

International Conference, Université de Mons

**4 May 1919: History in Motion – A Political, Social and Cultural Look
at a Turning Point in the History of Modern China**

BOOKS OF ABSTRACTS

Keynote speakers

Joan JUDGE (York University, Canada)

“The Other Vernacular: Commoner Knowledge Culture Circa 1919”

Lu Xun 魯迅 (1881-1936) wrote with characteristic clarity and bite in 1919 that nothing was straightforward in the May Fourth era: “All things have two, three, or multiple layers and every layer has its own self-contradictions.” While he was referring to divisions within academic culture, Lu Xun’s observation is even more apt when we examine the layers of complexity that extended beyond it. This paper examines two of the most intractable “multi-layered” problems that Lu Xun and his cohort grappled with—how to deal with “the people” and how to formulate a new vernacular language—from another vantage point. Its source base is not New Culture journals but various genres of cheap print. Its protagonists are not intellectuals but common readers, editorial entrepreneurs, and those I call “forward-looking mundane traditionalists.” For these individuals, May Fourth was not a watershed but just another twist in the road: a moment that was relevant to the extent that it affected the kinds of information common readers needed and the form in which it could most effectively be delivered.

My focus is on the *Guangyi shuju* 廣益書局 (“Kwang Yih Book Co. Ltd”) which continuously produced cheap print and a certain register of vernacular knowledge in the decades both preceding and following 1919. I specifically examine one of Guangyi’s publications that obliquely but productively addresses the question of the new vernacular: the *Suyu dian* 《俗語典》 (Dictionary of common sayings) published in 1922.

The paper is attentive to key points of intersection among the multiple historical layers at play circa 1919. It ultimately questions how these sites of juncture—or disjuncture—might deepen our understanding of China’s long Republic.

Professor in the Department of History at York University in Toronto, Canada, Joan Judge is a cultural historian of modern China with a scholarly focus on print culture and women’s history at the turn of the twentieth century. She is the author of Republican Lens: Gender, Visuality, and Experience in the Early Chinese Periodical Press (University of California Press, 2015), The Precious Raft of History: The Past, the West, and the Woman Question in China (Stanford University Press, 2008), Print and Politics: ‘Shibao’ and the Culture of Reform in Late Qing China (Stanford University Press, 1996). Her current research project is entitled “Quotidian Concerns: Everyday Knowledge and the Rise of the Common Reader in China, 1860–1940.” In this project she examines the processes of knowledge production and circulation that shaped modern China.

張寅德 ZHANG Yinde (Université Paris 3 – Sorbonne-Nouvelle, France)

“Ba Jin: ‘May Fourth Offspring’, Time Bomb, or Utopian Impulse?”

Ba Jin 巴金 (1904-2005), one of the most prolific and important Chinese writers of the 20th century, claims to be “the offspring of May 4th”. This statement is an invitation to revisit the complex relationship Ba Jin has with the movement, as well as some of the clichés around this literary figure. I first recall Ba Jin’s attachment to libertarian ideas introduced during these tremendous intellectual and cultural protest years: apart from his translations and essays related to anarchist theories and activities, his fictional work, also starts with an undoubted tropism to violent stories. Official criticism condemns this kind of destructive nihilism or, on the contrary, is in favor by considering it as a revolutionary patriotism. I propose an alternative reading to these reductive or instrumentalized interpretations, by coming back to Ba Jin’s first narrative texts, published at the turn of the 1930s, containing actually a great complexity.

It is such hidden aspects, the underlying utopianism in particular, that I attempt to rediscover by a detailed examination. My aim is to show that the utopian spirit, which Arif Dirlik defines as intrinsic to any anarchism characterized by a social revolution without purpose and end, is notable in Ba Jin’s work, permanently revolting against any authority, hierarchy and injustice, without intention of leading to any institution. His utopianism actually stands out from the self-deceived utopia cherished by the nascent century or the dystopian allegory by his contemporaries. He formulates the criticism of the reality, oppressive and inegalitarian, by adopting an otherness which warns against both revanchist statism and voluntary servitude. Instead of certainty of a heavenly elsewhere and a bright future, Ba Jin “makes violence” to the History to open gaps and possibilities, without stopping questioning or deconstructing. My presentation highlights the virtue of a writing that melts with tormented dreams, refusing models and normativity, and wandering between didacticism and imagination, representation and fabulation, reason and faith. Finally, I consider Ba Jin’s loyalty to the legacy of May 4th as an ever-renewed desire for the freedom of thinking and imagining, if not of acting.

*Zhang Yinde is Professor in Chinese Language, Literature and Civilization and in Comparative Literature Studies at the Université Paris 3, as well as Visiting Professor at the East China Normal University. A renowned expert in the Chinese prose literature, he has been focusing his research mainly on contemporary Chinese literature, on Chinese identity (ideological, cultural, and literary representations), and on Chinese-Western literary and cultural relations in the 20th century. He is the author of *Le Monde romanesque chinois au XX^e siècle. Modernités et identités* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2003) and *Mo Yan, le lieu de la fiction* (Paris: Seuil, 2014).*

Sebastian VEG (École des Hautes Études en Sciences sociales, France)

“The Elite and the Popular: The May Fourth Tradition of Chinese Intellectuals and its Critique in the Long 20th Century”

The new culture movement gave birth to a figure that played a central role in the history of 20th century China: May Fourth intellectuals. Inheriting some of the defining traits of the imperial literati – the propensity to take responsibility for society and the nation – they advocated “progressive” ideas (science and enlightenment), without renouncing their elite position. Although they were criticized – for their factionalism, their elitism, their fascination with theory, their snobbery and eagerness to imitate the latest Western fads – they dominated the intellectual field until 1949. After the establishment of the PRC, many of them were reincarnated as “Leninist scholar-officials” (even though some opted for expressions

of loyal dissent or remonstrance), and again in the 1980s as “establishment intellectuals.” In the democracy movement of 1989, they once more took centre stage, claiming to speak for the nation. It was only in the course of the soul-searching after the violent crackdown that their claimed role as spokespeople for society and their organic links with the state were more radically challenged. The question was now: had Chinese intellectuals ever been autonomous?

In the late 1990s, a new role appeared which can be described as “*minjian* intellectuals”: situating their activity outside the realm of both state and market, they did not claim the elite privilege of producing abstract knowledge, but based their legitimacy on taking part in concrete actions at the margins of society. In fact, it was not the first time that such a challenge had appeared. Already in May Fourth times, some prominent figures of the new culture movement had called to “Go to the People” (到民間去 *dao minjian qu*). At various points throughout the 20th century, intellectuals similarly attempted to give substance to an alternative tradition of engaging with grassroots society and producing knowledge outside the legitimacy framework of state institutions.

This presentation will attempt to sketch out these two traditions in China’s twentieth century history and to disentangle some of the strands of the controversial legacy of the May Fourth intellectuals today.

Sebastian Veg is a Professor of intellectual history and literature of 20th century China at the School of Advanced Studies in Social Sciences (EHESS), Paris, and an Honorary Professor at the University of Hong Kong. He was director of the French Centre for Research on Contemporary China (CEFC) in Hong Kong from 2011 to 2015. His interests are in 20th century Chinese intellectual history, literature, and political debates. His doctoral research was devoted to modernism and democracy in the May Fourth era (Fictions du pouvoir chinois. Littérature, modernisme et démocratie au début du XX^e siècle, Paris: Éditions de l’EHESS, 2009), followed by a second project on the new role of intellectuals in China since the 1990s. He was the co-investigator for a France–Hong Kong research grant on “New Approaches to the Mao Era: everyday history and popular memory.” Most recently, he published a series of articles on cultural and political debates in Hong Kong since the handover.

Carine DEFOORT (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium)

“May 4th as Past, Present, or Future? The Impact of Hu Shi’s Outline of the History of Chinese Philosophy”

May 4th 1919 represents a crucial moment in Chinese history: the present demanded a new vision of the past in order to meet the future. Since the early Republic, a whole century has gone by, but its imprint on Chinese philosophy has largely stayed. One of the most influential creators of this imprint was Hu Shi 胡適 (1891-1962), who published his *Outline of the History of Chinese Philosophy* (《中國哲學史大綱》) in that same year. This paper uses two case studies to illustrate how profoundly Hu and his contemporaries have shaped current views, namely on the issue of “correct naming” (*zheng ming* 正名) and on the philosopher Yang Zhu 楊朱. These one-century old views keep dominating the field because their historicity has been forgotten. They are largely treated as unquestionable matters of fact, the frame of current thinking that itself is hardly called into question. The present challenge is to reflect upon this past in order to meet the future.

Carine Defoort is Full Professor in Sinology at the KU Leuven, Belgium. She studied sinology and philosophy at KU Leuven, National Taiwan University, and the University of Hawaii. Her fields of interest are, primarily, early Chinese thought and, secondarily, the modern period interpretation of that thought. Some of her research topics are the Heguanzi, the “legitimacy of Chinese philosophy”, Fu Sinian, and the modern portrayals of Mozi, Mencius and Yang Zhu. She is the editor of Contemporary Chinese Thought (Routledge, Taylor & Francis, since 1997) and corresponding editor for Europe of China Review International (Honolulu, University of Hawaii, since 1994).

Participants

(alphabetical order)

AU Sonia Ka-lai (Hong Kong Baptist University, China)

“Hong Kong through the Eyes of the May Fourth Writers”

As Paul Claudel has written in his poem “Hong Kong”, western writers often consider Hong Kong, a British colony within the Chinese territory, an exotic place and the gateway to the imaginary China while mainland intellectuals cry for their lost territory. Hong Kong, bearing the permanent wound of invasion and colonisation, is the ineffaceable national shame for the mainland Chinese intellectuals, as seen in the travelogues and essays on the city by many canonical May Fourth authors, such as Lu Xun, Mao Dun, Guo Moruo, Hu Shi and Wen Yiduo.

In his poem “Song of the Seven Sons – Hong Kong”, the city penned by Wen Yiduo is a scene of a dramatic story; Guo Moruo’s deeply emotional recollection “A return trip in ten years... I have a duty to assume.” defines the patriotic duty of writers of his day. If this patriotic feeling is a common sentiment among these poets, Lu Xun, the leading figure of modern Chinese literature, pushes it even further by writing “But Hong Kong is anyway a scary step.” For the May Fourth intellectuals, their pens are the swords defending the sovereignty of China. Hong Kong’s beautiful scenery and tragic history move them; its colonial status is criticised by them. How do these revolutionary intellectuals’ glance at the lost territory? What roles do they play when they visit Hong Kong? How, charged with the duty of promoting vernacular language, do they impose their ideas of literary revolution on the Hong Kong literary scene, while Hong Kong government is pushing forward classical literature at the same time? This is a new research field that is seldom explored.

Sonia Au Ka-lai is lecturer in Academy of Film at Hong Kong Baptist University, PhD holder of the Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales (INALCO, Paris). She was former Associate Researcher of French Centre for Research on Contemporary China (CEFC). Her research fields are Chinese and French modern literature, Comparative Literature, Cinema, Translation and Cultural Studies. She translated in Chinese the French novel of Marguerite Duras La Maladie de la Mort and published her own Shorts Stories Gone for the Clouds. Her PhD thesis Hong Kong 1927-1937: Enquête sur la naissance d’une littérature moderne is in the editing process in Paris.

BOITTOUT Joachim (École pratique des Hautes Études, Paris, France)

“Neither May Fourth, nor Conservatism — A Study of Popular Novelists and Moderate Intellectuals of the 1910’s from their Interactions with La Jeunesse, 1912-1916”

This paper will explore the dialogue between different groups of *literati* in the middle of the 1910’s, just after the founding of the Republic of China (1912). When *Qingnian zazhi* 《青年雜誌》, the first version of *Xin Qingnian* 《新青年》, was released in 1915, it was *at first* perceived as one among many other magazines and newspapers dealing with social issues, though it soon gained notoriety thanks to its iconoclastic approach on cultural matters. In 1915, the Confucian « way of life », especially the heavy family and social bonds which were

structuring the social norms since many centuries, have already been questioned, challenged and sometimes even debunked in other publications. Very little attention has been drawn on these forerunners, despite the fact that they did provide a framework in which Chen Duxiu, Yi Baisha and other intellectuals who started *New Youth* launched their first attacks against the traditional order. In this paper, we would like to focus on two groups of *pre* May Fourth *literati* who initiated a public discussion about thorny and sensitive issues such as the expression of the « self » (自我 or 自覺) between 1912 and 1916 and the yearning for free wedding (婚姻自由). Two major issues that the *New Youth* intellectuals regard as fundamental claims. The streams of *literati* we will be dealing with are the *Tiger magazine* (《甲寅雜誌》) group, of which Zhang Shizhao 章士釗 is a prominent figure, and the group of sentimental novelists often improperly called the Mandarin Ducks and Butterflies writers (鴛鴦蝴蝶派) whose members work as journalists for the newspaper People's rights (民權報) from 1912 to 1914, such as Xu Zhenya 徐枕亞 or Xu Tianxiao 許天嘯. Despite many discrepancies which must be specified, these two groups both contribute to the building of a Republican public sphere where a great deal of thinking and energy is devoted to the enhancement of a citizenship consciousness. By doing so, they seem to be at the same time forerunners and rivals of May Fourth intellectuals. And the public sphere of these years appears to be an arena where May Fourth intellectuals strive to stand out in order to gain autonomy and, *in fine*, be able to claim moral and intellectual superiority over their forerunners.

Joachim Boittout is a former student of the École normale supérieure (Lyon). He is initially trained in classical Chinese poetry of the Han and Wei-Jin eras. His PhD dissertation (EHESS, under the supervision of Sebastian Veg) focuses on the political claims held in the classical literature of the 1900's and 1910's. His dissertation explores the importance of sentiments and sentimentality (情) in the framing of a new citizen consciousness and the nation building process. Joachim Boittout teaches modern and classical Chinese at the Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales (INALCO) in Paris.

CAO Qing (Durham University, UK)

“Is Democracy a Priority in the May Fourth Movement? – A Corpus-Based Investigation of *La Jeunesse*”

In China's official historiography, the 1919 May Fourth Movement (MFM) is synonymous to the popular demand for democracy. Portrayed as inaugurating popular campaigns in modern China, the MFM has been immortalised in the catchphrase ‘Mr Democracy and Mr Science (德先生、賽先生)’ in the public consciousness over the last century. Defined as marking the end of ‘capitalist democracy’ and launching a ‘new democracy’ in the official historiography (Yang *et al*, 1993), it is articulated by historians such as Bai Shouyi (1980). The argument constitutes a central thesis in one of the key modern history texts *From the Opium War to the May Fourth Movement* by Hu Sheng. But is this true? Or to what extent it is true? These are the questions that this paper explores.

Based on an innovative methodology of corpus linguistics, the study analyses the newly available digital database of *La Jeunesse* magazine (LJ 《新青年》) to delineate key strands of ideology promoted during the MFM. *La Jeunesse* is arguably the single most influential publication in the pursuit for modernity in the Republican period. The software WordSmith is applied to the LJ corpus that consists of 11 volumes (from 1915 to 1926) and 958 articles, amounting to three million characters. The empirical evidence shows ‘democracy’ is far less important than popularly believed. In terms of word frequency, for example, ‘democracy’ ranks only 230th in ‘concept nouns’ of *La Jeunesse*, significantly lower than the dominant themes of ‘revolution’ (ranked the 2nd) and ‘state’ (the 6th). The paper concludes with a critical

discussion on the popular myth of the close association of democracy with the MFM, contextualised in the trajectory and shift of political ideologies in early 20th century China.

Dr Qing Cao is Associate Professor in Chinese Studies at the School of Modern Languages and Cultures, Durham University, UK. His research interests centre on discourse and representation in the mass media. He is the author of China under Western Gaze (2014) and the lead editor of Discourse, Politics and Media in Contemporary China (2014). The study is part of a larger research project supported by a UK Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) grant that examines the flow and adaption of western ideas to China in late Qing and early Republican periods.

CHANG Yao-cheng (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium)

“Condemnations of the Confucian Dystopia and Praises of Mohism during the May Fourth Movement”

Kang Youwei (康有為; 1858-1927) and his student Chen Huanzhang (陳煥章; 1880-1933) promoted the state-religion movement to institute a “Confucian religion” (孔教) on the eve of the New Culture Movement. Kang Youwei envisaged that the institutionalized Confucian religion could become an international association with the aim of not only saving China but also advancing the entire world into the Confucian *datong* (大同) utopia. Disproving Kang Youwei’s utopian idea, many May Fourth writers re-evaluated the pros and cons of Confucianism and characterized the Confucian hegemony as a dystopia where the exploitable Confucian authority had been used as a puppet by the authoritarian regime for millennia. As a result, while the Ming and Qing scholars to a certain extent can only praise Mohism by refuting Mencius’ extreme accusation of Yang Zhu and Mozi and displaying the compatibility of Confucianism and Mohism, the New Culture activists tend to recognize their disagreement and thus consider Mohism as a device which serves as a reflection of the deficiency of Confucianism. Focusing on the writings of Yi Baisha (易白沙; 1886-1921), Chen Duxiu (陳獨秀; 1879-1942), Wu Yu (吳虞; 1872-1949), Hu Shi (胡適; 1891-1962), and Fu Sinian (傅斯年; 1896-1950), this paper investigates the interaction between the May Fourth dystopian discourse on Confucianism and the modern rise of Mohist studies: together with the introduction of Western thought, the research on Mohism provided the intellectuals an opportunity to reflect on the predominant Confucian tradition; the condemnation of Confucianism also enabled Mohism to reach a new level of freedom and regain its ability to criticize its old rival.

Chang, Yao-Cheng (張堯程) is a doctoral student of Sinology at KU Leuven (University of Leuven), Belgium. He finished his B.A and M.A in philosophy at National Taiwan University with theses about Daoism. Now he participates in the KU Leuven project “Yang Zhu and Mozi from Heretics to Philosophers”. His current research topics include the Mozi and the intellectual history about the emergence of “Chinese philosophy”. His doctoral research will concentrate on the modern ascription of “three laws” (三表) to early Mohism.

CIAUDO Joseph (École pratique des Hautes Études, Paris, France & Universität Heidelberg, Germany)

“‘Wenhua’ and ‘Xin wenhua’ as Historical ‘Grundbegriffe’: Toward a Critical Evaluation of the History of Culture-concept(s) in China in the May Fourth Era”

For several decades, we have been witnessing a profound renewal in our understanding of ‘the new culture movement’. To mention just the tail of this academic trend, Elisabeth Forster took the stand that

we should look at the new culture movement not as a movement *per se* but as ‘a buzzword’ (2017), while Kuo Ya-pei has brilliantly argued that ‘the new culture movement, with clear fault lines against all non-supporters and a stress upon ideological cohesion, was constructed in 1923–1924’ (2017). In the continuity of these insights, this paper will question our understanding of this so-called ‘*xin wenhua*’ 新文化 under the light of conceptual history. I argue that this term ought not to be systematically translated as ‘New Culture’ (often written with uppercase), because it was not only a *Schlagwort* genuinely ambivalent, but more exactly a *Grundbegriff* in the sense of Reinhart Koselleck, *i.e.* a concept inherently controversial and contested.

The paper puts forward the idea that terms such as *wenhua* 文化 encompassed a ‘multiplicity potential readings’ that have much to do with the transformation of Chinese language at the beginning of the twentieth century and with the emergence of a new conceptual repertoire. In their attempts to appropriate *xin wenhua* and turn it into a seemingly coherent movement with an agenda, Chinese intellectuals were fighting a war over the topic of ‘civilization/culture’. Yet, by employing the term ‘culture’ in academic writing today, we produce a historical dissonance for their use of this term is not our own. Furthermore, we fell into the trap of semantic transparency, and forget that the concept of ‘culture’ has its problematic history. By questioning the use of *wenhua* around May Fourth, I provide evidence that the accepted translation of culture is anachronistic. *Wenhua* often didn’t mean culture in our modern, all too modern, sense.

Joseph Ciaudo has studied Sinology, and Intellectual history at the National Institute of Oriental languages and cultures in Paris. In 2016, he completed there his PhD thesis on cultural discourses in the early twentieth century China. His research interests include Chinese intellectual history, the introduction of western philosophy in China, and the conceptual history of ‘culture’ in East Asia at the end of the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century. He joined the Excellence cluster ‘Europe and Asia in a Global Context’ in Heidelberg in 2017, and has started a new research project on Confucian Apologetics in the early twentieth century in the ‘Laboratoire d’Excellence : Histoire et anthropologie des savoirs, des techniques et des croyances’ in the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes (Paris), in October 2018.

DE GRANDIS Mario (Ohio State University, Columbus, USA)

“Another Quest for Modernity: Literary Journals of the Sinophone Muslim Communities”

Scholars have highly debated the origin of modern Chinese literature. In the canonical narrative, modern Chinese literature suddenly erupted with the May Fourth Movement. Moving away from such an interpretation, more recent studies have highlighted elements of continuity and rupture in modern Chinese literature, and pushed back its origin at least to the late Qing or, as some scholars have argued, even to the late Ming. Obviously, much depends on the variables considered to evaluate the process of change. Debating in absolute terms the defying features of “modern” Chinese literature requires making overblown generalizations over an extremely rich corpus of texts. Offering an alternative method, I propose to restrict the horizon to a specific literary community defined by social forms of mutual interaction. For this reason, in my study, literary modernity is assessed in relation to Muslim groups who are Sinophone, yet not always comprehensible to their neighbouring communities; phenotypically indistinguishable and culturally akin to the Han, save for the widespread abstinence from pork. In particular, I analyse *Huixing Pian*, the earliest journal produced by a Sinophone Muslim community of exchange students in Tokyo during the early nineteenth century. The journal breaks with traditional Sinophone Muslim literature by integrating religious concerns with the discourse on modernity articulated by late Qing intellectuals such as Yan Fu and Liang Qichao. Nonetheless, using primarily

classical Chinese (文言文) but also some Arabic, the journal also maintains continuity with both the Chinese literary tradition and, to a lesser extent, with the Middle Eastern world. Despite its limited circulation, the journal functioned as model for later Muslim publications, and triggered among Muslim Chinese communities the emergence of claims and expressions of modernity such as progress, democracy, science, the autonomous aesthetic, and gender equality that can be appraise in later publications.

Mario De Grandis is a PhD candidate, and translator of contemporary fiction. His research focuses on ethnic minority literature. Under the guidance of Kirk Denton, Mario is completing his dissertation titled The Sinophone Hui Literary Field in Postsocialist China. Mario is the editorial assistant of Modern Chinese Literature and Culture, and he has taught courses on Chinese culture and language. Mario holds an M.A. in Chinese Literature from OSU and an M.A. in Chinese Language Pedagogy from Nanjing University. He has lived and worked in China for five years.

DING Yiyun (London School of Economics and Political Science, UK)

“Defining ‘Conservativeness’ in the Post May-Fourth Era: Yang Yinyu and the Student Movement in the Beijing Women’s Normal University, 1923-1925”

Yang Yinyu (楊蔭榆, 1884-1938), born in a gentry’s family in the late Qing China, was among the first generation of female students and also the first generation of female career women in the republican China. After studied in both Japan and the US, Yang was nominated as the president of Beijing Women’s Normal University in 1924, who became the first female university president in Chinese history. However, this progressive educator was immediately protested against by her students as a ‘conservative’ who clung to traditional values and Beiyang warlords, and she was forced to resign within eighteen months. Lu Xun, then a professor in the university, stood aside with the students and published articles in condemning Yang as a ‘tyrannical mother-in-law to the female students’. As Lu Xun has been officially portrayed as a national ‘spiritual leader’ after the 1960s, Yang Yinyu has long been taken as a villain in the contemporary era.

This paper reappraises Yang and the student movement in order to rehabilitate the ideas of this marginalised historical figure, and examine what did ‘conservative’ mean in the post May-Fourth era. It argues that, a ‘conservative’ in the (post) May-Fourth era was not necessarily ‘anti-Western’. In fact, as a western-trained educator, many ideologies and pedagogies of Yang such as sex liberalisation, family education, were taken as ‘exotic’ by her students of May-Fourth generation. Lu Xun’s critiques reflected legacies of traditional Confucian values even if he was making efforts to erase them. Yang Yinyu’s case demonstrates the complexity of defining ‘progressiveness’ and ‘conservativeness’, and an intersectionality of gender, class, and political struggles in the Chinese academia.

Yiyun Ding is a research officer at the Department of Government, London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), funded by the Humanities in the European Research Area (HERA). Her current research project employs micro-historical methodology to discover how individuals were shaped by, and contributed to China’s educational reforms in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. It investigates how the living experiences of the early Chinese reformers, whose ideas were influenced by their transnational experiences either within or beyond East Asia, had significantly transformed the concept of ‘education’ in China.

FUSINI Letizia (School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, UK)

“Between Tradition and Innovation: The Creation of Modern Tragedy in Early Republican China”

One of the key features of the New Culture and May Fourth Movement was the introduction of Western tragic theory and dramaturgy, which would play a major role in aiding the emergence of a new and ‘progressive’ form of drama—the *huaju* 话剧. Based on spoken dialogue and centring on the representation of conflict (冲突) and contradiction (矛盾), the new-born *huaju* plays were to fill a cultural lacuna that had been diagnosed as early as the late Qing period by scholars such as Jiang Guangyun and Wang Guowei. While the former openly proclaimed that the biggest shortcoming of the Chinese theatrical tradition was the absence of a genre akin to tragedy in the West, the latter argued that the only Chinese ‘tragedies’ that his country could boast were produced during the Yuan dynasty. Later on, a growing number of scholars (including Hu Shi and Lu Xun) variously lamented such problematic ‘absence’, which they ascribed to the ‘pragmatism’ of the Chinese approach to life and its problems—an attitude of rationalism and secularism which would exclude ‘transcendence.’

However, the very notion of the *Dao* 道 and of *tianming* 天命 can be said to embody an immanent ‘transcendence’, one which ensures the final ‘great reunion’ (大团圆) and the restoration of harmony within a given dramatic work. Through a selection of tragic plays from the 20s and the 30s (including Cao Yu’s 1937 classic *Thunderstorm*), this paper will seek to prove that the creative process that led to the invention of a modern Chinese tragedy drew on the interplay of cross-cultural forces coming both from the Chinese and the Western tradition and whose final product was a higher synthesis of the two. Ultimately, this paper will argue that the innovative feature of this new type of tragedy that has its roots in the New Culture Movement did not lie in its treatment of transcendence but in its ability to convey the experience of the ‘limit’ and to contribute a fresh point of view on it.

Letizia Fusini (PhD, SOAS 2016) is currently a Postdoctoral Research Associate at SOAS, University of London and taught for two years History of Chinese Theatre at Goldsmiths college. Her research interests and publications to date fall in the realm of Sino-Western intercultural exchanges with particular reference to literature and drama. Her current research project investigates the impact of Western tragedy on the formation of modern Chinese spoken drama during the early Republican period. Her main academic contributions have appeared in CLCWeb, Neohelicon and in edited collections. Furthermore, she collaborated with the University of Venice regarding the publication of handbook of modern Chinese literature in Italian.

HOSKIN Mark (School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, UK)

“A Turning Point for Modern China: The Treaty of Versailles — How Much Attention did the 1919 Events Receive in the USA?”

This paper will consider the question of United States Government attention on the events in China between the years 1919 – 1921. Using U.S. Military Attaché reports from Embassies based in China and Japan and the State Department and/or Presidential responses to those reports to gauge the amount of attention and the expressed thought in response. Did this governmental attention result in direct actions, changes in official policy, or other governmental responses? How were the events perceived by US Officials in Japan? Was there a response to the events in China by the US towards World War 1 ally Japan, who was engaged in the Russian Civil War and attempting to create a separate state in Siberia? What was the result for US-China and US-Japan relations at this critical period? Through examination

of U.S. Military Attaché reports of these events, United States Government attention on the 1919 events in China and their implications for U.S. foreign policy will be explored.

Mark is currently an MA student in Taiwan Studies at SOAS, University of London. He is currently working on his dissertation in historical consideration of the 1947 drawing of the 11 Dash Line in the South China Sea through examination of the people to people interactions who sailed through the Sea when harvesting agricultural produce, trading, and exploring. Beginning September 2018 in the Doctoral School, he will continue to research foreign trade in East Asia to consider questions concerning its historical ramifications as countries have been affected by the effects of modern globalisation and connectivity. A Fellow of The Royal Asiatic Society and a member of The Royal Institute of International Affairs, these affiliations reflects his interests into the East Asia region and its effects on the world.

HUANG Yu and LUO Jiaying (Sun Yat-sen University, Guangzhou, China)

May Fourth Female Intellectuals in IFCL: A Case Study of Su Xuelin

Established by May Fourth leading educators Cai Yuanpei and Wu Zihui, Institut Franco-Chinois de Lyon (hereafter IFCL) received 473 students from 1921 to 1946. These Chinese students were provided with exposure to French culture and systematic training as to be integrated into the French higher education system. Many IFCL graduates obtained their doctorate degrees in sciences or humanities and returned to China to become founders of new academic disciplines in the emergent tertiary institutes. Notwithstanding the considerable number of female students at IFCL, the overseas trajectories of the May Fourth female intellectuals have been relatively understudied. This paper will begin with an overview of the IFCL female students in terms of their demographic features, marital status, and academic achievements. Then, it will illustrate the transformation of their gender and cultural identity with a case study of Su Xuelin (1897-1999), one of the earliest IFCL female students. Before going to IFCL, Su had been an emergent writer during the May Fourth Movement. Upon her return from Lyon to China, she became a prolific writer and scholar in Chinese and comparative literature. We will analyse Su Xuelin's autobiographic novel Jixin 《棘心》 (“*The Heart of Fire Thorn*”) that depicts her melancholy soul-searching learning experience at IFCL and some of her other writings about this important period of her life. We will compare and contrast the similar writings of another famous May Fourth female writer Bing Xin 冰心 about her overseas learning experience in USA and draw the tentative conclusion that IFCL provided an alternative path of spiritual and intellectual self-transformation for young Chinese females in the early twentieth-century.

Dr. Huang Yu (Heidi) is currently associate professor in literary and transcultural studies, and coordinator for the Center for European Studies at The School of International Studies, Sun Yat-sen University (PRC). After obtaining her PhD degree in Transcultural Studies from University of Lyon in 2011, she pursued her post-doctoral research in world literature and comparative literature at the City University of Hong Kong. Her research interests include comparative literature, world literature, Chinese literature and culture in global contexts, and cultural translation. Her publications could be found in international peer-reviewed journals including Modern Language Quarterly, Neohelicon, and Critical Arts among others. She is also an engaged translator and event-organizer promoting less known literary texts in a world literary dialogism.

Luo Jiaying is a MA student at The School of International Studies, Sun Yat-sen University (PRC). She is currently working on her MA thesis about Su Xuelin under Dr. Huang's supervision.

ISAY Gad C. (Tel-Hai College, Israel)

“Exploring the View of Life Controversy in 1923 for May Fourth Contributions to the Development of Confucian Learning”

In the framework of the controversy over the question of the view of life (人生觀) in the early 1920s, both those who supported science and/or scientism and those who supported the view of life based on metaphysics, made their contributions to the development of Confucian learning in the 20th century and thereafter. The supporters of scientism were obviously less aware of this. But their positivist approach, that subjected existence to the laws of materiality, mechanism, and heredity, suggested agreement with terms such as this-worldliness and the non-dichotomous that define contemporary Confucian discussions.

The supporters of the view of life based on metaphysics, on the other hand, proposed in their essays a concentric pattern, consisting of conscience as the person's inner center, surrounded by features such as subjectivity, synthesis, and free will, and further away the communal and natural environments. The structure of the concentric pattern is a major element of Confucian philosophy, as can be seen in the first chapter of the *Great Learning* (《大學》), and in other texts (mentioned in my presentation). This point may corroborate scholars' acknowledgement of the reputation of the supporters of the view of life based on metaphysics in the modern history of the transmission of the Confucian Way.

The conjunction of this-worldliness and the concentric pattern are then followed by an introduction of the often-misjudged standing of Qian Mu 錢穆 (1895-1990) both as participant in the 1923 controversy and in the modern development of Confucian learning. I argue that two outstanding features of his scholarship, his promotion of reverence for the sources, and the emphasis he laid everywhere in his writings on the notion of centrality and balance, should be incorporated into discussions of the intellectual history of the May Fourth movement.

Gad C. Isay, Department of East Asian Studies, Tel-Hai Center for the Study of Religions, Tel-Hai College. Publications include The Philosophy of the View of Life in Modern Chinese Thought (2013), studies of writings of missionaries in China during the late 19th century, and other studies on modern Chinese thought, specifically the thought of Qian Mu. Currently engaged in research on ancient Chinese philosophy and religiosity.

KUO Ya-pei (Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, the Netherlands)

“The Fallacy of Misplaced Concreteness – The ‘Conservative’ of the May Fourth Era”

One of the major changes in recent historiography of the republican period has been the rediscovery of the May Fourth “conservatives.” In both the English and Chinese, the number of publications on Du Yaquan, Liang Shuming, Gu Hongming, and the Research Clique, which include figures such as Liang Qichao and Zhang Dongsun, have increased since the 1990s. Most academics in the field are aware of and even overtly acknowledge the cosmopolitan and progressive nature of these figures' outlooks. The conservatives, as we now know, could be publishing in the vernacular, partaking the discourse of cultural reform, advocating Westernization, and embracing socialist persuasions. Yet, in spite of the mounting evidence to prove otherwise, they continue to be labelled as “the conservatives.” The deployment of the label, in this sense, is divorced from substance, and rather merely signifies one's adherence to established historiographic practice. This paper problematizes this perpetuation of convention and explores “the fallacy of misplaced concreteness” lurking in the practice. Instead of proposing to eliminate the label, it examines the genealogy of the current grouping of the conservatives and traces it to certain New Culture advocates' campaigns of self-purification in the post-May Fourth years. As such, it argues that by subscribing to the convention, one tacitly endorses a partisan interpretation of the early Republican intellectual scene, an interpretation put forth to obscure the true concreteness in history.

Ya-pei Kuo is a historian of Republican China. She received her PhD from the University of Wisconsin – Madison. Her research interests include the concept of “culture,” politics of “religion”, and the intellectual debates in the May Fourth era. Her publications can be found in journals such as Modern China, Past & Present, and Twentieth-Century China.

LAAOUINA Gaëlle (Université Jean-Moulin Lyon 3, France)

“Paris Group’s Anarchist Thought at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century: The New Culture Movement’s Premises”

After the opium wars, in line with the westernization movement, numerous Chinese students and intellectuals were sent abroad to study and constitute a new Chinese intelligentsia after their return. This new intelligentsia learnt and appropriated some European concepts and theories in order to construct a “Nation-State”. Therefore, it is in this context that Li Shizeng 李石曾 (also named Li Yuying) arrived in Paris in 1902 and became the first Chinese anarchist in France. Subsequently, Li Shizeng and other Chinese scholars, also named “Paris group”, created associations and weekly papers which professed a cultural and a scientific vocation, the implementation of a modernist and positivist anarchism, the propagation of science and the universalization of culture. They also developed the “Work-Study” movement which would permit social revolution through individual freedom and social equality. Cai Yuanpei, who was a main protagonist of the New Culture Movement, participated in their projects.

Within that period, the New Culture Movement’s cultural shift, against the warlords, was an attempt to democratize the nation. This notion of democracy was reached into China by anarchist ideas. Indeed, “Paris group” had strong anti-authoritarian values, called on an individual emancipation, and, in this way of thinking, criticized any hierarchical structures, especially the family. Thus, through their slogan “三纲革命” “*San gang geming*, they rejected Confucian’s three principle and morality, which was qualified as “false moral”. Moreover, their positivist anarchism emphasized the primacy of science. Indeed, through their works, we can notice that the transtextual concept “公理” *Gongli*, used by anti-despotic Chinese authors, was subject to a semantic shift : Science as the universal principle. People’s sense of morality was proportional to the learning of science. In this way, there was a dialectical relationship between education and revolution.

Afterwards, since 1912, these Chinese anarchist’s concepts, values and ideas were circulated among Chinese intellectual milieu. Liu Shifu, who was one of the mains pioneers of Anarchism in China, used to a large extent the articles of the Paris group’s newspaper “Le siècle nouveau” as a basis. Liu Shifu also was the founder of "The Society of Anarcho-Communist Comrades" in Shanghai. Then, this Society served as a role model for Societies which authors were part of the May Fourth’s initiators.

Gaëlle Laaouina is a PHD student of Chinese Studies in IETT research Center in Jean Moulin Lyon 3 University (France). Her doctoral thesis is entitled The Chinese anarchists in France at the beginning of the twentieth century.. Her research focuses on the transtextual study of French anarchism and the anarchism of these Chinese intellectuals in France, especially the transtextuality between Confucianism, Taoism and the concepts used by these Chinese anarchists. Her thesis also involves a more in-depth study of the Paris group’s “Work-Study” Movement.

LAUREILLARD Marie (Université Lumière Lyon 2, France)

“Shao Xunmei, a Decadent Poet in Republican China”

Shao Xunmei 邵洵美 (1906-1968), also known under the name Sinmay Zau, was a flamboyant figure of the 4th May period, a dandy who published popular journals and gathered talented artists around him, but he was above all a poet who adopted the poetics and lifestyle of European decadence. Shao, who had studied in Cambridge and Paris, was especially impressed by Swinburne and Baudelaire. Therefore the titles of his works *Fire and Flesh* (《火與肉》) and *Flower-like Evil* (《花一般的罪惡》), written during the 1920s, were respectively inspired by a Swinburne poem and *Les Fleurs du mal* by Baudelaire. This “decadent” culture, already known in China through translations of Baudelaire and Oscar Wilde in the early 1920s, fascinated Shao Xunmei, who sought to create an enchanted world during this fleeting life in poems infused with aestheticism, narcissism, and carnal desire. I intend to show in which way the poetry of Shao Xunmei, which was long forgotten and neglected in Chinese literary history, combined the classical and the modern, the Chinese and the foreign, and deserves attention as a Chinese adaptation and recreation of a European aesthetics and spirit.

Marie Laureillard, Associate Professor of Chinese language and civilisation at the Lumière-Lyon 2 University in France, member of the Lyons Institute of East Asian Studies, is specialised in modern art and literature history, semiotics, and cultural studies of China and Taiwan. She has published Feng Zikai, a Lyrical Cartoonist: Dialogue between Words and Strokes (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2017, in French) and co-edited Ghosts in the Far East yesterday and today (Paris: Presses de l'Inalco, 2017, 2 vol.). She is currently working on the Decadent Movement in Republican China in literature and cartoons and on the contemporary Taiwanese painter-poet Lo Ch'ing.

LI Mei-ting (Chinese University of Hong Kong, China)

“Taking May Fourth Linguistic Reform as a Strategy: The Anti-Colonialism Story of Hong Kong Literature”

The linguistics reformation is undoubtedly an important part of the May Fourth Movement as a performance of both the literary and nationality modernity. But in the 1920s Hong Kong, the linguistics reformation between the new (新文学) versus old (就文学) present a different story. In 1929 to 1931, a local young writers groups “Dao Shang She” (島上社) founded the literary magazine *Tie Ma* (《鐵馬》) and *Dao Shang* (《島上》) to advocate the linguistic reformation against the old-fashion writings such as Wenyan and butterfly literature. Apparently, their pursuing was under the shadow of May Fourth Movement which the spiritual meanings and influences was widely spread after 1919. But, under the colonial background, the story of Dao Shang She is more complicated than imagined. Tracing back to the early stage of 1920s, the old-fashion writers were paradoxically cooperating with the British colonial government in Hong Kong because of the new educational and cultural policies released by Sir Cecil Clementi (金文泰) after 1925. By embracing the discourse of the May Fourth Movement with Dao Shang She’s own agenda, their pursuing for the new and the searching for the modernity is not only about literary, but also represented the anti-colonialism story of Hong Kong. This thesis is to discover the intrinsic meaning of Dao Shang She’s literature pursuing by analysing their literary works in *Tie Ma* and *Dao Shang*.

*Now a PhD student of the Chinese Language and Literature Department in The Chinese University of Hong Kong, LI Mei-ting’s research interest is Hong Kong Literature, Modern Chinese Literature and Archival Studies. She has participated in an academical oral history project about Hong Kong Literature during 2014 – 2017 as a research assistant. And, I was also an editor of the local literary magazine *Fleurs des lettres* (《字花》) from 2014 – 2017.*

MA Félix Jun (Université Paul-Valéry Montpellier, France)

“From *Jiayin* 甲寅 (The Tiger) to *Xin Qingnian* 新青年 (La Jeunesse) – Rethinking Liberalism in the May Fourth Period in China”

Jiayin and *Xin Qingnian* were two influential political magazines in the middle of the 1910s in China. The latter, considered as the intellectual “pioneer” of the New Culture Movement and the May Fourth Movement, has been for a long time an important subject of study for many researchers, while the former is used to being ignored by historians for its short life (between 1914 and 1915) and its so-called “lack of historical significance”. But there is a real connection between these two magazines: *Jiayin* laid the intellectual foundations of *Xin Qingnian*, especially in reflecting on liberalism in the Chinese context. By redefining the relationship between individual and state, individual liberty and collective liberty, *Jiayin* provided *Xin Qingnian* with a further understanding of the concept of “individual” (*geren* 个人) (subjectivity and individuality) in early Republican China. The aim of our study is to trace the continuity of the liberal thought in modern Chinese conceptual history for better understanding the historical context and the peculiarities of liberalism in the May Fourth period.

MA Félix Jun is Associate Professor of Chinese studies and research fellow at the Institut de recherche intersite en études culturelles (IRIEC) at the Paul-Valéry University of Montpellier III, France. He received a PhD in history in 2013 from EHESS (Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales), France. His research focuses on the conceptual history in the late Qing dynasty and in the Republican China.

MAGAGNIN Paolo (Università Ca’ Foscari Venezia, Italy)

“Agents of May Fourth: The Early Introduction of Modern Literature in France by Two Chinese Intellectuals”

This paper intends to investigate the contribution of Chinese scholars and translators to the early popularisation of May Fourth literature in France, taking Jing Yinyu and Xu Zhongnian’s agency as a case study. Both former students of the Lyon Sino-French Institute, Jing and Xu played a pivotal role in the dissemination of modern Chinese literature in France in the first half of the XX century. Jing Yinyu (1901-1930), a writer close to the Creation Society, is best known as the first translator of Lu Xun’s fiction into a Western language and a friend of Romain Rolland’s: he compiled the collection of translated short stories titled *Anthologie des conteurs modernes chinois*, published in Paris in 1929. A more comprehensive project followed in 1932: in his *Anthologie de la littérature chinoise. Des origines à nos jours*, the scholar of French literature Xu Zhongnian (1904-1981) devoted a substantial section to presenting the recent developments of Chinese poetry, fiction, and drama, accompanied by a selection of texts in his French translation. What are the features of Jing’s and Xu’s dissemination of May Fourth literature in France through their translations? What is the two intellectuals’ artistic stance *vis-à-vis* the new literary scene? What ideological framework inspires their propagation of May Fourth ideals through literature, and how does such a framework affect their translation strategies and scholarly projects? In the final analysis, in what terms and to what extent do the two scholars-cum-translators’ endeavours contribute to the awareness, by a foreign readership, of the cultural, social and political experience of the May Fourth movement? I will attempt to answer these questions by conducting a twofold analysis, focused on the close reading of the translations contained in the two collections and on the scrutiny of the paratexts produced by the two editors to accompany the translated texts.

Paolo Magagnin is Assistant Professor in Chinese language and translation at the Università Ca' Foscari Venezia, Italy, and a member of the Laboratorio sulla Traduzione delle Lingue Orientali research group at the same university. His main fields of research include modern and contemporary Chinese fiction, translation studies, the didactics of Chinese literature and culture, and contemporary Chinese political discourse.

MAJOR Philippe (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium)

“Mr. Democracy, the Body Politics, and Naturalized Utopias in Chen Duxiu’s May Fourth Discourse”

This study argues that before his conversion to communism, Chen Duxiu’s (陳獨秀; 1879-1942) writings in the journal *New Youth* (《新青年》) tend to characterize Mr. Democracy (戴先生) as a utopian socio-political order described in terms of biological metaphors of the body politics. While Wang Hui (汪暉) has argued that Chen’s envisioning of the goals of science had reshaped it in the form of a Neo-Confucian investigation of things (格物致知) centered on the ethical cultivation of the practitioner, his views on democracy similarly betray (Neo-)Confucian ideals, such as that of the union of heaven and the human (天人合一) or of the Great Harmony (大同). Following Lydia Liu, I argue that Chen upholds the values of individualism only insofar as it frees the individual from the traditional bonds of the Confucian family system, thereupon enabling the atomized citizen to directly participate in the newly imagined political community. The latter is conceptualized, in Chen’s writings, as a unified body of modern citizens who find their true meaning in their inclusion in a society and a body politics that outlast the limited scope and transcend the finitude of human life. I conclude by arguing that Chen’s swift conversion to communism at the very beginning of the 1920s should be understood within the general context of his predisposition toward a utopian vision of politics centered on a positive understanding of liberty, as defined by Isaiah Berlin.

Philippe Major is a Postdoctoral Fellow in the Sinology Department of KU Leuven. He holds a PhD in Philosophy from the National University of Singapore. His main area of research is situated at the juncture between New Confucianism, philosophical textuality, and textual authority. He has published articles on the thought of Liang Shuming (Philosophy East & West, Monumenta Serica, and International Communication of Chinese Culture) and on the concept of democracy in modern China (Contemporary Chinese Thought).

NELSON Eric (Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, China)

“Conflicting Modernities: Zhang Junmai in the Wake of the May Fourth Movement”

This paper examines the significance of reflexive self-critical modernity in the development of new Confucianism by examining the example of Zhang Junmai (張君勱) in the wake of the May Fourth and New Culture Movements. Whereas Anglo-American trained intellectuals returned to China with a faith in the primacy of science and complete Westernization (全盤西化), Zhang’s university and research stays in Germany at the beginning of and after the conclusion of the First World War led him to a more critical perspective on Western modernity informed by its contemporary crisis tendencies, which he experienced in a Europe devastated by war and facing socialist revolutions, and its contemporary Western philosophical and social-political critics. Zhang utilized life-philosophy (Eucken and Bergson) and social democracy (Scheidemann and Kautsky) to critique the May Fourth and New Culture Movements and reconstruct the “rational core” and ethical sensibility of Confucian philosophy.

Zhang's "self-critical modernity," oriented toward a moral and social-political instead of a purely scientific vision of Enlightenment, informed his polemic against scientism initiated in his 1923 lecture "The Outlook of Life" (人生觀) and his stance throughout the subsequent controversy over science and life (科學與人生觀之爭). Zhang was attacked by the champions of scientific modernity such as Ding Wenjiang (丁文江) and Hu Shih (胡適). New Culture intellectuals construed Zhang's position as reactionary metaphysics beholden to the past without addressing Zhang's self-critical interpretation of modernity that was cognizant of early twentieth century Western critiques of the paradoxes and crises of modernity. Zhang responded with a new post-traditional form of Confucian philosophy that did not propose rejecting nor overcoming modernity, but which was interculturally fused with Occidental learning, progressive politics, and scientific inquiry.

Eric S. Nelson is Associate Professor of Humanities at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology. He works on modern German and Chinese philosophy. He is the author of Chinese and Buddhist Philosophy in Early Twentieth-Century German Thought (Bloomsbury, 2017) and Daoism and Environmental Philosophy (Routledge, 2020). He is the editor and co-editor of a number of special journal issues and anthologies in European, Chinese, and comparative philosophy.

PESARO Nicoletta (Università Ca' Foscari Venezia, Italy)

“Transculturating the May Fourth: From Lu Xun's 《阿 Q 正传》 (1921-22) to Dario Fo's *La storia di Qu* (1989; 2011)”

The May Fourth Movement has long been questioned in terms of appropriation of Western cultural models and as the manifestation of an incomplete modernity (Lee). In the course of the time, the historical and epistemological meaning of the event has been elaborated by many subjects (the CCP, Chinese intellectuals, Western sinologists etc.), and has inevitably become a brand epitomising a significant part of modern China's experience. If Chinese intellectuals instrumentally appropriated Western culture in the May Fourth period, the May Fourth Movement, in turn, has eventually been adopted both in China and the West as a metaphor for democratic resistance, freedom of thought and unrestrained expression of feelings, transcending the specific event. In my paper I will focus on one of Lu Xun (1881-1936)'s most representative works, *Ah Q zhengzhuan* (*The True Story of Ah Q*, 1921-22), and the transmedial and transcultural appropriations of the text, such as the Italian Nobel Laureate Dario Fo (1926-2016)'s adaptation *La storia di Qu* (*The story of Qu*, 1989; 2011). This particular case will be analysed – together with other translations or adaptations – as an example of transcultural appropriation of the original text, whose iconic transformation is embodied in the final scene of Fo's play with Qu-Randazzo (“Qu-Stray”, Ah Q's character adaptation) standing on the gallows in an Harlequin's suit.

Translation/adaptation “recreates the values that accrued to the foreign text over time” (Venuti, 11): as it happens for other classics, in the case of Lu Xun's novella – a hallmark of May Fourth literature – transculturation and transmediality reshape its identity, giving it new interpretations, an “afterlife” (in Benjamin's sense), a new continuity within a different context.

*Nicoletta Pesaro is Associate Professor of Chinese Language and Literature at Ca' Foscari University of Venice since 2006. She holds a Ph.D. in Chinese Language, Literature and History (University of Rome, La Sapienza). Her research interests include Chinese literature, translation studies, and narratology. She has published many articles on Chinese literature and literary translation, she edited *The Ways of Translation. Constraints and Liberties of Translating Chinese* (2014) and co-edited with Yinde Zhang *Littérature chinoise et globalisation : enjeux linguistiques, traductologiques et génériques* (2017). She has translated novels by modern and contemporary Chinese writers. Among her current projects are a new translation of Lu Xun's first two collections of short stories, and a book on modern Chinese fiction (Carocci) with Melinda Pirazzoli.*

RIEP Steven L. (Brigham Young University, Provo, USA)

“Women in China’s May Fourth Fiction: Religion and Women’s Emancipation in the Early Short Fiction of Xu Dishan”

Reformers and intellectuals from the May Fourth era and its forerunner the New Culture Movement called for overthrowing tradition and embracing new ways of writing and living. Among the writers active during this period was Xu Dishan, a lesser known academic and author of fiction and essays. Xu’s early writing called for re-evaluating the role of women and advocating for their emancipation. Featuring strong female protagonists, these works were unique in that the author frequently experimented with religions—Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, and traditional ancestor worship—as vehicles for women’s emancipation. Given the tendency to view religion as either a symbol of backward tradition or a tool of foreign imperialism, Xu Dishan pioneered this unique approach to both religion and to women’s liberation in the May Fourth era.

This paper will focus on the possibility for religion to serve as a vehicle for woman’s emancipation in Xu’s early short stories. These include “Birds Fated for Each Other” (1921), in which Buddhism plays a key role in a story set in Burma, “The Vain Labours of a Spider” (1922), which focuses on Christianity in Malaysia, and “The Merchant’s Wife” (1921), which treats Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity in Singapore and India. In these works, Xu, a practicing Christian who had studied Indian philosophy and religion and published scholarly works on Buddhism and Daoism, demonstrates with varying degrees of success how religious doctrines and practices might offer women not only opportunities for personal growth and development, but also liberation from traditional roles and class restrictions and the chance for economic independence. The author strategically negotiates the plurality of Chinese religions in a way that respects but does not privilege one system over another.

Steven L. Riep is an associate professor of Chinese and comparative literature at Brigham Young University, where he teaches courses in modern and contemporary Chinese literature, cinema, culture, advanced business Chinese and comparative literature. His research interests include disability studies; cultural production under authoritarian regimes; war, memory and literature and ecocriticism. He is currently completing a book manuscript entitled “Enabling Disabilities: Depictions of Characters with Physical and Cognitive Impairments in Literature and Visual Culture from China, Taiwan and Hong Kong.”

STAFUTTI Stefania (Università degli studi di Torino, Italy)

“The Role of Bao Tianxiao (1875–1973) in Shaping the Values of ‘New China’”

Since the last decades of the last century Chinese scholars too have started undergoing a new critical evaluation of the so called “Mandarin Ducks and Butterflies” literature, flourishing in China from the end of 19th century to the first decades of the 20th and have definitely stopped sticking to the ideological approach, through which they labelled it *tout court* as “Black curtain” literature, or even “degenerated black curtain literature”(堕落而为黑幕小说, Lu Xun).

Still, a lot of work remains to be done and some authors deserve more attention.

This is the case of Bao Tianxiao (包天笑) whose work I would like to consider focusing on two points, which involve some “core values” shared by both New China “official” leaders and “black curtain” authors as Bao Tianxiao. I will consider two spheres:

- 1) youth education and fosterage of patriotism. In this respect, I will take into consideration Bao Tianxiao as a translator, with respect to the translation of *Cuore*, (*Heart*, 《爱的教育》), by Edmondo De Amicis, (1846–1908) a MUST TO BE READ by kids in Italy up to the 60ies of the 20th century, which embodies the new values of a nascent Italian bourgeoisie but which was nevertheless often anthologized throughout the decades in PRC school books. Patriotism, among the values this book shares with New China leading figures, play also a role in Bao’s own fiction (see, for example, the final lines of 《倡们之病》 *The courtesan’s disease*, 1924) among others;
- 2) appraisal of the female role inside Chinese society. In this respect I will basically take into consideration the short story *Yi lüma* 《一缕麻》, 1909, focusing on the *taboo* topic of prenatal betrothal (指腹为婚)

My aim is to highlight the role of Bao Tianxiao in promoting “new values” among those people alien to the highly cultured circles whose members were shaping “new China” sometimes while staying in their ivory tower.

Stefania Staffuti works on modern and contemporary Chinese Literature also investigating the role of political discourse within different aspects of contemporary culture in China. She has been serving as Cultural Attaché at the Cultural Institute of the Embassy of Italy, Beijing from 2012 to 2016.

VAN DEN STOCK Ady (Universiteit Gent, Belgium)

“The Light behind the Crescent: Sino-Islamic Visions of May Fourth”

In this paper, I will engage with a relatively little known and neglected aspect of the modern Chinese intellectual landscape which can contribute to broadening our understanding of the impact of the May Fourth Movement in China, namely the perception and representation of calls for cultural renewal and socio-political transformation and emancipation by Chinese Islamic thinkers. While the tension between traditional and modern forms of legitimacy and normativity is characteristic of the situation faced by (traditionalist) intellectuals in Republican China in general, I will argue that these thinkers had to come to terms with an arguably even more complex turn of events: heirs to the late imperial tradition known as “Islamic Confucianism” (回儒), which sought to combine Neo-Confucian terminology and concepts with Islamic doctrines on a philosophical level, modern Sino-Islamic intellectuals came to be faced with the double task of continuing this syncretic tradition while at the same time trying to meet the normative requirements of the modern nation-state and its quest for the secularization of ethics and politics. Their allegiances were thus divided among and torn between demands of “Chineseness”, modernity, and Islamic identity. My paper will try to disentangle and clarify this complex constellation of elements from a historical perspective and point towards its relevance for critically engaging with the contemporary discourse of a “dialog of civilizations” and “multiple modernities.”

*Ady Van den Stock is a postdoctoral researcher at the Department of Languages and Cultures at Ghent University in Belgium. His research is focused on the intellectual development of Sino-Islamic traditions of thought in modern China and on modern Chinese philosophy, specifically on New Confucianism. He has published a monograph devoted to the latter topic entitled *The Horizon of Modernity: Subjectivity and Social Structure in New Confucian Philosophy* (Brill, 2016) and translated the work of Chinese philosophers such as Li Zehou, Yang Guorong, and Feng Qi. He currently serves as executive director of the Académie du Midi Philosophical Association and board member of the European Association for Chinese Philosophy.*

WANG Xiaowei (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium)

“Yangism in the May Fourth Movement”

The term “Individualism”, while having its own origin in a Western background, is sometimes translated as “個人主義” or “個性主義” to depict the characteristics of the thoughts that pinpoint the turning of traditional Chinese thoughts into modern ones. The translations themselves reveal a deviant understanding of the idea of “Individualism”, which can find its root in traditional Chinese thoughts, although the scholars who were active in the May Fourth Movement were highly influenced by the imported ideas. Individualism not only marks the realization of the self, but also sets forth a set of utopian expectations that reflect the updated political demands of the scholars of that era. With Mencius’ portrayal of Yang Zhu as an “egoist”, the scholars of the 20th century who tried to advocate individualism tend to see Yang Zhu as the first thinker in Chinese history who highlighted the value of “self”. This paper will focus on the interpretations of Yangism during the May Fourth Movement and will explore the role that Yangism plays in the Chinese understanding of individualism and the imagination of a utopian future.

Wang, Xiaowei (王曉薇) is a doctoral student in Sinology at KU Leuven (University of Leuven), Belgium. She participates in the KU Leuven project “Yang Zhu and Mozi from Heretics to Philosophers,” and studies Chinese intellectual history in the 20th century. Currently, her main focus is the portrayal of Yang Zhu in 20th-century China and how Yang Zhu was turned into a philosopher in the context of “Chinese Philosophy.”

YE Michelle Jia (Chinese University of Hong Kong, China)

“Inventing Enemies: Translation, Reference and Criticism in New Tide (1919-1922)”

This paper takes its cue from the view of the 20th-century China as a “literary field” (Hockx 1999), the May Fourth era as a “project” of “appropriation of cultural capital” (Doleželová-Velingerová and Král eds. 2001), and the relationship between popular and elite literature in this period as a result of “the narcissism of small differences” (Rojas 2008). It is concerned in particular with the role of translation in the canonization of the May Fourth discourse, with a study of the journal *New Tide* (《新潮》, or *The Renaissance*, 1919-1921).

By “translation”, the paper refers to only full and abridged renditions of foreign texts, but also “unmarked” and partial translations in the form of citations, parenthesized gloss and endnotes that filled visually marginal textual spaces throughout the journal. The enlarged set of translations presents two trajectories for the continuing re-interpretation of “May Fourth”. As a whole, it generates a macroscopic and complex picture of the journal editors’ basis of knowledge, contravening the current historiography of May Fourth translation that has been based primarily on selected translations of canonical texts. As individual yet interconnected rewrites, the translations – especially the “unmarked” and partial ones - prompt us to consider their surrounding linguistic contexts, rhetorical strategies and journalistic discourse, which are infused with references to and criticism of prior translations done by the co-existing, translational-minded intellectuals. The signs of canonizing an elusive May Fourth “self” and of marginalizing its “other” are also found in the mention of its contemporary periodicals in China across the issues of *New Tide*. Combining the distant and close reading, the paper seeks to understand *New Tide* translation as a field and a mode of canonization in the May Fourth era.

Michelle Jia Ye is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Translation, Chinese University of Hong Kong. She writes on translations in early-20th-century periodical press in China. Her on-going projects centre around the rediscovery of popular literary societies in early Republican China, and the reassessment of the May Fourth discourse with a focus on translation. Her recent research engages data visualization and network analysis.

YEUNG Wayne C.F. (Pennsylvania State University, State College, USA)

“Against Sympathetic Nationalism: Questioning May Fourth Politics with Lu Xun”

The recent affective turn in critical theory recommends a “return to affect”, but has so far merely repeated the well-known observation that our public life is suffused with emotions. On the other hand, classical studies of nationalism tend to side-line emotion as merely epiphenomenal to the sociological motivations behind nationalism, even while off-handedly acknowledging sympathy’s role in forging the “imagined community”. The prevalence of national critique, instead of romantic glorification of national roots, among May Fourth intellectuals underscores, beneath their discourse of modernization, the anxiety over national crisis and sympathy with the oppressed, which opens up a critical space between the two approaches. In this sense, far from perpetuating the myth of Lu Xun’s centrality in May Fourth literature, this presentation argues that Lu Xun’s affective response to the national crisis consistently contradicts the dominant narrative about the anachronism of traditional China and its peasant class. This is supported by the re-reading of certain canonical, “realist” works of Lu Xun: “New Year’s Sacrifice”, instead of a story about the plight of rural Chinese women, is about the anxiety over the complicity of “realist” storytelling in deflating the value of authentic experience; instead of a critique of peasantry ignorance and Confucian slavishness, “True Story of Ah Q” expresses Lu Xun’s hesitation over the silencing of the subaltern by modern representational regimes to which intellectuals also contributed. In both texts, Lu Xun raises critical questions about May Fourth intellectuals’ self-appointed role as the critical-yet-sympathetic fellow-traveller of the *malheureux* of the nation. Highlighting Lu Xun’s problematizing of nationalist sympathy, the presentation seeks to challenge two well-established notions: that the May Fourth project blindly follows Western rationalism; and that Lu Xun can only be thought as a writer torn between nationalist politics offering critical cure and modernist expressions of personal emotions.

Wayne Yeung is a PhD student of Comparative Literature and Asian Studies in Pennsylvania State University. His doctor thesis is projected to be a comparative study of Lu Xun and Louis-Ferdinand Céline, focusing on the problems of nationalism, democracy, modernism and fascism. Besides Sinophone and Francophone literatures, his research interests also cover Hong Kong literature and global film studies.

YU Xuying (Open University of Hong Kong, China)

“Two Universalisms in the Fever of ‘National Learning’ in the May Fourth Period”

China in the 1920s witnessed a revival of national learning (國學). This fever has two remarkable strands: one can be seen through a rise of cultural conservatism, exemplified by the Xueheng School and historiography of Southeast University. The other refers to the movement of “Rearranging the National Heritage” (整理國故) led by Hu Shi and scholars of Beijing University. While the first has been labelled as a counter-discourse to the New Cultural Movement, the second has been regarded as an important part of the New Cultural Movement. Previous research mostly has used the framework of liberal/radical/conservative to highlight their differences, but neglected their common strategy of

universalism. This research will argue that seemingly opposite though, these two streams share an emphasis on universalism in their struggle for the discursive position during May Fourth movement.

A comparative study will be done to investigate the respective features of universalism in the two strands. The Xueheng School's universalism is a paradoxical synthesis. On the one hand, it sets a universal standard for the cross-cultural comparison and defends "national essence" from the perspective of the "best things" of the world civilization. On the other hand, its insistence on the principle of selection, as well as the authority of legitimation and justification reveals an ambition of being a legislator. By contrast, the movement of "Rearranging the National Heritage" marks a paradigmatic shift from the traditional scholarship to modern scholarship by scientization, specialization, and de-ideologicalization of national learning. Its attempt to separate scholarship from politics, and pursue apolitical, neutral and universal scholarship, epitomizes Chinese intellectuals' identity shift from enlightenment thinker to scholar, from total intellectual to specialist, and from legislator to interpreter. Appearing near the end of the New Cultural Movement, the modern national learning in its essence signals the decline of the enlightenment discourse.

Dr. Xuying Yu, assistant professor of School of Arts & Social Sciences at The Open University of Hong Kong. Her research interests include modern Chinese intellectual history, Chinese science fiction, independent documentary and theatre. This paper is based on the preliminary finding of my ongoing RGC (Hong Kong) funded research project entitled "Fever of National Learning in 20th century China: Post-enlightenment Phenomena".