



# Newsletter

## 2022

Volume 4



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## RHIC Launched “The Dialogue” Forum

*With Keynote Speakers Rita Fan and Ronnie Chan Ronny Tong and Albert Chen attended Panel Conversation at the Inaugural Forum*

Since Fall 2021, the Research Hub on Institutions of China (RHIC) has launched “The Dialogue” forum at the University of Hong Kong. The forum invites distinguished speakers from various sectors, from the government and business sector to academia and the community globally, to share and exchange views on the future of Hong Kong and the interactions of the East and West in a rational, scientific, and fruitful way, and to build a high-quality platform for conversation and constructive deliberation.

Since its opening, the forum has successfully held two sessions despite the challenges stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic. Mrs. Rita Fan Hsu Lai-Tai, Non-official Member of the Candidate Eligibility Review Committee of the HKSAR and former President of the Legislative Council of the HKSAR; and Mr. Ronnie C. Chan, Chair of Hang Lung Properties, attended the forum as guest speakers and delivered a keynote speech separately. Professor Albert Chen Hung-Yee, Cheng Chan Lan Yue Professor and Chair of Constitutional Law in HKU and the member of the Committee for the Basic Law of the HKSAR under the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress and Mr. Ronny Tong Ka-Wah, Senior Counsel and Non-official Member of the Executive Council of the HKSAR participated in the panel conversation at the Inaugural Forum.

The Research Hub launched “The Dialogue” Forum believing the essential role of dialogue in bringing different cultures, civilizations, opinions and perspectives into a harmonious exchange. In a broader sense, with a footing in Hong Kong, “The Dialogue” seeks to bring together opinions and perspective from China and the West, fostering exchange and communication globally.





## Rita Fan in talks with Albert Chen and Ronny Tong on Hong Kong's new electoral system and the prospect of political development

The first forum of “The Dialogue” was held on October 28, 2021. The Guest Speaker was Mrs. Rita Fan, who gave the talk on “After the New Electoral System: Prospect of Political Development in Hong Kong”. Professor Albert Chen and Mr. Ronny Tong attended as panelists.

In her keynote speech, Mrs. Fan elaborated on the relationship between the “One Country, Two Systems” (OCTS) policy and the Constitution and the Basic Law. She reviewed the historical changes in Hong Kong's electoral system in detail. When speaking of the



features of the new electoral system, Mrs. Fan summarised, “The improved electoral system enlarges the Election Commission and strengthen the balanced and organised participation, and broader representation. Improving and expanding the functions of the Election Commission is particularly conducive to the development of the relationship between the executive and the legislature and the implementation of the executive-led system.”

Professor Albert Chen and Mr. Ronny Tong shared their insights on Hong Kong's new electoral system and future political development in the panel conversation session. A Questions-and-Answers (Q&A) session with the present audiences was also scheduled after the discussion session.

## Ronnie Chan shared views about the latest development in the China-U.S. relationship and Hong Kong's role

Mr. Ronnie Chan attended the second forum on November 23, 2021, as the keynote speaker, delivering a speech on the topic of “The Latest Development of China-U.S. Relationship and Hong Kong's Role”. Professor Y.C. Richard Wong, Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor of HKU, welcomed Mr. Chan before the forum.



Mr. Chan shared the changes in Sino-U.S. relations. He first reviewed the development of Sino- U.S. relations in the past few decades. Concerning the status quo of Sino- U.S. relations, Mr. Chan said that there has been a fundamental change in the U.S. attitude towards China since the 1990s. He emphasised that the U.S. policy change did not happen instantly but had been gradually formed over more than three decades.

Mr. Chan believed that Joe Biden's succession to the U.S. President after Trump will not change the U.S. policy towards China and the two countries will face a prolonged rivalry for decades. Nonetheless, he believed that compared with the increasingly “centrifugal” society in the U.S., Chinese society is becoming “centripetal” and have well-prepared for this competition.

The two forums have received much attention from mainstream media in Hong Kong and mainland China, including TVB News, Cable TV, South China Morning Post, China News Service, and Southern Metropolis Daily and so on.

## RHIC Seminar: New Frontiers of Research on Institutions of China Started

*Han Enze of HKU and Lawrence Zhang of HKUST  
Discuss Their New Books at the Talks*



The Research Hub on Institutions of China (RHIC) has launched a new academic seminar series titled “RHIC Seminar: New Frontiers of Research on Institutions of China” in the summer of 2022. The seminar invites scholars specialising in Chinese institutions and Chinese studies from all over the world to share their research achievements or publications. On June 20 and 28, 2022, Dr. Han Enze, Associate Professor of the Department of Politics and Public Administration, The University of Hong Kong, and Dr. Lawrence Zhang, Assistant Professor of the Division of Humanities, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, shared their new respective books.

As for the first seminar on Dr. Han's new book *Asymmetrical Neighbors*, the research objective the state building of the bordering areas of China, Thailand, Myanmar, especially Myanmar. In his presentation, Dr. Han said that previous studies on Myanmar's state building have focused on the domestic politics of Myanmar and suggested that the failure of its domestic political integration was mainly caused by internal affairs. This book focuses on explaining how its neighbours, namely China and Thailand, have impacted the integration of Myanmar's border areas, which is “the neighbourhood effect”. Dr. Han said that compared with the failure of the construction of Myanmar's border area, its neighbours China and Thailand have been relatively successful in the construction of the bordering areas and have had a major impact on the failure of Myanmar's border area construction. That is to say, a strong neighbour can influence a country's state construction and political development path.

Dr. Han is an expert on Southeast Asian politics and Chinese foreign relations, and the book *Asymmetrical Neighbors* is his new work that accumulates the constant year-long research on the area. The Chinese version of *Asymmetrical Neighbors* has recently been published by The Chinese University of Hong Kong Press in 2022, and its English version was published by Oxford University Press in 2019. Dr. Malinda Ye, editor of the book and editor of the Chinese University of Hong Kong Press, also attended the event.



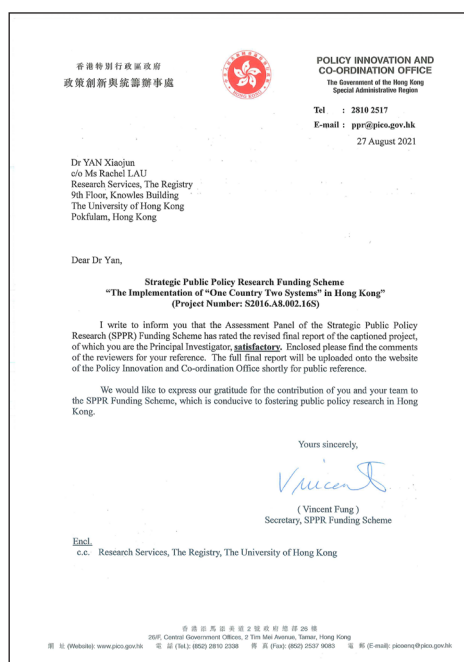
Dr. Zhang's new book *Power for a Price: The Purchase of Official Appointments in Qing China* on the Qing dynasty donation system, will soon be published by Harvard University Press. Explained in the book, the Qing-dynasty office purchase system (*juanna*) allowed individuals to pay for appointments in the government. Commonly regarded as an inherently corrupt and anti-meritocratic practice in traditional Chinese historiography, Dr. Zhang challenged these common misconceptions during his sharing. While presenting the case that office purchase was not only a useful device to raise funds for the state, but a political tool. Through literal investments in their positions and their potential to secure status and power, this device tied the interests of official elites even more closely to those of the state.

Despite the purchase of official appointments being a regular practice since the Qing Dynasty, there are still many misconceived notions argued by scholars over the years. Dr. Zhang explained that the dissenting opinions between Emperors of the time had been the cause. For example, the Yongzheng Emperor believed that official examinations were not necessarily advantageous for the state, and office purchase was an effective supplementary measure in the recruitment of bureaucrats. However, his successor, the Qianlong Emperor was wholly against office purchases as he believed it was corrupt. As a result, Imperial edicts from the Yongzheng Reign were excised in favour of a narrative that outlawed and dishonoured the practice.

The two seminars attracted over 150 experts and students.



## RHIC Successfully Completes One Strategic Public Policy Research Project Granted by Hong Kong SAR Government: *The Implementation of “One Country Two Systems” in Hong Kong*



On August 27, 2021, the Research Hub on Institutions of China (RHIC) successfully completed a research project entitled “*The Implementation of ‘One Country Two Systems’ in Hong Kong*” under the Strategic Public Policy Research Funding Scheme of the Office for Policy Innovation and Co-ordination (the former HKSAR Central Policy Unit) of the government of the HKSAR.

This research reviewed and clarified the institutional origin, operating principles and essential features of “One Country, Two Systems” and provided a theoretical and factual basis for the complete and accurate implementation of this political system in Hong Kong.

## The Second Book in the RHIC Book Series Published



Following the launch of RHIC Book Series in collaboration with Chung Hwa Book Company (Hong Kong) Limited (Chung Hwa Book) in 2021, and the publication of the first book, *Minds of the Times : Interviews with Key Figures on the Handover of Hong Kong and the "One Country, Two Systems" Policy*, the Hub's second book, *Breaking New Ground Amidst Righteousness: The Adaptive Change of the "One Country, Two Systems" Policy in Hong Kong*, was officially published in June this year, for the general public.

This book provides a comprehensive review of the adaptation and development of the "One Country, Two Systems" principle in Hong Kong.

On November 18, 2021, RHIC hold a signing ceremony for the book with Chung Hwa Book. Ms. Hou Ming, Chief Editor and General Manager of Chung Hwa Book Co. HK, and Mr. Lai Yiu Keung, Deputy Chief Editor and President of Academic Publishing Branch, attended the ceremony.

## New Staff Members



**Mr. Li Yongning**  
**(Project Manager & Assistant Research Officer)**

Mr. Li Yongning obtained his master's degree in Global Political Economy and bachelor's degree in Economics both from The Chinese University of Hong Kong. He joined the Research Hub in August 2021 to assist the Director with overseeing various projects and daily administrative work.



**Mr. Zhang Zhenyu**  
**(PhD Student)**

Mr. Zhang Zhenyu is a PhD student in the Department of Politics and Public Administration at The University of Hong Kong. He received his master's degree from Cornell Institute of Public Affairs (CIPA) in Economic and Financial Policy and bachelor's degree in Political Science at the University of Macao.



## In Brief

### June 2021 – June 2022

On December 9, 2021, Dr. Yan Xiaojun was invited to attend and speak at the Symposium entitled “*Strengthening Confidence in True Democracy*” in Hong Kong, organised by the Commissioner’s Office of Ministry of Foreign Affairs in HKSAR.

On May 9-15, 2022, Dr. Yan Xiaojun was interviewed by *Xinhua News Agency*, *People’s Daily*, *Qiushi Journal* and *China News Service*, respectively, on the election of sixth-term Chief Executive of the HKSAR.

On May 27, Dr. Yan Xiaojun was interviewed by *China Media Group* in the series of feature films titled “*Forever Running in Hong Kong*” to celebrate the 25th anniversary of Hong Kong’s return to the Motherland. Dr. Yan said that the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area would benefit the future development of Hong Kong from all walks of life, especially the younger generation and that it is essential for young people to have first-hand experience to realize that Hong Kong is part of the country. The interview has been broadcast on CCTV on the evening of June 30, 2022.

On May 28, 2022, invited by the Secretary for Justice, Mrs. Teresa Cheng, Dr. Yan Xiaojun attended *National Security Law Legal Forum “Thrive with Security”*, organised by the Department of Justice of the HKSAR.

From January to May 2022, Dr. Yan Xiaojun published a series of op-ed articles in *Ming Pao*, namely: “*Focusing on Good Governance and Opening up a New Political Landscape in Hong Kong*” (January 24), “*Getting Good Things Done*” (February 28), “*Building Governance Effectiveness in Hong Kong in the Post-Epidemic Era*”(April 4) and “*Breaking New Ground amidst Righteousness: Writing on the 25th Anniversary of Hong Kong’s Handover to the Motherland*” (May 30).

On May 30, 2022, on the eve of the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the HKSAR, Dr. Yan Xiaojun was interviewed by *Xinhua News Agency*, in which he said the evolution of the situation in Hong Kong has a profound contemporary background, and the implementation of “One Country, Two Systems” in Hong Kong requires a new historical phase in which we must adhere to the principle of “keeping the righteousness and innovation”.

On June 16, 2022, invited by the Bauhinia Culture Holdings, Dr. Yan Xiaojun delivered a speech titled “*A Journey Back Home: 25 Years of the HKSAR*” at the Bauhinia Culture International Forum entitled “*One Country, Two Systems: Achievements and Prospects*”.





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