

**INSTITUTE OF HUMANITIES AND  
SOCIAL SCIENCES, PEKING UNIVERSITY**

北京大學人文社會科學研究院





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## ABOUT PKU

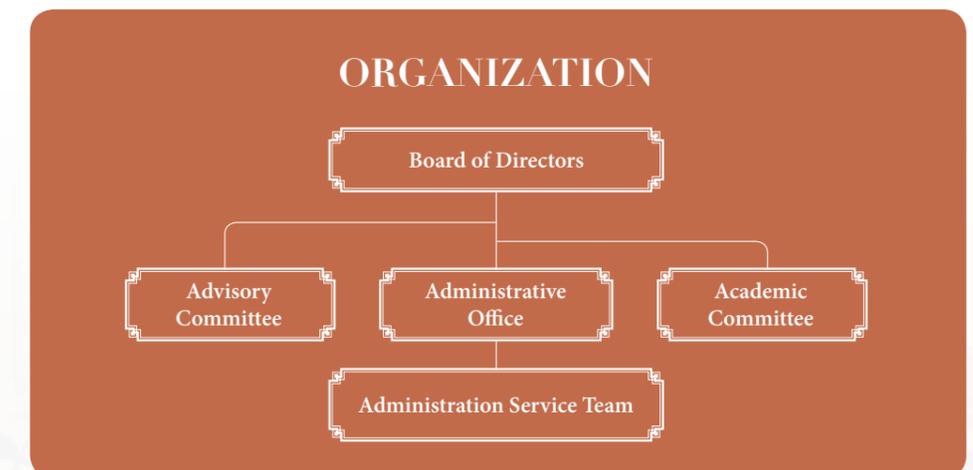
Founded in 1898 and initially named as Imperial University of Beijing, Peking University was the first modern higher education institution in China. Peking University played a key role in China's rebirth in modern times. In the early 20th century, many faculty and students were initiators of the major intellectual movements, which tremendously influenced the cultural, political and socio-economic dimensions of the Chinese society. Over the century, the university has retained its tradition of humanistic spirit. Based on science and liberal arts education, Peking University was the first higher education institution to establish a comprehensive disciplinary system in China. Today it is especially renowned for humanities and social sciences, including Chinese language and literature, history, archaeology, philosophy, sociology, economics and law. As a forerunner in educational reform, Peking University has always been breeding pioneers in different fields and groundbreaking researchers.

## ABOUT IHSS

The Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences (IHSS) at Peking University is an academic organization centering on the foundational disciplines in humanities and social sciences. Based on a four-month visiting-fellow program, our aim is to enhance interdisciplinary research and international conversation. The ethos of IHSS is to “inquire and inspire”.

The academic activities at IHSS are organized through five clusters of research topics: “Early China: the origin of Chinese civilization”, “Ethnicity, nation and state building”, “The grand social transformation and cultural reconstruction”, “The west and Chinese academia: classics, history, politics” and “Comparative studies of multiple civilizations and their interactions”. The five themes initiate conversations for scholars from different disciplines in the humanities and social sciences. They lead us to rethink about history, modernity, China and the world, as well as the challenges we face in today's globalized world.

The IHSS is composed of a board of directors, an advisory board, an academic board and an administrative team. Scholars include faculty from various departments in Peking University and visiting professors from other institutions in China and abroad.



# FIVE FOCUSES

*Focus 1:*

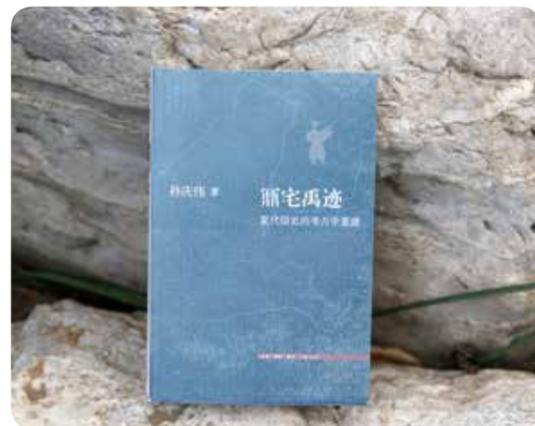
## “Early China: the origin of Chinese civilization”

The question, what is China, matters to the problem of identity crisis in the globalized era. This is also a question that has been hotly debated in the academia. Understanding the origin of Chinese civilization is one important approach to this question. In recent decades, archaeological sites—Taosi (c. 2300--1900 BC), Erlitou (c. 1900--1500 BC), Liangzhu (c. 3400-2250 BC), Shimao (c. 2000 BC), etc., has provided a large amount of new materials that allow the prehistoric legends to be incorporated into the scope of archaeological inquiries. However, how to transform excavated objects into historical narratives is dependent on our understanding of Early China, which requires perspectives from philology, paleography, geography, philosophy, history and sociology.

### Event Highlight

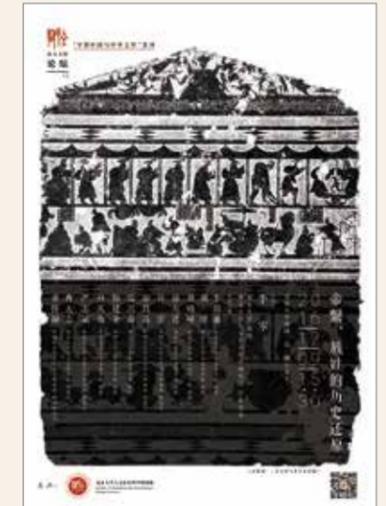
#### [Book Launch] Restoring the Xia Culture

The narratives of the oldest known dynasty, Xia dynasty (c. 2000-1600 BC), in Chinese history books are not well accepted by the archaeologists in the west due to its lack of archaeological evidence. Did Xia Culture exist at all? What were the archaeological relics that represent Xia Culture, if any? Professor Sun Qingwei, Dean of School of Archaeology and Museology of Peking University and member of the Academic Committee of IHSS, investigated the methodology and conceptions in Xia Culture studies in his new book *Mizhai Yuji* (甯宅禹迹): *An archaeological account of Xia History*.



#### [Seminar] Lineage of legendary rulers and clan surnames: tracing back to early Chinese history

Historians have been puzzled by the legends of prehistoric figures for long. Professor Li Ling, Chair of Advisory Committee of IHSS and member of the American Academy of Arts and Science, pointed out that using excavated objects and analyzing the lineage of clans and surnames are crucial methods to uncover the prehistory of Chinese civilization.



Poster of the seminar

#### [Reading group] A critical reading of *The Cambridge History of Ancient China: From the Origins of Civilization to 221 BC*

Professor Li Ling organized a reading group about the early history of China. Professor Edward Shaughnessy from University of Chicago, Professor Jessica Rawson from Oxford University, scholars and students at PKU joined the discussion.



*Focus 2:*

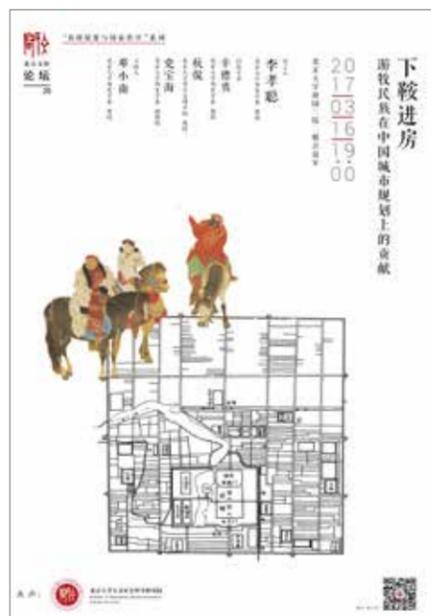
## “Ethnicity, nation and state building in medieval and early modern China”

Cross-ethnic group solidarity and national order are important issues in the making of a new Chinese political paradigm. This issue is critical not only to contemporary politics, but also to the study of medieval and early modern Chinese history. We need to focus on the historical change of political institutions, central vs. peripheral narratives in Wei-Jin and Tang-Song period, and incorporate perspectives from ethnology, anthropology, religious study, sociology. These topics contribute to a more comprehensive study of ethnicity, nation, race, and mediate the oftentimes assumed Sino-barbarian dichotomous narrative.

### Event Highlight

#### [Seminar] From Saddles to Houses: Nomadic People’s Contribution to the City Planning in China

The rise of cities, which seem to only exist in agricultural society, marked the transition from clan society to civilized society. Yet, in the history of capital cities in China for several thousand years, three capital cities of epoch-making significance were actually built by nomadic people, which made tremendous contribution to the planning and management of capital cities. In this seminar, Professor Li Xiacong from Peking University, who is also a leading expert in historical geography, noted that such phenomenon reflected the grand migration and cultural integration between the people in central plains and peripheral areas at that time.



Poster of the seminar

#### [Field Research] Rediscover the historical scene

The northwest region of China, including Inner Mongolia, Ningxia, Gansu and Xinjiang, is a place where northern nomads mix with agrarian peasants, and a place where the Han-Chinese and ethnic minorities mingle or have conflicts. It is also a place where the Silk Road was located, which communicated between the east and the west. The Institute has been organizing research groups to study the history, archaeological sites, geography and ethnology of this area.



The photos were taken during the research trip--relics of a Han-Dynasty fortress where archaeologists excavated thousands of manuscripts on bamboo slips (c. 84-24 BC).

#### [Lecture] State building and ethnicity policies of Six Dynasties

In different times of dynastic China, the central state used distinctive methods to rule the peripheral areas. How the central state defined “barbarians”, how “barbarians” were distinguished from the Han-Chinese, was an important issue to understand state governing logic. Hu Hong, Visiting Fellow of IHSS and Associate Professor of Wuhan University, talked about this issue in the case of southern mountainous areas in the Six Dynasties.



Hu Hong in Weiming Scholar Lecture, an endowed lecture series for young promising scholars

*Focus 3:*

## “The grand social transformation and cultural reconstruction”

Modern China has been experiencing new social transformation, and the study of transformation requires angles of multiple disciplines in the humanities and social sciences. We call for research on the driving forces and the destructive forces, crisis and recovery, reconstruction, and research on both structural factors and the specific mechanisms in the process of social change. The studies of the above-mentioned topics examine the continuity and discontinuity of history.

### Event Highlight

#### [Seminar] The land problems in rural and urban China

The last few decades witnessed grand social transformation in China, which evolved from an agrarian society to a rural/urban dual society as some scholars suggested. This seminar, chaired by Professor Liu Shouying from Renmin University, features the land problems in contemporary China, highlighting tensions in land ownership, rural migration, rural-urban divide, land reform, etc.



*Liu Shouying conducted empirical research in southern China and established a rich database of rural areas. This photo is a village of southern area, now undergoing population outflow problems.*

#### [Seminar] Localization of garrison system and the continuity between Ming and Qing

On a new book by Professor Michael Szonyi (Harvard University), *The Art of Being Governed: Everyday Politics in Late Imperial China*, scholars in the field of institutional history in Ming and Qing Dynasty pointed out that, in order to comprehend the continuity between the military household (*junhu* 軍戶) system in Yuan Dynasty and the garrison (*weisuo* 衛所) system in Ming Dynasty, the changes in ethnic relations caused by the migration of Han people to Mongolia, Xinjiang, Qinghai, should be noticed.



*Michael Szonyi,  
Professor at Harvard University  
and Director of Fairbank Center  
for Chinese Studies*

#### [Field research] Transformation and reconstruction of the rural areas in South China

Three distinguished historians in social history of southern China, Professor Zhao Shiyu from Peking University, Professor David Faure from Chinese University of Hong Kong, and Professor Liu Zhiwei from Sun Yat-sen University participated in the field trip “Transformation and Reconstruction of the Rural Areas in South China”, studying the inscription in an ancestral temple with 100-year history in Shunde, Guangdong Province.



*Focus 4:*

## “The west and Chinese academia: classics, history and politics”

The study of western ideas has lasted for more than a century in China. Nevertheless, the Chinese academia has not formed a set of systematic research agenda on Greek mythology, politics and customs, legal and social system of Roman Republic and Empire, as well as medieval scholasticism, Renaissance, early modern political social thought. In addition, this section also addresses issues of cultural mediation, the reception of western ideas in China, translation, etc.

### Event Highlight

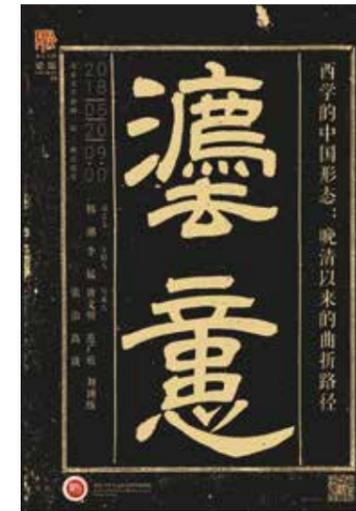
#### [Lecture series] Quentin Skinner on political theory

Quentin Skinner, Honorary Visiting Professor at IHSS and Professor at Queen Mary University of London, delivered four lectures at Peking University. They are about the methodological considerations about text interpretation, Machiavelli's theory about the ruler and the state, Hobbes on state and freedom.



#### [Seminar] Study of the West: From Late Imperial China to the contemporary time.

Led by Han Chao, Visiting Fellow at IHSS and Professor at Tongji University, attendees of the seminar discussed how western political ideas were introduced to China,



especially how early modern scholars borrow words from Chinese classics to represent the foreign ideas when they translated international law and theory of social contract.

*The photo in this poster is from the book cover of Yan Fu's translation of Montesquieu's *The Spirit of Laws* published in 1904. Yan Fu was one of most influential translators that introduced western social political ideas into early modern China, as well as a former president of Peking University.*

#### [Conference] Between appropriation and refutation-on the significance and reception of Max Weber in China

This conference sought to explore the various phases of Weber's translation and reception in China in both the academic and public spheres, put in historical context and understood in comparison against Weber's reception in Germany. Since Chinese translations are mostly based on English or Japanese versions and only rarely on the German original, the participants of this conference sought to better understand the image(s) of Weber created through often indirect transmissions. This conference was co-sponsored by IHSS and Max Weber Foundation. Before this conference, the Institute invited Prof. Wolfgang Schluchter, Professor Emeritus at the Heidelberg University and the editor of *The Complete Edition of Max Weber's Works*. He gave a lecture series and led a seminar on the works of Max Weber.



*Professor Hans van Ess (left), Chairman of Max Weber Foundation, with Professor Tillman from Arizona State University at the Conference*

*Focus 5:*

## “Comparative studies of multiple civilizations and their interactions”

Comparative studies of different civilizations include studies of the ancient civilizations such as Egypt, Assyria and Greece, as well as area studies, which incorporate the Middle East, central Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia, Far East and the Pacific Region, Africa and Latin America. These studies do not just focus on contemporary international politics or the regional features, but also aim at producing new insights into cross-cultural communication and providing potential solutions for social and political problems.

### Event Highlight

#### [Lecture Series] Jessica Rawson: China and Her Neighbours, Near and Far, 3000 BC- 1000 AD



China's history and archaeology are most usually discussed independently of the surrounding regions in East Asia. Yet China, as a powerful and influential centre, inevitably interacted with her neighbours. The talks by Professor Jessica Rawson, Honorary Visiting Professor of IHSS and Professor of Oxford University, took a comparative perspective, described the different paths ancient China took from the west and addressed the range of cross-region interactions, and consider their impacts in China and also on the neighbouring areas. Such studies reveal the strength of Chinese civilization in taking in new materials and ideas and yet retaining the principal features of long-standing traditions.

#### [Lecture] The Silk Road between European and Asian continents.

Rong Xinjiang is a professor of Peking University, member of Academic Committee of IHSS, a renowned scholar in Dunhuang studies. He pointed out that the Silk Road, dating back to c. 200 BC, exhibited various features in different time periods. The Silk Road lasted for a long time and its existence was continuous, instead of being completely subject to its political and diplomatic functions.



#### [Lecture Series] Sugata Bose: Indian ocean history, Asia and the world

Sugata Bose is the Founding Director of Harvard's South Asia Institute. As a leading scholar in Indian history, he gave a series of lectures titled “Asia after Europe: Decline and rise of a continent”, “Empires and nations in the Indian ocean arena”, “Between Gujarat and Bengal: Reinterpreting the Gandhi-Subhas Bose relationship” and “A colorful cosmopolitan: Rabindranath Tagore in Asia and the world”.



Poster of the lecture series

# VISITING FELLOW PROGRAM



*Photo of visiting fellows in the semester of Spring 2017*

The Visiting Fellow Program plays an integral role in the development of academics at IHSS. The aim is to take advantage of the strengths of Peking University in order to promote research in social sciences and the humanities, and assemble a mainstay group of scholars to explore both foundational studies and pioneering fields, in turn bolstering academic development and laying a basis for the training of promising scholars. IHSS also endeavors to promote interdisciplinary research, facilitate international exchange, and achieve breakthroughs in key academic areas.

Every semester, IHSS opens online application for the program to scholars from home and abroad, whose specialization spans the humanities and social sciences disciplines, and whose research is in natural sciences disciplines that overlap with the humanities and social sciences subjects. The move-in date for the visiting fellows is usually around the first week of the spring or autumn semester at Peking University. The visiting period is usually 4 months. During the visit, IHSS offers academic support, which creates an ideal research environment for fellows to focus on thinking and writing. Moreover, IHSS regularly arranges various forms of academic activities for visiting fellows to get involved in the academic life at PKU.

## Application

### *Professional Qualifications:*

1. IHSS does not offer post-doctoral fellowships. The candidate must hold a PhD for at least three years.
2. The visiting professor must hold the position of professor, must exhibit a high level of academic achievements including an outstanding record of research publications.
3. The visiting scholar must hold the minimum position of lecturer or assistant research fellow, must have a promising track record of independent achievements within his or her area(s) of study.

### *Application Procedure:*

1. Every academic year, IHSS has two openings for visiting fellows: one in the autumn and one in the spring semester. For scholars applying for the spring semester, please submit the application prior to September 1 of the previous year; for those applying for the autumn semester, please submit the application prior to March 1 of the same year. For more information, please refer to announcements on the IHSS website.
2. Applications should be submitted on the official IHSS website ([www.ihss.pku.edu.cn](http://www.ihss.pku.edu.cn)). Please click on “application” on the homepage or “Service” page, fill in and then submit the application.

#### **A complete application consists of:**

- a completed application form
- a curriculum vitae
- a research plan describing the work that you propose to carry out at IHSS
- 2-3 representative works (articles or books) in support of the application. (Books in support of the application may also be sent by regular mail.)

3. IHSS will hold regular meetings to evaluate applications and make the selection.
4. Applicants will be notified of their application results via email within one month after the application deadlines.



*In weekly seminars, visiting fellows take turns to present on their research projects.*



*In coffee talks, fellows share opinions about academic related issues and become familiar with each other.*



*IHSS is building a library of visiting fellows' works. Fellows usually bring a copy of their book with a signature on the title page.*

## Support

1. IHSS will pay a monthly stipend to visiting fellows based on their academic qualifications.\* IHSS will also provide visiting fellows with accommodation allowance, as well as one funded round trip between Beijing and the fellow's location.
2. IHSS will provide visiting fellows with research rooms. Fellows will also have access to meeting rooms, seminar rooms and other venues, as well as public space such as reception rooms and parlors. IHSS academic events are usually held in Building 2 of Jingyuan.
3. IHSS will provide visiting fellows with library and Internet service. With a PKU staff ID card, fellows will also be able to access the library and dine in university canteens.
4. IHSS will create as many opportunities as possible for visiting fellows to participate in knowledge exchange. Fellows are also welcomed to take part in a number of other informal academic events held by IHSS, including coffee talks, reading groups, etc.

*\*For details about allowances of PKU-UCL IAS Visiting Research Fellowship program, please refer to the application announcement.*





## Find us

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