

This conference aims to gather and present the preliminary results of a two-year research project, funded by the Italian Ministry of University and Research, and conducted in both China and Italy. The research focuses on Chinese cultural production and its reception in Italy over the last decade. It examines, on the one hand, the publishing policies, promotion, and translation of Chinese literature, and on the other, Chinese cinema and artistic exhibitions as tools for image-building. The narratives about China and from China that result from the dissemination of these cultural products are often contradictory and complex. To understand them, we must look at them from a new perspective. As in Alice's Looking-Glass, we need to "hold [the words] up to a glass and they will all go the right way again." The metaphor here highlights the need to read and deconstruct these narratives through a multidisciplinary approach. This will help illuminate how China portrays itself through film, literature, and art, as well as the sub- or counter-narratives generated within the Italian cultural sphere.

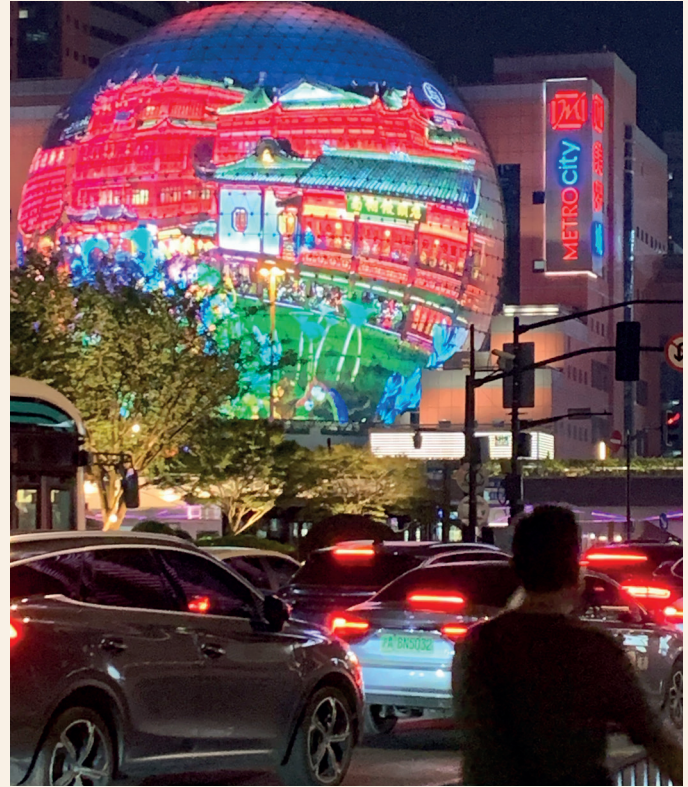
These discourses are shaped by a wide range of actors, including political actions, governmental decrees, propaganda activities, writers, translators, publishing houses, and figures from the fields of cinema and art (such as directors, film festival organizers, critics, and exhibition curators). Our team has spent the last two years scrutinising these actors, events, and objects to create a more systematic picture of the cultural interaction between China and Italy. Our goal is to understand what images of China have been built and communicated in Italy in recent years.



Ca' Foscari
University
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Department of Asian
and North African Studies

The initiative is part of the PRIN project titled "Chinese narratives and the narration of China in Italy: literature, cinema and art at the intersection of cultural diplomacy and cultural industry". CUP - H53D23006880006 | Numero di progetto - 2022FJX9YZ



International Conference

Through the Looking Glass: Chinese Narratives in Italy Between Literature, Cinema and Art.

*Attraverso lo specchio: Narrazioni
cinesi in Italia tra letteratura,
cinema e arte.*

September 15-16, 2025

Ca Foscari University of Venice

September 15, 2025

Aula Baratto, Ca' Foscari

9.00 Greetings

Literature, translation and the Publishing World

9.15 **Keynote speech: Jing Bartz** (WePro Consulting & Management UG), *A Generational Shift: Case Studies in Promoting Chinese Literature in Europe*

10.00 Q&A

10.15 Coffee Break

10.45 **Chiara Cigarini** (Ca' Foscari University of Venice), *Editorial Practices and Cultural Memetics: Translating China in Italy*

11.15 **Marco Fumian** (L'Orientale University of Naples), *If You Cannot Change the World, at Least You Can Change Yourself. Xue Mo and the Excellence of Traditional Chinese Culture.*

11.45 **Nicoletta Pesaro** (Ca' Foscari University of Venice), *The (Un)familiar Lexicon: Political Narratives and Literary Counter-narratives in Italian Translations of the Chinese Family Novel*

12.15 Discussion

13.00 Lunch

14.00 **Eugenia Tizzano** (Università L'Orientale Napoli), *Good Stories for Chinese and Global Childhood: Xue Tao's Case*

14.30 **Serena De Marchi** (Ca' Foscari University of Venice), *Multiple Narratives of "China" in the Italian Editorial Landscape*

15.00 **Paolo Magagnin** (Ca' Foscari University of Venice), *Academic Publishing and Cultural Diplomacy: Collaborative Translation Frameworks Between China and Italy*

15.30 Discussion

15.45 Coffee Break

Cultural and political diplomacy

16.00 **Laura De Giorgi** (Ca' Foscari University of Venice), *China's Voices on Italian Airwaves: PRC's Radio Broadcasting to Italy and in Italy*

16.30 **Flora Sapio** (Università L'Orientale Napoli), *Cultural dissemination in the New Era of Xi Jinping*

17.00 *An Unfinished Film* by Lou Ye (2024) Private screening

20.00 Dinner

September 16, 2025

Sala Conferenze, S. Sebastiano

From Literature to Art and Cinema

9.00 **Keynote speech: Tomaso Radaelli** (Mondo Mostre), *MondoMostre: at the forefront of large exhibition production with China*

9.45 Q&A

10.00 **Keynote speech: Xu Feng** (Beijing Central Academy of Drama) 问题意识: 从五四文学到新力量电影的社会介入传统 *The Tradition of Social Intervention from the Literature of the May Fourth Movement to Cinema of the New Forces.*

10.45 Q&A

11.00 Coffee Break

11.30 **Stefania Stafutti** (University of Turin), *Translating China, Transposing China: Shaping the Image of China at Home and Abroad*

12.00 **Sabrina Rastelli** (Ca' Foscari University of Venice), *'5000 Years of Chinese Civilization': Traditional Art as Visual Politics for China's Image Abroad*

12.30 **Manuela Lietti** (Ca' Foscari University of Venice), *A Decade of Contemporary Chinese Art in Italy: An Overview of Methodologies and Approaches*

13.00 **Elena Pollacchi, Giorgio Ceccarelli** (Ca' Foscari University of Venice), *Chinese filmmaking in the Grey Zone: Censorship and Authorial Strategies in Contemporary Chinese Cinema*

13.45 Lunch

14.45 Final Discussion

16.00 Concluding Remarks