

# INTRODUCING LOOKINGGLASS AND GLASSHOUSE FORUM

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Glasshouse Forum has the pleasure of presenting the second issue of *LookingGlass*, a newsletter written by Glasshouse Forum's secretariat and fellow researchers.

Its aim is to present and discuss topics taken up within the framework of Glasshouse Forum's work and to provide an arena for critical reflection on the merits and problems of capitalism.

*LookingGlass* contains longer reports, short interviews, essays and book reviews. You will also find presentations of recent Glasshouse Forum publications. The content will in a flexible way mirror those themes on which Glasshouse Forum is running projects, but *LookingGlass* also has the opportunity of being explorative on questions of capitalism.

Glasshouse Forum, founded in 2007, is a network of researchers and intellectuals – to date about 50 active contributors – from different disciplines, mainly from Europe and the US, but also from

Russia and China. The forum is politically independent and does not engage in lobbying activities, or make policy recommendations.

The following projects are running within Glasshouse Forum 2008/2009:

- The return of the capitalist-authoritarian great powers
- A consumed society?
- Short-termism in the long run
- Globalisation and the middle class in the West

#### **Glasshouse Forum publications to date:**

Glasshouse Forum has, to date, published six titles. The first four were presented in *LookingGlass* No. 1/2008:

*An Edited Transcript from a Round-Table Conference on Authoritarian Capitalism*, 2008, 128 pp.

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*White Whale or Red Herring? Assessing Sovereign Wealth Funds*, Daniel W. Drezner, 2008, 24 pp.

*The Limits of the China Model*, Johan Lagerkvist, 2008, 24 pp.

*Tolerance and Democracy in Liberal and Authoritarian Market Economies*, Sten Widmalm and Sven Oskarsson, 2008, 40 pp.

The latest publications are presented in this issue of *LookingGlass*:

*Towards an Hourglass Society? Income Differentials and the Fate of the Middle Class*, Kay Glans and Johanna Laurin (eds.), 2008, 144 pp. (see page 6):

*An Edited Transcript from a Round-Table Conference on Short-Termism*, Kay Glans and Johanna Laurin (eds.), 2008, 92 pp. (see page 16)

All Glasshouse Forum publications can be downloaded from our website:  
[www.glasshouseforum.org](http://www.glasshouseforum.org).

#### Upcoming Glasshouse Forum event:

China-West Intellectual Summit:  
China as a model for an alternative modernity?

As a follow up to the first round-table conference on authoritarian capitalism, Glasshouse Forum will bring together prominent intellectuals from the West and China for a “China-West Intellectual Summit” in Paris on 23–24 February 2009.

China is rising as an economic force with great

global weight. The assumption among many western observers that China will have to adopt a liberal democracy as it develops is not as convincing as it seemed earlier. Maybe China is developing an alternative to the Enlightenment Euro-American paradigm, finding a path to becoming an economic and political superpower without adopting a liberal democracy of the western model. If so, will it then become a model for other parts of the world as an alternative path to modernity? Will it have similarities with earlier western attempts at creating alternative modernities? Will it change the international political system and also influence the political climate within the West? Even if downright copying seems farfetched, we cannot rule out a more subtle inspiration emanating from a successful China, changing for instance the way the role of the state is perceived also in western societies? If Asian/Confucian traditions will be central to a Chinese model, will that also have an impact on the way the West looks at its own relation between tradition and modernity?

The China-West Intellectual Summit aims at exploring China’s search for a modernity of its own as an alternative to the logic of the Euro-American modernity and capitalism. It will discuss whether China is, or has the potential of becoming, a model for such an alternative modernity and which consequences might follow. How can different cultural and political value-system coexist on the global arena?

Participants are **Timothy Garton Ash**, Oxford University, **Daniel A. Bell** and **Zhiyuan Cui** of the Tsinghua University in Beijing, **Azar Gat**, Tel Aviv University, **G. John Ikenberry**, Princeton University, **Susan Shirk**, University of Cali-

fornia, **Vivienne Shue**, Oxford University, **Shaoguang Wang**, Chinese University of Hong Kong, **Feng Zhang**, The Foreign Policy Centre in London, and **Yongnian Zheng**, National University of Singapore. The summit will be moderated by **Gideon Rachman** of the *Financial Times*.

#### Glasshouse Forum in the media:

2008-11-04:

“Wake up Left, you’ve won!” Article in the arts and culture pages of Sweden’s largest daily newspaper *Dagens Nyheter* by Kay Glans, Glasshouse Forum’s editorial coordinator.

2008-09-23:

“Swedish development assistance put out of the running by capitalist dictatorships”. Opinion piece in *Dagens Nyheter* (the debate page “DN Debatt”) by Sten Widmalm and Sven Oskarsson, based on the Glasshouse Forum report *Tolerance and Democracy in Liberal and Authoritarian Market Economies*.

2008-09-22:

Interview about Glasshouse Forum with Daniel Sachs, CEO of Proventus and chairman of the Concerned Capitalists Foundation, in the business section of *Dagens Nyheter*.