



EDITORIAL

Revisiting Culture and Memory

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This volume's research articles collectively explore the interplay of past, present, and future in various Chinese and Sino-ophone socio-cultural contexts, emphasizing the connections between memory and culture. They prompt a reevaluation of cultural, technological, and political changes amid an epochal shift, highlighting China and the Sinophone sphere's growing role in reshaping the global landscape. Commemoration, reminiscence, memory's role in cultural transitions, and its impact on literature and modern translations of classical poetry are integral to these cultural transformations, continually shaping our self-awareness and existence in the world.

本期研究探討中國和華語文化中過去、現在和未來的交互關係，揭示了記憶與文化之間的內在聯繫。這些研究重新審視時代變遷對文化、技術和政治的影響，突顯了中國和華語地區在塑造全球格局中日益重要的角色。記憶、回憶和紀念是文學翻譯和文化轉型不可或缺的要素，同時也不斷塑造著人們的自我認知和存在感。

Keywords: Memory, Culture, China, Sinophone, Identity, Transition, Taiwan, Literature, Translation, Climate history

關鍵詞： 記憶、文化、中國、華語、身份認同、轉型、臺灣、文學、翻譯、氣候史

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If the research articles compiled in this volume reflect a shared commitment, it is the common interest of all authors to explore the interplay of the past, the present, and the future in different Chinese and/or Sinophone socio-cultural contexts. While shedding light on the manifold intersections between memory and culture, this issue brings together research articles that compel us to rethink cultural, medial, technological, and political changes that coincide with a general sentiment of an epochal shift under way. China and the Sinophone cultural sphere play an increasingly active role in the ongoing transitional process of reshaping the global world. These cultural transformations are secured by normative functions of commemoration, individual and collective reminiscence, the invention of memory in performing cultural transition in urban areas, historical practices of employing memory to insinuate a shared past, as well as memory's potential in transforming literary genres and in modern translations of classical poetry – all aspects of a never-ending accommodation which constantly recreates an awareness of our Self-being and Being-in-the-World.

Taiwan, often cited as a laboratory of democratic development and identity creation, is the focus of **Serena de Marchi's** piece, where she dives deeply into post-martial-law fictional texts that explore memories of the White Terror period as part of the cultural discourse on identity and in the context of transitional justice. While the literary texts and their creators are entirely different in terms of content and aesthetic device as well as with regard to generational belonging and self-understanding, they nevertheless endorse Taiwan's current effort to create a cultural memory of its authoritarian past in order to build a free and democratic common future.

Agnes Schick-Chen demonstrates how after the Cultural Revolution the broadly applied policy tool of *pingfan* 平反 (redress and rehabilitation) failed to address individual trauma and suffering, as it not only was insufficient to provide victims with a sense of having received justice but even less enabled them to come to terms with past experiences. She shows how for centuries feature films and documentaries stepped in by rendering meaningful narratives of *pingfan* and identifies three memory frames of unachieved justice that intercommunicated with changing politico-legal concepts and discourses.

Fabienne Wallenwein's paper deals with the role and utilisation of cultural heritage, employing a mixed-use urban block in Shanghai's former French Concession as a case study. She shows not only how historical areas in Shanghai run the risk of becoming dilapidated past recovery but also how, in the course of time, revolutionary and neo-liberal driven sentiments, future-oriented modernity, and nostalgia have shaped the varying morphology of the city. Nevertheless, she argues that contrary to widespread assumptions, heritage-making in Shanghai is not solely a linear state-led enterprise, but leaves room for societal actors to attach additional layers of cultural meaning in the process of revalorising and authenticating urban space.

An extensive discussion of contemporary *dagong* 打工 ('battlers') verse in its creative connection to the literary past and poetic traditions is delivered by **Joanna Krenz**. She starts from 20th- and 21st-century critical reflections on the relevance of poetry and literature for workers' lives and their desire to share a cultural space inhabited by ideas and expressive modes that are traditionally appropriated by more well-off strata of society. Subsequently, Krenz observes and compares various strategies employed by contemporary *dagong* poets to participate, via their poetic texts, in a shared space of cultural memory and literary heritage.

Yulia Dreyzis opens a critical comparative view on competing schools of translating classical Chinese verse into modern Russian, from early, ground-breaking pioneers of the *Belle Époque* through the “familiarising” styles developed by Sinologists of the Stalin and post-Stalin era to more recent experimental ways of exploring the legacies of Tang and Song poets taken by contemporary translators. Besides sketching out portraits of translators’ personalities and their fates during a century of turmoil, Dreyzis shows how changing aesthetic values and cultural ideologies produce a specific reminiscence that becomes part of modern translation history as a space of literary experiments.

Erling Agøy combs through local gazetteers, diaries, and histories in order to find evidence of collective climate memories in the 17th-century Jiangnan region, which obviously experienced the Little Ice Age, a time when cold and unstable weather affected much of China. While proof of an awareness of changes in climate is hardly traceable, Agøy discerns none other than Emperor Kangxi as clearly showing a keen interest in climate matters and weather reports, not least in order to secure social peace and political stability. Still, his imperial edicts hardly indicate a documented climate awareness in 17th-century China, while there is no doubt that climate history had its place secured in people’s collective memory.

West Lake as a cultural trope in Gozan literature is the point of departure for **Xiaolin Duan**, who follows the footsteps of Japanese Gozan monks who frequently visited Hangzhou – the most prominent Buddhist pilgrimage centre in China – and who artistically recreated West Lake as a Japanese image of China through their poetry, travel records, and landscape illustrations. Not only did these monks act as cultural mediators between China and Japan and vice versa, they also contributed to the reinforcement and universalisation of the West Lake as cultural trope, serving as a case study for transnational cultural appropriation and the transformation of a concrete place into an imagined space.

In her reading of a so far under-studied collection of statecraft writings of the 7th century, **Kelly Ngo** makes use of the Assmans’ theory of cultural memory. Her discussion of the compilation, its structure, and its contents focuses on three aspects: institutional communication in the course of rebuilding library infrastructure, reconstruction of cultural knowledge by adapting to the needs of the new power-holders, and, finally, the “binding nature” that qualified the compilation to build a collective identity for institutional representatives, dynastic rulership, and the general scholarly community during the reign of emperor Taizong and beyond.

Yun Zhu elucidates the fluidity and paradoxes of cultural memories in cross-cultural fiction, through examining the widely-circulated Chinese-language tale about Silla scholar Ch’oe Ch’iwŏn’s uncanny encounter with two anonymous supernatural sisters during his long-term stay in the Tang empire. Adopting the paradigm of cultural memory in narrative literature, Zhu highlights the complex and shifting ambiguity of the transcultural border-crossing perspective on the southern Chinese landscape by examining how this fictitious encounter was and continued to be remembered and recorded in Chinese and Korean imagery. The account of Choe’s adventure, thus, seems to merge literary Chinese cultural memory with literary commemoration of a (foreign) Silla scholar’s career in China.

In the second and final part of his in-depth study on the relationship between Ming-Qing vernacular stories and their classical sources, **Rainier Lanselle** expands the technical analysis presented in Part 1 (in the previous issue of this journal) into a more theoretical, translation-studies-based discussion.

Lanselle examines the extent to which the concept of ‘diglossia’ was understood by pre-modern Chinese writers, and their awareness of the importance of vernacular writing in spreading knowledge of the classical tradition beyond the confines of the literati class, thereby adding both to our understanding of Ming-Qing vernacular literature and to Translation Studies in the Chinese context.

Our memory of the Sinologist and specialist in Manchu studies Pēteris Šmits (Peter Schmidt), who was born and died in Latvia, is refreshed by **Georgijs Dunajevs** in a meticulous and captivating **Spotlight** on this outstanding personality of the formative epoch of our academic field. Dunajevs highlights the question of “identity” (national, academic) in framing this scholar, who first embarked on his academic career in St. Petersburg, continued in Vladivostok, and, after returning to Latvia once political independence had been obtained, served his homeland in an environment frequently suspicious of his knowledge and expertise.

Seven **book reviews** provide critical perspectives on recent publications in English, French, and German dedicated to studies of cultural memory, Taiwan literature, Chinese political history, classicist cyberpoetry, Sinophone utopias, the new Chinese elite, and German-Chinese relations. We are pleased to see our journal gradually transforming into a forum of multilingual Sinology and encourage our readers and authors to keep on contributing reviews on brand-new and significant publications published in any European language.

This long volume ends with the usual **list of PhDs** recently defended (2022–2023) in European universities. Although the list is by no means exhaustive, we were able to gather nineteen dissertations. Besides abstracts and general information, links are provided when available to freely downloadable versions from their respective universities. Supervisors and successful doctoral candidates are encouraged to send information about their dissertations to the editorial board at any time, for publication in the next issue.