

Video Resources on the Internet

Panels and Lectures Address China Controversies

Editors note: Over the past several months, colleagues have brought to our attention three public panel discussions and lectures that address contemporary controversies in Chinese studies. These discussions have been video-recorded and are available to view on the internet. These presentations may be useful either for scholarly pursuits or may be excerpted for classroom viewing. We wish to thank those who contacted us about these resources, and we encourage readers who know of other such video resources to let us know about them so that we can inform our ASIANetwork colleagues of their existence and availability.

Symposium on Giovanni Arrighi's *Adam Smith in Beijing* (March, 2008)

One of the contentious issues in Asian studies today is the debate over how to characterize China: Is it socialist? Capitalist? "Postsocialist"? One of the more intriguing and theoretically stimulating descriptions has been Giovanni Arrighi's notion of China as a historically rooted and successful "non-capitalist market economy," a social formation that may serve today as a beacon of development for other advancing societies. Arrighi's idea, which also suggests a decline of U.S. global hegemony in the face of a "rise of China," was presented most recently in his important, wide-ranging book, *Adam Smith in Beijing: Lineages of the 21st Century* (New York: Verso Press, 2007).

This study has sparked a broad scholarly response both from those who embrace his interpretations as well as from those who contend that he is wide of the mark or who accept parts of his model but reject others.

An important symposium was held in Baltimore in 2008 (prior to Arrighi's death last year) in which Arrighi himself presented his main arguments. In response, fellow panelists

David Harvey (CUNY) and Joel Andreas (Johns Hopkins) also spoke, offering their critiques. The panel presentation lasted some two hours, and the entire debate is available at the following web site: <video.google.com/videoplay?docid=2718530085458752500>.

Symposium: “Rediscovering China’s Cultural Revolution: Art and Politics, Lived Experience, Legacies of Liberation” (November, 2009)

Controversies continue to surface over the assessment of the most tumultuous political movement of the Mao period of Chinese history, the Cultural Revolution. The unequivocally condemnatory conclusions drawn by such recent books as Chang and Halliday’s *Mao: The Unknown Story* (New York: Random House, 2005) and MacFarquhar’s and Schoenhals’ *Mao’s Last Revolution* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2006) have been countered by more nuanced—and oftentimes largely favorable—accounts offered by Zhang, Wang, and Bai’s *Some of Us: Chinese Women Growing Up in the Mao Era* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2001); Han’s *The Unknown Cultural Revolution: Life and Change in a Chinese Village* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2008), Gao’s *The Battle for China’s Past: Mao and the Cultural Revolution* (London: Pluto Press, 2008), and Andreas’ *The Rise of the Red Engineers: The Cultural Revolution and the Origins of China’s New Class* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009).

The co-author and author of two of these books, ASIANetwork members Bai Di, (*Some of Us*) and Han Dongping (*The Unknown Cultural Revolution*), joined Stanford’s Ban Wang and others in a symposium at UC Berkeley, entitled “Rediscovering China’s Cultural Revolution.” Presentations included discussions of poster art, theatrical art, and cinematic art of the time period and evaluations of their political and social impacts. The panel on art lasted about 100 minutes, and the entire symposium’s proceedings can be found at the following web address: <http://thisiscommunism.org/rediscovering_chinas_cultural_revolution.htm>.

Public Lecture: “The Real Story of China in Africa: Discussion with Deborah Bräutigam” (February, 2010)

Contentious viewpoints also abound in analyzing China’s growing involvement with Africa. Is the massive increase in foreign aid and foreign trade (from \$10 billion in 2000 to over \$100 billion in 2008) a reflection of the long-standing PRC principle of “mutual benefit,” as the Chinese government claims, or is it the embodiment of a new thrust by China into Africa to claim the continent’s rich resources, regardless of political costs to the African people, in much the same way as Western powers have behaved during their eras of empire?

These competing assessments are discussed and evaluated in this lecture, sponsored by the National Committee on U.S.-China Relations. Drawing on her extensive field work in both China and Africa, Professor Deborah Bräutigam (American University) discusses several of the “myths” she sees in Western analyses of China’s growing presence throughout the continent that are detailed more extensively in her recently published book, *The Dragon’s Gift: The Real Story of China in Africa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009). Her lecture, which lasts approximately one hour, can be viewed at <<http://www.ncuscr.org/programs/real-story-china-africa-discussion-deborah-brautigam>>.