

Prof. Dr. Judd C. Kinzley

(University of Wisconsin-Madison / Current Fellow at the
Käte Hamburger Research Center, LMU Munich)

Chinese Businessmen and the Cracks in the Foundations of the Chinese State, 1938–1953

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Focusing on a small handful of Chinese businessmen with deep ties to government officials in the Chinese Republic as well as to those in the United States, in this talk I will reveal new ways of thinking about the relationship between private capital and the central state in China. The insights, which are drawn from the analysis of underutilized sources from China, the United States, and Taiwan, point to the ability of transnational business histories and commodity histories to shift longstanding assumptions about the nature of Chinese state power over the long duree.