**nation (state)/国(Guó)**

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| Final Remarks | Matthias Middell, HUANG Ping, LAU Kin-chi | 21 Mar 2022 |

Terms such as nation, and nation-state, have had their different origins of course in European as well as in Chinese histories, and their meaning has changed -- though always been so different that they can /should not simply be translated from one another -- over time at different occasions and as results of intellectual exchange between China and Europe, historically via others. The result is a creative appropriation of meaning that were given to the terms in the respective other context. What comes with nation, and nation-state, in all these contexts is the expectation of a certain homogenization and a success in overcoming the (ethnic, cultural, regional etc.) diversity typical for the imperial past. We have learned over the past decades that this expectation has been partially fulfilled with the transformation of imperial subjects into citizens of nation-states, or members of country in the Chinese context, but diversity has not faded away. On the contrary, we see remains of diversities that refer to times before the official foundation of nation-states re-emerging again and again – either as remains of colonial contexts or of previous efforts to integrate communities into an imperial setting.

One may ask if the current challenge for us is perhaps not so much to describe again and again the ambition and expectation in the homogenizing capacity that came up with the idea of the nation, and the practice of the nation-state, but to look at the many ways already experienced historically how to manage diversity under the condition of an interwoven constellation of nationalization and an increasing impact of transnational ties and global entanglements.