

# Institute for Chinese Studies Lecture Series

## China's Uneasy History of Foreign Enslavement

2020-2021

ICS  
LECTURE  
SERIES

Friday, November 13

4:00-5:30 pm

Online



## Don Wyatt

John M. McCardell, Jr. Distinguished Prof. of History  
Middlebury College

The origins of slavery in China are indisputably ancient, dating back to the earliest cultural beginnings of the nation as a civilization. Consequently, the record of slavery in China is exceptionally long, spanning uninterrupted from prehistory up until late imperial times and arguably persisting well beyond its outlawing in the early twentieth century of our Common Era. Throughout its duration, well known is the fact that the Chinese were enslavers of their own indigenous populations, which routinely included members of what emerged as the dominant Han ethnic majority itself. Yet, largely unknown is that, throughout the imperial past, untold numbers of non-Chinese peoples were also consigned to enslavement. In offering answers to how they might ever have come to suffer this fate, this talk endeavors to illuminate crucial aspects of the bondage of these foreigners, framed in relation to the evolving Chinese practice of slavery overall.

**Don Wyatt** (Harvard University, RSEA, A.M., 1978; EALC, Ph.D., 1984) is the John M. McCardell, Jr. Distinguished Professor of history at Middlebury College. Having joined the faculty there in 1986, he teaches both Chinese history and philosophy. His ongoing research includes the histories of traditional intellectualism, violence, and slavery.



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