~~Chinese Journalism Is Dead~~ Long Live Chinese Journalism!

Chinese journalism is dead—long live Chinese journalism! The dramatic transformations of China's media landscape over the past decade have led many to declare the death of quality journalism in the country. The Party-State's tightening grip on information, the dismantling of once vibrant investigative outlets, and the growing precarity of media professionals seem to confirm this narrative. And yet, as traditional spaces for critical reporting shrink, new modes of journalistic practice continue to emerge, often in dispersed and unexpected forms. From citizen-led investigations and social media exposés to transnational collaborations, Chinese journalism has not disappeared—it has adapted. This issue of the *Made in China Journal* explores the shifting terrain of journalistic production in and about China, tracing the resilience, reinvention, and risks that define the profession today.

We open with an essay in which **Kecheng Fang** maps the evolving landscape of quality journalism in China, exploring where reliable information continues to thrive under increasing restrictions. **Dan Chen** examines the evolution of *minsheng xinwen* (民生新闻, 'news about people's livelihoods') in China as a mechanism of controlled criticism within an authoritarian system. Through case studies such as stories of excessive parking fines and unfinished residential complexes, she illustrates how local television news resolves citizen grievances, disciplines bureaucrats, and reinforces state legitimacy. **Tucker Wang-Hai** explores how Chinese foreign-aimed journalists—individuals who are expected to use and normalise foreign platforms at work—navigate a changing work environment as their journalistic practices and traditional routines are increasingly platform-based and digitally oriented.

Li Jun presents a historical analysis of the evolving relationship between Chinese news media and the feminist movement over the past three decades, investigating how Chinese feminists have strategically utilised media platforms to advance their causes. **Vivian Wu** draws from two decades in journalism and her experience founding the independent media platform *Dasheng* (大声) to discuss the challenges that the Chinese-language diasporic media is currently facing and tracing some possible ways forward. **Altman Yuzhu Peng** takes on the Great Translation Movement, an activist-journalistic initiative that challenges the authority of the Chinese Party-State by exposing its support for Russia's invasion of Ukraine and highlighting its oversimplified and problematic portrayal of the Chinese people. Finally, **Hangwei Li** draws from her fieldwork in China, Kenya, Ethiopia, Zambia, and Mauritius to provide a nuanced understanding of African journalistic agency in diverse contexts and propose a future research agenda.

The issue also includes three opinion pieces. In the first, an anonymous scholar discusses how 'Northern frontier culture' has recently become a trendy term in propaganda texts and academic publications in and about Inner Mongolia, which has resulted in the marginalisation and de-territorialisation of one group: ethnic Mongols from the region. **Hongwei Bao** and **Maghiel Van Crevel** celebrate Chinese poet and fiction writer Mu Cao's recent victory in a prestigious international prize, exploring how his work challenges mainstream narratives about queerness, class, and survival by giving voice to those at the margins of China's underclass. **Trissia Wijaya** and **Kanishka Jayasuriya** investigate how China's dual-use technology push has sparked new hype about techno-nationalism, great-power rivalry, and resource extraction, wondering what this means for the global order and what are the broader socioeconomic and environmental implications.

In the China Columns section, **Murong Xuecun** tells the story of how his life came to be intertwined with that of one of innumerable faceless censors in charge of checking his social media activity when he was back in China. **James Leibold** focuses on the expansion of the Tibet-Aid Project in Chinese President Xi Jinping's 'New Era' of Han-centric nationalism, arguing that the project facilitates Han settler colonialism in the Tibet Autonomous Region. **Zhangluyuan Charlie Yang** draws from her fieldwork

in Hangzhou to challenge the idea that uxorilocal marriage is often celebrated in the contemporary Chinese online sphere and beyond as a sign of female empowerment. **Jane Hayward** looks back at century-old Marxist debates about the 'agrarian question' and contends that today, after decades of breakneck urbanisation, China is seeing the face of this question from the other side: are the cities filling up as planned and, where not, what should be done?

Andrew Kipnis delves into social change in China by working through some Chinese examples of the place of the past in the present: location-based social control in the Great Famine, the birth-planning policy, and the recent Covid-related lockdowns in Shanghai. **Jeremy Brown**'s essay traces the birth, growth, and afterlives of the claim, first made by Mao Zedong and then popularised by Liu Shaoqi in 1951, that the Chinese Communist Party is 'great, glorious, and correct'. **Zachary Lowell**, **Mengyao Li**, and **Yuzong Chen** reflect on their fieldwork experiences in China to discuss the challenges of doing field research in the country after the Covid-19 pandemic. **Luanjiao Hu** and **Ling Han** explain that, thanks to the popularity of digital platforms, feminism, and disabled women's increased educational attainment, a growing number of female-led disabled persons' organisations has emerged in China—a welcome change in a movement traditionally dominated by men. Finally, **Yue Hou** draws from original surveys and personal narratives to investigate the effectiveness of China's educational public diplomacy in winning the hearts and minds of students from the Global South who studied in China with Chinese state support.

In the Work of Arts section, **Giorgio Strafella** traces the history of Songzhuang Art Village on the outskirts of Beijing, arguing that the place continues to be one of the most significant art spaces in the world even though its origins remain under-researched and are often misunderstood. **Ruoxi Liu** and **Binghuang Xu** discuss how conventional family narratives in contemporary China can be reinterpreted through exhibition-making, arguing that re-examining family history serves as a method to challenge official and authoritarian narratives within families and Chinese society, reinterpret power relationships, and reconstruct history.

We wrap up the issue with a series of conversations about recent books. **Nicholas Loubere** talks to **Tamara Jacka** about her *Ginkgo Village: Trauma and Transformation in Rural China* (ANU Press, 2024). **Loretta Ieng-tak Lou** engages **Andrea E. Pia** about his *Cutting the Mass Line: Water, Politics, and Climate in Southwest China* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2024). **Yangyang Cheng** discusses with **Susan Greenhalgh** her *Soda Science: Making the World Safe for Coca-Cola* (University of Chicago Press, 2024). **Christian Sorace** chats with **Pang Laikwan** about her *One and All: The Logic of Chinese Sovereignty* (Stanford University Press, 2024). And **Anna Ting** talks to **Florence Mok** about her *Covert Colonialism: Governance, Surveillance and Political Culture in British Hong Kong, c. 1966–97* (Manchester University Press, 2023). ■

The Editors

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