



INTRODUCTION AND NOTE OF THE EDITORS

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INTRODUCTION

Xi Jinping, in power since 2012, is the most powerful Chinese president and party head since Mao Zedong. A charismatic leader, his leadership is underpinned by his far-reaching institutional reforms in areas as diverse as anti-corruption, economic and military development, as well as his vision of a “Chinese Dream” that has engrossed Chinese politics and society. He has more institutional backing than any other Chinese president in recent history which was further emphasized by the abolition of presidential term limits during the 19th party congress, allowing Xi to stay in power beyond 2023. With his policies and initiatives Xi has addressed widespread social grievances that challenge societal and party stability such as endemic corruption and the growing divide between urban and rural areas as well as low- and high-income groups. Internationally, he pushed for the further use of the “Theory of Peaceful Development” -- a paradigm that is free of hegemonism and instead emphasizes win-win cooperation, mutual benefit and a multipolar world order more inclusive to non-Western voices.

Yet Xi’s achievements remain controversial at the same time. Social control has become more restrictive in recent years. The space for domestic NGO work is narrowing, and the work of human rights lawyers and labour activists has increasingly become more confined over the past decade. Media and civic freedoms are once again in retreat. The internet is increasingly censored and under supervision. National security is now tied to ideology and culture. Under Xi, China made negative headlines with its treatment of dissidents like Liu Xiaobo. Most recently, the situation in the autonomous region of Xinjiang has gained international attention where the Uighur Muslim minority community face comprehensive surveillance and detention in labour and re-education camps. In the realm of academic freedom, the Chinese and international academic community has faced attempts to influence academic discourse and new party cells are being set-up at foreign universities.

Domestically, institutional reforms have been questioning long-held truths about China’s political system. The abolition of presidential term limits has shaken up established structures of leadership succession. Fragmented and decentralised decision-making processes – a characteristic of the Chinese political system for decades - have been centralised at the highest party level and new institutions like the Central Leading Group for Comprehensively Deepening Reform spearheaded by Xi himself integrate former cross-compartmental policymaking directly under the party leadership. As a result, state organisations have seen a decrease in power relative to party organs. On a societal level, the implementation of the anti-corruption campaign has also reached China’s formerly untouchable political elite. The *huji* 户籍 (*hukou* 户口) [household registration] system has seen its biggest reform in years as have property rights. Through these institutional reforms in the past years, China, somewhat paradoxically, managed to both strengthen autocratic and meritocratic institutional structures.

To account for these ongoing transformations under the Xi administration, the Mapping China Journal No. 2 in 2018 aims at exploring “China’s domestic politics in the era of Xi Jinping – new developments and challenges.” In doing so it selected six research papers focusing on different perspectives of China under Xi Jinping. It is interesting to note that while the papers explore different topics, there is a recurring theme that focuses on social control and management as well as censorship under the current administration of the Chinese Communist Party.

Daniel Rechtschaffen analyses how and why China has changed its censorship strategies to be more reactive in the internet era by examining the inner workings and manipulation strategies of the Fifty Cent Party. Rechtschaffen demonstrates how they are used as an instrument of Chinese “disaster politics.” It draws on two primary sources—an in-depth interview with a Fifty Cent Party member and a series of leaked emails from the Zhanggong District Internet Information Office—and examines the responses of the Fifty Cent Party to two events, the 2015 Tianjin explosions and the 2013 Shanshan riots.

For an international perspective, **Paul Naudascher** and **Frederik König** are asking to what extent China conforms with the Westphalian state model, reaching the somewhat surprising conclusion that China is most globalized in its political dimension, yet less so in its economic one. China under Xi Jinping is therefore not yet as globalized as it could be.

Xiaoxue Jiang Martin takes on exploring CCP’s increasing control over cyberspace since 2013 and argues that by means of securitisation of the internet and cyberactivity, the Chinese government has created a virtual panopticon. To make this case, the Copenhagen School’s Securitisation Theory and Foucault’s concepts of panopticism and disciplinary power are applied to the CCP’s censorship and surveillance of the Chinese internet.

For a legal perspective, **Marianne von Blomberg** looks in depth at the Social Credit System (SCS) to answer the difficult question what the heavy impact of the SCS means for the rule of law in China. Von Blomberg points out that a nation-wide legal framework for the SCS has not been developed so far, resulting in a number of future challenges for legal and social management personnel in the PRC.

The research paper by **Fanny Prouté** offers a unique perspective on the freedom of expression in the PRC by examining the role and censorship of what is considered sexual media in the Chinese discourse. Therefore, Prouté argues that the targeting of material that is considered pornographic by censors serves as a placeholder strategy to silence critical political voices. Vice versa the author also shows how critical voices are using expressions of sexuality and nudity as an alternative form of political resistance in the PRC.

Another discursive perspective is offered in the essay of **Miquel Vila**, who is challenging the perception of Xi Jinping as a populist leader. Using the Gramscian concept of a “passive revolution” Vila explores how the political discourse under Xi has integrated already existing demands within Chinese society into the Chinese Dream as a new collective narrative, arriving at the conclusion that the purpose of the Xi administration is to prevent any populist uprising as a potential challenge to party leadership.

NOTE OF THE EDITORS

Mapping China was founded in 2016 as an academic network connecting Masters and Doctoral students as well as young professionals working on China with a social science approach to foster exchange and knowledge among the new generation of China watchers. Although founded, based and registered as a non-profit (a so-called e.V.) in Germany, Mapping China now connects students and young professionals from all over the world. Out of the network grew a think tank explicitly aimed at giving young voices a broader audience to share their research findings and the opportunity to contribute to academic and policy discussions early on in their career.

In December 2017 the inaugural issue of Mapping China Journal (MCJ) was published focusing on integration processes and challenges linked to Chinese engagement in three regions of the world: Asia-Pacific, Africa, and the EU. The numerous submissions to this project and subsequent exchanges reflect the eagerness of a new generation of young China scholars to participate in the dynamic discourse on contemporary China. This second edition of Mapping China Journal (2018) offers a fresh take on the developments and challenges under the current leadership in the People's Republic of China.

This year's MCJ is the product of the cumulative effort of our Editorial Advisors, the Editorial Team, the Proof-Readers, the Layout Designer, the Editors and the Authors. All of them volunteered their time and without their support the second edition of MCJ would not have been possible. We are grateful for all the dedicated people investing time and effort into increasing the visibility of young scholars in the discourse on China and allowing for fresh and new perspectives.

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PUBLISH WITH THE
MAPPING CHINA JOURNAL



ABOUT THIS JOURNAL

This peer-reviewed Journal is explicitly aimed publishing work written by Bachelor and Master students and all interested PhD students in their early stages of their dissertation with an interdisciplinary background in Area Studies, Political and Social Science or in International Relations who have been working on or want to work on China and who are looking to publish their first research for a wider audience.

ABOUT MAPPING CHINA

Mapping China is a young professional network and NGO dedicated to a political science based analysis of contemporary China. We are the first network in Germany with the purpose of connecting young scholars of modern China from different universities in Germany and beyond. We are also the first think tank to offer young China watchers a publication platform for their own academic work specifically on China in order to engage in an academic discussion within a wider audience early on in their academic career. Kindly note that Mapping China publishes work in both German and English and does not translate any original work.

JOURNAL SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

The Mapping China Journal (MCJ) accepts submission of research papers and essays of original scholarly articles by students on all levels, including students at the early stages of their PhD and recent graduates that engage in scholarly discussion. More information about the Journal itself can be found [here](#).

MCJ does not accept any work that has been published before or is set to be published elsewhere. This includes previous self-publishing of the author and articles that are mainly based on previously published manuscripts. Submission of a manuscript implies that the author is committed to publishing with MCJ if the manuscript is accepted. By submitting, authors attest that their work is entirely their own. Authors ensure proper acknowledgement and citation. Please read Statement of Publication Ethics for further information.

Additionally, authors wishing to publish work that has been submitted and graded as part of a University degree should make sure that their University guidelines allow publication. This sole responsibility lies with the author.

REGULATIONS FOR SUBMISSION

Mapping China regularly posts Call for Papers for the MCJ. Please refer to any conditions of those in the original Call for Papers. Additionally, Mapping China accepts submission through the online portal or after contacting info@mappingchina.org. Research paper should feature original analysis or research, include a section on theory and have a length of 6000 to 8000 words. Essays should discuss opinions on a

contemporary topic and have a length of three pages to 3000 words. Kindly include a cover page with the title of the submission, the author's name, affiliation, email address and phone number. Additionally, kindly include a 150 to 250 words abstract for any work handed in.

PROCESS AFTER SUBMISSION

MCJ employs a double-blind peer review policy whereby research papers that pass the original in-house editorial assessment are sent to at least two expert referees for evaluation. Essays are sent to at least one expert for evaluation. Authors should therefore be careful to avoid any personal information in text or endnotes that might reveal their identity.

Authors should be prepared for multiple stages of review. First corrections might be necessary after in-house editorial assessment. Manuscripts are then either rejected before peer-review, after peer-review, accepted on the condition of revise and resubmit or accepted as is. In exceptional cases manuscripts might be accepted on condition of "rewrite and resubmit". The whole process might take up to six months. Work that cannot be featured in the MCJ might still be published as part of the Mapping China Working Paper Series. Accepted authors for the MCJ will sign an author's agreement with Mapping China e.V. All papers are reviewed based on their structure and coherency, theoretical quality, empirical quality, their research design and their analytical quality.

All accepted manuscripts are copyedited by MCJ for language and style. All changes will be tracked and approved by the author. The author will also receive the first galley proofs for inspection. At this stage, no changes are to be made in the text or notes, except for corrections of errors. Authors are responsible for obtaining permission from copyright holders where necessary – for example, stanzas of a poem, maps, photographs, illustrations, posters, tables, figures, or text exceeding the maximum length permitted by copyright law.

GENERAL MANUSCRIPT PREPARATION

- MCJ is using this Harvard Style Guide for citation. Please refer to it.
- Kindly use British English for texts written in English.
- Tables and figures may be included in the text and should be numerically ordered. They may contain captions.
- Any use of Mandarin Chinese is allowed and encouraged. Citation should be: pinyin in italics followed by characters followed by a direct translation in square brackets.
- Co-authored submissions are accepted. Kindly provide all authors' details on the cover page.
- Research papers are accepted in both English and German.
- If the author is not a native English speaker, kindly ensure a high level of language

competency before submission. This means that the paper should be proofread by a native or almost-native English speaker. Papers whose arguments are not clear due to language cannot be accepted for the MCJ.

- Kindly use Times New Roman font with a text size of 12. Main titles should be in size 16, titles in size 14 and subtitles in 12. The text should be 1.5 spaced throughout. All paragraphs should be justified. Kindly only leave one space between sentences and after colons.

RESEARCH PAPER MANUSCRIPT PREPARATION

- Research Papers should have a length of 6000 to 8000 words.
- Mapping China encourages the use of qualitative and quantitative methodology. Research Papers should be theory-based, meaning that they derive their arguments and hypotheses from theory. A section on methodology or the findings of the paper should be included.
- Kindly use scientific language in all parts of the research paper.

ESSAY MANUSCRIPT PREPARATION

- Essays should have a length of minimum three pages and maximum 3000 words. Please contact info@mappingchina.org to discuss individual cases.
- Essays are arguments-based, meaning that they do not require a section on theory. Nonetheless, they should be based on current academic discourse. Essays are discussing opinions on a contemporary topic.
- The language of an essay is allowed to be more non-scientific.
- While essays are not subjected to the same level of academic requirements as research papers, authors should make sure to include a wide variety of research sources, including academic texts.

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