

THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

Distinguished Symposium of China's Contemporary Political Economy
Co-sponsored by the Faculty of Social Science and Department of Sociology

Venue:

Cheng Yu Tung Building, Lecture Theatre 1B

Date and Time:

16 September 2024, 3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Speakers:

Professor Jean C. OI, William Haas Professor of Chinese Politics, Department of Political Science and Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies, Stanford University

Professor Andrew G. WALDER, Denise O'Leary and Kent Thiry Professor, Department of Sociology and Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies, Stanford University

Rundown:

Time	Item	Remarks
3:00 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.	Opening Remarks	
3:15 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Talk on “The Evolution of China’s Development Model”	By Prof. Jean C. OI
4:00 p.m. – 4:15 p.m.	Discussants’ Comments	By Prof. Zheng SONG; Prof. Pierre LANDRY
4:15 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	Short break & photo time	
4:30 p.m. – 5:15 p.m.	Talk on “Limited Engagement: China’s Corporate Expansion Abroad”	By Prof. Andrew G. WALDER
5:15 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.	Discussants’ Comments	By Prof. Zheng SONG; Prof. Pierre LANDRY
5:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.	Open Q&A	

Abstracts:

The Evolution of China's Development Model

Jean C. Oi

How is China's Development Model evolving as economic growth is the slowest in decades? In her past work, Oi has coined the term "local state corporatism" (LSC), to describe the behavior of local governments who acted as entrepreneurs to spearhead local state development, which was at the core of China's economic takeoff. Based on recent economic statistics, the outlook is gloomy as more than a few provinces missed their GDP targets last year. Yet, some provinces still had high growth rates. What explains their success? Is LSC still alive and well? Based on her recent fieldwork in China, Oi will share some of her findings about the new strategies, both domestic and international, that she found in different counties and cities. These findings suggest that there is emerging a LSC 2.0, with localities pursuing new policies, both within and outside of China.

Limited Engagement: China's Corporate Expansion Abroad

Andrew G. WALDER

China's corporate expansion abroad has been driven by over \$1.5 trillion in state financing, backed by the country's large foreign currency reserves. Close to half this amount has funded loans to foreign governments in low and middle income countries for infrastructure projects completed by massive state-owned firms. A similar amount has financed the acquisition of foreign assets, primarily in higher-income countries. State financing has accelerated overseas expansion in historically unprecedented ways, permitting an intense focus on national priorities as defined by national security and geopolitical objectives—the supply of energy and minerals, the acquisition of technologies, and diplomatic leverage. Yet the expansion is limited by the state's insistence on ownership and control of the largest corporations in core sectors, a non-convertible currency and strict capital controls, and the modest scale of China's foreign currency holdings relative to global capital markets. Nonstate firms, which rely primarily on independent financing for narrowly commercial objectives, have transcended these limitations, but they account for less than one quarter of all foreign transactions. As the growth of China's foreign reserves has stalled, global expansion has slowed markedly.