

ISSUE 4 - JANUARY 25

GLOBAL HUMANITIES INITIATIVE

Official Newsletter of the Global Humanities Initiative

Director's Welcome

BY HANS VAN DE VEN

This issue of the [Global Humanities Initiative](#) newsletter went into production the same week that president Donald Trump announced his vision for a transformed world. There is space for more than one view of the world.

The newsletter's pages are full of news about our recently launched [Elements in Global Humanities series](#) published by Cambridge University Press; the lectures that India's foremost public intellectual Pratap Mehta will deliver in the Trinity-Global Humanities Initiative lecture series; and the thriving [Francophone Programme](#) managed by Cambridge's professor Charles Forsdick and Dr Doyle Calhoun. The newsletter also shows that the faculty mobility programme continues to thrive. Our time will be one of upheaval. As the newsletter shows, we mean to shape it in a positive way in our own sphere of activity.

Over the last four years, a solid basis has been laid for a thriving Global Humanities Partnership involving universities in Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and South America. This summer delegates from all our partners will meet in Cambridge. We will review past activities and make plans for new programmes for the next few years. More news to come!



Hans van de Ven

Professor of Modern Chinese History
(Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies)

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GHI - Mobility Scheme



Prof Jenny Mander (MMLL - Cambridge) visiting Nanjing University in 2024

[READ MORE](#)

"I would like to thank the [Global Humanities Mobility Scheme](#) for supporting what was an immensely enjoyable, intellectually intense and culturally rewarding visit last academic year. The visit was memorable not least for the tremendous hospitality, intellectual ambition and generosity on the part of my Chinese hosts and their enthusiastic and extraordinarily eager and hard-working students. I was also enormously touched and grateful to the many students who went out of their way to accompany me at almost every step of the way – this was a wonderful way to hear about their own research projects as well as to learn about the Chinese university and broader cultural traditions.

I shall enjoy working with Professor He and his students in the course of 2025 in the context of a jointly hosted online seminar".

MOBILITY SCHEME AWARDEES 2024-25



[Dr Sura Qadiri](#) (MMLL - Department of French)
[Prof Miranda Griffin](#) (MMLL - Department of French)
[Prof Máire Ní Mhaonaigh](#) (MMLL - Department of ASNC)



[Prof Aparna Vaidik](#) (Faculty of History, Ashoka)



[Dr Chang Chen](#) (Department of English, Nanjing)



[Dr Maha AbdelMegeed](#) (Department of Arabic, AUB)
[Dr Sonja Mejcher-Atassi](#) (Department of English, AUB)



[Dr Alejandro Martinez](#) (Archives Programme Director, UDP)

"A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step"

~ Lao Tzu ~



Prof Lanlan Du (Nanjing)
Mobility Awardee 2023-24



Prof Lanlan Du (Nanjing)
Visiting Cambridge 2024

"My short stay at CRASH was intense academically, but at ease in my leisure time. I had a wonderful learning time and enjoyed the vibrant cultural life at Cambridge."

CRASH

[Full Interview HERE](#)

GHI - Elements Series

BY ALEX WRIGHT

Our first Element has been delivered in its entirety! [Mandakini Dubey's](#) "Esoteric Orientalism" is an inviting exploration of orientalism and occultism in the nineteenth century, offering fascinating material on the Theosophical Society, on Helena P (or Madame) Blavatsky and on the legacy of their thinking. Focusing her discussion on India, Professor Dubey shows that esoteric orientalism was a key factor in shaping the cosmopolitan nationalism not just of the anti-colonial movement but ultimately also the Hindutva narrative of race and nation. This fine book will clearly have much to say to scholars and students in religious studies, South Asian studies, politics, and the history of ideas, as well as to readers beyond these fields. Mandakini's Element is presently out for peer review, and our expectation is that it will go into production in the near future, with publication to follow soon. (We have a 12-week turnaround between the start of production and finished copies.) Elsewhere, three proposals have been received from members of the GH Network, or their contacts, and are being evaluated. Alex, Malvika, Frisbee and Saul are meeting later in January to take stock of progress and follow up on current and future leads. On the cover template, several alternatives are with the CUP design team after the initial 'misty mountains' image was latterly discovered to be too close to other Press Elements series. We should have a preview of the finished article to show to GHN members in the near future. At this early stage, progress on the series (with several volumes under contract and others in train) looks promising. The key thing now will be to sustain impetus and spread the word. We already have a webpage up and running on Cambridge Core (comprising a description, series editor details, and Frisbee's contact email address) which will be augmented with the finished series design and a list of upcoming titles as soon as the series template design is agreed and finalized: [Cambridge Elements - Global Humanities](#).



Alex Wright

Senior Executive Publisher & Head of Humanities
(Cambridge University Press)

Elements Main Editors



Saul Dubow

Commonwealth History
University of Cambridge



Malvika Maheshwari

Political Science
Ashoka University
Delhi, India



Frisbee Sheffield

Ancient Philosophy
University of Cambridge



GHI - FRANCOPHONE PROGRAMME

Prof Charles Forsdick (Drapers Professor of French) and Dr Doyle Calhoun (Assistant Professorship in Francophone Postcolonial Studies) have been awarded generous resources from the [Professorial Appointment Support Fund](#) to allow the development of activity in the field of [Francophone postcolonial studies](#).

This area has in recent years driven comparative and transnational initiatives across multiple language fields, contributing to the renewal of Modern Languages at a time of rapid change for the discipline. The programme will support the [Global Humanities Initiative](#) via a number of strands of activity:

- Visiting fellowships, bringing prominent scholars from the Caribbean or West Africa to Cambridge.
- A series of related workshops and film screenings / performances. Writers- and translators-in-residence.

The programme will ensure access to a broad range of contacts and collaborators, in France and North America, but more importantly across the French-speaking regions of the global South. These connections will enhance the ambitions of the [Global Humanities Initiative](#) to extend its reach, notably in West Africa (Ghana and Senegal) and the Caribbean (Haiti). This will contribute considerably to the ambitions of posing and answering questions about the Humanities through multiple cultural perspectives, diversifying our curriculum at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels, and collaborating with international scholars to allow their full contribution to our courses, programmes and research.



[PROF CHARLES FORSDICK \(MMLL\)](#)



[DR DOYLE D CALHOUN \(MMLL\)](#)

Visiting Researchers & Writers

The planned programme of visiting researchers and writers, was inaugurated in October 2024 by Moroccan author [Khalid Lyamlahy](#)



[Dr Khalid Lyamlahy](#)

French and
Francophone Studies
University of Chicago



How does literature reckon with stories of migration, suicide and loss?

READING & DISCUSSION

Fri, 18 Oct. 6-7pm
Davidson Room, Peterhouse

	DR. KHALID LYAMLAHY University of Chicago Will read from his novel <i>Évocateur d'un mémorial à Venise</i> (2023) and be in conversation with...	
	DR. DOYLE CALHOUN University of Cambridge ... on the occasion of the publication of his new book, <i>The Suicide Archive</i> (2024)	

Note: this event will involve discussion of suicide



[Dr Myriam Moïse](#)

Associate Professor of English and Gender Studies at Université des Antilles (Martinique), will be a resident scholar in MMLL in Spring 2025 as Society for French Studies Visiting International Fellow



GHI - EVENTS 2025

As the academic year progresses, the GHI is set to host an exciting series of events, featuring distinguished speakers and fostering international collaboration. The [Trinity Global Humanities Lectures](#) in May, followed by the [GHI Summer Forum 2025](#) in June, promise to be a remarkable opportunity for learning, networking, and global dialogue.

Trinity Global Humanities Lectures 2025: A Deep Dive into Contemporary Issues

Kicking off the season of events are the Trinity Lectures in May and early June, where we are thrilled to welcome [Pratab Bhanu Mehta](#)—one of the foremost thinkers in contemporary political and social thought. These lectures, taking place on the 14th, 21st, and 28th of May, and concluding on 4th June, will offer deep insights into the intersections of politics, society, and global development, sparking thought-provoking discussions that resonate across borders.



PROF PRATAP BHANU MEHTA
LAURENCE S. ROCKEFELLER VISITING
PROFESSOR PRINCETON UNIVERSITY



PROF MEHTA'S ARTICLE FOR THE INDIAN EXPRESS
DECEMBER 2024



PODCAST - SEPTEMBER 2024
CAN INDIA CHANGE COURSE?

GHI Summer Forum 2025: A Global Networking Event

Following the Trinity Lectures, we will host the highly anticipated GHI Summer Forum 2025 in Cambridge, scheduled for 25th, 26th, and 27th June. This year's Forum will welcome our esteemed network partners from China, India, Turkey, Ghana, Chile and Lebanon, creating an exciting opportunity for cross-cultural exchange, knowledge-sharing, and collaboration. The Forum will focus on building global partnerships and addressing critical issues through a series of collaborative discussions, workshops, and networking opportunities.



GHI SUMMER FORUM
JUNE 2023
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE



MEET THE TEAM: Fudan University (Shanghai, China)

Fudan University is a comprehensive research-oriented university renowned both at home and abroad for its highly-rated arts, sciences and medicine disciplines. It boasts a total area of approximately 2,500,000 square meters that are divided into 4 campuses: Handan (main campus in Wujiaochang area), Fenglin, Jiangwan and Zhangjiang, housing 35 schools and departments that offer 11 broad subject areas, 5 state-level key laboratories, 29 provincial and ministerial-level laboratories, 17 affiliated hospitals, and libraries that hold more than 5.5 million books and countless digital resources. The rapid development of humanities and social sciences is an important goal for Fudan University. It will act according to the mission of constructing the “New Humanities Discipline”, promote the development of theories and academic structure that match the future needs of the country, inherit the good in the Chinese culture, and cultivate talents adaptive to the new era. It will specialize in philosophy and social sciences, step up integrative innovation of social sciences and frontier technologies, and strengthen its capability to serve the society.

In the Spotlight . . .



Dr Lianbi Zhu

Associate Prof of History
(Fudan University)



No place like Home

- What is your Alma Mater?

PhD in History from the University of Sheffield, Nanjing University (BA & MA)

- What is your main area of research?

Cultural history of the British Empire (19th and 20th century; nationalism and national identity)

- What do you enjoy most about being part of the Global Humanities Network?

The best part of being part of the network is the opportunity to meet colleagues face to face or online from different backgrounds to discuss our research interests from a global perspective.



Cooking and Baking



“The Invention of Tradition”
(Eric J. Hobsbawm & Terence Ranger)



Prof Lu Li'an

Director
Global Partnerships Office &
Confucius Institutes Office
(Fudan University)



Yet To be discovered

- What is your Alma Mater?

PhD in English Literature from the University of Glasgow, The University of Edinburgh (MA), and Chenchi University, Taipei (BA)

- What is your main area of research?

Late 19th and 20th century English Novel, history of women's writing, global modernism

- What do you enjoy most about being part of the Global Humanities Network?

Learning to work with scholars in pushing the limits of university administration gives me meaningful joy.



Listening to Music



“Life of Pi”
(Robert B. Marks)

