



China Oxford Scholarship Fund

Rethinking China at Inaugural Oxford China Forum

Winter 2013/2014

www.chinaoxford.org

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Is the Chinese Communist Party sustainable? Is China capable of being a global leader? Is China's economic miracle over? These questions were raised at the first Oxford China Forum at Oxford University on November 16, 2013. The half-day "Rethink China" event took place at Magdalen College and attracted nearly 300 guests. The Director of Oxford's China Centre, Prof. Rana Mitter, made the opening address and kicked off the first of three panel discussions. Speakers included former British Ambassador to China Sir Christopher Hum, Chinese author Xue Xinran, Financial Times Beijing Bureau Chief Jamil Anderlini, former British Ambassador to Japan Sir John Boyd, Guy de Jonquieres from the European Centre for International Political Economy, Chairman of the First Eastern Investment Group Victor Chu and Oxford University Professors Rosemary Foot and Anna Lora-Wainwright. The Oxford China Forum was founded by Oxford University students Aiden Davies and Sasha Kaletsky. The Forum's aims are to inform a new generation about the central challenges facing one of the 21st century's most dynamic nations and to inspire Oxford students to think, debate and argue about China and its role in their lives. For more information, go to www.oxfordchinaforum.co.uk.

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International Chairman's Letter

Dear Friends,

- It's exciting to know what Scholars have been doing after they have completed their post-graduate studies at Oxford. It is very satisfying to learn how they have progressed. I hope more Scholars will keep the China Oxford Scholarship Fund updated with their careers so that the Fund can share this with its donors, benefactors and supporters.
- On behalf of the Fund, I would like to thank Peter Sunderland for his valuable contribution to the Awards Panel especially in the United Kingdom. I am pleased to know that Peter will now have more leisure time with his family and on the golf course.
- I always enjoy reading about China-related events that take place at Oxford. The Oxford China Forum organised by Oxford University students illustrates how there is an ever-growing focus on China's political, social and economic developments. I wish the Oxford China Forum continued success.
- My wife Clair and I were delighted to have the opportunity to meet the 2013-2014 Scholars over a series of dinners at our home in the UK in November and December. The Scholars are very impressive and this certainly reflects the high standards the Awards Panel works with in assessing and nominating candidates for scholarships.
- Lastly, it is usually during the winter holiday season and the festive Chinese New Year period that we remember most the people, places and experiences that are meaningful and important to us. If COSF and Oxford University are among them, I hope you will consider making a donation to COSF today. In the meantime, I wish you all the very best for the Year of the Horse.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Beardson'.

Timothy Beardson
International Chairman

Thank You to Peter Sunderland



L-R, Araceli Keelan, Xiaodi Bell, Peter Sunderland, Prof. Derek Siveter and Dyan Sterling

The Fund regrets to announce that its long-time Chairman of the UK Awards Panel, Peter Sunderland, has retired after nearly 20 years being involved with the scholarship programme. We thank Peter for his unwavering commitment to the Fund with his work in Hong Kong and the United Kingdom.

"We will always remember Peter's ready smile and wise counsel through the years he served both the Hong Kong Awards Panel and the UK Panel - the only member to do so to date. Please accept the gratitude and appreciation of all the Trustees and committee members," says Hong Kong Trustee Annie Bentley. During his nearly 20 years with COSF, he's reviewed hundreds of scholarship applications and interviewed more than a hundred students. He is also responsible for spearheading the pastoral care programme for Scholars in the United Kingdom which started in 2003.

"We wish him happy days at his golf course and would welcome a visit from him any time for the fantastic food in Hong Kong or Great Wall of Beijing and bright lights of Shanghai," adds Annie. Peter found himself in the interviewee's chair for a change when we asked him about his work with COSF.

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How did you become involved with the China Oxford Scholarship Fund?

Moving to Hong Kong in 1995, I re-established contact with Rory Nicholas whom I knew from our Brasenose days. He was one of the three original trustees when The Hong Kong Oxford Scholarship Fund was established in 1992. Another trustee was Sir David Akers-Jones who was another Brasenose alumnus who had been Chief Secretary to the Hong Kong Government. They were both looking to increase the number of people involved with the Fund and asked if I would join them.

What was it like being part of the interview process in China and Hong Kong when the scholarship programme was still in its early stages?

My first direct involvement was to participate in interviews in Beijing and Hong Kong in 2002. The interviews in Beijing took place over 2 days where myself, Annie Bentley, Sue Lau, Wendy Yung and William Louey saw 13 candidates. It was this experience that really enthused me, interviewing candidates who had obtained a place at Oxford to do postgraduate work without, as I discovered, having had a face to face interview with a native speaking Brit. The interviews in Hong Kong were face to face and were also conducted by telephone. I remember well one of these which was with Huang Jingmin. She was already in Oxford as an earlier award winner. We managed to contact her just as she was crossing a road and the interview took place as soon as she reached the other side. She became known as our "dam break lady".

Your organised the first informal lunch gathering for the COSF Scholars in the United Kingdom. How did this all come about?

It was recognised by the Hong Kong Committee that there was very little, if any, contact with our Scholars once they reached Oxford and there was no follow up thereafter. The Awards had been running for 9 years by this time with 46 awards having been made. In 2002, we disbursed 11 awards and it was decided to see how we could establish a scheme to make contact with our Scholars and also enable them to contact each other. I had contact details of the candidates whom I had interviewed in Hong Kong, Beijing and on the phone. They were all coming to the end of their year, or first year, in Oxford. I contacted Mark Yifan Mo and suggested that we set up a meeting when I was back in the UK on leave. This was duly arranged and in April 2003, my wife Gill and I met all the Scholars for lunch in a Cantonese restaurant near the Westgate Car Park. This was the start of the now regular meetings. There was also tea in Hertford College which was arranged by Prof. Zhanfeng Cui. These events eventually developed into the Scholars' Summer and Rhodes House lunches.

What's been the most challenging aspect of heading the UK awards process?

Initially the problem was getting started. Once Prof. Alistair Borthwick joined me, it was no longer a problem as he was based in Oxford. He helped to provide facilities and shared the load. Since then, it is the fact that so many deserving applicants cannot be helped. However, comparing those we are interviewing in UK with those still back in China, one has to remember that the UK-based applicants have already experienced western education in secondary school, in Oxford or in other institutions. These applicants have had access to considerable funding already and would be that much more able to navigate interviews.

Have the profile and experiences of Chinese applicants changed from when you started being involved with COSF compared with today's applicants?

What has changed a lot is the number of applicants who already have had educational experience out of China. Remember that when the Fund was first set up, there were very limited funds. All we could hope to do, and what we aimed to do, was to provide that last amount that would make the difference between being able to come to Oxford and not. This was put to me so well by Hong Kong Trustee, Annie Bentley. She said that during her application process, fees kept rising and this meant finding yet another source of funding so that she could achieve her dream. She helps others now, both personally and as a Trustee, to achieve their dream.

What has been the most rewarding aspect of your work on the awards panel?

This must be seeing those we have made awards to being able to contact the other award winners. They all, of course, do well, and we can be justifiably proud that we have helped them in some little way. It has also been good to see them at the summer lunches and to hear them address what must seem to them to be a very elite and serious audience.

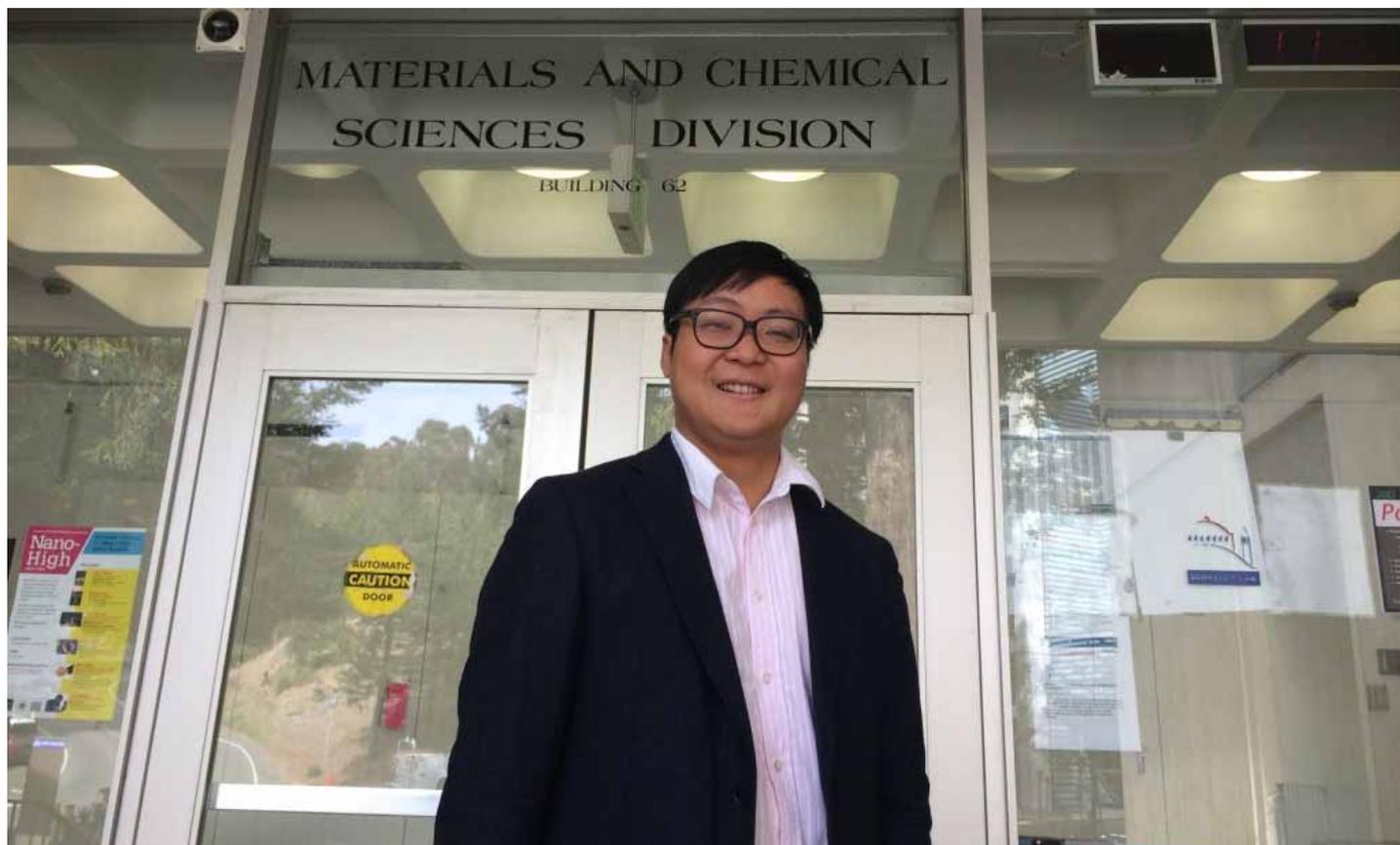
After all these years, are there any Scholars who stand out for you?

Having moved away from London, with its close proximity to Oxford, has reduced my ability to keep in touch with recent award winners. Those I particularly remember are two I have already mentioned. Jingmin Huang continued in Oxford for several years and Mark Yifan Mo who was instrumental in setting up the first luncheon.

Why do you think someone might want to support the China Oxford Scholarship Fund?

We have always hoped that there will be, in due course, scholars who are able to support COSF from their own successes or can introduce someone who can.

Letter from Wolfson China Scholar



Hello to all the friends, benefactors, supporters and scholars of the China Oxford Scholarship Fund community. My name is Yimin Wu and I was a Wolfson China Scholar in 2008 and 2009. I was at St. Anne's College and earned my DPhil in materials in 2012.

I would like to give my sincere gratitude to the China Oxford Scholarship Fund, with special thanks to The Wolfson Foundation which gave me enormous support during my DPhil study. Without this community, I cannot be who I am now. I am extremely proud of being part of the COSF community because of its ambitious missions and what it has done to cultivate future leaders in various disciplines.

After my DPhil study, I was awarded the prestigious EPSRC (Engineering and Physical Science Research Council) Doctoral Prize to remain at the University of Oxford for six months for post-doctoral research. During that time at Oxford, I did research on developing a novel photodetector. Also, I organised a UK PhD forum on "Scientific Innovation and Economy Restructuring" at St. Anne's College in February 2013. The Forum featured distinguished speakers such as the UK Chinese Embassy's Minister Counsellor Yang Shen, Pro-Vice Chancellor, Dr. Stephen Goss, 48 Group Club Chairman Stephen Perry and University College of London Pro-Provost Prof. Zhengxiao Guo.

After I left the United Kingdom, I was offered a postdoc position at the University of California at Berkeley and the Lawrence Berkeley National Lab. My work is trying to solve the energy issue of modern society. It is an exciting project on the energy materials for novel battery with a variety of applications, such as electrical powered vehicles, cell phone batteries and so on. It will help society to develop a sustainable energy economy without any societal or environmental costs.

Scholar's Update



Yuge Ma (3rd from left) and fellow Chinese students at the India Habitat Centre with Parliamentarian Mani Shankar Aiyar and his wife Suneet. Mani Aiyar.

Congratulations to Yuge Ma who was a Wolfson China Scholar in 2011 and a China Oxford Scholar in 2010. Last August, her book *Growing Up in India* was published and since then, her work has been receiving positive reviews in China and India. Yuge is pursuing a DPhil in Geography and the Environment and is at Wolfson College. In October 2013, she travelled to India where she is currently conducting field work as an Avantha Fellow with the Aspen Institute India. She is also a research associate at Institute for Economic Growth (IEG) in New Delhi. On top of her fieldwork, she has been busy promoting India to a mainland Chinese audience and mutual understanding between India and China. Last October, to coincide with Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to China, Yuge wrote an article about the economic relationship between India and China. This was published in the widely-read China Youth Daily. Yuge is the founding president of the Chinese Student Association in Jawaharlal Nehru University. She and her fellow Chinese students and friends had the opportunity to meet with Mani Shankar Aiyar at the India Habitat Centre in New Delhi. Aiyar is a Member of the Parliament and former Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas. In her book *Growing Up in India*, Yuge touches on her trip to Aiyar's constituency in the state of Tamil Nadu and her research on local democracy in India.

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Scholars' Snapshots



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Top photo: Timothy Beardson at his home with (L-R) Cheng Li, Kun Liu, Prof. Elizabeth Hsu, Xiang Liu and James Chan

Middle photo: 2013 Scholar Zhongwen Zhang with London Mayor Boris Johnson at a Hong Kong Association luncheon event at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel in Hyde Park.

Bottom photo: Araceli Keelan of the Brian Keelan Award hosted a pre-Christmas lunch for the 2013 Scholars at the SOJO Chinese Restaurant in Oxford City Centre.

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Top photo: 2012 COSF Scholar Ginny Jingyi Wang at her November 2013 graduation with Vice-Chancellor Prof. Andrew Hamilton. Ginny earned her MSc in Financial Economics and was at Oriel College.

Middle photo: 2009 Wolfson China Scholar Robert Jiahe Xi on day of graduation. Robert earned his DPhil in Computer Science and was at Christ Church.

Bottom photo: Scholars James Chan, Zhongwen Zhang and Sophie Feifei Deng with Victor Chu and Zhou Xiaoming, Minister Counsellor for the Economics and Commercial Office of the Chinese Embassy in the UK. Photo taken at the Oxford China Forum.

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Happy Chinese New Year

*Best Wishes for the
Year of the Horse*



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