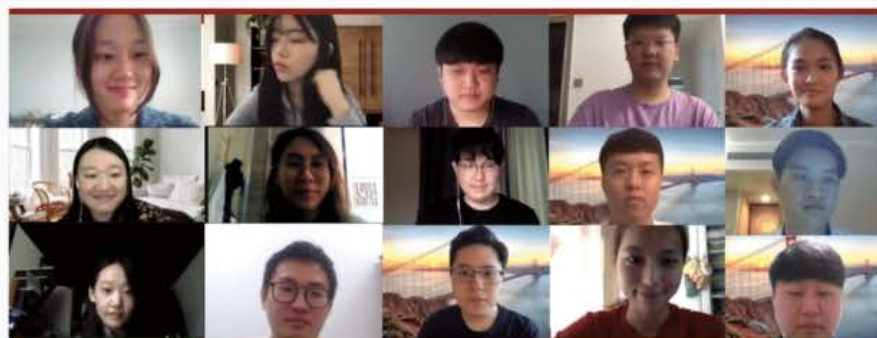


VOL. 10 ISSUE 1 • JUNE 2021

CENTRE FOR CHINA STUDIES

Newsletter of Centre for China Studies, the Chinese University of Hong Kong



Final year students during their capstone project presentations last month.

**CONGRATS
2021
GRADS!**



This Issue:

Students Explore Tai O Village
PAGE 2

CCS Alumni Association
PAGE 3

CCS Graduate Opens Café
PAGE 4

Meet our Undergraduate Students
PAGE 5-6

RPg Workshop
PAGE 6

MA Course Highlights
PAGE 7-8

Faculty and Student News
PAGE 9

STUDENTS EXPLORE HONG KONG'S CULTURAL HERITAGE

When asked to immerse themselves in China issues, a group of undergrads asked themselves how the pandemic might be impacting a local tourist and cultural hotspot



Groupmates Li Chun Chun, Li Man Yee, Kyoka Shigemitsu, Tsui Hoi Tung and Yoon Hye Won, either physically or virtually, after a day researching locals at Tai O Village.

A group of first-year Chinese Studies students were tasked with immersing themselves in China-related topics and issues. The group chose Tai O Fishing Village, and through research, collecting data in the form of footage, photos, and interviews they were able to learn and understand the story and struggles of the local people, such as Tai O's disappearing heritage and rapidly shrinking population of the village.

The group of students began with sifting through a large amount of existing research on Tai O. "We were invited to choose a topic related to Hong Kong or Chinese culture, so it directly made me think of Tai O. In the past,

Hong Kong was a fishing village, as Tai O is today, so studying it will help us with understanding the city's identity," said Li Man Yee.

With the help of the Tai O Rural Committee Historic and Cultural Showroom, they collected information on the developing history in Tai O mainly on the fishery, salt industry, and religious rituals unique to the area. The group interviewed local citizens, such as market vendors, a person in charge of a local temple, the fishermen, as well as renowned professors, such as Professor Liu from the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology who is an expert on Tai O Studies.

With a rapidly aging population and young people leaving for other places in Hong Kong, maintaining the lifestyle and traditions is becoming complicated and it may eventually lead to the disappearance of the distinct Tai O culture. This hands-on perspective allowed the students to get to know the history and understand the current policies of the SAR government regarding the revitalization of the village and the preservation of its culture.

Trying local Tai O cuisine in a newly revitalized Tai O Heritage Hotel was one of their most memorable experiences. After interviewing the locals, they also had a chance to visit the village's pier and enjoy the beautiful sunset.

The lessons they learned changed their perspectives on cultural heritage, and gave them opportunities to practice skills they learned in the classroom while exploring the village and connecting them with people they would normally not have a chance to meet.



Yoon Hye Won introducing the topic during the group's video presentation.

CCS ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

A brief interview with the new CCS Alumni Association President, a 2019 BSSc in China Studies graduate



John Chen (far left) with students at the 2017 CCS graduation celebration.

What are future events you have planned for the Alumni Association?

Currently I plan to organize some gatherings for alumni and students in Hong Kong with other student organizations of the Centre. I would also like to host some public talks that would cover different topics.

What is your vision for the Association?

I wish to integrate different groups of our students and alumni to create a network that helps bring more opportunities to those wishing to dig deeper into the field of China studies.

How long is your presidential term?

I was elected last October and I will work as the president for two or three years, until the association is on track and we have enough members to vote for new leadership.

Why would you encourage students to be a part of the alumni association?

Well, it costs nothing, all you need to do is fill in a form to join the association. We will offer services to our alumni and are building a close community with various activities.

"I hope the Association will continue to link different generations of students to one another, as well as to the Centre. For us teachers, it's always great to hear what our graduates are now up to!"

- CCS Professor Kristof Van den Troost

Why did you decide to come to CCS and what was your main interest during your studies?

I chose CCS for the awesome resources and opportunities provided by CUHK. I really enjoyed my exchange experience in Taiwan and the public lectures offered by the University Service Centre. My main focuses were early Qing history and diplomacy of the PRC.

What advice would you give to students currently in the China Studies programme?

Try to utilize the archives provided by the libraries, it's even better than the Hoover Institute of Stanford and the Fairbanks Center of Harvard! Also, the lectures offered by visiting scholars are wonderful if you intend to learn something professional for real.



A barbecue in Wu Kai Sha organized by the Alumni Association in 2018.

How can students and alumni join the association?

You can email me at chinastudiesalumni@gmail.com or directly sign up on the Google form at <https://forms.gle/zWuKbx8rXLWk8By76>.



A job talk organized by the Alumni Association in 2017.

CCS 2019 Graduate Opens Café Amid Pandemic

In the midst of the pandemic and economic uncertainty, 2019 CCS graduate Jaliff Yiu saw an opportunity to open a café in Hong Kong's Causeway Bay. Always having a love for food, he just needed the right time to share his gift of cooking with the rest of Hong Kong. "The industry took a great hit during the pandemic but it made the means to begin more approachable, hence the decision to take such a risk," said Yiu.

His passion for food was fostered in his time at CCS, as he was able to complete his capstone research project on the attitudes towards MSG of urban Chinese housewives. This project helped him to better understand food consumer psychology in Hong Kong. The programme prepared him in other ways too, linking him with like-minded individuals and giving him the opportunity to explore his interests in other cultures.

"CCS provided me with an academic space for my humanities oriented brain to channel one passion into multiple possibilities." He was given the opportunity with CCS to travel to Sichuan during a fieldtrip course, which piqued his curiosity in the historical research of food. He also had internships during the programme, with professors there to provide guidance along the way. "Modules centered on my understanding of the logistics, and macroeconomic aspects of food security in greater China."



Professor Ling Minhua and CCS graduate Helen Lee with Jaliff Yiu at Passepartout.



Jaliff with his coworkers at Passepartout.



Current CCS students visiting Passepartout.

"CCS provided me with an academic space for my humanities oriented brain to channel one passion into multiple possibilities."

Yiu credits his advisors for helping him tailor the programme to his interests. "All of these things cumulatively boosted my readiness to enter the food and beverage industry and ultimately opened many doors, such as my first graduate job in food and science research."

When asked what advice he might offer students who aren't sure about the direction to take after they've graduated, he noted the strengths of the CCS programme. "In the end it's what you make of the things you learn. Being uncertain of what to do is entirely normal, and frankly to an extent I felt lost on every step of the way." He would tell students to try hard to find what interests them and take advantage of the resources available to guide the way. "Whether that is the people you meet, the learning experiences we are privileged to embark on, or simply the academic environment to express your mind."

You can stop by and say hi to Jaliff at his café Passepartout on Lockhardt Road in Causeway Bay.

MEET SOME OF OUR UNDERGRADS



WONG Tsz Nok, Matthew
Hong Kong

As a local student, what do you think is advantageous about studying China?

There are two advantages. Hong Kong has a similar cultural background as China and many people here still uphold some Chinese traditional values, such as filial piety. In high school we studied classical texts like the Analects. These similarities helped me understand social phenomena within China more easily. Another advantage is experiencing the tension between Hongkongers and Chinese. The relationship between China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong is an important issue to investigate. Hongkongers have different attitudes towards China. It's not hard to notice conflict between them. Studying China as a local student allows me to look more closely at this issue in person.

Which courses have you enjoyed most in the programme so far?

My language and literature course, as I am fascinated with the power of language to communicate with others. I enjoyed the translation course I took last year. It allowed me to ponder which strategies to use when I need to translate sentences. Meanwhile, it makes me wonder if I have presented my thoughts accurately and precisely when I am trying to make a statement.

How does online learning differ from your expectations?

Actually, online learning does not differ from my expectations. My classmates and I are still paying attention during lessons. But I am enjoying it less than I thought I would. People are engaged in discussions. However, many of us, including myself, are not comfortable with turning on the camera. It feels better when I see people's actual faces rather than seeing them on Zoom. Sometimes by looking at other's facial expressions or body language, you know if they agree with you or not.

What is some advice you'd give to students who are struggling to learn online?

My advice is to stay away from your bed. Our home may serve as a safe space to us, but it may be harder to learn in a comfortable environment. I think having cups of tea during lessons help me to stay awake and focus in class.

Have you been able to connect with your classmates during this online mode of teaching?

My friends and I still message each other on a weekly basis. We share our thoughts on assignments or assessments. I think Instagram really helps us to know more about others' lives.

What are you most looking forward to when students are able to return to campus for classes?

I would say the food, libraries and conversations. I just don't like having discussions without seeing actual faces.

Have you been able to return to campus for studying or classes in other disciplines?

Sadly, the answer is no. Yet, I do have a chance to participate in a field trip to Kuk Po in the near future. I have enrolled in a course on intangible cultural heritage in Hong Kong which is conducted by the anthropology discipline. Kuk Po is now a famous hiking trail and only a few people are living there now. In the field trip, we are going to observe the setting of the village. If we are lucky enough, we may have a chance to talk with the village head. Also, it is important to listen to some hikers on how they feel about Kuk Po. Listening to non-villagers' points of view will allow us to hear other perspectives on Kuk Po.



Regina Wang POON, Year 3
Hong Kong

Why did you choose to study China?

I am interested in Chinese development and I have had a strong admiration for Chinese history and culture. I have been intrigued by China since I was a child, so deciding to pursue this major was easy as I can enhance my knowledge in a field I have always been passionate about.

Why did you choose CUHK over other institutions that teach Chinese studies?

CUHK has experience in teaching Chinese culture and is one of the best institutions for this major. CCS has also offered me opportunities to develop my passions such as my exchange to Shanghai Jiao Tong University. During my exchange I was able to talk to locals and improve my Mandarin proficiency. Since I used the language all the time it was challenging at first, but it helped me gain confidence eventually.

What do you plan to do after you complete your studies?

I don't have a specific plan for the future yet, but I want to continue learning about China and ideally work in Shanghai or another Chinese city. Since CCS equips me with a comprehensive knowledge and allows me to discover China through a wide range of subjects, I think it's a good place to start.

What do you love most about your CCS courses?

I love how my courses offer new approaches to studying China, such as analyzing Chinese movies or other art forms. It outlines the possible values of the movie and society itself, and highlights limitations or chances for the future. Evaluating to what extent these judgements and represented values play a role in the Chinese media culture makes it easier to understand modern Chinese society and see it through a global lens.

What advice do you have for new students?

Focus on learning Mandarin from year one, as it takes some time to develop a native accent. Starting as soon as possible would be beneficial for non-native speakers, especially to feel prepared for an exchange in year three.



RPg Training Workshop: Oral Defence

With students beginning to prepare for their upcoming qualifying exams and oral defence, they were able to receive advice and guidance from professors during the second RPg Training Workshop Series on 7 April.

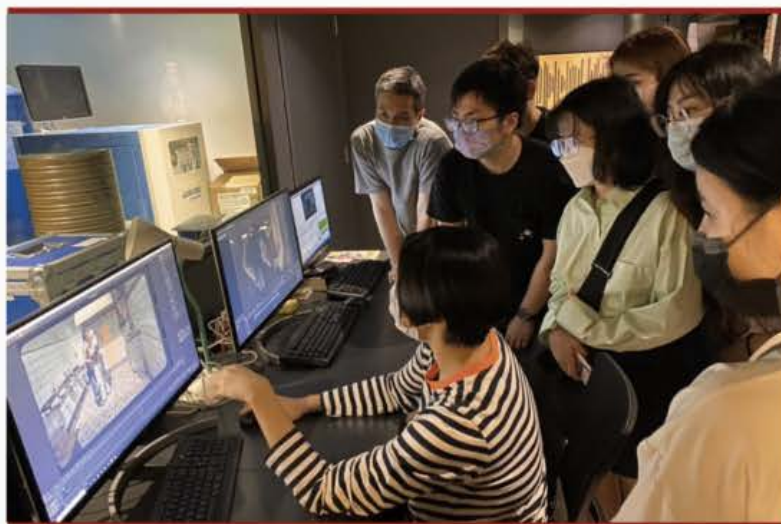
Graduating CCS student thesis topics range from: the domestic politics of Maoist sports; upland gatherers in western China and the natural medicinal products trade; the livelihood and identity of mainland professionals in Hong Kong; and Chinese Monastic Buddhism in Southeast Asia from 1876-1974.

MA COURSE HIGHLIGHTS

Prof. Kristof Van den Troost and Dr. Timmy Chen Chih-ting organized the CHES5002A **Chinese Studies Fieldtrip** course in Hong Kong which was centered around the theme of Hong Kong cinema, including focus on: Wong Kar-wai, Stanley Kwan, Film restoration, Golden Scene (film production, distribution, exhibition), women in Hong Kong cinema (Norris Wong, Ann Hui, Winnie Tsang, Cecilia Wong 卓男, Calmen Lui Lai Wah), and alternative forms of cinema (independent film, video art). Activities included film screenings, meetings with film scholars and practitioners, and visits to a variety of film companies and organizations.

After attending twelve days of activities, students submitted a field trip diary to reflect upon what they had learned, such as the history of Hong Kong cinema, the state of the industry today, and the role of different participants in the city's film culture.

This was some students' first time to participate in a film festival. One student, Wei Jingyan, had no idea what the significance was of holding a film festival or why the organizer would re-show movies that many people might have watched decades ago. By attending three screenings – Centre Stage (Director's Cut, Stanley Kwan, 1991), Fallen Angels (Wong Kar-wai, 1995), and Lan Yu (Stanley Kwan, 2001) 2001 – shown in its newly restored version at the 45th Hong Kong International Film Festival. Jingyan realized two meanings behind holding the film festival.



Students receiving a lesson at L'Imagine Ritrovata Asia, a highly specialized film restoration laboratory.

"It allows us to review and recall the excellent Hong Kong films in the past on the big screen, and the new versions also bring different visual experiences and understanding to the audience. The second meaning is to provide a platform for the audience to communicate. It is the communication between director and audience, and the communication between audience and audience." Students not only have a better appreciation of film, but also have a clearer understanding of the behind-the-scenes process.

Another student, Zhang Tianjiao, recalls in her diary "many of our guest speakers are women. Their existence has already injected fresh blood into the male-dominated Hong Kong cinema." She cites Calmen Lui's reply to a classmate who asked her if she thinks color grading consultant is a seriously underestimated profession, "If you don't underestimate yourself, do you think others will underestimate you?" Tianjiao appreciates Lui because, rather than regarding herself as a tool for the director, she tries to maximize her value and the value of the film in every creative process.

Tianjiao used to think a director is the biggest contributor when talking about their film, but after meeting with other practitioners, she realizes filmmaking is all about teamwork.

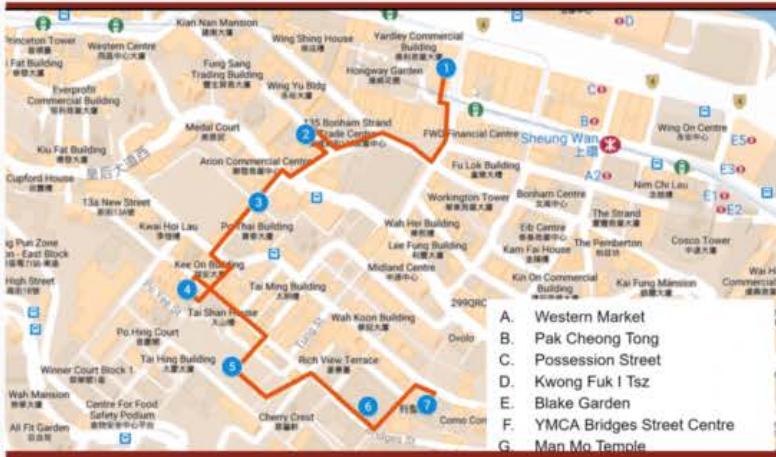
"Is there any hope for the Hong Kong film industry?"— this is one of the most frequently asked questions to our guest speakers. Tianjiao believes that "vicissitude is the natural law of every industry. However, filmmakers with different styles and characters in each era always bring new works that conform to their times. All we need to do is look forward to the coming surprises."



Students meeting Ms. Winnie Tsang, President, producer, and founder of Golden Scene.

"many of our guest speakers are women, their existence has already injected fresh blood into the male-dominated Hong Kong cinema. 'If you don't underestimate yourself, do you think others will underestimate you?'"
- from the diary of Zhang Tianjiao reflecting on quote by Calmen Lui

MA COURSE HIGHLIGHTS



Students in Dr. Leung Kai Chi's **Hong Kong and Mainland: Interaction and Integration** went on an online tour of Hong Kong Island: Sheung Wan and Central to learn about the social and cultural history of Hong Kong.

Hosted by Walk in Hong Kong, a local walking tour company, students virtually visited sites such as the Western Market, Tai Kwun, and a local trading house (Nam Pak Hong 南北行) to learn stories of Hong Kong's colonial history.

The class first "met" with their local tour guide Mr. Paul Chan, former Political Assistant to the Secretary for Food and Health and founder of Walk in Hong Kong, in the Western Market. Besides appreciating its Edwardian architecture, the class also learnt from Paul that the Western Market used to be right on the coastline of Hong Kong Island.

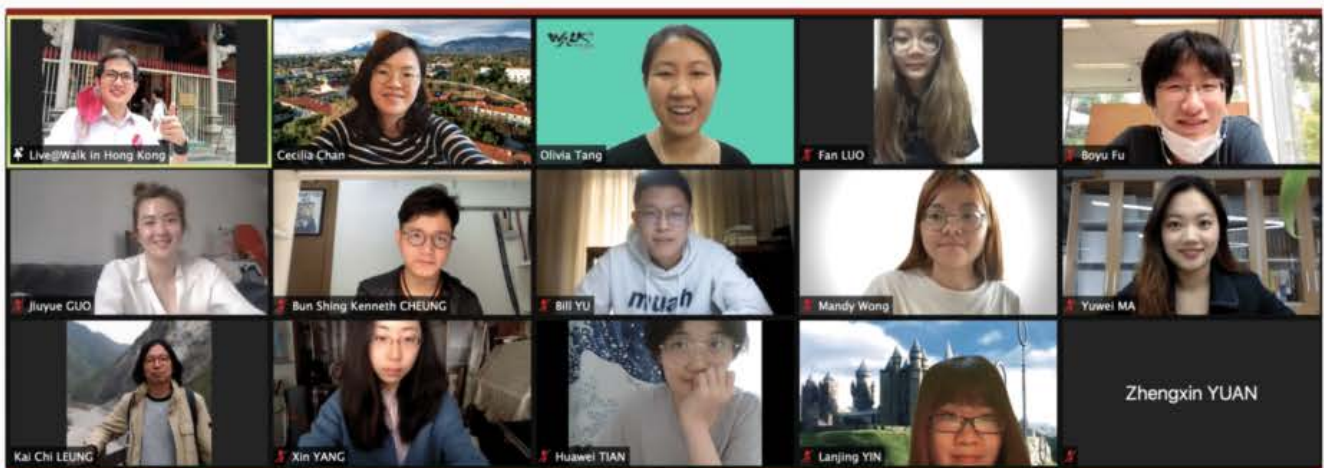
Back in the colonial period, the Market witnessed merchants docking to unload imported goods and slowly through the years, Hong Kong became a trading port.

The tour through Hong Kong's past ended in Blake Garden, which came into being when housing areas on the site were demolished and redeveloped due to the Bubonic Plague of 1894.

This tour offered a chance for students to reflect on how communities, societies, and governments responded to diseases and disasters historically, which is especially relevant when the world is challenged by the COVID-19 pandemic.



Dr. Leung with students from the MA graduating class of 2020 on a field trip to Tai Kwun Centre for Heritage and Arts.



CCS STUDENT AND FACULTY NEWS

Research Updates, Awards, Promotions, & Publications

photo submitted by CCS graduate Jaliff YIU

Publication Highlights

Full-time Faculty

Professor Minhua Ling published a journal article, "Container housing: Formal informality and deterritorialized home-making amid bulldozer urbanism in Shanghai." *Urban Studies*, 58 (6): 1141-1157. 2021.

Professor Tim Summers published an article, "Maritime politics as discourse in the Indo/Asia-Pacific," *Territory, Politics, Governance*, 2021 (online first).

Part-time Faculty

Dr. Willy Wo Lap Lam published a book chapter, "Xi Jinping restores the ideological imperative so as to boost his own power," in Arthur Ding and Jagannath Panda, ed., *Chinese Politics and Foreign Policy under Xi Jinping*, London: Routledge, 2021, pp. 25-46.

Dr. Stephan Ortmann published an article, "Hong Kong's constructive identity and political participation: Resisting China's blind nationalism," *Asian Studies Review*, 45:2, pp. 306-324. 2021.

Grants and Awards

Professor Summers received a Direct Grant for Research from the Faculty of Arts for the project "British media coverage of China".



Congratulations to **Professor Yunwen Gao** who was awarded the Faculty of Arts **Outstanding Teaching Award 2020**. This award is to honor teachers for their accomplishments in teaching and enhancing students' learning in the Faculty.

You can listen to recent talks from our China Studies Webinar Series on our podcast. Available on Spotify and the Apple Podcast app.



CENTRE FOR CHINA STUDIES
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

LEARN STUDIES AWARDS SERIES 2021-22 TERM 2

Waste and Labor in China's New Green City
Amy ZHANG
New York University

10 Jun (Thu) 9:30-11:00am (HKT)
9 Jun (Wed) 9:30-11:00pm (EAST)
Conducted by English
Online via Zoom

QR code for registration
Scan to register
By 9 Jun 3 pm (HKT)

Amy Zhang is an assistant professor of anthropology at New York University where she teaches and researches in the areas of environmental anthropology, science and technology studies, material culture and development. She is currently working on a book project on green efforts to transform waste management infrastructures and how these attempts ground and condition the forms and tenor of China's emerging urban environmental politics.

CCS closed out the 2021 spring term **Webinar Series** with talks by Professor Mun Young Cho from Yonsei University, Professor Lili Lai from Peking University, Professor He Bian from Princeton University, and Professor Amy Zhang from New York University.

Find updates on our speaker series from our website and social media

Important Upcoming Date:

JULY

2

Paper Submission Deadline
Institute of Chinese Studies
International Conference 2021:
See CUHK's Website for Details

Newsletter Contributors:

Cecilia Chi Man Chan, Professor Yunwen Gao, Marta Gramatyka, Alexandria Preis, Mavis Mei Fong Siu, Yiwei Yang and Dora Wuyutong Yao.