

Curriculum Vitae

American University
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Justin M. Jacobs

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EDUCATION

University of California, San Diego

- Ph.D. History, 2011
 - Advisors: Joseph W. Esherick and Paul G. Pickowicz
 - Dissertation: “Empire Besieged: The Preservation of Chinese Rule in Xinjiang, 1884–1971”

University of Washington, Seattle

- M.A. International Studies (China), 2005
- B.A. English Language and Literature, 2002
 - Magna Cum Laude, Phi Beta Kappa

EMPLOYMENT

American University, Department of History

- Professor, 2022–present
- Associate Professor, 2017–2022
- Assistant Professor, 2011–2017

PUBLICATIONS

BOOKS

- **2024.** *Plunder? How Museums Got Their Treasures*. Reaktion Books.
- **2020.** *The Compensations of Plunder: How China Lost Its Treasures*. University of Chicago Press.
 - **Chinese translation:** Zheng Zhiming 郑智明 [Justin Jacobs]. *Zhongguo shibao ji: waiguoren zai Zhongguo xibei de tanxian licheng* 中国失宝记：外国人在中国西北的探险历程. Trans. Zhao Kai 赵锴. Peking University Press, 2025.
- **2017.** *Indiana Jones in History: From Pompeii to the Moon*. Pulp Hero Press.
- **2016.** *Xinjiang and the Modern Chinese State*. University of Washington Press.

PEER-REVIEWED ARTICLES OR BOOK CHAPTERS

- **2020.** “The Concept of the Silk Road in the 19th and 20th Centuries.” In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Asian History*. Ed. David Ludden. New York: Oxford University Press.
- **2016.** “Exile Island: Xinjiang Refugees and the ‘One China’ Policy in Nationalist Taiwan, 1949–1971.” *Journal of Cold War Studies* 18, no. 1 (Winter): 188–218.

- **2014.** “Nationalist China’s ‘Great Game’: Leveraging Foreign Explorers in Xinjiang, 1927–1935.” *Journal of Asian Studies* 73, no. 1 (February): 43–64.
- **2011.** “Preparing the People for Mass Clemency: The 1956 Japanese War Crimes Trials in Shenyang and Taiyuan.” *China Quarterly* 205 (March): 152–172.
- **2010.** “The Many Deaths of a Kazak Unaligned: Osman Batur, Chinese Decolonization, and the Nationalization of a Nomad.” *American Historical Review* 115, no. 5 (December): 1291–1314.
- **2010.** “Confronting Indiana Jones: Chinese Nationalism, Historical Imperialism, and the Criminalization of Aurel Stein and the Raiders of Dunhuang, 1899–1944.” In *China on the Margins*. Ed. Sherman Cochran and Paul G. Pickowicz. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 65–90.
- **2008.** “How Chinese Turkestan Became Chinese: Visualizing Zhang Zhizhong’s *Tianshan Pictorial* and Xinjiang Youth Song and Dance Troupe.” *Journal of Asian Studies* 67, no. 2 (May): 545–591.

INVITED ARTICLES AND BOOK CHAPTERS

- **2019.** “An Analysis of Modern Chinese Colophons on the Dunhuang Manuscripts.” *The Silk Road* 17: 74–89.
- **2019.** “The Relevance of ‘India’ for Aurel Stein’s Expeditions in Xinjiang.” In *Marc Aurel Stein with Special Reference to South and Central Asian Legacy: Recent Discoveries and Research*. Ed. Radha Banerjee Sarkar. New Delhi: Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, 7–19.
- **2019.** “Tashkurgan.” In *China Tripping: Encountering the Everyday in the People’s Republic*. Ed. Jeremy A. Murray, Perry Link, and Paul G. Pickowicz. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 135–37.
- **2018.** “The Rise of Xinjiang Studies: A *JAS* New Author Forum.” *Journal of Asian Studies* 77, no. 1 (February): 7–18.
- **2014.** “Huang Wenbi: Pioneer of Chinese Archaeology in Xinjiang.” *The Silk Road* 12: 122–131.
- **2013.** “Langdon Warner at Dunhuang: What Really Happened?” *The Silk Road* 11: 1–11.
- **2012.** “Cultural Thieves or Political Liabilities? How Chinese Officials Viewed Foreign Archaeologists in Xinjiang, 1893–1914.” *The Silk Road* 10: 117–122.
- **2009.** “Central Asian Manuscripts ‘Are Not Worth Much To Us’: The Thousand-Buddha Caves in Early Twentieth-Century China.” *Journal of Inner Asian Art and Archaeology* 4: 161–168.

TRANSLATED ARTICLES

- **2024.** “Sitanyin de Xinjiang kaocha yu “Yindu” de xiangguanxing 斯坦因的新疆考察与《印度》的相关性 [The relevance of “India” for Aurel Stein’s Expeditions in Xinjiang]. *Xiyu wenshi* 西域文史 18: 309-20.

- **2022.** “Yang guizi likai le: xifang tanxianjia zai zhongguo de xiemu 洋鬼子离开了：西方探险家在中国的谢幕 [Foreign devils begone: the last act of Western archaeologists in China]. *Xiyu wenshi* 西域文史 16: 303–33.
- **2021.** “Dunhuang wenxian jindai tiba fenxi” 敦煌文献近代题跋分析 [An analysis of modern Dunhuang colophons]. *Silu wenming* 丝路文明 6 (November): 209–26.
- **2021.** “Diguo de junzi: Xifang kaogu xuejia yu Zhongguo guanyuan zai xibei de hudong” 帝国的君子：西方考古学家与中国官员在西北的互动 [Gentlemen of empire: interactions between Western archaeologists and Chinese officials in the northwest]. *Xiyu wenshi* 西域文史 15: 261–90.
- **2015.** “Huang Wenbi: Zhongguo Xinjiang kaogu de xianqu” 黄文弼：中国新疆考古的先驱 [Huang Wenbi: Pioneer of Chinese archaeology in Xinjiang]. *Xiyu wenshi* 西域文史 10 (December): 319–28.

BOOK REVIEWS

- **2024.** Xin Wen, *The King's Road: Diplomacy and the Remaking of the Silk Road* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2023), *Crossroads: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Asian Interactions* 23, no. 1–2.
- **2023.** Yuhua Wang, *The Rise and Fall of Imperial China: The Social Origins of State Development* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2022), H-Diplo (open-access online platform).
- **2023.** Jamil Hasanli, *Soviet Policy in Xinjiang: Stalin and the National Movement in Eastern Turkistan* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2021), *Journal of Cold War Studies* 25, no. 3 (Summer): 224–27.
- **2021.** Eric Schluessel, *Land of Strangers: The Civilizing Project in Qing Central Asia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2020), *Journal of Chinese History* 5 (July): 357–60.
- **2018.** Donald S. Lopez, Jr., *Hyecho's Journey: The World of Buddhism* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2017), *The Silk Road* 16 (2018): 102–104.
- **2018.** Susan Whitfield, *Silk, Slaves, and Stupas: Material Culture of the Silk Road* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2018), *The Silk Road* 16 (2018): 100–102.
- **2018.** Gregory Rohlf, *Building New China, Colonizing Kokonor: Resettlement to Qinghai in the 1950s* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2016), *Journal of Chinese History* 2 (July 2018): 452–53.
- **2017.** Rongxing Guo, *China's Spatial (Dis)integration: Political Economy of the Interethnic Unrest in Xinjiang* (Waltham, MA: Chandos Publishing, 2015), *Pacific Affairs* 90, no. 2 (June): 327–29.
- **2015.** Trine Brox and Ildikó Bellér-Hann, eds., *On the Fringes of the Harmonious Society: Tibetans and Uyghurs in Socialist China* (Copenhagen: NIAS Press, 2014), *The China Journal* 74 (July): 203–5.

- **2013.** David Brophy, “Tending to Unite? The Origins of Uyghur Nationalism” (Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 2011), reviewed for *DissertationReviews.com*.
- **2010.** Sang Bing, *Gengzi qinwang yu wan Qing zhengju* [Sang Bing, *The 1900 loyalist movement and late Qing politics*], *China Review International* 15, no. 4: 539–43.

TRANSLATIONS

- **2012.** Translations of ten archival documents relating to the history of modern Xinjiang, 1916–1955. Unpublished pedagogical materials.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

TELEVISION

- **2024.** “World Heritage Sites II: 12 More of the World’s Greatest Places.” The Great Courses. 12 episodes.
- **2021.** “World Heritage Sites: Exploring the World’s Greatest Places.” The Great Courses. 24 episodes.

DOCUMENTARIES

- **2018.** Interview on the 1956 Japanese war crimes trials in China for *The Tokyo Trials*, a documentary produced by Shanghai Media Group. November 17.
- **2017.** *Indiana Jones in History: From Pompeii to the Moon*. 21 episodes on Youtube. 277 minutes. Companion to book.

PODCAST

- **2018-20.** *Beyond Huaxia: A College History of China and Japan*. 61 episodes. 65 hours.
- **2018.** *Indiana Jones in History*. 6 episodes. 8 hours.

TESTIMONY

- **2018.** “China’s Repression and Internment of Uyghurs: U.S. Policy Responses.” Testimony before the U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific. September 26.

MEDIA COVERAGE

- **2024.** “Should Museums Return Antiquities to Their Countries of Origin? Some Say No.” *South China Morning Post*. December 22.
- **2024.** “Museums or Crime Scenes: The Contentious History of the World’s Most Famous Artifacts.” *Gizmodo*. November 3.
- **2024.** The M.O. Podcast. Podcast interview for *Plunder? How Museums Got Their Treasures*. September 25.
- **2024.** Talk Radio Europe. Radio interview for *Plunder? How Museums Got Their Treasures*. September 17.

- **2024.** “Chinese artefacts in repatriation row were ‘given willingly’ to British Museum.” *The Guardian/Observer*. July 20.
- **2024.** “No, the British Museum Isn’t Full of Plunder—Here’s Why.” *The Telegraph*. July 15, 2024.
- **2023.** “Wer war der echte Indiana Jones?” [Who was the real Indiana Jones?], *Hörzu Wissen*, June-July 2023, pp. 52–55. Online interview for German magazine. March 28.
- **2022.** “UK kitchen vase turns out to be \$1.8 million Qing-dynasty treasure.” Online magazine interview, May 25.
- **2022.** “Booty calls: Hollywood’s problem with lost-treasure yarns.” Newspaper interview, *The Guardian*. February 11.
- **2021.** “Classified study found COVID-19 could have originated in Chinese lab.” Television interview, Sinclair Broadcast Group. May 3.
- **2020.** “The Compensations of Plunder.” *Getty: Art + Ideas* podcast interview. December 9.
- **2020.** “US-China relations to change under Biden, analysts say, but not radically.” Television interview, Sinclair Broadcast Group. November 20.
- **2020.** “With US consulate closure, analysts see China’s Xi flexing muscle.” Television interview, Sinclair Broadcast Group. July 24.
- **2020.** “‘A net loss’: Will the coronavirus reshape China’s relations with the world?” Television interview, Sinclair Broadcast Group. April 15.
- **2018.** “Chinese leaders tried before to assimilate the Uighurs. This time it may face less resistance.” Op-ed, *Washington Post*, October 31.
- **2018.** “China 24” television interview on China’s ethnic minorities, China Global Television Network, May 29.
- **2018.** “Indiana Jones in History with Justin Jacobs.” *The Archaeology Podcast Network*. Episode 38. March 24.
- **2017.** “Indiana Jones and the big lie.” *Washington Post*, December 11.
- **2013.** “Strait Talk” television forum, Voice of America, China Branch, January 13. Hour-long televised interview conducted live in Chinese, with scholars from Taiwan and a Q&A session fielded from China.

PRESENTATIONS

RESEARCH TALKS

- **2025.** “Plunder? How Museums Got Their Treasures.” Royal Society for Asian Affairs, London. Virtual talk and Q&A. March 5.
- **2025.** “Plunder? How Museums Got Their Treasures.” Mayflower Society of Maryland. Museum tour and lunch presentation. February 15.
- **2025.** “Plunder? How Museums Got Their Treasures.” Mayflower Society. Virtual talk. January 9.
- **2025.** “Plunder? How Museums Got Their Treasures.” Oriental Ceramic Society, Hong Kong. Virtual talk. January 8.
- **2024.** “Plunder? How Museums Got Their Treasures.” Royal Asiatic Society of Beijing. Virtual talk. September 25.

- **2024.** “How Museums Got Their Treasures.” Smithsonian Associates. Virtual talk. August 20.
- **2021.** “The Compensations of Plunder: How China Lost Its Treasures.” Seattle Art Museum. Virtual talk. December 11.
- **2021.** “Western Archaeological Expeditions in Northwestern China and the Evolution of the Silk Road Concept.” School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. Virtual talk. January 15.
- **2020.** “The Compensations of Plunder: How China Lost Its Treasures.” California State University, San Bernardino. Virtual talk. November 9.
- **2020.** “The Compensations of Plunder: How China Lost Its Treasures.” The Oriental Ceramic Society of Hong Kong. Virtual talk. October 13.
- **2020.** “China’s Lost Treasures: Plundered or Bartered?” Smithsonian Associates. Virtual talk. August 19.
- **2020.** “The Compensations of Plunder: How China Lost Its Treasures.” The Hotchkiss School, Lakeville, Connecticut, February 28.
- **2019.** “China’s War On Terrorism,” Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, Washington, D.C., January 10.
- **2018.** “Historical Context for Chinese Strategies of Rule in Xinjiang,” Let’s Talk China Symposium: Shedding Light on Xinjiang, Brown University, Providence, December 1.
- **2018.** “Did Hollywood Get It Right?” Smithsonian Associates Program, Washington, D.C., March 22.
- **2018.** “How Chinese Governors Responded to Ottoman Influence in Xinjiang,” Doshisha University, Kyoto, March 6.
- **2018.** “Who Confronted Indiana Jones?” Smithsonian Associates Program, Washington, D.C., February 22.
- **2018.** “Who Enabled Indiana Jones?” Smithsonian Associates Program, Washington, D.C., February 1.
- **2018.** “Why Does that Belong in a Museum?” Smithsonian Associates Program, Washington, D.C., January 4.
- **2017.** “Who Was Indiana Jones?” Smithsonian Associates Program, Washington, D.C., December 7.
- **2017.** “China at the Door,” Baltimore Hebrew Congregation, Baltimore, April 3.
- **2016.** “1949 nian hou ‘Xinjiang sheng zhengfu’ zhu Taiwan banshichu de huodong” [On the activities of the office of the “Xinjiang Provincial Government” in Taiwan after 1949], Sichuan University, Chengdu, China, June 30.
- **2016.** “Guanyu Qingmo Minchu waiguo tanxianjia huoqu Xinjiang wenwu de xin lilun” [A new theory regarding the acquisition of antiquities by foreign explorers in Xinjiang during the late Qing and early Republican eras], Sichuan University, Chengdu, China, June 27.
- **2016.** “Minguo shiqi Xinjiang difangguan yingdui difang minzu zhuyi weixie de zhanlüe” [Strategies adopted by local Chinese officials in

Republican Xinjiang to deal with the threat of local ethnic nationalism], Sichuan University, Chengdu, China, June 24.

- **2016.** “The Compensations of Plunder: Foreign Explorers in Modern China,” Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, Washington, D.C., April 27.
- **2014.** “The Compensations of Plunder: Chinese Officials and Foreign Explorers in Xinjiang, 1900–1930,” Asian Studies Lunchtime Lecture, American University, Nov. 18.
- **2014.** “Publishing and the Field of Transnational History,” Nathan and Jeanette Miller Center for Historical Studies, University of Maryland, College Park, April 16.
- **2012.** “Yang Zengxin and the Politics of Difference in Xinjiang, 1912–28,” Inner Asian and Altaic Studies Lunchtime Lecture Series, Harvard University, November 7.
- **2012.** “The Road to Yi-Ta: The Failure of Chinese Communist Ethnic Policies in Xinjiang, 1950–70,” Washington Asian Forum public lecture, American University, Washington, D.C., February 29.
- **2011.** “100 Years Later: The 1911 Chinese Revolution Then and Today,” public talk given at American University, Washington, D.C., October 10.

CONFERENCES

- **2024.** Renaissance Weekend. Multiple featured lectures. Aug. 29-Sept. 2. Jackson, Wyoming.
- **2020.** “To the End of Revolution: The Chinese Communist Party and Tibet, 1949–1959.” Moderator for book talk by Xiaoyuan Liu. December 2.
- **2019.** “An Analysis of Modern Chinese Colophons on Manuscripts from Dunhuang and Turfan, 1910–1944,” paper presented at the Dunhuang and Cultural Contact Along the Silk Road conference, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest, May 2–3.
- **2019.** “Displaced Persons of East Asia Panel,” American University, Washington, D.C., February 26.
- **2018.** “An Examination of the Fate of Xinjiang Refugees during the Cold War,” paper presented at the International Workshop on Xinjiang Emigrants, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, March 3.
- **2016.** “The Compensations of Plunder: Why Chinese Officials Aided and Abetted Foreign Explorers in Xinjiang,” paper presented at the Association for Asian Studies Annual Conference, Seattle, April 2.
- **2015.** “The Relevance of ‘India’ for Aurel Stein’s Expeditions in Xinjiang,” paper presented at the Marc Aurel Stein with Special Reference to South and Central Asian Legacy: Recent Discoveries and Research conference, New Delhi, India, March 25.
- **2014.** “The Xinjiang Government in Exile on Taiwan,” New Sources and New Perspectives on China’s Frontiers during the Cold War Workshop, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington, D.C., August 5.

- **2014.** “Fight, Flight, or Unite? Strategies of Engagement in Early Communist Xinjiang,” paper presented at the Association for Asian Studies Annual Conference, Philadelphia, March 28.
- **2014.** “From Universal to Chinese Sovereignty in Late Imperial and Early Republican Xinjiang,” paper presented at the American Historical Association Annual Conference, Washington, D.C., January 4.
- **2012.** “‘Eggshell Autonomy’: The Origins of Ethnic Conflict in Modern Xinjiang, 1950–62,” paper presented at the Association for Asian Studies Annual Conference, Toronto, March 16.
- **2011.** “New Directions in the History of Modern Xinjiang,” panel discussant at the 12th Annual Central Eurasian Studies Society, Columbus, Ohio, September 18.
- **2010.** “Minguo shiqi Xinjiang yu zhongyang zhengfu de guanxi” [Relations between the central government and Xinjiang during the Republican era], paper presented at the Research Center for Chinese Borderlands and Geography (CASS), Beijing, China, April 18.
- **2008.** “The Legacy of Osman Batur in China and Kazakstan,” paper presented at the Osman Batur and East Turkestan International Conference, Istanbul, Turkey, May 3.
- **2007.** “Confronting Indiana Jones: The Chinese Conquest of Sir Aurel Stein and the Raiders of Dunhuang, 1900–1944,” paper presented at the Dunhuang: Past, Present, Future—100th Anniversary of Sir Aurel Stein’s Expedition conference, Budapest, Hungary, December 14.

HONORS & AWARDS

FELLOWSHIPS

- Jacob K. Javits Fellowship (2007–8, 2008–9, and 2010–2011)
- Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad Fellowship (2009–10)
- Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship—Uighur (2004–5)
- Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship—Chinese (Spring 2004)

OTHER

- H. Stuart Hughes Prize for Best Graduate Student Research Paper, UCSD History Dept. (2006–7)

TEACHING

COURSES TAUGHT

- ASIA 100: Introduction to Asia
- HIST 250: History of Chinese Civilization
- HIST 251: History of Modern China
- HIST 252: The Japanese Empire
- HIST 255: Iconic Monuments in World History
- HIST 265: History of Archaeological Expeditions
- HIST 274: Captain Cook and the Pacific

- HIST 341: Anatomy of the Fantastic
- HIST 399: Conversations in History: The Silk Road
- HIST 482: Research Seminar

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

- Faculty Advisor for Asian Studies Major

LANGUAGES

- Fluent: Mandarin Chinese

TRAVEL

- Extended Residence: China (Xinjiang, Yunnan, Sichuan, Guizhou, Shaanxi, Beijing, Shanghai, Macao, Hong Kong), Taiwan
- Substantial visits: Japan, India, Thailand, Laos, Myanmar, Iceland, Turkey, Hungary, Italy, England, Sweden, France