

CHINA CROSSROADS

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China's Openness to the West Preceding the Opium War

Joanna Waley-Cohen

Provost and Professor of Chinese History
NYU Shanghai

Author of [The Culture of War in China](#)

Author of [The Sextants of Beijing](#)

Author of [Exile in Mid-Qing China](#)



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In this talk, Professor Joanna Waley-Cohen discusses China and the West in the period preceding the 1839-1842 Opium War, focusing in particular on foreign goods and foreign knowledge. She shows multiple ways in which the lingering assumption, that at that time China was closed to outside ideas and influences, is mistaken.

[Joanna Waley-Cohen](#) is Provost for NYU Shanghai and Julius Silver Professor of History at NYU. She has taught the history of China at NYU since 1992 and at NYU Shanghai since it first opened in 2013. As Provost, she serves as NYU Shanghai's chief academic officer, setting the university's academic strategy and priorities, as well as overseeing academic appointments, research, and faculty affairs. Her research interests include early modern Chinese history; China and the West; Chinese law, and Chinese imperial culture, especially in the 18th century. Her major publications include [The Culture of War in China: Empire and the Military under the Qing](#) (2006), [The Sextants of Beijing: Global Currents in Chinese History](#) (1999), and [Exile in Mid-Qing China: Banishment to Xinjiang: 1758-1820](#) (1991). Waley-Cohen's ongoing scholarly projects include a revised history of imperialism in China, a study of daily life in China c.1800, and a history of culinary culture in early modern China. She holds a PhD in History from Yale and an MA in China Studies from Cambridge.

[China Crossroads](#) hosts talks on all topics related to China, including business, foreign policy, and other areas as they relate to China, the idea being that China is both already a "crossroads" of the world and itself at a "crossroads" in terms of its future global influence. For more information, contact Frank Tsai at editor@shanghai-review.org.