

## **Interdisziplinäre Tagung zu Methodenproblemen gegenwartsbezogener Chinaforschung**

Berlin, 5.-6. November 1993

Die Diskussion zu methodischen Grundlagen gegenwartsbezogener Chinaforschung findet bislang - sofern sie überhaupt geführt wird - allenfalls innerhalb von Einzeldisziplinen statt. Sowohl Versuche einer von fachspezifischen Eifersüchteleien freien interdisziplinären Diskussion als auch die sehr viel notwendigere gegenseitige Befruchtung zwischen den jeweiligen Allgemeindisziplinen und ihrer chinaspezifischen Anwendung blieben dabei bislang in der Regel auf der Strecke.

Einen Beitrag zur Überwindung dieser Situation der doppelten Kommunikationshürde versucht ein interdisziplinärer Workshop unter Leitung von M. Leutner und E. Sandschneider zu leisten. Am 5.-6. November 1993 trafen sich an der FU Berlin Chinawissenschaftler mit Fachschwerpunkten in Geschichte, Literaturwissenschaft, Sprachwissenschaft, Erziehungswissenschaft, Soziologie, Ökonomie und Politikwissenschaft, um gemeinsam interessierende methodologische Fragen zu diskutieren. Auf der Grundlage einer problemorientierten Darstellung anhand jeweils disziplinspezifischer Fragestellungen wurde für die Arbeitsphase des Projekts eine Positionsbestimmung als Ziel formuliert, die sich eher der zukunftsorientierten Programmatik als der rückwärtsgerichteten (Selbst-)Kritik verpflichtet fühlt. Die zentrale Frage, die aus unterschiedlichen Perspektiven in den Einzelbeiträgen behandelt werden soll, lautet: Auf welcher methodischen Grundlage sind welche thematischen und analytischen Beiträge mit welchen Perspektiven für die gegenwartsbezogene Chinaforschung denkbar? Die Beiträge sollen Anfang November 1994 auf einer zweiten Tagung an der FU Berlin vertiefend und in Vorbereitung auf eine Publikation diskutiert werden.

Eberhard Sandschneider

## **EC-Japan Specialists Workshop**

Concert Noble, Brussels, 2. Dezember 1993

A one day Workshop for EC-Japan Specialists was held on Thursday, 2 December 1993, at the Concert Noble, Brussels. The event was organised by Forum Europe and jointly supported by the Commission of the European Communities, the Mission of Japan to the EC and the Japan Foundation.

The keynote speaker was H.E. Tomohiko Kobayashi, Ambassador, Mission of Japan to the European Communities. An address was also delivered on behalf of Sir Leon Brittan, Vice President, Commission of the European Communities responsible for External Economic Relations.

The introductory session dealt with "The Outlook for EC-Japan Relations" and featured senior speakers from the EC Commission, the European Parliament and the Mission of Japan to the EC. The second session on "EC-Japan Relations in the Business Field", looked at research projects and subjects in need of study. The third session, devoted to "Education and Research", examined education and the study programmes needed to provide qualified staff to Euro-

pean companies working in Japan. The latter part of this session was used to examine the steps needed for setting up a permanent structure to serve the needs of EC-Japan specialists.

Mr Giles Merritt, Director of Forum Europe who chaired the workshop, set the tone for the one-day meeting when he said that the aim was to come up with a concrete action plan, establish a time-table and agree on the shape of a flexible yet permanent structure. He believed that it was important to link Japan specialists and allow universities and other interested parties both to interact and to respond better to the needs of government and business.

Some of the research issues that were pointed to by the 50 high-level participants from both the EC and Japanese academia and business, included investment flows and the prospects for investment in Japan by European companies. The need for more inter-European and interdisciplinary research work was also identified, as was research into the potential and also the profitability of doing business in Japan. Looking at how the US is developing its contacts with Japan was also considered to be an important subject for academic exploration by European researchers.

A questionnaire completed by participants of the workshop confirmed a high level of interest in the idea of devising some form of formal network for EC-Japan specialists to co-ordinate their work.

The workshop discussion yielded a general agreement that the next stage will be the convening of an interim steering committee, which will meet in January. This will devise an action plan for the putting together of an EC-Japan experts network and which could also pave the way for a 2-3 day conference to launch the network in the autumn of 1994. Mr Merritt said he judged that significant Japanese input would be forthcoming, and he also pledged Forum Europe's support in terms of providing interim secretariat services. The EC Commission said that it would be glad to act as a catalyst to the new grouping, providing logistical and other support.

### **Pacific Islands Political Studies Conference**

Rarotonga, Cook Islands, 5.-10. Dezember 1993

Over 100 participants, from as far away as France, Japan and USA, as well as the Cook Islands, Samoa, Fiji, Tahiti, Hawaii, Guam, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, Palau, Vanuatu, Tonga, New Zealand and Australia, took part in the Pacific Islands Political Studies Conference.

Since the Pacific Islands Political Studies Association (PIPSA) was set up in 1982, conferences have been held every two years in a different country (Australia, Samoa, Hawaii and Guam). The next meeting will be in 1995, probably in Fiji. The main function of PIPSA is to promote understanding and awareness, to discuss options, and to facilitate dissemination of information about political systems and processes in or interacting with, the Pacific Islands region.

Most of the participants are from universities - mainly political scientists, but also anthropologists, historians, economists and others interested in political issues; as well as from regional and international organizations, governments, business, media and other backgrounds.