Uncertain boundaries, fluid concepts, changing imagination
(Symposium dedicated to current issues in the study of Chinese culture)

Chiang Ching-Kuo Foundation International Sinological Center at Charles University
Inter-University Center for Sinology, Harvard University
Prague, November 14–17, 2013

The academic field devoted to the study of China has been – along with other disciplines and areas of knowledge – constantly transforming itself. The transformation of the field is currently reflected in growing interest in the history and epistemology of China studies, in discussions on the definition of the object of our study and on relevant (and also relevance of) methodologies. From East European perspective with its own traditions of “oriental studies” and sinology, as well as its own power struggles, going on under the surface of academic discussions, the whole picture becomes even more confused.

The aim of this symposium is to bring up new issues in our effort to reconceptualize the field, asking such questions as: What is the object of our study? How the boundaries of China, understood as both cultural and political entity, are shifting? How China and Chinese studies fare in the post-Orientalist era? What is the position of traditional sinology versus new methodologies? How local sinological traditions may participate in the future in the global academic discourse? These questions are naturally embedded also in broad issues of cultural relativism, nationalism, definition of modernity (modernities perhaps?), translation between cultures etc.

Essays addressing these questions generally, as well as in depth case studies on Chinese language, literature and culture, society, politics and ideology reflecting on these issues, are welcome. The organizers hope to bring together scholars from East and West in multiple meaning of this dichotomy (East Asia and the world, but also former East Europe and the West) in order to discuss what it means to “understand China” today, and how this meaning may be changing.

Organizers:

CCK Foundation International Sinological Center at Charles University in Prague, in collaboration with the CCKF Inter-University Center for Sinology, Harvard University

The Center will cover all the related costs of the invited speakers.

INVITED SPEAKERS (in alphabetical order):
Cheng Yuyu (National Taiwan University)
Cheng, Anne (Collège de France)
Findeisen, Raoul (Comenius University Bratislava)
Jacoby, Marcin (Warsaw University)
Ji Jin (Soochow University)
Lippiello, Tiziana (Ca'Foscari University, Venice)
Mair, Victor (University of Pennsylvania)
Rodionov, Alexey (St. Petersburg State University)
Rojas Carlos (Duke University)
Rošker, Jana (University of Ljubljana)
Standaert, Nicolas (Catholic University Leuven)
Wang Ban (Stanford University)
Zhang Longxi (City University of Hong Kong)
Zhang Xuexin 张学昕 (Liaoning Teachers' University)
Program
Thursday, Nov. 14  19.00 – Welcome party

Friday, Nov. 15
Opening remark
9.30 – 9.40 Olga Lomová (Charles University)
I.  Keynote speech, chair Olga Lomová
9.40 – 10.20 Anne Cheng (Collège de France): "Philosophy and the French invention of Sinology"
Coffee break: 10.20 – 10.30

II. Concepts and conceptualizations, chair Jana Rošker
10.30 – 11.10 Zhang Longxi (City University of Hong Kong): “Re-conceptualizing China in our Time: From a Chinese Perspective”
11.10 – 11.50 Tiziana Lippiello (Ca’Foscari University, Venice): "An anti-modern modernity: the uprise of classical thought in the era of globalization”
Lunch break: 12.00 – 13.30

III. Language and literature, chair Nicolas Standaert
13.30 – 14.10 Cheng Yuyu 鄭毓瑜 (National Taiwan University): “胡適文學革命的起點: 從文言句讀到白話音節”
14.10 – 14.50 Ban Wang (Stanford University): “ZMĚNĚNÝ TITUL”
Coffee break: 14.50 – 15.10

IV. Language, literature, and culture, chair Raoul Findeisen
15.00 – 15.50 Jing Tsu – nový titul
15.50 – 16.30 Carlos Rojas (Duke University): “Cui Jian’s ‘Nothing to My Name’—From Icon to Iterant”
16.30 – 17.00 Wrap-up session
19.00 – 21.00 Dinner

Saturday, Nov. 16

V. Second keynote, chair David Wang
9.30 – 10.10 Victor Mair (University of Pennsylvania): "Sinology, Chinese Studies, Orientalism, and Beyond: The Role of Language Technologies"

VI. Jaroslav Průšek, chair Ban Wang
10.10 – 10.50 David Wang (Harvard University): “Lyric and the epic half a century later”
10.50 – 11.30 Ji Jin 季进 (Soochow University): “Jaroslav Průšek 中国文学研究的方法与意义”
Coffee break: 11.30 – 11.45

VII. Contemporary Chinese Literature, chair Ji Jin
11.45 – 12.25 Zhang Xuexin 张学昕 (Liaoning Teachers’ University): “海外汉学、本土批评与中国当代小说”
12.25 – 13.05 Alexey Rodionov (St. Petersburg State University): “Modern Chinese Literature Research in the Former Soviet Countries: Shifts in Objects, Sources and Methodology”
Lunch: 13.05 – 14.30
VII. Sinology I, chair Alexey Rodionov
14.30 – 15.15 Raoul Findeisen (Comenius University Bratislava): “What and how is and may be sinology”

Coffee break: 15.55 – 16.10

VIII. Sinology II, chair Victor Mair
16.10 – 16.50 Jana Rošker (University of Ljubljana): “The urgent need for the re-conceptualization of Chinese studies and the search for new sinological methodologies”
16.50 – 17.30 Nicolas Standaert (Catholic University Leuven): “Don’t mind the gap: Sinology as an art of in-betweenness”

17.30 – 18.00 General discussion

Sunday, Nov. 17
9.00 – 14.00 Cultural program (optional)