2020 IACMR Keynote Panel

**China Forum: Chinese Entrepreneurs Today**

**中国论坛：今日中国企业家**

Chair/Discussant: Yanjie Bian, University of Minnesota/Xi’an Jiaotong University

Keynote speakers: 1. Man Shuai, Xi’an Jiaotong University (shuaiman1234@xjtu.edu.cn)

2. Peng LU, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (lv-peng@cass.org.cn)

3. Tony Tong, University of Colorado (Tony.Tong@colorado.edu)

**Yanjie Bian**: Professor of Sociology at University of Minnesota. Concurrently, he is Leading Professor and Director of the Institute for Empirical Social Science Research at Xi’an Jiaotong University. He is a co-founder (with Lulu Li) of Chinese General Social Survey. An author of 12 books and more than 160 scholarly articles on topics of social networks, corporate social capital, social stratification, and Chinese society, Dr. Bian’s current research project is *guanxi* networks and employment processes in Chinese cities.

**Man Shuai: *Guanxi* Circles as Governance Structure in China’s Private Firms**

**Abstract**: Co-authored with Yanjie Bian, this paper presents three case studies intended to examine Chinese private firms’ reliance on *guanxi*-oriented governance structure under different degrees of market rationality. Our findings show that regardless of their profitability goal, employment size, and organizational complexity, the three companies under study rely rather equally on their central players’ *guanxi* circle as the governance structure. Furthermore, when someone is permitted to enter this *guanxi* circle and exercise a certain degree of managerial authority, both job competence and personal trust of this person are simultaneously evaluated. We interpret these findings not as evidence of conflict between market rationality and *guanxi* favoritism, but as evidence for Weberian elective affinity between the two seemingly conflicting principles.

**中文摘要**：本文与边燕杰合作，通过三个研究案例来考察中国私营企业在不同市场理性程度下对关系型治理结构的依赖。我们的研究结果表明，无论私营企业的盈利目标、雇佣规模和组织复杂性有何差异，三家公司均同等依赖核心人物的关系圈作为公司治理结构。此外，当个体被允许进入这个关系圈并行使一定程度的管理权限时，该个体的工作能力和人际信任均需要同时评估。我们没有将这些发现解释为市场理性与关系偏好之间冲突的证据，而是作为韦伯所言两个看似矛盾原则之间选择性亲和关系的证据。

**Bio-sketch**: Shuai Man, PhD in Sociology from Tsinghua University (2015), is Associate Professor of Sociology and Research Fellow at the Institute for Empirical Social Science Research, Xi’an Jiaotong University. Her main research fields are social networks, trust, community, and organizational sociology. Dr. Shuai’s major publication include: Elective Affinity between *Guanxi* Favoritism and Market Rationality: *Guanxi* Circles as Governance Structure in China’s Private Firms (*Asia Pacific Business Review*, vol. 25, 2019, no. 6, co-authored with Yanjie Bian); Lost Trust and Dissolved *Guanxi* Circles：A Case Study of A Collective Resignation Event at Tianyuan Tea Company (*Chinese Journal of Sociology*, vol. 5, 2019, no. 3, sole author); A Sociological Analysis of the “Strong Central, Weak Local” Pattern of Trust in Government: Based on Three Stage Tracking Data after the Wenchuan Earthquake (*Social Sciences in China*, Vol. 39, 2018, no. 3, co-authored with Jarder Luo et al.).

帅满，清华大学社会学系博士（2015），西安交通大学人文社会科学学院社会学系副教授、实证社会科学研究所研究员。研究领域包括社会网络、信任、社区研究和组织社会学。学术发表包括：以第二作者在《亚太商业评论》2019年第6期发表《关系偏好与市场理性的选择性亲和：中国私营企业的关系圈治理结构》；以独立作者在《中国社会学杂志》2019年第3期发表《信任溃败与圈子解散：田园茶叶公司的集体离职事件研究》；以第二作者在《中国社会科学》2018年第3期发表《“央强地弱”政府信任格局的社会学分析：基于汶川震后调查数据》。

**Peng Lu: The Great Transformation of Corporate Elite in China**

**Abstract**: Changing social composition of corporate elites in private sector (private entrepreneurs) of China is key to understand the puzzle of China’s economic rising and its future. In nearly forty years of development, the overall composition of private entrepreneurs has undergone major changes. By using data from Chinese Private Entrepreneur Survey (CPES) and Chinese Super Rich Persons (CSRP), we try to map out the changing profile of private entrepreneurs in general and the very top faction of corporate elites in China. We find a growing proportion of people who have only market background, higher education and non-political affiliation. There are also significant differences in the occupational mobility of entrepreneurs in large, medium, and small enterprises in terms of what they did before they founded their businesses. In particular, entrepreneurs in large enterprises are more likely to come from those who worked inside the state system or privatized SOEs, while most small and medium entrepreneurs develop outside the system. Multiple regression and coefficient clustering analysis show that education level and political status have varying effects on the occupational mobility of entrepreneurs in terms of class and cohort.

**中文摘要**：中国私营经济的公司精英（私营企业主）的社会构成的变化，是理解中国经济增长之谜和未来趋势的关键。经过四十多年的发展，中国私营企业主的整体社会构成已经发生了巨大的转变。通过使用中国私营企业调查（CPES）和中国富豪数据库（CSRP）,我们试图对全体私营企业主和最富有的私营企业主的社会构成变化进行分析。我们发现，纯市场背景、受过高等教育、非政治党派的构成在上升。大、中、小三种类型的企业主在创业前的职业流动也存在显著差异，尤其是大企业主更有可能来自体制内下海或改制，而中小企业主以体制外成长为主。多元回归和系数集束化分析表明，教育程度与政治身份在阶层地位和同期群方面对企业主职业流动产生不同的影响。

**Bio-sketch**: Peng Lu （吕鹏）is a professor at Institute of Sociology, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. He works in the fields of social stratification, business-government relationship, Chinese entrepreneurship, and corporate social innovation. He earned his Ph.D. degree in sociology at Tsinghua University in 2010, plus a visiting student experience at Yale University from 2007-2008. He worked at New York University Abu Dhabi as a postdoctoral research fellow from 2011 to 2012. He serves several vital academic posts, including under-secretary-general of Committee of Social Stratification and Social Mobility of Chinese Sociology Association, and secretary-in-general of Research Center for Private Entrepreneurs of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. He is also the managing director of Chinese Private Entrepreneur Survey, a nationwide survey conducted every two years since 1993. He is now working on a book on the emerging of Chinese new rich. He publishes a book on the collapse of local growth coalition of Chinese private oil investor and local officials, and a number of articles in peer-reviewed journals in either Chinese or English. Email:

**Tony Tong: China’s Digital Entrepreneurs in a VUCA World (数字化时代创业者如何应对VUCA)**

**Abstract**: China has become a powerful force to be reckoned with in digital technologies at home and around the world. As a major investor in digital technologies and one of the world’s leading adopters of such technologies, China is shaping the global digital landscape significantly and inspiring massive innovation and entrepreneurship activities at home. Many of the country’s demographics take an active part in digital transformation, becoming digital entrepreneurs, according to a new report from Alibaba’ *Luohan Academy*. How do Chinese entrepreneurs take advantage of the expansive opportunities brought about by digital technologies (mobile internet, cloud computing, AI, IOT, blockchain), in an increasingly VUCA (volatility, uncertainty, complexity, ambiguity) world? Traditional management textbooks suggest that companies cope with VUCA by reducing volatility, avoiding uncertainty, simplifying complexity, and clarifying ambiguity. In this talk, I will present an analysis of how Chinese entrepreneurs are changing the way they cope with VUCA in this digital economy, and how they are leveraging emerging digital opportunities to create great businesses.

**Bio-sketch**: Tony Tong is a Professor of Strategy & Entrepreneurship in the Leeds School of Business at the University of Colorado. Previously, he was a Professor of Strategic Management in the Krannert School of Management at Purdue University, and was visiting professor at Peking University and Cheung Kong Graduate School of Business. He conducts research at the intersection of strategy, innovation, and globalization, studying interfirm relations, multinational firms, patents & intellectual property rights, and digital innovation. He has published in leading journals, including *Academy of Management Journal*, *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, *Journal of Economics & Management Strategy*, *Journal of International Business Studies*, *Nature Scientific Data*, *Organization Science*, *Research Policy*, *Strategic Management Journal*, and *Strategy Science*. He has also published several popular teaching case studies in *HBSP*, about the competitive and global strategies of Chinese multinational firms (e.g., Huawei, Xiaomi, Didi). His work has received several awards, including the *Winner of the Strategic Management Society Best Conference Paper Prize*, as well as grants from the *National Science Foundation* and the *Department of Energy*. He is a cofounder of the Chinese Patent Data Project ([sites.google.com/site/sipopdb](http://sites.google.com/site/sipopdb/)), which aims to link Chinese patents to various types of firms and make the linked patent-firm data publicly available for research.

童文锋教授是美国科罗拉多大学利兹商学院战略管理、创新创业学教授。曾任美国普渡大学克莱纳特管理学院战略管理学教授、技术成果转化研究与实践中心主任。研究主要聚焦在企业战略、创新创业、国际商务的交叉课题，包括兼并并购、战略联盟、跨国企业投资、创新与技术管理、专利与知识产权、数字化创新等。童教授的研究成果发表在众多知名学术期刊上，涵盖战略管理，创新创业，国际商务，管理经济学，其中包括近20篇UTD24论文。童教授的研究曾获得2011年国际战略管理学会（SMS）最佳论文奖，以及美国国家科学基金（NSF）的多次资助奖励。他指导的博士毕业生曾获得国际管理学会（AOM）战略领域的最佳博士论文奖（2013）和创业领域的最佳博士论文奖（2014）。