

Department of Geography - Public Seminar Series

“Markets and Towns from Sichuan to Chongqing: The City-Town Relationship”

Speaker:

Professor Carolyn Cartier

(Professor of Geography and China Studies, the University of Technology Sydney,

External Founding Fellow of the Centre for China in the World, the Australian National University)

Date and Time:

1:30-3:00pm, 26th September, 2019 (Thursday)

Venue:

Room AAB1312, Multi-purpose Room, Faculty of Social Sciences,

Academic and Administration Building (AAB), Baptist University Road Campus

Hong Kong Baptist University

Co-organiser: the Advanced Institute for Contemporary China Studies, Hong Kong Baptist University

Application of central place theory to analysis of settlement patterns in China, led by G. William Skinner, made “market towns” a key term in China studies. Periodic markets have resurged under reform, in many areas, yet how have they changed and in relation to what political-economic rationalities have they transformed? Among the four province-level cities, towns in Chongqing have maintained scheduled markets across the twentieth century. Based on research in Tongliang, a county of former Sichuan province that is now a “city district” of Chongqing, this paper reports conditions of markets at the historical intersection of rural reforms and the process of urbanization, in which towns are becoming entrained to the city-town system. Results from fieldwork in multiple towns and *jiedao* show that the numbers of markets have remained consistent since the 1940s, even where local resident working-age populations have declined in recent decades. Markets have become a focus of state-led rural construction, including construction of new market spaces. Town jurisdictions are subject to strict land-use controls, and in the absence of expansive industrial and real estate development, scheduled markets have continued to anchor local commercial economies. Towns in the vicinity of Tongliang have become incorporated into an evolving city-town system, in a process of territorial urbanization, while land areas of some markets have become subject to real estate development, which nevertheless continue to incorporate periodic markets. The realities of *ganchang* or going to market in county Chongqing suggest a reevaluation of modern ideas about the country and the city in China.

Carolyn Cartier (AB, MA, PhD University of California, Berkeley) is Professor of Geography and China Studies at the University of Technology Sydney and an External Founding Fellow of the Centre for China in the World at the Australian National University. Tenured in the U.S. academy at the University of Southern California, she was a Fulbright Fellow in the Department of Geography at HKBU in 2005–06. She is the author of *Globalizing South China*, reissued twice, and co-editor of *The Chinese Diaspora: Space, Place, Mobility and Identity* with Laurence J. C. Ma. She is currently chief investigator of the Australian Research Council project, “Governing the City in China: The Territorial Imperative,” a collaboration with the Center for Research on the Administrative Divisions in China.

