

Translators' reply to Mr. Leif Littrup, Associate Professor, Copenhagen University

Associate Professor Mr. Littrup's critique of the translation from Chinese to Danish of Xi Jinping's interview "My Road into Politics" from 2000 concentrates on two points:

1. Correct contextual translation of the Chinese character 团。
2. Omission of a 19 characters sentence with three names of leading political figures at Tsinghua University in 1975.

Ad 1. Correct contextual translational of the Chinese character 团

Mr. Littrup argues that it is of paramount importance for understanding Xi Jinping's later career that Xi Jinping in 1971 joined the Youth League. In the context of the interview, reading Xi Jinping's personal story in his own words, the translators see no evidence to support this view. The translators find Mr. Littrup's elaborated comments misplaced.

That said, the translators agree that Mr. Littrup is right to point out that the proper translation of 团 *tuán* in the context of this interview should be "Communist Youth League of China" (CYLC), 中国社会主义青年团. The translators have appreciated the suggestion and adjusted the translation accordingly.

Ad.2. Omission of a 19 characters sentence with three names of leading political figures at Tsinghua University in 1975.

迟群、谢静宜都不在家，刘冰掌权，他说，可以来嘛

Mr. Littrup objects that the above sentence was omitted from the translation because this statement of Xi Jinping, according to Mr. Littrup, is of particular importance to understand Xi Jinping's early political involvement. Although Mr. Littrup's own translation character by character is correct, his translation of the sentence is inaccurate,

Neither CHI Qun nor XIE Jingyi was at home, LIU Bing was in power and he said that, of course, I could come.

and so is Mr. Littrup's understanding of the chapter in which the sentence appears.

What Xi Jinping actually says is this:

While Chi Qun and Xie Jingyi were absent (from the university because of the campaign), Liu Bing was in charge. Liu said there was no problem for me to enrol.

The sentence is an ironic side-remark by Xi Jinping. It's not about which political faction may or may not have helped Xi Jinping to enrol at Tsinghua University and thereby indicating that Xi Jinping – 22 years old and 700 km away in Shaanxi province – was part of a factional infighting in Beijing. Therefore, the translators found the sentence with three Chinese names of less relevance. The essence of Xi Jinping's problem to enrol at Tsinghua University and how it was solved is already fully translated:

"The factory submitted a document stating that the political question of-Xi Zhongxun (Xi Jinping's father/CBT, SP) was a contradiction within the people and should have no influence on his children's careers. The document meant that I was admitted into the university."(开了这么个证明，就上学了.) (Xi Jinping himself is here very clear – 开了 ... 就上, CBT/SP).

However, when a reader objects that a sentence is omitted, the translators have no problem to include the sentence. A footnote explaining the short remark by Xi Jinping has been added (see below).

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The Chinese magazine *Zhongguo Ernü's* interview with Xi Jinping in 2000 is 9,900 Chinese characters long. Around 95% was translated, as noted in the translators' original comment to the translation. Mr. Littrup suggested that one Chinese character 团 *tuán* was incorrectly translated. The translators have adjusted the translation accordingly. Mr. Littrup objected that a sentence of 19 Chinese characters was omitted. The translators have added the sentence in their own and correct translation together with a footnote. Mr. Littrup's paper has a number of other errors and wrong pinyin spelling. All relevant texts are uploaded on this web-site. The translators are confident that readers will form their own opinion.

Carsten Boyer Thøgersen and Susanne Posborg, September 2013.

New footnote added to the translation.

In 1975, Chi Qun was the party secretary of Tsinghua University while Xie Jingyi and Liu Bing both were deputy party secretaries at the university. Chi and Xie were cultural revolutionaries. Liu Bing was associated with Deng Xiaoping. What Xi Jinping wants to tell with his short side-remark is this: While the cultural revolutionaries Chi and Xie, respectively party secretary and vice party secretary at Tsinghua University, were busy attending an important political campaign outside the university, daily management of the university was transferred – following normal administrative procedures – to the other vice party secretary Liu Bing, an ally of Deng Xiaoping. Still, administrative decisions as always would follow established procedures. Therefore, Liu Bing could not make an administrative decision on Xi Jinping's enrolment until the university's administrative office had received an obligatory document from the working unit of Xi Jinping's father. When received, Liu routinely confirmed Xi Jinping's application, already requested by Yan'an Prefecture and endorsed by Yanchuan County. Xi Jinping probably made this side-remark with a drop of irony: while the cultural revolutionaries Chi and Xie were busy elsewhere, they missed a chance to complicate, if they had wanted to, the admission to Tsinghua University of a student whose father had been criticized by the cultural revolutionaries. But as Xi Jinping right after says, the document from his father's work unit was the very document allowing him to enrol at Tsinghua University. If the cultural revolutionaries Chi and Xie had been in charge of daily management at Tsinghua University, they could have made noises but hardly side-lined established administrative procedures.