



15th All India Conference of China Studies (AICCS)

Organized by
Institute of Chinese Studies, New Delhi & Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati

in cooperation with
Gauhati University & Omeo Kumar Das Institute of Social Change and Development

in partnership with
India Office, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung

17–19 November 2022
Venue: IIT Guwahati (Hybrid Mode)

Special Theme: *Connected Geographies and Cultural Interfaces*

CONCEPT NOTE

China has been the center of scholarly attention for long, though the nature and reason of the interest may have changed as China moved through its long history. In the last century alone, the reasons for observing and studying China has changed as it witnessed transformational change both in the way it was perceived by others and the way it viewed itself. It is well-known that in the decades since the establishment of the People's Republic of China, some countries of the West have had several Centres and Institutes dedicated to study and research of China. India, on the other hand, has had many limitations in its efforts to study China, in spite of the fact that India and China have shared a civilizational interaction for centuries. Yet, progress made since the turn of the twenty-first century has been extremely encouraging, with two new generations of China scholars coming to maturity and producing works on a wide range of themes. Moreover, many of these scholars have achieved commendable competence in Chinese language, enabling them to use primary source materials that are much more readily available compared to a few decades back.

Subsequently, some of the existing areas of research have been strengthened, but more importantly, new areas of interest and importance have been identified and ventured into. The body of research emerging out of our centers of China Studies have two points of departure compared to the past; first, it is becoming more and more interdisciplinary, and secondly, it is taking ample advantage of the abundant primary source material and language competence available today. While much discussion is taking place all over the world on the trajectory of China's development, an important aspect of the research on China today is that more and more archival material is becoming accessible resulting into questioning of well-established formulations on the strength of theoretical and methodological rigor. No less important are the propelling forces that have shaped discourse and debates on China, namely Marxist thought, Chinese Nationalist Movement, civilizational discourse, evolution of Communist Party of China (CPC), political accountability, and social stratification and cultural diversity and so on.

Given this background, the 15th AICCS will have the following three components:

Part I: China Studies: State of the Field

- a. Global Trends in China Studies
- b. New Scholarship in China

This part will include areas such as foreign policy and strategy, economic development, domestic politics and challenges of governance, dynamics of society and culture, environmental concerns, food and energy security, and so on.

Part II: New Research on China in India

In the last decade, AICCS has witnessed steady and significant increase in the number of enthusiastic young scholars, especially M. Phil. /Ph. D. students, wishing to share their research; an extremely welcome trend, this would enhance interactions as much between themselves as with the senior scholars of China Studies who have set the benchmark for academic research and continue to do so through mentoring. As in recent years, it is in this section that new horizons of Indian scholarship on China would be displayed in all its diversity and originality.

Part III: Special Theme: Connected Geographies and Cultural Interfaces

North-eastern part of India is regarded by scholars as a strategic link between South, South East and East Asia, sharing common geographical features and development objectives. From the ancient period, interaction in this region has had the civilizational framework at its foundation. Part of the once-thriving southern silk route, this region is often conceptualized as a cultural region, characterized by ethnic affinities and historical interaction between different communities, Himalayan ecologies, shared level of relative deprivation, and so on. Guwahati, the location for the 15th AICCS, is an important city of this region; on one hand, as a prominent center of historical and modern relevance, it has witnessed a rich people-to-people interactions in the realms of culture, and on the other it represents the aspirations and anxieties of enormous geo-strategic significance of the area as perceived through the lens of contemporary geo-political considerations. Therefore, the theme of *Connected Geographies and Cultural Interfaces*, that reflects all these scholarly concerns, will be the Special Theme this year.

The Conference will be arranged into Thematic Panels, composed of the selected abstracts/ papers of individual scholars (through Call for Papers), and Special Panels, composed of selected panel proposals (through Call for Papers), as well as invited panels.

Please note, in addition to the Special Theme, individual abstracts and panel proposals on all China-related topics and themes may be submitted.

The best paper presented by a young & emerging scholar in the Thematic Panels will be given the *Mira Sinha Bhattacharjea Award*, with a prize money of Rs. 25,000/-. Selection will be made on the basis of methodology, argument and presentation. The selected paper will be published by ICS. Further relevant information will be posted in due course of time on the [AICCS conference page](#).

We are hopeful that a large contingent of scholars, young and established, from institutions across India, as well as specially invited scholars of China Studies from abroad, will participate in the event and enrich and expand the knowledge resources on China.

Prof. Sabaree Mitra (Convenor)

Professor, CCSEAS, JNU & Honorary Fellow,
Institute of Chinese Studies, New Delhi.

Dr. Pahi Saikia (Co-Convenor)

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