Call for Papers

The Fifth Oxford Young Scholars Conference on Contemporary China

Governance in China after Mao: Continuity and Reform

23 May -24 May, 2016
University of Oxford

As China moved into the post-Mao phase of adaptation, the emphasis on utopian goals and social mobilization was replaced with economic modernization and a reconciliation of state and society through new governance strategies. Whereas political reliability was emphasized for much of the Maoist era, in the post-Mao period, the emphasis has been primarily on expertise to promote economic modernity. The political preference in the Maoist era had created a “virtuocracy,” as Susan Shirk branded it, in which people were recruited into the party and appointed into official positions not on the basis of their professional qualifications but on the basis of their correct political virtues. But the change in regime goals in the new era—from state revolution to economic modernization—required an infusion of expertise into the governance structure, and a combination of co-optation and exclusion strategies for the new elites and masses. What are the continuities and reforms related to governance issues in the post-Mao era? Have we witnessed the “great transformations of governance”?

This conference intends to create a platform for young scholars of humanities, social sciences and area studies to exchange ideas on the study of governance in contemporary China. We would like to define the theme broadly so as to draw contributions from a wide range of research programs, including but not limited to governance issues that are related to state building, public administration, rule of/by law, political economy and Party-state-society relations. We also welcome perspectives from comparative politics and international relations that shed light on governance issues in relation to China’s transition on a global scale. In addition to their research presentations, participants are encouraged to demonstrate how their research engages with the methodological and conceptual challenges in the study of governance.

The one-day conference will be held on Tuesday, 24 May 2016 at the University of Oxford. On the evening of Monday, 23 May 2016, there will be a specially featured roundtable discussion during which prominent China scholars will offer their thoughts.
on the theme of the conference. All conference participants are invited to the discussion. Speakers in the previous roundtable discussions included Prof. Patricia Thornton, Prof. Rosemary Foot, Prof. Vivienne Shue, Prof. Jeffrey Wasserstrom, Prof. Leigh Jenco, among others.

Submission Deadlines
If you wish to present a paper, please submit your name, affiliation, paper title, an abstract (no more than one page) and a CV to oxchina2016@gmail.com by 20 Feb 2016. Applicants will be notified of a decision by 20 Mar 2016. The full paper must be submitted by 30 April 2016 (all UK time).

Funding
Free conference catering and one-night accommodation, as well as partial subsidies which cover the travel cost to the conference from within the UK may be available to scholars whose papers are selected for presentation (15-20 mins). Applicants are invited to indicate whether they have their own funding (this is for logistical reasons only. The selection of applicants is purely based on the quality of abstracts). This conference is jointly funded by the University of Oxford China Centre and the Antonian Fund of St. Antony’s College, University of Oxford.