

A stylized illustration of a dog's head, likely a Golden Retriever, rendered in a graphic, woodcut-like style. The fur is depicted with dense, dark brown, textured strokes, interspersed with thin, light brown and reddish-brown lines. The dog's face is shown in profile, with its mouth slightly open, revealing a pink tongue and white teeth. A prominent red text box is centered over the dog's face.

DOG DAYS

Dog Days

Sirius rises late in the dark, liquid sky
 On summer nights, star of stars,
 Orion's Dog they call it, brightest
 Of all, but an evil portent, bringing heat
 And fevers to suffering humanity

Homer, *The Iliad*

According to the Chinese zodiac, 2018 was the year of the ‘earthly dog’. Legends about dogs abound in Chinese mythology, but the most famous one undoubtedly is that of the ‘heavenly dog’ (*tiangou*). As the story goes, after divine archer Hou Yi shot down the nine suns that had simultaneously risen up in the sky, the Queen Mother of the West decided to reward him with the elixir of immortality. Unfortunately for him, his wife Chang’e—who, depending on whom you listen to, was either a selfish woman willing to sacrifice her marriage to preserve her youth or simply very disgruntled with her husband—beat him to the holy beverage and, with her body growing lighter and lighter as an effect of the magic potion, flew away towards the moon. Here enters the dog, a big black hound that Hou Yi was rearing. Seeing the wife of his master floating away, the dog lapped what was left of the elixir and started giving chase, his body growing in size all the while. Hiding on the moon did not save Chang’e, as the giant mutt swallowed the celestial object whole, with her on it. It took the intervention of the Queen Mother of the West to tame the dog and force him to spit out both the moon and the Chang’e. Instead of being punished, the gigantic animal was pressed into service as the guard dog at the gates of the heavens.

Some identify the heavenly dog with a particular star—Sirius, which in Chinese is *tianlangxing*, or ‘star of the heavenly wolf’.

As Homer’s words at the beginning of this introduction make abundantly clear, Sirius has an ominous reputation. Since ancient times, Roman and Greeks linked the star with the hottest days of the year. They even coined an expression—‘dog days’—to indicate that span of time in the summer of the northern hemisphere when Sirius rose in conjunction with the sun. Those were inauspicious days, characterised by heat, spells of dryness, thunderstorms, and a sudden loss of energy and industriousness, if not outright madness. Curiously, it was in the middle of the long, hot, and feverish dog days of the summer of 2018 that some workers at Shenzhen Jasic Technology took their chances and attempted to form an independent union to challenge their employer. This brave action did not take long to provoke a coordinated response from the company and the local government, with the workers quickly being terminated, beaten, and detained. The fever did not break there, however, as the governmental immune response continued, triggered by solidarity groups springing up both inside and outside the country in support of the arrested workers and their struggle. Of particular embarrassment for the Chinese authorities was the participation of Maoist and Marxist student groups in the protests, with many travelling to Shenzhen from around China to join the workers. In late August over 50 activists were arrested in both Shenzhen and Beijing. This incident is emblematic of China’s contemporary situation, with any challenge to the status quo being immediately and severely suppressed.

China’s year of the dog was also imbued with the spirit of another canine, Cerberus—the three-headed hound of Hades—with the ravenous advance of the surveillance state and the increasing securitisation of Chinese society. Over the past several months the Chinese government has rapidly ramped up its acquisition and development of surveillance technology, deploying facial recognition cameras across the country and moving to integrate the huge amounts of data being collected through online activity into new modes of predictive algorithmic governance.

Nowhere is this large-scale experiment in social control more evident than Xinjiang, where the authorities have detained perhaps more than one million Uyghur and other ethnic minority citizens in vast ‘reeducation camps’, resulting in family separations, forced labour, and the destruction of lives on a mass scale. While the Chinese government was able to quickly build their mass detention apparatus with little attention from the international community, there have since been herculean efforts to bring to light the logistics of what is going on and the devastating toll it is taking on people’s lives. While the government now admits to the existence of the camps, there is a stubborn refusal to acknowledge them for what they really are. At the same time, there have been incidents around the globe of Chinese citizens threatening and attempting to silence those speaking out about what is happening in public forums.

Anybody Out There?

In this *Yearbook*, we follow the events of 2018 through the essays that appeared throughout the year in the *Made in China Journal*. We have regrouped the essays into seven thematic sections. The first—entitled ‘Anybody Out There?’—examines the current predicament of the Chinese labour movement. Labour activism has undergone significant transformation in China over the last decade. Between the mid-2000s and mid-2010s, an increase in labour protests seemed to herald a growing and more self-confident labour movement. A series of high-profile collective actions that took place in 2010—in particular a strike at a Honda auto parts factory in Foshan in 2010—sparked a renewed optimism, during which the public debate on Chinese labour came to be dominated by the idea of China’s workers ‘awakening’ and taking their fate into their own hands. This new narrative was largely focussed on the so-called ‘new generation of migrant workers’, presented in much of the academic literature

and public debate as the engine of the new wave of worker struggle. Far from the optimism of those years, today the effects of economic slowdown and the tightening of controls on civil society have thrown China’s workers into a state of uncertainty and disorientation, and the Chinese labour movement has once again found itself at an impasse.

This section offers a series of essays that aim at assessing and understanding the current conjuncture. In ‘Changes and Continuity’, Chris King-Chi Chan offers a retrospective of the development of industrial relations in China over the past four decades. In ‘China’s Labour Movement in Transition’, Geoffrey Crothall draws from China Labour Bulletin’s impressive trove of data to analyse the latest trends in Chinese labour unrest. In ‘*Gongyou*, the New Dangerous Class in China?’, Yu Chunsen looks into the discourses that Chinese migrant workers use to define their shared identity, probing the possibility of them becoming the foundation of a new class consciousness. In ‘Reconfiguring Supply Chains’, Nellie Chu shows how infrastructure projects that link China’s interior and coastal manufacturing regions have intensified key aspects of the country’s informal economy. In ‘The Struggles of Temporary Agency Workers in Xi’s China’, Zhang Lu tracks the activism of dispatch workers in Chinese auto factories, examining the potential for this group to successfully bargain for their rights. In ‘Robot Threat or Robot Dividend?’, Huang Yu considers the possible consequences of automation and robotisation on employment and labour activism in China. In ‘A Pessoptimistic View of Chinese Labour NGOs’, Ivan Franceschini and Kevin Lin revisit the debate on labour NGOs in China, offering their own reading of the current situation. Finally, in ‘The Jasic Strike and the Future of the Chinese Labour Movement’ and ‘The Jasic Mobilisation: A High Tide for the Chinese Labour Movement?’, Zhang Yueran and Au Loong Yu provide insights into the struggle of the Jasic workers mentioned at the beginning of this introduction.

To the Soil

In December 2018, the Chinese authorities commemorated the 40th anniversary of China's reform and opening up, an event generally hailed as the beginning of the country's rise as a global economic and political power. The unprecedented economic growth and transformation of these four decades has been rooted in a fundamental restructuring of local society. Contemporary China has changed from a largely agrarian society predominantly inhabited by peasants, to a rapidly urbanising one, characterised by a floating populace moving back and forth between rural and urban spaces, which are in a continuous state of flux. Going hand in hand with China's ascent into modernity is the subordination of rural areas and people. While rural China has historically been a site of extraction and exploitation, in the post-reform period this has intensified, and rurality itself has become a problem, best typified through the ubiquitous propaganda about the need to revitalise the countryside, and ongoing attempts to reconstruct rural areas in a new image.

Against this background, the second section—'To the Soil'—focuses on the labour that these attempts to restructure and reformulate rural China have entailed, and the ways in which they have transformed rural lives and communities. In 'China's Land Reform and the Logic of Capital Accumulation', Jane Hayward examines how rural land reforms in China are being driven by the imperative of capital accumulation. In 'Manufactured Modernity', Sarah Rogers reflects on poverty resettlement projects to try to make sense of the intent and impact of such large-scale interventions on both the lives of individuals and the transformation of the Chinese countryside as a whole. In 'Managing the Anthropocene', John Aloysius Zinda highlights how scholars and journalists alike tend to place environment and labour in separate boxes and seldom consider the labour of environmental protection or the people who perform it. In 'Beyond

Proletarianisation', Thomas Sætre Jakobsen bemoans the fact that China labour studies' bias towards urban contexts is neglecting the reality of hundreds of millions of workers who live between the farmlands in the countryside and the workplaces of the city. In 'Inside Work', Tamara Jacka shows how the development trajectory of modern China has been underpinned and enabled by the exploitation of the 'inside work' of rural women. In 'Rural Transformations and Urbanisation', Marina Svensson describes her experience at the Third Ningbo International Photography Week, which this year focussed on documenting rural transformations and processes of urbanisation. Finally, in 'Domestic Archaeology', Daniele Dainelli presents a photographic project on the Chinese countryside that took him seven years to complete.

On a Chinese Screen

The third section—'On a Chinese Screen'—looks into the role of the media in relation to labour issues and beyond. The previous decade saw widespread discussions about the role of the Internet in reshaping power relations in Chinese society. New media—it was widely believed—would give voice to the poor and downtrodden, allow citizens to better supervise government activity, and foster lively cultural exchanges. Workers would also benefit from this, as the Internet provided them with the tools needed to bring their grievances into the spotlight and enhance their ability to connect with their peers to establish new forms of solidarity. A decade later, what is left of that cyber-utopian discourse? As the Chinese Party-state steps up the censorship and manipulation of online information, and as new media is increasingly used as a means of reinforcing control and surveillance over the population, a more sombre assessment of the role of the Internet seems to have gained traction in the court of public opinion. The scandals that in recent years have engulfed

those social media companies that in the late 2000s and early 2010s gave rise to many of those thwarted expectations—Facebook in primis—have nothing but contributed to the disillusion.

The essays included in this section assess the relevance of the cyber-utopian discourse against the background of the latest developments in Chinese politics and society. In ‘Changing Representations of China’s Workers’, Sun Wanning considers how the struggles of Chinese migrant workers have been constructed in public discourse and how media has come to play a role in their struggles. In ‘Platform Economies’, Julie Chen analyses the plight of Chinese platform workers. In ‘Rethinking Online privacy in the Chinese Workplace’, Mimi Zou shows how social media provides considerable scope for employers to monitor employees. In ‘Visualising Labour and Labourscapes in China’, Marina Svensson examines how Chinese workers have been portrayed through the lens of photography. In ‘Documenting China’s Influence’, David Bandurski investigates an ‘independent’ Chinese documentary, revealing how foreign media can inadvertently become co-producers of state propaganda. Finally, in ‘The Global Age of the Algorithm’, Nicholas Loubere and Stefan Brehm look into the development of the social credit system in China.

Human Rights Made in China

The fourth section—Human Rights Made in China—offers a variety of perspectives on issues related to human rights and state violence in China. In ‘Beijing Evictions: A Winter Tale’, Li Qiaochu, Song Jian, and Zhang Shuchi discuss the reaction of local civil society to the evictions of migrants from the suburbs of Beijing that took place at the end of 2017. In ‘Evictions and the Right to the City’, Kevin Lin ponders whether migrants in today’s China have a right to the city. In ‘Outsourcing

Coercion and Social Control’, Lynette Ong examines how the Chinese state outsources violence and social control to private actors, including thugs-for-hire, profit-seeking brokers, and even commercial enterprises. In ‘Justice Restored Under Xi Jinping’, Elisa Nesossi considers two decades of miscarriages of justice in China and recent efforts to remedy the situation. In ‘Confessions Made in China’, Magnus Fiskesjö discusses how mass media outside of the control of Chinese state authorities should deal with the coerced televised confessions of political prisoners in China. In ‘Will the Future of Human Rights Be “Made in China”?', Sarah Brooks looks at how the Chinese government has stepped into the role of international player, focussing on China’s activities at the United Nations. In ‘Remembering Liu Xiaobo One Year On’, Jean-Philippe Béja offers some glimpses into Liu’s life, highlighting the significance of his legacy for new generations of activists. Finally, in ‘Xinjiang Today’, Tom Cliff recounts how in the past couple of years Xinjiang has witnessed the rise of a composite version of twentieth century authoritarian fantasies and popular dystopias made possible by twenty-first century technology.

States of Emergency

On 12 May 2008, a 7.9 magnitude earthquake hit Wenchuan county, Sichuan province. Felt as far as Beijing, the tremors caused horrific damage: 69,229 people died and 17,923 went missing. Yet, the aftermath of the earthquake was also a time of hope. Chinese citizens from all over the country outdid each other to show solidarity with the victims, not only donating money and goods, but also rushing to the disaster zones to provide assistance. Young volunteers from all walks of life poured into Sichuan to help, with many of them going on to establish their own social organisations. As local governments began to recognise the importance of NGOs in providing disaster

relief and social services, 2008 was widely seen as a ‘Year Zero’ for Chinese civil society. At that time, hardly anybody could have foreseen the wave of repression against civil society that was to come and that is today the norm. Indeed, there were worrying signals even then—the threats against the parents of children who had died in the disaster and the trial of Tan Zuoren, for instance—but the general atmosphere remained forward-looking and optimistic.

The essays included in the fifth section—‘States of Emergency’—revisit the optimism of those early days and examines what is left. In ‘Be Grateful to the Party!’, Christian Sorace probes how the Chinese Communist Party has used propaganda and other means to boost its ‘affective sovereignty’ in the wake of the disaster. In ‘The World Is Yours!’, Bin Xu describes the moral dilemmas that afflicted him as a scholar and volunteer in the earthquake areas. In ‘Sichuan, Year Zero?’, Yi Kang offers a retrospective on NGO development in Sichuan since 2008, challenging the idea that it was a ‘dawn’ for Chinese civil society. In ‘Civic Transformation in the Wake of the Wenchuan Earthquake’, Sun Taiyi examines the evolution of state-society relations by looking at the interactions between state, society, and individuals. In ‘The Power of the Square’, Gao Huan explores the specific case study of an emergency shelter in Mianyang. Finally, in ‘Documenting the Sichuan Earthquake’, Marina Svensson analyses the most significant Chinese documentaries portraying the catastrophe to audiences around the world.

Window on Asia and Work of Arts

The sixth section—‘Window on Asia’—offers a series of perspectives on the latest developments in the field of labour and civil society across Asia. In “‘Hun Sen Won’t Die, Workers Will Die’”, Sabina Lawreniuk examines the ways in which both labour politics and China have played a role in determining

the latest assault on freedoms of expression, association, and assembly in Cambodia. In ‘My Rights Have Been Left behind in Papua New Guinea’, Zhang Shuchi describes the plight of Chinese workers abroad. In ‘Online Activism and South Korea’s Candlelight Movement’, Hyejin Kim looks at the role of the Internet and new media in fostering a new generation of activists in South Korea. In ‘China and Development Aid’, Sverre Molland assesses the impact of China’s increasing influence in mainland Southeast Asia on the attempts to introduce humanitarian and human rights standards in labour migration. In ‘Illicit Economies of the Internet’, Johan Lindquist looks into the ‘like economy’ of click farms in Indonesia, taking click farmers not as an aberration, but rather as a starting point for approaching this kind of phenomenon. In ‘Chinese Digital Ecosystems Go Abroad’, Elisa Oreglia ponders the implications of the spread of WeChat among Internet users in the Shan State, Myanmar. Finally, in ‘Ulaanbaatar, City of the Future’, Christian Sorace explores the political implications of chronic pollution in the Mongolian capital.

We wrap up the volume with a cultural section entitled ‘Work of Arts’. In ‘Communist Hibernation’, Christian Sorace offers his take on the oeuvre of movie director Geng Jun against the background of China’s Rustbelt. In ‘Crime and Punishment on a Chinese Border’, Suzanne Scoggins reviews Zhao Liang’s documentary *Crime and Punishment* about the harsh reality of police enforcement in a small Chinese town on the border with North Korea. In ‘Figuring Post-worker Shenzhen’, Mary Ann O’Donnell introduces several works of art that depict the post-worker demographics of Shenzhen, and its emergence as a ‘creative’ city. In ‘Rural Migrant Workers in Independent Films’, Eric Florence examines how the representation of migrant workers in China has evolved over the years through the lens of independent Chinese movies. In ‘Plastic China’, Yan Schulz reviews Wang Jiuliang’s recent documentary about waste management in China. Finally, in ‘The Last Days of Shi Yang’,

Ivan Franceschini presents a fictionalised account of a revolutionary martyr of the 1920s—a lawyer that played an important role in the labour struggles of those years.

the globe, it will take more than some noise to set things right. This book is our small attempt to keep the candles burning while we hope that the year of the pig will bring better tidings. ■

Keeping the Candles Burning

This volume recaps the third year of our *Made in China Journal*. Since the journal's launch in 2016, the publication has grown beyond our wildest expectations, and we are grateful to both our contributors and our readers for the continued support. The aim of *Made in China* is to create a bridge between academia and a wider audience, making the research and work of our authors accessible to everybody, especially to those who might make use of their findings and ideas. For this reason, we strongly believe in open access. As the Chinese authorities step up their attempts to censor academic publications and to influence global public discourse on China—and as commercial academic publishers all over the world capitulate to the demands coming from Beijing—we are convinced that open access publishing remains key to academic freedom and integrity. It is this belief that motivates us to keep *Made in China* going, and it is with this conviction that we continue into our fourth year. We believe that the conformity and sycophancy that are increasingly underlining the debate in and on China can only be fought through critical engagement and inclusion. To return to the heavenly dog, legends say that *tiangou* had an enemy in the figure of the Daoist immortal Zhang Xian, who protects children from the animal with his bow and arrows. More often, Chinese people would simply take matters in their own hands and, whenever an eclipse of the sun or the moon occurred, they would beat on drums or light firecrackers in an attempt to scare away the giant invisible hound that had devoured the celestial bodies. It always worked. However, in today's world, with the light going out around

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