

Workshops in Chinese Culture and Digital Studies 2025

Professor Peter K. Bol

Charles H. Carswell Professor of East Asian Languages and Civilizations, Harvard University

Co-organized by CUHK Library

Sponsored by Bei Shan Tang Foundation

These two workshops are ONLY open to the local research community who have experience in digital scholarship/humanities research.

Background:

The Institute of Chinese Studies is pleased to launch the “Distinguished Lectureship in Chinese Culture and Digital Studies”, which is sponsored by Bei Shan Tang Foundation. The Lectureship brings together experts to create a platform for intellectual exchange and dialogue in the field of digital humanities. Renowned scholars from around the world are invited to CUHK to inspire and nurture the next generation of scholars with digital knowledge across all areas of Chinese Studies.

Instructor:

Professor Peter K. Bol is the Charles H. Carswell Professor of East Asian Languages and Civilizations at Harvard University. His research concerns the history of China’s cultural elites at the national and local levels from the 7th to the 17th century. He is the author of *This Culture of Ours: Intellectual Transitions in T'ang and Sung China*, *Neo-Confucianism in History*, and *Localizing Learning: The Literati Enterprise in Wuzhou, 1100-1600*, the co-author of *Sung Dynasty Uses of the I-ching*, co-editor of *Ways with Words*, and various journal articles. He co-directed the [China Historical Geographic Information Systems](#) project, a collaboration between Harvard and Fudan University to create a GIS for 2000 years of Chinese history. He directs the [China Biographical Database](#) project, a collaboration between Harvard, Academia Sinica, and Peking University, currently with 640,000 historical figures.

Workshop 1 (Hands-on Practice)

Title: “Learning to use the China Biographical Database (CBDB)”

Date: 7 May 2025 (Wednesday)

Time: 2:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Venue: Digital Scholarship Lab, University Library, CUHK

Abstract:

CBDB is a large relational database devoted to the study of men and women in China’s historical record. It is the result of 20 years of effort by the Institute of History and Philology at Academia Sinica, the Center for Research on Ancient Chinese History at the Peking University, and the Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies at Harvard University. This workshop will briefly introduce the project, its sources, and its past and future development. We will then turn to step-by-step training in the use of CBDB and methods of visualizing data through network and spatial analysis. Participants can download the database from the CBDB website and open it in Microsoft Access.

Workshop 2 (Research Presentation)

Title: “Teaching China’s History with AI: An Example”

Date: 9 May 2025 (Friday)

Time: 2:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Venue: Digital Scholarship Lab, University Library, CUHK

Abstract:

The challenge in introducing digital methods into history and the humanities courses is that most students are still unfamiliar with the methods. How can we avoid spending our time teaching the technology, which is not a typical strength of scholars of history and literature in the first place, at the expense of the topic of the course? Professor Bol

will report on his experience this year using various AI methods to teach a course on the history of literature and art in Ming dynasty Suzhou.

Enquiries: dslab@lib.cuhk.edu.hk / ics-dhlectureship@cuhk.edu.hk