

International Conference on Contemporary History  
of China in Taipei

A "Conference on the History of the Republic of China" was held from 24 to 27 August 1981 in Taiwan under the joint sponsorship of the Academia Historica (kuo-shih kuan), the Kuomintang Party History Commission (chung-kuo-min-tang chung-yang tang-shih wei-yüan-hui), the Institute of Modern History of the Academia Sinica (chung-yang yen-chiu-yüan chin-tai-shih yen-chiu-suo), and the Institute of International Relations of the National Chengchi University (kuo-li cheng-chih ta-hsüeh kuo-chi kuan-hsi yen-chiu chung-hsin). The conference was organized on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the foundation of the Republic of China.

This conference may, above all, be called a major event for Chinese scholars in Taiwan dealing with the contemporary history of China. It was the first time that such a large symposium on that topic was held on the island. The significance of the conference was further enhanced by the fact that out of the 145 participants, 65 came from abroad, about half of the latter being of Chinese descent. More than 40 of the foreigners taught at universities in the United States, among them C. Martin Wilbur, Robert A. Scalapino, Chow Tse-tsung. From Japan came, among others, Takeuchi Minoru and Shinkichi Eto; West Germany was represented by Gottfried-Karl Kindermann, Jürgen Domes, Heng-yü Kuo, and the author of this report.

The conference was brilliantly organized. The five committees (Revolution of 1911, Early Period of the Republic, Northern Expedition & Period of Political Tutelage, War of Resistance Against Japan, National Reconstruction Years) had simultaneously sessions in separate rooms of the Grand Hotel in Taipei, the site of the conference. Each committee had 12 sessions of 80 minutes each. The organizers, in particular chairman Chin Hsiao-yi and secretary-general Lee Kuo-chi, must be credited for the careful planning of the sessions. According to the schedule, each of the two morning and the two afternoon sessions were to begin with the presentation of the speaker's paper (12 minutes) followed by one or two commentators (8 minutes each) and open discussion. Unfortunately, the time limits were sometime not observed by some writers and commentators, and the chairmen refrained from intervening, so that in some cases not enough time was left for contributions from the floor. The two official languages of the conference were determined to be Chinese and English with simultaneous or consecutive translations. Unfortunately again, this did not always happen, either because of lack of qualified interpreters or lack of time.

At the beginning or during the conference part of the 72 papers presented in the sessions were available in Chinese and English, as separate brochures together with abstracts volumes. According to the organizers' intention, all papers will be published in a bilingual omnibus volume in October 1981.

In his opening address conference chairman Chin Hsiao-yi indicated that, from now on, the Academia Historica, the Academia Sinica, and the Kuomintang Party History Commission will open its archives to the inter-

national scholarly community. The author of this report who was, eleven years ago, refused access to materials of the 1920's stored in the stacks of Taiwan archives would like to express his hope that this promise will be kept entirely. This would be one of the most important prerequisites to reaching, as Mr. Chin phrased it in his speech, "the highest state of thoroughness, perspicacity, and objectivity" in the study of Chinese contemporary history.

Dr. Dieter Heinzig, Köln

Treaty on Cooperation Between Beijing University and  
the Free University of Berlin in Teaching and Research

In early April 1981, a delegation from the Free University of Berlin travelled to Beijing on the invitation of Beijing University, for negotiating and signing a treaty of cooperation with Beijing University. Professor Dr. Eberhard Lämmert, president of the Free University, was the head of the delegation. Members of the delegation included first vice-president Professor Dr. Dieter Heckelmann, head of the office for international relations Dr. Horst Hartwich, and Professor Dr. Kuo Heng-yü from the Department for East Asian Studies. On the Chinese side, Professor Wang Lubin, first vice-president of Beijing University, and vice-president Wang Xuezheng, were in charge of the negotiations. The treaty was signed on April 6 by the first vice-president of Beijing University - Professor Zhou Peiyuan had resigned on April 1 - and the President of the Free University.

Under the treaty, a Ph.D. candidate in Chinese studies has already concluded a two-month research-visit at Beijing University in the spring of this year. Beginning in the winter term of 1981/82, Professor Chen Zhenhan from the Department of Economics of Beijing University will spend two terms as visiting professor at the Department of East Asian Studies. During the winter term he will give a lecture and an accompanying seminar on the economic history of modern China from 1840-1949.

Beyond the treaty, the Free University has invited Professor Fei Xiaotong, who will be in Berlin at the end of November for academic discussions. Two lectures are planned on "The Development of Sociology in China" and "National Minorities in China." Also invited is Professor Zhang Jiqian from the History Department of Beijing University. She will arrive in the spring of 1982 and stay in Berlin for several weeks. Professor Zhang heads the Chinese side of a jointly planned project dealing with German-Chinese relations from 1865 to 1949. Head of the project on the German side is Professor Kuo Heng-yü.

Dr. Mechthild Leutner, Berlin