



VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF
WELLINGTON
TE HERENGA WAKA

New Zealand Contemporary China Research Centre

KŌMARU KURA



2022 Annual Report

THE NEW ZEALAND CONTEMPORARY CHINA RESEARCH CENTRE | KŌMARU KURA

Dec 2022

2022 in review

Due to ongoing travel disruptions, the public focus of 2022 has been on online academic exchanges, research publications, continuing the Global China Seminar Series and responding to requests for media commentary and opinion pieces. We are tentatively returning to in person events but mostly locally. The China Capable Public Sector (CCPS) programme remains a central focus for the Centre's engagement with the New Zealand Government. As part of our ongoing commitment to academic exchange with Chinese institutions, we held a successful online symposium with the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. We also co-organised a successful online discussion with the Shanghai Institute of International Studies and engaged in online discussions with Chinese institutions and the Chinese Embassy in New Zealand. China and New Zealand-China relations have remained topical for media in 2022. This year the Centre was reviewed by Victoria University of Wellington (the host institution) with a favourable outcome and new ideas to strengthen the long-term sustainability of the Centre.

During the second half of 2022 the director was on research and study leave. We'd like to thank Duncan Campbell for his work as Acting Director in that absence. Duncan brought extensive experience and knowledge to the role and ensured that activities at the Centre ran smoothly and were high quality. Duncan convened an extraordinarily successful forum on the Chinese diaspora in New Zealand featuring members of the local Chinese community. He organised and ran a successful public lecture, hosted six Global China Seminars as well as five knowledge transfer talks, two masterclasses and various other activities for the China Capable Public Sector programme.

Next year we look forward to opportunities for in-person visits to China and in-person dialogues.

Activities of the Centre

Publications

‘Talking Past Each Other: Coverage of New Zealand-China Relations in New Zealand and Chinese Media.’ (2022) By Caleb Hoyle

This NZCCRC publication compares reporting on the New Zealand-China bilateral relationship in China and New Zealand over the first half of 2022. It presents a comparative analysis of media coverage in China and New Zealand across three themes: China in the Pacific, New Zealand’s China policy; the state of the New Zealand-China relationship. The report found significant differences in how stories about the relationship were presented in the New Zealand Herald and Stuff, compared to the presentation in the People’s Daily and Global Times.

Encountering China: New Zealanders and the People’s Republic (2022) edited by Brian Moloughney and Duncan Campbell

The NZCCRC provided financial support for the publication of a volume marking the anniversary of 50 years of diplomatic relations between Aotearoa New Zealand, and the People’s Republic of China (1972-2022). Senior fellows, the Director and Centre staff contributed pieces to the book, which featured 50 vignettes from New Zealanders across a wide range of themes. The book was successfully launched by the Centre in partnership with Massey University Press on the 8th of December. Some pieces have been republished in Newsroom, China Heritage and the Asia Media Centre.

Public Lecture

Renowned China commentator Jeremy Goldkorn delivered a Public Lecture in Wellington on the 7th of July 2022 titled ‘America’s nutjob China hawks, useful idiots and the disappearing ground between them’. The lecture was both in-person and online to an audience of some 120 scholars, policymakers, diplomats, students and members of the public. The speech examined the fraught public debates in the United States about US-China relations. The talk was well-received, and the speaker was interviewed by RNZ, Newsroom and other local news outlets.

Symposiums

Transformation of the World Trade System: Opportunities and Challenges (19 May 2022)

Co-organised by the New Zealand Contemporary China Research Centre and the Bureau of International Cooperation at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS).

This online symposium drew on expertise from across New Zealand to discuss the WTO, its reform and the prospects for the international trade system. New Zealand speakers included: Rob Scollay (Auckland University), Michelle Zhang (VUW), Alan Bollard (VUW), and Stephanie Honey, and was moderated by Xiaoming Huang (VUW). The discussion focussed on opportunities and disruptors to trade and economic links with specific reference to:

1. Reform of the World Trade Organisation (WTO)
2. Regional Integration (CPTPP, RCEP, APEC)

3. Bilateral Trade and Economy

Global China Seminar Series

The Global China Seminar series is a regular academic seminar on an aspect of China Studies. We have had a series of high-quality speakers and good turnout at all seminars with audiences ranging from 30 to 60 academics, policymakers, media and interested public. Most of the events have been in-person and online hybrid offerings which has enabled scholars and students from other centres to participate. 2022 speakers included:

1. Professor Paola Voci (Professor of Chinese, University of Otago) *'Truth still matters: cinema and the 'ethical frame' in and out of China.'*
2. Professor Paul Clark (Professor of Chinese, University of Auckland) *'Recreating Beijing: A Changing City and Citizenry, 1914-1984.'*
3. Professor Brian Moloughney (Professor of History, University of Otago) *'China (Re)learns Sanskrit: Alexander von Staël-Holstein and Comparative Philology in Peking, 1917-1937.'*
4. Chris Elder (Former NZ Ambassador to China) *'A lily in the barnyard of politics: The Institute of Pacific Relations in China, and the New Zealand economists who were brought to central roles through shameless cronyism.'*
5. Linda Jaivin (Translator and Author of *The Shortest History of China*) *'China's diversity (and why we need to hear more about it).'*
6. Dr Sally Liangni Liu (Senior Lecturer, School of Humanities, Media, and Creative Communication, Massey University) *'Albany- An ethnoburb to study subethnicities of new Chinese immigrants from China in New Zealand.'*
7. Dr Nick Smith (Research Fellow, University of Canterbury) *'From positive to negative history: The shifting use of history in China's diplomacy.'*
8. Portia Mao (Journalist, Tui Media) *'My experience as a Chinese kimi journalist.'*
9. Dr Lili Song (Senior Lecturer in Law, University of Otago) *'Foreigners in the Chinese Criminal Justice System.'*

Roundtables

1. The Centre hosted a roundtable discussion with the Chinese Embassy on the recently released 20th Party Congress report.
2. The Centre hosted representatives from the Chinese Embassy for a discussion of New Zealand-China relations and regional affairs (23 February 2022).
3. The Centre hosted a roundtable discussion with the Chinese Embassy on the New Zealand-China bilateral relationship (30 September 2022).

China Capable Public Sector (CCPS)

The Centre has continued to work closely with the CCPS programme to deliver quality programmes on China for the New Zealand public sector. In 2022 we have delivered 22 events with the CCPS programme including:

- Three 5-day Masterclasses on China.
- Five 1-day MFAT exclusive workshops- a new offering for MFAT employees to increase their knowledge and understanding of China.

- Twelve Knowledge Transfer events:
- One Cross-Agency Forum examining the Chinese diaspora in New Zealand

The Centre will continue to deliver the CCPS programme into 2023 with the addition of a new one-day course designed exclusively for MBIE participants complimenting the existing work programme.

2022 Review

The Centre was reviewed by Victoria University of Wellington (the host University) in mid-2022. The review panel consisted of David Capie (Convenor), Alan Bollard, Pip McLauchlan, Brian Moloughney, and Danette Olsen. The self-review process was an excellent opportunity to reflect on the Centre's activities and to consider its future strategic direction as well as to plan for a sustainable future. The review findings were positive. They provided 5 commendations on the work to date and 13 recommendations for the future. These have been incorporated into an implementation plan for the Centre over the next couple of years.

I would like to thank the review panel for their excellent recommendations and professional review and all those who provided submissions to the review.

Other Activities

The Centre has been active providing comment for New Zealand and international media (print, online, television and radio) as well as maintaining a social media presence through its Twitter account and regular op-eds for domestic and international media and think tanks. Staff at the Centre published journal articles and engaged in roundtables hosted by the Asia New Zealand Foundation and the Centre for Strategic Studies. Aside from the Chinese Embassy, the Centre has held discussions this year with diplomats from Australia, the EU, Germany, Japan, Singapore, South Korea, the United States, and the United Kingdom. Staff at the Centre participated in online events with Chinese institutions.

Planned Activities for 2023

The Centre plans to engage with partners at institutions in China and to hold in-person meetings in the coming year. We are hoping that 2023 will be a year when we can lead a group of scholars to China for dialogues and host Chinese institutions in New Zealand. The Centre plans an ongoing series of China talks to highlight the breadth of expertise in the country and to facilitate discussion. The Centre plans a report on Chinese language media in New Zealand. The Centre has a full programme of CCPS activities in the first half of 2023. The Centre will begin implementing the review panel recommendations in 2023.

A View to the Future

The review of the New Zealand Contemporary China Research Centre demonstrated the ongoing need for a research centre charged with promoting research and knowledge-sharing on China in New Zealand. The review also demonstrated the need to reprioritise the work of the

Centre toward more academic oriented activities and to not spread the limited staffing bandwidth too thinly.

Discussion of China is becoming mainstream, and the Centre has played a key role in promoting and guiding that shift. At the same time, New Zealand remains well behind the level of knowledge and expertise required to shift away from reactive discussion of critical issues toward proactive consideration. The need for knowledge informed by New Zealand-relevant research is greater than ever. This is especially true with the emergence of a more confident and impactful contemporary China, and one that continues to present both opportunities and risks for New Zealand.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge the continued support and encouragement that the Centre receives from Victoria University of Wellington, Sarah Leggott and the Centre's Associate Directors representing our New Zealand university members.

As always, I welcome input and feedback from the Advisory Board.

Jason Young
NZCCRC Director
Dec 2022



Victoria University of Wellington

705-6, 21 D Kelburn Parade

PO Box 600

Wellington, 6140

NEW ZEALAND

+64-4-463 5760

chinacentre@vuw.ac.nz

www.wgtn.ac.nz/chinaresearchcentre