



# 中國制度

研 究 中 心

Research Hub on Institutions of China  
Faculty of Social Sciences, HKU

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Newsletter | Summer 2021 | Issue 3



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## **HKU-HYI Joint Training Programme: New Frontiers of Research on Institutions of China, to Take Place in 2022**

*20 promising scholars from around the world will be selected  
for the training program*

*Outstanding trainees will be selected to spend  
one academic year of research at Harvard University*



Picture: The Harvard-Yenching Institute

The Research Hub on Institutions of China and the Harvard-Yenching Institute (HYI) are co-organising a joint training programme entitled “New Frontiers of Research on Institutions of China”. The training programme will be held at the University of Hong Kong on January 5th-12th, 2022.

Established in 1928, HYI is an independent foundation dedicated to advancing higher education in Asia in the humanities and social sciences, with special attention to the study of Asian culture. HYI offers fellowship programs for overseas study and research to doctoral students and younger faculty members at leading East, Southeast, and South Asian universities in all fields of the humanities and social sciences. HYI also supports several publication series at Harvard and in Asia, publishes a book review series and working paper series, and provide support for the Harvard-Yenching Library as well as other research initiatives.

Institutions – political, economic, social and cultural – are key to understanding the profound socio-political development that has occurred in China. The development, design, operation and evolution of institutions have long been critical to the resilience, stability and vitality of the ruling regime. Research on institutions is integral to improving the theorising and understanding of the past, present and future of China’s transformation from a comparative and historical perspective.

This training programme invites young scholars of various academic backgrounds to study and discuss the dynamic process and rationale behind China's institutional development since 1949, as well as to explore the impact of institutional change and continuity on contemporary politics, society and culture in the People's Republic of China. The programme aims to open new frontiers in China Studies through providing a fresh perspective on China's institutions.

Trainees will have the opportunity to learn from prominent scholars from the United States and China in seminars on topics ranging from institutions of the Chinese Communist Party, social, economic, political and



**CALL FOR APPLICATIONS**

**HKU-HYI Joint Training Program:**  
**New Frontiers of Research on Institutions of China**

**January 5-12, 2022**  
 Centennial Campus,  
 The University of Hong Kong

**Application Deadline:**  
**(HKT) 5 pm**  
**August 31, 2021**

**Program Highlights**  
 This training program invites young scholars of various backgrounds to study and discuss together the dynamic process and rationale behind China's institutional development since 1949, and explore the impact of institutional change and continuity in the past one and half centuries on the contemporary politics, society and culture of the People's Republic of China. The program aims at opening new frontiers for the field of China Studies through a fresh perspective on China's institutions.

**Eligibility**  
 The program is open to up to 20 scholars (junior faculty members, doctoral students and post-doctoral fellows) in the field of China studies from all over the world.  
 The Harvard-Yenching Institute may select up to five outstanding Asia-based trainees for HYI fellowships opportunities, which will enable the selected trainees to spend an academic year of advanced study and research at Harvard University.

To learn more, please visit: <https://www.socsc.hku.hk/hic/programs>  
 For enquiries, please contact [rhicprog@hku.hk](mailto:rhicprog@hku.hk)

cultural institutions of China. They will also have the opportunity to present and receive detailed feedback on their individual research projects. During the training programme, the sponsoring institutions also plan to organise a thematic field trip activity.

The programme is open to up to 20 scholars (junior faculty members, doctoral students and post-doctoral fellows) in the field of China studies from all over the world. The Harvard-Yenching Institute may select up to five outstanding Asia-based trainees for HYI fellowship opportunities, which will enable the selected trainees to spend an academic year of advanced study and research at Harvard University.

The Research Hub seeks to promote scholarly excellence in the field of China Studies, with a focus on China's evolving political institutions. It also seeks to have a national policy impact on the future development of China. The Research Hub aims to become a world-class platform that facilitates interdisciplinary, cross-institutional and

cross-regional research collaboration, a coordinator for the communication of great minds that share a common interest in China's past, present and future, and an incubator of innovative research that inspires younger generation of scholars on Contemporary China.

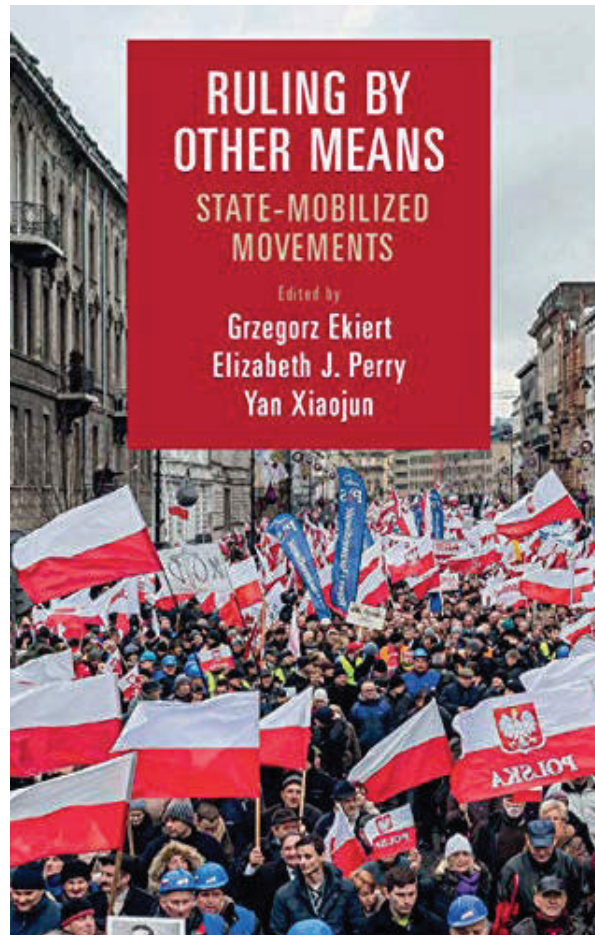


Further details and application information can be found by scanning the QR code on the left.





## ***Ruling By Other Means: State-Mobilized Movements*** **Published by Cambridge University Press**



Picture: Cover of *Ruling by Other Means: State Mobilized Movements*

*Ruling by Other Means: State-Mobilized Movements* was published by Cambridge University Press in July 2020. Co-edited by Professor Grzegorz Ekiert, Laurence A. Tisch Professor of Government and Director of the Minda De Gunzburg Centre for European Studies at Harvard University, Professor Elizabeth J. Perry, Henry Rosovsky Professor of Government and Director of the Harvard-Yenching Institute, and Dr. Yan Xiaojun, Director of the Research Hub on Institutions of China, *Ruling by Other Means* investigates the phenomenon of state-mobilised movements.

Through 13 case studies from different geographical contexts and time periods, *Ruling by Other Means* offers a new set of theories to explain state-mobilised movements, a type of social movement where states organise citizens for collective action in order to achieve state goals and interests.



Traditional theories assume that social movements are collectively and spontaneously organised by citizens to voice social grievances and to make demands of the state. However, the chapters in this volume demonstrate that certain social movements exhibit a high degree of state intervention, with governments participating in seemingly autonomous social movements by supporting and funding groups.

*Ruling by Other Means* re-examines basic assumptions in traditional theories on social movements by viewing states as participants capable of organising and mobilising citizens to promote specific national interests and goals. Through introducing this new framing, *Ruling by Other Means* introduces new questions and opens up new ground for further research on social movements and contentious politics.

States may mobilise citizens to achieve a variety of goals. These range from suppressing existing social movements, pre-empting the possibility of future protests, achieving economic development goals, and increasing mass support for territorial claims. Given the increasing frequency of state-mobilised movements, the editors aptly note that “for better or worse, state-mobilised movements have been and will surely continue to be of world-changing significance.”

As an original contribution to the study of state-society relations, *Ruling by Other Means* has garnered significant scholarly attention. Jack A. Goldstone, professor of public policy at George Mason University, praised the work as a “must-read volume for anyone studying social movements and state power.”

Joel S. Migdal, professor of international studies at the Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies at the University of Washington, noted that *Ruling by Other Means* “demonstrate[s] how states have taken the very tool most often used against them to shore themselves up” and provides an “innovative approach, analysing how state leaders mobilise citizens against both real and imagined enemies.”

Douglas McAdam, professor of sociology at Stanford University, observed that “in an era in which the line between states and movements is increasingly blurry, *Ruling by Other Means* serves as a welcome corrective to the traditional view.”

The publication and research findings of *Ruling by Other Means* were also featured in an article of the University of Hong Kong Bulletin (Vol. 22, November 2020).

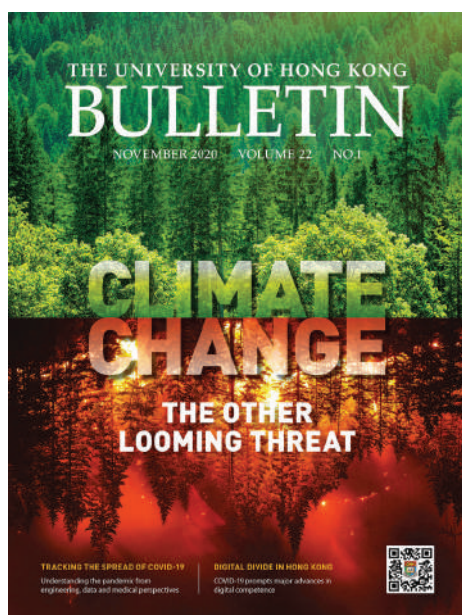


The University of Hong Kong Bulletin's article featuring  
*Ruling by Other Means* can be found below.

## Protests Sponsored by the State

*Social movements used to be about  
disadvantaged groups rising against the state*

*But now, states themselves are initiating social movements  
Political scientist Dr Yan Xiaojun has been investigating*



A new approach to ruling has emerged in recent decades that is shaking up the relationship between the state and society. Governments in diverse areas of the world have been mobilising citizens to execute and give legitimacy to their policy aims, in the guise of a ‘social movement’.

“In the past, we thought of social movements as the weapon of the weak and of disadvantaged social groups who did not have much say in national policies and sometimes went to the streets to fight for their rights and dignity. The target was always the state,” said Dr Yan Xiaojun of the Department of Politics and Public Administration.

“But in the 21st century, we are realising this might be only half of the story. Social movements have also become a very important tool of governance, especially for authoritarian regimes but also democratic states. More and more, they use social movements to achieve their political goals, or to fight their real or imagined enemies. It’s a global phenomenon.”

The phenomenon began to take hold in the post-war era – in places such as Mississippi, where political leaders and white supremacists allied to maintain Jim Crow laws, and China, where Mao Zedong launched both the Red Guards and the workers’ groups that subsequently contained them – and it has accelerated.

Recent examples include the mobilisation of Crimean citizens by Russian allies to oppose Ukrainian rule in

2014, Vladimir Putin's support for citizen campaigns to change Russia's constitution so his rule could be extended, Hugo Chávez's creation of citizens' groups to back his policy and political goals, and the Hong Kong government's support for new social groups to counter the Occupy Central movement and the recent protests.

"The study of state-sponsored social movements is surprisingly a new field in political science," said Dr Yan, who has just edited a new book on the topic, *Ruling by Other Means: State-Mobilized Movements*, with colleagues from Harvard University. "But it's really become a global movement."

## Pitting different groups against each other

Dr Yan's own chapter focusses on Mao's use of worker groups to suppress student-led movements in 1968 and 1989.

In the first case, the Red Guards founded by Mao in 1966 had descended into in-fighting and factionalism. To bring them under control, Mao formed Workers Propaganda Teams for Mao Zedong Thought, comprising factory workers who entered university campuses and put down the most violent Red Guard factions. The teams then uprooted higher education by taking charge of the universities and abolishing the merit-based education and promotion system for one based on political background. The workers' teams held sway until Mao's death in 1976.

**BOOKS**

### PROTESTS SPONSORED BY THE STATE

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"There is a famous saying by Mao: the proletariat will enter into the university, will study in the university and will control the university," Dr Yan said. "This was a success for Mao, but it may not have been to the country's benefit."

Students were also targeted in June 1989. Riots in Beijing were mobilised on June 1-2, 1989 to launch a propaganda war against student protesters that could justify a military crackdown. Shanghai followed a different path, mobilising factory workers to directly confront the students, a tactic that avoided bloodshed, although it was formulated after the violence in Beijing.

"The central theme of this book is that the state might not use direct state agents or forces to reach a particular policy goal, but instead mobilise one part of society against another," he said.

**Learning from experience**

How does the state gain complexity in social movements? During the Cultural Revolution, the cult of Mao made people keen to do his bidding. In 1989, peasants and workers who had benefited from Deng Xiaoping's reforms were willing to defend the status quo.

In Putin's Russia, bribery and payoffs have been used to incite people. In Mississippi, existing social structures and groups were tapped for support. In Hong Kong, the government created new social groups specifically to counter the Occupy movement.

States can also sponsor social movements for various purposes – to suppress one group as in China, enforce racial segregation as in Mississippi, take over territories as in Russia or, more constructively, to mobilise support for physical development plans as seen in Taiwan.

"Governments around the world are learning from their experiences how to use state-mobilised social movements," Dr Yan said. Opponents are learning, too. He pointed to Hong Kong protesters, who disclose the connections of state-mobilised groups to the state, thus undermining their credibility.

"The state in the 21st century is undergoing a transformation. The relationship between the state and society is changing and the boundaries are becoming blurred," he said. He cited the example of commercial entities conducting censorship in China.

and managing groups in the United States. "Protest, according to Max Weber, is a purely state action. But now we don't know which part is the state and which part is society."

**DR YAN XIAOJUN**

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**Ruling by Other Means: State-Mobilized Movements**

Editors: Gregoire Dierck, Elizabeth J. Perry and Yan Xiaojun

Publisher: Cambridge University Press

Year of Publication: 2020

The Red Guards were founded by Mao in 1966 to use demonstrators in fighting and factionalism. Mao then formed Workers Propaganda Teams for Mao Zedong Thought, which were sent to universities and factories, to bring the Red Guards under control and restore order.

The precious gift – arranged – given by Mao to the Workers Propaganda Teams for Mao Zedong Thought.

“There is a famous saying by Mao: the proletariat will enter into the university, will study in the university and will control the university,” Dr Yan said. “This was a success for Mao, but it may not have been to the country’s benefit.”

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“The state in the 21st century is undergoing a transformation. The relationship between the state and society is changing and the boundaries are becoming blurred,” he said. He cited the example of commercial entities conducting censorship in China and managing prisons in the United States. “Prison, according to Max Weber, is a purely state action. But now we don’t know which part is the state and which part is society.”

## RHIC Launches Book Series in Partnership with Chung Hwa Book Company Publishing (Hong Kong)

*First work in the series, Minds of the Times, successfully published*



As part of a book series by the Research Hub on Institutions of China, *Minds of the Times: Interviews with Key Figures on the Handover of Hong Kong and the “One Country, Two Systems” Policy* (hereafter, *Minds of the Times*) was published in April 2021 with Chung Hwa Book Company (Hong Kong).

RHIC Book Series focus on the changes in the Chinese political system and promotes the development of contemporary China Studies through the publication of humanities and social science research. In addition to producing relevant research with scholarly impact, RHIC book series aim to become a featured book series that represent high-level China studies to inspire young scholars and influence policy development.

*Minds of the Times* is the first volume in the RHIC Book Series in partnership with Chung Hwa Book Company (Hong Kong). The Research Hub will continue to focus on producing research in China Studies for domestic and international publication, with the goal of becoming a world-class platform that facilitates interdisciplinary, cross-institutional and cross-regional research collaboration.

Since the 1997 Handover, there has been a growing need for the public and academic community to discuss and understand the experiences from the Handover. *Minds of the Times* utilises an oral history approach to enrich scholarship and discussions regarding the formation of the “One Country, Two Systems” policy.

Historical research can enrich public policy analysis in various ways. Historian Virginia Berridge notes that a historical approach can enable researchers to gain “an overview of the complexity of policy change over time.” Likewise, accounting historians Marilyn Collins and Robert Bloom argue that oral histories can be used to “supplement and clarify the written record or provide a record where no written record exists.” Enid H. Douglas observes that while written records are often unable to reflect emotional dynamics around policy decisions, oral history can often help researchers “reveal the deeper level of reasoning behind many decisions” and the “chemistry of the interaction before and at the time decisions were made.”

Policy researchers such as Russell Riley and Eldad Ben Aharon have noted that oral histories supplement the written record and help researchers identify relevant documents for closer examination. Oral history also enables researchers to understand dynamics and relationships that are not able to be captured on paper.

*Minds of the Times* enables the reader to understand the political ideologies and activities of the individuals involved in the formulation of the “One Country, Two Systems” policy, and highlights their responses to a series of historical questions. Through interviews with political elites with first-hand experience and involvement, this book supplements contemporary understandings of the “One Country, Two Systems” policy and oral histories of Mainland China and Hong Kong.

*Minds of the Times* is part of *The Implementation of One Country, Two Systems in Hong Kong* research project funded by the Policy Innovation and Co-ordination Office of the HKSAR Government.



## Harvard University Asia Center Hosted Author Conversations Series on *Ruling by Other Means: State-Mobilized Movements*

*Director of the Harvard University Asia Center, Professor James Robson noted that *Ruling by Other Means* offered a new perspective on social movements through a diversity of case studies*



On December 8th, 2020, Harvard University Asia Centre hosted its Fall 2020 Author Conversation Series. Professor Grzegorz Ekiert, Laurence A. Tisch Professor of Government and Director of the Minda De Gunzburg Center for European Studies at Harvard University, and Professor Elizabeth J. Perry, Henry Rosovsky Professor of Government and Director of the Harvard-Yenching Institute, and Dr. Yan Xiaojun discussed their new book, *Ruling by Other Means: State-Mobilized Movements*. The conversation was moderated by Professor James Robson, James C. Kralik and Yunli Lou Professor of East Asian Languages and Civilisations and William Fung Director of the Harvard University Asia Center.

Published by Cambridge University Press in July 2020, *Ruling by Other Means* examines the emergence of state-mobilised movements, a type of social movement where the state organises citizens to achieve its

goals. In contrast to traditional studies of social movements, which examine the threat of social movements to the state, *Ruling by Other Means* investigates how the state enters the realm of movement politics to achieve its own goals. In this conversation, the three editors discussed the current state of research on state-mobilised movements.



Professor Perry observed that very little current research on social movements looked at the role of the state and examined the relationship between state structures, protest movements, and expansion of state power. She characterised the role of the state as an underexplored “black box.”

Professor Ekiert echoed this observation, noting that existing research on contentious politics predominantly examined the role of different groups in challenging the state, rather than the state’s presence in civil society and participation in movement politics.

Dr. Yan argued that while the term “state-mobilised movement” is relatively new, that there are many historical examples of states mobilising citizens to pursue particular goals. Given the intensifying willingness and capacity of governments to mobilise such movements, studies of state-mobilised movements have become increasingly important.

Professor Robson noted that *Ruling by Other Means* offers an opportunity for readers to consider their own assumptions of social movements. Although much more ground remains to be broken in studies of state-mobilised movements, *Ruling by Other Means* ignites an exciting and increasingly important conversation on the changing nature of state-society relations.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, Harvard University Asia Center's 2020 Author Conversation Series were hosted online. Every year, the Asia Center selects and recommends works that have made a significant academic impact in Asian Studies and invites authors for discussion, creating a platform for interaction between authors and members of the public.



## RHIC Successfully Completes Two Research Projects Commissioned by the Chinese Association of Hong Kong and Macao Studies

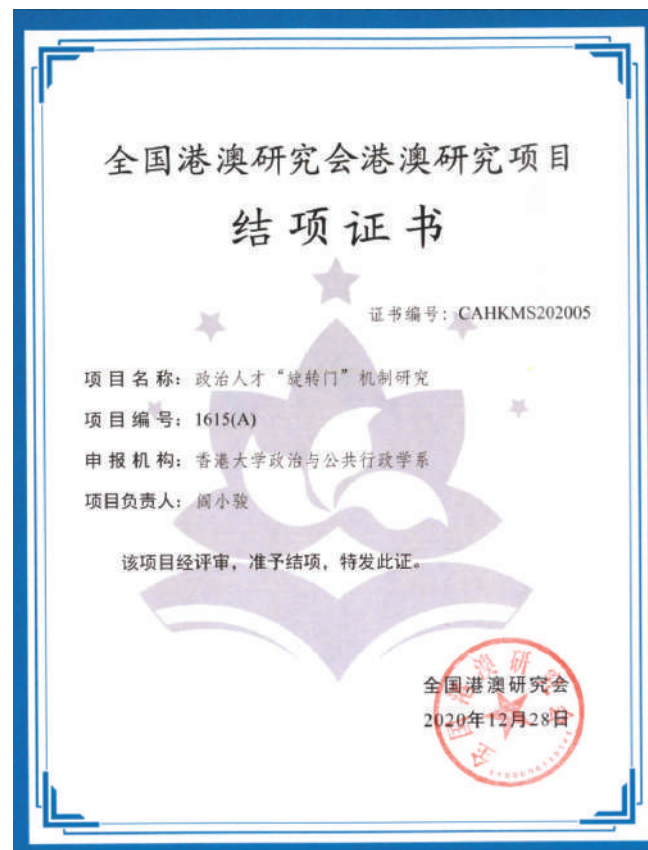
*Commissioned by the Chinese Association of Hong Kong and Macao Studies, RHIC led research teams from the University of Hong Kong, Renmin University of China, and Shanghai Jiao Tong University to investigate the theory behind the “One Country, Two Systems” policy and the “Revolving Door Mechanism”*



The Research Hub on Institutions of China successfully completed two research projects commissioned by the Chinese Association of Hong Kong and Macao Studies in December 2020. The two projects included Deng Xiaoping's “One Country, Two Systems” (OCTS) Theory: A Comprehensive Study and The “Revolving Door” Mechanism and Hong Kong's Political Talent.

In Deng Xiaoping's “One Country, Two Systems” Theory: A Comprehensive Study, the research team traces back the institutional origin, basic principles of the OCTS and examines holistically the new challenges and

new circumstances in the politics of HKSAR. It aims at providing new insights for continuing dialogue with regard to the practice of the OCTS policy in Hong Kong among scholars and policy practitioners, as well as offering policy advice for the adjustment and reform of the ways in which the OCTS policy is implemented in the new era and for the enhancement of the capacity of adaptive governance of the HKSAR Government, as well as the improvement of the relationship between the Central People's Government and the HKSAR.



In *The “Revolving Door” Mechanism and Hong Kong’s Political Talent* project, the research team took an institutionalist approach. The team examined the theoretical underpinnings and history of the mechanism, and consulted documents such as the Basic Law, the Code for Officials under the Political Appointment System, and the Civil Service Code to outline a framework for the revolving door mechanism in Hong Kong. Finally, the team suggested and made targeted policy recommendations based on the analysis of specific institutional defects.

The two projects were commissioned by the Chinese Association of Hong Kong and Macao Studies. Dr. Yan Xiaojun, Director of the Research Hub on Institutions of China, led research teams comprising of researchers from the University of Hong Kong, Renmin University of China, and Shanghai Jiao Tong University.



## When People Are Stuck in Their Mindset, We Should Be More Open

*Remarks made at the International Communication in the New Era Forum  
(May 31, 2021)*



From left: Ms. Pansy Ho Chiu-king, Dr. Yan Xiaojun, Mr. Nury Vittachi;  
In the video, left: Ms. Han Yonghong, right: Mr. Eric Li.

### **Nury Vittachi<sup>1</sup>:**

*The main theme of this panel is “telling China’s story”. I look at the newspapers every day and China seems to be the bad guy of the world. Why is China the bad guy of the world and what can be done about it? How do we correct that negative story?*

### **Yan Xiaojun:**

In my opinion, there are three reasons as to why China is being considered the bad guy; the first one is difference, the second is change, and the third is the future.

In terms of the first point, China is culturally different from the Western world, especially the United States.

<sup>1</sup> Nury Vittachi, journalist and author based in Hong Kong, was the host of the panel discussion.



China is also different institutionally, with different political, economic, and cultural systems. People are afraid of something they are not familiar with.

The second thing is change. As Eric just mentioned, China now has a changing position in the world and people have a changing perception of themselves.<sup>2</sup> This is a big reason why people, especially the American people, feel that China is different from the China of the 1970s and 1980s as it's now something they're not familiar with.

The third thing is the future; namely, what is our future position in the world? While it is uncertain, there's a looming impression in the background that China may be the superpower of the 21<sup>st</sup> or 22<sup>nd</sup> century. People are afraid of that and are not getting used to a new perception of the future.

I think that political and cultural differences, China's changing global position, and the future might be the reasons why China is considered the bad guy.

**Nury Vittachi:**

*It could be said that all governments are trying to do the same thing. They try to enhance life, eradicate*

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<sup>2</sup> Eric X. Li (李世默), founder of Guancha.cn and Chengwei Capital, was a fellow discussant on the panel.

*poverty and run their country in a safe, non-corrupt way. They're all very similar, so why is China perceived differently?*

**Yan Xiaojun:**

There are some people in the West who are strategically trying to demonise China but that is a very small number of people that I won't focus on today. What I would like to talk about is the people in the West who are very critical of China, some of whom are my friends in the Western media working at leading newspapers and journals. There are two things that are on their mind, the first of which is that their system is the better one and that the others want to follow their way. They assume that as long as others are becoming more like them, things will get better in all aspects. There are some things that they want to share with others, and these are things that make them feel good and that they have personally experienced.

There is another group of people; they are not familiar with exotic things. In an exotic and foreign culture like China's, they are suspicious of anything that is taking place in the culture. They want also to reform, correct, and improve the situation in a foreign culture. This group also wants the two cultural pathways to converge at the end of the day. I think these people have good intentions; in a way, they are very kind friends but they have very unique thoughts about how to deal with a foreign culture. I think in terms of international communication and telling China's story, this group should be one of our most important audiences that we should communicate with.

**Nury Vittachi:**

*One of the issues is that major news outlets – such as Agence France-Presse, Associated Press, Reuters, – all come from the West and dominate international press coverage in newspapers around the world. What is the solution? How can we succeed in telling China's real story to the world?*

**Yan Xiaojun:**

In this globalised age, someone is always telling the Chinese story. Some are telling it to a smaller audience, but no matter how large or small these audiences are, they are all important. When we are telling the Chinese story, it is important that we tell a fact-based, factual, and consistent story. Our messages have to be consistent.

It's also important that we tell the story in a cultivated way. Since my college years, I have been reading Han Yonghong's reports on China, which are very well written and fact-based.<sup>3</sup> Likewise, everyone is attracted to Eric's TED talk because these are messages that are delivered in a cultivated and enjoyable way.

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<sup>3</sup> Han Yonghong (韓詠紅), Deputy Editor-in-Chief of Singapore's *Lianhe Zaobao* (聯合早報), was a fellow discussant on the panel.

Thirdly, when we are trying to tell our Chinese story, it has to be done in a communicative way. Communication and telling stories is not a one-way road, it should be a two-way road. We should have a conversation and dialogue with the international audience.

**Nury Vittachi:**

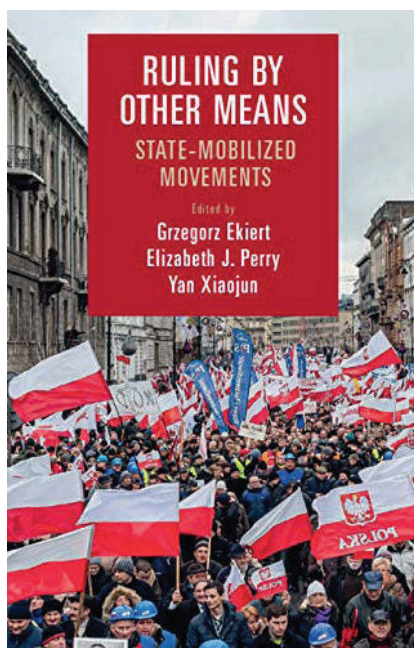
*We all personally know journalists from different places. As several of you have mentioned, they're not bad people but just stuck in a particular mindset. How can we gently improve the mindset without being accused of brainwashing them?*

**Yan Xiaojun:**

I don't have a magic solution but there are several things we can do. As the late Premier Zhou Enlai said, it's important to make friends with people who have different points of view. Through cultivating friendships, people might understand each other more.

There are also things that people might do, such as bringing people into China and letting them have first-hand, actual experience in China. As the famous Chinese saying goes, "to see something once is better than to hear about it a hundred times (百聞不如一見)".

Last but not least, when people are stuck in their mindset, we should be more open. We should remain open to the world and to different points of view. This is also a method of exchange and way of communicative change. As Michelle Obama said, "when they go low, we go high."



***Ruling by Other Means: State-Mobilized Movements***  
(co-edited by Grzegorz Ekiert, Elizabeth J. Perry & Yan Xiaojun), Cambridge University Press, 2020, 362 pages.

<https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108784146>



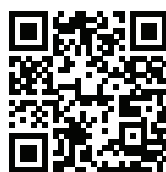
What do states gain by sending citizens into the streets? *Ruling by Other Means* investigates this question through the lens of State-Mobilized Movements (SMMs), an umbrella concept that includes a range of (often covertly organised) collective actions intended

to advance state interests. The SMMs research agenda departs significantly from that of classic social movement and contentious politics theory, focused on threats to the state from seemingly autonomous societal actors. Existing theories assume that the goal of popular protest is to voice societal grievances, represent oppressed groups, and challenge state authorities and other powerholders. The chapters in this volume show, however, that states themselves organise citizens (sometimes surreptitiously and even transnationally) to act collectively to advance state goals. Drawn from different historical periods and diverse geographical regions, these case studies expand and improve our understanding of social movements, civil society and state-society relations under authoritarian regimes.



**“Elite Bargains and Policy Priorities in Authoritarian Regimes: Agenda Setting in China under Xi Jinping and Hu Jintao”.** (by Kwan Nok Chan, Wai Fung Lam and Shaowei Chen). *Governance*. September 2020.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/gove.12543>



Journal Impact Factor (2019) : **2.899**

What explains agenda outcomes in authoritarian regimes? Existing research attributes policy priorities to either the autocrat's survival



needs or the co-optation of external interests. The former leaves out policy choices beyond the calculus of regime survival; and the latter elite power play that bears more immediately on government priorities than activities at the fringe. We hypothesise that officials working under autocrats who seek co-optative elite bargains are more likely to prioritise domain-specific concerns and less inclined to disrupt the status quo than those under leaders who rule with coercion. Our comparison of the Hu Jintao and Xi Jinping administrations of China reveals patterns consistent with these hypotheses: Hu’s “steward” leadership is associated with increased agenda inertia and diversity, whereas policy priorities change in greater frequency and converge to a stronger focus under Xi’s “strongman” rule. These contrasts are also clearer in policy venues closer to the central leader’s direct control.



**“Friction and Bureaucratic Control in Authoritarian Regimes” (Kwan Nok Chan, Shiwei Fan). *Regulation & Governance*, April 2021.**

<https://doi.org/10.1111/rego.12310>



Journal Impact Factor (2019) : **3.375**

Democracies deliberately create “friction” in bureaucratic processes, using inefficiencies to mitigate the impact of government transitions and asymmetric information on leaders’

ability to exert control. With far more centralised power, would authoritarians prefer less friction? We argue that they do not. In fact, excess friction is actively supplied to hinder bureaucratic coordination independent of or even in opposition to top-down control, leaving the central leaders the only player powerful enough to organise complex actions. Our analysis of data on the Chinese Government indicates that bureaucrats are systematically sent to unfamiliar work environment, and that agencies that are more exposed to the resultant inefficiencies are also more likely to come under direct control by senior Politburo members. The pattern of targeted intervention indicates that bureaucratic control in authoritarian regimes is predicated not only on centralised power in general but also the deliberate supply of friction to obstruct independent actions from the bottom up.



**Guarding Against the Threat of a Westernising Education: A Comparative Study of Chinese and Saudi Cultural Security Discourses and Practices towards Overseas Study” (by Yan Xiaojun, Mohammed Al-Sudairi), *Journal of Contemporary China*, February 2021.**

<https://doi.org/10.1080/10670564.2021.1884962>



Journal Impact Factor (2019) : **2.345**

Cultural security has become a major watchword in the national security discourses of both the People's Republic of China and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Within this discourse, overseas study has been imagined as a conduit for cultural and ideological subversion threatening the authority of the prevailing regimes. At the same time, overseas study has been actively encouraged by both the Chinese and Saudi states as an important element in their modernisation projects. In the past two decades, the Chinese and Saudi overseas student populations have been some of the largest in the world. The article seeks to explore these tensions by examining the conceptualisation and practice of cultural security in the PRC and Saudi Arabia through their management of overseas study.



**‘Is the Chinese “Entrepreneurial Welfare State” an Industrial Policy in Disguise?’ (by Yan Xiaojun, Chen Hanyu and Li La), *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 41, No. 4, April 2020, pp.603-622.**

<https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2019.1700790>



Journal Impact Factor (2019) : **1.754**

What has driven China, a developing country that has only recently saved itself from nationwide poverty, to increase its investment in social welfare so rapidly and extensively in the past decade? Drawing on extensive field research in a prefecture-level district in southwest China between 2014 and 2017, the authors argue in this article that local governments in China provide welfare housing programmes as a veil for developmentalist industrial policies aimed at industrial upgrading and the improvement of dynamic efficiency. The article demonstrates the unique incentive structure behind the local Chinese governments' role as the front-line investor in social welfare benefits, and how the local state has cunningly used the façade of welfare provision to (1) divert the earmarked budget to implement development-oriented industrial policy; and (2) fake a discursive congruence between the heavily interventionist local practice and the overall neoliberal central-level policy discourse that features deregulation, small government and a laissez-faire developmental pathway. Exploring this set of strategic dynamics underlining the manoeuvres of the Chinese welfare operation helps us understand the variability of welfare state forms and trajectories of developmental strategy in the Global South.

*Introducing New Staff at the Research Hub on Institutions of China***Dr. Hanyu Chen (Assistant Research Officer)**

Dr. Hanyu Chen obtained his PhD in Politics from the University of Hong Kong and his master's degree in international political economy from King's College London. He joined the Research Hub in 2021 and assists Dr. Yan Xiaojun with overseeing research and administrative activities. Dr. Chen previously worked at Perrett Laver and previously received the University of Hong Kong's Li Ka Shing Prize for his thesis in 2017-2018.

**Ms. Hazel Leung (Research Assistant)**

Ms. Hazel Leung obtained her bachelor's degree from Wellesley College in history and political science. She joined the Research Hub in 2020 and is responsible for providing research support.

**Mr. Dongwei Lin (Research Assistant)**

Mr. Dongwei Lin obtained his bachelor's degree in history from Xiamen University and master's degree in global communications from the Chinese University of Hong Kong. He joined the Research Hub in 2021 and is responsible for providing research support.

**Mr. Ryan Chen (Technical Assistant)**

Mr. Ryan Chen joined the Research Hub in 2020 as a Technical Assistant and is responsible for providing technical and research support. Mr. Chen will be studying political science at Duke University in the autumn.

## April 2020 – May 2021

On June 8, 2020, RHIC organised an online conference titled *Hong Kong as an International Financial Center: After the National Security Legislation*. Experts from Mainland China and Hong Kong attended the online conference. Hong Kong financial and legal industry representatives were also in attendance.

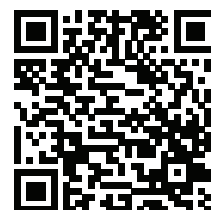
On September 17, 2020, *Why Is China Stable: Stories from the Grassroots* (Author: Dr. Yan Xiaojun, published by Joint Publishing, Hong Kong, 2017) was selected for inclusion in the National Press and Publication Administration's *Classic China International Publishing Project*.

On September 26, 2020, Dr. Yan spoke at the Faculty of Law, University of Hong Kong's "One Country, Two Systems" after the *National Security Law: Reflections and Perspectives* roundtable, chaired by Professor Hualin Fu, Dean of the Faculty.

On October 1, 2020, the founding benefactor of RHIC, Mr. Hui Wing Mau, was awarded the Grand Bauhinia Medal from the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. In a letter to RHIC on October 7, 2020, Mr. Hui wrote: 'I will continue to pay attention to and support the development of RHIC. I hope that RHIC will continue to actively promote Chinese institutions and culture to help Hong Kong's youth better understand the motherland, as well as promote the continued stability of the "One Country, Two Systems" policy.'

On January 13, 2021, Dr. Yan Xiaojun spoke at *Crisis and Opportunity: China-Canada Relations in A Changing World*, a closed-door seminar held by the Charhar Institute on China-Canada relations. Chinese Ambassador to Canada, Mr. Cong Peiwu, and Canadian Ambassador to China, Mr. Dominic Barton, were in attendance.

On January 27, 2021, Dr. Yan Xiaojun spoke at the Japan Institute of International Affairs' *Order and Chaos in Hong Kong after the National Security Law* webinar. Dr. Yan's full remarks can be accessed by scanning the QR code on the right.



In April 2021, Chung Hwa Book Company (Hong Kong) launched the Research Hub on Institutions of China's book series. The first volume, *Minds of the Times: Interviews with Key Figures on The Handover of Hong Kong and the "One Country, Two Systems" Policy*, was published for general readership.

On May 31, 2021, Dr. Yan Xiaojun spoke at the *International Communication in the New Era* Forum organised by Hong Kong Coalition and Friday Culture Limited.





中國制度

研 究 中 心

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