

emerging trend among China historians in the Anglo-American academic community. In mainland China, a limited number of senior university professors, non-professional historians and private collectors are studying local and provincial histories of the Cultural Revolution.

At the conference, Chinese, Japanese, European and North American scholars presented and discussed their research. We were thrilled that all 12 scholars who were invited from Mainland China were able to participate in the conference. The range of topics that were presented varied from the early Cultural Revolution in Qingdao, ethnic conflicts in Inner Mongolia, the escape of Guangxi's rebels to Beijing, the role of the PLA in Hebei, to the 1975 massacre in Shadian. Keynote lectures were given in Chinese by Michael Schoenhals (Lund University), Susanne Weigelin-Schwiedrzik (University of Vienna) and Wu Yiching (University of Toronto). We showed the documentary "The Story of the Corps Collector" (尸长的故事), by Chi Miao (University of Lorraine), about memories of the deadly armed struggle in Chongqing in 1967. Furthermore, a public roundtable titled "The 50th Anniversary of the Cultural Revolutions: Legacies and Continuities" was held with Andrew Walder (Stanford University), Barbara Mittler (University of Heidelberg), Wu Di (China Film Research Center), Yin Hongbiao (Beijing University), Dong Guoqiang (Nanjing University) and Qin Hui (Qinghua University). The roundtable was financially supported by the GSSC (Global South Studies Center Cologne).

Some topics and debates came up several times throughout the conference. First, did China experience "10,000" different Cultural Revolutions or is there some value in promoting one central national narrative? In other words, should we support the right of every eyewitness to promote his or her own version of the Cultural Revolution or is it the duty of scholars to contribute to a consensus on the evaluation of the movement to avoid continued factional struggles on the battlefield of memory? Furthermore, the roles of central and provincial actors in local conflicts were also frequently discussed. Provincial histories of factionalism are complicated. Local actors often tried to get support from Beijing and interventions from the center could curb or escalate local conflicts. As a result, to write a purely local history of the Cultural Revolution seems to be impossible. Is it useful at this moment to work out national patterns of conflicts or do we still lack knowledge about the events in many provinces? Last but not least, some of the Chinese scholars themselves participated in the Cultural Revolution. The question was raised how an eyewitness can be a historian and how he or she can deal with the great challenges that arise from fulfilling these two different roles.

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## **CHES Young Scholars Conference 2015 — Responding to China's Environmental Crisis: Interdisciplinary Approaches**

University of Vienna, Vienna, Austria, February 27–28, 2015

The research network on China and the Environment in the Social Sciences (CHES) was founded at the Department of East Asian Studies, University of Vienna, in 2013 as a forum for postgraduate students with research interests relating to the environment in China. As the group's inaugural event, the CHES Young Scholars Conference 2015 took place on February 27–28 at the University of Vienna. Altogether 37 young scholars and academics from across the globe took part in the conference. The two conference days featured five panel sessions and two keynote speeches. Each panel was also provided with a highly-qualified discussant who offered individual feedback to every panellist. The detailed conference programme can be accessed at <http://chess.univie.ac.at/chess-young-scholars-conference->

2015/program2/. Apart from laying the foundation for fruitful collaborations, the conference also functioned as a forum for talented young scholars to present their views and approaches to China's pending environmental crisis from various disciplinary angles.

Day 1 started with an eye-opening keynote speech by Yu Xiaogang (Green Watershed China), one of China's leading environmental activists. Mr Yu elaborated on the responsibility of China's banks with regard to climate change. He stressed their potential to prevent rogue firms from exploiting green credit, and to positively influence greenhouse gas emissions. Courtesy of Mr Yu, CHESS was also provided with a full series of Green Credit Banking Sector Reports published by the NGO Green Watershed China. The conference's ensuing first panel revolved around China's Circular Economy (CE). In particular, the role of CE as a national development strategy (Wang, National Taiwan University), related informal waste management activities (Steuer, Vienna) and its implementation at company level as well as within the context of ship recycling (Staudner, BOKU) were discussed. Panel II dealt with civil society organisations, enterprises and corporate social responsibility (CSR). The presenters put forward highly sophisticated and viable analytical frameworks (Leggett, Freie Universität Berlin), and a detailed CSR case study in Inner Mongolia (Holzer, Vienna). The concluding individual paper panel comprised a variety of topics: Thorium was introduced as a possible future clean energy solution for China (Thiele, Vienna); the impact of the country's environmental regulation on foreign direct investment flows was demonstrated (Bu, Nanjing); the role of transnational networks in improving local environmental protection standards in China, with a case study of the Matsutake mushroom, was outlined (Hathaway, Simon Fraser); and the influence of NGOs on formal cadre training with respect to environmental protection was highlighted (Ritirc, Vienna).

Day 2 opened with a deeply inspiring keynote speech by Andrew Mertha (Cornell), who addressed the concerns of young scholars regarding the challenges and rewards of field research on China's environmental politics. Dr Mertha drew from his extensive experience of field research, and gave valuable advice on how to choose appropriate cases of analysis, how to arrange interviews and how to deal with sometimes more, sometimes less cooperative state officials. In doing so, he encouraged scholars to "dirty their hands", and not to eschew experiencing real on-site conditions. The lively discussion that followed proved that Dr Mertha had indeed addressed many of the concerns PhD students have prior to conducting their own field studies. The first panel of the day (Panel IV) dealt with public perception and environmental issues in China. It began with a case study on the public perception of smog in Tangshan, Henan Province (Li, Oregon State), and an anthropological analysis of environmental movements in Hong Kong (Lou, Oxford), and continued with a comprehensive analytical framework for the assessment of public participation rationales in China's Environmental Impact Assessment using the example of the New Beijing Airport Project (Moriggi & Brombal, Ca' Foscari), and a discussion of the development of Chinese discourses on climate change during the past six years (Immervoll, Vienna). The final conference panel addressed the issue of environmental governance in China. Within the context of environmentalism, it was argued that a fragmented understanding of 'environment' itself could be responsible for largely inefficient inter-actor cooperation (Wang-Kaeding, LSE). Furthermore, the standing of NGOs in an authoritarian state such as China (Sieckmann, Vienna), hydro-politics in Chinese water megaprojects (Pohlner, Oxford), and the changing roles of the State and civil society with regard to disaster risk reduction (Hörhager, Goethe University) were examined.

Overall, the CHESS Young Scholars Conference 2015 can be termed a great success. The contributions were of an exceptionally high quality, and aptly reflected the diversity of China's environmental issues and ways of approaching them. On both conference days, the

prevailing atmosphere was highly motivating, encouraging and constructive. It not only facilitated thought-provoking discussions, but also opened up opportunities for joint collaboration in the future, and thus greatly promoted the advancement of interdisciplinary approaches to the study of China and the environment. Encouraged by the positive feedback received from participants and keynote speakers alike, the next steps taken by CHES will include the further upgrade of the network's homepage, and seeking out opportunities for publishing a conference volume. It was further envisaged that the CHES Young Scholars Conference be established as a recurring event, functioning as a hub for talented, aspiring academics with a shared research interest in environmental issues relating to China.

On November 19–20, 2016, the next CHES Workshop will be held in Vienna. Abstracts can be submitted until September 30, 2016: <http://chess.univie.ac.at/chess-workshop-2016/>.

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## Jahrestagung der China-AG

Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg, 5. März 2016

Das diesjährige China-AG-Treffen für sinologische NachwuchswissenschaftlerInnen fand im charmanten Freiburg im Breisgau statt. Nach der kurzen Vorstellung des Organisationsteams, bestehend aus Stefani Jürries, Elisabeth Schleep und Jennifer Stapornwongkul, begrüßte uns die Freiburger Lehrstuhlinhaberin für Geschichte und Gesellschaft des modernen Chinas, Nicola Spakowski, die als ehemaliges Mitglied der China-AG von ihren persönlichen Erfahrungen mit der Nachwuchstagung berichtete. Sie plädierte für einen starken Mittelbau in der deutschen sinologischen Forschungslandschaft und betonte hierbei, wie wichtig eine gute und funktionierende Vernetzung sowohl für das jeweilige Institut als auch für die persönliche akademische Laufbahn sei. Nach dieser ermutigenden Ansprache gab es schließlich von Prof. Spakowski eine kurze Vorstellung des Instituts, seiner verschiedenen Studiengänge (B.A./M.A. Sinologie; M.A. Modern China Studies; Lehramt ab WS 2016/17) und der hiesigen Lehrstühle mit ihren jeweiligen Forschungsschwerpunkten.

Aufgrund des Ausfalls des Impulsreferats motivierte uns Jennifer Stapornwongkul zu einem interaktiven Kennenlernspiel, bei dem sich die TeilnehmerInnen nach Kriterien wie Länge des Anreiseweges und chronologischer oder thematischer Einordnung des Forschungsgebietes gruppierten und sich so mit ihren NachbarInnen austauschen konnten.

Nachdem das erste Eis gebrochen war, startete die Doktorandin Barbara Witt aus Würzburg mit einer Untersuchung der Nezha-Legende des *Fengshen yanyi*. Sie beschäftigt sich mit der Erzählstruktur der Nezha-Legende unter dem Gesichtspunkt des Strukturalismus und der Transtextualität (Genette) und hinterfragt die Verortung der Legende im Gesamtbezugsrahmen, außerdem, inwieweit einzelne Episoden der Erzählhandlung vorgreifen.

Daraufhin stellte die Münchnerin Alexandra Fekete ihr Magisterarbeitsthema über die Freitod-Dichtung von Frauen zur Kaiserzeit vor. Sie konnte, gestützt auf einen Textkorpus von 37 Gedichten, in diesem speziellen Genre verschiedene Ursachen für den Suizid der Protagonistinnen ausmachen. Für die Doktorarbeit sucht die Referentin Wege, die Arbeit thematisch zu erweitern, und fragte das Plenum nach Vorschlägen.

Beim letzten Vortrag vor der Mittagspause stellte die Doktorandin Clara Luhn aus München ihr Thema vor, das sich anhand eines Briefwechsels von Shan Tao und Xi Kang mit einer systematischen und vergleichenden Analyse von Anspielungen mit der Methode des „Con-