

ASIEN

The German Journal on Contemporary Asia

Nr. 146

Januar 2018



- Women's Careers and Cities: Comparison of Employment Patterns in South Korea and Japan
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- An Interview with Hu Ching Fang

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Printed by DSN – Druck Service Nord, 21465 Wentorf, info@dsndruck.de

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Gender, Migration and Food: Women in Japanese Foodscapes in Berlin and Düsseldorf

Freie Universität Berlin, June 23, 2017

University of Hong Kong) identified a newly emerging pattern of claims-making within China's contentious politics, i.e. Environmental Public Interest Campaigns, basing this claim on the comparative effectiveness of their public protest incidents for environment concerns vis-à-vis other interest-groups.

The fourth panel centered on the creation of the welfare state in China. Tobias ten Brink (Jacobs University Bremen) and Liu Tao (University of Duisburg-Essen) discussed the social security program (dibao) and its formation through a synthesis of both domestic factors and international influences. Armin Müller (University of Göttingen) provided a wealth of empirical observations on village doctors, elucidating the institutional impediments and difficulties that challenge them and their work. He concluded that even in reform, the resulting chain of authority remains weak and leaves policies largely unenforceable; providing a research opportunity to identify the causes. Mark Frazier (New School for Social Research) reflected on urbanization and social policies and how they symbiotically contribute to a hierarchical system of social citizenship adversely impacting migrant workers in China. He pointed out paradoxes even in well intentioned social programs that subsequently worsen the status and protection of migrant workers in cities. Neil Munro (University of Glasgow) researched the interpretation of the concept of "market justice" in his comparative study of China and Russia. Through focus groups and interviews, he teased out the difficulty of meaningfully applying that concept in either country.

The fifth and final panel addressed Chinese economic development patterns and modes. Maximilian Dullo and Doris Fischer (University of Würzburg) explored a cutting-edge sector: drone tech firms in China. They found that it was the user community that was of primary strategic importance for firms' developmental sustainability. Marcus Conlé (University of Duisburg-Essen) presented research on the biopharmaceutical industry in China; designated as a strategic emerging industry for the nation. Turning to less developed industries and economic zones, Carsten Holz (Hong Kong University of Science and Technology) investigated economic development in West Sichuan. He examined whether and how economic development in a depressed region can come about, and used a government economic development program for the promotion of tourism as a case study.

Each presentation was followed by a discussant's comments and lively debate. ASC 2017 concluded with remarks from the conference organizer, Felix Wemheuer (University of Cologne).

Yan Zhe

Gender, Migration and Food: Women in Japanese Foodscapes in Berlin and Düsseldorf

Freie Universität Berlin, June 23, 2017

On 23 June 2017, the workshop "Gender, Migration, and Food: Women in Japanese Foodscapes in Berlin and Düsseldorf" was held at Freie Universität Berlin (FU). The workshop was organized by Cornelia Reiher (FU) in collaboration with Nora Kottmann (Heinrich-Heine-Universität Düsseldorf, HHU), bringing together Japan and China scholars with students from both universities.

The event was rooted in a method course initiated by C. Reiher at FU Berlin. Against the backdrop of the emergence of new "Japanese" food trends in Berlin in recent years, she saw an opportunity to teach students ethnographic methods by asking them to conduct interviews

with members of the Japanese diaspora working in the food industry and produce short movies. In collaboration with N. Kottmann, the project grew to include Düsseldorf, a city with a large number of Japanese nationals. As the courses concluded, the workshop was held with the aim of discussing and comparing the results that emerged from the teachings and students' projects in both cities.

The workshop centered around one keynote speech delivered by James Farrer (Sophia University, Japan), three presentations by Christian Tagsold (HHU), N. Kottmann and C. Reiher respectively, focusing on Japanese cuisine and diaspora in Germany. In addition, the short movies made by students as part of the coursework were also screened. This was then followed by an exchange on challenges encountered during fieldwork, and finally, by way of conclusion, an overarching discussion concerning teaching methods.

The keynote speech by J. Farrer shed light on Japanese food in China. Examining the data through the perspective of gender, he underscored two main features of the Japanese food-scape. First, food consumption seems to be gendered: urban restaurants are seen as a place for female customers, with foreign food in particular conveying gendered messages tailored for a feminine clientele. The second striking aspect is the existence of a form of neo-orientalism. As most restaurants are being run by Chinese (or Taiwanese) owners for Chinese customers, Japan is often portrayed as an alternative version of Asian modernity: the merging of modernity and traditions, the encounter between modern families and traditional gender roles, as well as the coexistence of status consumption (upper-class gastro-tourism) and environmentalist virtue (environmental friendly approach to food).

After this introductory presentation that emphasized theoretical perspectives from which phenomena of culinary globalization can be studied, the next panel dealt with Japanese cuisine and diaspora in the German context. After a historical and theoretical overview of the Japanese diaspora in Germany drawn by C. Tagsold, N. Kottmann and C. Reiher gave examples of Japanese women's trajectories in Berlin and Düsseldorf, underlining the existence of diverse motivations and strategies, embedded in heterogeneous narratives. Their preliminary findings highlighted a stratified food industry, where male respondents could focus on establishing their careers while female interviewees faced more precarious working conditions. Nevertheless, selected narratives also underscored the possibilities for women to realize their dreams in an environment characterized by a level of freedom they did not experience in Japan. Even though gendered dynamics cannot be overlooked, with men often occupying stable and socially valorized positions, Japanese women could indeed also exercise agency in this new environment. Although these insights seem to be true for both cities, there exist great differences with regard to nationalities and demographics of the people involved in "Japanese" food businesses and the foodscapes itself.

The third part of the workshop revolved around the screening of the short movies produced by the students during their method seminars. The videos featured Japanese restaurants, bistros, cafés, as well as bakeries in the two cities. While conducting research, the students from Düsseldorf found out that many of their interviewees often tried to distance themselves from the "Japanese community", underlying the existence of heterogeneous trajectories described during the previous presentations. Subsequently, the students discussed their experiences, the issues encountered during fieldwork, and what they learnt from it. They expressed a heightened interest in doing field research and were thankful for having had the opportunity to try out various methods before writing their theses. They agreed that more such seminars would be needed, even as early as in their B.A. courses.

A roundtable discussion among Japanese Studies professors from both universities (Verena Blechinger-Talcott, Cosima Wagner and Matthias Zachmann from FUB; N. Kottmann and C. Tagsold from HHU) about teaching methods concluded the workshop. Three main points were discussed. The first one dealt with the issue of teaching research methods. Participants underlined the importance of teaching quantitative as well as qualitative methods, which requires that more time in the seminars is reserved for methods texts, including new types of challenges, such as data management. Also, they highlighted the benefits of applying them to concrete cases, even if that means that quantity has to be limited. The second point addressed the feasibility of such projects. Although incentives are an important motivation for the students, such hands-on projects would not be feasible every semester. Therefore, an alternative could be to improve the link between the major and the minor subjects, which often include methods. The third point was related to the necessity to balance flexibility and material limitations: the professors underlined the importance of designing the seminars in a flexible way and trying to transfer the knowledge to the society within the existing financial and time constraints.

At the end of the workshop C. Reiher summarized the findings and concluded that more flexibility was necessary in order to teach methods in a more comprehensive way.

Marie Weishaupt, Chaline Timmerarens