

International Conference on Migration and Floating Population in China

Köln, 2.-4. Mai 1996

The Conference on migration in China hosted by the University of Cologne was only the first of three international gatherings on this topic within three months as the organizer Thomas Scharping mentioned in his introduction to the participants from the People's Republic of China, Taiwan, England, the USA, the Netherlands, and Germany. This may display the importance of the problem for China's social development as well as for related studies. The Cologne one proved to be very successful not least because of the perfect organization. Several papers presented the results of empirical studies and delivered a lot of detailed data which allow to understand the reasons and mechanisms of out- and in-migration in China more clearly.

After some opening remarks on factors influencing the decision to migrate made by Thomas Scharping, the paper of the Chinese doyen of migration studies Prof. Ma Xia (Chinese Academy of Social Sciences; his paper was presented by Wang Feng, because of a delay of Ma's departure from Beijing) explained "New Trends in Population Migration in China": a decrease in migration with official change of *hukou* and the increase in "floating population" migration; increase in spontaneous and self-determined migration; migration streams turning back east and into urban areas; booming peasant labor in urban areas. To summarize, the traditional closed migration model is changing into an open model, administrative walls separating rural and urban areas are breaking down. Judith Banister (U.S. Bureau of the Census) looked in her paper on "China: Regional Migration Trends" at available information on national and provincial migration in China, and analyzed the levels, trends, and characteristics of long-term and short-term migration. She drew the conclusion that China saw an escalation of migration in the 1980s, but apparently even more movement in the 1990s, much of it in the categories of temporary migration or floating population.

Three more papers surveyed the general background of migration as well as factors which are influencing population mobility. In their contribution on "Recent Changes in the Chinese Labor System" Jutta Hebel (Göttingen University) and Günter Schucher (German Overseas Institute, Hamburg) gave information on the state's activities in the labor field. The undergoing changes in the organization of social labor induce a process of institution building to face the new problems. This includes the introduction of new regulations of labor allocation and reallocation, of a policy to cope with rising unemployment, and of measures ensuring access to basic goods and services. Finally, it requires an adequate administrative infrastructure to implement further reforms. The Chinese labor policy is responsive to economic and social changes in order to prevent the risks of a totally unrestricted and anarchic labor market displayed by the desolate Russian example. Dorothy J. Solinger (University of California, Irvine) dealt with the problem of "Migrant Petty Entrepreneurs and a Dual Labor Market". According to her, the urban Chinese labor market does share crucial features with the dual market theory, but exploitation does not uniformly plague everyone outside the formal sector. She, therefore, proposed to distinguish between state-administered or formal markets; informal, but ascriptively guided, non-state markets; and non-administered, anonymous markets, all of them

shaped by two key resources: connection to the state and native-place advantages. Several different sorts of private entrepreneurs and their employees operate in different labor markets, each of them having its own dynamics. Because of differences both for their treatment on the job and in their life style, the notion of a uniform "secondary" labor market would erase much of variation. Wang Feng's paper (East-West-Center, Honolulu) was an overview of "Recent Changes in Household Registration System in China" which splits China into two parts since more than 40 years. Recently, among other things, an ID-system has been established, and grain rationing coupons have been abolished. Wang pointed at the fundamental dilemma the Chinese government is facing: Control over migration has to be lifted for the sake of creating a labor market, but the government wants to maintain social control and the urban population wants to keep their privileges.

At the second day, Thomas Scharping and Walter Schulze (Cologne University) addressed "Economic, Labor and Income Developments in the Pearl River Delta: A Migration Survey of Foshan and Shenzhen", presenting the results of their survey which focused on employment and income developments. The way different groups of permanent and temporary migrants are embedded into the urban setting of both Foshan and Shenzhen shows vividly that the instrument of the *hukou*-system still works as a measure to divide the urban society in two separated groups. Both groups of migrants occupy totally different areas in the labour market. Sun Changmin (Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences) compared the results of a survey of 1993 on the "Floating Population in Shanghai" to that of a survey of 1988. Proceeding from a description of demographic and policy impacts on floating population, he explained major features and trends of in-migration. To him, the reasons of the dramatic increase of in-migration consist in the large number of surplus labor in rural China, transformations of the social structure, and the family planning policy. With the further socio-economic development of Shanghai, some problems may arise as, e.g., the creation of new urban slums and an increasing crime rate.

Wolfgang Taubmann (Bremen University) and Thomas Heberer (Trier University) presented an overview of "Some Results of a Research Project on 'Rural Urbanization in China'". In contrast to the survey of Scharping and Schulze their survey has been designed for rural employees. They have selected seven small towns in surroundings of different developmental levels to study the role of small towns in the transformation process in the countryside. Taubmann who concentrated on technical and demographic aspects came to the conclusion that the majority of town governments only have a limited range of possibilities at hand to manage migrants. Heberer talked about social stratification and added remarks on the evaluation of migrants in the prestige scale, the change of attitudes, the function of migrants for the private sector, and the emergence of interest groups.

In difference to other papers Hein Mallee (Rijksuniversiteit te Leiden) was specifically concerned with "Rural Household Dynamics and Spatial Mobility". Since a lot of migration is circular migration, mobility is village-based. The first thing possible migrants will consider is the situation of their family. Migration is one resource among others used by families. More mobile households are larger and have more members in working age. To have family members in different places is a way to

split social risks. Mallees analysis shows the assumption that surplus labor directly leads to out-migration in a new light: It is facilitating mobility rather than pushing people out.

It was Delia Davin (Leeds University, UK) who raised "Gender Issues in Rural-Urban Migration" and pointed at marriage migration to be very important in female migration. Whereas men migrate mainly for economic reasons, female migration is in each case influenced by family reasons. The marriage market seems to extend, and women are taking advantage of this market to raise their economic situation. Compared to men female migrants are facing more constraints. Their migration, however, will have positive economic effects for home areas. Contrary to Chinese arguments, fertility of migrating women is lower than that of women back home, but Chinese statistics compare with local urban people.

The conference continued with some preliminary remarks of Lutz Bieg (Cologne University) on "Rural and Urban Values as Mirrored in Contemporary Chinese Literature". Bieg defined values to be a network of "relative general preferences governing the countless choices that people must make". Whereas in the rural part of China the *We-feeling* is predominant, the urban part is determined by the *I-feeling*. Contemporary Chinese literature which can be used as a tool to study value change is accepting the border which separates the countryside from the cities. No plot is situated both in rural and urban surroundings.

At the beginning of the third day, Jutta Hebel presented the paper of Cai Fang (Chinese Academy of Social Sciences) who couldn't attend the conference. Dealing with "Recent Trends of Migration and Population in Shandong" the paper treated main features of migrants, factors affecting mobility, and effects of mobility. There are two conflicting policies in China: city governments tend to issue regulations that limit the move by raising migration costs, governments in places of origin, however, tend to encourage population mobility in order to narrow the gap in regional development levels. Xu Gailing (Sichuan Academy of Social Sciences) described "Recent Trends of Migration in Sichuan" and added some thoughts about how to rationally guide migration. She suggested to adjust the selection and volume of migrants as well as the time of migration, to guide the direction of migration, to adjust the forms of migration, and to improve administration.

The last two papers presented at the conference dealt with Taiwan. According to Chen Chaonan (Academia Sinica, Taipeh) Taiwan has undergone the transformation from a predominantly agricultural society to an industrial society in a way which is far more similar to the earlier experience in Western Europe and the U.S. than in most other Asian nations: urbanization and industrialization has had the same pace. When the difference between urban and rural areas is becoming smaller, rural to urban migration is followed by urban out-migration. The main reason for long-distance migration is still economic-related, whereas in short-distance migration housing became more important. Chen illustrated this by elaborating the "Selectivity of Migration in the Taipei Metropolitan Area". Karsten Giese (FU Berlin) unfolded "Some Aspects of Migration from Mainland China to Taiwan". Taiwanese officials stress that irregular migration started in the end of 1987, when private sector exchanges across the Taiwan Straits have been permitted. According to official

sources, since then the number of migrants is increasing year by year to reach an annual level of about 5,000 to 6,000 people by the year 1993. 98% of the migrants are from Fujian and 95% are male what demonstrates that the PRC migrants are classical migrant workers, but not participants of a communist infiltration programme as often suspected by the Taiwanese public security. This is confirmed by the areas of apprehension which are industrial suburbs of Taipeh.

The conference papers will be published by the Institute of Asian Affairs in Hamburg. In my opinion it would be helpful to clarify some terms and data problems in the introduction to this anthology. The discussion in Cologne was sometimes confused because of the different use of vague terms like "temporary migration" and of discord about the reliability of Chinese data sources. Nevertheless the Colognian conference made an important contribution to migration studies on behalf of China.

Günter Schucher

Democratization and Cooperation in Asia. Forum of Democratic Leaders in the Asia Pacific

Seoul, 2. und 3. Mai 1996

Hauptsächlich auf Initiative von Dr. Kim Dae-jung wurde in Dezember 1994 das Forum of Democratic Leaders gegründet; neben ihm sind Corazon C. Aquino, Sonia Gandhi und Oscar Arias Sanchez Ko-Präsidenten. Das Forum will zur Weiterentwicklung von Demokratie in Asien beitragen und dies sowohl durch praktisch-politische Schritte als auch im wissenschaftlichen Bereich. Unterstützt durch Kim Dae-jung konzipierten Prof. Dr. Ra Jong-Yil und Dr. Park Byeong-Seok ein ambitionöses Projekt, nämlich Darstellung und Bewertung von Demokratisierung und Zusammenarbeit in Asien. Prospektive Teilnehmer einer internationalen Konferenz erhielten die umfangreiche Darlegung des Konzepts zugeschickt und im Mai 1996 fand dann die Konferenz in Seoul statt. Vor deren Beginn erhielten die Teilnehmer einen Band mit den Kurzfassungen der rund 50 Referate. Im Herbst dieses Jahres sollen die Beiträge in englischer und koreanischer Sprache veröffentlicht werden.

Drei Dinge kennzeichneten die Konferenz: Eine intensive und kontroverse Behandlung des Themas durch über 50 Referate, die detaillierte und überaus anregende Diskussion dieser Referate durch rund 140 offiziell nominierte „discussants“ und insgesamt eine bewundernswerte sowie hervorragende Organisation. Um das Pensum in zwei Tagen bewältigen zu können, war es in drei Themengruppen unterteilt: 1. Asiatische Identität, Kultur und Demokratie, 2. Industrialisierung und Demokratisierung, 3. Regionale Zusammenarbeit. Neben historischen Rückblicken und der Darstellung „westlicher“ Sichtweisen gab es sowohl Überblicksreferate als auch länderspezifische Fallstudien. Die koordinierte Vielfalt und das Bemühen einer Orientierung am von den Organisatoren vorgegebenen Konzept mit seinen Fragestellungen und Schwerpunktsetzungen, all dies machte die Konferenz zu einem äußerst lohnenden und stimulierenden Ereignis.

Die meisten Teilnehmerinnen und Teilnehmer kamen aus Asien bzw. aus dem pazifischen Raum. Die bei solchen Konferenzen sonst übliche Präsenz zahlreicher amerikanischer Kollegen fehlte. Die Veranstalter hatten bewußt Referenten aus Europa