

IMPLICATIONS AND DILEMMAS: OPEN SCIENCE, ACADEMIC FREEDOM, INTEGRITY, SECURITY – ROUND TABLE

THINGS MAKING EXCHANGE DIFFICULT (AND A FEW
SUGGESTIONS)

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Problems we are facing

Language barriers:

- China-knowledge in Europe (media + academia) overwhelmingly based on non-Chinese-language sources
- China is non-transparent (“doesn’t let us in”) OR: we cannot enter? – non-English knowledge needs to become available

Difficulties of comparison:

- How to avoid both relativism and essentialism?
- How to grant legitimacy to Chinese views? (we tend to assume that Chinese partners with views different from ours are either brainwashed or frightened – we deprive them of the ownership of their own thoughts)

Problems we are facing

Media and rhetoric

- China (whatever “China” is...) and China-related issues get instrumentalized for domestic political interests – no public debate about the issues at stake, but a highly polarized discourse on for- or against-China instead
- Higher education and media: in this polarized political environment China scholars often clash with mainstream media – how can I preserve my credibility in the classroom against mainstream media discourse?
- Fear and its profits in the domestic political arena: publics are manipulated with fear on *BOTH* sides – how to go against it? only with knowledge! – you fear the unknown most – openness is needed on *BOTH* sides
- Need: people in academia disseminate their thoughts / findings to a broader public (e.g. *The Conversation*)

An attempt at “China-competence”

Technische Universität Berlin, China Center

- **Project for China-competence: TUWITECH** – funded by the German Ministry of Education and Research
- China-competence: knowledge that assists to place information on China in context and facilitates orientation, cooperation and decision making
- Knowledge on China for disciplines of science and technology:
 - For students: offer of 12-15 courses on contemporary China
e.g. society, culture, politics, EU-China relations, economics, start-ups, investment, finance, environment, climate, urbanization, innovation, digitalization, AI
 - For researchers: specially devised training of four focus areas
- Team: sinologists + TU-colleagues + cooperation with Tongji University Shanghai

An attempt at “China-competence”

China-competence certificate:

For students:

- A) Basic: 18 ECTS
- B) Advanced: 36 ECTS (language course and China stay included and are a must)

For researchers

- A) Basic: participation at all four two-day blocks
- B) Advanced: Basic level + a project with Chinese partners (guidance provided by China Center team)

A larger-scale suggestion:

- Need to restructure/open up sinology (says a sinologist 😊) – China cannot be considered a “discipline” – interdisciplinary approach and capacity building are needed

Thank you!