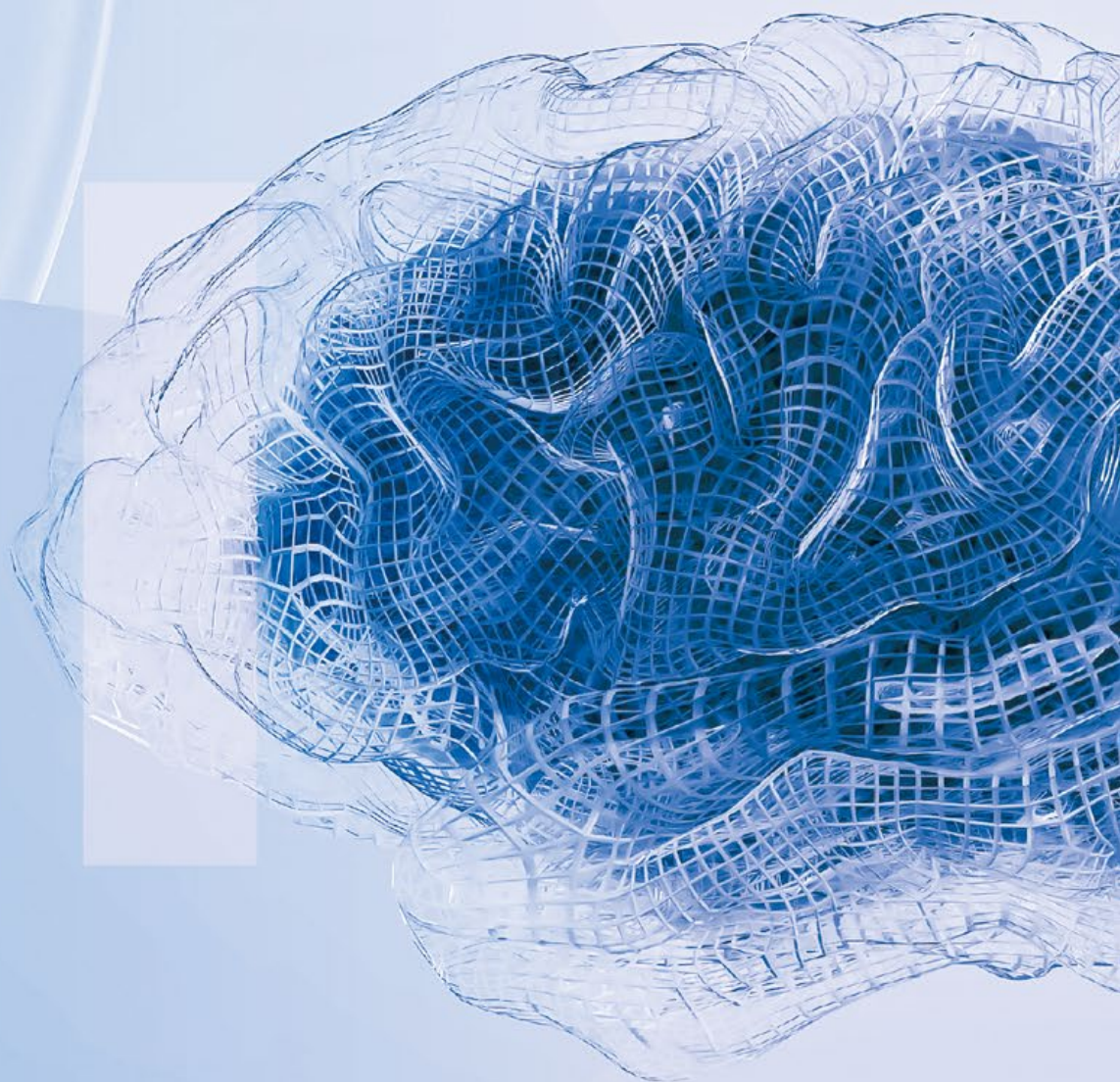




北京大学博古睿
研究中心

Berggruen Research Center
Peking University



2022
ANNUAL REPORT

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Our Mission & The Center

IN 2022

March 22

Launch of series "When Science and Humanities Face Life Together" with the first dialogue focusing on whether scientists and philosophers face life on the same spatio-temporal scale



March 25

Center co-hosts conference "Unfolding Metaverse: Real Virtuality or Illusory Reality?" Topics include "The Underlying Technologies of 'Metaverse' and Outlook on Future Society," "Crypto Arts," and "Virtual Reality and the Ethics of World Making"



April 22

Workshop on "Technology and Society: Humanities in Thirty Years" focuses on how human society can open minds to the convergence of reality and imagination



June 1

Launch of *Cuiling* Magazine, a Chinese-language publication by the Berggruen Institute. It focuses on the China Center's research activities



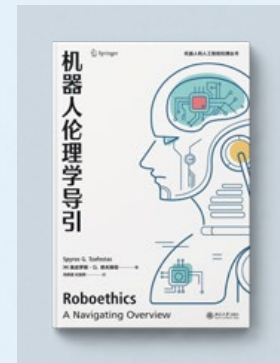
July 3

The Third Global Thinkers Series event featuring 2021 Berggruen Prize laureate Peter Singer on "Ethics and Animals"



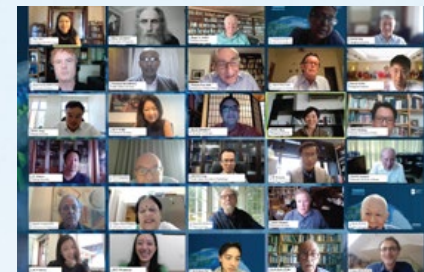
August

Chinese translation of *Roboethics: A Navigating Overview* published under Berggruen translation series by Peking University Press



August 18

Tianxia's third international conference "Formulating a Minimalist Morality for a Planetary Order: Alternative Cultural Perspectives"



September 17

Conversation between Lü Zhi and Xiang Biao on "The Common Worries of Humans and Nature"



September 17

Project *Gong Sheng's* third workshop and it focuses on "Boundaries, Cohesions, and Planetary Governance" which aims to unearth the holistic interests that support all of humankind and the environment



LETTER FROM THE CHAIRS

With 2022 coming to a close, the Berggruen Research Center (the Center) at Peking University (PKU) happily celebrates its fourth year of steady growth from an idea into a thriving institution. Together with the other members of the Academic Advisory Council (Wang Bo, Vice-President, PKU; Yuan Ming, Dean, Yenching Academy, PKU; Shang Xinjian, Professor of Philosophy, PKU), we once again would like to commend the Center's Co-Directors Song Bing and Liu Zhe together with the Center staff working under Associate Director Li Xiaojiao for their dedication to the grand vision that guides the Center in its many workshops, programs, lecture series, and publications.

The Center is its people. On behalf of the Council, we are delighted to welcome to the team two new staff members: program coordinator Jinyoung Lim and operations coordinator Ren Mengmeng. Again, having successfully navigated a challenging selection process from the largest pool of applicants we have had so far, the diversity among the 2022 cohort of Berggruen Fellows reflects the broad spectrum of interests that animate life in the Center. Congratulations to science fiction writer Baoshu, philosopher of Daoism Chen Xia from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS), philosopher of Buddhism Gong Jun from Sun Yat-sen University, neuroscientist Liu Chao from Beijing Normal University, art curator Iris Long, Dr. Lü Xiaoyu from the School of International Studies of PKU, and Professor Mei Jianhua from the School of Philosophy of Shanxi University.

The year 2022 began with the launch of a new public lecture series entitled “When Science and Humanities Face Life Together” to ponder the most fundamental human questions such as “what is humanity?” and “what is life itself?” The first lecture featured Professor Zhao Tingyang and Professor Bai Shunong, both of whom have been senior fellows at the Center. The second lecture of this series brought Professor Chen Xia from CASS and Professor Wang Song from the Philosophy Department of PKU into conversation, who engaged this theme from the perspectives of Daoist and Buddhist philosophies.

This public lecture series complements the Global Thinkers Series that this year invited the 2021 Berggruen Prize winner Professor Peter Singer to speak on “Ethics and Animals.” The event was hosted by Tsinghua University’s Professor Wang Hui with Shandong University’s Professor Guo Peng as a discussant. This Zoom event attracted an audience of over 300 local and international scholars.

The Center’s continuing interest in artificial intelligence (AI) and new technologies was well represented across the year. The concept “metaverse” has captured public imagination and sparked off global discussions on what the future holds for humanity. Joining this conversation, the Center collaborated with the School of Philosophy of Renmin University and the Server Art Foundation in organizing a conference in late March that brought together 19 experts from across high-tech industry, academia, and the art community. Experts such as He Zhan, Head of Omniverse of Nvidia, Greater China, and Zhu Jiaming, economist and a high profiled public intellectual, reflected on a range of topics including the underlying technologies of the metaverse, the prospects for future societies, crypto arts, virtual reality, and the ethics of world-making.

This new initiative again complemented the “Imagining Futures” project and its second workshop held in April. A cohort of 16 scholars and writers from fields including gene editing, virtual reality, population and economy, climate and ecology, and humanities focused on prospects and predictions of cutting-edge technologies. What will their impact be on human society, the relationships between people, the models of future economic development, as well as shaping the human response to global climate and ecological change?



Lin Jianhua

*Co-Chair, Academic Advisory Council
Berggruen Research Center, Peking University*



Roger T. Ames

*Co-Chair, Academic Advisory Council
Berggruen Research Center, Peking University*

The continuing series “Symbiosis in Life Sciences and *Gong Sheng* in Eastern Philosophies” convened its third workshop in September with the theme “Boundaries, Cohesions, and Planetary Governance.” Discussion centered around the possibility of constructing a new “planetary order” that is truly cross-ethnic, cross-species, and cross-cultural. The 18 participants included scholars from the fields of AI, philosophy, sociology, anthropology, ecology, and international relations studies. As a special event for the workshop Professor Xiang Biao, Director of Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, and Professor Lü Zhi from School of Life Sciences, PKU were invited to have an online dialogue on “The Common Worries of Humans and Nature.” A conference volume entitled *Gong Sheng Across Contexts* is being edited for publication with Palgrave Macmillan in 2023.

Our flagship *Tianxia* project convened its third international conference on the theme “Formulating a Minimalist Morality for a Planetary Order: Alternative Cultural Perspectives,” with the distinguished political philosopher Michael Walzer as its keynote speaker. Some 23 scholars representing the thick moralities such as Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Confucianism, Judaism, Ubuntu, and liberalism reflected on the possibility of finding consensus on a thin “close-to-the-bone” morality that would provide a fragmented humanity with a degree of solidarity. The contributions at this conference are being edited as a volume for University of Hawai’i Press that follows the first publication from this series: *Tianxia in Comparative Perspectives: Alternative Models of a Planetary Order*.

Indeed, publications that are emerging from research at the Center abound. The Chinese version of *Roboethics: A Navigating Overview* translated by Professors Shang Xinjian and Du Liyan has been published under the Berggruen Book Series by Peking University Press. As a result of a multiyear series of discussions the Center organized over a three-year period, *Bridging Two Worlds: Comparing Classical Political Thought and Statecraft in India and China* will be published by the University of California Press in January 2023, along with another volume by Zhao Tingyang: *The Whirlpool that Produced China: “Stag Hunting” for Control of Tianxia on the Central Plain of China*. The Center is also working with Peking University Press and City University of Hongkong Press to publish that anthology from the first *Tianxia* conference, *Rethinking China: What is Tianxia?* Again, *Cuiling Magazine*, a new Chinese-language publication by the Berggruen Institute, had its first issue in 2022 that included many articles from the Center’s projects.

The one sad event that affected everyone deeply at the Center and continues to be felt was the loss in June of our Senior Fellow, Professor Zhang Xianglong. Professor Zhang made indelible contributions to the Center in so many different ways, was much loved and appreciated, and the world seems much smaller without him. The lingering pandemic has made it a complex and sometimes challenging year for the Center, but with strong leadership and hard work by its devoted team, the Center has stayed the course.



Lin Jianhua

Co-Chair, Academic Advisory Council
Berggruen Research Center, Peking University
Former President, Peking University



Roger T. Ames

Co-Chair, Academic Advisory Council
Berggruen Research Center, Peking University
Senior Academic Advisor, Berggruen Institute China Center

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTORS

At the time of writing this letter, China has just relaxed its Covid control measures and removed requirements for regular PCR tests and health code updates. Two thirds of the employees at the China Center came down with Covid within a matter of days. In addition, all of us need to take care of family members who have also been struck by the virus. Though expected, the rapidity of contagion still caught people and public health experts by surprise. We took this in stride and didn’t allow the disruptions to affect our morale or hectic year-end workload.

Our Center was born and grew amidst of global uncertainty and crises. Against the background of deteriorating US - China relations, we began the Center’s work in earnest in 2019. In that startup year, we searched with fits and starts intellectual programs, which would distinguish us from academia and other research institutions in China. The subsequent three years we lived under the specter of Covid-19 and were forced to adjust and adapt our work. Challenges notwithstanding, we managed to build a team of nine and a network of advisers and were able to establish ourselves as a major hub for innovative thinking, and we attracted many innovative and thoughtful provocateurs and thinkers. The work ethic, spirit of resilience, resourcefulness, optimism, and creative ethos exhibited by our staff have infused and shaped the Center, and these are the qualities which we hope will be cemented at the Center.

In our program areas, we strive to distinguish the Center from other think tanks and academic research institutions, thereby complementing and enriching the ecosystem of innovative research and creative ideas. Our first program area explores the intersection of frontier science, technology and Chinese philosophy. We bring scientists and philosophers together in dialogue and ask ourselves in what way the human notions and societal frameworks that have been taken for granted since the Industrial Revolution may be questioned, challenged, or enriched by the Eastern traditions of Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism. We also query how Chinese philosophies may help reorient ourselves in the rapidly evolving digital era. To date, we have conducted two projects in this area. One is Artificial Intelligence Meets Chinese Philosophers, and the second is Symbiosis in Life Sciences and the Notion of *Gong Sheng* (mutual embeddedness and co-becoming). Our second program area deals with ancient wisdom and planetary governance, where we explore ways in which ancient worldviews from China and India may inspire different conceptual frameworks and foundational values for global affairs and why the contemporary human condition requires leaders to look and act beyond the boundaries of nation-states. The rise of China and multiplicity of global-scale crises such as pandemics and climate change have formed the backdrop and impetus for rethinking foundational notions and the nation-state framework which have undergirded the global order for hundreds of years. The flagship project of the Center, *Tianxia*, entered its fourth year this year. It continues to attract top brains in the field and has been highly productive in publications. Our third program area focuses on creative futures. In this area, we bring scientists, philosophers, science fiction writers, artists, and curators together and creatively imagine a multiplicity of futures. In the coming year, our fellows will organize workshops with sci-fi writers and curate an exhibition on plural futures.

Our concerns are global or even planetary in nature. When searching for inspiration and answers, we delve deep into the foundational thinking which has shaped us and attempt to unsettle that thinking. Methodologically, we break down silos among disciplines and professions. We position our Center as a “think reactor” or incubator for new ideas whereby we explore new ways of connecting different disciplines and cultivate new areas of research and thinking. To that end, some of our projects may be tentative or even speculative in nature, but this is intentional. This year, we launched the Center’s journal, *Cuiling*, which intends to capture the “sparks of new ideas” that arise out of our program areas. The first

issue was focused on planetary governance and the idea of *gong sheng*.

We are particularly grateful to our fellows and thinkers who have gathered around us in these years. Some are highly accomplished in their fields, while others are creative and experimental and on their way to brilliance. Together, we have embarked on this journey of questioning, searching, exchanging, and at times debating ideas. We are flattered by their enthusiasm for our program areas and are grateful for their open-mindedness, graciousness, and warm support. Professor Zhang Xianglong, a highly accomplished Confucian scholar and phenomenologist, was among this extraordinary group of fellows who made a huge difference to our Center. His academic legacy and spirit of constantly expanding the horizons of thought will inspire us for many years to come.

As we enter into the Year of the Rabbit, once again, we would like to commend and express our gratitude to the hardworking and resourceful team members and the unconditional support of our Academic Advisory Council. With resilience, optimism, and a can-do spirit, we are ready to take on whatever risks and challenges ahead in the future.



Song Bing

*Co-Director,
Berggruen Research Center, Peking University
Senior Vice President, Berggruen Institute*



Liu Zhe

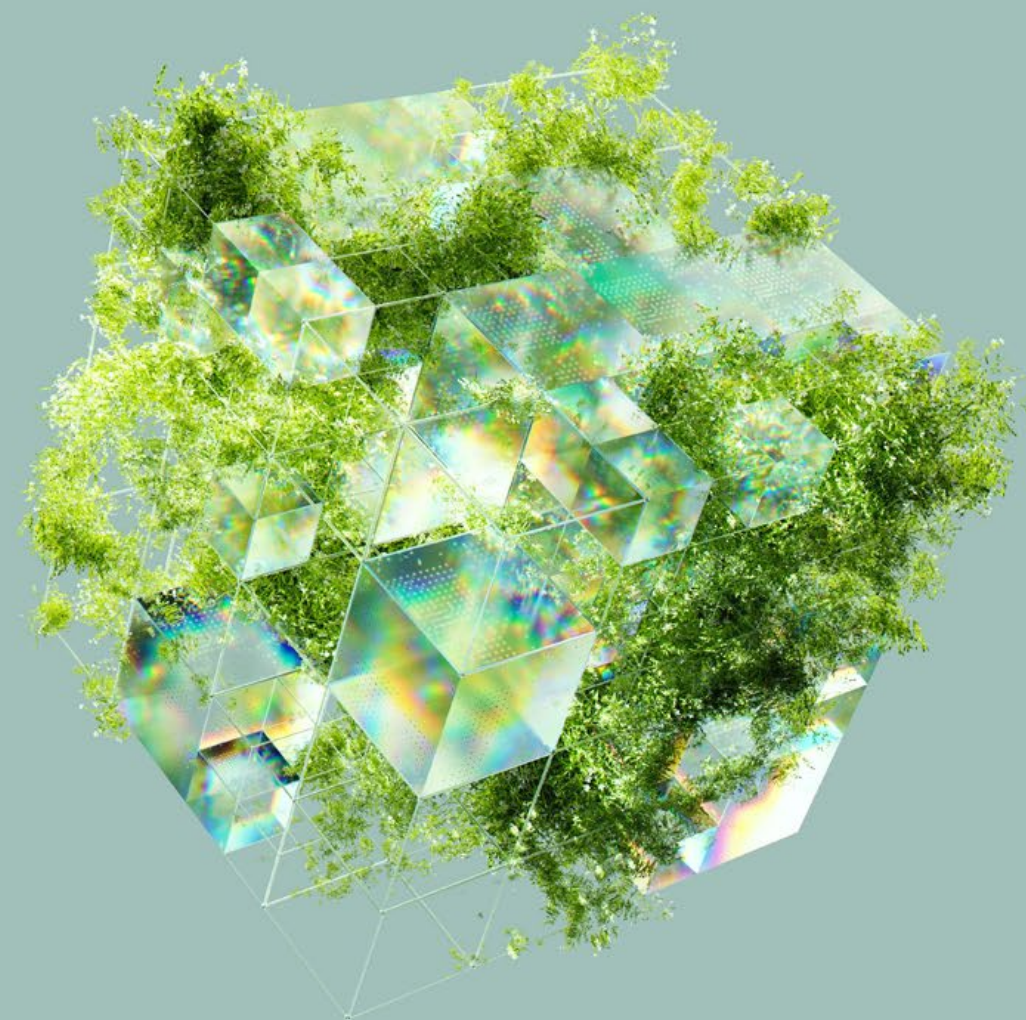
*Co-Director,
Berggruen Research Center, Peking University
Deputy Chair, Department of Philosophy and
Religious Studies, Peking University*





PROGRAM AREAS

Frontier Science, Technology, and Philosophy
Creative Futures
Ancient Wisdom and Planetary Governance
Center's Event Series



FRONTIER SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND PHILOSOPHY

We live in an era of explosive knowledge growth. Frontier sciences and technologies allow humans to understand the world in unprecedented ways at speeds faster than in any other time in history. At the same time, they have also created new perspectives for human beings to understand themselves.

We believe it is imperative to make full use of intellectual resources from across the world to explore topics in philosophy which can respond to the challenges from frontier technological paradigms, connect the past with the future, and provide an interdisciplinary road map for the way ahead. In this way we can develop and shape impactful philosophical, scientific, and technological concepts that serve humanity better.

PROJECT

Symbiosis in Life Sciences and *Gong Sheng* in Eastern Philosophies

Symbiosis and symbiogenesis are topics of much research and debate in the fields of biology and evolutionary theories in recent decades. *Gong sheng* or *kyosei* (in both written Chinese and Japanese kanji: 共生), has been used in China and Japan to translate the ubiquitous biological phenomenon of “symbiosis” discussed in life sciences. The two-character term *gong sheng* was rarely referenced in ancient texts and it is unclear when it entered into common parlance in modern China and Japan. Nonetheless, *gong sheng* or *kyosei* has been broadly used and in fact it has been viewed as a highly desired framework of thinking in social, economic, and political contexts. It has cemented into the deep cultural and psychological construct of these East Asia societies, so much so that people rarely pause and reflect on the origin and philosophical foundation of this notion. Intrigued by this situation and realizing the potentially global significance of this notion, the Center launched a project on “Symbiosis in Life Sciences and *Gong Sheng* in Eastern Philosophies” in August 2021, involving life scientists, philosophers, international law theorists as well as environmental and social scientists.

Gong sheng at a general level refers to the conception of the world as consisting of mutually embedded, co-existent and co-becoming entities. In the East Asian contexts, the philosophical roots of *gong sheng* can be found in the ontological thinking of Oneness, which recognizes the same and the only origin of all things including humanity, animals, plants, and inorganic matter, or put differently, the universe with its infinite forms are the manifestations of Dao, or Self-nature. So, from that point of view, all things are interconnected and of the same origin, ab initio. While both Confucianism and Daoism share similar theories on the unity of the cosmic order and humanity, Daoism also developed elaborate nutritional, medical, and spiritual practices based on the conviction of the isomorphism of humanity and the cosmos. Buddhism, on the other hand, has been known for its intricate theories of karma and interdependent co-arising or co-dependent origination, which explain the non-linear entangled web of causality of all things.

In all these discussions, notions of oneness,

sharedness, inter-relatedness, co-generating, and togetherness and associated spirit of “live and let live” have been featured prominently. Methodologically, these notions necessitate relational and holistic ways of examining ourselves, our relationship with others, as well as with our environment. Ethically, they reinforce the sense of togetherness, promote self-reflection, self-constraint, other-regarding virtues, cooperation, and mutual support. Therefore, the thinking of *gong sheng* grounded in Oneness is planetary or even cosmic in scope. It eschews dualistic thinking, transcends anthropocentrism, and celebrates interconnectedness of all beings. It also tempers individualistic instincts, advocates self-restraint, and checks zero-sum competition mentality. In today’s world of down-spiraling geopolitical contests, worsening social and racial divisions, and the degradation of our natural environment, shouldn’t we—humanity—raise the level of our collective consciousness and embrace different notions of organizing ourselves and our relationships with “others”?

We held the first workshop of the project in August 2021 in Beijing. Titled with “Symbiosis: Life Science and Philosophical Perspectives,” it engaged in rich interdisciplinary dialogues and discussed the latest developments in human symbiotic microorganisms, biological and evolutionary basis of “symbiosis,” and the concept of *gong sheng* in Chinese philosophy.

The second workshop was held in October 2021, and it focused on “The Construction of the Symbiosis Concept and Its Implications” and explored the meaning of word “symbiosis,” or *gong sheng* in Chinese, *kyosei* in Japanese.

The third workshop took place on September 17-18 of 2022 in Beijing. It invited scholars from the fields of philosophy, sociology, anthropology, ecology and international relations to explore the planetary order of culture embedness and co-existence, which is truly cross-ethnic, cross-species, and cross-cultural.

As a special session of the third conference, anthropologist Xiang Biao from Max Planck Institute and conservation biologist Lü Zhi from

Peking University conducted an online dialogue on “The Common Worries of Humans and Nature” as part of the workshop. The event attracted an audience of over 20,000 on *Bilibili* and *WeChat*, and it was reported by popular media including *The Paper* and *Jiemian*.

The first project report “[A Future of Symbiosis and Coexistence: What Is Symbiosis, and Why Should We Want It?](#)” was published in late 2021.





Scan to read



Workshop on “Boundaries, Cohesions, and Planetary Governance,” September 17, Beijing



Xiang Biao and Lü Zhi conducts an online dialogue on “The Common Worries of Humans and Nature,” September 17, online

PROJECT

When Science and Humanities Face Life Together

Do biologists and humanists agree that “human beings are biological organisms”? Is there a boundary between “human beings” and “biological organisms”? If so, where is this boundary drawn? If not, what does it mean to be a “human being”? Is this boundary meaningful for understanding human beings and life?

This dialogue series invites life scientists, humanities and social science scholars, artists, and cross-disciplinary thinkers to share their thoughts on “what is humanity?” and “what is life?” under differing conceptual systems. We aim to promote in-depth exchange between philosophy and science, and to provide a more thorough and essential understanding of human transformation.

Titled “Do Scientists and Philosophers Face Life on the Same Spatio-Temporal Scale?” the first event of the series was held on March 22. It featured

philosopher Zhao Tingyang and plant biologist Bai Shunong, moderated by Professor Liu Xiaoli. They sought to address some of the basic questions of philosophy since the Axial Age and discussed how they may relate to human survivability, innovations, human nature, human society, and the world’s living systems.

The second event focused on “Live, Life, and Humanity from Different Perspectives.” It invited Daoism philosopher Chen Xia and Buddhist specialist Wang Song to discuss questions including “What are the different views of *sheng ming* (‘life’) in Chinese philosophical traditions?” “How does ancient Chinese philosophy define humans and our relationship with other living beings?” “How does ancient Chinese philosophy understand *sheng* (to ‘live’ or ‘be alive’) as opposed to *si* (to ‘die’ or ‘be dead’)?” “Is there any difference between *sheng* and *sheng ming* (‘life’)?”



Zhao Tingyang and Bai Shunong addresses one another's questions at the first event “Do Scientists and Philosophers Face Life on the Same Spatio-Temporal Scale?” March 22, Beijing



Wang Song discusses Buddhist's perspectives on *sheng ming* at the second event “Live, Life, and Humanity from Different Perspectives,” August 8, Beijing



Chen Xia talks about how Daoism defines humans and our relationship with other living beings at the second event, August 8, Beijing



Scan to know more

PROJECT

Unfolding Metaverse: Real Virtuality or Illusory Reality?

The concept of “metaverse” captured public imagination and sparked off global discussions on what the future holds for humanity. We are interested in how the co-mingling of virtual realities and the physical world will impact the human species and in what way they will re-organize the human society and shape the future of the planet. At this juncture, we are once again confronted with long standing philosophical queries: What is the nature of reality? What is real? Can we know reality, and if so, how?

Together with Renmin University and the Server Art Foundation, the Center hosted a conference on March 25. The half-day conference invited 19 experts from across high-tech industry, academia and the art community, including He Zhan, Head of Omniverse of Nvidia, Greater China, Zhu Jiaming, economist and a high profiled public intellectual, and Duan Yongchao, an expert on crypto and NFT. It covered topics such as “The Underlying Technologies of ‘Metaverse’ and Outlook on Future Society,” “Crypto Arts,” and “Virtual Reality and the Ethics of World Making.”



“Unfolding Metaverse: Real Virtuality or Illusory Reality?” March 25, Beijing



Zhu Jiaming presents “Metaverse: A Revolutionary Choice in an Era of Great Human Transformation,” March 25, Beijing



Wang Feiyue, Liu Xiaoli, and Zhu Rui discuss “A New Generation of Human Cognition: Virtual Reality and the Ethics of World-Making,” March 25, Beijing



Scan to know more

CREATIVE FUTURES

Rapid development and extensive application of digital, gene-editing and other life-altering technologies are profoundly changing how we envision possible futures. Technology together with the associated multiplying impact it exerts on humanity and the broader environment introduce opportunities and complications to our vision of the world and our ability to imagine and shape the future.

We invite scientists in AI, robotics, gene-editing, climate change, as well as technologists in virtual reality, gaming and on-line applications to map out their research visions and project future scenarios of human society and the planetary system. We produce project reports to capture these evidence-based future-oriented, science fiction writers, artists and curators are also part of the project and they take the lead in creating images of the future, and narratives and stories which transport us to realms of imagination.

PROJECT

Imagining Futures: Humanity in Thirty Years

The first workshop was held on July 26, 2021, focusing on how the development of AI and robotics systems affects humanity. We invited scientists, philosophers, social science experts, writers and artists to predict the possible impacts of technology over the next thirty years.

To further expand the multidisciplinary perspective for the project, the second workshop, held on April

22-24, 2022, invited experts from fields of gene editing, virtual reality, population and economy, climate and ecology, and humanities to “open their minds” to the convergence of reality and imagination and speculate on the future of human society.

The first project report “[Technology and Society: Humanity in 30 Years](#)” was published in early 2022.



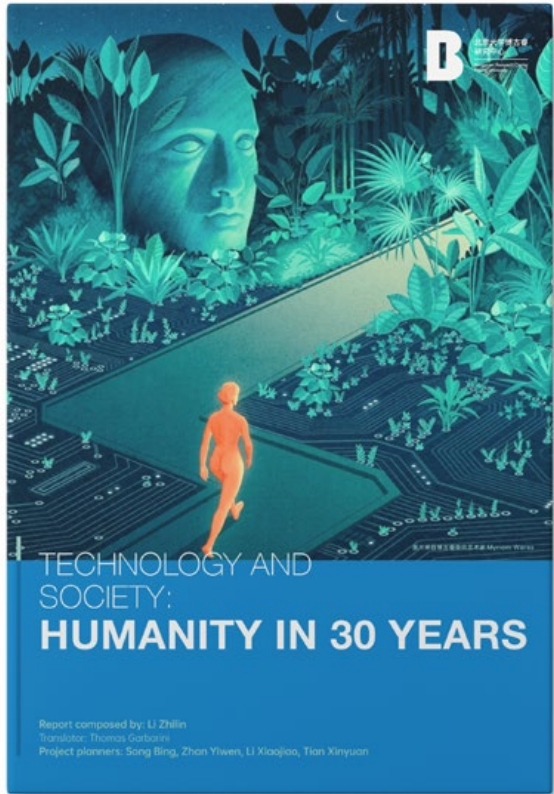
“Technology and Society: Humanity in Thirty Years” second workshop, April 22-24, Beijing



Ken Liu presents on “Artificial Stories, Sustainable Stories,” April 22-24, Beijing



Wang Yangming presents on “Towards the Endless Frontier of Bioengineering,” April 22-24, Beijing



Scan to read

PROJECT

Brain-Computer Interfaces and Future Society

Based on fellow Chen Haidan’s research on how Brain-Computer Interface (BCI) technology is seen by Chinese scientists, doctors, and patients, the project aims to explore how BCI will shape our future and what impact it will bring to the broader community.

The Center hosted the first closed door workshop on April 15, where Tsinghua University’s BCI researcher Gao Xiaorong introduced “Interfaces, Interaction, and Intelligence in Generalized BCI” and Renmin

University’s Zhu Rui shared his understanding of the technology from a philosopher’s perspective. Other discussants included AI scientists, legal experts, social scientists, and artists.

The second event was held on July 28, and experts from the fields of medicine, law, philosophy, and science fiction discussed how BCI technology would influence the future of human society from the angles of data privacy, brain-machine enhancement, and human-machine relationship.



Gao Xiaorong presents on “Interfaces, Interaction, and Intelligence in Generalized BCI,” April 15, Beijing



Zhu Rui shares his views on how BCI affects the future of the society, April 15, Beijing



The Center’s fellows Chen Haidan and Ge Jianqiao host the discussion, April 15, Beijing

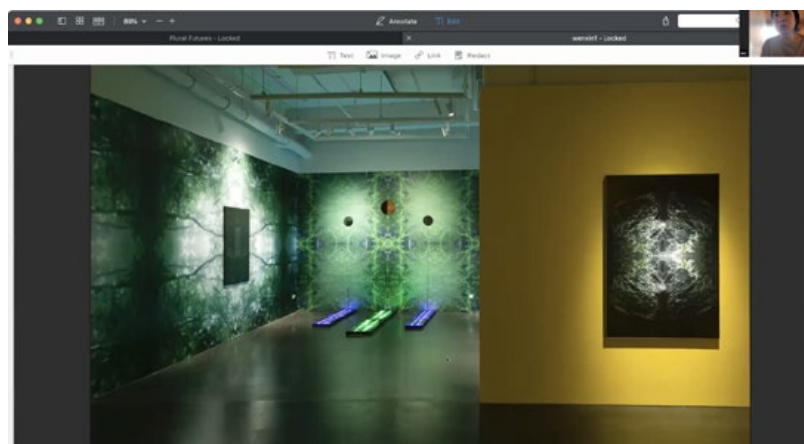


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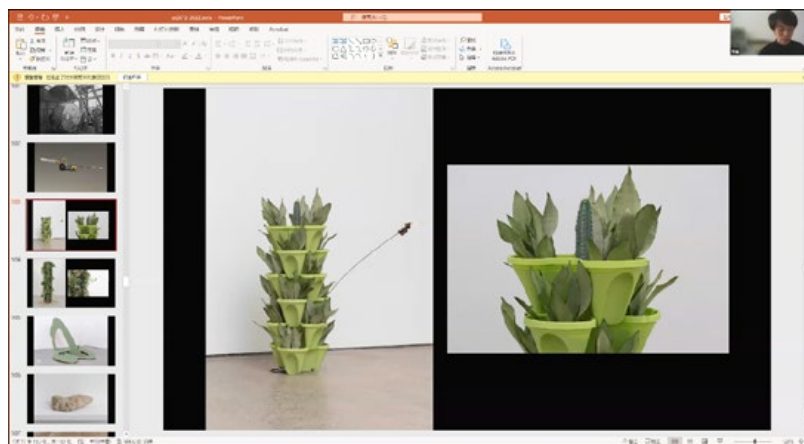
PROJECT

Plural Futures

“Expanded Curation-Plural Futures” is a series of curatorial experiments bridging artists with scientists, with a focus on translating knowledge and experience from different realms and disciplines into site-specific and context-sensitive scenes. On November 6, artists Guo Cheng and Zhang Wenxin, and biologists Bai Shunong and Zhang Wei joined the first discussion on “plural temporalities” to map “traces of time” from their work practices.



Artist Zhang Wenxin shares her project “SubSurfaceSam’sedaja,” November 6, online



Artist Guo Cheng presents on his exhibition “Down to Earth,” November 6, online

ANCIENT WISDOM AND PLANETARY GOVERNANCE

We live in an era of great transformation. Frontier technologies are developing rapidly, geopolitical rivalries are intensifying, political polarization is occurring in many countries, social divisions are worsening, and the climate crisis continues unchecked. Together, these global challenges have profoundly impacted human society.

Borrowing from ancient wisdom on governance, we work on projects to discuss and explore future-oriented global governance concepts aligned with the overall interests of mankind and our living environment, so as to develop and shape new

ideas, concepts, and practices that will have a positive influence on the world.

In exploring related topics, we are focusing on how value systems originating from the world’s philosophical, cultural, and historical traditions both shape and limit concepts and practices in contemporary global governance. We encourage drawing upon underlying intellectual frameworks to reflect on the relational nature of human rationality at the levels of the individual, societal, political, and cultural ecosystems, in order to explore paths towards a truly open and pluralistic value system that encompasses the big picture. Through these explorations, we think about how to build a planetary system that is oriented toward the overall interests of mankind and our living environment and that reflects a “planetary mindset” characterized by harmonious, convivial coexistence. We encourage interdisciplinary thinkers to join our project and together promote this far-reaching intellectual shift.

PROJECT

What is *Tianxia*?

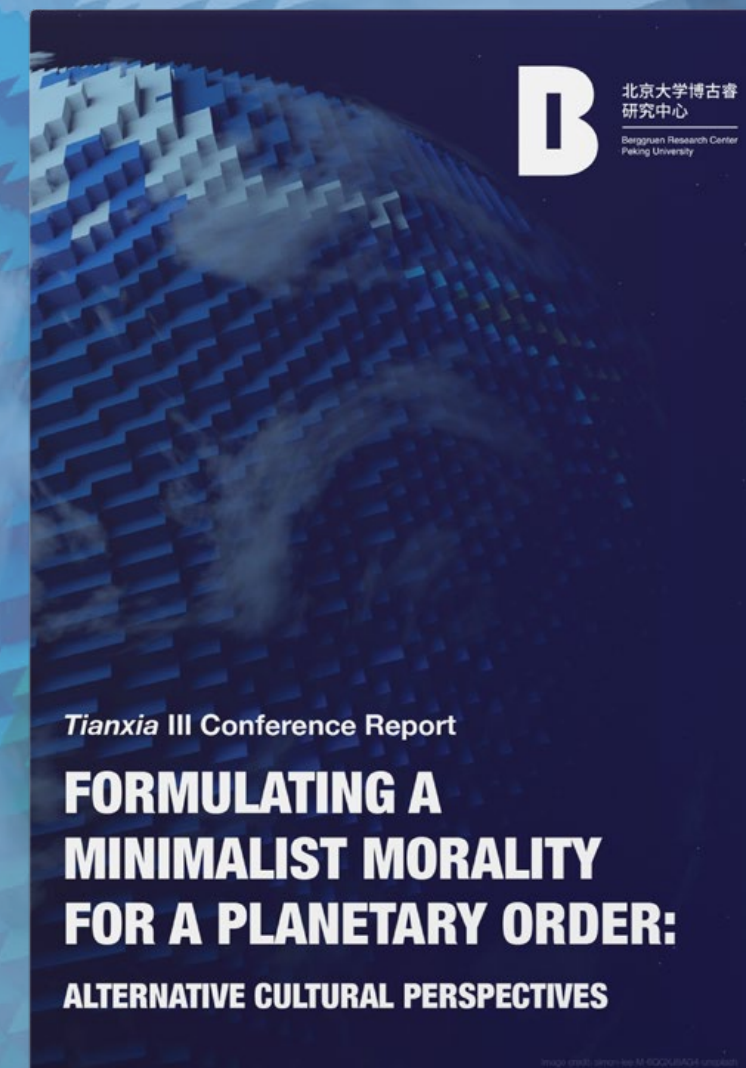
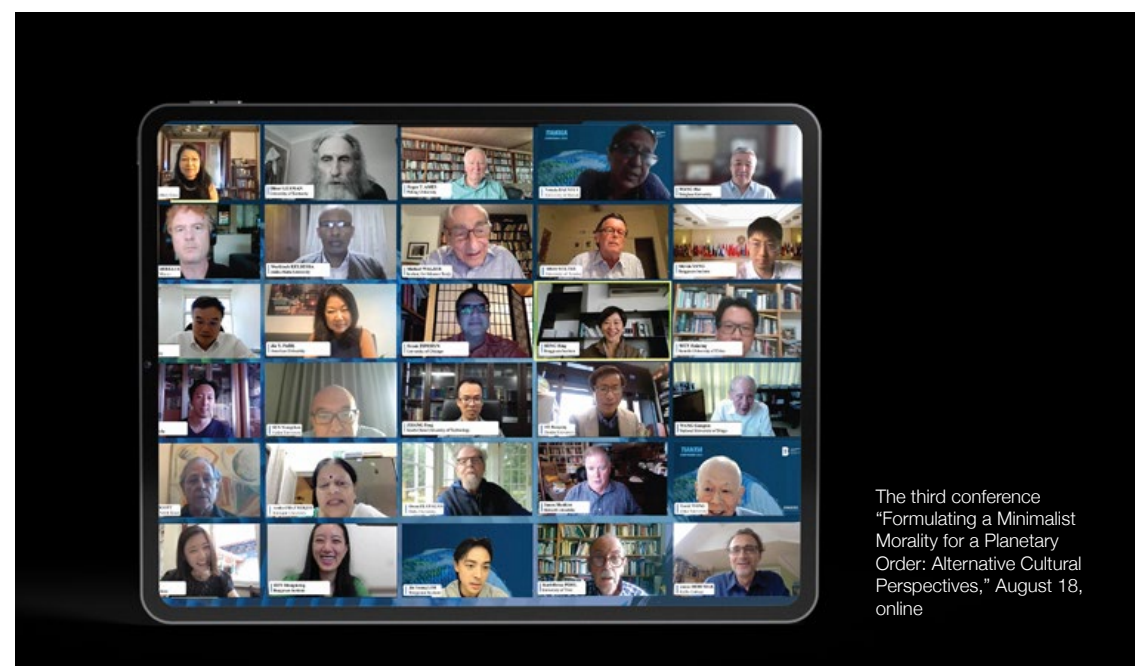
Tianxia 天下, conventionally translated as “all under heaven,” is not only a familiar term in everyday Chinese parlance that means “the world,” but also a geopolitical term found throughout the canonical literature that has a deeper philosophical and historical meaning. Over the past few decades, the import of this technical term—sometimes referred to as “All Under Heaven System” (*Tianxiatixi* 天下体系)—has been much debated as a possible Chinese framework for thinking about a new and evolving world order and a new model of world governance.

In August 2022, the third *Tianxia* conference “Formulating a Minimalist Morality for a Planetary Order: Alternative Cultural Perspectives” was held via Zoom. It was inspired by keynote speaker Michael Walzer’s *Thick and Thin: Moral Argument at Home and Abroad*, where thin morality does not mean minor or emotionally shallow morality, but with thinness and intensity coming together, a “morality close to the bone.” When we moved from liberal thinking on a minimalist ethic to include other cultural traditions—Buddhist, Indian, Confucian, Islamic, Ubuntu, Japanese, European, Jewish, and so on—we asked the question: how would they formulate an answer to the contemporary challenge of a fragmented and failing Westphalian “internationality” to reconceive of the world as a world? What would they offer as their conception

of a shared and practicable morality needed at a planetary scale?

We are now in the planning stages of our fourth *Tianxia* conference for 2023 on the theme “A Civilizational Dialogue as a Framework for Engagement on a Planetary Order.” More fundamental than the second-order and abstract notion of the nation state and its accoutrements is the shared lives of the world’s peoples, imbricated as they are in all of their various interpenetrating activities: politics, economics, culture, technologies, environment, religion, security, health, and so on. At an ecological level much deeper than that of the nation state, we live in a world of focal yet interacting civilizations that have shifting horizons rather than fixed boundaries and that are defined more in terms of shared values and histories than national identities. Can a civilizational dialogue at the highest level of cultural identity rather than a nation state approach to the geopolitical discourse change the framework of engagement and move us closer to a shared planetary order?

The second project report “[Formulating a Minimalist Morality for a Planetary Order: Alternative Cultural Perspectives](#)” was published in 2022



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CENTER'S EVENT SERIES

PROJECT

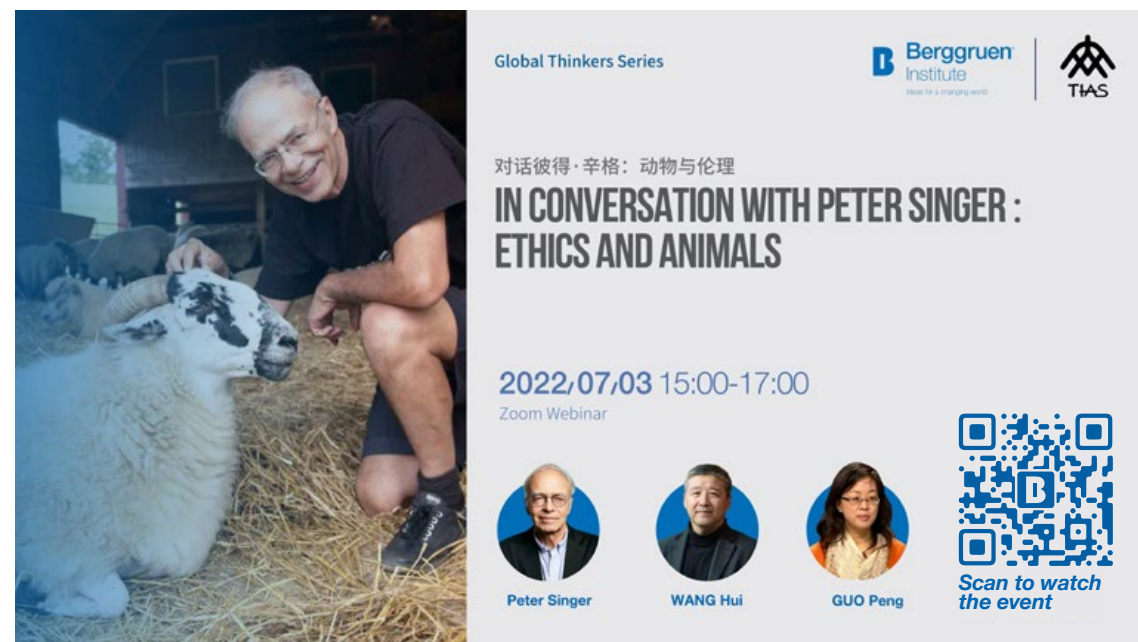
Global Thinkers Series

The Global Thinkers Series invites thinkers who have deep insights into issues of great significance, including evolution of different civilizations, grand narratives of world history and their contemporary implications, as well as philosophical and social theories which have profoundly reshaped societies and human minds.

Held on July 3, the third event of the Series invited Professor Peter Singer, 2021 Berggruen Prize laureate, Ira W. DeCamp Professor of Bioethics in the University Center for Human Values at Princeton University, for a conversation on "Ethics and Animals." Professor Guo Peng from the Center for Animal Protection Studies of Shandong University joined the event as the discussant, and Berggruen Prize jury member, senior Professor of Literature and History Wang Hui from Tsinghua

University moderated the dialogue. Professor Singer argued that we owe nonhuman animals equal consideration of their interests, and he explained what the implications of that view are and why it is important, both for animals and humans, that we change the way we treat animals, especially in our current methods of raising animals intensively for meat, eggs, and dairy products.

Held on August 19, 2021, the second event of the Series invited Professor Wang Gungwu, historian and sinologist, former Vice Chancellor of the University of Hong Kong, for a conversation on "Understanding the Sinic Civilization in World History." The first event was held in July 2020, and it featured Professor Jared Diamond, author of popular book *Guns, Germs and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies*.



Dialogue with Peter Singer, "Ethics and Animals," July 3, online

CENTER'S EVENT SERIES

PROJECT

Berggruen Seminar Series

A public lecture series, the Berggruen Seminar Series provides a platform for Berggruen fellows and friends to share their latest research with the public. Started in March 2019, the series has hosted 18 events. Aiming to provide opportunities for speakers and audience to have in-depth discussions, the events are held in person (when possible) and are live streamed for online audience. Topics of previous seminars include "Heritable Genome Editing," "Challenges Posed by Big Data on the Foundations of Scientific Thinking," "Care Robots and Ethics," "Confucian Commonsense Meets the AI Revolution," "AI Ethics: Designing for Responsibility," and "Imperfect Genes: Human Evolution in New Gene Origination."

Berggruen Seminar 18 December 2, online

"The Ethics of 'Symbiosis': Seeking a Trans-Boundary Entry through Comics, Literature, and Art" featuring Professor Huang Tsung-chieh and Dr. Shi Danqing.

Citing the works of the Australian artist Patricia Piccinini and Japanese manga artists Daisuke Igarashi and Taiyo Matsumoto, Professor Huang Tsung-chieh from National Dong Hwa University in Taiwan illustrated how various genetic variations, hybrids, and cross-border movements can bring about the imagination of "symbiotic ethics" in a post-human world. Tsinghua University's Dr. Shi Danqing presented on the cross-disciplinary studies of symbiosis and design art. The event was moderated by Li Xiaojiao of Berggruen China Center.



Titled "The Ethics of 'Symbiosis': Seeking a Trans-Boundary Entry through Comics, Literature, and Art," Berggruen Seminar 18 features Professor Huang Tsung-chieh and Dr. Shi Danqing, December 2, online



THE BERGGRUEN FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

The Berggruen Fellowship Program is a cornerstone of the Institute's mission to generate ideas that shape the future. It was established in 2015 with the goal of bringing together the best possible minds from across cultural and political boundaries to explore the urgent questions of our times and develop innovative responses through collaborative interdisciplinary work. Over the past seven years, the program has developed a dynamic network of 40 current fellows and 110 alumni fellows. The themes of the fellowship have evolved from comparative philosophy and religion to the profound and accelerating changes reshaping the foundations of the modern world. Berggruen Fellows' independent research and points of collaboration extend the Institute's programmatic work on what we call the Great Transformations: the Future of Capitalism, the Future of Democracy, Future Humans, and the Planetary.

In the early years of the program, we established academic partnerships with premier research universities throughout the world—Harvard University, New York University, University of Oxford, Peking University, Stanford University, and Tsinghua University—which would then host Berggruen Fellows during their academic-year fellowship terms. Since 2018, we have partnered with the University of Southern California (USC) to bring our fellows to Los Angeles to work from the Institute's office at the Bradbury Building and the campus of USC to foster closer dialogue and collaboration among fellows.

Since the official launch, the China Center has been running its own Berggruen Fellowship program which brings top Chinese and international scholars to work on the Center's core research themes of "Frontier Science, Technologies, and Philosophy," "Creative Futures," and "Ancient Wisdom and Global Governance." The 7 current fellows and 25 alumni members make strong contributions to the Center's research programs.

The Center organizes a monthly brown-bag lunch series when fellows meet to discuss their research topics and seek collaborative opportunities. Topics covered in the series included "Virtual Reality and Realism," "When Scientists and Philosophers Face Life Together," "Gods in Science Fiction," "AI in Science Practice and the Future Society," "Ethics and Governance in Brain-Computer Interfaces," and "The Social Brain: Evolution Development and the Future" among others.

FELLOWS

in alphabetical order

Current Fellows

Baoshu

Science Fiction Writer, 2022-2023 Berggruen China Center Fellow



Baoshu is a science fiction/fantasy writer and a member of the Science Fiction Committee in the Chinese Writers Association. He has published six novels and four collections of shorter works since 2010. His best-known works include *Three Body X: Redemption of Time*, *Ruins of Time* (Chinese, Chongqing Press, 2011), the novella "Everybody Loves Charles," etc. He has won the Chinese Nebula Award and Galaxy Award multiple times. Many of his works are available in English, Japanese, German, Italian, and other languages. He edited two anthologies of Chinese SF on different subgenres. He is also a translator, best known for his rendition of *Star Maker* (by Olaf Stapledon). He lives in Xi'an, China.



CHEN Xia

Philosopher of Daoism, 2022-2023 Berggruen China Center Fellow



Chen Xia is a Research Fellow at the Institute of Philosophy and Director of the Editorial Department for the *Journal of Philosophical Trends* and *Chinese Philosophical Almanac* at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. She is a member (2020-2023) of the International Council of Philosophy and Human Sciences Executive Committee and the Co-Chair of the Scientific Panel, UNESCO Silk Roads Youth Research Grant. She has been a visiting scholar at Harvard, SOAS, University of Missouri-St. Louis, Science Po Bordeaux, and a Fulbright Scholar at Brown University. Her research focuses on Chinese Philosophy and Religions, concentrating on Daoism.

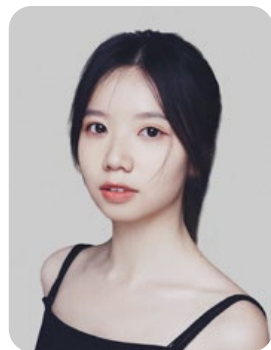


GONG Jun*Philosopher of Buddhism, 2022-2023 Berggruen China Center Fellow*

Gong Jun is a professor and deputy director at the Center for Buddhist Studies at Sun Yat-sen University. He is the editor-in-chief of the *Chinese Buddhist Review* and a member of editorial board of the *Journal of Humanistic Religion*. From 2002 to 2003, he was a visiting scholar at the Department of East Asian Studies at Harvard University. He is mainly engaged in research on the history of Buddhist thought, East Asian Zen Buddhism, interpretation of Buddhist classics, Buddhism and society, and ecological ethics. He has published books on Buddhism including *The History of Modern Buddhism as 'Knowledge' – An Intellectual History Discourse in the East Asian Perspective* (Chinese, The Commercial Press, 2019), *Introduction to Chinese Zen Studies* (Chinese, Fudan University Press, 2009), and *History of Zen: A Problem-Centered Discourse on the History of Ideas* (Chinese, SDX Joint Publishing House, 2006).

**LIU Chao***Psychologist and Brain Scientist, 2022-2023 Berggruen China Center Fellow*

Professor Liu Chao is a member of the State Key Laboratory of Cognitive Neuroscience and Learning at Beijing Normal University. He gained a Ph.D. in Psychology at University of Michigan Ann Arbor. His research focuses on the regulatory role and brain mechanisms of emotion in social cognition, especially moral cognition, as well as its application in education, management, public safety and other fields. He has published more than 40 papers in related journals such as *Cerebral Cortex*, *Neuroimage*, *Social Cognitive & Affective Neuroscience*, etc. As a Berggruen China Center Fellow, Liu will focus on the project “Philosophical, Psychological, and Brain Research on How Intelligent Machines Acquire Social Emotions in a Man-Machine Coexistence Society.”

**Iris LONG***Writer and Curator, 2022-2023 Berggruen China Center Fellow*

Iris Long is a writer and independent curator with a particular focus on how trans-disciplinary practices can enable novel knowledge production as opposed to concept appropriation or generalization. She has curated exhibitions around art and technology, such as “Lying Sophia and Mocking Alexa” (sophialexa.com, Hyundai Blue Prize recipient), “Blue Cables in Venetian Watercourse” (PSA Emerging Curator’s Program Award), and the third Today Art Museum “Future of Today.” Iris’s research has been presented in “Art and Artificial Intelligence” (ZKM Karlsruhe), “Art Machines: International Symposium on Computational Media Art” (Hong Kong), “Digital Research in the Humanities and Arts” (London), ISEA and among others. In 2021, she initialized “Port: Under the Cloud,” a long-term research and curatorial project on the infrastructures of science and technology in China.

**LÜ Xiaoyu***Writer and International Relations Scholar, 2022-2023 Berggruen China Center Fellow*

Lü Xiaoyu is an Assistant Professor at the School of International Studies at Peking University. He gained a MSc and DPhil degrees in Politics at St Antony’s College, University of Oxford. He was a Research Fellow at Strategic and Defense Studies Centre at the Australian National University, and a Policy Consultant at the United Nations Development Programme. His research focuses on Conflict and Peace Studies, with field experience in Myanmar, Syria, Lebanon, and Colombia. His monographs include a political ethnography of international development institutions *Norms, Storytelling and International Institutions in China: The Imperative to Narrate* (English, Palgrave MacMillan, 2021) and a non-fiction based his experience in the Peruvian presidential election *Lima Dream: When a Chinese Wanders into an Election* (Chinese, Shanghai Literature Press, 2021). With the support of the Berggruen Fellowship, his project will examine the possibilities of collaborative and convivialist living in global disorder and the concept of multispecies peace.

**MEI Jianhua***Professor of Philosophy, 2022-2023 Berggruen China Center Fellow*

Graduated from Peking University with a Ph.D. in Analytical Philosophy and Comparative Philosophy, Mei Jianhua is currently a professor at the School of Philosophy and Sociology of Shanxi University. His research interests are philosophy of mind, philosophy of artificial intelligence and experimental philosophy, metaphysics, and pre-Qin philosophy. He focuses on fundamental philosophical questions about how to understand consciousness, causality, self, and reality in the context of contemporary science. As a Berggruen fellow, he will focus on the metaphysics of virtual reality, to understand reality from Eastern and Western metaphysics and virtual reality technology, and to provide a metaphysical basis for virtual reality.



Fellow Alumni

2021-2022

CHEN Haidan
Associate Professor of Ethics Studies,
Peking University

CHEN Xiaoping
Professor of Robotics, University of Science and
Technology of China

GE Jianqiao
Lecturer of Brain Science,
Peking University

LI Chenjian
University Chair Professor of Biology,
Peking University

LIU Xiaoli
Professor of Philosophy,
Renmin University of China

ZHANG Xianglong*
Professor of Philosophy,
Peking University

2020-2021

BAI Shunong
Professor of Plant Biology,
Peking University

DUAN Weiwen
Professor of Philosophy,
Chinese Academy of Social Sciences

HAO Jingfang
Science fiction writer,
Hugo Prize winner

LU Qiaoying
Assistant Professor of Philosophy,
Peking University

Sebastian SUNDAY GRÈVE
Assistant Professor of Philosophy,
Peking University

2019-2020

HE Huaihong
Professor, Department of Philosophy and
Religious Studies, Peking University

WANG Yangming
Principal Investigator, the Laboratory of Stem
Cells and Noncoding RNAs,
Peking University

WU Tianyue
Associate Professor, Department of Philosophy
and Religious Studies,
Peking University

2018-2019

ZENG Yi
Professor and Deputy Director, the Research
Center for Brain-inspired Intelligence, Chinese
Academy of Sciences

ZHAO Tingyang
Professor and Member,
Chinese Academy of Social Sciences

GAN Chunsong
Professor and Deputy director, Confucianism
Research Center, Peking University

2017-2018

Peter HERSHOCK
Director, the East-West Center,
the University of Hawaii

2016-2017

Stephen ANGLE
Mansfield Freeman Professor, East Asian
Studies, Wesleyan University

Rajeev BHARGAVA
Director, the Institute of Indian Thought
at the Centre for the Study of Developing
Societies

2015-2017

LI Jin
Professor of Education and Human
Development, Brown University

Anna SUN
Associate Professor of Sociology and Asian
Studies, Kenyon College

2016-2018

Viren MURTHY
Associate Professor of History, the University
of Wisconsin-Madison

Roger T. AMES
Humanities Chair Professor,
Peking University

BAI Tongdong
Dongfang Chair Professor of Philosophy,
Fudan University

* Professor Zhang passed away in June 2022 in Beijing.

IMPACT

Berggruen's topics are very open. They include not only the latest research in natural sciences, they also bring the responses for these developments from the perspectives of humanities and social sciences. The topics resonate with the common concerns of humanity.

CHEN Xia

Research Fellow, Institute of Philosophy,
Chinese Academy of Social Sciences
2022-2023 Berggruen Fellow

The Berggruen China Centre is able to integrate classical Eastern philosophies with modern, cutting-edge technological concepts, providing a broad philosophical resource for the crises and challenges facing humanity today.

GONG Jun

Professor, Center for Buddhist Studies, Sun
Yat-sen University
2022-2023 Berggruen Fellow

The Center acts like a four-way junction that allows for exchanges between the academic and literary worlds, East and West, and this is how ideas emerge.

Baoshu

Science Fiction Writer
2022-2023 Berggruen Fellow

In addition to solving the problems of today, we need to think about issues in the distant future, things that don't bring present-day value, but are of great importance. The world needs a Berggruen Institute that allows imagination and the development of concepts for the future.

LI Chenjian

University Chair Professor of Biology,
Peking University
2021-2022 Berggruen Fellow

What impressed me most was the wide range of topics covered by the center, which gave me, as a microbiology researcher, the opportunity to have a full exchange with Chinese philosophers, which is inspiring for my science research.

ZHAO Liping

Eveleigh-Fenton Chair of Applied Microbiology,
Rutgers University

Cuiling Magazine



Launched in June, *Cuiling* Magazine is a Chinese-language publication by the Berggruen Institute. It is curated, edited, and presented by Berggruen Institute China Center. "Cui Ling" means "green hill with lush grass and trees" in Chinese, which complements the English translation of the German "Berggruen." The work will be based on the Institute's extensive academic foundation, wide-ranging expertise in the humanities, and expansive perspective on the intellectual frontier. *Cuiling* is published online throughout the year, with intermittent print editions.

"Planetary Wisdom" is the theme of the inaugural print issue of *Cuiling*, focused on the planetary thinking and philosophy that has been a focus of the Institute's work over the past year.



cuilingmag.com



Wechat

BOOKS



Translated by Professor Shang Xinjian and Researcher Du Liyan, the Chinese version of the book *Roboethics: A Navigating Overview* is published under Berggruen translation series by Peking University Press.

DIRECTORS AND FELLOWS ACTIVITIES



June 13 Venice

Center co-director Song Bing participates in the “East-West Dialogue at Casa dei Tre Oci,” discussing possible paths for dialogue on critical issues from Ukraine to climate change. Participants include Henry Kissinger, George Yeo, Gordon Brown, Kevin Rudd, Ernesto Zedillo, Yan Xuetong, Zheng Yongnian, Nicolas Berggruen, Mario Monti, Kai-Fu Lee, and Eric Schmidt, among others.

January

Fellow Ge Jianqiao joins Chinese Open Science Network Executive Committee.



July

Fellow Baoshu publishes book *Our Science Fiction World*.



July 6 Athens

Center co-director Song Bing presents at workshop “Ancient Wisdom for Modern Challenges,” organized by Sustainable Development Solutions Network.

July 6 Athens

Fellow Chen Xia talks on “Do Human Beings Only Bring Negative Value to Nature? A Moderate Anthropocentrism Perspective” at workshop “Ancient Wisdom for Modern Challenges,” organized by Sustainable Development Solutions Network.



July 29 online

Fellow Gong Jun presents at international conference “How Zen Became Chan: Pre-modern and Modern Representations of a Transnational East Asian Buddhist Tradition,” organized by The University of British Columbia and Yale University.



August 27 Beijing

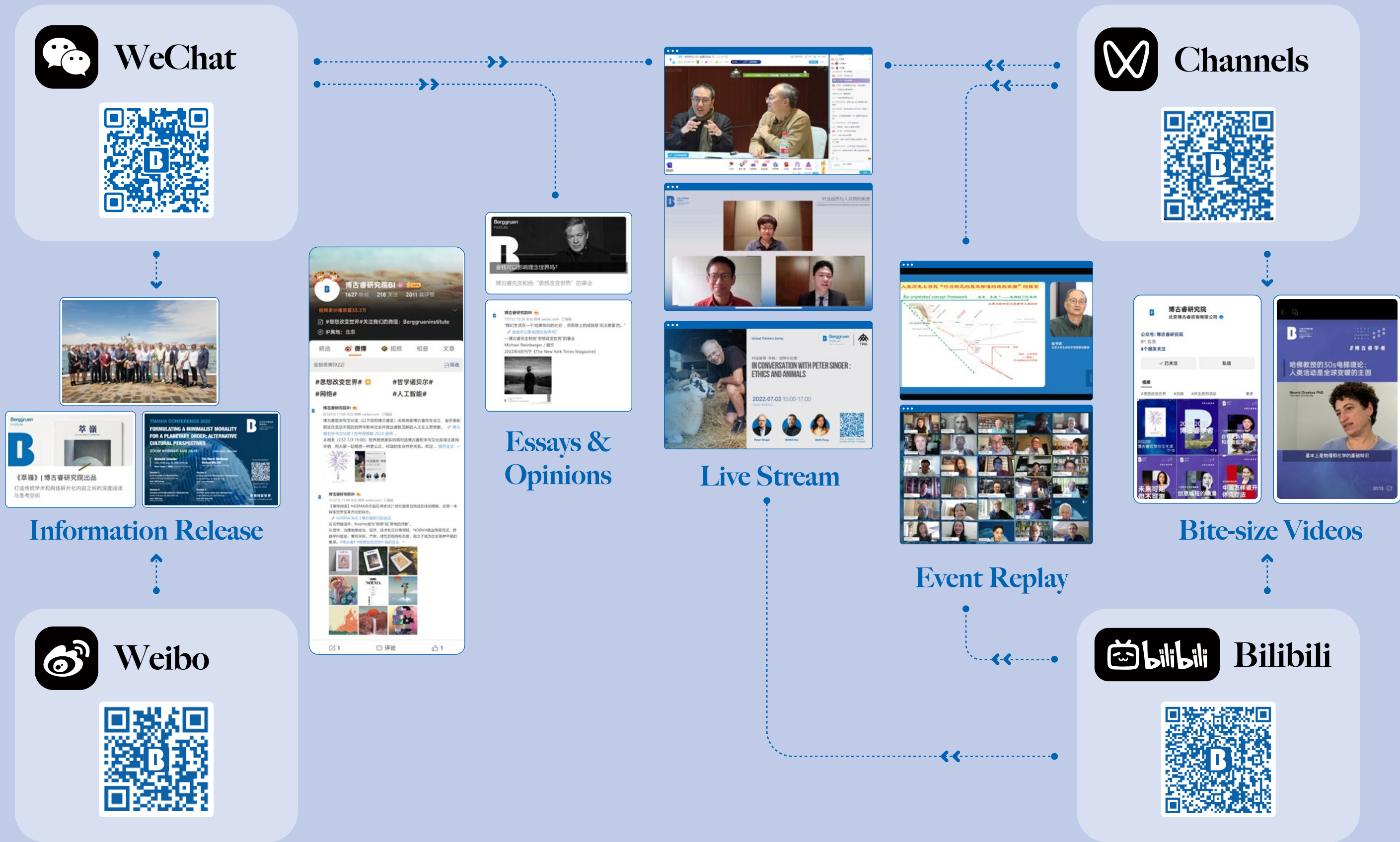
Center co-director Liu Zhe speaks at the workshop on his book *The Shaping of Subjectivity: Merleau-Ponty and Idealism*. The book was published in April 2021.



November 18 online





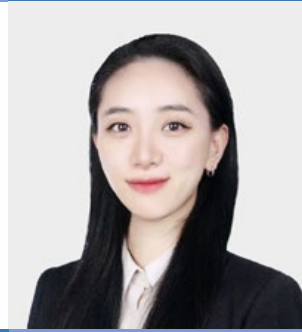




Fellow Chen Xia presents on “Philosophy and Youth” at International Symposium on “Scientific and Cultural Exchanges along the Silk Roads” organized by UNESCO.

SOCIAL MEDIA FOOTPRINT

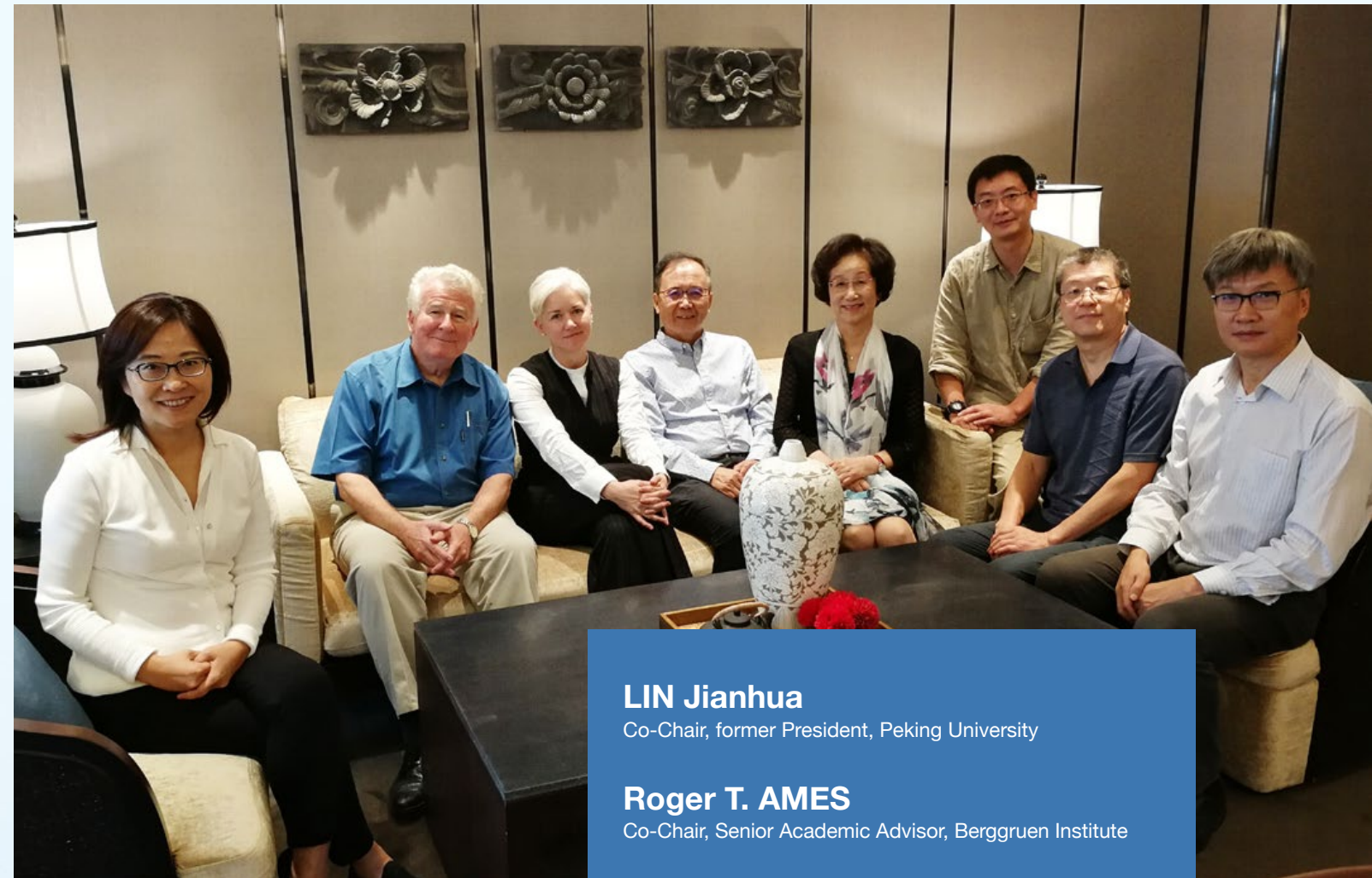


TEAM

in alphabetical order

		
LI He Chief Content Officer (Chinese Language)	LI Xiaojiao Associate Director	LIM Jin Young Program Coordinator
		
LIU Zhe Co-Director	REN Mengmeng Operations Coordinator	SONG Bing Co-Director
		
SUN Xinwei Program Coordinator	TIAN Xinyuan Senior Program Coordinator	XIANG Qun Office Manager

ACADEMIC ADVISORY COUNCIL



LIN Jianhua

Co-Chair, former President, Peking University

Roger T. AMES

Co-Chair, Senior Academic Advisor, Berggruen Institute

YUAN Ming

Dean, Yenching Academy, Peking University

WANG Bo

Vice President, Peking University

SHANG Xinjian

Professor of Philosophy, Peking University

OUR MISSION

The Berggruen Institute was established in 2010 with a mission to develop foundational ideas and shape political and social institutions for the 21st century.

In this age of technology and globalization, it is essential that we critically analyze our systems and the beliefs upon which they are founded.

As an international “think and act” network, we seek to bring together the best minds and most authoritative voices from across cultural and political boundaries to address the core challenges of our era—from global governance to what it means to be human in a technological age.



The Berggruen Research Center at Peking University was established on December 19, 2018. Located at the heart of Peking University, the Center engages with China’s most outstanding thinkers to examine, share, and develop ideas to address global challenges.

With a future oriented perspective, intellectual themes for research programs are focused on frontier science, technology, and philosophy, as well as issues involving global governance. The Center funds a fellowship program, supports publications that feature its major research focuses, hosts programs activities such as lectures, workshops, and symposia, and produces multi-media outreach programs.

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