

Helping the UK understand China

Professor Rana Mitter from the University of Oxford is using his expert knowledge of Chinese history to help the government, businesses and the public to understand and engage with contemporary Chinese politics.



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China has the largest population in the world and with its rapidly growing economy and political power, greater understanding of the country is essential. Professor Mitter of the History Faculty and the Department of Politics and International Relations at the University of Oxford has been using his in-depth knowledge of Chinese politics and culture to help a number of groups in the UK. China is more historically conscious than the West, and Chinese policy is often based on an understanding of the country's history. With this in mind, Professor Mitter's academic work on China's role in World War II and its post-war recovery has become highly relevant to understanding contemporary Chinese politics. Professor Mitter has been called on by the International Institute for Strategic Studies (on behalf of the Ministry of Defence), the Foreign Office and the British Army to help them understand China as a growing power. He has also briefed UK government ministers prior to diplomatic visits to China. Businesses use his knowledge to help them understand investment opportunities in China.

Bringing a fresh understanding of China to the UK public is also important to Professor Mitter and he frequently appears on BBC Radio to discuss a variety of topics relating to China, concerning the past, present and future. Professor Mitter is the author of *Modern China: A Very Short Introduction* which is part of a popular series of books from Oxford University Press.

'Professor Rana Mitter has been able to convey the complexity of China, and its challenges, in a balanced way to audiences ranging from government ministers, to business people, to school children. At a time when China's impact is becoming greater, Professor Mitter's stress on the need to look at China from within, and try to understand the history of where it has come from in order to interpret its actions today has been invaluable.'

Dr Kerry Brown, Senior Fellow, Chatham House