

Global China Studies: An Interdisciplinary Framework for the Twenty-First Century

If the long nineteenth century was the Age of Revolution and Empire, and the twentieth century was the Age of Democratization and Dictatorship, the twenty-first century is shaping up as the Age of the Global and the Local.

In emphasizing '*Global*', we highlight the tremendous rise in global connectivity across multiple areas of activity including communications, finance, ecology, health, the human environment, law, markets, money, political and social organizations, music and the arts, popular culture, production, technology, trade, science and consciousness. In contrast, '*Local*' emphasizes the persistence, and even resistance - cultural, economic, political, social - to consequent global hegemonies. Global Studies then is the study of what has already become or is becoming global, local engagement with and resistance to the Global, and the tensions and interactions between these interactive processes.¹ Global China Studies is the study of the Global and the Local in China.

The HKUST School of Humanities and Social Science is proud to offer the first UG and PG programs in the world in Global China Studies. Within this interdisciplinary framework, our faculty hold research agendas in a broad range of disciplines,² with special strengths in five areas of PG training,³ each of which relate directly to the study of the Global and the Local in China, and beyond, in economics, history/anthropology, political science, sociology, and technology/sustainability.⁴ Within these five disciplines, we specialize in five related, but more focused areas of research: on economic development, on human capital, on inequality, on sustainability, and on state/society relations; and we plan to develop a sixth research area on environmental and energy policy as part of a new university Energy Initiative and a long-standing university commitment to Environmental Studies. Furthermore, our faculty conducts innovative research on the nature of creativity in a Global China context through *The Intimacy of Creativity*, the internationally-acclaimed composers and performers Partnership, and through other workshops in Chinese literature and the arts.

¹ We follow here Philip Zelickow's understanding of Global Studies. See "The global era and the end of foreign policy," *Financial Times*, 17 August 2011, p. 9.

² The HKUST School of Humanities and Social Science includes some sixty professorial faculty and almost one hundred teaching faculty in fourteen disciplines - anthropology, arts, economics, geography, history, language education, linguistics, literature, music, philosophy, political science, psychology, science-technology-society, and sociology - under the Center for Language Education, the Division of Humanities, and the Division of Social Science.

³ In addition, we have vibrant smaller-scale training programs such as in language education and linguistics.

⁴ Sustainability here includes cultural sustainability by which we largely mean both the persistence of local culture and such other cultural dimensions of sustainable development as cultural studies, ethics, literature, philosophy, and religion.

We offer these programs in Global China Studies because we believe that the over-arching processes of modern economic development, its ever-increasing demands for energy, technology, and human capital, and the consequent problems these demands create of rising inequality, problematic sustainability, and worsening state/society relations are the dominant global processes of interest in the twenty-first century. We also study local accommodation and resistance to these and other global processes, focusing in particular on the formation, transformation and transmigration of those salient foundational values, traditions, and attitudes that affect contemporary Chinese society and beyond.

In other words, while Global China Studies focuses largely on China, it is relevant to our understanding of the dominant socio-economic-environmental, and political processes currently changing our world. We study the impact of globalization on China, and the impact of China on the global economy, the global environment, the global polity, and global society. We focus on the underlying humanistic and social science problems and processes of broad academic and policy relevance, and we aspire to engage thought leaders to understand how our research can inform leadership everywhere and contribute to more enlightened public policy.

We welcome students, colleagues, and interested parties to explore the HKUST School of Humanities and Social Science, our faculty, our research and training programs, and our public events and lectures.