



## New Trustee, Professor Ying Jin



We are delighted to announce that Ying Jin, Professor of Architecture and Urbanism at the C.U. Faculty of Architecture and Director of Studies for Robinson College, has joined the Board of the NRI Trust. We look forward to his contributions to the Institute's activities.

## Thanks to Retiring Trustees

We take this opportunity to mark the retirement from the Board of Alec, Baron Broers, Professor of Electrical Engineering, and former Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, and Mr Stephen Perry, Businessman and Honorary President of the 48-Group Club. We record our thanks to them for their service to the Institute over many years, with immense gratitude for their encouragement and wise guidance.

## Sixth Ma Kanwen Memorial Lecture



On Friday 31st May, 2024, Professor Asaf Goldschmidt (Tel Aviv University) presented his lecture *Ancient Canons vs. Contemporary Practices – Medical Practice in China during the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries*, which examined the medical encounter in China during the 12th and 13th centuries using medical case records of Xu Shuwei 許叔微, 1079-1154.

## Director's sabbatical leave in China

From September to December 2024, the Director took his sabbatical leave in Beijing as a Visiting Professor at the Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences, Peking University. He was pleased to be able to take the opportunity to visit some important archaeological sites which are closely linked with his research on the development of metal technologies in early China. These included the Wuwangdun tomb of the late Warring States period (3rd century BCE) in Huainan, Anhui province, the Shimao site near Shenmu city, and the Zhaigou site in Qingjian county, northern Shaanxi. He also attended several conferences during this period, such as the Second International Symposium on Theory and Practice of Chinese Archaeology organized by Peking University, the Symposium on Scientific Heritage of Ancient China and Chinese Civilisation organized by Shandong University, and the Needham Conference 2024 entitled *Science and Civilisation: The Magnetic Compass and Maritime Navigation* organized by the Joseph Needham Foundation for Science & Civilization (Hong Kong), the NRI, and the Sun Yat-sen University.

## Dr. Michael Loewe

(2 November 1922 – 1 January 2025)

The passing of Dr. Loewe at the age of 102 draws to a close a ground-breaking career in Sinology. Others will provide detailed accounts of his contributions to scholarship on early China elsewhere. His contributions to the NRI are less well-known. Michael and Joseph had been friends since Michael's move to Cambridge in the 1950's, no doubt engaging in many academic discussions. As a result, Michael joined the Management Committee of the NRI when it was formally established in May 1986, serving on the committee until early 1992. Thereafter, he was a regular participant in our seminars and workshops, also providing encouragement and support to members of staff here. We extend our deepest condolences to Michael's family.



## Scholars working at the NRI in 2024

Mr. Guo Jianbo, Li Foundation (EA), Sichuan Institute for Archaeology and Cultural Heritage; Liang Yue, Li Foundation (USA), Binghamton University; Dr. Yang Shujia, HPY Fellow, Palace Museum in Beijing; Dr. Wang Shengyu, HPY Fellow, Heidelberg University; Dr. Hu Haohua, China Academy of Art; Dr. Dong Junqing, Li Foundation (EA), Chinese Academy of Sciences; He Yahui, Li Foundation (USA), Stanford University; Dr. Shi Zhilin, Lanzhou University; Dr. Zhou Chang, Xi'an Univ. of Post and Telec.; Prof. Liu Dun, Jing Brand, Tsinghua University; Dr. Liu Peifeng, SBFT, Jingdezhen Ceramic University; Dr. Jiang Xiao Chengyang, Jing Brand, Peking University; Dr. Liu Nian, Li Foundation (EA), Inst. of Archaeology, CASS; Dr. Yu Jia, SYK Fellow; Dr. Liu Jie, Shanxi University; Prof. Zhao Feng, Jing Brand, Zhejiang University; Prof. Oh Chaekun, Daejeon University; Dr. Jiang Pei, Jing Brand (Tianyoude); Dr. Xu Bin, The Palace Museum; Dr. Zhang Lu, Sichuan University; Niall Chithelen, Li Foundation (USA), University of California, San Diego; Dr. Lewis Bremner, SYK Fellow; Dr. Arthur Harris, Lloyd-Dan David; Dr. Jingyi Zhao, ISF Fellow; Chen Zhiyu, PhD student of HPS, University of Cambridge; Dr. Sally Church, NRI Research Associate.

## ***Material Culture in the History of Sciences and Art***

On 18th March 2024, a workshop on ‘*Material Culture in the History of Sciences and Arts: Mobility, Exchange, and Innovation*’, organized by Drs. Yu Jia and Hu Haohua, took place at the Whipple Museum Learning Gallery, University of Cambridge. This successful one-day workshop, which attracted an audience of more than 30, was financially supported by the China Academy of Art, and also received support from HPS and the NRI.

*Photo:* Dr. Joshua Nall introduces items from the collection of the Whipple Museum.



## ***Science in the Forest, Science in the Past IV***



From 6th to 8th June 2024, the fourth conference in the series under the title *Science in the Forest, Science in the Past* organised by Professor Sir Geoffrey Lloyd, Professor Aparecida Vilaça, Professor Willard McCarty and Professor Marilyn Strathern, took place at the NRI. The event was supported by the NRI and other institutions within Cambridge and in the UK with an international group of academics from a broad range of disciplines. The conference papers focused on the theme of *Regeneration* and covered a wide range of topics, such as *Replacements and displacements*, *Scientific Renaissance*, and *Transformation in indigenous and ancient societies*.

## ***Cultural Exchanges along the Silk Road***

On 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2024, a workshop organized by Dr. Zhilin Shi under the title *Cultural Exchange along the Silk Road* took place in the K. P. Tin Hall at the NRI. Around twenty scholars from China and the UK participated in the workshop, including a delegation led by Professor Binglin Zheng from Lanzhou University. Eighteen papers were presented which covered a wide range of topics, such as *Introduction of the codex to China*, *Chinese Buddhist Apocrypha Sutra*, and *Persian travelers on the Silk Road*. Lanzhou University provided financial support for the workshop.

*Photo:* Librarian John Moffett, Director Prof. Jianjun Mei, Prof. Binglin Zheng, Prof. Imre Galambos and Prof. Yingchun Wei.



## ***Joseph Needham, Science and Civilization in China: The Needham Legacy***

Peter Lee, Jianjun Mei, Christian Daniel, Shi Yunli



## ***The Needham Legacy Conference***

In December 2024, *The Needham Legacy Conference* took place at the Sun Yat-sen University (SYSU) in Guangzhou, China. This event was jointly organised by the Joseph Needham Foundation for Science & Civilization (Hong Kong), the NRI, and the Institute for Advanced Studies in Humanities, SYSU. Around 20 scholars from around the world took part and the Director joined the roundtable discussion on *Science and Civilization in China: The Needham Legacy*.

## Library and Archives

In July 2024 we began a new 2-year project to catalogue the archives of Dr. Lu Gwei-Djen 鲁桂珍. Funded by the Chiang Ching-Kuo Foundation for International Scholarly Exchange and led by Prof. Mary Brazelton, the project will involve the digitisation of selected archival items, especially photographs. A workshop will also be held in 2027 to celebrate Dr. Lu's life and achievements. We are once again very grateful to several volunteers – Sarah Stanton, Ashley Fox-Wilson, Fuge Yang and Dorothy Tranah – for their contributions to the project. The library continues to acquire plenty of new books from China and beyond. We have also received many donations, including generous multivolume gifts from the Jao Tsung-I Academy of Sinology, Baptist University, HK, Chengdu Institute of Cultural Relics and Archaeology 成都文物考古研究院 (31 vols.), Sichuan Institute of Cultural Relics and Archaeology 四川省文物考古研究院 (19 vols), and a gift of c.200 volumes from the family of Professor Mark Elvin. Finally, a very big thank-you to the four volunteers from The Arts Society Cantab, who spent 5 days in September cleaning our old western books.



Photo: Volunteers from The Arts Society Cantab

### Ho Peng Yoke Fellowship Fund

We are delighted to record the generosity of former scholars, friends and supporters who over the past year have contributed to the Fellowship Fund established in the name of our former Director (1989-2002) Professor Ho Peng Yoke: Dr. Chen Shuanglin, Dr. Guo Ji, Professor Li Haijing, Dr. Li Peng, Beifang International Education Group, Cambridge Centre for Languages, Deep Dive, Linkbridge, Tsinghua University, Varsity, Xinya College. Donations may be made via the NRI website.

## Michaelmas Term Text-Reading Seminars

It was another busy year at the NRI with a rich and varied seminar programme. The Michaelmas Term series opened with Ilay Golan's presentation on *Religious Practices and Seafaring Knowledge of Sailors in Late Imperial China*, exploring the relationship between maritime practices and spiritual beliefs. It concluded on 29th November with Prof. Chaekun Oh's talk on *The acceptance of Yuan China Medicine and Emergence of Local Herbs in the Late Koryo Dynasty*. The Lent Term programme included talks on *Natural History Drawings and Illustrations in China and Europe* (Dr. Hu Haohua); *The Visibility of Mercury and the Conflict between European and 'Muslim' Astronomy in Beijing, 1657* (Professor Christopher Cullen) and *The Circulation and Application of Chinese Dedrobium in Europe from C17th to C19th* (Dr. Yang Shujia). This gives just a flavour of the varied topics that we include in our seminars, which take place at 3.30pm on Fridays in Term. Photo: Prof. Liu Dun in June 2024, presenting on *Matteo Ricci's preface to Euclid's Elements and its influence on the late-Qing Chinese intellectuals*.



## Visit from the ISF Academy Hong Kong

The NRI was delighted to welcome nine students from the ISF Academy in Hong Kong, along with Head of School Dr Malcolm Pritchard and staff members, for the annual summer programme in Chinese history and civilization from 25th June to 12th July 2024. Under the supervision and guidance of Dr Jenny Zhao, the students spent three enriching weeks exploring the institute's library, conducting independent research, and contributing to volunteer work by assisting with cataloguing items in the institute's inventory. Beyond their academic pursuits, the students enjoyed a guided tour of Cambridge with the Bursar, Chris Jagger, as well as a visit to the Whipple Museum led by Director and Curator Dr Josh Nall. They also attended an engaging lecture by visiting fellow Prof. Xinyi Liu. The programme culminated in a dynamic final day, where students presented their research findings to NRI fellows. Their topics spanned a diverse range of subjects, including the history of martial arts, Song dynasty currency, divorce documents in the Dunhuang manuscripts, and mathematics and astronomy in the Qing era, among others. We commend the students for their dedication and look forward to seeing how their fascinating projects develop.

## New Books on Joseph Needham in 2024



John Moffett; and *Exchanges in the Making of Modern Science: Needham's Dialogical Vision* jointly edited by Arun Bala, Raymond W. K. Lau and Jianjun Mei.

During 2024 we saw the publication of two important books on Joseph Needham: *'Chinese Wartime Science through the Lens of Joseph Needham'* by Dr. Liu Xiao and *'Multicivilizational*

