

**Oxford Prospects Programmes China-Britain Cultural Dialogue**  
**Trinity College, University of Oxford**  
**23 October 2015**

**Welcome Address – Professor Nick Rawlins**

*Professor Rawlins is Pro-Vice-Chancellor at the University of Oxford, with responsibility for external affairs and development. Professor Rawlins has a distinguished research career in areas including the neural basis of memory, brain degeneration, pain and anxiety. He was elected Fellow of the Academy of Medical Sciences in 2006 and Fellow of the British Psychological Society in 2010. He was Associate Head of Oxford University's Medical Sciences Division from 2008 until taking up his post as Pro-Vice-Chancellor in 2010.*

**Panel I. Chair – Professor Denis Noble, CBE, FRS**

*Denis Noble often appears in the media and has written for national newspapers in the UK and abroad. He directs a large interdisciplinary research team of biologists and mathematicians and is author of *The Music of Life*, a popular book on systems biology, now translated into seven languages. The musical metaphors in that book reflect his interpretations of the songs of southern France. Denis Noble is a physiologist and systems biologist who discovered electrical mechanisms in the proteins and cells that generate the rhythm of the heart. He constructed the first mathematical model of this process in *Nature* in 1960. Today, this work has grown into an international project, the *Physiome Project*, that constructs models of all the organs of the body. He is President of the International Union of Physiological Sciences and is Professor Emeritus at Oxford University. His book, *The Music of Life*, is the first popular science book on the principles of Systems Biology and has been translated into many languages.*

**1. In Dialogue with the Western Regions: some reflections on Buddhism in Chinese history**  
—Professor Stefano Zacchetti

**Abstract:** The introduction and transformation of Buddhism in China from around the 1st century CE constitutes one of the most significant instances of interaction between the Chinese civilization and a cultural “other” in the pre-modern period. In many areas (from language to institutions), the Buddhist experience established models of interaction that were influential throughout the history of China and remain important for understanding its present.

*Professor Zacchetti is a fellow of Balliol College and Professor at the Oriental Studies Institute, University of Oxford. He took his first degree in Chinese and gained a PhD in Chinese from Venice University in 1999 before undertaking further study at Sichuan University in China and Leiden University in the Netherlands. He has held professorships or visiting positions at the International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology (Tokyo), Ca' Foscari University (Venice), UC Berkeley and Stanford University. Professor Zacchetti specialises in early Chinese Buddhist literature, especially translations of and exegeses upon canonical Sanskrit texts. He has published a large number of research papers as well as the 2005 monograph *In Praise of the Light*.*

## 2. Responsibility and Possibility: Role of China in World Cultural Pattern and Reconstruction of Contemporary Culture —Professor Huang Huilin

**Abstract:** Nowadays, humanity faces many common problems, and the world needs more cooperation in order to achieve win-win solutions. Just as “All Men are Created Equal” yet, objectively speaking, have different roles and responsibilities, so too countries enjoy *legal equality* while at the same time having different national characters and strengths. The stronger in Civilization should take more responsibility. History and reality show that today’s European and United States cultures have a strong influence on a global scale. Will it be possible in the future for Chinese culture to have a global influence, as the “Two Poles” representing the Western world – Europe and the USA – do today? We will try to design and build a *Third Pole Culture* that focuses on harmony and mutual benefit.

*Professor Huang Huilin, Professor Emeritus in Beijing Normal University, the first doctoral tutor in Chinese Film Studies, the first President of the School of Arts and Communication, Beijing Normal University. Since 1992, she has been granted a special government allowance by the State Council of China. Currently Dean of the Academy for International Communication of Chinese Culture in Beijing Normal University, Director of Research Center of Film, Television and Theater, and Honorary President of the Film and Television Education Professional Committee of China Higher Education. She was formerly a standing member of the Arts Education Committee of the Chinese Ministry of Education, and Vice Chairwoman of the Research Association of the History and Theory of Chinese Drama.*

## 3. Shakespeare and China, 1692 and 2015 —Professor Michael Dobson

**Abstract:** The theatre has been a crucial meeting-point for Britain and China and their mutual representations since the seventeenth century, and the works of Shakespeare in particular have prompted and enabled a long and varied series of negotiations by which these already transnational scripts have been adapted, by both British and Chinese artists, to dramatize and display ideas about China. This short talk will investigate the earliest English stage representations of China, from Shakespeare's own time through a 1692 version of \*A Midsummer Night's Dream\* which culminates in an idyllic vision of Chinese civilization, before turning to some recent Chinese productions of Shakespeare and their new visibility on the international stage. How far does China's newly prominent investment in live Shakespeare represent an appropriation of British drama to Chinese agendas, and how far does it (also) represent a new phase of dialogue with British culture?

*Professor Michael Dobson did his undergraduate and doctoral work at Oxford University. He worked as a research fellow at Harvard and other North American universities before returning to Britain in 1996. After professorships at the Roehampton Institute and Birkbeck College, he was appointed Director of the Shakespeare Institute in 2011. He has taught as a visiting professor at Peking University in China and at Lund University in Sweden. Professor Dobson is a founder and board member of the European Shakespeare Research Association; the Academic Dean of the Shakespeare programme at the British-American Drama Academy; and general editor, with Dymphna Callaghan, of the Palgrave Shakespeare Studies monograph series. He is a regular theatre and book reviewer; for Shakespeare Survey he reviewed every major production of a Shakespeare play in England between 1999 and 2007.*

#### **4. The Value of Chinese He (Harmony) Culture to World Civilization – Mr Qi Mingqiu**

**Abstract:** Chinese *He* (harmony) culture has a long history. Traditional agriculture-based culture espouses the philosophy of *The Unity of Nature and Humanity*, which emphasizes the harmony of man and nature. As one of the essential cores of Chinese traditional culture, the ideology of *Harmony Without Uniformity* has a unique role in helping us to deal with conflicts and problems that arise between man & nature, man & man, and man & society. The international aim of *Making Universal Peace* reveals the social ideal of the Chinese people, and is the spirit that always animates Chinese culture and tradition. Chinese *He* culture is of important theoretical value and relevance for the international exchange of cultural learning, the harmonious coexistence of diverse civilizations and the peaceful development of humanity.

*Mr Qi Mingqiu, Vice Chairman of the China Soong Ching Ling Foundation (CSCLF), senior economist, senior engineer. He has worked extensively in the international cultural exchange arena, making efforts to promote dialogue and exchanges between Eastern and Western civilizations. He was involved in deepening the restructuring of the economy and of state owned enterprises in China in the 1980s and 1990s. He was one of the founders of China's Internet, a telecommunications reform pioneer, and leader and organizer of key national informatization projects. He has been featured twice in Time magazine.*

### **Panel II. Chair – Dr Ben Clyde**

#### **1. Cultural Policy and the Contested Significance of Contemporary Art from China: towards a critical polylogue –Professor Paul Gladston**

**Abstract:** In this short paper I shall reflect critically on recent Chinese state policy related to cultural industries and diplomacy as well as the contested significance of contemporary art from China. I shall conclude by arguing for the necessity of new interpretative paradigms beyond those which currently inform local and international debates on the significance of contemporary Chinese art.

*Professor Paul Gladston is Professor in Critical Theory and Visual Culture and Head of the Department of Culture, Film and Media, University of Nottingham. He was trained initially in fine art before taking his MA and a PhD in critical theory. Between 2005 and 2010, he served as inaugural head of the Department of International Communications and director of the Institute of Comparative Cultural Studies at the University of Nottingham Ningbo, China. In 2009 he was Visiting Professor in Critical Theory at the Sichuan Academy of Arts, Chongqing. Professor Gladston has written extensively on the theory and practice of contemporary Chinese art for numerous journals and magazines, and has written numerous essays for exhibition catalogues. His book-length publications include Art History after Deconstruction (2005), China and Other Spaces (2009) and Contemporary Art in Shanghai: Conversations with Seven Chinese Artists (2011).*

#### **2. Three Kinds of Story in Chinese Cinema –Professor Yang Yuanying**

**Abstract:** Under the stimulus of emerging economic growth, people's consumption habits and cultural needs have been transformed, and audiences have become more and

more diverse. This phenomenon is reflected in film production, where genres have diversified, critical opinion is often divided, and the views of the critics may not be mirrored at the box office. Sometimes a critically acclaimed film has a very poor box office. Conversely, a high-grossing film may be viewed negatively by the critics, as happened with *The Golden Era*, *Coming Home* and *Tiny Houses* in 2014. These three films, telling different stories and set in different periods, all became heated and controversial “media events”.

*Professor Yang Yuanying, Professor of Beijing Film Academy, Vice-president of the China Film Association Theory Review Committee, deputy director of the China Academy of Film and Literature, Specialty Committee of television and drama theory. Her main research directions are film history and film theory. She has published a variety of related academic books, and acted as planner and consultant for a number of scholarly publications.*

### **3. Cross-Cultural Dialogues: The Role of Education in Visual Communication —Professor Teal Triggs**

**Abstract:** The role of design and visual communication is increasingly becoming significant in the ways in which it promotes China’s global cultural and economic positioning. Initiatives such as Beijing Design Week and Red Dots’ ‘China Good Design’ are drawing attention to the ways in which designers generate and communicate high-quality cultural outputs. At the heart of this, however, is the role design education plays in fostering a ‘disruptive’ approach to creative expression, potentially leading toward innovation. This talk takes examples of student work from the Royal College of Art which explore different ways in which cross-cultural dialogues can inform and support postgraduate students in their learning experience.

*Professor Teal Triggs is an educator, historian and writer whose research focuses primarily on graphic design history, design research methods, self-publishing and feminism. She has led interdisciplinary research teams within the broader field of information environments exploring the role of information in public spaces and community-based learning. At the Royal College of Art, Professor Triggs is Associate Dean in the School of Communication. She also teaches on MA programmes within the School and has extensive experience in supervising MPhil and PhD students in visual communication, design criticism and information experience design.*

### **4. Aesthetic Style of Martial Art Dancing in Chinese Kung Fu Movies —Professor Jia Leilei**

**Abstract:** The Chinese martial arts action film is a unique genre that never renounces violent means, never gives up violent struggle, and determines the nature of “Violence Narrative” in Chinese cinema. In doing so, it creates an implicit justification in the minds of the audience for the existence of movie violence. Chinese martial arts involve a highly stylized pattern of action. The artistic function of martial arts is not purely a fight nor a simple visual spectacle, but the blend of martial arts, drama, scene and character. When integrated into film, the Chinese martial arts have evolved into a *martial arts dance*, with performing art as the main function, and the combat as secondary. When the audience enjoy a skilled fight-action sequence, they actually watch a show combining martial arts and dance on the cinematic stage. In that sense, the internationalization of Chinese martial arts action films is changing the nature of violent imagery on the world screen.

*Professor Jia Leilei, Vice President of the Chinese National Academy of Arts (CNAA), Doctor and Researcher, Doctoral supervisor, Director of the Department of Film, Radio and TV Studies, Graduate School of CNAA, gaining a special government allowance. Prof Jia is a Member of the Film Censorship Committee of the State Administration of Radio, Film and Television and Deputy Director of the Theory and Criticism Working Committee of the China Film Association. As a distinguished scholar in film and film education, Prof. Jia has published many academic books, such as Film Linguistics, The Transmission of Images, Chinese Martial Arts Movies, The History Of Contemporary Chinese Film, What Is A Good Movie, The Myth Of The Dance Of Martial Arts and Chinese TV Criticism.*