

## Xiaobo Yuan, PhD

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### CURRENT APPOINTMENT

2019 — Assistant Professor of Anthropology and Religion  
Whitman College, Walla Walla, WA

### EDUCATION

- 2017 Ph.D. in Anthropology, University of Chicago.  
Dissertation: *Reform and Rectification: Chinese Christianities and the Politics of Flourishing*  
Committee: Judith Farquhar, Julie Chu, Hussein Agrama
- 2011 M.A. in Anthropology, University of Chicago.  
Thesis: "God(s) in Translation: Missionary Discourses and the 19<sup>th</sup>-century 'Term Question' in China"  
*Winner of Roy D. Albert Prize for Best MA Thesis in Anthropology*
- 2007 B.A. (with honors) in English and Anthropology, Johns Hopkins University.

### PREVIOUS APPOINTMENTS

2017-19 Consortium for Faculty Diversity Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of Anthropology  
Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, NY

### RESEARCH INTERESTS

Anthropology of global Christianity, religion and secularism, anthropology of the state, religion and affect, religious minorities, post-Socialism, publicity and secrecy, consumption and aspiration, urbanization and development zones in East Asia; transnational religious circulations, digital missionization, religious infrastructures; Greater China, Southeast Asia, U.S.

### PUBLICATIONS

#### **Book Manuscript**

*Converting China: Urbanizing Christianity and the Politics of Flourishing* (manuscript under preparation)

## Peer-Reviewed Articles

- Under preparation “Coders for Christ: Hackathons and the Missionary Imagination.”  
Manuscript in preparation for *Current Anthropology*
- 2023 (co-authored w/ Shiqi Lin) “Interrogating Futurity in Contemporary China: Towards Plural Horizons of Political Imagination,” Introduction to *China Perspectives* 135 (2023): 3-7.  
<https://doi.org/10.4000/chinaperspectives.16204>
- 2021 “Infernal Affect: Christianity, Class, and Economic Anxiety in Urban China.” Roundtable on Lived Neoliberalism: Negotiating Markets and Morality Outside the West, *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 89 (3): 956-977. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/jaarel/lfabo77>
- 2021 “Refusing Educational Desire: Negotiating Faith and Precarity at an Underground Chinese Christian School.” *Asian Anthropology* 20(3): 190-209.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/1683478X.2021.1930468>
- 2021 “Gendering Heterodoxy: The Corporeal Politics of Xiejiao in Chinese Christianity.” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 89 (1): 174–203. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jaarel/lfaao692>

## Edited Works

- 2023 (co-edited with Shiqi Lin) Special Feature: Interrogating Futurity in Contemporary China: Towards Plural Horizons of Political Imagination. *China Perspectives* 135.  
<https://doi.org/10.4000/chinaperspectives.15981>

## Book Reviews and Other Publications

- Forthcoming Review essay, *Siting Postcoloniality: Critical Perspectives from the East Asian Sinosphere*, ed. By Pheng Cheah and Caroline S. Hau (Duke University Press, 2022), for *The Comparatist*.
- 2024 Review of *Negotiating the Christian Past in China: Memory and Missions in Contemporary Xiamen*, by Jifeng Liu (Penn State University Press, 2022), for *Review of Religion and Chinese Society*.
- 2021 Review of *Beijing from Below: Stories of Marginal Lives in the Capital's Center*, by Harriet Evans (Duke University Press, 2020), *American Ethnologist* 42 (2): 223-224.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/amet.13010>
- 2018 Review of *The China Questions: Critical Insights into a Rising Power*, by Jennifer Rudolph and Michael Szonyi (eds.), *China Review International* 23: 3 (fall 2016): 297-300.
- 2014 “Under the Cross in China,” *Boston Review*, January 2014.

## **Publications in Preparation**

“Infrastructures of Sending: Transnational Missions and the Telos of History.” Manuscript in preparation for *Religion and Society*.

“Feminism Problem-Spaces in the Anthropology of Christianity.” Manuscript in preparation for *Feminist Anthropology*.

“God(s) in translation: language, power, and legacies of the 19th-century ‘Term Question’ in China.” Manuscript in preparation for *Review of Religion and Chinese Society*.

## **FELLOWSHIPS AND HONORS**

2022	Nielsen Center for the Liberal Arts Fellow, Workshop for Early Career Faculty
2020	Louis B. Perry Award for Faculty-Student Summer Research, Whitman College
2018	Faculty Conversation Grant for Ethnographic Writing Group, Vassar College
2015-16	Charlotte W. Newcombe Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship
2016	Starr Prize Lectureship (declined), Department of Anthropology, University of Chicago
2014	Mark Hanna Watkins Post-Field Fellowship, Department of Anthropology, University of Chicago
2014-15	Martin Marty Center Junior Fellowship, Divinity School, University of Chicago
2014	Wenner-Gren Foundation Dissertation Fieldwork Grant
2013	U.S. Fulbright Institute of International Education (IIE) Grant
2012	Roy D. Albert Prize for Best MA Essay in Anthropology, University of Chicago
2010	University of Chicago Center for East Asian Studies Pre-Dissertation Grant
2009	Title VI Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Grant (summer)
2008-13	University of Chicago Social Science Graduate Fellowship (five-year)
2003-2007	Woodrow Wilson Undergraduate Research Fellowship, Johns Hopkins University
2005-2006	Louis Azrael Fellowship in Communications (awarded by Johns Hopkins Writing Seminars Department for excellence in journalism)

## **CONFERENCE ACTIVITY**

### **Conferences and Panels Organized**

2021 Organizer, chair, and panelist. Creating Emergent Futures in Contemporary China. Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, Seattle, March 25-28.

2017 Co-organizer and presenter. Foucault and Religion Conference, University of Chicago Divinity School, March 10-11.

- 2016 Co-organizer and Presenter. East Asian Secularisms, Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Minneapolis, November 16-20.

### Invited Talks

- 2021 “Second-Generation Christians’ and Crises of Sincerity.” Invited participant in the Spiritual Crisis and Moral Transformation in Contemporary China workshop, University of Rochester, November 12-13.
- 2021 “Little Sinners and Demonic Real Estate: Urban Christianity in China and the Syncopations of Conversion.” Invited panelist, Syncopating East Asia symposium, University of California Humanities Research Institute.
- 2020 “Policing Chinese Christianity.” Whitman College Faculty Forum, October 21.

### Conference Papers and Roundtables

- 2023 “Coding for Christ: Missionaries, Hackers, and the Back to Jerusalem Movement.” Religion & Technology panel, Society for Anthropology of Religion Biennial Meeting, Victoria, BC, May 14.
- 2022 Discussant, Roundtable: Embodied Encounters Of Violence And Faith: Feminist & Decolonial Perspectives On Gender And Religion, Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Seattle, September 9-13.
- 2021 “‘When the Police Come Knocking’: underground Chinese Christianity and the Futurity of Conversion.” Panel: Creating Emergent Futures in Contemporary China, Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, Seattle, March 25-28.
- 2018 “‘One Belt, One Road’: traversing temporalities on China’s New Silk Road.” Panel: Horizons of Extinction. Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, San Jose, November 14-18.
- 2017 “Engendering Heterodoxy.” *Foucault & Religion* Conference, University of Chicago Divinity School, March 10-11.
- 2016 “Economies of Exposure: publicity and concealment in Chinese Christianities.” Panel: East Asian Secularisms. Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Minneapolis, November 16-20.
- 2015 “...And the Case of the Disappearing Slash: On Censorship, Queer Fiction, and Chinese Cyberpolitics.” Panel: Familiar Texts, New Socialities: Remaking Community, Identity, and Sexuality through Fanworks. Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Denver, November 18-22.
- 2014 “Conversion among the converted: personal transformation and imaginations of the state in China’s True Jesus Church.” Panel: Understanding Christian politics in its own terms. Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Washington D.C., December 3-7.

- 2014 “The Politics of Self-Exile: Underground Christian Schools in China.” Panel: Educating religious experts for the nation. Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, San Diego, November 22-25.
- 2011 “Whispering singers and translated texts: the practices of Chinese Christian hymnody.” Panel: Systems of Value, Exchange, and Mobility. Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Montreal, November 16-20.
- 2010 “Asking the Right Questions: Coevalness and the Possibilities of a Critical Anthropology.” Invited presentation. Panel: Anthropology in the World. Futures Seminar at the Department of Anthropology, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, November 11-12.
- 2009 “Doing the Work of God’: Narrative Constructions of Agency and Divinity.” Panel: Religious Dynamism in the Modern World. Annual Meeting of the Central States Anthropological Society (CSAS) Conference, Urbana-Champaign, April 2-5.

## TEACHING

- 2019- Assistant Professor, Whitman College
- Courses taught: Consuming Divinity: Food and Religion (Rel 115); Becoming Human: Introduction to Anthropology (Anth101); Fundamentals of Cultural Anthropology (Anth201); China Now (Anth/Asia 220); Global Christianity (Rel/Anth 225); Religion and the Spirit of Capitalism (Rel/Anth 223); Religion and Politics in East Asia (Rel325); Resistance and Refusal (Anth 330); Affect and Emotion (Anth347); Religion, Language, and Power (Anth/Rel366)
- 2017-19 Postdoctoral Fellow, Vassar College
- Courses taught: Introduction to Cultural Anthropology (fall 2017, spring 2019); China Now (fall 2017, 2018); The State as Anthropological Object (spring 2018); Futures: Culture, Media, and the Speculative Imagination (spring 2019)
- 2016-17 Graduate Preceptor, M.A. Program in the Social Sciences (Graduate Preceptor), University of Chicago
- Courses taught: Masters Thesis Proposal Writing (graduate, spring 2017); Perspectives on Social Theory (graduate, fall 2016)
- 2014-15 Undergraduate Preceptor, Global Studies Program, University of Chicago
- Courses taught: International Studies B.A. Thesis Seminar (undergraduate, fall 2015)
- 2010-15 Graduate Lecturer and Teaching Assistant. University of Chicago

Courses (taught as primary instructor): Contemporary Global Issues I (undergraduate, taught section of 30 students); Reading Cultures (undergraduate)

Courses TA'd: Anthropology of Religion (mixed graduate and undergraduate); Weber, Bakhtin, Benjamin (graduate course in social theory)

### **Pedagogical Training**

2022 Teaching Workshop Fellow, Nielsen Center for the Liberal Arts at Eckert College. Participated in workshops in January and May.

2010 Writing Pedagogy Training, Writing Program, University of Chicago, July-August.

### **ACADEMIC SERVICE**

2021-26 (Spring 2021, Spring-Fall 2023 elected) Committee Member, Institutional Review Board, Whitman College

2022-25 (Three-year elected) Committee Member, Aid to Faculty Scholarship and Institutional Development (ASID), Whitman College

2024 (participant) Pedagogical Inquiry Grant (PIG), "Decolonizing Anthropology" (Spring 2024)

2023 Faculty co-leader, Whitman Summer Chinese Studies Program in Taiwan (Tunghai University, six-week academic program)

2021-23 (participant) Pedagogical Inquiry Grant (PIG), "Social Justice at Whitman College" (Fall 2021)

2021 (participant) Pedagogical Inquiry Grant (PIG), "The End(s) of the Body" (Spring 2021)

2022 (Spring semester, elected) Committee Member, Admissions and Financial Aid, Whitman College

2018-19 Member of Global Campus & Studies Working Group in the Engaged Pluralism Initiative (EPI), Vassar College.

2017 Applications reader for program admissions, the M.A. Program in the Social Sciences, University of Chicago.

2015 Development Intern, Community Programs Accelerator in the Office of Civic Engagement, University of Chicago. Grant-writing and funding prospect research for community organizations in the South Side of Chicago.

### **MANUSCRIPT REVIEWING**

*Current Anthropology, American Ethnologist, Feminist Anthropology*

### **LANGUAGES**

English: native; Mandarin Chinese: fluent

## **PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS**

American Anthropological Association  
Society for the Anthropology of Religion  
American Academy of Religion  
Society for East Asian Anthropology  
Association for Asian Studies