



**UNIVERSITY
OF MALAYA**

INSTITUTE OF CHINA STUDIES

马来亚大学中国研究所

ICS Bulletin

No.12, December 2018

Tan Sri Lee Loy Seng Annual China Lecture Series 2018: “New Confucianism and the 21st Century Civilizational Dialogue”



From left: Dato' Lee Hau Hian of Kuala Lumpur Kepong Berhad, sponsor for the public lecture, Datuk Ir. (Dr.) Abdul Rahim Hj. Hashim, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Malaya, Prof. Tu Weiming and Datuk Prof. Dr. Danny Wong

On 26th October 2018, the Institute of China Studies (ICS), with the generous support of Kuala Lumpur Kepong Berhad (KLK), hosted the second lecture of the Tan Sri Lee Loy Seng Annual China Lecture Series, which was delivered by Professor Tu Weiming, of Beijing University.

A globally renowned Confucian scholar, Tu Weiming is Chair Professor of the Humanities and founding Director of the Institute for Advanced Humanistic Studies at Peking University. He is also a Professor Emeritus and Senior Fellow of Asia Center at Harvard University. Professor Tu other affiliations include his position as a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, a vice-president of the Institute of International Philosophy, and a member of the Academia Sinica. In terms of his research concerns, Professor Tu is currently exploring the subject of Spiritual Humanism as an emerging global discourse.

The title of the 2018 public lecture was “New Confucianism and the 21st Century Civilizational Dialogue.” Professor Tu began with a review of the general status of Confucianism. Sideline for much of 20th century, he sees the Confucian ethos being gradually rehabilitated into contemporary China mainstream life. And as the PRC's footprints expand abroad, through the Belt and Road Initiatives, for example, this ancient Chinese tradition is likely to bear significant impacts upon the 21st century world order.

As a life-long advocate of inter-civilizational dialogues, Professor Tu sees in a resurgent China new possibilities for cross-cultural understanding and interactions, in Asia broadly, and Malaysia specifically. But these openings, he warned come with risks as well, that could impede Beijing's much touted vision of the harmonious co-existence of world civilizations.

And Prof Tu addressed these challenges through the prism of the moral cultivation endeavor of ‘learning to be human’. Drawing upon the Confucian comprehensive and integrated humanistic tradition, he identified four basic principles by which one can and should embark on the authentic way of learning to be human.

- (1) First is the harmonious fusion of the body and mind. A holistic development that requires the nurturing of the physical as well as the spiritual dimension of the human self. Material wealth alone is not adequate. The human person needs spiritual vitality as well.



Prof. Tu delivering the lecture

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Tan Sri Lee Loy Seng Annual China Lecture Series 2018

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(2) The second principle Prof Tu underscored is the fruitful interaction of self and community. In the Confucian tradition, the self is integral to the whole. Unless the individual is bonded to the collective, the human person's identity and sense of fulfillment becomes challenged.

(3) The individual is not merely connected to the wider human family. The human species must also maintain a sustainable relationship with nature. In this third principle, Prof Tu reminded us of the urgent need to preserve the wellbeing of mother-earth. The fate of humankind is intertwined with the destiny of the wider natural ecology.

(4) The final fourth point pertains to the transcendental principle. World civilizations must co-exist in deference to a higher authority of the Heavens. Professor Tu explained that the Confucian tradition, though humanistic in essence, is actually acutely mindful of the need to sustain a existence that is in harmony with the cosmic power.

In order to achieve civilizational harmony, Professor Tu exhortation is to strive for a balanced development, of body and mind, self and community, human and nature, and

human and the transcendent. By embracing this holistic vision, we are more likely to see the various world civilizations co-existing harmoniously. ♦



International Forum "Reflection and Dialogue on China's Education Reform"



The President of the Malaysia China Silk Road Business Chamber, Tan Sri Ong Tee Keat (5th from right), the keynote speaker, Prof. Zhou Jianshe (4th from right), the Director of ICS, Dr. Ngeow Chow Bing (5th from left) and the Director of Kong Zi Institute, Dr Wang Zhenghai (4th from left) with all the presenters.

On 8th August 2018, Kongzi Institute (UM) and ICS co-organized an international forum entitled "Reflection and Dialogue on China's Education Reform." The President of the Malaysia China Silk Road Business Chamber, Tan Sri Ong Tee Keat, officiated the opening of this forum. Professor Zhou Jianshe from the Research Center for Language Intelligence of China then delivered the keynote speech in which he spoke on the subject of artificial intelligence and its potential impact on education. The forum main theme was to review the history and the contemporary challenges facing Chinese education. And to discuss the ongoing reform and development of higher education in China and how these could enhance educational exchanges between China and Asean. The speakers at the forum included scholars from Beijing University, Tsinghua University, Fudan University, Xiamen University, and others. ♦

International Symposium “Transformation Anchored on Human Rights: A China – Malaysia Dialogue”



The presenters of the symposium with the organisers, Front row from left: Prof. Zhang Wei, Prof. Zhou Wei, Prof. Gudmundur Alfredson and Prof. Datuk Dr. Danny Wong. Back row from left: Dr. Zhou Lulu, Prof. Liu Xiaonan, Dr. Li Juan, Dr. Peter Chang, Dr. Andika Wahab, Dr. Sune Torsen, Mr. Sebastien Gillioz, Ms. Zhang Chong and Prof. Wang Tao

On 21-22 November 2018, the Institute of China Studies (UM), and the Institute for Human Rights, China University of Political Science & Law, China co-organized an international symposium entitled “Transformation anchored on Human Rights: A China-Malaysia Dialogue”. A together 16 speakers from Malaysia, China, and Europe presented their research in this symposium.

In the first panel, entitled “NHRAP (National Human Rights Action Plan) and World Civilizations”, the speakers analyzed how the NHRAP in China and Malaysia were informed and affected by their respectively philosophical and religious ideology. Dr. Peter Chang presented a comparatively study of Confucianism and Islamic view on the freedom of religion. Prof Wang Tao offered an updated perspective on the Chinese strategy of human rights. Base on specific case studies, Prof Zhou Wei provided insights into rights protection relating to infectious disease carriers. Dr. Li Juan rounded up the panel with an analysis of women rights in China today.

In the second panel (“Business and Human Rights”), Dr Sune Torsen started off with a paper entitled “What are the UNGPs and why are they good news for Chinese business”. Dr Zhou Lulu then spoke on the issue of forced labor and



human rights in China. Sebastian Gillioz from the OHCHR gave us a global perspective, elucidating business and human rights on the international stage. Finally Dr. Andika Wahab presented a research piece on the challenges facing human rights provision in the Malaysia palm oil industry.

The Belt & Road Initiative and Sustainable Development was the focus on Panel Three. Prof Wang Jianguyu set the BRI within the context of the wider international development program. This is followed by Prof Wang Xiumei analysis of the BRI in terms of corporation social responsibilities. Alif Iskandar closed up with discussion with a paper on how to make the BRI sustainable.

In the last panel entitled “Human Rights Education”, Professor Gudmundur Alfredsson gave an overview of the United Nations Declaration of Humans Rights and its impact on education and training. Prof Liu Xiaonan followed with a discussion on the development of gender and human rights teaching in China. Prof Zhang Wei then offered us a review of how the human rights education was developed in the China University of Political Science and Law. Providing a Malaysia perspective, Dr Khoo Ying Hooi shared with the symposium her views on the role of SUHAKAM and its advocacy of human rights education in Malaysia. ♦



Party's Absorption of the State: A Brief Comment on the Constitutional and Political Structural Reforms of China in 2018

Ngeow Chow Bing



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In early 2018, three consecutive important meetings of the party-state of China were convened in Beijing. First was the Second Plenum of the 19th Party Congress, held on 18 and 19 January. Second was the Third Plenum of the 19th Party Congress, convened from 26-28 of February. Third was the 13th National People's Congress, from 5 to 20 of March. Out of these three meetings, a series of vastly important and very comprehensive constitutional and political structural reforms were unveiled. While most foreign attention has been fixated on the constitutional change in which the term limit of the Presidency of China is lifted, the constitutional and political structural reforms actually go beyond that. A much more significant trend that emerged out of these changes was the absorption of the state institutions into the organizational apparatus of the Chinese Communist Party.

In terms of the timeline, the first meeting, the Second Plenum, was an unusual plenum, convened for the specific purpose of discussing the proposal for constitutional changes. In the past, the Second Plenum generally was devoted to deliberation on appointment matters at the state institutions (State Council, judiciary, procuratory, etc.). This has been changed to the Third Plenum this year, and during the Third Plenum, the proposal of "Plan for Deepening the Institutional Reform of the Party and State" was also adopted. The National People's Congress later basically just ratified the decisions made in the Second and Third Plenums.

It was during the Second Plenum that the constitutional changes were made. What has caught the eyes of the public was the removal of the two-term limit of the Chinese presidency. But there are other notable developments, most importantly, the enshrining of Xi Jinping's ideology or body of thought into the state's constitution, and the creation of National Supervisory Commission as a state organ comparable with other central-level bodies including the State Council, Central Military Commission, the Judiciary, and the Procuratory.



The first session of the 13th National People's Congress opens at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, China on March 5, 2018.

Source: Courtesy of Xinhuanet

Lifting of term-limit. Presidency is the weakest office among the trinity of offices (General Secretary of the Party, Chairman of the Central Military Commission, Presidency of the state) in terms of real power. These three offices were held by a single person since the late Jiang Zemin era, and the term limit of the presidency means in effective the term limit of the general secretary, although the party's constitution places no term limits on its general secretary. By removing the presidency's term limit, the Party is changing the state's constitution more along the line of the party.

The newly created National Supervision Commission (NSC) absorbs two entities, the Ministry of Supervision and the National Bureau of Corruption Prevention into one, and will be a powerful state organ under the overall guidance of the Central Commission of Disciplinary Inspection (CCDI) of the party. CCDI has been the chief weapon for Xi's anti-corruption campaign. But CCDI only covers theoretically party-members. And there are non-party public servants who are not under the coverage of CCDI. By creating NSC, and by absorbing the practices and rules of the CCDI into the NSC, and also making the two bodies sharing the same office and working closely together as one entity but with two labels (in Chinese called 合署办公), the party's authority now extends to non-party public servants through NSC, such as university staff and employees of state-owned enterprises. NSC's elevation of its position to the same level of judiciary and procuratory indicates it is at the "deputy-state" level (副国级) in Chinese administrative hierarchy. Other than its scope, what is notable about NSC is also that it is authorized by the legislature to have a wide scope of investigation and detention powers. It can detain suspects without the latter having legal counsel, raising fears that this could lead to human rights abuses.

What has received less attention is the structural reform that strengthens the infusion of state and party bodies. During the plenums, the party also rolled out the "Plan for Deepening the Institutional Reform of the Party and State", a very comprehensive and ambitious restructuring of the party-state institutions. Their major elements include:

- Transfer of authority from the State Council to the Central Party's Departments in several commissions and bureaus. The Party's center traditionally has four Departments: United Front Department, International Department, Organization Department, and Propaganda/Publicity Department. These four Departments are Ministerial-level organizations directly under the Party and not the State Council. Several independent commissions and bodies of the State Council,

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which are Vice-Ministerial-level organizations, have been transferred to be led under the leadership of these Party's Departments. State Ethnic Affairs Commission, State Administration of Religious Affairs, Overseas Chinese Affairs Office, have been transferred from the State Council to the direct authority of the United Front Department. In the past, the United Front Department also has leadership over these state's bodies but it was a dual leadership in the sense that these bodies were supervised by both United Front Department and the State Council, but now is clearly only under the Party not the State. State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television of the People's Republic of China, which was a Ministerial level body under the State Council, has been restructured and splintered into several bodies and placed under the direct leadership of the Central Propaganda Department. The Organization Department takes over from the State Council the Public Service Bureau, which was originally part of Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security. Now effectively all public servants are to be managed by the Organization Department.

- The removal of State Council's authority over certain civilian and quasi-military armed forces, including China Coast Guard and the People's Armed Police. Previously these two forces operated either directly under the State Council or jointly between the State Council and Central Military Commission, but now they have been put exclusively under the authority of the Central Military Commission.
- Merging of Party and State personnel training institutions. Before the merger, the Central Party School was responsible for party's cadre training whereas the National Academy of Governance was responsible for all civil servants' training, but now the two bodies have been merged into one, despite the maintenance of the two labels.
- Creation of super-ministerial level party's coordinating bodies to oversee specific areas of work. These bodies include the Comprehensive Rule of Law Commission, Central Auditing Commission, Central Leadership Small Group on Educational Work. In effect these bodies will be the "super" bodies under the Party's center that guides the work of relevant state's institutions, such as the courts, the National Audit Office under the State Council, and the Ministry of Education.
- Upgrading several small groups to the level of central commissions, including Central Comprehensively Deepening Reforms Commission, Central Financial and Economic Affairs Commission, Central Cyberspace Affairs Commission, and Central Commission on Foreign Affairs. The upgrading indicates that these bodies will be empowered to be a concrete policy formulation rather than deliberation bodies, effectively becoming the highest authority in their respective spheres.

All together these reforms indicate a much higher level of party-state infusion. This is a reversal of the ideas, in the past, of furthering the separation of the party and the state, and allowing the state to have more autonomy. The background of the separation idea was the total infusion of party and state during Mao's time, which brought unchecked and dictatorial power. After Mao, the liberal atmosphere allowed for reduced role of the party, not just general in the social and economic life of Chinese citizens, but also within the state itself. The most liberal exponent of this line of

thinking was in the late 1980s, when Zhao Ziyang was the party secretary, there were exploratory plans to completely separate the party from the state, including the abolishing of party cells and organizations within the state. However, the Tiananmen Incident basically killed it off. Nevertheless, "party-state separation" lingered on, although without much effective ideas of how to actually pursue this line of thinking, during Jiang's and Hu's eras. Xi's constitutional and political structural changes in March 2018 effectively ended this program, and now party-state infusion will be the major norm and trend.

What were the major factors driving Xi to implement this program of party-state infusion? First is the need for administrative efficiency. China is a Leninist party-state, and the dualistic structure created an enormous bureaucracy that has a lot of duplications of functions and diffusions of authority and responsibility. For instance, the Central Party School trains party cadres and National Academy of Governance trains civil servants, but most civil servants and party cadres also, especially among the higher echelon, which means that two institutions are training the same group of people, creating waste and duplication. Xi's reforms are aimed at reducing these inefficiencies. The second factor is likely about power consolidation. During the late years of Hu Jintao's leadership, the Chinese bureaucracy increasingly had become more corrupt, and ill-disciplined, and upon entering the top position in China, Xi Jinping was determined to tighten up and create a more consolidated and disciplined machinery. The reforms reduce situations of ambiguous or dual commands that have led to the lack of discipline in the bureaucracy and lack of coordination between different agencies.

Party-state infusion, however, is likely to lead to the erosion of the autonomy of the state. Given the party's more powerful status, party-state infusion practically means the party's absorption of the state. The party operates on the principle of keeping power at all costs. The state runs on principles of legality and the rule of law (at least in appearance). Hence, although the absorption will likely lead to a more efficient and consolidated party-state machinery at the disposal of the Chinese leadership, it is unclear whether this is for the long-term benefit for the rule of law in China. ♦

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This article is the personal opinion of the writer.

ICS Seminar “US-China Relations in the New Eras of Trump and Xi”

In conjunction with the Malaysian International Affairs Forum (MIAF), and the East Asian International Relations Caucus (EAIR), and ICS hosted a seminar by Professor Dr. David Lampton, of John Hopkins University on 31 May 2018. Entitled “US-China Relations in the New Eras of Trump and Xi” Prof Lampton explained that US and China now have leaders who are a departure from recent decades. And that domestic politics in each country are creating great pressure on the foreign policies of Beijing and Washington. This is overlaid by global and regional geopolitical shifts, with major trade and securities issues unfolding. All these, Prof Lampton suggests, is making the current situation fluid and risky, whereupon the US-China relationship could be moving into a period of uncharted waters. ♦



Professor Lampton

ICS Seminar “Analyzing China’s Influence in the Developing Asia”

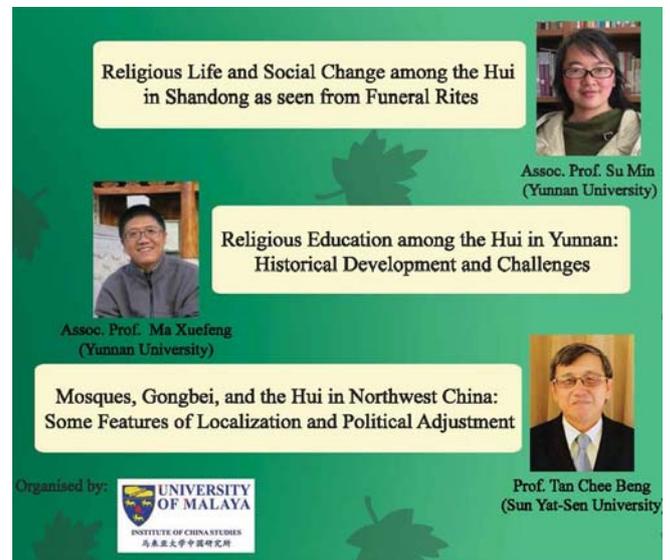
Together with Bait Amanah, ICS joined the East Asian International (EAIR) in hosting Professor Evelyn Goh of the Australian National University at a forum held at the Wisma Perwira Angkatan Tentera Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur on 15 August 2018. Prof Goh’s talk was titled “Analyzing China’s Influence in the Developing Asia”. She explained that China’s impact can only be accurately assessed by showing how its growing power resources are translated into policy influence over other states. And that China, like most world powers, draws upon military might, economic benefits, institutional authority, and ideational appeal, to purposefully coerce, induce, or persuade others to behave in ways that help achieve Chinese goals. Prof Goh concluded that the extent to which China succeeds is determined as much by the political context and decision-making processes of the target states, as it is by how Chinese actors skillfully deploy their power. ♦



Professor Evelyn Goh

ICS Seminar “Hui Muslims in China and Recent Development”

ICS hosted an important seminar on “Hui Muslims in China and Recent Development” on 21 August 2018. Three speakers presented their research in this event. Prof. Tan Chee Beng from Sun Yat-Sen University, with his paper titled “Mosques, Gongbei, and the Hui in Northwest China: Some Features of Localization and Political Adjustment.” Assoc Prof. Su Min of Yunnan University spoke on ‘Religious Life and Social Change among the Hui in Shandong as seen from Funeral Rites.’ The last presentation was by Assoc Prof Ma Xuefang, titled “Religious Education among the Hui in Yunnan: Historical Development and Challenges.” Considering the current concern with the state of religion in China, this seminar provided the attendees with some helpful perspective on the Hui Chinese Muslim community. ♦



ICS Seminar “Assessing Mahathir’s Visit to China and the Future of Malaysia-China Collaboration Under the Belt and Road Initiative”

On 19 September 2018, Dr. Li Zhiyong from the University of International Business and Economics, China, and a visiting scholar at ICS, presented his assessment of Mahathir’s visit to China and the future of Malaysia-China collaboration under the Belt and Road Initiative. Dr Li pondered if Mahathir’s visit to China was a catastrophe or a success for Malaysia. And ask if China has benefitted from Mahathir’s visit. While there are some reservation, Dr Li is of the opinion that Sino-Malaysia relationship has not been adversely affected by Mahathir’s seemingly tougher stances on some of the BRI projects. And that a win-win relationship between the two countries can still be achieved.



Dr. Li Zhiyong



ICS Forum

“Dialogue on China’s Investment in Malaysia”

On 4 October 2018, ICS and IDEAS co-hosted a ‘Dialogue on China’s Investment in Malaysia’. Laurence Todd, the Director of Research at IDEAS presented a report entitled “Impacts of Investment from China in Malaysia on the Local Economy”. Among some of the key findings in Mr Todd’s report was the argument that Malaysia stakeholders exercise as much influence as their Chinese counterparts in the decision-making process of China’s investment in Malaysia. In the second presentation entitled “The potential trade impact of the DFTZ on SMEs in Malaysia”, Professor Tham Siew Yean gave an update on the challenges facing Alibaba’s investment in Malaysia, and its likely effect on the national and regional economy. ♦



FORUM

“Dialogue on China’s Investment in Malaysia”



DATE: 4 October 2018 (Thursday)
 TIME: 9:00 a.m.
 VENUE: Seminar Room, Institute of China Studies,
 4th Floor, Block B, Institute of Graduate Studies (IPS Building),
 University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur

RSVP: chinastudies@um.edu.my / 603-7967 7289

ICS Seminar

“The Cultural Diplomacy between
China and Indochina :

An Analysis on the Varied Responses”

On 19 November 2018, Dr Yi Yan, from the School of International Relations/Research School for Southeast Asian Studies, Xiamen University, Dr Yi Yuan presented a Seminar at ICS, with the title: The Cultural Diplomacy between China and Indochina: An Analysis on the Varied Responses. Dr Yi began with a historical overview of the China and Indo-China relationship. This is followed by a detailed analysis on the cultural diplomacy between China and its southern neighbors. Dr Yi concluded with some insightful perspective on the varied responses that emerged out of the two sides cultural diplomatic efforts. ♦



Dr. Yi Yuan



ICS Seminar

“The Belt and Road Initiative in the Context
of Malaysia History and the Future”

Dr. Zhou Yungzhong is currently based at the China Foreign Transportation University. His previous affiliations included Nanjing University and Xiamen University. During his presentation entitled “The Belt and Road Initiative in the context of Malaysia history and the future,” Dr. Zhou provided a broad historical perspective to the contemporary launch of the Belt and Road Initiative. He then set this in terms of China long historical engagement with the Malay civilization. With these historical analysis, Dr. Zhou then shared with the seminar some of his anticipations and expectations, as the BRI progresses ahead. ♦



讲座
**丝绸之路视野下的
 马来西亚历史与未来**

主讲人：周运中博士，中国海外交通史学会理事，
 南京大学学士，复旦大学博士，曾任厦门大学
 大学历史学系助理教授

日期：2018年11月15日（星期四）
 时间：2:00 p.m.
 地点：马来亚大学中国研究所会议室
 ICS Seminar Room, 4th Floor, Block B, IPS Building,
 University of Malaya

ICS Seminar

“Academic Book Publishing with Palgrave
Macmillan/Springer Nature in Asia”

Mr. Vishal Daryanomal

On 23 November 2018, commissioning editor, Mr. Vishal Daryanomal, visited University of Malaya to introduce Palgrave Macmillan to ICS academic staff and research associates. He explained Palgrave Macmillan’s position in the market and introduced the various ongoing book projects, especially those pertaining to Asia. Mr Daryanomal also elaborated on the type of manuscript they are looking for, the publishing process, and how to submit proposals. The presentation ended with a question and answer session. ♦

ICS Seminar

“Demystifying Big Powers Interplay: China and India Rivalry in Nepal”



Dr. Pramod Jaiswal

On 19 December 2018, a Senior Fellow at the Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies (New Delhi), Dr. Pramod Jaiswal brought to ICS a rarely heard from perspective, namely, the Nepal viewpoint. In the talk titled “Demystifying Big Powers Interplay: China and India Rivalry in Nepal”, Dr Pramod explain in some details the delicate

balancing act the Asian powers displayed in asserting their influence on Nepal. And this open up opportunities for Nepal to play one neighbor against the other in order to maintain the Nepalis sovereignty and ensure its economic progress. ♦

ICS Seminar

“A Precarious Balancing Act: The US-China-Europe and the Emerging New Global Order”

Together with MAAS (Malaysian Association for American Studies), ICS co-hosted a seminar by Klaus Larres, a Distinguished Professor of History and International Affairs at the University of North Carolina on 20 December 2018. Prof Larres titled this presentation as “A Precarious Balancing Act: The US-China-Europe and the Emerging New Global Order”. Prof Larres focused on Europe's attempt to position itself between China and the US, explaining that this proving to be quite a dilemma. The Trump administration unconventional approach towards international relations in general, and China in particular, is making Europe difficult to adjust its own position and anticipate the possible outcomes. Of particular concern to the Europeans, according to Prof Larres, is their sense of responsibility to uphold the existing ‘rules-based’ global order.



Professor Klaus Larres

♦

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The new issue of the International Journal of China Studies (Volume 9, Number 3) was published in December 2018. The issue features 4 research articles, 1 research note and 1 book review.