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EDITORIAL

Springtime of Life: Youth in Chinese History

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This editorial introduces the research articles on the topic of "Youth". Further, it discusses the recent developments of censorship and self-censorship.

本期歐洲漢學學會年刊的專題是"青年"。此外還討論有關審查制度和自我審查機制的最新發展。

Keywords: Youth, Censorship, Self-censorship, Sinology, Chinese Studies, Editorial

關鍵詞：青春，青年， 審查，自我審查，漢學，编者序

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Youth, being 'young', by definition has something of immaturity and impetuousness about it. Youth is about vigour and chasing dreams. It is water gushing from its spring that, after finding its way to the lowlands in great movements, flows quietly into the sea. As the Chinese saying goes: "The Yangzi never runs backwards; man recaptures not his youth" (長江從不倒退；人不重拾青春). It is in the context of accepted "mature" norms that the significance of "youth" gains importance.

Youth, like other temporal concepts such as generation, is firstly a category of thematisation of oneself and of these new norms and ideas. Second, it is an analytical category. The authors of this second issue want to discuss both. Self-thematisation means that people belonging to an age cohort think that it is relevant to understand themselves in connection with others as a part of a distinct lost youth culture (Clark 2012). It is a "stratification of biographical experiences" and, when we grow old, it is an "imagined common origin" (Jureit 2017, 2). The May Fourth Movement, the Red Guards (Chan 1980; 1985) or the generation of rusticated youth (Bonnin 2013), the participants in the Tiananmen protests in Beijing in 1976 and 1989 (Liao 2011), or the student protests in Hong Kong and Taiwan (Ho 2021) became one of these turning points for many participants and their societies.

As an analytical category, youth describes a defined period of our life span. The fixation on parents is becoming weaker. The elderly integrates the upgrowing generation into the society as adults and as full members, endowed with new rights, responsibilities, and duties. In the eyes of these young people, this transfer is not always consensual, passive, or exclusively through traditional rituals. Youth in its temporality marks a crucial and renegotiated space of change and reorientation. It is a distinct period in our life when newly-formed groups challenge societal norms and "try to perceive historical change collectively in biographical time, linking it to the generational renewal of society" (Jureit 2015, 3). The Tiananmen protesters in 1989 were not only protesting for a better society but criticising the dominant ruling elders. The generation gap between the young and the elderly became obvious in Taiwan with the Wild Lily Student Movement and the Sunflower Student Movement. The increasing concern of the youngsters about their future in Hong Kong was a major impetus for Hong Kong's Umbrella

Movement in 2014. These concerns of mainly young people developed into the fight for their political rights as Hong Kongers in an unforeseen scope in the last protests of 2019/20.

In this second volume of the *Journal of the European Association for Chinese Studies*, the freshness, ambitions, and ideals of Chinese youth – whether in imperial times or in the contemporary period – are in focus. In this way, changes in religious beliefs and the alteration of women's domain of personal relationships during the Tang dynasty are explored in the contribution by Giulia Falato; the images of children in adult-oriented political cartoons of the 1950s are scrutinised with respect to the degree to which children are portrayed as being able to speak 'for themselves' in the contribution by Mariia Guleva; Helmut Opletal traces the flow of information towards the leadership at the time of the 1978-1981 Democracy Wall Movement; and Sofia Graziani explores the discourses and debates surrounding the reform of the work of the Communist Youth League during the 1980s.

Giulia Falato asks what it was to be a young girl growing up in the Tang, through a detailed analysis of the genre of "female instructions" (*nüxun*). She sheds light on the continuities and discontinuities in the moral characteristics ascribed to young women over the course of the first millennium of the Chinese empire. Although the instructions reflect the long-standing influence of Han-era prescriptions, they also bear witness to some modifications brought about for instance by Daoism and Buddhism. Her study begins with an overview of the situation in early imperial times, which were marked by a strong inner/outer dichotomy, but also by the emergence of female educators, as exemplified in Liu Xiang's *Lienü zhuan* and Ban Zhao's *Nü jie*. Falato then focuses on Tang educators, and how they adapted Han precepts to their times. Among other works, she uses the *Nü xiaojing* and the *Nü lunyu*, both of which titles bear explicit references to the classical era, "to establish an ideal dialogue with young, unmarried ladies and to impart a series of moral lessons." As guidelines for the private sphere, such instructions insist on the various stages of a woman's life, and the proper way to handle them, from their native family to their husband's, without neglecting their social aspects.

Mariia Guleva looks closely at the representation of children in the (adult-oriented) cartoon magazine *Manhua* in the 1950s. Including a broad range of illustrations by well known popular artists such as Feng Zikai, Zhang Leping, and Zhang Ding as well as by those less celebrated, she shows that the image of the child was used in a variety of ways, sometimes as a pathetic figure suffering under the woes of capitalism or pre-1949 "feudalism", sometimes as a cheerful emblem of a bright future, often drawing on traditional folk-art images of chubby infants on *nianhua* posters. One of the features of 1950s China was the "revolutionary" overthrow of long-established ideas of the respect due to age, so that children might be represented as teachers of their elders: thus a girl is shown helping her illiterate grandmother to spell out the name of Chairman Mao, and a Young Pioneer tells off an unhygienically spitting adult. In other instances, the vivid imagination of playful children is used to conjure up a vision of the bright future of socialism. The Party's emphasis in the 1950s on modernisation and development towards social and economic maturity made the growing child a natural image of "New China's" growth. Guleva examines how the *Manhua* cartoons represent the "good child" and appropriate or inappropriate adult reactions to children's behaviour under socialism, often granting these imaginary children a degree of agency not just greater than that of the adults in the cartoons, but greater than was actually enjoyed by most people in society at the time.

Based on the analysis of a great variety of official documents, **Sofia Graziani** asks how the Communist Youth League faces the new needs of the times with the beginning of the "reform and opening up". However, it could only partially meet the need for greater responsiveness to the needs of its members and of the new political ruling class in the 1980s. As a mass organisation or the traditional "transmission belt" of a Marxist-Leninist party, it is also not sufficiently independent or strong to ensure that the laboriously opened reform windows and new topics can be sustained. This documented fragility and inability to address the needs of the youth continue to decline after the suppression of the Tiananmen protests and especially with the reign of Xi Jinping.

An illuminating paper by **Helmut Opletal** reveals the extent to which CCP leaders were kept informed of what was going on at Democracy Wall during the heady days

of 1978–80, and how the aims of the young activists aligned or conflicted with the differing reform agendas promoted by such influential figures as Deng Xiaoping and Hu Yaobang. How much did high-ranking cadres really know about the grassroots movements, not just around Beijing's Democracy Wall but in far-flung parts of the country? Did the democracy activists have any impact on the reforms enacted by the Party? Opletal is careful to stress that much remains unknown, but he discusses in detail the ambiguous role played by journalists from the official Chinese media (who had their own biases and agendas) as conduits between the activists and the Party. He pays particular attention to the role of Tang Xin, a reporter/cadre with the *Beijing Daily* and the son of Tang Ke, the powerful Petroleum Industry minister. He shows clearly that discussions within the Party, and particularly within the Communist Youth League, where Hu Yaobang held sway, could be somewhat favourable towards the activists, but as we all know, Deng Xiaoping decided that no threat to the Party's authority could be permitted, and the brief "Beijing Spring" came to an end. This paper draws on extensive interviews which Opletal has conducted with activists and others involved with the Democracy Wall events; these interviews are available in full (in Chinese, German, and English) on his website.

To the historians of Chinese literature, translators, and literary critics among us, Jaroslav Průšek is well known as a highly esteemed, though somewhat legendary, major figure of European sinology in the 20th century. During times and under circumstances that made the study of Chinese literature, particularly of modern Chinese literature, almost tributary to directly opposed ideological notions, Průšek was an unconventional scholar in every sense. His vast scholarly interests, from "lyricism" as a feature at the core of Chinese modernity to the role of nomads in the formation of early Chinese culture, maintain, together with his published works, their influence on contemporary scholarship. His engaged and rigorous polemics, however, as exemplified in his notorious dispute with C.T. Hsia, remind us that the study of "things Chinese" remains closely intertwined with the schisms of our contemporary world. **Olga Lomová**'s Spotlight on Průšek succeeds in conveying the aura of his personality and at the same time lays open the historical person in "his time and place".

Ming-sho Ho turns our gaze to how young voters determined the outcome of the 2020 Taiwan elections. This case study of Taiwan shows how the ongoing demonstrations in Hong Kong and repressive policing increased fears for Taiwan's future. Younger Taiwanese citizens, who did not grow up under the authoritarian system, engage themselves in the democratic discourse because they think participation can make a substantial change.

The inaugural issue of our journal opened with the topic of censorship and self-censorship (Klotzbücher et al. 2020). One year ago, however, we could hardly anticipate the growing importance of this topic. After the Braga incident (Greatrex 2014), several European institutions and scholars have since been sanctioned by the People's Republic of China in March 2021 (Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo zhu Oumeng shituan 2021). After a leaked intervention at the Confucius Institute in Hamburg about a panel on the Tiananmen protests (Demes 2021), the Confucius Institutes in Duisburg and Hannover have confirmed that they cancelled a public book presentation at the request of the Chinese side (Mützel 2021). As these recent incidents within the German context exemplify, documented or failed actions of external threads (Rotella 2021; Yar 2021), censorship and self-censorship closely map the relationship between politics and science in any research field. The question of how an academic community discusses censorship and self-censorship touches upon how such a community sustains the autonomy of their academic discussion and their research independence.This public debate is overdue.

The ongoing discussions on commercial platforms and in social media do not reach everyone, so we are willing for this journal to become the scholarly forum for our field of Chinese Studies to document and discuss these developments. In the spotlight section of this issue, **Andreas Fulda** is the first to continue the discussion on censorship in Volume 1 by analysing the German discussion of the last few years. He identifies different topics in this discourse and concludes with recommendations on how to continue to communicate with scholars affiliated in China.

Against silence and invisibility, the outcomes of censorship and self-censorship, it is our endeavour to discuss the embeddedness and the implications for our academic positionality in our field.

This volume's reviews focus on historical research: **Huiyi Wu** has scrutinised Noël Golvers' study, published in English, of a German-born Swiss Jesuit and missionary *Johann Schreck Terrentius SJ, His European Network and the Origins of the Jesuit Library in Peking*, which sheds light on the importance of inter-European scholarly networks for knowledge transfer between the Christian world and China at the initial stage around the turn from the 16th to the 17th century. **Joseph Ciaudo** has reviewed for us Lilian Truchon's voluminous monograph *Évolution et Civilisation en Chine : Le darwinisme dans la culture politique chinoise*, which embarks on another transcultural journey. This, however, cannot be assessed by following the life and works of a historical individual. Instead, as Ciaudo sees it, the results of Truchon's research offer various and often valuable insights into and materials on a tremendously complex aspect of intellectual history. **Johannes Preiser-Kapeller**, global historian at the University of Vienna, was inspired by Kai Vogelsang's new book *China und Japan. Zwei Reiche unter einem Himmel. Eine Geschichte der sino-japanischen Kulturbeziehungen*. Preiser-Kapeller delivers a comprehensive review, which, although from an external perspective, assesses a book whose author intended to transcend the limits of history centred around myths of national culture. Beside these reviews of monographies on historical topics, **Bart Dessein** continues his reviewing of the Princeton University Press edition of Chih-Chung Tsai's cartoon versions of Chinese classics, this time the *Dao De Jing*.

The volume concludes, as usual, with a **list of recently defended PhDs**, which reflects the wide range of European institutions for pursuing graduate work in Chinese studies, from Barcelona to Oslo, and from Bucharest to Stockholm. Besides providing English abstracts, each entry often contains links to online repositories where the dissertations can be downloaded.

Last but not least: We are happy to announce that starting from JEACS, vol. 3 (2022), we will also include another spotlight subsection on "resources".

Finally, the editorial team gladly welcomes Alison Hardie (Leeds) as its sixth active member. All of you who want to contribute to this journal, please get in touch with us.

And follow us on Twitter via our new Twitter account @JournalEACS for new Calls for Papers and announcements (https://twitter.com/JournalEACS).

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