



# Young China Watchers (YCW) – Lau China Institute Conference 2023

**China:  
Going Global,  
Staying Local**

**#YCWChina2023**

London, UK  
Saturday 18 February 2023  
10:00 – 16:50 GMT

# The 6<sup>th</sup> Young China Watchers (YCW) – Lau China Institute Conference

## China: Going Global, Staying Local

### Introduction

The Young China Watchers London team is very pleased to begin the Year of the Rabbit with the return of our annual conference – the first one in person since 2019!<sup>1</sup>

**The theme of the conference highlights the often contradictory impressions observers and analysts may have of China.** With the unexpectedly swift lifting of Covid-19 restrictions, Beijing signalled to the world that China is open again: for tourism, for diplomacy and for business. After three years of pandemic containment, many will be watching how attitudes and priorities for global relations have evolved.

**At YCW, we try to examine China from all possible angles.** The linkages we create between topics and themes broadens the discussion and enhances our understanding of the big picture. At this year's conference, we've aimed to represent some of this diversity with speakers on international law, cultural collaborations, politics, economics and the environment. Attendees will have the chance to network and mingle with the next generation of China thinkers, watchers and actors.

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<sup>1</sup> 1 For information on prior conferences, see our conference summaries: [2017](#), [2018](#), [2019](#). You can view recordings from our conference in 2020 and 2021 on our [YouTube channel](#).

## Organisers

### The Lau China Institute, King's College London



The Lau China Institute is a multi-disciplinary centre for the study of all aspects of China and with partners across Greater China. It undertakes three core functions:

**High quality teaching through masters and doctoral programmes:** The Institute currently has almost forty students in both categories, undertaking research in areas from China's globalisation to its political economy, culture, history and scientific traditions.

**Extensive outreach through working in partnership with organisations in the business, government, media and public realms.** King's sits at the heart of a global city and next to an internationally important financial centre. Through its events, publications, policy seminars and other activities, the Lau China Institute seeks to engage with these communities and their expanding interests in China, and actively participates in the public debates on China-related issues within the UK and globally.

**Credible and high impact research:** The Lau Institute seeks to support through visiting researchers, academic partnerships in China as well as publication and dissemination of clear, insightful and high-quality research. It has a particular interest in promoting innovative, multi-discipline research and research that can be related to policy outcomes.

The Lau China Institute aspires to be the strategic body at the heart of King's College London's multi-faceted links with institutions, individuals and issues across Greater China. It aims to be a global centre, at the global university, in a global city, on a global issue.

## Young China Watchers



Young China Watchers (YCW) is a dynamic group of China-focused young professionals. Through regular roundtables and talks with senior figures in academic, policy and business communities, it provides a chance for engaged individuals to interact and discuss the most pressing issues emerging from China today. Through its fast-growing global network, the organisation seeks to foster the next generation of China-focused thought-leaders.

YCW operates on an open membership policy, actively attracting all China-engaged, knowledgeable and policy-interested individuals. Its mission is to nurture a new community of people focused on and alert to China's growing importance in international affairs.

**Expanding global network:** YCW was first established in Beijing in the spring of 2010 and has steadily expanded its network to ten chapters, including Shanghai, Hong Kong, London, New York, Singapore, Brussels, San Francisco, Washington and Berlin with over 4,000 members globally.

YCW carries out this ambitious agenda through both its **Global Speaker Series and Dinner Discussions**, which aim to bring together local communities of members with expert speakers in an informal setting.

**Engaging YCW's local communities:** In addition to fostering local YCW communities through its city chapters, YCW's Global Editorial Team interviews leading experts and past YCW speakers on leading China-related issues as well as featuring outstanding young professionals working on China across all topics and disciplines.

**YCW's Mentorship Programmes** in Beijing and London link "YCWers" as mentors to young professionals and graduate students at leading universities. Its annual Pulse Survey examines the views of the global community of young professionals engaged in China. YCW also runs an Annual Essay Competition in partnership with King's College London that aims to discover bright young writers, addressing topics related to China.

# Conference agenda

## 1000: YCW and KCL Welcome

- Michael Yip (Co-Head, YCW London)
- Prof Alessio Patalano (Professor of War & Strategy in East Asia, King's College London)

### *Opening Keynote: China's Economy*

## 1030: China: Cyclical Bottom, Structural Top

- Rory Green (Chief China Economist and Head of Asia Research, TS Lombard)

### *Panel 1: International Law*

## 1115: China and the International Legal Order: Replacing or Shaping?

- Joshua Fung (Barrister, 7 King's Bench Walk; 2020-22 Yenching Scholar)
- Xiao Mao (Tutor in Public Int'l Law, Oxford; 2021-22 Judicial Fellow, Int'l Court of Justice)
- Dr Lijun (Liz) Zhao (Senior Lecturer in Law, City, University of London)

### *Writing Competition Winner Remarks: Government Technology*

## 1200: How Online Mass-Line Could Transform China's Political Ecosystem

- Luke Cavanaugh (Associate, Boston Consulting Group; Founder and Trustee, Student Think Tank on Europe-Asia Relations)

## 1220: Lunch

### *Panel 2: Security in East Asia*

## 1330: "Lips and Teeth": The China – North Korea Relationship in 2023

- Alastair Morgan (fmr UK ambassador to North Korea; fmr UK Consul General in Guangzhou)
- Prof Ramon Pacheco Pardo (Professor of International Relations, King's College London)

### *Panel 3: Film and Culture*

## 1420: The Big Screen: UK-China relations through film exchange

- Alex Chang (Actor and Co-Founder, Paradox House)
- Giulia D'Aquila (PhD Candidate, King's College London)

## 1510: Coffee break

### *Panel 4: Discourses in the UK*

## 1530: The UK-China Debate: How are relations depicted by key opinion-formers?

- Andrew Yeh (Deputy Director, China Strategic Risks Institute)
- Karoline Kan (Journalist and Author, Under Red Skies)
- Clementine Pippa Ebel (Founder, China Business Breakfast Club; 2023-25 Yenching Scholar)

### *Closing Keynote*

## 1610: On China Watching

- Jessie Lau (Independent Writer, Journalist, Editor, Filmmaker and Artist)

## 1650: Social and networking

# Biographies

## Opening keynote speaker

### **Rory Green**

Chief China Economist and Head of Asia Research, TS Lombard



Rory leads TS Lombard's Asia research and advises on how macroeconomic developments impact investment decisions. Rory joined TS Lombard in 2018, returning to the UK after almost a decade in Asia. Prior to TS Lombard, Rory spent four years with PRC Macro Advisors, a Beijing based economic research firm specialising in China's political economy. Before turning to economics, Rory worked at a number of Beijing based mediatech start-ups. Rory is a fluent Mandarin speaker and the winner of two Chinese government scholarships in Economics and Mandarin.

Rory has a BA (Joint Hons) in History & French from the University of Manchester. Rory was awarded two Chinese government scholarships in Economics and Mandarin, and obtained an MSc in Economics from Beijing Normal University in 2014. Rory speaks fluent Mandarin and French, and advanced Korean.

## Closing keynote speaker

### **Jessie Lau**

Independent Writer, Journalist, Editor, Filmmaker and Artist



Jessie's work explores questions surrounding gender, nationalism, coloniality, grassroots mobilisations, race and social justice issues. Her work has appeared in print, online and on air at The Guardian, Foreign Policy, CNN, BBC World Service, The Economist, WIRED, The Nation, the New Statesman and others.

Jessie also serves as Board Member at NüVoices (a collective supporting women working on China subjects), as well as editor and co-founder of NüStories (a magazine featuring underrepresented voices).

Jessie holds a MSc in International History from the London School of Economics, an LLM in International Relations from Peking University, and a BA in English from the University of California, Berkeley.

## Panellists

### *Panel 1: International Law*

#### **China and the International Legal Order: Replacing or Shaping?**

### **Joshua Fung**

Barrister, 7 King's Bench Walk; 2020-22 Yenching Scholar



Joshua's commercial practice as a barrister encompasses civil fraud, financial services, international trade, and professional negligence. He understands the commercial environment of the Asia-Pacific region and is fluent in Mandarin Chinese as well as business proficient in Bahasa Malaysia and Bahasa Indonesia. He is also called to the New York State Bar.

Prior to joining 7 King's Bench Walk, Joshua was on fellowship at the Yenching Academy of Peking University. His research, on the use of precedent in the Chinese legal system, has been published.

Joshua studied law at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he graduated with a Double First and was ranked fourth in his year. He is also an LLM graduate of New York University School of Law, where he specialised in international law, philosophy, and legal theory.

### **Xiao Mao**

DPhil Candidate and Tutor in Public International Law, University of Oxford; 2021-22 Judicial Fellow, International Court of Justice



Xiao is a DPhil research student at the University of Oxford, and a Tutor in Public International Law. Her research focuses on the impartiality of decision-making in international courts and tribunals.

She edits numerous journals (Chinese Journal of International Law, Asian Journal of Law and Society, and Amsterdam Law Forum) and serves as a co-convenor of the Chinese Law Discussion Group at Oxford.

Aside from academia and teaching, Xiao served as a Judicial Fellow at the International Court of Justice during 2021-22; has worked as a Research Associate for the Public International Law and Policy Group (a pro bono law firm); and served as an event coordinator and a researcher for the Chinese Initiative on International Law (an NGO).

In 2018, Xiao won the Rhodes Scholarship. She also holds degrees in law from University of Oxford (MPhil), Vrije

Universiteit Amsterdam (MSc), University College London (LLM, Distinction) and Shanghai Jiao Tong University (LLB, Distinction).

## Dr Lijun (Liz) Zhao

Senior Lecturer in Law, City, University of London



Dr Zhao's expertise lies in international maritime, trade, corporate and commercial law. She has published extensively in these areas. Dr Zhao also teaches contract law; English and European legal systems; and commercial law.

In addition to her teaching and research, Dr Zhao is the Director of Academic Visitors Programme at City and has served as the Founding Director of the China-Europe Commercial Collaboration Association.

Dr Zhao also holds visiting professorships at the Max Planck Institute, Harvard Law School, Bologna University, Koln University, and the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators.

### ***Writing Competition Winner Remarks: Government Technology*** **How Online Mass-Line Could Transform China's Political Ecosystem**

## Luke Cavanaugh

Associate at BCG; Co-Founder and Trustee at STEAR; 2021 Schwarzman Scholar



Luke is the 2022 winner of the [YCW-Lau China Institute Writing Competition](#), who authored [How Online Mass-Line Could Transform China's Political Ecosystem](#). He discusses how tech-based policy incubation initiatives can be optimised and implemented in China.

Luke is also an Associate at BCG. He graduated from the University of Cambridge and Schwarzman Scholars.

Luke currently sits as one of eight young people on the Global Visionaries Board of the United Nations' International Telecommunications Union. He is also the Co-Founder of STEAR, the first and leading young professional think tank focusing on Europe-Asia Relations, where he led a team of 70 delivering projects to partners including all three of the EU's Principal Bodies and the ASEAN Secretariat.

Most recently, Luke has started working on [interweave.gov](#) - a newsletter focused on Digital Government Innovation in Europe and Asia. He is always happy to receive feedback: <https://interweavegov.substack.com/>



***Panel 2: Security in East Asia***

**“Lips and Teeth”: The China – North Korea Relationship in 2023**

**Alastair Morgan CMG**

Former UK ambassador to North Korea; former UK Consul General in Guangzhou



Alastair Morgan is a Visiting Senior Research Fellow in the Department of War Studies, at the Centre for Science and Security Studies (CSSS).

Alastair was the British Ambassador to the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea from December 2015 until December 2018. He was British Consul-General in Guangzhou from 2010 to 2014 and Director of Trade and Investment at the British Embassy in Beijing from 2007 to 2010. Prior to that, he was Counsellor Trade Policy and Director of Inward Investment at the British Embassy in Tokyo from 2002 to 2006, following a year on loan to the Japanese Ministry of International Trade and Industry from 2001 to 2002. He started work in British government service at the Department of Trade and Industry in 1985.

He was regional security expert and Coordinator of the UN 1874 Panel of Experts on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea sanctions from 2019 to 2021. He is currently a Tokyo College Ushioda Fellow of the University of Tokyo, affiliated with Tokyo University’s Graduate School of Public Policy. From 1983 to 1985 he was a lecturer at Gakushuin University, Tokyo. He is a graduate of Cambridge University.

**Ramon Pacheco Pardo**

Professor of International Relations, King's College London



Ramon Pacheco Pardo is Professor of International Relations at King's College London and the KF-VUB Korea Chair at the Brussels School of Governance of Vrije Universiteit Brussel. His publications include the books *Shrimp to Whale: South Korea from the Forgotten War to K-Pop* (2022) and *North Korea-US Relations from Kim Jong Il to Kim Jong Un* (2019).

He has participated in track 1.5 and 2 dialogues with South Korea, North Korea, China, and Japan. Prof Pacheco Pardo has testified before the European Parliament and advised the OECD, the European External Action Service, the South Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the United Kingdom’s Cabinet and Foreign & Commonwealth offices.

***Panel 3: Film and Culture***

**The Big Screen: UK-China relations through film exchange**

**Alex Chang**

Actor and Co-Founder, Paradox House



Alex Chang is an award-winning British-Chinese actor and producer. He is a Co-Founder of Paradox House, which has produced 10+ features and has had films playing at Cannes, Berlin, Toronto and Sundance Film Festival.

Alex's early acting career spanned mostly across back to back theatre projects working at illustrious venues such as The Bush Theatre, Soho Theatre & Theatre Royal Stratford East. He landed his first feature film in *Triumph In The Skies* (2015) working with acclaimed directors Wilson Yip & Matt Chow.

In 2021, Alex was cast as an original cast member of the multi award-winning *Life of Pi* playing at the Wyndham's Theatre in London's West End.

**Giulia d'Aquila**

PhD Candidate, King's College London; 2021 Winner, UK-China Film Collab Future Talent Programme



Giulia D'Aquila is a PhD Candidate in Chinese Studies at King's College Lau China Institute. Her current research focuses on the role that Chinese contemporary films play in the international relations between the UK and China. In 2021 she was selected for the Future Talent Programme by the UK-China Film Collab, and carried out film-related activities and preparatory research as part of her project.

***Panel 4: Discourses in the UK***

**The UK-China Debate: How are relations depicted by key opinion-formers?**

**Clementine Pippa Ebel**

Founder, China Business Breakfast Club; 2023-25 Yenching Scholar



Pippa's focus is on building greater understanding between China and the West. During her five years working in and with China, Pippa has been involved in education, trade and government exchanges. Currently, she is researching Beijing's Belt and Road Initiative.

Previously, Pippa was a Strategist at Hot Pot China, supporting international businesses to operate in China. Her clients included Her Majesty's Government, the Foreign,

Commonwealth & Development Office, Liberty London, Gymshark and Orvis. Whilst living in China, Pippa specialised in developing China's international education sector, first as the founder of CulturEd, then as International Coordinator for Westminster School, Chengdu. Pippa is a graduate of the University of Oxford.

**Karoline Kan**

Journalist and Author, *Under Red Skies*



Karoline Kan is an author and journalist from China. Her book, *Under Red Skies* was published in 2019 in English and has been translated into Italian, Portuguese and Spanish. She was the climate reporter at Bloomberg Green from 2020 to 2022, based in Beijing. Before joining Bloomberg, she worked at China Dialogue and The New York Times Beijing office. In 2019 and 2020, her writing won The Honorable Mention by The Society of Publishers in Asia Awards (SOPA) of reporting on Arts & Culture; in 2022, her investigative reporting on Chinese state owned companies' carbon emissions was shortlisted in SOPAwards for Excellence in Reporting on the Environment.

**Andrew Yeh**

Deputy Director, China Strategic Risks Institute



Andrew Yeh is the Deputy Director at the China Strategic Risks Institute. He has worked around the China policy area for several years, having previously served as Head of Global Operations at the Inter-Parliamentary Alliance on China. He is a member of East and South East Asians for Labour.

**Welcome speakers and moderators**

**Michael Yip**

Co-Head, YCW London



Michael is Co-Head of YCW London and sits on the global executive team. He is also a Research Cluster Lead at the University of Oxford, where he researches banking agreements between China and overseas governments. Previously, Michael was a British civil servant, covering portfolios relating to international trade, infrastructure and finance during Brexit and Covid-19. Michael also worked at the World Bank and was a Yenching Scholar.

## Alessio Patalano

Professor of War & Strategy, King's College London



Alessio is Professor of War & Strategy in East Asia at the Department of War Studies, King's College London. He specialises in maritime strategy and doctrine, Japanese military history and strategy, East Asian security, and British defence policy towards the Indo-Pacific. Prof Patalano's publications include *Maritime Strategy and Naval Innovation: Technology, Bureaucracy, and the Problem of Change in the Age of Competition* (2021). In 2022, Prof Patalano became the first specialist advisor on the Indo-Pacific to the Foreign Affairs Committee in the UK Parliament.

## Cameron Hunter

Co-Head, YCW London



Cameron is Co-Head of YCW London. He currently works at the Department for International Trade, having previously worked on UK-China engagement at the Great Britain China Centre and the All Party Parliamentary China Group. Prior to this, Cameron was a global mobility adviser at the University of Sydney and a board director for United Nations Youth Australia. He studied Chinese and Politics at the University of Sydney, Renmin University of China and King's College London.

## Eloise Evans

Director, YCW London



Eloise is Director of YCW London. She is also a Committee Specialist in the House of Commons International Affairs Unit. In this role, she works closely with the Parliamentary Select Committees, including the Foreign Affairs Committee, International Trade Committee, and the Defence Committee amongst others, to lead inquiries and support the Committees and MPs in their scrutiny work. In particular, Eloise focuses on China policy, and she actively undertakes work to promote Mandarin language learning and improve China capabilities across Parliament.

Eloise is currently a youth delegate to the G20 on behalf of the UK. She leads on the Peacebuilding and Reconciliation track in this role.

Prior to her current role, Eloise worked in local government and across Whitehall covering portfolios relating to foreign policy and international trade. Eloise graduated with a first-class degree in BA Chinese Studies from the University of Manchester in 2019 and was a recipient of the EU-China scholarship to study Mandarin Chinese at Tsinghua University in Beijing.

## **Chris Sargent**

Director, YCW London



Chris is Director of YCW London, and joins the Department for International Trade as a trade negotiator in March. He is currently Account Manager at MHP Group, where he provides counsel to clients such as AstraZeneca and Takeda on their global policy and public affairs programmes, with a primary focus on China. Chris previously co-led the British Chamber of Commerce in China's policy research, informing UK and Chinese government trade policy. He has also worked for the UN in Beijing, and read Chinese and French at the University of Exeter as well as Peking University.