



Universität
Zürich^{UZH}

Chair of East Asian Art History

University of Zurich
Institute of Art History
Rämistrasse 73
8006 Zurich
www.khist.uzh.ch/ostasien

Zurich Lectures in East Asian Art History

October 22, 2025
18:15–19:30

University of Zurich
Rämistrasse 59
8001 Zürich
Room RAA-G-15

After Revisionism: The New Framing of the Arts of China's Middle Period (10th–14th century)

Prof. Dr. Shane McCausland
SOAS University of London



Cizhou ware slip-painted pot painted with dragon, Henan or Hebei, h. 31.1 m. Collection: LACMA, 53.74 (dated Yuan, 1279-1368).



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Abstract

This lecture examines the current state-of-the-field for Chinese art history in the Middle Period (10th-14th c.). After a prolonged phase of revisionism, a change is now underway whereby new critical methods and regional perspectives are becoming more established. There is now a renewed interest in how such fundamental art-historical effects as cultural continuity happened, with a tacit recognition of the notion that 'for things to stay the same, everything must change'. In the presentation, some case studies afford the opportunity to explore current issues, including the fate of the mid-twentieth-century 'sinicization' theory of art; the implications for the arts of new thinking about the geo-political status of the so-called conquest (non-Chinese) dynasties; the multiplicity of calligraphic scripts alongside Chinese; and trans-continental elite dialogue seen in the art of court painting.

Shane McCausland is Percival David Professor of the History of Art in the Department of History of Art & Archaeology at SOAS University of London. He was an undergraduate at Cambridge and completed his PhD at Princeton University in art history with East Asian studies. He has curated numerous art exhibitions in China, the USA and Europe and published widely in Chinese and East Asian art history. His latest monograph is *The Art of the Chinese Picture-Scroll* (Reaktion/Chicago). He is a member of the art history panel of the UK's Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2029. Currently a Leverhulme Research Fellow (2024–26), he is co-curator of an exhibition, 'Genghis Khan and the Art of the Mongol World', to be mounted in 2027 at the Royal Academy of Arts in London.