

ASIEN

The German Journal on Contemporary Asia

Nr. 162/163

Januar/April 2022

Transnational Flows of Contemporary Asia

- Discerning Transnational Flows: The Formation and Development of Chinese Newcomers' Transnational Businesses in Japan
- Tensions in Local-Global Production of Tourist Spaces in Vietnam: Heritage, Global Flows, and Local Identities
- Waiting: Social Meanings of Immobility in Kathmandu, Nepal
- The Transnational Flow of Tourism and *Daigou* between China and Nepal before and during the COVID-19 Pandemic



DGA
DEUTSCHE GESELLSCHAFT FÜR ASIENKUNDE E.V.
GERMAN ASSOCIATION FOR ASIAN STUDIES

DEUTSCHE GESELLSCHAFT FÜR ASIENKUNDE E. V.
German Association for Asian Studies

Vorstand / Board of Directors

Prof. Dr. Dr. Nele Noesselt (Vorsitzende)

Dr. Margot Schüller, Hamburg (geschäftsführendes Vorstandsmitglied); Prof. Dr. Jörn Dosch, Rostock (stv. Vorsitzender); Sophie Veauthier, Tübingen (stv. Vorsitzende); Jun.-Prof. Dr. Carmen Brandt, Bonn; Prof. Dr. Marco Bunte, Erlangen-Nürnberg; Philipp C. D. Immel, Würzburg; Carolin Kautz, Göttingen; Dr. Mirjam Lücking, Jerusalem; Dr. Florian Pölking, Bochum; Almut Rößner (OAV), Hamburg

Wissenschaftliche Beiräte / Advisory Councils

Südasien / South Asia

Dr. Ira Sarma, Leipzig
Dr. Mirella Lingorska, Tübingen

Südostasien / Southeast Asia

Dr. Andreas Ufen, Hamburg
Prof. Dr. Antje Missbach, Bielefeld

China

Prof. Dr. Elena Meyer-Clement, Kopenhagen
Dr. Saskia Hieber, Tutzing
Prof. Dr. Maximilian Mayer, Bonn

Japan – Korea

Dr. Christian Wirth, Hamburg
Sabine Burghart PhD, Turku
Dr. David Shim, Groningen

Coverfoto:

Photo taken of 'The Future Belongs To What Was As Much As What Is', art installation by Morag Myerscough, August 2022; courtesy of the artist.

Lizenz: CC BY-SA 4.0

ASIEN

Begründet von Günter Diehl
und Werner Draguhn

Issue Editor:

Carolin Kautz

Guest Editors:

An Huy Tran

Aimi Muranaka

Editorial Team

Carmen Brandt

Thilo Diefenbach

Anna Fiedler

Julia Gerster

Julia Marinaccio

Florian Pölking

Diana Schnelle

Editorial Board

Nele Noesselt

Margot Schüller

Jörn Dosch

Sophie Veauthier

Editorial Manager

Deike Zimmann

Editorial Assistant

Leo Koenig

Copy Editors

Alec Crutchley

James Powell

Deike Zimmann

International Board

Sanjaya Baru, Indien

Anne Booth, England

Chu Yun-han, Taiwan ROC

Lowell Dittmer, USA

Reinhard Drifte, England

Park Sung-Hoon, Südkorea

Anthony Reid, Australien

Ulrike Schaede, USA

Jusuf Wanandi, Indonesien

ASIEN ist eine referierte Fachzeitschrift. ASIEN veröffentlicht wissenschaftliche Beiträge aus den Bereichen Politik, Wirtschaft und Kultur zum gegenwärtigen Asien.

ASIEN ist die Mitgliederzeitschrift der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Asienkunde e.V. (DGA)
Die Redaktion freut sich besonders, wenn Mitglieder der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Asienkunde die Zeitschrift durch Übersendung von Aufsätzen zu einschlägigen Themen sowie von Rezensionen, Konferenzberichten und Informationen zu Forschung und Lehre unterstützen.

ASIEN erscheint vierteljährlich. Mitglieder erhalten ASIEN kostenlos. Ein Jahresabonnement kostet 80,00 Euro (zzgl. Porto und Versand).

Hinweise für Autorinnen und Autoren

Manuskripte müssen in Deutsch oder Englisch abgefasst sein und dem ASIEN *style guide* entsprechen.

Alle Manuskripte müssen in einem bearbeitungsfähigen Format (DOC[X], RTF, ODT) an die Redaktion (asien@asienkunde.de) gemailt werden. Rezensionen werden an rezensionen@asienkunde.de gemailt.

Englischsprachige/nicht-muttersprachliche Beiträge müssen vor Einreichung von einem native speaker geprüft worden sein.

Jeder eingereichte Beitrag durchläuft ein Begutachtungsverfahren und wird vor der Veröffentlichung lektoriert.

Beachten Sie bitte die Informationen auf Seite 6 zu den einzelnen Beitragskategorien in ASIEN.

Nach der Veröffentlichung unterliegen die Beiträge (mit einigen Ausnahmen, s.S.6) einer Embargoperiode von einem Jahr, anschließend sind sie frei zugänglich und zweitveröffentlichungsfähig.

Jede Zweitveröffentlichung muss einen gut sichtbaren Nachweis der Erstveröffentlichung enthalten, möglichst mit Link zu <http://asien.asienforschung.de>.

Ein Honorar kann leider nicht gezahlt werden.

Printed by DSN – Druck Service Nord, 21521 Dassendorf, info@dsndruck.de

Die in der Zeitschrift veröffentlichten Beiträge sind urheberrechtlich geschützt. Ihr Nachdruck darf vor Ablauf der Embargoperiode – auch auszugsweise – nur mit schriftlicher Genehmigung der Redaktion erfolgen. Namentlich gekennzeichnete Beiträge geben nicht unbedingt die Meinung der Herausgebenden wieder.

EDITORIAL

An Huy Tran and Aimi Muranaka:

Transnational Flows of Contemporary Asia: Trends and Futures 7–14

THEMENSCHWERPUNKT – REFEREED ARTICLES

Bin Li:

Discerning Transnational Flows: The Formation and Development of
Chinese Newcomers' Transnational Businesses in Japan..... 15–33

THEMENSCHWERPUNKT – RESEARCH NOTES

Mirjam Le and Franziska Susana Nicolaisen:

Tensions in Local-Global Production of Tourist Spaces in Vietnam:
Heritage, Global Flows, and Local Identities..... 34–57

Sandhya A. S.:

Waiting: Social Meanings of Immobility in Kathmandu, Nepal..... 58–76

Ze Zhou Yang:

The Transnational Flow of Tourism and *Daigou* between China and
Nepal before and during the COVID-19 Pandemic..... 77–94

FORSCHUNG UND LEHRE

Gunter Schubert und Björn Alpermann:

Die jüngste Kontroverse um Zustand und Zukunft der deutschen
Chinaforschung – eine vorläufige Bilanz 95–107

Sabrina Habich-Sobiegalla and H. Christoph Steinhardt:

Debating Academic Autonomy in the German-Speaking Field of
China Studies: An Assessment 108–118

Thilo Diefenbach:

Die Diskussion um die moralische Positionierung der deutschen
Sinologie – von Taiwan aus betrachtet. Ein Kommentar zur Ausgabe
Nr. 32 der *minima sinica* 119–123

KONFERENZBERICHTE

Judith Müller und Carsten Butsch:

12. Jahrestagung des Arbeitskreises Südasiens in der Deutschen
Gesellschaft für Geographie
Universität Bonn, 21.–22. Januar 2022..... 124–126

Elizaveta Priupolina:

International workshop "Navigating Sino-Russian relations in the
2010s: role claims and mutual expectations"
University of Duisburg-Essen, March 29–30, 2021 127–128

Franca Balster, Jonas Lindner, and Lena Wassermann:

2022 DGA Young Scholars Group Methods Workshop
Würzburg, March 4–6, 2022..... 129–130

REZENSIONEN

Kevin Bockholt:

- Jan Schmidt und Katja Schmidtpott (Hgg.): The East Asian
Dimension of the First World War. Global Entanglements and
Japan, China and Korea, 1914–1919131–134

Felix Rheinfelder:

- Gregory Rohlf: Building New China, Colonizing Kokonor.
Resettlement to Qinghai in the 1950s135–137

Thomas Weyrauch:

- Klaus Mühlhahn: Geschichte des modernen China: Von der
Qing-Dynastie bis zur Gegenwart138–141

Thilo Diefenbach:

- Alice Grünfelder: Wolken über Taiwan. Notizen aus einem
bedrohten Land142–145

Johannes Küchler:

- Björn Alpermann: Xinjiang – China und die Uiguren146–149

Thomas Weyrauch:

- Sammelrezension Yuanshi Bu: Chinesisches Zivilrecht150–153

NEUERE LITERATUR154–173

BEITRAGSFORMATE IN ASIEN

Wissenschaftliche Artikel

Artikel (**double blind peer reviewed**) werden von zwei externen Gutachter*innen doppel-blind begutachtet. Sie sollten eine Länge von 45–50.000 Zeichen (ohne Leerzeichen) nicht überschreiten. Die erste Seite muss einen 15–20-zeiligen englischsprachigen Summary, 4–8 inhaltscharakterisierende – englische – Schlagwörter sowie kurze biografische Angaben (Name, Position, Institution sowie optional Forschungsschwerpunkt oder aktuelles Projekt) enthalten.

Artikel (**non peer reviewed**) sollten ebenfalls nach den Richtlinien für Wissenschaftliche Artikel verfasst werden, für sie gelten die gleichen Vorgaben bezüglich Form und Umfang. Freie Artikel werden jedoch hauptsächlich durch die ASIEN-Redaktion betreut und nicht extern begutachtet. Diese Form der Veröffentlichung wird daher eher erfahreneren Wissenschaftler*innen empfohlen.

Research Notes

Unter dieser Rubrik werden keine vollständig ausgearbeiteten Artikel, sondern eher Berichte aus der laufenden Forschung veröffentlicht. Darunter fallen beispielsweise die Verschriftlichung erster empirischer Ergebnisse aus der Feldforschung oder konkrete Überlegungen zur Weiterentwicklung einer bestimmten theoretischen Diskussion. Die Begutachtung von Research Notes erfolgt in einem offenen Peer-review-Verfahren mit nur einem externen Gutachten. Die Beiträge sollten einen Umfang von bis zu 35–40.000 Zeichen (ohne Leerzeichen) nicht überschreiten.

Stimmen aus Asien

Stimmen aus Asien ist ein freies Format für kommentierte, selbständige Übersetzungen zeitgeschichtlich relevanter asiatischer Texte, die womöglich nicht oder nicht kurzfristig in westlichen Sprachen für ein breiteres Publikum zur Verfügung stehen. Die unterschiedlichsten Quellen kommen infrage: Publiizierte Texte, amtliche Schriftstücke, Interviews, Reden etc. Nach Möglichkeit sollen die Originaltexte oder eine geeignete Quellenangabe (Link) eingefügt werden. Die Klärung der Urheberrechte obliegt der Verantwortung der Autor*innen.

Forschung und Lehre

In dieser formal sehr offenen Rubrik versammeln wir Beiträge aller Art, die sich mit Studium und Lehre zu Asien und den Entwicklungen in der Forschungslandschaft im deutschsprachigen Raum auseinandersetzen. Beispiele wären die Vorstellung neuer Studiengänge, kritische Kommentare zu bestehenden Strukturen oder aktuellen Entwicklungen und Diskursen, die Evaluation der Forschung zu bestimmten Themen und Regionen oder die Auseinandersetzung mit Verbindungen von Forschung, Lehre, Politik, Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft. Die Beitragslänge kann stark variieren, sollte aber 25.000 Zeichen nicht überschreiten.

Asien aktuell

In dieser Kategorie werden Beiträge zu besonders aktuellen Themen veröffentlicht. Hierbei handelt es sich nicht um wissenschaftliche Artikel im klassischen Sinne, sondern eher um reflektierte Darstellungen von und Kommentare zum Tagesgeschehen in bzw. mit relevantem Bezug zu Asien. Konstruktive Antwortbeiträge zu kürzlich erschienenen Asien-aktuell-Artikeln werden ebenfalls gern berücksichtigt. Die Beiträge sollten 20–25.000 Zeichen (ohne Leerzeichen) nicht überschreiten. Die Veröffentlichung erfolgt vorab auf der ASIEN-Website sowie in der nächsten ASIEN-Ausgabe.

Konferenzberichte

Konferenzberichte sollten einen Umfang zwischen 3.000 und 8.000 Zeichen (ohne Leerzeichen) haben. Die Veröffentlichung erfolgt normalerweise in der zum Konferenzdatum passenden ASIEN-Ausgabe. Konferenzberichte sind ab der Publikation der ASIEN-Ausgabe sofort öffentlich zugänglich.

Rezensionen

Rezensionen sollten einen Umfang zwischen 3.000 und 8.000 Zeichen (ohne Leerzeichen) haben; Sammelrezensionen dürfen etwas länger ausfallen. Die Veröffentlichung erfolgt in der nächstmöglichen ASIEN-Ausgabe. Rezensionen sind ab der Publikation der ASIEN-Ausgabe sofort öffentlich zugänglich.

Weitere Informationen und Artikeleinreichung: [asien.asienforschung.de](https://www.asien.asienforschung.de).

Editorial

Transnational Flows of Contemporary Asia: Trends and Futures

An Huy Tran and Aimi Muranaka

Asia is a major hub of impressive flows in many ways. Half of the twelve biggest rivers in the world flow through this region and provide resources and infrastructures that affect more than 50 percent of the world's population. As the home to some of the largest and fastest growing economies in the world, this region witnesses and houses not only massive flows of economies and trading activities but also vivid flows of information, industries, and innovation. Moreover, Asia is either the home or the transit center for colossal streams of migration (both in terms of internal and transnational migration) and tourism. According to the International Organization for Migration, around 40 percent of the world's international migrants originate from Asia and it is also the region with the fastest growing numbers of emigrants and immigrants (Mcauliffe and Triandafyllidou 2021). As a result, global cross-border flows have been shifting toward this region in several dimensions including trade, capital, people, knowledge, transport, culture, resources, and the environment (Tonby et al. 2019), and what is happening in Asia and the future of this area cannot be comprehended without contemplating these flows. Globalization and the expansion of international/internal migration have opened new “spaces of flows” (Castles and Miller 2003) where subjects, objects, commodities, capital, discourses, and ideas move and circulate. Taking this context into consideration, this special issue attempts to trace, investigate, and make sense of the transnational flows that have been happening within and beyond Asia. Subsequently, it seeks to provide a closer look into the different transnational flows that are shaping Asia's dynamic characteristics, realities, and possible future.

Using transnational flows as a conceptual window, this special issue tackles not only fluid movements but also immobilities, fractures, stagnations, and/or disruptions that co-exist or emerge as the results of transnational flows in Asia. Beyond intra-Asian mobilities, this issue also considers transnational flows that connect Asia to other parts of the world to comprehend the articulated asymmetrical power relations between different actors and institutions around the globe. Asia in this sense is subsequently not limited to geographical locations but rather goes beyond national/regional/geographical frameworks. Before introducing the contributions that investigate the various flows of people, knowledge, goods, practices, and power

that transgress Asian national, cultural, and political borders, this editorial will provide a deeper conceptualization of the notion of transnational flows. Specifically, the concept of flows will be discussed in terms of its usage within existing literature and how it is apprehended within the scope of this special issue.

Studying Movements and Mobilities through Transnational Flows

In our modern world where interconnectedness has become an integral norm, it is difficult to examine any given phenomenon, process, or subject without positioning it in connection to other social actors, tangible and intangible objects, and phenomena. Such a characteristic of globalized society has been described via several concepts. Studies on globalization have engaged with notions of scapes, hyperconnection, or simultaneity to investigate how different areas, places, and individuals around the globe are interlinked (Appadurai 1990; Callon 1998; Latour 1993). For instance, Appadurai's theorization of scapes (1990) including ethno, techno, financial, media, and ideological scapes, was an attempt to grasp how global cultural flows penetrate and produce representations of the social world. Among the most widely used concepts to describe the interconnectedness of global life, the notion of flows has been extensively engaged with by scholars in different fields. Castells (1999) considered the globalized modern society to be constructed around flows, with flows of capital, images, sounds, and symbols forming particular spaces and patterns that dominate and shape social organizations, institutions, behaviors, and identities. Flows are not just one element of social organization but "the expression of processes dominating our economic, political, and symbolic life" (Castells 1999). Castells (1999, 295) also pointed to the fluidity of flows by suggesting the concept of "space of flows," which is the material arrangements that allow the "simultaneity of social practices without territorial contiguity." Similarly, Ritzer (2010, 2) engaged with the concept of flows to define globalization as a "set of processes involving increasing liquidity and the growing multidirectional flows of people, objects, places, and information as well as the structures they encounter and create that are barriers to or expedite those flows." Going beyond defining the phenomenon of globalization, scholars have also paid attention to how flows penetrate structures and how structures control and block different types of flow. Observing such an occurrence, Rey and Ritzer (2010) identified four types of flows that characterize globalization including interconnected flows, multidirectional flows, conflicting flows, and reverse flows. The notion of flows thus provides a better heuristic for the pervasive scaling and re-scaling dynamics intrinsic to the reality of a globalized world (Sassen 2007) such as the processes of territorialization and deterritorialization, location, dislocation, and re-location which do not only occur among and through national borders but also, and especially, on the local levels of daily experiences.

The notion of flows has also been of particular importance in other research fields. Cardao-Pito (2022), for example, suggested comprehending socio-economic activities and relations based on the theory of intangible flows, which takes into consideration economic flows that are not visible on top of others that can be easily observed and traced. The concept of flows has also gained important status in mobility and migration studies. Such popularity is not surprising as these fields typically deal with “large-scale movements of people, objects, capital and information across the world [...], together with the local processes of daily transportation of travel and material things within everyday life” (Büscher et al. 2011). Since the beginning of the 1990s, scholarship indicating the plurality of activities that take place beyond rigid national borders (Basch et al. 1994; Glick Schiller et al. 1995; Smith and Guarnizo 1998; Portes et al. 1999; Vertovec 2009) has proliferated. These studies suggested taking “transnationalism” as the core framework to comprehend the heterogeneous set of social practices and identities that are taken up by actors in the increasingly interconnected, hypermobile global arena. For example, it is impossible to fully capture the experience of contemporary migration without contemplating migrants’ simultaneous connections to different networks of people, information, and cultural products that span across geographical, cultural, and political borders. The perspective of transnationalism also hints at going beyond the “methodological nationalism” (Beck 2009; Faist 2012; Roulleau-Berger 2017; Weiß and Nohl 2012) that considers the nation-state as the only analytical unit and container for social processes. The notion of flows therefore assists the portrait of trans-border connections, movements, and activities that mobile populations and objects carry out within and across a multiplicity of places, spaces, locations, and scales. In other words, in a social landscape where mobility has become a constant rather than a variable (Schultermandl and Toplu 2010), the notion of flows helps better grasp how subjects, objects, capital, ideas, intimacies, affections, and emotions are on the move through and beyond a plurality of social, economic and moral spaces.

Because flows can glide through borders and boundaries, the notion of flows can suggest an overconcentration on fluid movements that transgress borderlines. Migration studies, for example, used to have a “mobility bias” (Schewel 2020) that focused predominantly on how people become mobile or how mobility is made possible. This bias directs attention to the drivers of mobility and risks, overlooking the countervailing forces that restrict or resist them, although these hindering forces are as important as those that allow mobilities. As a result, scholars have been advocating for the investigation of the relationship between mobility and immobility, between movement and stasis, as these are concepts that dialectically and complementarily exist (Baas and Yeoh 2019; Glick-Schiller and Salazar 2013) to make better sense of the opportunities, constraints, obstacles, and possibilities emerging from transnational migration. Moreover, the study of flows requires giving thought to the direction, volume/density, and characteristics of flows over time. Flows of labor migrants, for example, tend to be seen as following the global-South-

to-global-North direction, which might not be correct when temporal discrepancies are considered. Recognizing the need for transnational and nuanced takes on flows that consider movement, simultaneity, and im/mobility, this special issue proposes engaging with the notion of transnational flows to look at not only cross-border migration but also other phenomena of movement and (im)mobility in contemporary Asia. The transnational flows in this issue cover movements, mobilities, and streams that not only cross and transgress but also challenge and contest borders. These flows include but are not limited to tangible mobilities and circulations of humans, commodities, capital, objects, and practices but also intangible movements of ideas, information, norms, and power. As a result, transnational flows feature the endless links amongst different actors, spaces, and practices positioned in and between dissimilar “transnational social fields” (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004) that straddle national borders.

In addition, since transnational flows interact with variegated actors and infrastructures along their flowing trajectories, they are often confronted with a variety of barriers and borders not only in terms of physical borderlines between nation states or geographical areas but also numerous virtual, social, economic, and cultural boundaries. As a result, it is necessary to acknowledge and take into consideration the effects of spatial fixities (Smith 1999) and also factors and structures that obstruct certain types of transnational flow while allowing or facilitating others. The crises that came out of the Covid-19 global pandemic can be good examples of such situations in which transnational flows of humans temporarily ceased or were interrupted between many locations and regions while the flows of certain commodities and goods (especially medical supplies such as masks and vaccines) intensified. Xiang et al. (2022) applied the concept of “shock mobilities” to illustrate both sudden surges and stoppages of various interconnected flows of mobility and immobility as a result of the global pandemic such as repatriation flights or human and goods smuggling. This special issue therefore seeks to understand the transnational flows within and beyond contemporary Asia from a plurality of perspectives and angles.

Essentially, we position transnational flows not as researched subjects or phenomena but rather as processes that span spaces and times. Moreover, we think of transnational flows not only as movements that are smooth and silky but also as a starting point to dive deeper into matters of immobility and/or fixity, which are integral parts of these flows. The issue thus regards connections and breaks, conjunctions and disjunctions amongst places, spaces, and locations, as well as people, temporalities, experiences, and practices positioned within both national and transnational social spaces. With this conceptualization, the notion of transnational flows contributes to the comprehension of the realities, trends, and possible futures of socio-cultural, economic, religious, and political phenomena in Asia not in phenomenological and static, but rather in processual terms. It sheds light on the speed, density, and acceleration of movements that take place simultaneously across time, space, and scales. Concurrently, the notion provides nuanced perspectives on

how different kinds of movement and mobility are achieved, shaped, facilitated, and intertwined in the region. The notion of transnational flows also invites analysis of the effects of diverse types of borders/boundaries, infrastructures, and institutions on different flows and vice versa, and deepens the scrutiny of power relations, hierarchies, and (in)equalities produced at local, regional, and global levels.

This issue works with transnational flows as a venture point not only in terms of theoretical frameworks and empirical sampling but also in methodological development. In the past three decades, social scientists have been suggesting different clusters of methods to study flows in an increasingly interconnected world. Marcus's classical approach of multi-sited ethnography (1995), for instance, recommends following the studied subjects or objects and tracking their flows through and between spatial and temporal boundaries. Sharing a similar point of view, the mobile method encourages researchers to follow the flows of the movements, travel, and displacements that they aim to study (Büscher et al. 2011; Sheller and Urry 2006; Urry 2007). Such methods are mobile "not just in making researchers moving with mobile subjects, but also, metaphorically, in researchers being moved by people to the opportunities and the implications for design and future innovation" (Büscher et al. 2011, 9). Specifically, these methods aim to capture flows and movements with mobile strategies, tactics, and tricks that transcend territorial boundaries and pay attention not only to mobility and movements but also to immobility and unmoving conditions (Hannam et al. 2006; Sheller and Urry 2006). Given the aforementioned conceptualization of transnational flows, this special issue also positions transnational flows as a method that takes into account, pursues, and visualizes the different scale, spatial, and temporal variances in cross-border movements as well as the multiplicity and diversity of the contemporary forms of "navigation" through and across Asia. It also calls for more creative and innovative methods in tracing the various types, scales, directions, and characteristics of transnational flows, some of which have been creatively and vividly presented in the works featured in this issue.

Tracing the Transnational Flows of Contemporary Asia

The contributions in this special issue consider different types of transnational flows as crucial elements in constructing the research themes and objects as well as in choosing the theoretical frameworks, analytical units, and methodological instruments. They include one research article and three research notes that scrutinize the transnational flows happening in the Asian region from sociological and anthropological perspectives.

The research article from Li looks at the development of the businesses of new Chinese entrepreneurs in Japan and illustrates how different types of transnational flows allow and shape such a development. The author identifies three types of transnational flow, namely financial, social capital, and commodity flows that significantly affect how Chinese entrepreneurs set up and run transnational

businesses between China and Japan. He also points to the temporal aspect of researching transnational flows as the flows featured in the article do not take place simultaneously but happen step by step depending on the maturity of the transnational business. By investigating the directions of these transnational flows, this article contributes to the issue's characterization of flows as not unidirectional but rather multi-directional and capable of having transnational effects.

Similarly, the research note from Le and Nicolaisen also addresses the direction of transnational flows within, from, and to Asia. In their work, the authors examine transnational flows of tourism that produce, appropriate, and shape the commodification and (de)colonization of certain tourist sites and destinations. Using the cases of the two world heritage sites of Tam Dao and Hoi An in Vietnam, the authors constellate how flows of tourists, global flows of knowledge and aspiration, as well as flows of power, transform local tourist places. Their work urges us to look at the diverse and sometimes contradictory effects that transnational flows can have on specific localities in terms of a place's identities, images, and people.

As mentioned above, the study of transnational flows cannot be fully comprehended without consideration of the interrelationship between mobility and immobility. Sandhya's study on Nepalese labor migrants' waiting period tackles this exact conjunction between mobility and immobility and how such conjunction is an integral part of transnational migration flows. The author argues that the "waiting" and seemingly inactive period during which Nepalese laborers wait to be sent abroad by migration intermediaries does not necessarily render these migrants immobile. Rather, "waiting" is regarded as an expected part of the process of migration and immobility is therefore integral to mobility. In that sense, the transnational flow of labor migration between Nepal and other countries features the interchange of movements and non-movements as well as smooth flows and disruption.

Also taking immobility as the study background, Yang's research note explores how flows of people and objects (medical masks in this case) crossed national borders during the Covid-19 pandemic-induced mobility crisis. The contribution engages with the transnational practices between Nepal and China of *daigou*—the group of people residing outside of China and purchasing goods for people living in China. The author first investigates how transnational flows of merchandise were established, maintained, and developed by *daigou* in pre-pandemic times, and how these flows changed during the pandemic. The research note then examines how *daigou*, despite being physically immobile during the pandemic, made use of the established networks and infrastructures to facilitate the mobility of mask flows from Nepal to China. This work illustrates how different transnational flows connect, support, and even replace one another in different socio-historical periods.

Compiling and presenting a set of research notes and articles that engage with the different transnational flows of contemporary Asia from several perspectives, this special issue wishes to provide a not new, yet timely and sufficient way to study the current trends and realities in Asia. The contributions shed light on the different

types and characteristics of the transnational flows that are shaping the Asian region and therefore enhance the empirical, epistemological, and methodological understandings of the movements and mobilities of different objects and subjects. They also point to the necessity of continuously examining, revising, connecting and subsequently challenging or improving existing theoretical concepts or methodological approaches. Given this necessity, the special issue calls for further studies and works that collectively conceptualize transnational flows as well as their meanings and effects not only within and beyond contemporary Asia but also in other regions and parts of the world.

Acknowledgement

We sincerely thank Beatrice Zani for providing thoughtful comments and support from the beginning until the very end of this project.

References

- Appadurai, Arjun. 1990. "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy." *Theory, Culture & Society* 7 (2–3): 295–310.
- Baas, Michel, and Brenda S. Yeoh. 2019. "Introduction: Migration studies and critical temporalities." *Current Sociology* 67 (2): 161–168.
- Basch, Linda G., Nina Glick Schiller, and Cristina Szanton Blanc. 1994. *Nations Unbound: Transnational Projects, Postcolonial Predicaments, and Deterritorialized Nation-States*. London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.
- Beck, Ulrich. 2009. *World at Risk*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Büscher, Monika, John Urry, and Katian Witchger, eds. 2011. *Mobile Methods*. Abingdon, Oxon; New York, NY: Routledge.
- Callon, Michel. 1998. "Introduction: The Embeddedness of Economic Markets in Economics." *The Sociological Review* 46 (1_suppl): 1–57.
- Cardao-Pito, Tiago. 2022. *Intangible Flows Theory in Economics: Human Participation in Economic and Societal Production*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Castells, Manuel. 1999. "Grassrooting the Space of Flows." *Urban Geography* 20 (4): 294–302.
- Castles, Stephen, and Mark J. Miller. 2003. *The Age of Migration*. 3rd edition. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Faist, Thomas. 2012. "Toward a Transnational Methodology: Methods to Address Methodological Nationalism, Essentialism, and Positionality." *Revue Européenne Des Migrations Internationales* 28 (1): 51–70.
- Glick Schiller, Nina, Linda G. Basch, and Cristina Blanc-Szanton. 1995. "From Immigrant to Transmigrant: Theorizing Transnational Migration." *Anthropological Quarterly* 68 (1): 48–63.
- Glick Schiller, Nina, and Noel B. Salazar. 2013. "Regimes of Mobility Across the Globe." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 39 (2): 183–200.
- Hannam, Kevin, Mimi Sheller, and John Urry. 2006. "Editorial: Mobilities, Immobilities and Moorings." *Mobilities* 1 (1): 1–22.
- Latour, Bruno. 1993. *We Have Never Been Modern*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.
- Levitt, Peggy, and Nina Glick Schiller. 2004. "Conceptualizing Simultaneity: A Transnational Social Field Perspective on Society." *International Migration Review* 38 (3): 1002–1039.

- Marcus, George E. 1995. "Ethnography in/of the World System: The Emergence of Multi-Sited Ethnography." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 24: 95–117.
- Meauliffe, Marie, and Anna Triandafyllidou. 2021. *World Migration Report 2022*. Geneva: International Organization for Migration (IOM).
- Portes, Alejandro, Luis E. Guarnizo, and Patricia Landolt. 1999. "The Study of Transnationalism: Pitfalls and Promise of an Emergent Research Field." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 22 (2): 217–237.
- Rey, P. J., and George Ritzer. 2010. "Conceptualizing Globalization in Terms of Flows." In *Current Perspectives in Social Theory*, Vol. 27, edited by H. F. Dahms and L. Hazelrigg, 247–71. Emerald Group Publishing Limited.
- Ritzer, George. 2010. *Globalization: A Basic Text*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Rouleau-Berger, Laurence. 2017. "In Commemoration of the Legacy of Ulrich Beck: Theory of Migration and Methodological Cosmopolitanism." *Development and Society* 46 (2): 227–50.
- Sassen, Saskia, ed. 2007. *Deciphering the Global: Its Scales, Spaces and Subjects*. New York: Routledge.
- Schewel, Kerilyn. 2020. "Understanding Immobility: Moving Beyond the Mobility Bias in Migration Studies." *International Migration Review* 54 (2): 328–355.
- Schultermandl, Silvia, and Sebnem Toplu, eds. 2010. *A Fluid Sense of Self: The Politics of Transnational Identity*. Wien Berlin Münster: Lit.
- Sheller, Mimi, and John Urry. 2006. "The New Mobilities Paradigm." *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space* 38 (2): 207–226.
- Smith, Linda Tuhiwai. 1999. *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. London; New York: Dunedin, N.Z.: New York: Zed Books; University of Otago Press; Distributed in the USA exclusively by St. Martin's Press.
- Smith, Michael P., and Luis Guarnizo, eds. 1998. *Transnationalism from Below*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers.
- Tonby, Oliver, Jonathan Woetzel, Wonsik Choi, Karel Eloot, Rajat Dhawan, Jeongmin Seong, and Patti Wang. 2019. *The Future of Asia: Asian Flows and Networks Are Defining the Next Phase of Globalization. Discussion Paper*. Singapore: McKinsey Global Institute.
- Urry, John. 2007. *Mobilities*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Vertovec, Steven. 2009. *Transnationalism*. London; New York: Routledge.
- Weiß, Anja, and Arnd-Michael Nohl. 2012. "Overcoming Methodological Nationalism in Migration Research: Cases and Contexts in Multi-Level Comparisons." In *Beyond Methodological Nationalism: Research Methodologies for Cross-Border Studies*, edited by A. Amelina, D. D. Nergiz, T. Faist, and N. Glick Schiller, 65–87. New York; London: Routledge.
- Xiang, Biao, William L. Allen, Shahram Khosravi, Hélène Neveu Kringelbach, Yasmin Y. Ortega, Karen Anne S. Liao, Jorge E. Cuéllar, Lamea Momen, Priya Deshingkar, and Mukta Naik. 2022. "Shock Mobilities During Moments of Acute Uncertainty." *Geopolitics* 1 (26). <https://doi.org/10.1080/14650045.2022.2091314>.

An Huy Tran

Doktorand in Soziologie und Ostasienwissenschaften
(Fokus: Japan und Vietnam), Universität Duisburg-Essen
huy.tranan@area-ruhr.de; ORCID: 0000-0003-3946-4630

Dr. Aimi Muranaka

Post-doc im BMBF-Projekt „Qualifikation“ im Migrationsprozess ausländischer Fachkräfte in Asien“ (QuaMaFA), (Fokus: Japan), Universität Duisburg-Essen
aimimuramy53@gmail.com; ORCID: 0000-0001-8442-0464

Refereed article

Discerning Transnational Flows: The Formation and Development of Chinese Newcomers' Transnational Businesses in Japan

Bin Li

Summary

The success of overseas Chinese entrepreneurs' transnational businesses has long been attributed to these immigrants' dual embeddedness between China and their countries of settlement in cultural, social capital, and institutional terms. However, the embeddedness approach focuses mainly on opportunity structures, and less so on resources and commodity flows in transnational businesses. This empirical study will hence turn to the Chinese newcomer entrepreneurs who arrived and set up businesses in Japan from the 1990s, investigating how these immigrants' transnational enterprises developed step by step with different transnational flows. Based on my fieldwork in Tokyo in 2019 and digital interviews in 2020, the study shows that the development of Chinese newcomers' transnational businesses includes three phases characterized respectively by uni-/bidirectional transnational flows of financial support, social capital, and commodities. Moreover, it also illustrates that the various noncommercial factors emerging between China and Japan have the potential to cause instability in transnational businesses. The paper aims herewith to provide empirical data aiding our understanding of the establishment of overseas Chinese entrepreneurs' transnational businesses.

Keywords: Chinese in Japan; transnational business; transnational flow; entrepreneurship

Bin Li is currently enrolled in a doctoral program at the Graduate School of East Asian Studies and Anthropology Faculty, Free University of Berlin, Germany. His doctoral research, funded by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), investigates how the entrepreneurial motivations and strategies of Chinese newcomers in Japan developed in the course of their immigration experiences and social interactions within local society. He received his master's degree from the Graduate School of Environmental Studies, Tohoku University, Japan, and a BA from the University of International Relations, China.

bin.li@fu-berlin.de

Introduction

With the increasing attention paid to transnational entrepreneurship (Portes, Guarnizo, and Haller 2002; Drori, Honig, and Wright 2009), the activities of overseas Chinese entrepreneurs have been positioned as empirical evidence for the emergence of transnational social and economic phenomena in the Chinese context too (Wong and Ng 2002; Wong 2006; Nyíri 2011; Lin and Tao 2012; Liu 2012; Zhou and Liu 2015; Ren and Liu 2015, 2019; Quan et al. 2019). This paper thus focuses on the Chinese newcomer entrepreneurs who moved to Japan from the 1990s. It investigates specifically the unidirectional or bidirectional flows at different stages of their transnational businesses.

Interest in Chinese transnational businesses first started in the 1990s, when the “bamboo networks” of overseas Chinese entrepreneurs started attracting academic attention (Weidenbaum and Hughes 1996). These bamboo networks, based on familism and Confucianism principles, are indicative of the transnational connections existing between overseas Chinese communities in Southeast Asia. Moreover, the globalization processes playing out in the past few decades have turned scholars toward the Chinese “transmigrants” who adopt bicultural backgrounds, mobilize international sociocultural capital for their transnational businesses, and live cosmopolitan lifestyles (Light 2007). For instance, in the ethnographic work on the high-tech Chinese transnational entrepreneurs of Silicon Valley, Bernard Wong discovered that their entrepreneurial pursuits are based on local knowledge of opportunity structures (2006) of both their homeland and of the country of destination.

Drawing on the earlier concept of “embeddedness” (Granovetter 1985), the “mixed embeddedness” framework (Kloosterman and Rath 2001) that highlights the opportunity structures at the national, regional/urban, and neighborhood levels has become the main theory used in analyzing immigrant entrepreneurship. Much research has been done in expanding this analytic framework to the investigation of immigrants’ transnational businesses (Wahlbeck 2018; Quan et al. 2019; Giacomo 2020). For instance, Na Ren and Hong Liu (2015) put forward the idea of the “dual embeddedness” of Chinese transnational entrepreneurs in Singapore. According to these two authors, the “dual embedded social process” in China and Singapore has become a critical livelihood strategy to accumulate favorable economic and social resources for immigrants’ entrepreneurial practices.

In a comparative study, meanwhile, Min Zhou and Hong Liu (2015) stressed the importance of contextualization in understanding Chinese transnational entrepreneurs. Specifically, differences in migration histories, policies, and sociocultural milieus in sending and receiving countries may generate divergent patterns of economic transnationalism. As for Chinese immigrants in Japan, although their ethnic businesses have long been discussed (Ito 1995; Higuchi 2010, 2012), there has so far been only limited research emphasizing transnational entrepreneurship and the development of related businesses. Gracia Liu-Farrer’s

(2007, 2011) works have been among the most important here. Focusing on transnationalism from below, she pointed out the positive roles of Chinese transnational entrepreneurs in China's and Japan's globalized economies by these individuals' linking of local businesses and organizations on both sides (Liu-Farrer 2007).

Overall, the existing literature has viewed the transnationalism of overseas Chinese businesses as representing a setting in which these entrepreneurs can constantly and concurrently mobilize different social networks, cultural values, and financial resources between the homeland and the host countries. Meanwhile, being involved in transnational business landscapes, overseas Chinese entrepreneurs tend to live a lifestyle that further strengthens the "practice in enabling transnational entrepreneurship" (Drori, Honig, and Ginsberg 2010, 6). However, "fuzziness" (Razin 2002) and ambiguity remain here, because these works fail to investigate the formation process and stability of such transnational businesses.

Specifically, it is still unclear whether the transnational social, cultural, and economic capitals favoring transnational businesses appear simultaneously or conversely emerge stepwise. One challenge in figuring out the processes and outcomes of transnationalism is that they are "multiple and messy" in reality because the "scales, spaces and mechanisms of globalization and transnationalism are just too entangled" (Vertovec 2009, 3). The categories of transnationalism from above and from below (Guarnizo and Smith 1998), as well as Steve Vertovec's (2009) different takes on transnationalism associated with sociocultural, political, economic, and religious transformations, cannot fully explain the matter. This is not only because transnational businesses refer to interrelated aspects both from above and from below but also because not all resources required for developing such businesses are always in order. Second, the existing literature stresses dual embeddedness here and paid more attention to well-developed transnational businesses. However, whether ideal and stable uni-/bidirectional flows indeed exist throughout needs more discussion, particularly in zooming in on different phases in these businesses' development processes.

This paper thus aims to remove the fuzziness around overseas Chinese transnational businesses. To resolve the identified research puzzles, it will draw attention to the flows within the transnational business landscapes existing between China and Japan. "Flows" refers to the continuous movement of resources, people, and commodities from one country to another in specific directions. Flows between the two countries are, as noted, both unidirectional and bidirectional, and the contents of them characterize transnational businesses' different development stages. In this sense, instead of simply acquiring a sense of the favorable factors here and depicting static opportunity structures, this paper pays more attention to long-term development processes and looks at how Chinese newcomers' transnational businesses formed stepwise. Moreover, it also examines these individuals' transnational entrepreneurship beyond just fully fledged and bidirectional business

practices. Instead, it highlights the unidirectional flows occurring in the initial stages of these businesses' formation as well as the overall instability of such transnational flows.

The paper aims to answer the following key research question: How did Chinese newcomer entrepreneurs' transnational businesses spanning China and Japan develop step by step with different transnational flows? It first introduces the various characteristics of Chinese newcomers in Japan and the advantages of conducting transnational business between the two countries. After presenting my methodology and data, I then dig into the three development stages of transnational flows as featuring financial support, social capital, and commodities. I explicate further how natural disasters, social discourses, and political conflicts affect the stability of these transnational flows, too.

Chinese newcomers in Japan and their transnational businesses

The history of Sino-Japanese cultural exchange dates back to the seventh century. Starting with the Tang dynasty (618–907), China would make significant contributions to Japanese civilization during the next millennium (Vogel 2019). However, after Japan's Meiji Restoration from 1868 and the defeat of China in the First Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895), the Qing dynasty (1644–1912) realized that Japan had surpassed China in political and military power, which impelled government-sponsored Chinese student migration to Japan (Liu-Farrer 2013). Chinese migration to Japan stopped after the latter invaded the former in 1937 (the Second Sino-Japanese War, lasting until 1945). Migration from mainland China to Japan did not resume until 1972, when the People's Republic of China and Japan finally reestablished diplomatic relations after a long hiatus. Overall, then, China's and Japan's cultural and economic exchange were long unstable due to the wars and political turmoil of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Chinese migrants in Japan can be categorized into two groups: the older generations and the newcomers. The first refers to the migrants arriving from mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan before the 1970s. The second mainly denotes, meanwhile, those who migrated from mainland China to Japan after China's economic reform in 1978 (Tan and Liu 2008). According to the statistics of Japan's Immigration Services Agency, the rapid growth of Chinese newcomers started at the end of the 1980s. The total number of Chinese nationals in Japan has since reached 786,241 (Immigration Services Agency 2019),¹ accounting for approximately 28 percent of the latter's foreign population.

Compared to the older generations, the Chinese newcomers have two significant differences to them. First, the latter are highly educated. Liu-Farrer (2011) pointed

1 In this paper, I use the numbers as of 2019. In 2020 and 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic strongly influenced foreign migration to Japan, but this decrease does not represent general trends therein.

out that the migration of Chinese newcomers to Japan has been characterized by education-based migration channels. In 2019, those from mainland China accounted for approximately 40 percent of Japan's total international students (Japan Student Services Organization 2020). Several studies (Zhu 2003; Tsuboya 2008) identified that the number of Chinese immigrants there who receive bachelor's and master's degrees has increased in recent years. Their education in Japan and good language abilities give them subsequent competence in the latter's labor market. Second, compared to the older generations who were mainly engaged in the "three knives" (cook, tailor, and hairdresser) businesses in ethnic enclaves (Tan and Liu 2008), the newcomers are contrariwise active in a range of fields: from traditional ethnic businesses such as Chinese restaurants and acupuncture stores, to the information technology industry, to new media. More importantly, as skilled laborers, these newcomers play a key role in the transnational economies of both China and Japan (Liu-Farrer 2011).

These two defining characteristics of Chinese newcomer immigrants to Japan relate to their careers in developing transnational businesses. The latter does not necessarily refer to setting up offices in the two countries, although some of my research participants tend to do so. Compared with other ethnic businesses focusing on co-ethnic markets and resources in the receiving society, theirs rely rather on the mobilization of transnational resources and transnational commodities/services flows. Quantitative research has proved that a higher education level correlates with immigrant entrepreneurs' greater transnational involvement (Lin and Tao 2012). Chinese newcomers' experiences of working in Japanese companies are also helpful in training fully fledged entrepreneurs because the former can learn local business culture and skills and build up social networks for their future businesses (Liu-Farrer 2011). Overall, the status quo of Chinese newcomers in Japan favors their developing of transnational entrepreneurship.

Methodology and data

In this study, I apply qualitative methodology based on in-depth semi-structured and unstructured interviews with 20 Chinese newcomer entrepreneurs engaged in transnational business between China and Japan. The data was gathered during my fieldwork in Tokyo, from April to November 2019. The follow-up fieldwork was interrupted due to the COVID-19 pandemic hitting in 2020. During this period, I held online interviews with five of these entrepreneurs instead.

As Table 1 below shows, research participants match the characteristics of Chinese newcomers in Japan. The sampled entrepreneurs are all individuals who migrated to Japan in the 1990s and first decade of the new century, running businesses in Tokyo. There are seven female and 13 male entrepreneurs among my research participants. Eleven had obtained Japanese citizenship and four had permanent residency at the time of interview. The majority of the sampled entrepreneurs moved to Japan through the education channel. Three female entrepreneurs came to Japan on

dependent visas because their husbands were employed by companies there at the time. Eight have bachelor's degrees, 11 master's degrees. The entrepreneurs usually started businesses several years after their arrival. Most of them had work experience in local or Chinese companies in Japan.

Their businesses are diverse in nature, and can be regarded as transnational ones in several regards. The largest group here is intermediary agencies providing transnational services in the realms of labor dispatch, study abroad, and of import and export trade. In addition, another large group is transnational chain stores, such as beauty salons or restaurants. Although not providing intermediary services between China and Japan, they should also be seen as such businesses because of their continuous transnational material supplies and business strategies. It is important to note that some sampled entrepreneurs were involved in more than one transnational business.

Aside from a few pre-prepared guiding questions, I left much space for research participants to interpret and narrate the development of their respective transnational businesses. To ensure the richness of the data, I interviewed these Chinese entrepreneurs multiple times during the fieldwork. Each interview lasted about one hour. For data analysis, the interviews were transcribed into Mandarin. I coded the original data using the software ATLAS.ti and identified three development stages to Chinese entrepreneurs' transnational businesses, as characterized by different transnational flows.²

Table 1: Basic information of the sampled entrepreneurs

	Pseudo-nym	Gender	Nationality	Arrival year	Migration channel	Education I background	Time of starting business	Nature of main business
1	Chensen	M	Japan	1992	Study	Bachelor's (China)	2000	Labor-dispatch agency
2	Cindy	F	China (PR)	2012	Dependent	Master's (China)	2018	Digital marketing
3	Hoshi	M	Japan	1998	Study	Master's (Japan)	2006	Software development / digital marketing
4	Jianwei	M	Japan	2009	Study	Master's (Japan)	2013	Trade / cosmetic store
5	Jiaying	M	China (PR)	2004	Study	Bachelor's (Japan)	2010	Educational agency
6	Jingwei	M	China	2012	Study	Master's (China)	2015	Educational agency / real estate agency
7	Kenji	M	Japan	2010	Study	Master's (Japan)	2014	Trade

² For privacy, I refer to the research participants only by pseudonyms in the paper. They acknowledged and agreed with the information disclosure taking place. No financial responsibility and commercial transactions exist between the research participants and the author. The fieldwork was funded by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD).

8	Liu	M	China	2012	Study	Master's (Japan)	2015	Restaurant
9	Miyasaki	F	Japan	1999	Dependent	Bachelor's (China)	2005	Educational agency
10	Nishikawa	F	Japan	1995	Study	Master's (Japan)	2007	Restaurant / entertainment
11	Oda	F	Japan	1991	Study	Master's (Japan)	1998	Restaurant / real estate agency
12	Qiu	M	China	2011	Study	Master's (Japan)	2013	Educational agency / restaurant
13	Sato	M	Japan	2005	Study	Bachelor's (Japan)	2016	Labor-dispatch agency
14	Sayuri	F	Japan	2003	Dependent	Bachelor's (China)	2014	IT / labor-dispatch agency
15	Shizuko	F	Japan	1996	Study	Bachelor's (Japan)	2002	Trade / manufacture
16	Sugiyama	M	Japan	1998	Study	Bachelor's (China)	2002	Factory / trade
17	Sun	M	China	2013	Skilled Labor	Vocational School (Korea)	2015	Beauty salon
18	Sunjian	M	China	2009	Study	Master's (Japan)	2012	Hotel / study-abroad agency
19	Yubing	F	China (PR)	2007	Study	Bachelor's (Japan)	2012	Trade
20	Zixiao	M	China (PR)	2008	Study	Master's (Japan)	2015	Trade

Note: China (PR) denotes those who have both Chinese passports and Japanese permanent residency.

Three types of transnational flows

This section will focus on the aforementioned three development stages in these Chinese newcomers' transnational businesses. The first stage features the initial financial flows from China to Japan, the second emphasizes social-capital flows in the other direction. These two stages play an indispensable role in the subsequent bidirectional commodity flows that characterize the third and final stage. I will also show the unpredictability of these transnational businesses. Political conflicts, changes in social discourses, and natural disasters are all likely to cause such uncertainty.

Initial financial flows from China to Japan

Transnational remittances are one of the most critical components to the formation of Chinese immigrant businesses. The early Chinese migration channels indicate that the sending societies, particularly inside villages, pool money together to support continuous migration. Chinese immigrants who achieved economic success abroad have an obligation to send money back to the society of origin through donations or

investments (Kuhn 2009). Although this model has weakened among Chinese newcomers in Japan, transnational financial flows are still imperative — particularly for the initial phase of their entrepreneurial careers.

Self-financing is a common strategy for Chinese newcomer entrepreneurs in Japan (Liu-Farrer 2007). One reason for receiving financial support from family members is that the nascent entrepreneurs had difficulty applying for loans from Japan's financial institutions. Among research participants, nine of them tried to set up their first businesses by applying for related loans. However, only two ultimately obtained them — and for amounts less than expected. Zixiao (case 20), a young male entrepreneur running a firm selling Japanese secondhand musical instruments to China, recounted that his loan application submitted in 2016 was rejected because of, as he was told, his lack of business experience. However, Zixiao and many other research participants pointed out that although it would generally not be explicitly said, whether they could obtain loans, and the amounts involved, depended on their nationality, how long they have had Japanese citizenship or permanent residency, and if they were engaged in the preferred IT-related businesses or not.

Due to these difficulties, most of my research participants resorted to self-financing. Although the majority of interviewees had work experience in Japan and some personal savings, few could scrape together enough money to go ahead with their plans without others' help. As Liu-Farrer's (2007) study showed, instead of relying on local financial institutions Chinese newcomer entrepreneurs tended to start with co-ownership, pooling money together from friends or former colleagues in Japan. My study shows that remittances from family members in China are also crucial financial resources supporting Chinese newcomers' prospective transnational businesses. Nishikawa (case 10) is a successful female entrepreneur running several transnational chain restaurants. At the start of her entrepreneurial career, she took over a small Chinese restaurant in Tokyo from the former owner. The transfer fee was around JPY 20 million (approximately EUR 150,000). She raised the money mainly in three ways: personal savings, borrowing money from multiple friends in Japan, and receiving financial support from her parents, among which transnational financial support comprised approximately half of the total requested transfer fee. These are the typical three ways in which Chinese newcomer entrepreneurs obtain their initial financing.

Compared to pooling money together at the outset through partnership, the entrepreneurs preferred to receive remittances from their family members instead. One reason is that financial support from the latter, particularly parents, is characteristic of quasi-altruism. In other words, their parents offered financial support not for future reward but on the basis of familial affection. For example, Sato (case 13), a young male entrepreneur running a labor-dispatch agency in Tokyo, told me:

My parents never said that they could “lend” me money. Instead, they said they could use the money to support my career in Japan. It gave me less pressure. I

will, of course, pay them back but it may not be in the form of money and not within a specific time limit [...]. Borrowing money from friends or starting with co-ownership is different. Although you and your friends are very close, you have to reach an agreement on when and how much you should pay back. I had co-ownership for my first business, an izakaya [informal Japanese bar]. But it failed in one year. One reason, I think, is that we did not have an agreement about our business strategy. We were both investors, so I had limited independence in the business. But my parents will never judge or interfere with my current business. (Interview on May 14, 2019, Tokyo)

Although not related to pecuniary reward, their parents' financial support did often indicate certain expectations at least. Thus, aside from acknowledging the preference to receive financing via remittances from family members back home, it is also necessary to look at the parents' wish to offer financial support to their children in setting up businesses abroad, too. From the interviewees' narratives, I discovered that their parents' unconditional financial support was related to high expectations regarding their children's "success" in Japan. As a number of studies have showed, there is a complex nexus between Chinese migrants' perceptions of going abroad, family expectations, and the social discourse of migration (Fong 2004; Nyíri 2010; Coates 2019). Many Chinese youth went abroad in the 1990s to fulfill not only their dreams of living in an imagined advanced country but also "filial dreams," since they were recognized as "the vanguard of modernization in their family and society" (Fong 2004, 632).

The story of Shizuko (case 15) supports these views. A female entrepreneur born in Shandong Province, China, she started her entrepreneurial career with a food firm exporting sugar from her native country to Japan. Shizuko said she became an entrepreneur primarily because of her parents' "push." Since moving to Japan in 1996, her parents had been telling her how much they expected her to be successful there. They also expressed how they would emotionally and financially support her. The high expectations of Shizuko's parents encouraged her to start the business independently. Shizuko said her parents did not want the money they gave her back and the best reward they expected was her successful career in Japan.

Overall, the first type of flows involved in establishing Chinese entrepreneurs' transnational businesses in Japan is primarily characterized, then, by financial support from one's family. Such transnational financial support in the initial phases could be easily overlooked because we tend to pay more attention to established businesses here. However, financial support from family members is critical because of the difficulty in obtaining it from the host society's financial institutions. Moreover, these Chinese newcomer entrepreneurs were more likely to use the money from parents to start their businesses than that borrowed from or pooled with friends, because it gave them the freedom to decide on their business ventures independently. In this sense, I argue that transnational financial flows from China to Japan are an indispensable stepping stone in the future development of their transnational businesses.

The backflows of social capital

In the discussions regarding immigrant entrepreneurship in Anthropology and Sociology, social embeddedness may have received more scrutiny than economic transactions to date. For Chinese entrepreneurs of the older generations, intense emotional and social attachments to their hometowns ensured the success of their transnational economic activities (Kuhn 2009). Chinese newcomer entrepreneurs nowadays rely on their social networks and connections in both host and home countries meanwhile (Wong 2006). The ones that I interviewed indeed have various personal connections in both China and Japan. However, not all such personal social networks can be defined as “social capital” because, in entrepreneurship studies, only those networks that help entrepreneurs identify business opportunities, access financial resources and tacit knowledge, and recruit employees are considered to be so (Stuart and Sorenson 2005). My study shows that social capital favoring these individuals’ entrepreneurship primarily emerged in the host country, and they needed to revert to previous or develop new social capital in the homeland to build transnational businesses.

When talking about the initiation of their businesses, many Chinese newcomer entrepreneurs thought that remaining well-connected in Japan was imperative. The increasing influence of social capital in the country of settlement on their entrepreneurial activities derived first from the expansion of their social networks in Japan. The entrepreneurial success of overseas Chinese was previously thought to benefit from self-enclosed and self-sustaining ethnic enclaves, specifically the early Chinatowns in host countries (Min Zhou and Logan 1989; Zhou 1992). Although nowadays there are still geographical concentrations of Chinese newcomers in Japan (Yamashita 2010, 2013), compared with their predecessors the newcomers can socially integrate into the host society better and build various ethnic and non-ethnic social networks based on changes in residency status (Zhu 2003).

Moreover, the expanding nature of social networks in Japan is also related to the newcomer entrepreneurs’ initial business orientations. For instance, Chensen (case 1), born to a family in Shanghai that held beliefs about traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), moved to Japan in the early 1990s. He opened his first acupuncture and massage store after his study with a TCM practitioner in Japan. Thanks to regular both Chinese and Japanese clients, it only took a few years to expand to seven stores in the center of Tokyo. Chensen told me that at the beginning his ambition was not to conduct transnational business but only to take root in Japan. Therefore, he was deeply conscious of the importance of integrating in Japan not only in his business life but also his private one, too.

However, with the competition having become increasingly fierce in recent years, Chensen realized that he must cast his eyes on other industries. After discovering that Tai Chi was becoming increasingly popular in Japan, he started a new business introducing professional trainers therein to the latter’s gyms. After living in Japan for 20 years, renouncing his Chinese citizenship, and marrying a Japanese wife, he

had to confront the difficulty of searching for social capital in China to support his transnational labor-dispatch agency. Chensen's case demonstrates that despite transnational tendencies, Chinese newcomer entrepreneurs mainly initiated businesses requiring deep social interaction with and integration into the host society. However, the lack of favorable social capital in their country of origin was a tough nut to crack.

Beatrice Zani (2018) discovered that Chinese female migrants in Taiwan who had established transnational economies needed to reactivate and redeploy emotional and social networks in China to prosper. The development of their transnational businesses is also accompanied by the rebuilding of and transitions in previous social capital. Because of the difficulties of finding appropriate business partners in China who could help ensure the continued growth of their transnational businesses, many research participants relied on overseas Chinese associations in Japan. For instance, Sayuri (case 14) moved to the latter as a dependent with her husband, who was employed as an IT engineer in a Japanese company. After being a housewife for a few years, she set up an IT consulting firm with her husband. Being aware of the business opportunities arising from Japan's enormous demand for IT talent and the large population of such engineers in China, they decided to change their business focus to the labor dispatch of transnational IT professionals. Although they are well-connected in Japan's own IT industry, due to their lack of close connections with China's they could not initially find proper cooperative partners to help introduce them to Chinese IT talents and professionals. Afterward, they joined the overseas Chinese IT Enterprises Credit Association, which connects Chinese domestic IT enterprises, overseas Chinese IT companies in Japan, and Japanese IT companies. Sayuri admitted that without the channel provided by the association, their transnational business could not have thrived: they needed a platform for (re)building social connections with the individuals and agencies working in China's IT industry.

Overseas Chinese associations, particularly the fellow provincial/hometown ones prominent in the past, were vital for continued migration because they provided essential public services for the older generations of overseas Chinese and protected the common interests of these migrant communities in their host societies (Kuhn 2009). Nowadays, many of the overseas Chinese newcomer associations in Japan that I visited during my fieldwork are not necessarily based on compatriotism principles but specialize rather in various transnational economic and investment activities. In this respect, these associations can provide transnational platforms for Chinese newcomer entrepreneurs to build business connections with domestic partners back home and help solve the problem of a lack of favorable social capital there.

Apart from searching for new business partners in China through overseas Chinese associations, the flows of returning Chinese migrants from Japan constitute another way to develop the social capital these newcomers' transnational businesses need if

they are to flourish. According to my research participants, these returnees are mainly comprised of two groups: family members and former employees respectively. While those I interviewed expressed their preference to continue living and running businesses in Japan in the future, the latter is not the final place of settlement for many Chinese newcomers. Instead, many of them decided to return home (Achenbach 2017).

As one of the earliest Chinese newcomers I spoke to, Oda (case 11) came to Japan as an international student in 1991. Because she had a strong wish to be self-employed, she and her brother, who also studied in Japan, opened a Chinese restaurant in Ikebukuro, Tokyo, after graduation. Her business thrived. After a few years, she owned three restaurants in Tokyo's main commercial areas. Since her brother's wife and child both live in China, he decided to return home to be with his family. After discussing the issue, Oda and her brother found that it was possible to develop their business into a transnational restaurant chain. Therefore, after returning, her brother started taking charge of the new restaurants in their hometown, Dalian, Liaoning Province. Oda said that, like many Chinese newcomer entrepreneurs taking root in Japan, she had been living there for decades, and most of her personal connections were concentrated in the host country. Except for her parents, she had very few close connections in China, let alone social capital for developing a transnational business. In her view, her brother's decision to return brought the opportunity to expand her business back in China.

Besides this, returning former employees can also benefit the development of transnational businesses. For instance, Jianwei's (case 4) first venture was a cosmetic store in Tokyo targeting Chinese tourists. With the increasing demand for transnational procurement services in China from the 2010s, he started considering exporting Japanese cosmetics there. Since founding a cosmetics firm in 2013, his full-time employees (all Chinese migrants) have changed several times. Nevertheless, Jianwei did not see these frequent personnel changes as a crisis but as a chance for his transnational trade to prosper because some of his former employees who returned home became the first dealer group in China. "Doing transnational business needs the support of stable and reliable social networks," said Jianwei, "my former employees are trustworthy and familiar with the cosmetic industry. They are the right persons to help us expand the business transnationally" (Interview on July 17, 2019, Tokyo). The case at hand demonstrates that the backflows of Chinese newcomers from Japan to China might change former employer-employee relationships into business partnerships when one's trade goes transnational.

As the initial flows involve financial support from the homeland as a key stepping stone in Chinese newcomers' transnational businesses, the backflows from Japan to China — characterized by the rebuilding and relocating of social capital in the homeland — provide the channels for this. After taking root in Japan, Chinese entrepreneurs confronted the difficulty of (re)building social capital back home. To provide for intense transnational commercial engagement, these entrepreneurs need

to create channels with the aid of overseas Chinese associations and as based on the return migrant flows between the two countries.

Bidirectional transnational flows of commodities

After introducing the “stepping stone” and “channel” aspects of these transnational businesses, we proceed now to the “backbone”: transnational flows of commodities. In Chinese newcomers’ transnational businesses, the latter flows are bidirectional and include both goods and services. These transnational commodity flows do not necessarily require the newcomer entrepreneurs’ frequent movement between China and Japan. Thanks to advanced communication technologies and benefiting from their established transnational business networks, these individuals are not forced to become commercial “high-flying astronauts” (Wong 2006, 167) if they wish to prosper.

One feature of this third type of flows is that research participants tended to establish correlated transnational businesses instead of only playing roles as intermediary agencies in transnational economies. Sugiyama (case 16) is a good example here. His initial such business, for instance, exported chestnuts from China to Japan. Not content to be a broker, he set up a chestnut-processing plant in Japan and established a transnational industrial chain, including raw-material planting, export trade, food processing, and online/offline food stores. These circumstances are not exceptional. Sayuri’s (case 14) labor-dispatch agency not only provides services vis-à-vis introducing Chinese IT professionals to Japan but also IT consultancy. For most, their vision was not only to export commodities and services from one country to another. To explore further business opportunities, these entrepreneurs had, rather, incorporated transnational commodities into broader economic activities in the two countries.

Apart from the transnational-business ecosystem, we cannot overlook the important role of new social media in this final kind of flows. With the progress of digital technology, online marketing strategies through Internet use and mobile applications have received increasing attention in transnational entrepreneurship studies (Chen 2006; Sirkeci 2013; Zani 2018; 2020). For instance, Yubing (case 19) is the owner of a firm exporting popular Japanese cosmetics, electronic household appliances, and game machines to China. However, with the increase of competitors in this field, she realized that the business would slump if she could not find something new besides these traditional items of trade. On a trip to a village near Kyoto in 2017, she was attracted to traditional Japanese lacquerware and thought they would also prove popular in China. She had by now established stable supply chains and sales channels for the items already being sold. However, to introduce and promote new commodities, she needed to be innovative. Yubing and her team started using social media as the main marketing channel for the new goods. On her TikTok account, she posted many short videos introducing traditional Japanese lacquerware and gained 10,000 followers. The new marketing channel brought potential customers to

her transnational business. Whether live webcasts or short videos, many Chinese entrepreneurs admitted that online marketing had become indispensable to their transnational businesses because it increases not only their overall volume of trade but also helps diversify the commodities traded between China and Japan.

While broad market prospects and fast-developing technologies seem to foresee a promising future for the transnational businesses operating between China and Japan, some entrepreneurs pointed out that transnational commodity flows were more vulnerable than people thought. Depending on the nature of their business, these transnational commodity flows are influenced by different factors such as trade policies, import and export duties, and marketing conditions, among which the China-Japan relationship was one of the most frequently mentioned factors during our talks. However, in the narratives of my research participants, the circumstances influencing their transnational commodity flows here did not refer to the two countries' diplomatic relations but rather to the contemporary social discourses on the other country. For example, when I talked with Shizuko (case 15), a female entrepreneur running a food business, about the most significant crisis in her entrepreneurial career to date she told me that her sales performance suffered a disastrous decline in 2008 and 2009 due to the "poisoned dumpling incident." In 2008, a batch of frozen dumplings imported from China were revealed to include poisonous substances. The incident incurred broad subsequent public concern and hostility toward goods imported to Japan from China, which caused extensive damage to those entrepreneurs running food and catering businesses.

Shizuko's firm mainly brought Chinese candy to Japan, but due to the baneful social influences her volume of trade decreased by approximately 80 percent in the space of two years. She told me that almost all food businesses dealing with China-Japan transnational goods were influenced because local clients tended to shun foodstuffs from China at the time. It made her realize that transnational trade was not as stable as expected. In 2012, meanwhile, a surge of anti-Japanese sentiment caused mass strikes and demonstrations in mainland China. Whether in services or goods, the businesses that these entrepreneurs ran in China related to Japan — be they restaurants with Japanese decoration styles or Japanese training schools. However, anything related to Japan and Japanese commodities would cause deep hatred at the time, with such extreme sentiment casting a heavy shadow over transnational commodities flows.

Apart from China-Japan relations, some research participants pointed out also the considerable influence of natural disasters on these transnational commodity flows. One representative example is the 2011 Tōhoku earthquake. According to the statistics of the Immigration Services Agency of Japan (2019), compared with the preceding year, the number of new arrivals from mainland China (all visa types) in 2011 saw an approximate 40 percent reduction in numbers. Less willingness to come to Japan influenced many transnational businesses providing study-abroad, labor-dispatch, and tourism services here.

For instance, Sunjian's (case 18) early transnational businesses had two aspects to them. In China, he opened a travel agency helping Chinese tourists apply for visas and suggesting travel plans. In Japan, he managed two guesthouses in Tokyo, and many of his travel-agency customers liked to stay in his guesthouses at a discounted rate. This project went well until the 2011 earthquake. Sunjian told me that many customers who had plans to come to Japan canceled their trip because they were concerned about the aftershocks and nuclear disasters. To keep the company running, he put this project on hold for a few years and started undertaking the outsourcing of hotel housekeeping services instead. With the number of Chinese tourists willing to visit Japan reviving a few years later, he restarted his two earlier transnational businesses from 2015 onward. However, another unexpected incident came as a terrible blow to his business in 2020.

The latter was another challenging year for these entrepreneurs. With the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, many of them have suffered traumatic shocks. For instance, Sato (case 13), a young male entrepreneur running a transnational labor-dispatch agency, told me that the impact was so overwhelming that he might have to reconsider his line of business as it relies on the transnational movement of labor — something the pandemic has hit hard. Not only related strict entry and exit policies but also people's unwillingness to work abroad could not have come as a worse time for the transnational service provider. Although having focused on labor dispatch for several years now, Sato admitted that he currently felt at a loss about what to do and intended to shift his business focus to a café that he invested in a few years ago in Japan.

In short, promoting transnational commodity flows between China and Japan has become the focus of these entrepreneurs. Based on broad transnational commercial networks, favorable trade policies, and extensive market demand, transnationalism has become one of the most promising pathways to commercial development. On the other hand, however, as many entrepreneurs who have rich experience in conducting transnational business pointed out, trading across borders could also be fraught with uncertainty. Many of them either temporarily stopped their trade or directly found other business opportunities unrelated to transnational goods or services. Therefore, I argue that we should not presume that going transnational is the ultimate objective of overseas Chinese entrepreneurs. Confronting different situations and challenges, these individuals must adjust their business strategies accordingly; their transnational endeavors may, in consequence, be only one phase in their long entrepreneurial careers.

Concluding remarks and future perspectives

This paper has aimed to explicate how transnational businesses operating between China and Japan formed and developed step by step. It identified three phases herein, as based on three types of transnational flows. The first phase is characterized by transnational financial flows from China to Japan. Due to the difficulties of obtaining

support from Japan's financial institutions, Chinese entrepreneurs viewed receiving it instead from family members in China as being the most appreciated means of funding. The second phase features backflows of social capital for the establishment of transnational business channels. The lack of stable and trustworthy business networks in China was a common difficulty confronting these transnational entrepreneurs. With the aid of overseas Chinese associations and returning Chinese migrants, they managed to activate and locate social capital again in the homeland. The third and final phase, meanwhile, is transnational commodity flows. The establishment of transnational-business ecosystems and the increased trend of using social media for marketing have largely expanded the variety, amount, and depth of these third kinds of flows.

The cases presented here illustrated the three core characteristics of transnational flows. First, the existence of three phases here — starting from financial support, then comes social capital, afterward commodities and services — indicates that these transnational flows are staged. That is not to say that each phase refers exclusively to only one transnational flow. Admittedly, many entrepreneurs interviewed kept expanding their transnational networks after their related businesses had gotten on the right track. However, as has been shown, the transnational flows of financial support, social capital, and commodities/services are characteristic of each phase of their business development. Second, the empirical study also indicated that transnational flows could be both unidirectional and bidirectional. The financial support from China to Japan and the backflows of social capital in the opposite direction were unidirectional, whereas the commodity and services flows happened both ways.

Moreover, the paper also showed that even fully fledged transnational businesses were repeatedly confronted with great uncertainty, too. Entrepreneurs being able to mobilize constant flows of resources in different development stages constitutes the foundation of their transnational endeavors. However, this does not mean that these transnational flows are always steady. Despite the great market potential, such flows between China and Japan can also be affected by noneconomic factors such as political conflicts and natural disasters. In this respect, “flows” stands for both continuity and instability in transnational businesses.

The implication of all this is to draw attention to the necessity of reconsidering the embeddedness approach traditionally taken to transnational business. That approach stresses static opportunity structures between homeland and country of settlement. However, this study shifted the focus instead to dynamic transnational flows and dissected the formation and development of transnational businesses operating between China and Japan by pointing out the different phases, natures, and directions of related flows. Focus on transnational flows remedies the ambiguity of the embeddedness approach and help us better understand how transnational businesses form and develop. Given that the current empirical study focused only on Chinese immigrants' transnational ventures between Japan and their homeland, further

investigations could look at whether newcomer entrepreneurs in other countries of settlement also went through similar processes and whether the related transnational flows involve more than two countries. Besides, quantitative research could also further verify the correlations between such flows' stages, contents, and directions by quantifying those of various other capitals and commodities.

References

- Achenbach, Ruth. 2015. *Return Migration Decisions: A Study on Highly Skilled Chinese in Japan*. Frankfurt: Springer VS.
- Chen, Wenhong. 2006. "The Impact of Internet Use on Transnational Entrepreneurship: The Case of Chinese Immigrants to Canada." In *New Technologies in Global Societies*, edited by Pui-lam Law, Leopoldina Fortunati, and Shanhua Yang, 197–220. New Jersey: World Scientific.
- Coates, Jamie. 2019. "The Cruel Optimism of Mobility: Aspiration, Belonging, and the 'Good Life' among Transnational Chinese Migrants in Tokyo." *Position* 27, no. 3 (August): 469–97. <https://doi.org/10.1215/10679847-7539277>.
- Drori, Israel, Benson Honig, and Ari Ginsberg. 2010. "Researching Transnational Entrepreneurship: An Approach Based on the Theory of Practice." In *Transnational and Immigrant Entrepreneurship in a Globalized World*, edited by Benson Honig, Israel Drori, and Barbara Carmichael, 3–30. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Drori, Israel, Benson Honig, and Mike Wright. 2009. "Transnational Entrepreneurship: An Emergent Field of Study." *Entrepreneurship: Theory and Practice* 44: 1001–22. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6520.2009.00332.x>.
- Fong, Vanessa. 2004. "Filial Nationalism among Chinese Teenagers with Global Identities." *American Ethnologist* 31, no. 4 (November): 63–48. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4098872>
- Giacomo, Solano. 2020. "The Mixed Embeddedness of Transnational Migrant Entrepreneurs: Moroccans in Amsterdam and Milan." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 46, no. 10 (February): 2067–85. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2018.1559999>.
- Granovetter, Mark. 1985. "Economic Action and Social Structure: The Problem of Embeddedness." *American Journal of Sociology* 91, no. 3 (November): 481–510. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2780199>.
- Guarnizo, Luis E., and Michael P. Smith. 1998. "The Locations of Transnationalism." In *Transnationalism from Below*, edited by Michael P. Smith, and Luis E. Guarnizo, 3–30. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers.
- Higuchi, Naoto. 2010. "Zainichi Gaikokujin no Esuniku Bijinesu: Kokusekibetsu Hikaku no Kokoromi [Migrants' Ethnic Businesses in Japan: Based on the Comparisons by Nationality]." *Asia Pacific Review*, no. 7 (September): 2–16. <https://ci.nii.ac.jp/naid/40017293758>.
- Higuchi, Naoto. 2012. "Nihon no Esuniku Bijinesu wo Meguru Mitorizu [A Review of Japan's Ethnic Business]." In *Ethnic Businesses in Japan*, edited by Naoto Higuchi, 1–36. Kyoto: Sekaishiso.
- Immigration Services Agency of Japan. 2019. "Statistics on Foreign Residents in Japan." Accessed August 28, 2021. https://www.isa.go.jp/en/policies/statistics/toukei_ichiran_touroku.html.
- Ito, Tairo. 1995. "Kantoken ni Okeru Shinkakyō no Esuniku Bijinesu: Esuniku na Kizuka no Sentaku Katei wo Chūshin ni [Chinese Newcomers' Ethnic Businesses in Kanto: A Focus on the Selection of Ethnic Bonds]." *Japanese Urban Sociology Annual Report* 13: 5–21. https://www.jstage.jst.go.jp/article/jpasurban1983/1995/13/1995_13_5/_pdf.
- Japan Student Services Organization. 2020. "Result of an Annual Survey of International Students in Japan 2019." Accessed August 27, 2021. <https://www.studyinJapan.go.jp/en/statistics/zaiseiki/index.html>.

- Kloosterman, Robert, and Jan Rath. 2001. "Immigrant Entrepreneurs in Advanced Economies: Mixed Embeddedness Further Explored." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 27, no. 2 (April): 189–201. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13691830020041561>.
- Kuhn, Philip A. 2009. *Chinese Among Others: Emigration in Modern Times*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Light, Ivan. 2007. "Global Entrepreneurship and Transnationalism." In *Handbook of Research on Ethnic Minority Entrepreneurship: A Co-Evolutionary View on Resource Management*, edited by Dana Léo-Paul, 3–15. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.
- Lin, Xiaohua, Shaw Tao. 2012. "Transnational Entrepreneurs: Characteristics, Drivers, and Success Factors." *Journal of International Entrepreneurship* 10, no. 1 (January): 50–69. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10843-011-0082-1>.
- Liu, Hong. 2012. "Transnational Chinese Sphere in Singapore: Dynamics, Transformations and Characteristics." *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs* 41, no. 2 (June): 37–60. <https://doi.org/10.1177/186810261204100203>.
- Liu-Farrer, Gracia. 2007. "Producing Global Economies from Below: Chinese Immigrant Transnational Entrepreneurship in Japan." In *Deciphering the Global: Its Scales, Spaces and Subjects*, edited by Saskia Sassen, 179–99. New York: Routledge.
- Liu-Farrer, Gracia. 2011. *Labour Migration from China to Japan: International Studies, Transnational Migrants*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Nihon Keizai Shimbun. 2010. "Gyōza Jiken, Shōhisha no Fushin Nezuyoku Reshoku Shijō ni Eikyō Naogyōza Jiken, Shōhisha no Fushin Nezuyoku Hiyashoku Shijō ni Eikyō Nao [The Dumpling Incident, Consumer Distrust and Its Effects on Frozen Food Market]." *Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, March 28, 2010. https://www.nikkei.com/article/DGXNASDD2700Y_X20C10A3TJC000/.
- Nyíri, Pál. 2010. *Mobility and Cultural Authority in Contemporary China*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.
- Nyíri, Pál. 2011. "Chinese Entrepreneurs in Poor Countries: A Transnational 'middleman Minority' and Its Futures." *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* 12, no. 1 (March): 145–53. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14649373.2011.532985>.
- Portes, Alejandro, Luis Eduardo Guarnizo, and William J. Haller. 2002. "Transnational Entrepreneurs: An Alternative Form of Immigrant Economic Adaptation." *American Sociological Review* 67, no. 2 (April): 278–98. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3088896>.
- Quan, Rose, Mingyue Fan, Michael Zhang, and Huan Sun. 2019. "A Dynamic Dual Model: The Determinants of Transnational Migrant Entrepreneurs' Embeddedness in the UK." *Journal of Entrepreneurship, Management and Innovation* 15, no. 2 (January): 29–56. <https://doi.org/10.7341/20191522>.
- Razin, Eran. 2002. "The Economic Context, Embeddedness and Immigrant Entrepreneurs." *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research* 8, no. 1/2 (February): 162–67. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13552550210428061>.
- Ren, Na, and Hong Liu. 2015. "Traversing between Transnationalism and Integration: Dual Embeddedness of New Chinese Immigrant Entrepreneurs in Singapore." *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal* 24, no. 3 (July): 298–326. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0117196815594719>.
- Ren, Na, and Hong Liu. 2019. "Domesticating 'Transnational Cultural Capital': The Chinese State and Diasporic Technopreneur Returnees." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 45, no. 13 (October): 2308–27. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2018.1534583>.
- Sirkeci, Ibrahim. 2013. *Transnational Marketing and Transnational Consumers*. Berlin: Springer.
- Stuart, Toby E., and Olav Sorenson. 2005. "Social Networks and Entrepreneurship." In *Handbook of Entrepreneurship Research. International Handbook Series on Entrepreneurship*, edited by Sharon A. Alvarez, Rajshree Agarwal, and Olav Sorenson, 233–52. Boston: Springer.

- Tan, Lumei, and Jie Liu. 2008. *Shinkakyō to Rokakyō – Henyōsuru Nihon no Chūgokujin Shakai* [The Newcomers and The Older Generations: The Changing Chinese Society in Japan]. Tokyo: Bunshun Shinsho.
- Tsuboya, Mioko. 2008. *Eizoku no Sojyona Chūgokujin Aidentiti: Chūgoku kara no Nihon Ryūgaku ni Miru Kokusai Imin Shisutemu* [Permanent Sojourner, Chinese Identity: View International Migration System from Chinese International Students in Japan]. Tokyo: Yushindo Kobunsha.
- Vertovec, Steven. 2009. *Transnationalism*. London: Routledge.
- Wahlbeck, Östen. 2018. “Combining Mixed Embeddedness and Transnationalism: The Utilization of Social Resources among Turkish Migrant Entrepreneurs.” *Sociologica* 12, no. 2 (December): 73–86. <https://doi.org/10.6092/issn.1971-8853/8623>.
- Weidenbaum, Murray L., and Samuel Hughes. 1996. *The Bamboo Network How Expatriate Chinese Entrepreneurs Are Creating a New Economic Superpower in Asia*. New York: Martin Kessler Books.
- Wong, Bernard P. 2006. *The Chinese in Silicon Valley: Globalization, Social Networks, and Ethnic Identity*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publisher Inc.
- Wong, Lloyd L., and Michele Ng. 2002. “The Emergence of Small Transnational Enterprise in Vancouver: The Case of Chinese Entrepreneur Immigrants.” *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 26, no. 3 (September): 508–30. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2427.00396>.
- Yamashita, Kiyomi. 2010. *Ikebukuro Chainataun: Tonai Saidai no Shinkakyōmachi no Jitsuzo ni Semaru* [Ikebukuro Chinatown: Approaching the Real Image of the Biggest New Chinatown in Tokyo]. Tokyo: Yosensha.
- Yamashita, Kiyomi. 2013. “Ikebukuro Chinatown in Tokyo: The First ‘New Chinatown’ in Japan.” In *Chinatowns around the World Gilded Ghetto, Ethnopolitics, and Cultural Diaspora*, edited by Bernard P. Wong, and Tan Chee Beng, 247–62. Leiden: Brill.
- Zani, Beatrice. 2018. “Gendered Transnational Ties and Multipolar Economies: Chinese Migrant Women’s WeChat Commerce in Taiwan.” *International Migration* 57, no. 24 (October): 232–46. <https://doi.org/10.1111/imig.12526>.
- Zani, Beatrice. 2020. “WeChat, We Sell, We Feel: Chinese Women’s Emotional Petit Capitalism.” *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 23, no. 5 (August): 803–20. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1367877920923360>.
- Zhou, Min. 1992. *CHINATOWN: The Socioeconomic Potential of an Urban Enclave*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Zhou, Min and Hong Liu. 2015. “Transnational Entrepreneurship and Immigrant Integration: New Chinese Immigrants in Singapore and the United States.” In *Immigration and Work. Research in the Sociology of Work* 27, edited by Jody A. Vallejo, 169–201. UK: Emerald Group.
- Zhou, Min, and John R. Logan. 1989. “Returns on Human Capital in Ethnic Enclaves: New York City’s Chinatown.” *American Sociological Review* 54, no. 5 (October): 809–20. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2117755>.
- Zhu, Huiling. 2003. *Nihon Kakyō kajin Shakai no Hensen: Nicchu Kokko Seijyōka Iko wo Chūshin ni* [The Changes of Chinese Society in Japan after Normalization of Japan-China Diplomatic Relations]. Tokyo: Duan Press.

Research note

Tensions in Local-Global Production of Tourist Spaces in Vietnam: Heritage, Global Flows, and Local Identities

Mirjam Le and Franziska Susana Nicolaisen

Summary

This research note examines the relations between mobility, urban heritage, and locality in Vietnam. The main research question is: Can heritage preservation function as a decolonization project, or does it re-establish structures of internal coloniality? We analyze data on Hội An and Tam Đảo regarding narratives, appropriation, and consumption practices and link our findings to larger processes of decolonization. The paper argues that urban heritage preservation can function as a decolonization project, promoting emancipation for parts of Vietnamese society. While heritage is perceived as inherently local, its production often leads to a transfer of ownership from local communities to the national and international levels. However, due to globalized flows of knowledge, aspirations, and power in the tourist sector, it simultaneously re-establishes structures of internal coloniality in Vietnamese society. The emerging interface between global flows and local aspiration creates a landscape of spatial consumption, undermining local ownership of urban heritage space and alienating locals.

Keywords: heritage, coloniality, kitschification, tourism

Mirjam Le finished her Ph.D. on small-town urbanization and the production of urban space in Vietnam at the University of Passau in October 2022. She now works as a researcher on a project on citizenship in Vietnam in cooperation with the University of Passau and Franziska Nicolaisen.

mirjam.le@united-le.com

Franziska Susana Nicolaisen is working as a research assistant on a project on tourism in small cities at the University of Darmstadt. Her Ph.D. project focuses on heritage and urbanization in Vietnam. Since 2020 she has been working on citizenship in Vietnam in cooperation with the University of Passau and Mirjam Le.

franziska.nicolaisen@gmx.de

Introduction

Background and research question

In 2012, Western media reported on the opening of a replica of a small Austrian village in the southern Chinese province of Guangdong (Bell 2012). Since then, imitation landscapes based on either Western spatial forms or massive monuments have been constructed all over East- and Southeast Asia. These seemingly artificial landscapes provide sought-after travel destinations for domestic tourists, while Western tourists view them with ambivalence, citing a supposed lack of authenticity.

Tourism is rooted in mobility, creating the physical and virtual spatial movements of ideas, goods, and people in global flows. Flows of tourists searching for authenticity encounter historically rooted landscapes that make up the emerging tourist interface. They produce new touristic landscapes for consumption, embedded in the historical context of colonization and power imbalance (Michaud and Turner 2006). These flows of tourists and global narratives on authenticity and entertainment are embedded in processes of coloniality (Mignolo 2016; Quijano 2007). Coloniality describes the durable and intertwined structures of power and control first established during the colonial era.

The two case studies in this work, Hội An and Tam Đảo, are the results of past engagement with mobile actors and ideas. Hội An, located on the coast of Central Vietnam, was founded as an important regional trading port. In the 1990s, Hội An re-emerged as a national heritage site and one of Vietnam's most important tourist spots, being named a UNESCO heritage site in 1999. The French established Tam Đảo in the early 20th century as a hill station around 80 km from Hanoi, Vietnam's capital city. The area has been rediscovered in recent years by a growing urban middle class seeking recreation.

We argue that the original creation of these two places and their recent transformation into heritage sites embed these spaces into global mobility flows. The resulting appropriation and commodification combine historical material structures with emerging artificial tourist landscapes oriented towards consumption. Flows of traders, colonialists, state authorities, investors, and tourists, who bring their aspirations and knowledge, have continuously shaped both towns. Trying to integrate these outside ideals into their existing landscapes, both Hội An and Tam Đảo are today considered heritage sites by actors not native to these places. These mobile global actors continue to transform Hội An and Tam Đảo, raising the main research question of this paper: Can heritage preservation function as a decolonization project, or does it re-establish structures of internal coloniality?

Data collection and methodology

We engage with this question based on (1) a review of literature on mobility and heritage production, (2) an evaluation of visual qualitative data from participatory

fieldwork in 2015 and 2020, and (3) an analysis of image representations and reviews on online travel sites. We analyze the collected data regarding narratives, appropriation, and consumption practices and link our findings to larger processes of decolonization in the framework of global commodification and mobility.

The first section of this paper explains how the mobility of ideas and people continuously shapes urban spaces and local communities. We argue that urbanization, colonization, and tourism are inherently intertwined. Using the example of heritage space in Hội An and Tam Đảo, we look at the production, appropriation, and commodification of heritage sites. We argue that new global mobilities of ideas, money, and people connected to tourism transform local practices and identities. We conclude that the production of heritage in Vietnam constitutes emancipation from former colonial structures while also enforcing the emergence of new power hierarchies, which often alienate local communities.

For this paper, the local, as spatially bound patterns of interaction, is defined by integration processes that structure space to create a spatial organization in which specific knowledge rooted in this spatial unit has meaning. As the local has a spatial connotation, the global “denotes an abstraction from space in terms of flows, ideas, virtual realities, and images, while local in contrast refers to real spaces” (Korff 2003, 2). Simultaneously, local and global are intertwined as they encompass and constitute each other to produce localities in the framework of globalization.

Literature review

Politics of mobility and flows of people and ideas

All cities are representations of their locality and history. Cities are also the result of the flow of mobile ideas concerning their material forms and acceptable behavior for people moving through them (Söderström 2013). Because urban spaces are organized around encounters and communication (Arendt 1958; Schmid 2012; Sennett 2010), they facilitate the flow of goods, ideas, and aspirations. Consequently, urban spaces are always locally rooted but with a global outlook.

As mobility transforms the materiality of cities, it offers access to modernity for local people while appropriating their lived space for economic and political interests (Schmid 2012). Therefore, mobility is embedded in structures of power which Tim Cresswell (2010) calls the politics of mobility. Depending on underlying power relations, the capacity to be mobile enables:

- participation in the construction of the local heritage space,
- coping with processes of appropriation, and
- realization of individual aspirations in the context of commodification.

Furthermore, spatial mobility allows new aspirations and reimagination of the material space as those traveling are confronted with differences in meaning, form,

and behavior. As mobility transforms historical urban spaces, these historical spaces are (re-)discovered for travel and tourist activities. Urban space becomes a heritage space that combines materiality with the practices and traditions rooted in it. However, because heritage needs to be locally rooted to maintain its authenticity, the focus of urban development shifts from modernization to preservation to keep its attraction for tourists. Here, authenticity is understood as practices, people, and materiality conceived in encounters as genuine and true to the imagined past. Authenticity is a perceived representation of the past and the contemporary spatial and social landscape in which practices and people are embedded.

Relation between colonialism, tourism, and urbanism in Vietnam

Tourism in Vietnam is intrinsically connected to colonialism. French colonists brought the practice of tourism to Vietnam and created tourist infrastructure in the second half of the 19th century (Peyvel and Võ 2016). They invested in infrastructure for seaside resorts and hill stations as a reprieve from tropical heat in the cities (Demay 2014). Hill stations combined lush nature and rural peacefulness with modern amenities and leisure activities. To Westerners, these hill stations were located outside of time and space, isolated from the colonial state. They created an island of metropolitan culture that evoked the motherland. Colonial travel destinations thereby connected colonies with the space of the home country. This connection allowed European colonialists to envision themselves as modern and cosmopolitan, which was reinforced when returning to the metropolitan center with pictures and artifacts to present to an audience (McDonald 2017; Linehan, Clark, and Xie 2020). Hence travel mobility was intertwined with the idea of modernity. The consumption of books and visuals also made colonial spaces accessible for people in the metropolitan center. This representation of foreign space for those at home is still part of travel practices today.

Tourism contributed to infrastructure development in the periphery of Indochina, like transport, electricity, and leisure facilities. These developments altered the spiritual and livelihood functions attached to the transformed physical landscapes (Peyvel and Võ 2016, 38). The transformed spaces, influenced by outside ideas, were integrated into the concept of a Vietnamese community and the narrative of historical continuity.

Modern-day consumption of historical urban spaces by tourists continues the process of spatial transformation and the reproduction of colonial tourism practices. Tourism affects urban materialities like architecture and the functional role of the city (Peyvel and Võ 2016, 39). Former recreational sites serve as tourist destinations and generate revenue (Peyvel and Võ 2016, 38; Michaud and Turner 2006). Coastline privatization (Peyvel and Võ 2016, 38) and ecological destruction due to increasing tourism have entered public discourse (Hitchcock, King, and Parnwell 2010; Bourdeau, Gravari-Barbas, and Robinson 2015).

Heritage production and objectification

The production of historical heritage is based on two consecutive transformation processes influenced by flows of ideas and people: (1) the historical creation of urban space based on global ideas on urbanity (Söderström 2013), and (2) its transformation into heritage. The previous taskscape, oriented towards everyday use, changes into a heritagescape and finally a leisurescape, a landscape of escapism, consumption, and leisure activities, based on a process of slow commodification (Mitchell 1998, 276). Ingold (1993) defines a taskscape as a socially constructed space of human activities embedded in spatial materiality. In this sense, heritagescape is the landscape of the material and social past reconstructed in the framework of modern practices of development, tourism, and socio-economic practices.

Towards a heritagescape: Construction and appropriation

Hitchcock, King, and Parnwell (2010, 2) cite Melanie Smith (2003), who defines “heritage” as an interpretation process rather than a static collection of material things. Heritage production begins with the construction of heritage, first by colonial powers, then—after independence—by the elites of the new nation-state. Ian C. Glover (2003) cites Benedict Anderson (1983) to explain the recontextualization and depreciation of archaeological sites by colonial rulers as a tool of legitimization. After independence, as part of nation-building efforts, heritage was recontextualized in narratives of pre-colonial era accomplishments, traditions, and national identity (Hitchcock, King, and Parnwell 2010, 264). Today, state actors still use the decolonization of national heritage as a political tool to increase state legitimacy, creating spaces of contestation. Enduring structures of coloniality (Mignolo 2016; Quijano 2007) force previously colonized countries to confront the contextualization of their heritage. Jan Ifversen and Laura Pozzi (2020) describe four approaches to heritage production:

- removal of material traces,
- repression of memories and histories of colonialism,
- reframing of memories and material space with narratives of modernization and independence,
- the re-emergence of alternative narratives.

This process creates sanitized historic spaces (Linehan, Clark, and Xie 2020). Colonial roots of violence and dispossession are ignored and their memory is removed to produce enjoyable tourist landscapes. Instead of confronting the colonial past, it is disguised and transformed into an aspirational item for consumers (Linehan, Clark, and Xie 2020).

Unintentionally, this creates spaces of symbolic annihilation, which silences local memories and reproduces spaces of colonial violence. As decolonization becomes

an elite project, localized forms of knowledge, meaning, and materiality are decontextualized to support nation-building projects (Ifversen and Pozzi 2020; Linehan, Clark, and Xie 2020).

Following heritage construction, historically rooted spaces are appropriated by international actors, such as global investors and UNESCO, with their understanding of heritage. UNESCO, for example, focuses on the originality of material structures to maintain authenticity. Hence UNESCO sets rules for conserving heritage sites, emphasizing preservation (Bui and Le 2017, 292; Avieli 2015, 39–40). These rules partially shift control over these spaces from local authorities and people to the global level.

However, the ownership of tourist infrastructure (Linehan, Clark, and Xie 2020), the imaginations used in marketing, and the production of touristified landscapes also constitute practices of appropriation. With the increasing value of land in tourist hotspots, investors and state actors enter markets and push residents out of competition, resulting in corruption and land rights conflicts. As landscapes of staged encounters emerge, the appropriation of land, traditions, and culture and the enclosure of local spaces like beaches become commonplace (Linehan, Clark, and Xie 2020). This appropriation of localities transforms structures of colonialism into practices of coloniality.

Commodification: Kitschification, nostalgia, and aspirations in the emerging leisurescape

Heritage space is not only produced by global actors and ideas but also by its consumption. The commodification of space, practices, people, and meanings is expressed in the “tourist gaze” (Urry 1993), which reduces encounters to their visual consumption. Travel agencies reimagine previous colonial spaces based on caricature identities and circulate them globally (Linehan, Clark, and Xie 2020) to promote a process of carefully selected representations in touristic encounters (Johnson 2010, 173). The colonial gaze becomes a tourist gaze that manufactures colonial imaginaries (Linehan, Clark, and Xie 2020).

To this effect, processes of “kitschification” transform landscapes in Asia to increase their attractiveness to tourists (Bachimon, Gauché, and Lê 2020). Kitsch represents a simple, charming, albeit artificial view of reality and the illusion of authenticity (Bachimon, Gauché, and Lê 2020). “Kitschification” allows for a cheaper tourist experience, particularly for the middle class in Vietnam. The blending of different styles, including architecture from other epochs and world regions, combined with distorted proportions, evokes uniqueness and extravagance. However, “kitschification” also provides a sense of safety and familiarity because it facilitates orientation and mobility in tourist landscapes (Bachimon, Gauché, and Lê 2020).

Like the colonial powers, who previously built replicas of their countries for recreational purposes, today’s developers produce new levels of kitsch. They use colonial memory to design tourist landscapes based on historical nostalgia (Linehan,

Clark, and Xie 2020; Ifverson and Pozzi 2020 for Shanghai). Nostalgia is rooted in positive emotions around an idealized past based on memories embedded with imagination (Yuanyuan Shi et al. 2021). This nostalgia links kitsch to aspirations (Appadurai 2004), using the past as a frame of reference (Appadurai 2004). The countryside becomes a counter-model to the chaos of modern cities, representing a rural, authentic past (Gillen 2016). Thus nostalgia serves tourists who hope to escape from the demands of modern everyday life (Shi et al. 2021; Mitchell 1998, 274–275).

Nostalgia is not rooted in the history of heritage but visions of an aspired modernity represented by the space (Bachimon, Gauché, and Lê 2020). Rural environments are transformed from productive to decorative landscapes that only simulate a rural lifestyle. This tourist experience encourages consumerism, offers mass-produced souvenirs, provides the backdrop for photos shared on social media, and firmly integrates these spaces into global imagination (Bachimon, Gauché, and Lê 2020). As aspirations are contextualized in global narratives of modernization, consumption, and development, they cause a deep intrusion into existing landscapes due to the creation of kitschified landscapes.

In the emerging societies of Southeast Asia, aspirations often center around self-perception as a modern citizen. Consequently, tourist sites have to combine past and future, tradition and modernity, authenticity and comfort to fulfill these aspirations.

Process of heritage production and commodification in Hội An and Tam Đảo

Hội An

Production of heritagescape in Hội An

In literature (Bui and Le 2017: 293; UNESCO 2021; Avieli 2015), Hội An is represented as an important port city during the golden age of maritime trade in the region from the 15th century onward. Due to changes in trade routes, the closing of China's borders, and the siltation of the river connection, the main port moved to Da Nang in the early 19th century. In 1884, Hội An became part of the French protectorate of Annam. During this period, colonial architecture influenced the houses built in the old town of Hội An. Due to its small size, limited political importance, and peripheral location, most historical architecture survived the 20th century. In 1999, UNESCO declared Hội An a World Heritage site. Today, French colonial architecture, old Chinese family houses, and assembly halls dominate the ancient town center. Old infrastructure like the famous Japanese bridge is restored and repurposed to serve as museums.

Fig. 1: Restored courtyard in the old town center of Hội An



Photo: Franziska Nicolaisen 2020. CC BY-SA 4.0.

Hội An is the result of historical mobility and was once a symbol of early globalization. However, the architectural landscape became frozen in time with its UNESCO heritage status. Nir Avieli (2015, 47) speaks of “empty shell syndrome.” While the materiality of the space is preserved, its functionality has radically changed. Tourist infrastructure, including hotels, resorts, shops, and restaurants, has replaced everyday urban life (Bui and Le 2017, 295).

While Hội An re-emerged as a recreational consumption space, local authorities aim to promote Hội An as a “cultural city,” including cultural events and a city pass that allows entrance to most historical buildings and museums (Bui and Le 2017; Tran 2014). The focus is on the illusion of historical authenticity. The historical context is simplified and Hội An’s history between 1884 and the modern-day is absent from the tourist experience.

For most of the second half of the 20th century, Hội An’s identity was rooted in rural livelihood (Bui and Le 2017). After Vietnam re-entered the international community in the 1990s, this identity changed. Hội An’s rapid tourist development attracted investors, entrepreneurs, and backpackers, which accelerated processes of

appropriation by “foreigners.” The development of tourism infrastructure leads to local people losing access to public spaces like Cửa Đại Beach.

Fig. 2: Hội An’s old city center between recreational consumption and cultural restoration



Photo: Mirjam Le 2014. CC BY-SA 4.0.

The Vietnamese state perceives the use of public space for private activities as uncivilized. Therefore, authorities regulate behavior and activities such as renovation, shop operation, and motorbike use, to maintain the city's image for tourists (Avieli 2015; Bui and Le 2017). The regulation and control of the old city center in Hội An sanitize urban heritage space from the reality of Vietnamese urban life.

The growing tourist infrastructure has spread into the rural hinterland, integrating the rural landscape and the handicraft villages into the production of Hội An as a tourist site. These rural villages have become part of the leisure industry with guided tours, restaurants, and cooking classes. The rural hinterland is heavily entangled with the global flows of tourists and money, enabling local-global encounters and the expansion of heritage space beyond the historical framework of the old city. While the ancient town center functions as a tourist hub, the city recently redeveloped the Thu Bon River islands, referencing the ancient town's architectural design to increase the urban area. (Bui and Le 2017).

Fig. 3: Redevelopment on Thu Bon River Island with old architectural styles

Photo: Mirjam Le 2014. CC BY-SA 4.0.

On the positive side, Hội An's status as a UNESCO heritage site has provided capital for local people to renovate and maintain their old houses (Avieli 2015; Bui and Le 2015). The emerging hospitality sector has created new labor opportunities. State authorities invest in education for the hospitality sector, for example training tourist guides. However, this sector depends on tourism demand. Moreover, jobs in management are often given to metropolitan elites or expats. At the same time, many locals work long hours in low-paying jobs, for example, in tailors' shops (James 2010). These processes thereby reproduce structures of coloniality where the local community is subordinated to the needs of the tourism sector.

The emerging art scene in Hội An illustrates this complicated interweaving of ownership and appropriation. Hội An's authorities focus on intangible heritage, particularly artisan craftwork, to market the ancient city center (Tran 2014). Private art galleries in the ancient center provide showcases for local, contemporary artists and traditional handicrafts. However, expats own many of these galleries and sell their artwork and narratives of Vietnam. The company Hay Hay illustrates this challenging balance between support for local art and appropriation. Founded as a new art collective by two foreigners trying to support local artists and artisans, it was perceived as a bright spot in the cheap consumption landscape in Hội An. However, over time, Hay Hay became a global design studio located in New Zealand and decorating hotels in Asia with Asian imagery and art (Hay Hay Hotel Art Supplier,

n.d.), reproducing colonial processes whereby foreigners appropriate Vietnamese spaces for consumption purposes.

Leisurescape Hội An

Over the last two decades, Hội An has morphed into a modern consumption space. Domestic tourism and backpackers are slowly being pushed to the margins as the tourist space of the city focuses more on guided tours for affluent Western tourists. (Bui and Le 2017). Commerce is once again the city's driving force, as most buildings in the old town contain high-end tailors or shops for souvenirs, representing kitsch. Hội An has become famous for its tailoring services, even though it is not part of any local tradition or custom. The line between artisan artifacts, art, and kitsch in Hội An's souvenir shops is blurred by a combination of local symbols, like the conical hat, with global symbols, like Christmas decorations. These symbols create exotic visuals not rooted in local identities but in global flows.

Fig. 4: Localized kitsch in a high-end souvenir shop in Hội An



Photo: Mirjam Le 2014. CC BY-SA 4.0.

Beyond the commodification of tourist experiences with kitsch souvenirs, there is also a low-key “kitschification” of the urban landscape, staging the city as picture-perfect. Clean, decorated streets without motorized traffic project an image of Vietnam not found anywhere else. However, this image caters to historical and exotic nostalgia, evoking an alien world known in the West from adventure novels,

portraying a peaceful, better past where everything was colorful and joyful. The use of Cyclos, Vietnam's rickshaw, for tourist entertainment demonstrates this.

Fig. 5: Re-emerging practices: Cyclos as means of transport for tourists



Photo: Mirjam Le 2014. CC BY-SA 4.0.

Authorities have invented several festivals and have reintroduced old games to maintain the illusion of authenticity and provide tourists with entertaining experiences. One example is the moon lantern festival, where tourists put lanterns into the river on the day of the full moon (James 2010; Bui and Le 2017). However, these forms of entertainment, including historical costumes and music, are not part of locals' daily routines.

Referring back to the idea of the empty shell syndrome (Anieli 2015), the city becomes a museum where the experience of Vietnam is "Disneyfied," curated, and manufactured to create a safe travel space. While the staging of the tourist space is prominent, the residual historical material space reduces the need for a "kitschification" of the landscape. Kitsch is relegated to souvenir shops and maintains the impression of artisan handicrafts. However, the everyday activities of the residents are pushed outside of the ancient town and looking for the "real Vietnam" becomes increasingly difficult.

Thus, to fulfill aspirations of rural nostalgia, tourists book tours to surrounding areas where they can pick produce and take cooking classes (Things To Do 2021). In the context of heritage production, this expands the UNESCO heritage concept by

incorporating local practices and landscapes, and offering new sites for encounters. At the same time, the inclusion in these tours of “traditional” games and performances, like those offered by Kybimo garden (Kybimo Garden 2020), appropriate local culture for imitation and “kitschification.” Due to a lack of communication, the blurred lines between Vietnamese rural life and the invented traditions limit opportunities for learning and understanding. Local identities become props for entertainment.

Fig. 6: Souvenir shop in Hội An as emerging leiscapescape



Photo: Mirjam Le 2014. CC BY-SA 4.0.

In contrast to the invented or revived traditions staged for tourists, it is possible to find glimpses of lived Vietnamese tradition in Hội An. One example is the annual celebration of the Vietnamese New Year (Tết). Hội An has a good number of spots that offer tourists the opportunity to experience Tet celebrations. Homestays, for example, offer a festive dinner to their guests. It is also possible to observe celebrations in public spaces, for example, dragon dances in the streets and the burning of offerings. Local decorations, particularly yellow flowers, are commonplace and point to locally rooted traditions. However, it is difficult for tourists to appreciate these examples of modern lived traditions due to a lack of context.

Fig. 7: Lived traditions in local spaces: Tet decorations for the Year of the Goat in Hội An following Central Vietnamese customs



Photo: Mirjam Le 2015. CC BY-SA 4.0.

Beyond the rural and historical nostalgia, which is heavily commodified, lie the economic aspirations of the residents, global investors, and state authorities. Participation in modernity, enabled by financial means and investment, is the main aim. Maintaining Hội An as a heritage site is less focused on local identity and tradition and more on improving economic livelihoods. Thus, while the “kitschification” and use of local identities for tourist entertainment might be problematic with regard to decolonization, it can provide local empowerment where it opens economic opportunities and the realization of local aspirations of modernity.

Tam Đảo

The production of a heritagescape

Tam Đảo was founded in 1907 by French colonists as an exclusive summer retreat for French elites, around 80 km from Hanoi in Vinh Phuc Province, 900 meters above sea level. During colonial times, Tam Đảo was known as “The Đà Lạt of the North,” named after the most famous hill station constructed by the French in the Central Highlands of Vietnam. The name Tam Đảo translates as “Three Islands,” referring to the three mountains in the region. Today Tam Đảo is still known for its nature and temperate climate, with a yearly average temperature of 22.9°C.

Fig. 8: Lived traditions in local spaces: Tet decorations for the Year of the Goat in Hội An following Central Vietnamese customs



Photo: Mirjam Le 2015. CC BY-SA 4.0.

At first, development was slow. In 1912 there were only a few buildings, mainly for military personnel. The first fully equipped hotel opened in 1913. In 1914, private villas were built (Cungphuot 2021). Photographs taken in the 1920s and 1930s show the steep and winding road that led up to the resort and the town's relatively small size. It consisted of large French-style villas, a public swimming pool, parks, a playground, and walkways surrounded by trees. Other infrastructure shown includes electric cables leading up the hill and bridges built across streams (Saigoneer 2017).

As tourism during colonial times contributed to infrastructure development in the periphery, it initiated profound spatial changes. Historical accounts from as early as 1905, written by French colonists, describe the difficulties in developing Tam Đảo as a hill station. During the early years, streets were blocked by flooding and a local man died during the construction of a bridge. In later years, the use of the station as a sanatorium was emphasized (Entreprises Coloniales 2014).

However, unlike Hội An, this historical landscape did not survive the last century. Only one French Catholic church remains as proof of Tam Đảo's historical roots as a hill station. Other colonial traces are ignored or have even been removed. The reclaiming of the space by the Vietnamese government constitutes an act of emancipation, but local people are marginalized in the pursuit of modernization. The lack of historical contextualization also erases negative memories about colonial

power structures, former spiritual meanings, and identity. While this study focuses on the former hill station, which is now the town of Tam Đảo, it is part of Tam Đảo national park, which covers an area of 34,995 ha in three provinces, namely Vĩnh Phúc Province, Tuyên Quang Province, and Thái Nguyên Province.

Fig. 9: Emerging domestic tourist space: Central square in Tam Đảo



Photo: Ronald Hermann 2020. CC BY-SA 4.0.

Tam Đảo is rich in biodiversity. The Vietnamese government designated it as a conservation area in 1977 (Le et al. 2016). The area was then recognized as a national park in March 1996 and is one of the largest national parks in Vietnam. Unlike other areas around Hanoi, Tam Đảo national park has not been transformed into agricultural land. While conserving local biodiversity and species helps preserve a part of Vietnam's natural heritage and identity, it also transfers ownership of the region to the national level.

Tam Đảo district, which comprises not only Tam Đảo town but also communities at the foot of the mountains, is home to a large number of ethnic minorities, predominantly the San Diu minority. With a population of about 10,000, they are one of the smaller ethnic groups in Vietnam. Nevertheless, their folk songs became national intangible cultural heritage in 2019 (Vietnamplus 2014). Continuous interest among tourists in the area offers the opportunity to share and preserve this

culture. However, continued investment, the influx of ethnic Kinh, and employment opportunities in the tourism sector for ethnic youths threaten the preservation of their language and customs.

Tam Đảo town today consists of two key tourist areas, Tam Đảo 1 Tourist Area and Tam Đảo 2 Tourist area, and is foremost a tourist site for the urban middle class in Hanoi and its expat community. While it is still called “The Đà Lạt of the North,” the name now reminds visitors only of the cool climate, fresh air, and breathtaking views that characterize Tam Đảo today. The main attraction of Tam Đảo remains and draws in visitors escaping both heat and the hectic lifestyle of the modern city, thus reviving the colonial practice of traveling to the mountains during summer. Today, Tam Đảo’s image combines nature, recreation, and authenticity. Almost all the historic buildings are gone, destroyed in the 1950s. Instead, new hotels and restaurants have been built in their place. While the long road climbing up the hill still exists, it has been improved to serve modern traffic. Nevertheless, the road is very narrow. Thus vehicles driving in opposite directions have to navigate carefully to pass safely.

Fig. 10: European style architecture dominates the newly constructed urban landscape in Tam Đảo



Photo: Ronald Hermann 2020. CC BY-SA 4.0.

Beyond this focus on serenity, Tam Đảo also represents modern entertainment. The natural scenery and new buildings offer visitors an ideal backdrop for group pictures and selfies. The French Catholic Church is a favorite for wedding pictures, which are extremely popular among Vietnamese. The couples do not necessarily have any connection to the Christian faith or French culture. The Church is reduced to a historical artifact, chosen for its beauty and uniqueness, without actual historical contextualization. Colonial history is only mentioned in tour guides and is not represented anywhere in the material space in Tam Đảo via signs or visible information. In photographs taken in 2008, the old letters denoting the former colonial swimming pool can still be seen, but it is unclear whether those still exist in 2021 (Manhhai, n.d.). Old staircases and fragments of old buildings are still scattered around Tam Đảo, but no conservation effort nor map indicates where these places are.

The emerging leiscapescape

Since its founding in 1907, Tam Đảo has undergone several transformations from war destruction to touristic rediscovery. It developed from an exclusive resort and sanatorium for French elites, to a site in the war against the French, to a place of modern-day entertainment and consumption. While the town's rebuilding started in 1959, it only developed as a tourist destination after 2010. Since then, new hotels, guest houses, shops, and restaurants have been built at a rapid pace. They accommodate the growing number of foreign and domestic tourists and generate new income streams.

Fig. 11: Appropriating nature: Tam Đảo as rediscovered hill station



Photo: Franziska Nicolaisen 2020. CC BY-SA 4.0.

The large number of hotels compared to the local population and the omnipresence of souvenir shops in the town center demonstrate the focus on consumption. There is a strong focus on colorful architecture, referencing European villages combined with different architectural styles, embellishments, and bright colors.

While hill stations, small replicas of the colonial motherland, constituted a form of reverse “exoticism,” recent developments in Tam Đảo demonstrate the modern process of “kitschification.” The most prominent example of this process is “Tam Đảo Castle,” built between 2015 and 2018, mixing neo-Gothic and Renaissance architectural styles (Luxurydesign, n.d.). The architects took inspiration from European castles, most notably Neuschwanstein Castle in Germany, the blueprint for Disney’s Cinderella and Sleeping Beauty Castles (Ghelburi, n.d.). It was designed as a symbol of Tam Đảo (Luxurydesign, n.d.) and is the first visible building when driving up the hill towards the town center.

Fig. 12: Tam Đảo town coming into view from the main road leading up the hill, with Tam Đảo Castle at the forefront



Photo: Franziska Nicolaisen 2020. CC BY-SA 4.0.

Reviews of Tam Đảo Castle are predominantly positive, emphasizing its beauty with adjectives such as “majestic” and “impressive,” and it serves as a popular backdrop for photographs. Even though it is set on a hilltop, visitors can easily reach the castle

on foot. Close to the castle, there is a restaurant with an outdoor terrace. Because the castle is still under renovation, the terrace is popular for taking pictures and enjoying the view.

The production of such a new “European space” with fairytale architecture is not embedded into a historical discourse of colonialism but a fantasy. Marketing on Vietnamese travel sites and blogs only refers to the colonial past as a footnote. However, tourism in Tam Đảo reproduces the aspirations and practices of earlier colonial French tourists. The marketing, directed at a growing Vietnamese middle class, is similar to historical photos depicting the space: golf, nature, and a swimming pool represent continuity from the colonial past.

Fig. 13: Commodification of heritage: Fairy tale architecture as leiscapescape not embedded in historical context



Photo: Ronald Hermann 2020. CC BY-SA 4.0.

Finally, in the case of Tam Đảo, the idea of nature and nostalgia for rural life is prevalent. Travel sites point toward easy access to experiencing nature. The town is located in a national park, so there is some information regarding the biodiversity surrounding Tam Đảo. However, generally, there is a lack of rural context. Nature is an important marketing tool, but at the same time, the development and modernization of space also destroys the existing nature. Nature becomes

domesticated for tourists, staged as a safe space. However, access is limited, so it cannot be freely discovered. Instead, routes exist which are described online for tourists to follow. In a positive sense, this protects nature by limiting access. However, it also produces a level of simulation of the experience of a wild Vietnam.

One of the leading natural sites of Tam Đảo town is the “Silver waterfall” (*Thác Bạc*). However, in online reviews of the site, Vietnamese visitors criticize the smell of the water. Contrary to the expectation of pristine nature, when visitors come down the steep stairway that descends to the waterfall, they are reminded of the toll tourism development has taken on the natural surroundings of Tam Đảo.

Rural mountain landscapes, primary vegetation, and agriculture in high-altitude resorts have symbolized a form of authenticity since the origin of tourism. Tourist aspirations entangle participation in modernity as expressed by consumption and the search for authenticity and nostalgia for a rural and historical past. This entanglement is represented by the staging of the tourist landscape, as seen on tourist websites and Facebook review groups. The created landscape offers two backgrounds for selfies: (1) the lush mountainous landscape, including mysterious clouds and dream-like light, and (2) the recreated European castle and town square. All of this creates an imaginary fairyland, removed from time and space. It combines rural nostalgia, nostalgia for a childlike innocence represented in Disney fairytales, and the drive for modernity to be shown on social media.

One example of the commodification of historical spaces by creating the illusion of authenticity and appealing to nostalgia for an idealized colonial past is a collection of fragrances named after and inspired by Tam Đảo. Marketed as “A memory from the holy forests of Indochina” (Diptyqueoaris 2021) by one of the brand’s founders who spent his childhood in the former French colony, it is produced in France and marketed to an affluent Western middle class.

Discussion: Global flows, the ownership of urban heritage, and coloniality

In this paper, we have discussed two historical urban spaces in Vietnam—the colonial-era hill station Tam Đảo and the pre-colonial trading port, Hội An—and their transformation through mobility, heritage production, and tourism. Both tourist sites are historically located at the interface of global flows of ideas, people, and goods, including trading networks and colonial travel practices. They were thus never merely local but permanently embedded in global narratives. Nowadays, in staging their respective tourist landscapes, both spaces not only present their historical and natural landscapes but integrate them once again into global flows of narratives and identities. We argue that these places move beyond the local narrative on Vietnamese identity as they represent an image of Vietnam to the outside world. As travel agencies market these spaces to a global, mobile audience, they are embedded into processes of alienation from local communities. Leisurescapes with

a strong focus on consumption emerge, partly erasing local realities in favor of exotic fantasies, rural nostalgia, and fictitious historical realities.

Thus, while flows are imagined as mobile and open, in reality, these global flows reshape the existing landscape and erect new boundaries. They limit access, ownership, and local agency for local people in the name of a homogeneous global vision of modernity, tourism, and consumption which washed up in these spaces on the backwash of the flow of tourists, experts, and investors. Consequently, in both locations underlying structures of coloniality have re-emerged. These structures are based on Vietnamese and global inequalities between the center, represented by metropolitan elites, and the periphery, with its local population. While creating new opportunities, tourist consumption excludes those that cannot participate and exploits the local labor force, like in the case of the tailors' in Hội An. This alienation leads to the re-establishment of metropolitan power structures.

However, integration in global flows of ideas, money, goods, and people also opens new opportunities for emancipation for the middle class. With access to the global community, new aspirations can emerge and be realized, for example, for artists in Hội An. For the Vietnamese middle class, domestic tourism allows them to appropriate global leisure practices at home and become part of a globalized, mobile community, shifting frames of reference of a younger generation beyond the local or national framework. The example of Tam Đảo shows that the "Disneyfication" of European architecture into a fairyland can be understood as an appropriation of European culture in a kind of reverse exoticism, similar to the European appropriation of Asian culture. Thus, future research should look at the changing power balance wherein Europe is perceived as a recreational and exotic "other" which provides adventure and excitement. In this sense, the reappropriation of a European space offers an opportunity to realize the aspirations of the urban middle class. However, this emancipation can be understood as a privilege of a mobile middle class that can use their social status to enforce their agency. Lower socio-economic groups cannot participate in these practices of emancipation. Instead, they face internal coloniality due to economic development and modernization. An intertwined and contested relationship exists between decolonization and the reinforcement of previous power structures.

References

- Anderson, Benedict. 1983. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso.
- Appadurai, Arjun. 2004. "The Capacity to Aspire: Culture and the Terms of Recognition." In *Culture and Public Action*, edited by Vijayendra Rai and Michael Walton, 59–84. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Arendt, Hannah. 1958. *The Human Condition*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Avieli, Nir. 2015. "The Rise and Fall (?) of Hoi An, a UNESCO World Heritage Site in Vietnam." *Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia* 30 (1): 35–71. <https://doi.org/10.1355/sj30-1b>.

- Bachimon, Philippe, Evelyne Gauché, and Lê Anh Thu. 2020. "Kitsch Landscapes as Tourist Destinations in South and Southeast Asia (China, Vietnam, Nepal)." *Tourism Review* 17: 1-31. <https://doi.org/10.4000/viatourism.4982>.
- Bell, Bethany. 2012. "Chinese Replica of Austrian Village Unveiled." *BBC*, June 05, 2012. <https://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-asia-18327751>.
- Bourdeau Laurent, Maria Gravari-Barbas, and Mike Robinson. 2015. *World Heritage, Tourism and Identity Inscription and Co-production*. London: Routledge.
- Bui, Huong T., and Andrew Le. 2017. "UNESCO World Heritage Designation: An Opportunity or a Threat to Hoi An Ancient Town (Vietnam)?" In *Tourism and Opportunities for Economic Development in Asia*, edited by Patricia Ordóñez de Pablos and Zeyar Myo Patricia, 291-301. Hershey: IGI Global.
- Cungphuot. 2021. "Kinh Nghiệm Du Lịch Tam Đảo (Experience Tam Đảo tourism)." Accessed July 28, 2022. <https://cungphuot.info/kinh-nghiem-du-lich-tam-dao-post13581.cp>.
- Cresswell, Tim. 2010. "Towards a Politics of Mobility." *Development and Planning D: Society and Space* 28 (1): 17-31. <https://doi.org/10.1068/d11407>.
- Demay, Aline. 2014. *Tourism and Colonization in Indochina (1898-1939)*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Diptyqueoaris. 2021. "Tam Dao Collection." Accessed July 28, 2022. https://www.diptyqueparis.com/en_uk/c/tam-dao-collection-uk.html.
- Entreprises Coloniales. 2014. "Le Tamdao, Station d'Altitude (Tam Dao Hill Station)." Last modified December 30, 2021. https://www.entreprises-coloniales.fr/inde-indochine/Tamdao_station_altitude.pdf.
- Ghelburi, Mihail. n.d. "Which Castle is the Disney Castle Modeled After?" Castle Tourism. Accessed September 04, 2021. <https://castletourist.com/which-castle-is-the-disney-castle-modeled-after/>.
- Gillen, Jamie. 2016. "Bringing the Countryside to the City: Practices and Imaginations of the Rural in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam." *Urban Studies* 53 (2): 324-337.
- Glover, Ian C. 2003. "National and Political Uses of Archaeology in South-East Asia." *Indonesia and the Malay World* 31 (89): 16-30.
- Hay Hay Hotel Art Supplier. n.d. "What is Hay Hay." Accessed September 02, 2021. <https://www.hayhaydesign.com/about-us>.
- Hitchcock, Michael, Victor T. King, and Michael J. G. Parnwell. 2010. "Heritage Tourism in Southeast Asia." In *Heritage Tourism in Southeast Asia*, edited by Michael Hitchcock, Vitor T. King, and Michael J. G. Parnwell, 1-27. Copenhagen: NIAS Press.
- Ifversion, Jan, and Laura Pozzi. 2020. "European Colonial Heritage in Shanghai: Conflicting Practices." *Heritage and Society* 13 (1-2): 143-163.
- Ingold, Tim. 1993. "The Temporality of the Landscape." *World Archaeology* 25 (2): 152-174.
- James, Ursula. 2010. "'Real Culture' Preservation, Authenticity, and Change in Hoi An's Heritage Tourism Industry." Independent Study Project (ISP) Collection, 873.
- Johnson, Mark. 2010. "Aspiring to the 'Tourist Gaze': Selling the Past, Longing for the Future at the World Heritage Site of Hue, Vietnam." In *Heritage Tourism in Southeast Asia*, edited by Michael Hitchcock, Victor T. King, and Michael J. G. Parnwell, 173-201. Copenhagen: NIAS Press.
- Korff, Rüdiger. 2003. "Local Enclosures of Globalization: The Power of Locality." *Dialectical Anthropology* 27 (1): 1-18.
- Kybimo Garden. 2020. "The Experience Program." Accessed July 28, 2022. <https://www.kybimogarden.com/en/the-experience-program.html>.
- Le, Thi Ha Thu, Don Koo Lee, Yong Shik Kim, and Yohan Lee. 2016. "Public Preferences for Biodiversity Conservation in Vietnam's Tam Dao National Park." *Forest Science and Technology* 12(3): 144-152.

- Linehan, Denis, Ian D. Clark, and Philip F. Xie. 2020. "Introduction." In *Colonialism, Tourism and Place: Global Transformations in Tourist Destinations*, edited by Denis Linehan, Ian D. Clark, and Philip F. Xie, 1–11. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Luxurydesign. n.d. "Kiến Trúc Lâu Đài Tam Đảo (Tamdao Castle 2015-2018) (Tam Dao castle architecture)." Accessed September 04, 2021. <http://luxurydesign.vn/album-detail/kien-truc--noi-that/hang-muc/kien-truc-lau-dai-tam-dao-tamdao-castle-2015-2018.html>.
- Manhhai. n.d. "Khu Nghỉ Mát Tam Đảo" (Tam Đảo Resort)." Flickr. Accessed August 31, 2021. <https://www.flickr.com/photos/13476480@N07/sets/72157687670020284>.
- McDonald, Kate. 2017. *Placing Empire Travel and the Social Imagination in Imperial Japan*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Michaud, Jean, and Sarah Turner. 2006. "Contending Visions of a Hill-station in Vietnam." *Annals of Tourism Research* 33 (3): 785–808.
- Mignolo, Walter. 2017. "Coloniality Is Far from Over, and So Must Be Decoloniality." *Afterall A Journal of Art Context and Enquiry* 43: 39–45.
- Mitchell Clare. 1998. "Entrepreneurialism, Commodification and Creative Destruction: a Model of Post-modern Community Development." *Journal of Rural Studies* 14 (3): 273–286.
- Peyvel, Emmanuelle, and Võ Sáng Xuân La. 2016. "Tourism, Urbanisation and Globalisation in Vietnam." *The Newsletter* 73: 38–39.
- Quijano, Anibal. 2007. "Coloniality and Modernity/Rationality." *Cultural Studies* 21(2):168–178.
- Saigoneer. 2017. "[Photos] Vinh Phuc's Tam Dao Hill Station in Its Glory Days." *Saigoneer*, October 23, 2017. <https://saigoneer.com/vietnam-heritage/11565-photos-vinh-phuc-s-tam-dao-hill-station-in-its-glory-days>.
- Schmid, Christian. 2012. "Henri Lefebvre, the Right to the City, and the New Metropolitan Mainstream." In *Cities for People, Not for Profit: Critical Urban Theory and the Right to the City*, edited by Neil Brenner, Peter Marcuse, and Margit Mayer, 42–62. New York: Routledge.
- Sennett, Richard. 2010. "The Public Realm." In *The Blackwell City Reader*, edited by Gary Bridge and Sophie Watson, 261–272. London: Blackwell Publishers.
- Shi, Yuanyuan, Karim, Bettache, Nan Zhang, and Lan Xue. 2021. "Constructing Nostalgia in Tourism: A Comparison Analysis of Genuine and Artificial Approaches." *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management* 19: 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2020.100488>.
- Söderström Ola. 2013. "What Traveling Urban Types Do: Postcolonial Modernization in Two Globalizing Cities." In *Critical Mobilities*, edited by Ola Söderström, Didier Ruedin, Shalini Randeria, Gianni D'Amato, and Francesco Panese, 1–16. London: Routledge.
- Things To Do. 2021. "Things to Do in Hoi An, Quang Nam Province: The Best Farms." Accessed July 28, 2022. <https://www.thingstodopost.org/things-to-do-in-hoi-an-quang-nam-province-the-best-farms-931244>.
- Tran, Van Nhan. 2014. "Building Hoi An towards a Cultural City." Report, UCLG Committee on Culture, Secretariat of Hoi An's committee office, Agenda 21 for Culture, Good Practice. https://obs.agenda21culture.net/sites/default/files/2018-05/HOI_AN-ENG.pdf.
- UNESCO. 2021. "Hoi An Ancient Town." The List. Accessed July 28, 2022. <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/948/>.
- Urry, John. 1993. "The Tourist Gaze "Revisited." *The American Behavioural Scientist* 36, no. 2: 172–186.
- Vietnamplus. 2019. "San Diu Ethnic Group's Folk Singing Named National Intangible Cultural Heritage." *VietnamPlus*, March 21, 2019. <https://en.vietnamplus.vn/san-diu-ethnic-groups-folk-singing-named-national-intangible-cultural-heritage/148660.vnp>.

Research note

Waiting: Social Meanings of Immobility in Kathmandu, Nepal

Sandhya A. S.

Summary

This research note looks closely at transnational mobility as a lived experience in the city of Kathmandu, Nepal. It sheds light on the lives of aspirant migrants to show how uncertainties around mobility shape their everyday lives in the city, whereby immobility is not juxtaposed against mobility but is rather interwoven with it. Here, waiting for news about vacancies from the local agent, waiting to get selected for an interview, waiting to bid farewell to their families and waiting to return to them conditions the ebbs and flows of their mobile, working lives. It shows that waiting, as experienced by the migrants, can have different subjective tonalities. While it may be experienced in an emotionally neutral manner, as periods of inactivity around which their everyday routine is designed, it could also be perceived as a failure to meet gendered and familial expectations. Disturbing the productivist association of waiting with inactivity, many migrants also view their period of employment abroad (activity) as an extended period of waiting, around which their life course is outlined. These differing perceptions of waiting provide interesting ethnographic insights into our conceptualization of mobility, immobility and perceptions of time.

Keywords: Waiting, aspirations, mediation, brokerage, migrant subjectivities

Sandhya A. S. is a doctoral researcher in the International Max Planck Research School on the Social and Political Constitution of the Economy (IMPRS-SPCE) programme, in association with the University of Duisburg-Essen and Max Planck Institute for the Study of Societies, Germany. She is interested in labor geography, transnational labor markets and segmentations, employer recruitment behavior and reward systems, race, gender, and employment, as well as neoliberal subjectivities and markets.

sas@mpifg.de, ORCID: 0000-0002-3691-386X

Introduction

In the capital city of the 5th largest remittance-receiving country in the world (World Bank 2019) and a significant labor exporter in South Asia, mobility is characterized by many irregular phases of immobility—of waiting. In Nepal, *baideshik rojgar* or foreign employment, is a predominantly male activity (MOLESS 2020) that households use as a strategy to create and sustain a source of income amidst falling agricultural output, a lack of decent employment opportunities, political uncertainty and a prevailing “culture of migration,” fueled by the development-driven migration policies of the newly democratic, remittance-reliant country. Here, migration is deeply embedded into the male lifecycle and mobility is a significant part of meeting society’s gendered and familial expectations (Thieme 2006, Sharma 2008). However, mobility is deeply intertwined with periods of *praiṅṣā gardai* or waiting and this research note explains the multi-dimensionality of waiting as an experience from the perspective of the migrants. This note uses data from ethnographically informed qualitative research¹ conducted in Kathmandu to unravel the mundaneness of waiting as a lived experience that creates a palpable restlessness among the labor migrants in search of *baideshik rojgar* and looks into the social meanings of waiting that these migrants ascribe to different stages of the migration process.

Looking at mobility in terms of “flows” might insinuate a voluntary and aspirational movement of migrant workers from one place to another. However, that is hardly the case for the low-skilled migrant workers who have come to occupy the peripheries of the global capitalist order and who are absorbed into destination countries’ segmented labor markets (Pattisson 2013, Donini 2019). As scholars working on migration infrastructure have recently pointed out, such migrants do not “flow” from one country to another but are rather “moved,” “transplanted” and “placed” by a number of commercially motivated intermediaries to meet the demand for cheap and disposable workers (Lindquist et al. 2012, Xiang 2008). Labor market intermediaries—or brokers in common parlance—create, channel and condition these flows of cross-border mobility. Intensive intermediation by these actors, however, does not simplify mobility but rather makes it procedural and convoluted (Xiang and Lindquist 2014, 2018). As a

1 During the author’s research stay in Kathmandu between 2019 and 2020, a total of 40 in-depth, unstructured interviews were conducted to study the recruitment industry in Nepal facilitating the cross-border migration of low-skilled migrant workers to the Gulf countries, Malaysia and Japan. Additionally, a number of non-participatory observations were carried out in well-known migrant waiting spots, during interview and training sessions at the recruitment agencies, as well as at migrant-run canteens and eateries where aspirant migrants went to have affordable meals and interact with one another. Conversations with migrants were mostly conducted in a mix of Hindi and Nepali, and later transcribed in English. All of the names of the interviewees are pseudonymized and the photographs used in this paper were captured by the author with sensitivity pertaining to the identities of the migrants.

result, migrants' cross-border mobility is interrupted by several phases of immobility and "waiting through spaces of mobility (becomes) an often-inevitable and frequent experience woven through the fabric of the mobile everyday" (Bissell 2007, 277).

Waiting is not a homogenous experience. It differs from one context to another, depending on the reason and duration of the wait, the spatial arrangement of the act of waiting, and, more importantly, on the perceptions and experiences of waiting. In understanding waiting, it is also important to identify what the migrant workers do while waiting, who they do it with, and whether waiting is active or passive in the given context, raising questions of intentionality, purpose, power and agency. For example, in the context of the informal sector in India, Breman (1996, 2020) speaks of "footloose" workers, or workers who are always in transit, moving from one job assignment to another. Shedding light on the flexibilization and casualization of work that forces workers to be footloose, Breman points out how the global capitalist regime uproots workers and keeps them mobile, never allowing them to fully settle down. Similarly, Xiang (2004) describes Indian IT workers being "put on the bench" and kept waiting indefinitely for suitable jobs. "Benching" of workers happens either before a new job or during periods of unemployment, during which time they are forced to take up a number of unskilled, low-paid assignments to survive the wait. Similarly, Gidwani and Maringanti (2016) speak of "floating workers," as those who experience episodic unemployment as a result of the casualization of employment relationships and how these workers are neither fully included nor completely expelled from the reserve army of labor but are rather caught in a "spatiotemporal flux in and tenuousness of capital's embrace" (Gidwani and Maringanti 2016: 121). The experiences of waiting in these instances are qualitatively different yet they highlight how waiting is a conceptually significant site of study, with a focus on workers *in transit* rather than on workers at sites of production. Waiting as an experience therefore interacts with a number of factors and this note serves as a prelude to a larger discussion on migrant subjectivities and experiences.

This research note proceeds as follows: The next section begins by pointing out how mobility, immobility and waiting are mediated processes under the current regime of migration governance and how mediation, contrary to expectations, makes mobility complicated and intercepted. In the following three sub-sections and using the voices and narratives of Nepali migrant workers, I discuss how waiting is not a homogenous experience. Waiting means different things to different migrants depending on their migration trajectory and their personal lifeworld. While it can be a habituated part of everyday life, something that the migrants use to design their daily routine, it can also represent their failure to "successfully" migrate and meet gendered social expectations. For some others, waiting can also be associated with the period of employment itself, challenging our preconceived notions of waiting as inactivity or unproductivity. These different

perceptions and experiences of waiting provoke us to reconsider the boundaries between home/destination, activity/inactivity and mobility/immobility.

Ebbs and flows in mediated mobility

Transnational migration has become an extremely mediated process, especially in the migrant-sending countries of South and Southeast Asia. With the formalization of migration procedures and with identity cards, skill training certification and medical reports becoming instruments of migration regulation, a significant proportion of cross-border mobility is channeled through licensed labor brokers or intermediaries, on whom states and migrants are structurally dependent (Lindquist 2010, Xiang 2013). In Nepal, over 90% of work permits for employment abroad are obtained through these brokerage agencies, locally known as manpower agencies. The highly procedural nature of the formalities pertaining to labor migration and related documentation (or “paperwork”), rampant corruption, and lack of transparency make it very difficult for most migrants to access employment abroad without the involvement of multiple layers of intermediaries, both within and outside Nepal (Kern and Müller-Böcker 2015). Brokers thrive within this institutional gap and they respond to and construct migrant aspirations within Nepal (Shreshta 2018). These entrepreneurial groups provide a range of services to these migrants—from obtaining information about vacancies, conducting or facilitating interviews on behalf of/with employers and training migrants, to assisting them in mobilizing funds for the migration process, and intimately regulating their lives even after departure until the end of contract period. The mediation of local agents and brokerage agencies therefore plays a crucial role in shaping the migration trajectories of Nepali workers.

Intermediation in cross-border mobility and recruitment for foreign employment, however, does not translate into simpler migration trajectories. Although facilitation is its primary goal, directed at meeting the information deficit and coordinating demand and supply across borders, intermediation tends to make the migration process procedural, channeled yet highly fragmented (Lindquist 2010, Xiang 2013). Studies on the Asian brokerage context have recently shown that the formalization of transnational migration by the means of licensing recruitment agencies and making them key actors in channeling the migration process has caused involution and the shrinking of mobility (Xiang and Lindquist 2014, 2018). A thickening of migration bureaucracy, which in many migrant-sending countries such as Nepal is done for the protection of the migrant workers and to limit the chance of exploitation, has not translated into straightforward channels of mobility. It has rather made migration as an experience more complicated for the migrant and has created many different phases of uncertainty and waiting. Mediated mobility has therefore produced rhythms of mobility and immobility through which migrant workers navigate their experiences of transnational migration.

Waiting, however, is not always the same as an absence of or delay in mobility. Waiting, as a product of intermediation, is in fact intimately intertwined with mobility. The ebbs and flows in the migrant worker's life as a result of their aspiration or need to move abroad for work thus need to be looked at from the point of view of the structural dependence of migrants and states on brokering intermediaries (Xiang 2013). Waiting also needs to be understood in relation to activity or inactivity. As David Bisell (2007) reminds us, waiting is not simply a suspension of time or a stasis. It is the relationality of activity and inactivity that defines the period of waiting. He points out that the productivist bias in studies on waiting as a phenomenon have looked at waiting from the lens of absence of activity only and this has been mirrored in migration literature, in that periods of immobility have merely been equated with anticipation of mobility. This simplistic understanding of waiting also hinders analysis of migration whereby an individual migratory journey, a departure, or an arrival would be considered spatiotemporal nodes of mobility and the overall cycle of mobility/immobility would be overlooked. In a context in which circular migration is more of a norm than an exception, individual journeys of two—three years of contractual employment restrict our understanding to a means/end viewpoint and do not fully capture the migration experience of the transnational worker. This research note expresses the need to look at the intimate interactions of migrants with activity and inactivity and with fellow migrants and family, to understand how mobility and immobility are not juxtaposed against one another, but rather approach waiting as a co-constitutive element of the mediated migration experience.

Waiting as a way of life

For many new and returnee (from now on “aspirant”) migrant men between the ages of 20 and 40 in Kathmandu, waiting is an integral part of their daily routine. It is common to find aspirant migrants waiting on the street corners of Kathmandu, seemingly idle and not visibly doing anything, standing out from the rapidly moving crowd of the city. While some men are seen waiting in public areas for news regarding their foreign employment and have developed a routine around it, many others have adopted waiting as a way of life and as certain phases of uncertain times between two contractual employments. The mundaneness in waiting, a restlessness to move (again, in the case of returnee migrants) and obtain *baideshik rojgar*, or foreign employment, is palpable in the city.

A few kilometers from the *Guashala chowk*² in Kathmandu, is the *manpower bazaar* (see Image 1)—a spatial concentration of recruitment agencies near the

2 A *chowk* in South Asia's northern belt (Pakistan, India and Nepal) refers to a junction or an intersection of two or more roads. It denotes a central point and is also used to refer to local marketplaces. A few kilometers from the *Gaushala chowk* is a spatial concentration of recruitment agencies that facilitate cross-border mobility. Colloquially known as the *manpower Bazaar*, this marketplace is essentially different from the caricature of bazaar economy painted by renowned

Tribhuvan International airport. The landscape is dotted with numerous guesthouses and cheap lodging options which migrant workers and tourists use to stay in the city on a temporary basis. Like any typical *chowk*, the area is also very well connected, with public and private-operated buses and shared minibuses or coasters taking commuters across Kathmandu Valley. The centralized migration procedures in Nepal that were developed to regulate emigration and monitor the activities of recruitment agencies have caused the spatial concentration of manpower agencies in the city and have forced migrant workers to leave their homes and be physically present in Kathmandu in order to initiate the process of documentation and recruitment.

Image 1: Migrants waiting near the manpower bazaar for their local agent to take them to a recruitment agency



Source: Photograph taken by the author, 19-01-2020, Kathmandu. CC BY-SA 4.0.

anthropologist Clifford Geertz, in which localized interactions, factionalized transactions, and stable and prolonged clientele defines the market relationship (Geertz 1978: 29). The relationships in this market, in contrast, are largely formalized and institutionalized, wherein the registered and licensed recruitment agencies are centrally monitored by the state. However, local caste, community and kinship dynamics continue to influence market activities and interactions.

The first point of contact for the aspirant migrant worker is often the local agent, similar to other migrant-sending contexts in Asia (Lindquist 2010). A local agent is a very mobile actor, someone who usually has had some migration experience of their own and is responsible for recruiting workers at the village level. The migrants tend to trust these local actors better than the unknown recruitment firms based in Kathmandu city. The agent uses this trust to mobilize workers locally and visits the recruitment agencies within the city with a bag full of passports and hopes. Once in Kathmandu, the agents assist the migrant workers in finding cheap, affordable lodgings near *Gaushala chowk*, take them from one interview to another, and guide them through migration-related procedures and formalities. In the absence of an interview, there is not much to be done in the city but to wait. Much of this waiting involves not doing anything and incorporating this “not doing” as part of their daily life.

Image 2: Aspirant migrants in waiting, often spotted standing or squatting in the stretch between Guashala chowk and Pashupati plaza



Source: Photograph taken by the author, 09-12-2019, Kathmandu. CC BY-SA 4.0.

The migrant workers in the city wait for different reasons. As one of them said, Some are doing *pratīkṣā* [waiting] for their agents to show up. Many have come from outside [of Kathmandu] and this is like a meeting point for us to meet our agent who will then take us to the [recruitment] agency. Some are [...] just

standing and seeing the city from here. These people are staying at the *dharmshalas* [cheap lodgings provided by charitable or religious institutions] and are just outside soaking the sun and doing *time-pass*. Some are waiting for their transport [...] like that [...] nothing new (December 09, 2019, Kathmandu; see Image 2).

The mundaneness of waiting is “nothing new” to the migrants as they design their everyday lives in the city around these moments of waiting. Waiting here primarily implies inactivity in the anticipation of activity, which in this case is cross-border mobility. This period of waiting before departure can last anything between a few days to many months and is usually considered a prequel to the “preparatory” phase of migration whereby a suitable agency is found, interviews are arranged, training (if relevant for the position) is completed, medical checkups and state-instituted orientation programs are completed. Unlike the preparatory phase of migration, which involves finishing a number of tasks and formalities, the pre-preparatory phase of waiting involves *samaya bitā'unē* (passing time) and is usually considered an emotionally neutral endeavor. The migrants waiting in the public spaces in Kathmandu and the routines they design around this phase display a material experience of patience and impatience at the same time; an urge to move yet a realization of the inevitability of the wait. “Time-pass” here is therefore neither good nor bad; it is just an ineludible phase of transnational migration marked by immobility.

“Time-pass” is a very common phrase used in the South Asian sub-continent, usually referring to doing nothing productive but passing time. It can mean a wastage of time but it can also imply a jovial and relaxed passage of time, without any negative connotations. Craig Jefferey (2010), for example, notes the usage of the phrase by unemployed youths in India, at times signifying a frustration among the population and at times used to refer to time spent with fellow “time-passers,” merely hanging out. However, unlike the privileged, upper-caste male loiterers in the sub-continent forming “*addas*” (Roy 2012) or meeting points in public spaces for intellectual and political discussion while joking and claiming the public space, waiting among the Nepali migrants does not appear to be assertive. It is, as one of the interviewees described it, about seeing the time go by and knowing that one is not alone in doing so. Often found in small groups, migrants wait with fellow migrants or agents in and around *manpower bazaar*. The acts of standing, squatting, leaning against the fence, looking at phones, playing games, etc. help them to deal with “doing nothing” with fellow migrants. However, this lack of impetus associated with “doing nothing” is also not the same as boredom, an idea that is a product of Western modernity, the compartmentalization of work and leisure time, and individualism (Gardiner 2012). In contrast, waiting as “doing nothing” is oriented towards a near, more immediate future of “doing something”—of being mobile again, of being able to work and financially support one’s family. It does not come from a place of mismatch between available time

and self-gratifying leisurely activity, but rather represents a sense of personhood and being *in* time (Musharbash 2007).

Waiting is here a social event and not an individual act. With “corporeally engaging practices” such as standing all day and looking around, these workers-in-waiting experience inactivity together in the anticipation of a better, more mobile future (Bissell 2007). Waiting in public places in this context also signifies a passive witnessing of urban life and incorporating one’s inactivity into the active urban rhythm of the city. Amidst the busy sounds of the city, while observing the rush of working hours, the chaos of the bus station, the groups of tourists visiting important landmarks nearby, while sharing a cup of tea and anecdotes from work abroad, waiting also lets these men bond and allows them to view migration for employment as a shared experience. The gendered use of public spaces in South Asian countries, of course, does not allow women to be part of such gatherings and the experience of waiting for female migrants will have very different tonalities, something this research note does not attempt to capture, but which has attracted rich scholarly attention in the last two decades (see amongst others Phadke et al. 2009, Yeoh and Huang 1998, 2010).

Waiting as failure

Among the many roles that recruitment agencies play in Nepal, keeping a stock of “failed” migrant workers ready for recruitment is one of them, leaving a reservoir of “just-in-time,” deadline-ready workers (De Stefano 2015). As one senior employee of a recruitment agency said as a part of the “orientation” before an interview with a reputed airline catering company:

We are like a river [...] there is a flow. So, don’t worry if you don’t clear this interview. See this as an experience ok? Even if you don’t get selected today, there is another interview next week, and another in another 2 weeks. So, don’t worry. You will get something [...] you (just) have to be patient and confident (March 13, 2020, Kathmandu).

Waiting, in this context, is associated with a period of time spent on unsuccessful attempts at transnational migration and cross-border employment. Much like the proverbial frog in the princess tale, migrants are expected to remain patient while they have several interviews until one of them “clicks.” It is expected that they will develop patience to counter the general sense of unease and restlessness that many migrants understandably face during prolonged periods of uncertainty. There appears to be a general sense of impatience with waiting or, more specifically, not moving for prospective work abroad. My conversations with Bhola provided a rich glimpse into this feeling of uneasiness with immobility as he described his experience of waiting as failure.

Image 3: Bhola looking at the list of selected migrant workers for a reputable airline catering company based in Dubai. Bhola was rejected without any explanation from the recruitment agency



Source: Photograph taken by the author, 25-02-2020, Kathmandu. CC BY-SA 4.0.

Bhola (pseudonym) is a 30-year-old aspirant migrant based in the city of Kathmandu (see Image 3). He, like many other migrants, started working abroad as soon as it was legal for him to do so. Bhola was around 19 years old when, having gained some domestic experience and training in waiting tables in restaurants, he first went to Dubai. Despite being trained and experienced in waiting tables and having been told by the recruitment agency that the job he was going to get in Dubai would be “in his field,” his first job abroad was as a cleaner in a pest control company. On being asked why he stuck to the work, Bhola said “I didn’t know any of that [...] it was my first job. I was just 18 years or something [...] didn’t have much idea about foreign jobs. So, I went for it anyway.” After displaying dedication to his work as a cleaner in the first few months, his employer asked Bhola if he wanted a promotion. Being the only person among the cleaning recruits who could speak English fluently and who could therefore “listen to instructions about chemicals,” Bhola was asked to undertake some brief training on pesticide and pest control. They gave him a new job as “some technician kind of person” and put him in the pest control department. Within a year’s time, he had been promoted to “team leader” and had technicians working under him to control and monitor

operations in pest-infested sites. Bhola liked the status of the job, although he was aware that his health had deteriorated due to exposure to hazardous chemicals. He was proud of the fact that, unlike the other cleaners who had come with him, he ate his lunch with the local staff. As he said,

Because I was working with chemicals [...] no? It was serious work, so they gave me hygiene[ic] food with Arabic people. They also nominated me often as employee of the month [...] I was doing well [...] gave me appreciation [...] gave me certificates.

But by the end of two extended contracts and 6 years with the company, Bhola realized that his pay had not increased much and his health had deteriorated over the years. He felt “old” by the age of 25 and decided to return home as “certificates could not be exchanged for money (chuckles).” He was also seeking a different assignment within the same company, some of which were denied to him because of the dangers of the work for unmarried men (danger of impotency from exposure to certain chemicals). So he said to himself “It’s time to move on” (January 12, 2020, Kathmandu).

Being able to “move on” is an expression that Bhola used repeatedly. Moving on here represents a range of emotions, mainly an interest in not being physically or emotionally stuck at one place of work. As he said, “Coming back to Nepal after six years of work [...] I thought I would easily get another job and move on. But I waited [...] for two years.” Soon after, at the age of 27 and after appearing for several interviews mediated by recruitment agencies, Bhola was selected for a job as a security guard in the UAE. It was a job with a contracting company that placed foreign recruits as security guards with companies in Dubai and Abu Dhabi. Once in Dubai, he was expected to train with the Dubai Police Academy and take a test to prove his competence as a security guard. Those who passed the test and received their certificates were to get a relatively decent pay package of about 2260 dirhams (541.98 euros) a month and those without this certification would only receive the minimum wage of 1200 dirhams (287.73 euros). Bhola was placed with a company in Dubai and he worked there for 9 months doing long hours and suffering heavy penalties for mistakes, until the company went bankrupt and ceased operation. During the period of inactivity that followed, the company stopped paying the workers, who were placed in lodgings and were asked to be patient and wait until the company got another contract. Bhola recalled “I was staying with 35-36 people in one room! It was very difficult to stay like that [...] so many people staying in one room [...] like goats [...] like dogs.” He also recalled how, on top of the extreme heat, poor ventilation, and cramped lodgings, men would often get into brawls and violent fights as a result of the enforced sharing of space and the frustration of not working or being paid for over 9 months. Many wanted to leave the country and go back but the employers kept promising them that the company was about to revive its operations. Quite a few workers left the country anyway. Bhola recollected that he was perhaps one of the last to leave the company lodgings.

Bhola's reluctance to go back to Nepal was not a result of his patience, he said. He was embarrassed to go home without money. Towards the end of his 7 months of waiting, he also had to borrow 1 lakh rupee (1,172.64 euros) from his "ageing parents" and felt very guilty for this. "I should be the one sending them money every month and I had to borrow from them," he said with remorse. Shame and the fear of facing his parents without money made Bhola stay much longer than his counterparts. After waiting for 9 months, the company representative told Bhola that he should return as the company was not likely to recruit workers. He was angry but he did not resist. He merely asked them to pay his dues for the months he had actually worked. "I didn't question them, ask them anything or complain. I just thought 'no need to figure (this) out [...] just move on. Just get the experience and move on,'" he said.

"Moving on" here also implies a willingness to be flexible and have fewer rigid expectations of work, an employer or life in general. Being trained in waiting table and having had the initial desire to work in the hospitality industry, Bhola had been trained in a wide range of occupations from pest control management to security and patrolling. Far from being "unskilled," Bhola had undergone skill training in different industries and was willing to be trained in more fields. "Moving on" for him meant not having rigid career expectations and being prepared for and grabbing whatever career opportunity that was available. He was, at the time of the interview, working in a forest reserve as a daily wage laborer helping out in the kitchen and administration in Nepal "for the time being" until he found another foreign employment contract. Fluid aspirations and flexible career trajectories define the need to move on for Bhola and others with similar experiences.

Moving on here also represents impatience with waiting for the "right job" and points towards a willingness to stay mobile to meet the gendered and normative expectations of his immediate family that come with the process of migration. Lack of suitable employment opportunities and rampant unemployment in Nepal leaves him little choice and puts him in a perpetual cycle of mobility. Mobility here is not just aspirational but a compulsion; the only way to earn money in a dignified way. Speaking of times of unemployment at home, he said

It affects you. Your family also [...] and also your society sees you in a different way if you don't earn. If you are young and don't have a job, stay at home, people comment [...] people talk. People say "your ageing mother and father are working and you are staying home."

Being a son in South Asia, he is expected to be the provider and to take care of his parents. Bhola spoke of disappointing his family and having had suicidal thoughts during times of prolonged waiting for jobs. He was determined to "keep moving" and said

I have to continuously move [to other places to earn. To also make my parents feel that their son is not *faltu* [useless]. There may be many problems [in the destination country] [...] But at least you will be away [...] from your family,

[yet] send them some money. Even if you work hard, spend less, work overtime, you still send money and make them happy. If you are at home, no one will respect you, your mind will also be dull. Then negative thoughts come to you(r) mind.

Bhola blamed his luck for his prolonged waiting period and inability to keep getting good jobs abroad but he was sure that he had “to move on [...] and not stay [...] in one place” (January 12, 2020, Kathmandu).

Bhola’s experience of cross-border migration has been interrupted by several periods of waiting, uncertainty and insecurity. His narrative shows that, given the precarious nature of transnational employment, especially in low-skilled occupational categories, waiting does not end with the point of departure. Waiting is something that migrant workers have to encounter at different points in their migratory experience, both in the domicile as well as in the destination. Seeing his inability to uninterruptedly provide for his family, Bhola views these periods of uncertainty as failure; failure to be the family’s breadwinner and to meet society’s gendered and normative expectations. Adapting to these phases of uncertainty, and developing “moving on” as a mechanism of coping, Bhola insists on building flexibility into his approach to work and life; epitomizing neoliberal subjectivity. This view of waiting as failure also sheds light on the general sense of unease and agitation that circular migrant workers experience, making them confront their uncertain reality with a literal as well as figurative urge to “keep moving.”

Waiting as an investment

Migrants’ narratives also bring to the fore another interesting facet of waiting as experienced during *baideshik rojgar*. The whole period of foreign employment, or of perceived productivity as a result of mobility, is itself sometimes viewed as an extended period of waiting wherein the time spent away from family and home is considered the wait—a wait to return back home, to the final destination. Contrary to what some scholars have noted with regard to local circular migrants viewing home itself as a waiting room before getting back to work (Bremen 2020), some of the Nepali migrant workers I spoke to shared how the period of employment itself is seen as the wait, time to be spent on investing in the future and paying back accumulated debts. This narrative shows that in the lives of circular migrant workers, the ideas of home and destination are often blurred and what one views as *the wait* depends on what one is waiting for: mobility or stability.

In the context of heavy recruitment fees paid to obtain contractual foreign employment, debt procured to meet expenses both within and outside Nepal, the hardships of working overtime and under stressful conditions, the physical and emotional loss experienced during mobility, and having to be away from family for most of their working lives, some migrants consider the time away from home as time for investment towards a better future in Nepal. Hard-earned money is meticulously saved to provide for oneself and one’s family. In the absence of state-

instituted social security and welfare cover, as in most South Asian countries, migrants find that responsibility for health, education and social provisions such as income after retirement fall on their shoulders. The period of waiting in this context is a period of hardship and sacrifice that is seen as an investment towards a better life after settling down.

Rajpal (pseudonym), a 37-year-old migrant, provided insights into how migrants tend to view the period of employment abroad as an extended period of waiting to return to home, a time perceived as an investment for the wellbeing of one's family. Although only approaching his 40s, Rajpal's weary eyes and overall fatigued demeanor made him look much older than his age, something he claimed was a result of decades of *baideshik rojgar*. During his last contract for a six-year period of work in Malaysia in a garment factory, Rajpal managed to save enough money to build a house in his village in Nepal, albeit to an unfinished state. He had requested that his employer grant him three months' holiday in early 2020 to finish his house. He had been sending money to his wife on a regular basis to make sure the construction was underway before he arrived in Nepal after several years of foreign employment. Although he had hoped that the construction of the house would be finished by the end of his stay and that he could return to his place of employment, the construction had to be left incomplete because the family had run out of funds. He said

It's not finished yet. I mean from the outside it's done, the structure is erect. But the inside [...] plastering is not done. Before that my money ran out. At first, I spent the money on land, then the building. My money ran out, didn't have any left for plaster. But we can still stay inside, that is not a problem.

He had also been providing for his children's education at the same time. He insisted on sending them to private boarding schools rather than to tuition fee-free government schools. He said,

In government schools there is no control on education [...] it's bad. It's expensive in boarding school [...] 7000 NPR (54.94 USD) per month, for both [children]. It is a lot but at least we know the kids are learning [...] and they will get a good job in 10-15 years.

In order to invest in the future, he did not hesitate to work overtime when in Malaysia and limit his "indulgence" in alcohol and marijuana, which his fellow migrants sometimes urged him to. He took a loan from a local moneylender for the house and it required around 9 months to pay it off. The agricultural land and the cattle his family owned in their village did not yield a profit and were used only for consumption. The only way for him to make sure he "had a roof over his head" when he retired and his children were educated and prepared to take over his role as the household's breadwinners, was for him to use his time away from his family as an investment.

Image 4: A Nepali migrant returning from Malaysia with gifts for his family. The name of the migrant worker is obscured for anonymity



Source: Photograph taken by the author, 15-02-2020, Kathmandu. CC BY-SA 4.0.

At the time of our meeting in early 2020, Rajpal was visiting Nepal after three years of work. He, like many young Nepali men returning from employment abroad, was really looking forward to visiting his family and friends after a few years of separation. The return of the migrant worker after the end of a contract is characterized by a sense of heightened excitement to be back home after 2-3 years and a desire to perform one's uplifted status as a result of the mobility. This starts right at the airport arrival gate in Kathmandu. Many migrants can be seen arriving well dressed, carrying neatly packed gifts for their friends and families (see Image 4). As someone returning from *bidesh* or a foreign land, the expectations of people around them are high. As Rajpal said

Everyone expects something from you when you come home [...] They [...] my children, my wife, my wife's three sisters, my father, my brother's children, his family, everyone calls me a month or so before coming to Nepal and they will tell me "*baba* will you get a torch for me, will you get a jacket for me, will you get a mobile for me" (smiles). My wife called last time and said "I want that electric rice cooker, bring that for me. Also get makeup products [...] Nepali ones are no good" (laughs). I visit only once in three years, so it's possible. I bring luggage of 40-50kg. I bring things like LCD (TV), clothes, rice cooker [...] (chuckles) (February 20, 2020, Kathmandu).

But once home and once the excitement of visiting, sharing their experiences abroad, and gift giving ends, a gradual restlessness sets in. As an aspirant migrant in their mid-30's said

"At first when you come [...] for a month or so, it will be fun. Everyone will ask for you, everyone will take care of you, it's all nice. Slowly it gets [...] tasteless. As long as you stay abroad [...] send them money regularly [...] people love you. If you have spare money in your pocket, people are nice to you. Even if you had to go through hell to get that money [...] it doesn't matter. People see only money [...] not how it came. So, its best if you are abroad [...] money in the bank account [...] send money to family once a month or once in two months and meet them in 2-3 years with some gifts, everyone loves you.

After a few months of being back home, the workers tend to re-start the process of contacting a local agent, waiting for a vacancy, going to Kathmandu, getting in touch with an agency, waiting for an interview, getting their paperwork done and getting ready to bid farewell to their families again, creating a long and repetitive cycle of being at home and being away for work. The restlessness to get "moving" creeps in after only a few days of being back. But Rajpal, like Bhola, is not inflexible about his ambitions and merely wants to be on the move when he can. He knows that the only way for him to provide for his family and earn their respect is by staying away for work and making occasional visits, but other than that, he leaves it to fate to determine where he goes or what he does. As Rajpal calmly stated,

My wife says "You are old now [...] you are getting old. You still don't send much money home. You should change your job [...] get something else that pays more." Maybe I will see, but I am also okay with this garment work. If I don't get anything [...] in Nepal, India, Malaysia, anywhere, I will land up somewhere according to my fate, where fate leads me [...] I will *time-pass* there (February 20, 2020, Kathmandu).

Employment and periods of activity themselves thus become periods of "time-pass" and serve as waiting rooms for the occasional, and eventually permanent, return home.

Conclusion

“As the reserve army of labour returns home or hangs around movie theatres without a job for the day, the politics of social labour are all to do with why and how flexible workers wait for the next insecure job” (Chari 2004, 76). By disentangling the act of waiting itself, this research note has shown how waiting is multiple and mutable, and is deeply intertwined with the mediation of cross-border mobility that makes migration procedural and convoluted (Lindquist and Xiang 2018). When the casualization of employment relationships is more of a norm than an exception and when employment contracts for low-skilled, discardable migrant workers do not last for more than two–three years, throwing light on the time in-between contracts becomes highly relevant. Also relevant is how these migrants are “permanently temporary” and how their access to social protection is greatly restricted in the countries of both origin and destination, forcing them to be “continually circular” (Baas 2018) and to design a lifestyle around constant moving and waiting.

This research note has shown the different tonalities of the experience of waiting as part of transnational migration, disturbing our idea of a unilateral flow of cross-border mobility. The rhythms of waiting and moving—of work, application, detention, waiting lists, transit, prolongation and extension, etc., deeply condition the experience of transnational migration. This research note has pointed out that the period of waiting and uncertainty is not restricted to moments of anticipation before departure. Waiting is also encountered during the migratory phase as well as during periods of employment abroad, blurring our preconceived notions of what is “home” and what is not. While waiting, migrant workers experience a number of emotions and intentions such as anticipation, longing, restlessness and finally of surrendering to the wait and letting go. Instead of equating waiting with inactivity, these migrants’ narratives also show that waiting is experienced beyond the binary distinction of activity/inactivity and the positioning of migrants with respect to perceptions of time and productivity differs from one experience to another. Yet these are not isolated experiences and, while migrants stand together on the street corners of Kathmandu or share a meal or a *chiyā* (tea) in former migrant-run canteens and food stalls, social meanings of waiting are constructed and processed. Of course, the narratives shared here were from right before the pandemic, which later highlighted the fragility of the global migration order and further generated immense uncertainty and insecurity among migrants across the world. While this research note is only a prelude to a larger discussion on migration and migrant subjectivities, future work in this direction can explore pandemic-induced immobility as experienced by both migrants and migration brokers and can investigate immobility as an embodied, visceral experience, as well as examine its implications on gendered and racialized bodies. Developing our understanding of the interaction between migrant subjectivities and migration trajectories, studies

could also look into perceptions of time in circular migration regimes and the governance of short-term migrant contracts.

References

- Bissell, D. 2007. "Animating suspension: waiting for mobilities." *Mobilities* 2(2): 277–298.
- Baas, M. 2018. "Temporary labour migration." In *Routledge handbook of Asian migrations*, edited by Liu-Farrer and Yeoh, 51–63. London: Routledge.
- Breman, J. 1996. *Footloose labour: working in India's informal economy* (Vol. 2). Cambridge University Press.
- Breman, J. 2020. "The pandemic in India and its impact on footloose labour." *The Indian Journal of Labour Economics* 63(4): 901–919.
- Chari, S. 2004. *Fraternal capital: Peasant-workers, self-made men, and globalization in provincial India*. Orient Blackswan.
- De Stefano, V. 2015. "The rise of the just-in-time workforce: On-demand work, crowdwork, and labor protection in the gig-economy." *Comp. Lab. L. & Pol'y J.* 37: 471.
- Donini, A. 2019. "Social suffering and structural violence: Nepali workers in Qatar." In *The ILO@ 100: Addressing the Past and Future of Work and Social Protection*, edited by Gironde and Carbonnier, 178–199. Brill Nijhoff: Leiden, Boston.
- Gardiner, M. E. 2012. "Henri Lefebvre and the 'sociology of boredom'." *Theory, Culture & Society* 29(2): 37–62.
- Geertz, C. 1978/2018. "The bazaar economy: Information and search in peasant marketing." In *The sociology of economic life*, 118–124. Routledge.
- Gidwani, V., and A. Maringanti. 2016. "The waste-value dialectic: Lumpen urbanization in contemporary India." *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 36(1): 112–133.
- Jeffrey, C. 2010. *Timepass: Youth, class, and the politics of waiting in India*. Stanford University Press.
- Kern, A., and U. Müller-Böcker. 2015. "The middle space of migration: A case study on brokerage and recruitment agencies in Nepal." *Geoforum* 65: 158–169.
- Lindquist, J. 2010. "Labour recruitment, circuits of capital and gendered mobility: Reconceptualizing the Indonesian migration industry." *Pacific Affairs* 83(1): 115–132.
- Lindquist, J., B. Xiang, and B. S. Yeoh. 2012. "Opening the black box of migration: Brokers, the organization of transnational mobility and the changing political economy in Asia." *Pacific Affairs* 85(1): 7–19.
- Lindquist, J., B. Xiang, and B. S. Yeoh. 2018. "The infrastructural turn in Asian migration." In *Routledge Handbook of Asian Migrations*. London: Routledge 152–161.
- MOLESS. 2020. "Nepal Labour Migration Report." Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security, Government of Nepal: Kathmandu.
<https://www.developmentaid.org/api/frontend/cms/file/2020/12/Migration-Report-2020-English.pdf>
- Musharbash, Y. 2007. "Boredom, time, and modernity: An example from Aboriginal Australia." *American Anthropologist* 109(2): 307–317.
- Pattison, P. 2013. "Revealed: Qatar's world cup 'slaves'." *The Guardian*, Sept. 25, 2013.
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/sep/25/revealed-qatars-world-cup-slaves>.
- Phadke, S., S. Ranade, and S. Khan. 2009. "Why loiter? Radical possibilities for gendered dissent." In *Dissent and cultural resistance in Asia's cities*, 199–217. Routledge.
- Roy, D. 2012. "Caste and power: an ethnography in West Bengal, India." *Modern Asian Studies* 46(4): 947–974.

- Sharma, J. R. 2008. "Practices of male labor migration from the hills of Nepal to India in development discourses: Which pathology?" *Gender, Technology and Development* 12(3): 303–323.
- Shrestha, T. 2018. "Aspirational infrastructure: Everyday brokerage and the foreign-employment recruitment agencies in Nepal." *Pacific Affairs* 91(4): 673–693.
- Thieme, S. 2006. *Social networks and migration: Far West Nepalese labour migrants in Delhi*. Lit Verlag: Münster.
- World Bank. 2019. "Migration and Remittances: Recent Developments and Outlook." In *Migration and Development Brief* 31, The World Bank Group. <https://www.knomad.org/sites/default/files/2019-04/Migrationanddevelopmentbrief31.pdf>
- Xiang, B. 2004. "Indian information technology professionals' world system: the nation and the transnation in individuals' migration strategy". In *State/Nation/Transnation: Perspectives on Transnationalism in the Asia-Pacific*, edited by B. Yeoh and K. Willis, 161–178. New York: Routledge.
- Xiang, B. 2008. "Transplanting Labor in East Asia." *Senri Ethnological Reports* 77: 175–186.
- Xiang, B. 2013. "The intermediary trap: international labour recruitment, transnational governance and state-citizen relations in China." *Asia Colloquia Papers* Vol 3: (1), York Centre for Asian Research.
- Xiang, B., and J. Lindquist. 2014. "Migration infrastructures." *International migration review* 48(1): 122–148.
- Xiang, B., and J. Lindquist. 2018. "Postscript: Infrastructuralization: Evolving sociopolitical dynamics in labour migration from Asia." *Pacific Affairs* 91(4): 759–773.
- Yeoh, B. S., and S. Huang. 1998. "Negotiating public space: Strategies and styles of migrant female domestic workers in Singapore." *Urban studies* 35(3): 583–602.
- Yeoh, B. S., and S. Huang. 2010. "Sexualised politics of proximities among female transnational migrants in Singapore." *Population, Space and Place* 16(1): 37–49.

Research note

The Transnational Flow of Tourism and *Daigou* between China and Nepal before and during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Ze Zhou Yang

Summary

Through various ethnographic research techniques, this article examines transnational *daigou* practices — meaning informal onsell practices — between two neighboring countries, China and Nepal. Linking *daigou* to debates on transnational flows, it analyzes the paradoxical implications of the dilemma *daigouers* find themselves in and their desired alternative mobilities among “flows,” especially that of Chinese tourism to Nepal. I show how these *daigouers* disrupt the boundaries between the public and personal, virtual and physical, as well as local and global in an attempt to achieve upward social mobility by harnessing their bodies, information, products, and other forms of capital amid the tourism flow. Traveling in this capacity becomes a creative response to the tensions inherent to the various translocal structures wherein they are otherwise marginalized. I thus show how this tourism flow shapes, allows, and also restricts *daigou* mobility. While acknowledging the latter's dependence on this flow, specifically investigating how the COVID-19 pandemic has created a temporary site through which such mobility endured for some time even while tourism was suspended, I also show how these *daigouers* have claimed their subjectivity. Based on this case study, I refute hegemonic narratives of such flows being untethered, uniformed, faceless, and agentless. Instead, I argue that even though flows are powerful and influential regarding types of mobility and immobility they are still not dominant. Instead, different actors' grounded mobile and immobile experiences keep practicing, conditioning, and negotiating various flows, with those concerned maintaining their own characteristics in confronting them. As such, the article seeks to make the current discussion of transnational flows more nuanced by highlighting the structuring imperatives of (im)mobility, class, and capital vis-à-vis globalization.

Keywords: transnational flow, Nepal-China relations, COVID-19, *daigou*, globalization

Ze Zhou Yang is a Ph. D. candidate at SOAS, University of London. His research focuses on China's disputable global presence, particularly in the Himalayan area. 633361@soas.ac.uk; shivyang0712@gmail.com

Introduction

In this article, I account for certain recent *daigou* movements between China and Nepal before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. A *daigou*, according to the Cambridge Dictionary (2021), is “someone who is outside China who buys goods for someone who lives in China.” This definition is simple and static. However, it serves as a working definition of *daigou* for readers who are not familiar with the term. In the Chinese context, *daigou* refers to both such people and the related activities they engage in, and so the word functions as a both noun and verb. For the sake of clarity and consistency, however, I use *daigou* here to refer to their activities and *daigouers* to denote a specific group of people.

The movement of Chinese *daigouers* to Nepal, an updated snapshot of globalization in the inter-Asian context, has been profoundly shaped by the heavy flow of tourists. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, *daigou* had become a prominent type of mobility between the two countries, mainly living from the established routes, infrastructure facilities, as well as physical and social spaces sustaining that flow of tourists. The pandemic had put a halt to most movement between China and Nepal for at least 18 months at the time of writing (November 2021). During this health crisis, most routes between the two countries were closed. As a result, flows and mobilities in any form would be forcibly reduced. Many *daigouers* and their goods are stuck in Nepal. However, the immobility caused by the suspension of flows generated new kinds of mobility. While unstable and only temporary, the pandemic also created windows of opportunity through which Chinese *daigouers* oversaw the unusual mobility of medical supplies — primarily masks.

By investigating the particular types of *daigou* mobility before and during the pandemic, I explore the dialectical, imbricated, and symbiotic relationship between transnational flows, mobility, and immobility as an approach to a globalization disjunctive in nature. How do various transnational flows structure the mobility of *daigou*? Vice versa, what forms of immobility coexist with these flows? How does the transformation of such flows’ underlying conditions serve to modify the types of mobility and immobility we see? Attempting to answer these questions based on a case study of Chinese *daigouers* in Kathmandu, the capital city of Nepal, I refute hegemonic narratives of such flows being untethered, uniformed, autonomous, faceless, and agentless. Instead, I argue that even though these flows are powerful and influential regarding types of mobility and immobility they are still not dominant. Different actors’ grounded mobile and immobile experiences keep practicing, conditioning, and negotiating various flows, with those concerned maintaining their own characteristics in confronting them. People are world-forming instead of subsumed into hegemonic discourses and experiences of flows — whether these aim to empower or limit them. Understanding these flows in their full intricacy also reveals to us the complexity of globalization.

Since the late 1980s, scholars in the Social Sciences and Cultural Studies have employed the term “flow” widely and diversely yet without explicitly defining what

is meant by it. It represents and interrogates the processes of globalization, or, in Bauman's (2000) illustrative metaphor, "liquid modernity." Among these scholars, Appadurai (1996) and Castells (1989, 1999, 2004, 2009) have made significant contributions to theorizing about the concept and developing its close connection to global economic circulations and cultural productions. For instance, Appadurai proposes global cultural flows having five dimensions to them — ethnoscap, mediascapes, technoscapes, financescapes, and ideoscapes respectively — per a framework put forward to explore the tensions between homogenization and heterogenization in the contemporary globalized world. These flows represent "a historical break with 'place' as it has long been seen and experienced" (Rockefeller 2011, 561).

Castells, meanwhile, critically reexamines people's sited experiences and is inspired by the dramatic rise of information technology. He notes the contrast between "the space of flows" and "the space of places" that organize "the experiences and activity around the confines of locality" (Castells 2020, 233) via "flows of capital, flows of information, flows of technology, flows of organizational interactions, flows of images, sounds and symbols" (Castells 2009, 412). One implication here is the ideological construction of an autonomous space that, detached from grounded places, crosses many political, cultural, and religious boundaries. Flows also empower members of traditionally oppressed groups in their struggle to detach themselves from these structures by aiding their increased circulation and movement.

Another strand of research has critically examined the concept and practice of flows (Adey 2006; Appadurai 2000; Cresswell 2010; Rockefeller 2011; Schewel 2019; Sheller 2014; Turner 2007; Velde and Naerssen 2010). While acknowledging the importance hereof, these observers also recognize that flows' underlying conditions are not universally contextualized, and access to connectivity and mobility are not equally distributed — the latter depends on kinds of fixity. Based on the critical review of isomorphic flows, some scholars criticize the purported inclusive, equal, and empowering functions of being connected and in motion within the space of flows. For them, these creative spaces can create not only new forms of poverty and hierarchy but also are inclusive only for social and economic elites, who possess a variety of capitals and abilities that help them to navigate network societies and different flows (Crang 2002; Susser 1996). Moreover, to understand these flows, one should consider the dialectical relationship between mobility and immobility; as Hannam et al. argue, flows are not always about being in motion because "there is no linear increase in fluidity without extensive systems of immobility" (2006, 3). People, objects, and information may stop for either a brief time or for good for numerous reasons. In general, the critical studies of flows draw our attention to "specific groups' embodied experiences of place and movement, throwing into question the equation of transnational mobility with social and spatial mastery" (Martin 2017, 891).

In this article, I align myself with the latter strain of scholarship to localize and contextualize transnational flows between China and Nepal, as well as the mobilities shaped by them. I provide ethnographic data on the life experiences of a specific group, *daigouers*, who travel between China and Nepal for illicit commercial activities. This is done in analyzing flows' intricate relationship with mobility and fixity in the everyday world. The noted connection between *daigou* and flow is not innovative since its citing in the existing *daigou* literature is by no means uncommon. Many scholars (Xie 2018; Zhang 2017; Zhao 2020) have demonstrated how *daigou* have been shaped by different flows, such as money, people, consumer goods, cultural content, and values. As I will reveal, the mobility of *daigouers* is closely entangled with certain flows in the contact zone — especially those of tourism and industrial commodities. Although highlighting the deterritorialized aspects of *daigou*-related endeavors by embedding them within flows, I do not imagine related movements as “unbroken, agentless” (Rockefeller 2011, 560) or in perpetual motion.

When Chinese *daigouers* are in Kathmandu, they are both connected to transnationally mobile networks of related activities and to relatively static and localized structures in both the sending and host societies. Many *daigouers*' motivation to travel to Nepal is often informed by their material and immaterial “stuckness” back home. Moreover, those Chinese “moorings” (Hannam et al. 2006) already established in Nepal help facilitate their movements. For instance, the branch offices of Chinese express-delivery companies connect Kathmandu to numerous other mooring spots in China and elsewhere. Furthermore, “spatial fixes” (Harvey 2001) such as restaurants, hotels, and hostels backed by Chinese capital, enterprises that facilitate multiple flows, also provide *daigouers* with familiar food, accommodation, networked communities, and forms of entertainment. However, the resources offered by mobile networks of Nepal-based Chinese *daigouers* are not equally distributed. I attempt to show how these individuals live at the nexus of social exclusion, orientalist imagination, and of unequal structures situated at multiple different local levels. They build and maintain transnational networks of alternative mobility, taking advantage of different flows of people, technologies, and social media content.

The article's contribution to the scholarship is the following. First, I offer updated empirical data on contemporary movements between China and Nepal. While the media has generally noted China's prominent presence in Nepal, micro-level academic discussion hereof remains absent. Second, I enrich the work on *daigou* through a case study of related practices across the Chinese-Nepali border. More importantly, I contribute to our understanding of the dialectical relationship between transnational flows, mobility, and fixity at the level of individual experience through case studies of Chinese *daigouers* in/to Nepal. By investigating the complicated ties between transnational flow and mobility, I aim to enhance the critical theorization of globalization with updated inter-Asian instances.

Research sites and methodology

The findings I present here are drawn from my fieldwork in Nepal between September 2019 and April 2020. The physical site of research into Chinese *daigou* practices in Nepal is Kathmandu. As a result of increased tourism, Chinese communities are emerging in the Nepali capital that center around tourism-related industries and infrastructures, such as restaurants, hotels, hostels, agencies, and stores. My methodological approach is primarily ethnographic, including participant observations, semi-structured interviews, and informal conversations held both individually and in groups. Not all interlocutors are “professional” *daigouers* who travel to Nepal for informal economic activity: *daigou* is, rather, a common practice and experience that many Chinese people traveling abroad engage in. Thus, scholars should contextualize the fluidity of *daigou* within a broader understanding of translocalities.

Most of the ethnographic material was collected from late December 2019 to April 2020, by when the COVID-19 pandemic had reached Nepal and rapidly spread through the country. On March 23, 2020, without any advanced notice, the Nepali government declared a national lockdown that was implemented at 6 a.m. the next day (Pradhan 2020). During this period, Nepal’s borders to the south and north were closed and all international flights suspended. With people’s physical movement now restricted, they increasingly took to virtual interactions and online communities instead. Informed by empirical fieldwork that demonstrates the key importance of digital sites in facilitating various types of flows between Nepal and China, I developed a hybrid research method that mixes observations of both virtual and physical communities.

I conducted virtual ethnography through the online platform WeChat, which is not only popular with Chinese people but also with Nepalis seeking to communicate with the latter. Work via WeChat mainly occurs through one of three methods: instant messaging with participants; discussion via chat groups; and, using Moments (a platform feature that resembles Facebook). Prior to and since the pandemic’s onset, I would participate in ten WeChat chat groups, with their respective membership numbers ranging from dozens to hundreds of people.

The transnational flow of Chinese tourism and (im)mobility of *daigou*

For most of the time period since Nepal and China established official diplomatic relations in 1955, the exchange between the two countries has primarily comprised state-dominated geopolitical and diplomatic forms hereof (Sangroula 2018). Starting in the twenty-first century, Chinese tourism to Nepal has become a new flow between the two countries. In 2001, the Chinese government approved Nepal being one of its outbound-tourism destinations. From 2010 to 2019, the number of Chinese tourists visiting Nepal increased dramatically from 46,360 to 169,543 respectively.

In 2019 Chinese tourism accounted for 14.2 percent of all such international visitors to Nepal, ranking second globally only to India (Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation of Nepal 2020). Various media and government institutions in both countries have employed the term “flow of Chinese tourists” (Himalayan News Service 2019; Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2018; Xinhua News Agency 2018) to illustrate the increasing prominence of Chinese tourists in Nepal. Many of these institutions describe also the two state governments’ significant role in enhancing the flow of Chinese tourism to Nepal by modernizing infrastructure, enhancing connectivity regarding roads and air travel, as well as by issuing favorable policies here.

However, despite the fact that from the above statistics, news items, and government statements we might describe this type of flow as dominated by state-sponsored infrastructures, policies, and technologies, it is crucial to avoid reifying these conditions as the only aspects of the space of flow. This is because heterogenous circumstances on the ground also shape it. For instance, the tourism flow not only runs through embassy compounds but also those hotels, hostels, restaurants, and grocery stores invested in by private Chinese and Nepali businessmen/women. Moreover, the above discourses of flow ignore the various agendas of Chinese tourists themselves, their different motivations, knowledges, and tourist practices. The notion of flow conveys a smoothness of motion that might not capture precisely how the movements of many Chinese tourists work. Many of the latter I encountered in Nepal were immature, budget travelers who lacked the money and knowledge to prudently navigate their travel-related activities abroad. Nonetheless the space of tourist flow between Nepal and China is not detached and independent from two entities that have clear boundaries, becoming a deterritorialized third space between the two countries. Instead, it extends into two national territories and is articulated via many nontourist aspects of both societies. Consequently, this particular space of flow is not only inclusive for tourists. The same networks, facilities, and channels of movement originally planned to serve tourists are appropriated by other actors too, including *daigouers*. In this way, the transnational flow of Chinese tourism shapes the mobility of *daigou* practices.

Most importantly, the state-sanctioned tourism exchange between Nepal and China offers *daigouers* a legal and manageable identity when traveling abroad. During my fieldwork, all the *daigouers* I interviewed held tourist visas. In 2015, Nepal waived visa fees for Chinese citizens. Although this tourist visa is originally only valid for 30 days, it can be flexibly renewed for up to 180 days at little extra cost in practice. Moreover, after entering Nepal a person holding this visa is not prevented from engaging in different types of nontourist activities, like *daigou*. However their covert identity concealed under the guise of tourism determines that these endeavors must stay low-profile, avoiding the state’s gaze. To conduct these unregistered activities, *daigouers* must inhabit marginalized areas where neither state regulation nor protection dominate. In Kathmandu, the gray zone (Marginson 2012) that many *daigouers* occupy overlaps with the city’s liminal tourist heaven, Thamel

(Grossman-Thompson and Linder 2014), which is also the Nepali capital's emerging Chinatown.

This is another way in which the flow of tourism sustains the mobility of *daigou*. It embeds *daigouers* in the material-infrastructure facilities designed for use by tourists. Many I interviewed and observed rent rooms in low-end hotels maintained by Chinese investors. In addition to being places of rest, the rooms are also where they store products before delivering them to the express-service dropoff points or personally carrying them with them to the airport. Those who choose not to stay in Thamel still spend much time there purchasing goods and building rapport with storeowners, friends, and fellow *daigouers* in shops, cafés, and restaurants. Part of the reason for remaining in Thamel is that many *daigouers* lack the basic linguistic, economic, and cultural abilities to explore areas beyond this district. In embedding them in Nepal's material tourist spaces, the flow of tourism also links *daigouers* with social networks that are mediated by Chinese-speaking local brokers, who have either failed to secure a licensed job in the formal tourist market or intend to extend their formal related business to the informal *daigou* milieu. For both groups, their relations — as friends, guides, partners, storeowners, and buyers — form valuable social capital from which they obtain subsequent opportunities to use other types of the latter (Burt 1992).

The recent popularity of online streaming activities in many stores in Thamel may more concretely demonstrate how *daigou* is embedded in touristic material and social spaces. In Thamel, visitors can easily find many stores selling tourist items such as cashmere goods, jewellery, and tea. During my latest round of fieldwork there, I found that although many stores were crowded with Chinese people these individuals were *daigouers* rather than ordinary tourists. And these *daigouers* utilized advanced real-time communication technologies to advertise their wares. For instance, they stand facing several smartphones and show in-store products to customers back in China. From time to time, Nepali storeowners or staff appear on-screen and greet, usually in Chinese, these potential customers. *Daigouers* use popular digital platforms for this, particularly Douyin (TikTok) and Kuaishou. The Nepali owners let the *daigouers* use store space and resources, in exchange potentially opening their businesses up to broader markets in China. The ordering process is instantaneous. Customers in China can place their orders through online portals while watching the live show. Once made, the products will be carefully packaged, taken to the nearby express-service dropoff points, and then delivered to different locations across China.

Online streaming belongs among *daigouers*' essential strategies to authenticate the products they sell commercially. Academic works on *daigou* have highlighted the branding practices involved, meaning "successfully annexing individuals' unique personalities and life experiences to commercial products through visual and discursive narratives" — as such, "attracting customers, enhancing 'stickiness,' and increasing profit margins" (Zhang 2017, 194). Zhao also demonstrates that "by

taking advantage of WeChat's timeline service, they [Chinese students] intentionally bring down the boundary between personal and professional networks to maintain and develop their relationships with daigou customers in China, most of whom they have never met in person" (Zhao 2020, 14).

Such branding is spatialized. The mobility of *daigou* functions around a number of peculiar geographic moorings in which a place is authenticated by aligning it with particular products. For the European countries, in Chinese eyes, these authentic goods are high-end luxury ones; Australia and New Zealand, meanwhile, are associated with healthcare items and powdered formulas. Nepal itself is associated with goods such as handmade cashmere scarves and Buddhist handicrafts. These products may enhance many Chinese people's inner-orientalized image (Shen 2016) by perpetuating the view of Nepal as both a sacred Buddhist land and a backward, less-industrialized country. Nevertheless, *daigouers*' presence in the source market is crucial to proving authenticity here.

In addition to the online streaming of goods, many Chinese *daigouers* also share snapshots of their everyday lives in Nepal with potential customers via digital platforms. The information embedded in these snapshots is comprehensive, highlighting their daily experiences and interactions with local people. Zhao (2020) indicates that this self-disclosure is not uniform but rather strategically employed and carefully calculated. The aim is to highlight that they actually live in Nepal, have extensive and reliable networks of local partners, and can secure high-quality products. While the sense of being present disclosed from the snapshots of everyday life contributes to fostering trust between *daigouers* and their customers, the contents of these photos and videos are also selectively chosen to satisfy people's imagination of Nepal as a primitive society. Doing so provides evidence, for example, that the handmade cashmere scarves they sell are genuine.

The above analysis demonstrates another link between the tourism flow and *daigou* mobility. While tourism physically facilitates many *daigouers*' movement back and forth to Nepal, it also offers certain cultural references and mobilizes specific cultural capital to be added to the various commercial products that they sell. While most *daigouers* I interviewed told me that they did not personally care about Nepal's exotism, they all realized how important highlighting it was to prove to potential customers the authenticity of their goods. As such, they made sure that this impression was fully conveyed to interested parties when branding their goods. By doing so, they demonstrate that they are not passive in the tourism flow because they can also mobilize personal resources and technologies to reconfirm and reshape the nature of it.

Elsewhere, Martin (2017) has characterized the *daigou* practices of Chinese international students in Australia as one creative method to confront the established discrimination of being underpaid they encounter in formal markets. Similar observations are also made by scholars like Zani (2018, 2020), who analyses how women from mainland China in Taiwan utilize *daigou* to earn emotional and

financial capital while they remain excluded from local formal-employment systems. While many Chinese *daigouers*' everyday lives are limited to the small geographic area of Thamel, my informants seldom complained about a sense of stuckness in Nepal. Few of them wanted to integrate into local society, and local opportunities were sufficient for them to exploit — especially for those only staying in Nepal for a few weeks.

Comparison of *daigouers* in Nepal and their counterparts in Australia and Taiwan reveals, then, it is embedment in different flows that leads to their varying perceptions, attitudes, and mobility practices. Chinese international students pay large sums (e.g. for visa fees, educational costs, airfares) to travel to and stay in Australia; Nepal-based *daigouers*' equivalent costs are minuscule meanwhile. Taking advantage of the flow of Chinese tourists to Nepal (e.g. via improved infrastructure, government support), *daigouers* can frequently travel between the two countries without becoming stuck in the host society. Moreover, while the state more systematically regulates international students, *daigouers* who take the form of tourists enjoy more travel flexibility because they are not required to report to formal institutions like universities. Many of the *daigouers* I met in Nepal simultaneously held tourist visas from other South Asian countries like India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. Martin characterizes *daigou* as “an opportunistic exploitation of temporary gaps” (2017, 905), with those engaged in such activities continually pursuing related opportunities by traveling to different overseas locations as tourists.

However, the above analysis is not to suggest *daigouers*' movement is totally uninhibited. A sense of stuckness, actually, is a prerequisite for the mobility of their bodies, money, and commercial products. Many of the *daigouers* I interviewed and observed are young people who did not possess much economic, social, or cultural capital in their places of origin in China. Many are not from the latter's metropolitan centers and did not acquire a higher education. Unable to secure promising careers in China's large cities and reluctant to remain at home, they turned their attention to Nepal and other less-developed countries in seeking alternative forms of upward mobility.

Disc (pseudonym) is a young *daigouer* in his early 20s. After graduating from high school, he “wandered in society for a few years” before traveling to Nepal, the first foreign country he had ever visited, on the recommendation of a friend who had *daigou* experience. He confessed that he knew nothing about the place other than the common saying “Nepal is friendly to China.” Disc told me that, in addition to earning money, he wanted to see more of the world (*jian jian shi mian*).

Disc's stories and motivations are representative of others I met too. *Daigouers* mobilize the limited capital they have to hand, such as their savings and a few social relations, so as to generate practical capital — say, money. In many cases, this practical capital is more subtle and symbolic than a financial income however. By placing their bodies amid virtual and physical flows, they expect to connect with

transnational networks and thus satisfy some of their cosmopolitan desires. In some cases, the *daigouers* wish to earn this symbolic capital more than practical forms of the latter: the experience of traveling to many foreign countries, extended networks, and accumulated human resources offers them the feeling of being privileged and liberated.

In this sense, *daigou* resembles a specific travel practice like backpacking — as with those engaging in the latter, *daigouers* also utilize their movement as a rite of passage through which they can “upgrade” themselves. After the journey, they can be incorporated into their home contexts again (Cohen 2004) — potentially having now greater social capital. Many young *daigouers* I met in Nepal confessed that they would not do this kind of work for long. They wanted to gain as much money as possible while abroad and use it to invest in their own businesses in China, most likely in their hometowns. Nevertheless, when they start their journeys, many *daigouers* are comparatively vulnerable because they lack money, networks, and knowledge. Compared to Martin’s (2017) international students from middle-class families, these Nepal-based *daigouers* are less likely to travel significant distances to places like Australia and stay there for prolonged periods of time. Some *daigouers* even told me that they had not visited any of China’s big cities before going abroad. In this manner, the transnational flows of Chinese tourists to Nepal and other developing countries in Asia and Africa offer these marginalized actors low-cost, alternative systems of mobility that enable them to practice globalization with their own bodies.

So far, in this section, I have analyzed the dialectical relationship between the flow of Chinese tourists to Nepal and *daigou* mobility. I have demonstrated how that flow provides originally marginalized and vulnerable young *daigouers* with an affordable system of movement — as constituted by favorable state policies, accessible and comprehensive tourist infrastructures, and extended social networks. Instead of being “carried” by the flow, *daigouers* actively participate in confirming and shaping its nature via their own commercial activities. While promoting certain goods to their customers, and therein emphasizing the exotism of the source market, they contribute to shaping Nepal as a meaningful tourist destination in the Chinese context — potentially making their customers future visitors.

Moreover, I have analyzed many *daigouers*’ fixity in their places of origin. Such spatial and social rootedness coexist with the tourism flow and will never be erased by it. Nonetheless, this flow at least presents these people with opportunities to confront stuckness. It is worth noting that while the tourism flow is proven to be able to mobilize *daigouers*, more comprehensive studies are needed to determine whether it actually empowers them as well. Not many I interviewed had earned enough hereby to start their own business back home. The typical situation is, rather, that they only manage to break even regarding the income and expenditure related to the traveling life. While many had established more extensive social networks during

the process of *daigou*, more evidence is needed if we are to prove the financial and social capital gained can aid their upward mobility on returning home.

This research puzzle emerging from my observation of *daigouers* in Nepal echoes Martin's warning that we should be cautious "against any simple equation of mobility with capital understood as an abstract, general and placeless form of value" (2017, 906). In the next section, I will heed this scholar's advice and thus depict a more nuanced relationship existing between tourism flow and (im)mobility. I examine the months from late December 2019 to April 2020, as a link moment of the mobility assemblages (Xiang 2021). Toward the end of this period, most cross-border flows were suspended and many *daigouers* stranded in Kathmandu. I argue that although the tourism flow contributes to shaping *daigou* mobility, the suspension of the former does not necessarily negate the latter. On the contrary, indeed: while old types of mobility may struggle to survive, new forms can emerge in such circumstances.

Moving masks and stranded *daigouers*

Trading medicine and medical supplies between Nepal and China was not entirely unfashionable before the pandemic. It constitutes a part of another flow between the two countries, that of industrial goods. This flow is almost unidirectional, given the industries in each country. For example, almost all the medical masks in Nepal are imported from China. According to an official report for the fiscal year 2019/20, Nepal imported therein a total 73,199 kilograms of face masks — of which 67,833 kgs came from China (Department of Customs, Government of Nepal 2020). Comparatively, Nepali industrial goods entering the Chinese market are minuscule. Although industrial flows share similar spatial material and social networks with tourism ones and with *daigou* mobility, they remained largely separate spheres prior to the pandemic — as the data from my fieldwork also suggests. However, as I outline below, the mobility assemblages induced by the COVID-19 pandemic brought these respective realms together, producing a new type of reversed mobility regarding medical masks — albeit only very briefly.

This pandemic first erupted in China in December 2019. Reacting to this looming health emergency, China quickly suspended most of its physical interactions with the rest of the world. However, attempts to contain the SARS-CoV-2 virus failed, allowing it to spread quickly around the globe. In Nepal, the first confirmed case occurred in late January. However, the government was slow to react to the health risks. For instance, it did not require masks until March (Kumar 2020; Poudel 2020a, 2020b). Toward the end of that month, as noted, the Nepali government eventually declared a national lockdown. Initially it was due to last a week but actually remained in place until July 21, 2020 (Nepali Times 2020), with the country's borders herewith closed and all international flights suspended.

The "mask mania" in Nepal mainly happened from January to early February 2020. Two reasons explain its emergence. One is the time it took for the virus — at around

one month — to cross the Himalayan mountains. During this window, the Nepali government did not pay much attention to addressing if and how the virus would spread from China. Many Chinese people in Nepal even felt lucky because they were outside of their native country. The time gap between the virus's emergence in China and arrival in Nepal led to a mismatch between perception and information dissemination about associated risks. While the Nepali government did not initially require masks to be worn, Chinese officials maintained the opposite stance and consequently issued related regulations. Although most physical movement between Nepal and China was stopped in this context, digital information was free to cross borders. Chinese nationals in Nepal received numerous news stories about severe shortages of medical supplies of all types back home every day, whereas Nepali media paid much less attention to the pandemic initially. As informed by both my fieldwork data and local media (Poudel 2020b), when Chinese people began visiting local pharmacies the latter's staff felt more confused than anything about their related requests.

As the gaps in the flows of virus and information closed, so too did the cross-border movement of masks also ebb. At the end of January 2020, the Nepali government banned the latter's export to other countries, directly ending the aforementioned mask mania (Poudel 2020b). This decision was based on its evaluation now of COVID-19 as a serious threat to national security and its knowledge about low mask availability in local markets. Moreover, as the number of cases increased, the Nepali public began to understand the severity of the pandemic, thus acquiring masks, sanitizer, and other medical supplies. Prior to the pandemic, the price of a standard medical mask had been around NPR 10; it would reach NPR 50 at the peak of the mask mania. As a result, some pharmacies in Kathmandu issued related purchase restrictions.

We can conclude from this that the perceived dominant role of flows in shaping mobilities is questionable. The suspension of flows of tourism and industrial goods did not lead to the immediate suspension of *daigou* mobility. On the contrary, when most parts of the tourist system were shut down, *daigou* mobility survived for a while yet and even developed new patterns of engagement. To a large extent, forced immobility generated exploitable opportunities for onselling masks. Many stranded Chinese people, including tourists and expatriates, who were previously not professional *daigouers* started looking for masks in Kathmandu's pharmacies. Some engaged in mask-related *daigou* activities for profit — specifically, in compensation for their extra costs assumed due to forced immobility (e.g. for accommodation and similar).

Most people I talked with bought masks for two reasons: self-protection and for their family and friends in China. For instance, Lily and Back (pseudonyms) are both female Chinese tourists who were visiting Nepal to hike in the Himalayas. They arrived in Nepal before the pandemic's onset. However, in late December 2019 they were prevented from returning to China. For about a month, they were quarantined

in the same hostel from which I conducted fieldwork. It was closed to the public; residents could only leave the compound for reasons of essential business, which included purchasing masks. Their *daigou* activities with regard to medical masks were not influenced by a financial interest here, though being stranded in Nepal was an advantage in a business sense.

In addition to extending to new actors, forced immobility revealed the opportunities attached to fixity — something that has mainly been devalued in these flows. Many successful cases of onselling masks, as relevant *daigouers* told me, would be dependent on networks on the ground in China, Nepal, and elsewhere. The mechanisms of fulfilling a mask order were no different from other *daigou* activities: bringing them from China, looking for goods and trading in Nepal, as well as finding means of transportation. However, masks were specifically regulated commercial products that were not easily obtainable in a market dependent on tourism. For *daigouers* who sought large quantities of masks, locating and buying them was more complicated. They had to mobilize all their resources accumulated through their previous *daigou* experience to successfully complete orders. In other words, *daigouers* needed to utilize their local networks established and maintained prior to the pandemic. Doing this required these individuals to have long-term experience of living and trading in Nepal rather than just of occasional travel to the country for a few weeks at a time.

Moreover, preorders from clients in China were especially important because the need for masks was temporary and urgent. Thus, *daigouers* could not be entirely detached from their native country. *Daigou* is highly dependent on close, interpersonal relations indeed. These trustworthy networks established and sustained between *daigouers* and their Chinese clients not only guaranteed the availability of masks at short notice but also vouched for their quality — as dependent on the trader's reputation.

Kang Yang (pseudonym) was a professional *daigouer* in Nepal. Before coming to the country he had *daigou* experience in India, where he had established reliable connections with some local medical suppliers. On January 24, 2020, right before Chinese New Year, Kang received an urgent order from a client he had frequently helped prior to the pandemic demanding the express delivery of 30,000 masks to a small city in China's interior. After contacting his Nepali associates and visiting several pharmacies in Kathmandu, Kang realized that such a large quantity of masks could not be supplied by his local associates. So, Kang reached out to his contacts in India and learned that they could supply the masks as long as he visited Hyderabad and paid a deposit in advance. On Chinese New Year's Eve, he successfully secured the masks, which were then transported to China by his company. He earned around CNY 40,000 from this transaction, which both covered his costs and yielded a considerable profit indeed.

While "successful" *daigouers* like Kang could mobilize their transnational networks, many marginalized and vulnerable ones like Disc could only quarantine in their hotel

rooms and had no idea what to do business-wise. During interview, Disc discussed his ambitions to earn quick money. However his lack of experience, cash, customers, and contacts prevented him from doing so. Other *daigouers* shared more or less similar stories with me. Without much capital on the ground, many could only find medical masks by visiting local pharmacies one by one as each had only a limited supply thereof.

The *daigou* literature pays much attention to the transnational networks constituted by personal relations. For instance, Zani (2020) demonstrates how *daigou* women's personal networks help create new informal businesses that break down the boundaries between the virtual world and the real one. Similarly, Zhao (2020) finds that Chinese international students in Australia utilize circles of families and friends to establish and expand their *daigou* businesses. While scholars focus on the mobility and malleability of transnational *daigou* networks, they equally point out that the latter are not universal or placeless; rather, they are rooted in various geographies and cultures. The above-presented (un)successful cases during a particular brief time period further support these findings.

It is worth noting that though the examined *daigou* mobility regarding medical masks was supported and sustained by immobile people and their sited transnational networks, which can thus be described as dominated by states of geographic and social immobility, it is crucial to avoid reifying the practices as wholly fixed. To a large extent, the mask-related *daigou* did not form a type of movement that was totally autonomous from the tourist flow because it primarily lived from the infrastructures that facilitated the latter. For instance, some of the masks were transported to China through express-delivery services when still available. Most were taken there in people's suitcases however. Nonetheless, the infrastructures those masks moved through largely overlapped with those conditioning tourist and industrial flows. During this time, groups of otherwise mobile people — *daigouers*, tourists, expatriates, and others — were forced to confine themselves to various fixed spaces in Kathmandu. Limited movement within certain local areas was allowed, so that hotels, restaurants, and grocery stores became the daily spheres of many Chinese people. These initially tourist facilities offered many *daigouers* affordable accommodation and food during the challenging period in question when most of their income sources were cut off, proving crucial for sustaining their mask-related *daigou* activities.

Moreover, many people's movements, connections, and exchanges occurred via virtual communities such as ones on WeChat. This speaks to Urry's (2007) view that the digital constitutes a site of imaginative, communicative, and virtual travel. These physically confined people could hence move through social media, without the constraints of time and space. This represents a way to exchange information via communication technologies and to join the "powerful, interdependent knowledge-based systems that through new software are increasingly organizing production, consumption, travel and communications" (Urry 2007, 149). Before the pandemic,

WeChat groups were already popular among Chinese tourists and Nepali locals for establishing connections and exchanging information — representing critical virtual hubs through which the tourism flow ran. These virtual tourist hubs were then used to update people on pandemic-related developments every day. Many also used these WeChat groups to discuss potential ways to now leave Nepal and to urge Chinese authorities to aid those stranded there.

Such groups also provided arenas in which social, cultural, economic, and political issues were debated. These discussions involved criticism of the Nepali government and the Chinese Embassy in Kathmandu. Moreover, Chinese people shared hereby their dissatisfaction with the local Nepali populace, who to a large extent were portrayed as irresponsible and spreaders of the virus. *Daigouers* were often the target of criticism in these groups too. During the lockdown period, several protests organized by stranded Chinese nationals occurred in public places in Kathmandu (Dhungana 2020; Rajbhandari and Bhandari 2020). WeChat users blamed *daigouers* for organizing these activities and condemned them for ruining the relationship between China and Nepal. During lockdown, and because of the pressure ensuing from public discourses that condemned mask-related *daigou* activities as the merely exploiting of the pandemic, many *daigouers* chose to turn to business taking place between their own kind alone. WeChat groups thus offered other *daigouers* a full range of services — from advertising products, to discussions between dealers, to cash transactions.

The mobility of medical masks was consequently not only driven by temporary, forced immobility but also dependent on the mobile systems earlier established by other such flows. Without these, the new systems would have soon collapsed. In this sense, mask-related *daigou* mobility can be regarded as one of the methods by which cross-border flows between Nepal and China sought prolongment. By facilitating this specific type of mobility, the owners of restaurants, hotels, and other businesses who were initially closely dependent on tourist activities also tried to adjust their focus when ordinary tourists could not patronize them. However, the dynamics produced by the mask-related *daigou* mobility were minuscule vis-à-vis maintaining the entire system of movement here; in other words, it failed to constitute a flow by itself.

Conclusion

Drawing on the experiences of Chinese people in Nepal prior to and during the COVID-19 pandemic, I empirically examined the *daigou* practices intermingling with social exclusion, immigration, hierarchical structures, and the virtual world here. Underpinning that, I investigated the intricate and dialectical relations between the flow of Chinese tourists to Nepal and specific types of mobility and fixity. Motivated by the pursuit of upward mobility through transnational movements, young Chinese *daigouers* choose to engage in frequent motion — crossing various physical and virtual spaces, and taking advantage of the tourism flow.

While the latter liberates many *daigouers* from their marginalization in places of origin, its key traits like frequent mobility and lack of deep connection do not support *daigou* activities. Such endeavors require sited interactions to a certain extent. Thus, many *daigouers* develop creative practices to cooperate with, navigate, as well as challenge these flows. In presenting young Chinese *daigouers*' forms of creativity and vulnerability amid various transnational flows, I have offered empirical evidence refuting the wholly positive conceptualization of cosmopolitan mobilities widespread in academic discourse.

My findings suggest a complicated picture of globalization, as constituted by increasingly competing yet also still cooperative links between flows, spaces, places, actors, and objects in both the physical and virtual worlds. Regarding a specific type of mobility, the tourism flow, my findings offer a snapshot of how globalization is perceived, imagined, and practiced by ordinary people in the inter-Asian context. Results also suggest that understanding globalization in all its complexity means observing the dialectics between flows and sited experiences. Here, mobility is conditional: it is only achieved through different actors' respective processes of negotiation, adaption, and transgression with regard to borders.

References

- Adey, Peter. 2006. "If Mobility is Everything Then it is Nothing: Towards a Relational Politics of (Im)mobilities." *Mobilities* 1 (1): 75–94. DOI: 10.1080/17450100500489080.
- Appadurai, Arjun. 1996. *Modernity at large: Cultural dimensions of globalization*. London: University of Minnesota Press.
- Appadurai, Arjun. 2000. "Grassroots Globalization and the Research Imagination." *Public Culture* 12 (1): 1–19.
- Bauman, Zygmunt. 2000. *Liquid Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Burt, Ronald. 1992. *Structural holes: The social structure of competition*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Cambridge Dictionary. 2021. "Dagou." dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/daigou (accessed: 2021-10-5).
- Castells, Manuel. 1989. *The Informational City: Information Technology, Economic Restructuring and the Urban-Regional Process*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Castells, Manuel. 1999. "Grassrooting the space of flows." *Urban Geography* 20 (4): 294–302. DOI: 10.2747/0272-3638.20.4.294.
- Castells, Manuel. 2004. "Informationalism, Networks, and the Network Society: A Theoretical Blueprint." In *The Network Society: A Cross-cultural Perspective*, edited by Manuel Castells, 3–48. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited.
- Castells, Manuel. 2009. *The Rise of the Network Society: The Information Age - Economy, Society and Culture*. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated.
- Castells, Manuel. 2020. "Space of Flows, Space of Places: Materials for a Theory of Urbanism in the Information Age." In *The City Reader*, edited by Richard LeGates, and Frederic Stout (7th edition). Routledge.
- Cohen, Erik. 2004. "Backpacking: Diversity and Change." In *The Global Nomad: Backpacker Travel in Theory and Practice*, edited by Greg Richards, and Julie Wilson, 43–59. Bristol: Channel View Publications.

- Crang, Mike. 2002. "Between Places: Producing Hubs, Flows, and Networks." *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space* 34 (4): 569–574. <https://doi.org/10.1068/a34154>.
- Cresswell, Tim. 2010. "Towards a Politics of Mobility." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 28 (1): 17–31. <https://doi.org/10.1068/d11407>.
- Department of Customs, Government of Nepal. 2020. *Nepal Foreign Trade Statistics Fiscal Year 2019/20 (2076/77)*. Kathmandu.
- Dhungana, Shuvam. 2020. "Six injured as Chinese nationals demanding to be allowed to go home clash with police." *The Kathmandu Post*, May 2020.
- Grossman-Thompson, Barbara, and Benjamin Linder. 2014. "'A few days here is plenty': the value and implications of popular sources for tourism development in Kathmandu, Nepal." *International Journal of Leisure and Tourism Marketing* 4 (2): 117–134.
- Hannam, Kevin, Mimi Sheller, and John Urry. 2006. "Mobilities, Immobilities and Moorings." *Mobilities* 1 (1): 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.1080/174501005000489189>.
- Harvey, David. 2001. "Globalization and the 'Spatial Fix'." *Geographische Revue* 3 (2): 23–30.
- Himalayan News Service. 2019. "Flow of Chinese tourists yet to meet expectations." *The Himalayan Times*, April 2019.
- Kumar, Himendra. 2020. "Visit Nepal 2020 has already suffered setbacks but it can be salvaged, say tourism entrepreneurs." *The Kathmandu Post*, February 2020.
- Martin, Fran. 2017. "Rethinking network capital: Hospitality work and parallel trading among Chinese students in Melbourne." *Mobilities* 12 (6): 890–907.
- Marginson, Simon. 2012. "Including the Other: Regulation of the Human Rights of Mobile Students in a Nation-bound World." *Higher Education* 63: 497–512.
- Ministry of Culture, Tourism & Civil Aviation of Nepal. 2020. *Nepal Tourism Statistics 2019*. Kathmandu: MoCT & C.
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 2018. "Rt. Hon'ble Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli addressed the Nepal-China Business Forum today in Beijing." <https://mofa.gov.np/address-by-the-right-honourable-k-p-sharma-oli-prime-minister-of-nepal-to-the-nepal-china-business-forum/> (assessed 2021-7-16).
- Nepali Times. 2020. "Nepal ends Covid-19 lockdown-Cabinet decides to life restrictions, but limits public gatherings." *Nepali Times*, July 2020.
- Pradhan, Tika. 2020. "Nepal goes under lockdown for a week starting 6am Tuesday." *The Kathmandu Post*, March 2020.
- Poudel, Arjun. 2020a. "Nepali man suspected to have been infected with the new strain of coronavirus discharged." *The Kathmandu Post*, January 2020.
- Poudel, Arjun. 2020b. "Nepalis rush to buy face masks amidst coronavirus outbreak but there are none available." *The Kathmandu Post*, February 2020.
- Rajbhandari, Aneka, and Rastraraj Bhandari. 2020. "Protesting Chinese in Nepal told not to tarnish China's image." *Nepali Times*, May 2020.
- Rockefeller, Stuart. 2011. "Flow." *Current Anthropology* 52 (4): 557–578. <https://doi.org/10.1086/660912>.
- Sangroula, Yubraj. 2018. *South Asia China Geo-Economics*. Kathmandu: Lex & Juris Publications.
- Schewel, Kerilyn. 2020. "Understanding Immobility: Moving Beyond the Mobility Bias in Migration Studies." *International Migration Review* 54 (2): 328–355. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0197918319831952>.
- Sheller, Mimi. 2014. "The new mobilities paradigm for a live sociology." *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education* 62 (6): 79–88. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0271121414566014>.
- Shen, Weirong. 2016. *xiangxiang xi zang* (Imagining Tibet). Beijing: Beijing shifan daxue chubanshe (Press of Beijing Normal University).

- Susser, Ida. 1996. "The Shaping of Conflict in the Space of Flows." *Critique of Anthropology* 16 (1): 9–47. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0308275X9601600104>.
- Turner, Bryan. 2007. "The Enclave Society: Towards a Sociology of Immobility." *European Journal of Social Theory* 10 (2): 287–304. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1368431007077807>.
- Urry, John. 2007. *Mobilities*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Velde, Martin, and Ton Naerssen. 2011. "People, borders, trajectories: an approach to cross-border mobility and immobility in and to the European Union." *Area* 43 (2): 218–224. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41240488>.
- Xiang, Biao. 2021. "Shock Mobility: Convulsions in Human Migration are Having Large Impacts." *MoLab Inventory of Mobilities and Socioeconomic Changes*. Department 'Anthropology of Economic Experimentation'. Halle/Saale: Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology.
- Xinhua News Agency. 2018. "Nepal launches tourism website in Chinese language." *CGTN*, May 2018.
- Xie, Zhuoxiao. 2018. "Im/materializing Cross-Border Mobility: A Study of Mainland China-Hong Kong Daigou (Cross-Border Shopping Services on Global Consumer Goods)." *International Journal of Communication* 12: 4052–4065.
- Zani, Beatrice. 2018a. "Gendered Transnational Ties and Multipolar Economies: Chinese Migrant Women's WeChat Commerce in Taiwan." *International Migration* 57 (4): 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1111/imig.12526>.
- Zani, Beatrice. 2018b. "Trapped in Migration." *China Perspectives*, 1-2 (113): 75–86.
- Zani, Beatrice. 2020. "WeChat, we sell, we feel: Chinese women's emotional petit capitalism." *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 23 (5): 803–820. DOI: 10.1177/1367877920923360.
- Zhang, Lin. 2017. "Fashioning the feminine self in 'prosumer capitalism': Women's work and the transnational reselling of Western luxury online." *Journal of Consumer Culture* 17 (2): 184–204. DOI: 10.1177/1469540515572239.
- Zhao, Xinyu. 2020. "Digital labour in transnational mobility: Chinese international students' online boundary work in daigou." *New Media & Society* 23 (9): 2554–2574. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444820934096>.

Forschung und Lehre

Die jüngste Kontroverse um Zustand und Zukunft der deutschen Chinaforschung – eine vorläufige Bilanz

Gunter Schubert und Björn Alpermann

Einleitung

Die deutsche Chinaforschung trägt seit einiger Zeit eine kontroverse und teilweise polemisch geführte Debatte aus, die um einige für die wissenschaftliche und hochschulpolitische Auseinandersetzung mit dem autoritären China der Gegenwart zentrale Fragen kreist. Auch die Autoren dieses Beitrags haben sich daran beteiligt (und tun dies weiter), u. a. mit einem in der FAZ vom 9. März 2022 veröffentlichten Artikel, in dem wir prononciert Stellung nahmen gegen ein von uns so wahrgenommenes „moralisches Kreuzrittertum“ in den Reihen der Kritiker*innen der universitären deutschen Sinologie (Alpermann und Schubert 2022).¹ Die davon ausgelösten heftigen Reaktionen in den traditionellen Printmedien und vor allem auf den verschiedensten Social Media-Plattformen haben uns nicht überrascht. Allerdings zeigte sich, dass unsere Argumente, die von manchem kritischen Geist mitunter absichtlich verkürzt und somit verzerrt wiedergegeben wurden, eine genauere Ausführung erfordern, für die ein Zeitungsartikel nicht den notwendigen Raum bietet. Wir möchten daher in diesem Beitrag, den wir auch als vorläufige Bilanz der andauernden Debatte verstehen, auf diese Argumente zurückkommen und sie im Lichte der daran bisher vorgetragenen Kritik detaillierter entfalten. Dabei geht es uns in erster Linie um eine Versachlichung des in der deutschen Chinaforschung ausgetragenen Streits über den „richtigen Umgang“ mit dem autoritären China der Gegenwart. Zweifellos ist diese Debatte zu wichtig, als dass man sie zu einem polemisch zwischen unterschiedlichen „Lagern“ geführten Schlagabtausch verkommen lassen sollte.

Wie wir in unserem FAZ-Beitrag einleitend schrieben, steht die gegenwärtige Kontroverse im Kontext eines sich zunehmend autoritär gerierenden KP-Regimes sowie geopolitischer Verschiebungen mit einer Zuspitzung der Spannungen zwischen den USA bzw. dem „Westen“ einerseits und der VR China (sowie

1 Ein Autorenkollektiv von Chinaforscher*innen, von denen wir einige in unserem Beitrag explizit genannt haben, antworteten einige Tage später mit einem eigenen FAZ-Artikel (Fulda et al. 2022).

Russland) andererseits; davon berührt ist auch die Frage, ob bzw. wie die sinologische Ausbildung an den deutschen Universitäten und die Forschungsförderung an die „neue Normalität“ in China angepasst werden müssen. Hier wendeten wir uns dezidiert gegen allzu pauschale Vorwürfe aus dem Lager der Kritiker*innen der deutschen Chinaforschung, deren Repräsentant*innen seien naive oder opportunistische „China-Versteher*innen“ ohne die notwendige politische Distanz zum Objekt ihrer Forschung und ohne moralischen Kompass. Aber uns war und ist gleichzeitig klar, dass sich Sinolog*innen im Lichte der auf vielen Feldern hochproblematischen Lage in China kritisch hinterfragen müssen, ob sie den an sie gestellten professionellen Anforderungen in Bezug auf ihre Forschung, die Vermittlung chinabezogenen Wissens und die institutionelle Kooperation mit China gerecht werden. Im Folgenden möchten wir uns daher auf drei Aspekte konzentrieren, die im Zentrum der Frage nach dem „richtigen Umgang“ mit dem gegenwärtigen China stehen:

- a) *Positionalität*, konkret die Spannung zwischen individuellen normativen Wertorientierungen einerseits und dem öffentlichen (Aus-)Bildungsauftrag der Sinologie in Deutschland andererseits
- b) Der *Feldzugang* und die damit verbundenen wissenschaftsethischen und -praktischen Herausforderungen, unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des Problemkomplexes „Selbstzensur“
- c) Die *Hochschulkooperation* mit China

Positionalität

In unserem FAZ-Artikel haben wir auf die Gefahr einer gesinnungsethischen (moralischen) „Eignungsprüfung“ verwiesen, die den Chinaforscher*innen von den Protagonist*innen des chinakritischen Narrativs, das den öffentlichen Diskurs zunehmend prägt, abverlangt werde. Damit verwehr(t)en wir uns gegen die Forderung von Kritiker*innen innerhalb und außerhalb der deutschen Chinawissenschaft, Chinaforscher*innen mögen stetig und entschieden Menschenrechtsverletzungen in China anprangern und sich sichtbar solidarisch mit jenen zeigen, deren Mut zur öffentlich geäußerten Kritik vom chinesischen Regime sanktioniert wird – vor allem durch Einreiseverbote; auch sollten sie bei der Wahl und Bearbeitung ihrer Forschungsthemen darauf achten, nicht die Legitimität des autoritären Regimes in China zu stärken – etwa durch eine unkritische Übernahme bestimmter prominenter Konzepte, wie jenes der „autoritären Resilienz“, mit dem die Anpassungs- und Lernfähigkeit des chinesischen politischen Systems gefeiert, dessen undemokratische und menschenverachtende Seiten aber ausgeblendet würden (Fabian und Fulda 2022).² Unser den Kritiker*innen der deutschen

2 Die beiden Autoren warnen davor, dass „(D)ie undifferenzierte Übernahme des Konzepts der autoritären Resilienz letztlich die Gefahr (birgt), dass die westliche Zielbestimmung der liberalen Demokratie durch die Teleologie des Einparteienstaates ersetzt wird“ (Fabian und Fulda 2022: 72).

Chinaforschung gemachter Vorwurf, sie forderten eine normativ aufgeladene Forschung und ein entsprechendes öffentliches Engagement, mag überzogen klingen und war sicherlich der von uns intendierten Zuspitzung im Rahmen eines kurzen Zeitungsartikels geschuldet. Dahinter steht allerdings ein ernstes Problem, mit dem die gegenwartsorientierte Chinaforschung schon seit Jahrzehnten, und nicht erst in jüngster Zeit, konfrontiert ist. Man könnte es als *Positionalitätsproblem* bezeichnen, das ein unvermeidbares Spannungsverhältnis bezeichnet, in dem sich vor allem die sozialwissenschaftliche Chinaforschung befindet: Wie kann die forschungsgeleitete Produktion von Wissen über China mit dem normativen Postulat der Kritik am chinesischen Autoritarismus bzw. dem moralischen Gebot, alle Demokrat*innen mögen gegen die Zumutungen einer Autokratie zusammenstehen, vereinbart werden? Hier hat sich nach unserer Beobachtung in jüngster Vergangenheit im öffentlichen Diskurs eine bedenkliche Verschiebung in Richtung eines moralisierenden Rigorismus vollzogen, in dem schon gar nicht mehr die Frage gestellt wird, ob bzw. bis zu welchem Punkt eine normative Kontextualisierung der Chinaforschung überhaupt erfolgen sollte.

Während das „ob“ für uns nicht zur Debatte steht, vertreten wir in der Frage der Skalierung normativer Positionalität in der sinologischen Forschung und Lehre allerdings eine deutlich andere Position als das von uns, erneut in intendierter Zuspitzung, so bezeichnete „moralische Kreuzrittertum“. Genauso wenig, wie es darum gehen kann, Forschung zu China *a priori* in den Rahmen vermeintlich tendenziell regimelegitimierender Paradigmen – „autoritäre Resilienz“, „strategische Anpassungsfähigkeit“, „effektive Politikimplementierung“ – zu stellen, ist es problematisch, sich prinzipiell an regimedelegitimierenden Paradigmen – „digitaler Überwachungsstaat“, „neo-totalitäres System“ – zu orientieren. Wissenschaft darf ihre kritische Distanz zum Untersuchungsgegenstand und ihre allgemeine „Falsifizierungswilligkeit“ nicht aufgeben, wenn sie Wissenschaft bleiben will. Egal, ob man einen induktiven oder deduktiven Weg bei der Datenerhebung und -analyse beschreitet, Wissenschaft muss offen für unerwartete Ergebnisse bleiben und diese unabdingbare intellektuelle Voraussetzung für seriöse Wissenschaft ständig selbstkritisch reflektieren. Sie muss sich ferner an den Kern des Weberschen Wertfreiheitspostulats halten: Wissenschaft steht nicht im Dienst einer politischen Überzeugung, sondern muss davon losgelöst betrieben werden. Das bedeutet nicht, dass Wissenschaft normativ agnostisch ist – aber auch wenn die individuellen ethisch-moralischen und politischen Überzeugungen der Wissenschaftler*innen die Auswahl ihrer Themen und Paradigmen mitbestimmen, darf die Chinaforschung als Ganzes nicht von außerwissenschaftlichen Programmatiken angeleitet werden. In unserem FAZ-Artikel haben wir dazu geschrieben, dass die zentrale Aufgabe der Chinaforschung,

Damit suggerieren sie, dass sich die westliche Chinaforschung eine solche Zielbestimmung zu eigen macht (bzw. machen muss) und von dieser Position aus ihre Forschungsausrichtung definiert. Es ist aber strittig, ob sich Forschung einer normativen Zielbestimmung unterwerfen soll oder darf (siehe unten).

nämlich Wissen über China zu schaffen, getrennt von der Frage zu verhandeln sei, wie sich Chinaforscher*innen „auf normativer Ebene zum autoritären System in China positionieren“. ³ Eine Verkoppelung, so schreiben wir weiter, unterwerfe die Chinaforschung letztlich jener erwähnten Gesinnungsprüfung, die in „akzeptable“ und „inakzeptable“ Forschung unterscheiden will und damit lediglich einen Echoraum für westliche Wertüberzeugungen schafft. Chinaforscher*innen, zumal solche, die aus Steuermitteln alimentiert werden, schulden der Öffentlichkeit zuvorderst eine Wissensgenerierung und -vermittlung, die ein solides Verstehen des politischen und gesellschaftlichen Denkens und Handelns in China ermöglicht. Dazu gehört zweifellos auch, die Perspektive der „anderen Seite“ in der gebotenen Tiefenschärfe und „Interesselosigkeit“ herauszuarbeiten und dem politischen Diskurs zu übereignen – ganz egal, ob es einem passt oder nicht, was man in China tut und denkt. Das autoritäre Regime der VR China *verstehen* zu wollen, bedeutet nicht, es zu rechtfertigen. Diese banale Feststellung ist in der Kontroverse um die deutsche Chinaforschung ziemlich unter die Räder gekommen. ⁴

Zugang zum Forschungsfeld

Dass die deutschen Sinolog*innen um der Wahrung ihres physischen Zugangs zum Forschungsfeld China willen „regimeloyale“ Forschung betrieben und sich in permanenter Selbstzensur übten, ist ein explizit in der gegenwärtigen Debatte erhobener Vorwurf, der auf einen weiteren Aspekt des Positionalitätsproblems verweist. ⁵ Denn die Kritiker*innen sprechen großen Teilen der Chinaforschung hierzulande die intellektuelle Aufrichtigkeit ab, die Dysfunktionalitäten des chinesischen politischen Systems, Verstöße des KP-Regimes gegen das Völkerrecht sowie die Menschenrechtsverletzungen in China klar benennen zu wollen, weil dies berufliche Karrieren kosten könnte. ⁶ Dementsprechend sei Feldforschung in China durch die dafür unvermeidliche Zusammenarbeit mit chinesischen Stellen, Wissenschaftsinstitutionen und Wissenschaftler*innen, die ihrerseits in besonderer Weise der Kontrolle durch die Parteibürokratie ausgesetzt sind, erheblich kompromittiert, würden die von ihr generierten Ergebnisse durch Selbstzensur

3 Diese Position teilen viele befragte internationale Chinaforscher*innen (siehe Greitens und Truex 2019).

4 Es hat eine nicht zu übersehende Ironie, dass der Begriff des „Chinaverstehers“ bzw. der „Chinaverstherin“ durchaus zutreffend auf die Repräsentant*innen der Chinaforschung bezogen werden kann – und gerade nicht als Schlüsselbegriff der Kritiker*innen taugt, mit dem diese einen wissenschaftlich getarnten Opportunismus in weiten Teilen der Sinologie gegenüber dem chinesischen Regime geißeln.

5 In diesem Zusammenhang wird oft ein weiterer Vorwurf erhoben, nämlich dass diejenigen, die ihren Auftrag ernstnehmen und die Wahrheit aussprechen, die „kritischen“ Chinaforscher*innen also, von den eigenen Zunftkolleg*innen ausgegrenzt würden, statt dass man sich solidarisch hinter sie stelle.

6 Der in Nottingham tätige deutsche Chinaforscher Andreas Fulda hat in verschiedenen Publikationen Namen deutscher Chinaforscher*innen genannt, die seiner Meinung nach dem chinesischen Regime zu sehr entgegengekommen sind, siehe Fulda (2021).

„regimekonform“ angepasst und die deutschen Chinaforscher*innen somit „gekauft“.⁷

In unserem FAZ-Artikel haben wir argumentiert, dass die Gefahr einer Vereinnahmung durch die politische Agenda der KP China nicht dazu führen darf, dass wir den für die sozialwissenschaftliche Chinaforschung wichtigen Zugang zum Land für empirische Feldforschung einfach aufgeben – ganz ungeachtet der Frage, ob solche Forschung nicht auch auf anderen Wegen möglich und daher weniger anfällig für eine Vereinnahmung durch das KP-Regime sein könnte.⁸ Besonders kritisch wird die von uns, nicht zuletzt auf der Basis langjähriger eigener Erfahrung, angeführte Praxis der empirisch arbeitenden Chinaforschung gesehen, oft verschiedene Strategien anwenden zu müssen, um mit den forschungspraktischen Restriktionen, die sich in der Ära Xi Jinping (seit 2012) noch einmal verschärft haben, fertig zu werden. Alle, die Feldforschung in China betreiben, wissen, was damit gemeint ist. Um sensible Daten erheben zu können, müssen Forschungsprojekte mitunter thematisch und semantisch „geframt“ werden, damit sie gemeinsam mit chinesischen Kolleg*innen, die übrigens unter ganz ähnlichen Zwängen wie ausländische Forscher*innen stehen, durchgeführt werden können (Alpermann 2012: 171ff; Fuchs et al. 2019; Göbel 2014; Klotzbücher 2014). Die Projektbeschreibung und Datenerhebung müssen immer wieder ausgesteuert werden, weil bestimmte Dokumente nicht erhältlich sind oder bestimmte Gesprächspartner*innen nicht mehr zur Verfügung stehen. In Interviews muss darauf geachtet werden, die Befragten nicht in eine schwierige Situation zu bringen, die sie gegenüber ihren Vorgesetzten exponiert. Und nicht zuletzt müssen die chinesischen Kooperationspartner*innen geschützt werden, da ihre Zusammenarbeit mit deutschen bzw. westlichen Wissenschaftler*innen grundsätzlich ein politisches Risiko darstellt, das sie bewusst eingehen und dafür auch die notwendige politische Sensibilität ihrer westlichen Kolleg*innen bei der Durchführung der Forschung erwarten dürfen (Alpermann 2022). Diese Realität der chinabezogenen Forschungsarbeit existiert auch in anderen autoritären Systemen und ist etwa unseren Fachkolleg*innen, die zu Ländern des Mittleren Ostens arbeiten, genauso vertraut wie uns (Glasius et al. 2018).

7 Dieser Vorwurf ist bereits vor 15 Jahren von dem in Hongkong tätigen deutschen Ökonomen und Chinaforscher Carsten A. Holz erhoben worden, damals jedoch noch in eine Frage gekleidet, siehe Holz (2007).

8 So plädieren viele Kritiker*innen, dass das Internet vielfältiges Quellen- und Datenmaterial bereitstellt, das von Chinaforscher*innen genutzt werden kann. Wir stimmen dem zu, halten die empirische Forschung im Land selbst jedoch für dringend notwendig, um ein möglichst komplettes Bild der chinesischen Realität zu zeichnen. Die Fokussierung auf digitales Material wirft zudem selbst methodische Probleme auf (de Seta 2020), die inzwischen in den Fachvereinigungen der deutschen Sinologie intensiv diskutiert werden. Aber auch die Interviewarbeit mit im Ausland arbeitenden oder lebenden Chines*innen dürfte in den kommenden Jahren (wieder) zu einer wichtigen Quelle für Primärdaten werden.

Dies alles sind natürlich Restriktionen, die die Arbeit im chinesischen Forschungsfeld erschweren. Ohne forschungsstrategische *Mimikry*, also taktische Kompromisse beim Forschungsdesign, geht es aber nicht, und nur die, die selbst wenig oder gar keine Erfahrung mit sozialwissenschaftlicher Arbeit in China haben, können hier das „Ethos eines Geheimdienstes“ anklagen.⁹ Es geht den Kritiker*innen vor allem um die „roten Linien“, die nicht überschritten werden dürfen, bevor ein Forschungsprojekt wissenschaftsethisch nicht mehr legitimierbar ist, keine validen Daten mehr generiert, der Tatbestand der Selbstzensur gegeben ist und Chinaforscher*innen zu Steigbügelhalter*innen eines autoritären, menschenverachtenden Regimes werden. Doch wer wollte den Verlauf dieser „roten Linien“ eigentlich ausweisen, wenn nicht die im Feld tätigen Chinaforscher*innen selbst? Was stellen sich die Kritiker*innen ansonsten vor? Einen Katalog über das, was geht und was nicht mehr geht? Eine Prüfungsinstanz, die über die Einhaltung dieser Kriterien wacht? Dann gelangten wir wieder an den Punkt, an dem Forschung einer vorgängigen Gesinnungsprüfung unterworfen würde – ein Albtraum! Am Ende entscheidet der Wissenschaftsdiskurs über die fachliche und wissenschaftsethische Qualität von Forschung und die wissenschaftliche Integrität derer, die diese Forschung betreiben. Wir haben keinen Zweifel, dass dieser Diskurs Fehlentwicklungen sehr schnell aufdeckt. Die Konsequenzen tragen dann diejenigen, die den Prinzipien seriöser wissenschaftlicher Arbeit und wissenschaftsethischer Tadellosigkeit nicht gerecht werden. Dann steht schnell eine Reputation auf dem Spiel!

Fakt ist, dass die empirische Chinaforschung sehr viel solides Wissen über das gegenwärtige China generiert – Wissen, dessen Zustandekommen die harte Prüfung der *Community of Peers* bestehen musste, um in den wissenschaftlichen Diskurs Eingang zu finden und sich dort festsetzen zu können. Unzutreffend ist in diesem Kontext die hartnäckig bei einigen Kritiker*innen der deutschen Chinaforschung vorgetragene Behauptung, die entsprechenden „taktischen Kompromisse“, also das Forschungsdesign, würden nicht transparent gemacht. So verlangen die Prinzipien guter wissenschaftlicher Praxis und nicht zuletzt auch die Herausgeber*innen jeder seriösen Fachzeitschrift, dass die Methodologie des Forschungsprozesses etwa in einem Fachartikel offengelegt wird. Das gleiche gilt übrigens auch für Anträge an die einschlägigen Förderinstitutionen. Doch offensichtlich hegen die Kritiker*innen der deutschen Chinaforschung den Generalverdacht, dass die Beschreibung der Methodologie lediglich die korruptionsanfällige *Embeddedness* der Chinaforscher*innen verschleierte und nicht wirklich deutlich mache, wie weit die „faulen Kompromisse“ im Feld bzw. mit dem chinesischen Regime wirklich gehen. Zweifellos ist richtig, dass die Chinaforschung ehrliche Rechenschaft über ihre methodische Arbeit geben muss. Pauschal zu behaupten, dass sie das nicht täte und die Prinzipien Offenheit, Authentizität, Wahrheitsverpflichtung sowie das Recht des

9 So der Bochumer Sinologe Heiner Roetz in einer Replik auf unseren FAZ-Artikel, siehe Roetz (2022).

Zweifels und der Kritik verletze (Fulda et al. 2022), ist jedoch irreführend und dient der notwendigen Diskussion über die weitere Entwicklung und Implementierung sinnvoller Transparenzkriterien in keiner Weise. Zumindest gilt: Wer behauptet, dass es Selbstzensur und opportunistische Vereinnahmung in der Chinaforschung gegeben habe, muss dies auch belegen können, wenn er oder sie glaubwürdig bleiben will. Dann kann es eine Diskussion geben – anderenfalls gibt es nur Unterstellungen, die leicht in den Verdacht geraten, eher einer marktorientierten Profilierung der Kritiker*innen als der Sache einer wissenschaftsethisch und durchaus normativ engagierten Chinaforschung zu dienen, die wir alle wollen. Das bedeutet, dass natürlich neben parteistaatlichen Diskursen und Programmatiken sowie deren Umsetzung auch das „inoffizielle China“ untersucht werden muss: die (potenziell) marginalisierten sozialen Gruppen, die von der Parteilinie abweichenden politischen Strömungen, Widerstände und Gegenbewegungen zur dominanten offiziellen Politik und Mainstream-Gesellschaft. Anders als unsere Kritiker*innen sehen wir hier aber keine akute Gefahr der Vernachlässigung solcher Themenfelder. Nur wer den Fachdiskurs nicht kennt oder aktiv ausblendet, wird angesichts der überbordenden Literatur zu Themen wie sozialen Protestbewegungen, Zivilgesellschaft oder Arbeitsmigrant*innen zu der Einschätzung gelangen, dass „dieses ‚inoffizielle China‘ von der westlichen Chinaforschung und -politik allerdings weitgehend ignoriert und ausgeblendet [wurde]“ (Fabian und Fulda 2022: 70).

Hochschulkooperation mit China

Die Kritik an der deutschen Chinaforschung trifft auch die deutschen Hochschulen. So wird behauptet, auf dünner Datenbasis und pauschalisierend über die gesamte Republik hinweg, dass die Universitäten hochgradig, strukturell gar, von chinesischem Geld abhängig seien und viele Studiengänge ohne Unterstützung der VR China gar nicht gestemmt werden könnten (Fulda und Missal 2021a). Wir haben an verschiedenen Stellen darauf hingewiesen, dass die hier vorgetragenen Zahlen in suggestiver Weise zusammengestellt werden, nicht zwischen institutionell geförderter Drittmittelforschung und chinesischen Finanztransfers unterscheiden und im Vergleich zum Gesamtaufkommen der universitären Förderetats nur einen sehr kleinen Umfang ausmachen. Die in diesem Zusammenhang gern zitierte, sich auf Informationsfreiheitsgesetze berufende, Anfrage von David Missal an die deutschen Hochschulen, Auskunft über ihre aus der VR China stammenden Fördermittel zu geben, enthält entgegen anderslautender Behauptungen kaum empirische Belege für Abhängigkeiten (Missal 2022). So schreiben Fulda et al. (2022) zwar von „massiven finanziellen Mitteln“, die von China nach Deutschland fließen und verweisen auf „mehr als hundert Anfragen an öffentliche Stellen“; dabei unterschlagen sie aber, dass (nach unserer Zählung) weniger als zehn der betreffenden Hochschulen substanziell, d. h. mit konkreten Zahlen, auf die Anfrage geantwortet haben! Die von Missal belegbaren Summen belaufen sich auf „mindestens 1,96 Mio. Euro pro Jahr im Durchschnitt“. Dies entspricht jedoch nur

0,006 Prozent der Ausgaben deutscher Gebietskörperschaften für Hochschulen im Jahr 2019 (Statistisches Bundesamt 2020: 55). Selbst wenn man theoretisch von sehr hohen nicht dokumentierten Zahlungen ausginge, deutet nichts an dieser Stichprobe auf „massive“ Zuflüsse chinesischer Gelder hin.

Auch die Behauptung, einzelne Fächer (vor allem die Sinologien) seien von chinesischem Geld abhängig, wird nicht durch harte Daten belegt. Das ist unseriös! Die schlichte Tatsache, dass es an Universitäten drittmittelgeförderte Projektkooperationen mit China gibt, kann nicht einfach als Ausdruck unbotmäßigen Einflusses der chinesischen Regierung auf die Finanzierung der deutschen Hochschulen und ihre Autonomie gedeutet werden. Und die wenigen Beispiele, die in diesem Kontext immer wieder angeführt werden – etwa der Fall der fünfjährigen Anschubfinanzierung einer in der Sinologie der FU Berlin angesiedelten Sprachdidaktikprofessur durch das Büro für chinesische Sprache des Bildungsministeriums (*Hanban*)¹⁰ (wie zuvor auch eine ähnliche Professur an der Universität Göttingen), reichen nicht aus, um eine strukturelle Abhängigkeit von chinesischem Geld zu belegen.¹¹ Allerdings sind wir dezidiert der Meinung, dass die deutschen Universitäten ihre Fördermittelstruktur insgesamt transparenter in die Öffentlichkeit vermitteln und dabei auch ihre „chinesischen Gelder“ ausweisen sollten. Dann würde sich so manche Aufgeregtheit in der augenblicklichen Debatte rasch legen und die Kenntnis der tatsächlichen Dimension der chinesischen „Finanzinfiltration“ zu einer sachgerechten Auseinandersetzung über solche Mittel führen.¹² Im „Academic Freedom Index“ jedenfalls, einem weltweiten Ranking der Wissenschaftsfreiheit, das gemeinsam von den Universitäten Erlangen-Nürnberg und Göteborg durchgeführt wird, belegt Deutschland aktuell Platz 1 unter 177 Ländern und Gebieten (Kinzelbach et al. 2022).

10 Siehe auch die diesbezüglichen Klarstellungen der FU Berlin: <https://www.fu-berlin.de/presse/informationen/fup/faq/china/01.html>.

11 Es entbehrt nicht der Ironie, dass ausgerechnet der Stelleninhaber dieser Berliner Professur, gerade die Übersetzung eines Romans einer uigurischen Autorin vorgelegt hat, der sich mit dem äußerst heiklen Thema der Umerziehungskampagne in Xinjiang beschäftigt; siehe Erdal (2022).

12 In diesen Kontext gehört auch der parallele Streit über die Konfuzius-Institute, die von den Kritiker*innen der deutschen Chinaforschung ebenfalls als Ausweis struktureller Abhängigkeiten betrachtet werden, obwohl es hier zuvorderst um den Vorwurf eines fahrlässigen Ausverkaufs der Hochschulautonomie an die amtliche chinesische Kulturpolitik und Regierungspropaganda geht. Auch dieser Vorwurf ist schwer zu belegen. Wie in der Frage chinesischer Querfinanzierungen an den Universitäten werden einzelne Fälle nachgewiesener Einflussnahme – wie die abgesetzte digitale Präsentation eines kritischen Buches über Xi Jinping an den Konfuzius-Instituten der Universitäten Hannover und Duisburg-Essen nach einer Intervention der chinesischen Botschaft im Sommer 2021 – zum Beweis einer flächendeckenden U-Boot-Funktion dieser Einrichtungen für die chinesische Regierung aufgebaut. Die Arbeit der Konfuzius-Institute ist insgesamt sehr transparent. Aber natürlich stellt sich die Frage, ob sie noch ein zeitgemäßes Instrument der deutsch-chinesischen Hochschulk Kooperation sind. Auch hier plädieren wir für eine Debatte, die an Fakten orientiert bleibt und das Für und Wider der Konfuzius-Institute nüchtern abwägt. Zum Umgang mit den Konfuzius-Instituten siehe den zielführenden Beitrag von Niedenführ (2022).

Besonders eindringlich wenden wir uns gegen die Forderung aus den Reihen der Kritiker*innen der Chinaforschung und auch teilweise aus der Politik, die deutschen Universitäten sollten, im Lichte der finanziellen Abhängigkeiten von China, des illegalen Wissenstransfers aus universitären Forschungslaboren und der systematischen Einschüchterung und Kontrolle von chinesischen Studierenden in Deutschland durch die Regierung in Beijing, die Kooperation mit chinesischen Hochschulen einschränken oder gar beenden. Erneut: Für alle diese Vorwürfe gibt es bisher nur wenige Belege und gesicherte, weil systematisch erhobene Daten.¹³ So liefern auch die im Mai 2022 veröffentlichten Ergebnisse der „China Science Investigation“ hier nur begrenzte Einblicke. Diese Studie entdeckte, „mindestens 349 wissenschaftliche Veröffentlichungen, in denen Forschende an deutschen Hochschulen mit chinesischen Kolleginnen und Kollegen aus Militäreinrichtungen zusammengearbeitet haben“ (Correctiv 2022). Für ganz Europa waren es 2.994 Fälle im Untersuchungszeitraum Januar 2000 bis Februar 2022. Zur Bewertung dieser Zahlen sollte allerdings auch berücksichtigt werden, dass insgesamt über 350.000 in europäisch-chinesischer Kooperation entstandene Fachartikel untersucht wurden. Der Anteil derjenigen mit den o.g. Bezügen zum chinesischen Militär liegt demnach bei weniger als einem Prozent. Je nach Standpunkt der Betrachter*innen handelt es sich entweder um „die Spitze des Eisbergs“ oder um „die Nadel im Heuhaufen“. Solange sich aber kein Muster einer unbotmäßigen Einmischung des chinesischen Regimes in die deutsche Hochschulautonomie zeigt, bleibt es die Aufgabe deutscher Universitäten, auch mit chinesischen Wissenschaftsinstitutionen zu kooperieren, wo ihnen dies Vorteile bietet und selbstverständlich nicht gegen Dual-use-Richtlinien verstößt. Dabei spielt nicht zuletzt der Punkt eine Rolle, dass mit dieser Kooperation eben nicht zwingend das Regime gestärkt wird. Wie wir in unserem FAZ-Artikel schrieben, ist zwar unstrittig, dass das chinesische Wissenschaftssystem derzeit unter einem großen ideologischen Druck steht – genauso wie alle anderen gesellschaftlichen Bereiche auch. Nichtsdestotrotz wird an Chinas Universitäten seriöse Forschung betrieben – nicht nur in den Naturwissenschaften, sondern auch in den Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaften.¹⁴ Und es werden dort die chinesischen Eliten von morgen ausgebildet, die man nicht einfach als junge Avantgarde einer repressiven Autokratie betrachten darf. Vielmehr sollten wir den Kontakt zu ihnen und ihren Professor*innen so lange wie möglich halten, um den wichtigen akademischen Austausch, und damit auch ein Stück weit den politischen Dialog,

13 Das Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz hat jüngst konstatiert, dass die Kommunistische Partei Chinas „auch im Ausland auf eine umfassende Kontrolle der eigenen Bevölkerung“ setze und sich dabei chinesischer Unternehmen, Studierendenorganisationen und kulturellen Vereinen bediene; zitiert in Feldwisch-Drentrup (2021) (siehe auch Scholars at Risk Academic Freedom Monitoring Project 2019). Diese Probleme sind also keineswegs zu unterschätzen, sollten aber evidenzbasiert diskutiert werden.

14 Auch hier gehen die Meinungen innerhalb der Zunft weit auseinander. So äußerte der Trierer Chinawissenschaftler Sebastian Heilmann in einem FAZ-Artikel die Meinung, dass Kooperationen mit China im Bereich der Geisteswissenschaften „entkernt“ seien, da sie nur noch der Umsetzung der Parteipolitik dienen; zitiert in Feldwisch-Drentrup (2021).

zwischen China und Deutschland fortzuführen. Universitäten sind nicht der Ort, wo „Entkoppelungsnarrative“ die Agenda bestimmen dürfen!¹⁵ Und weiterhin: Die Grenzen der deutsch-chinesischen Hochschulkooperation bestimmen sich zuvorderst aus wissenschaftsethischen Erwägungen, die sich – wir wiederholen – auf gesicherte Daten und Erfahrungsmuster stützen müssen – nicht aber auf eine moralische (moralisierende) Fokussierung auf sogenannte westliche Werte, die vom KP-Regime verletzt werden und für die man die chinesischen Universitäten, ihr wissenschaftliches Personal und ihre Studierenden in Regress nimmt. Wir schützen Werte wie die Wissenschaftsfreiheit am besten, indem wir sie verantwortungsvoll vorleben (Godehardt und Alpermann 2022). Daher sprechen wir uns, erneut, gegen von außen oktroyierte Zwangsmaßnahmen aus.¹⁶

Vorläufiges Fazit

Wie wir eingangs betont haben, wollen wir mit diesem Beitrag zur Versachlichung einer kontrovers – und mitunter polemisch – geführten Debatte beitragen. Uns ist bewusst, dass unsere Positionen vor allem bei jenen Kritiker*innen Anstoß erregen, die ihre professionelle Zielbestimmung in der Herbeiführung einer demokratischen Ordnung in China sehen und die sich daher einem bestimmten „Normativitätspostulat“ sehr viel stärker verpflichtet fühlen als dies – unserer Meinung nach – Chinaforscher*innen tun sollten. Wissenschaft steht im Dienst der Wahrheit, nicht eines politischen Wertekanons. Allerdings, die Wahrheit muss gesagt werden, ohne „faule“ Kompromisse – zumindest darin dürften sich alle einig sein, auch wenn der Streit sehr schnell – und notwendigerweise – gleich dort weitergehen wird, wie der „faule Kompromiss“ zu definieren ist.

Angesichts einer sich dramatisch verändernden weltpolitischen Lage und einer außenpolitisch zunehmend selbstbewusst, mitunter aggressiv, auftretenden chinesischen Regierung, eines daraus resultierenden kritischen öffentlichen China-Diskurses (der sich seit einigen Jahren bundesweit auch in sinkenden Studierendenzahlen im Fach Sinologie abbildet), der Selbstabkapselung der VR China durch ihre konsequente „Null-COVID“-Politik und einer damit einhergehenden Entfremdung beider Seiten, zukünftig wahrscheinlich kleiner werdender Spielräume für Feldforschung in China und für Forschungs Kooperationen mit chinesischen Wissenschaftler*innen und Wissenschaftsinstitutionen sieht die deutsche

15 Das gilt natürlich auch für die Forschungspraxis. Wissensproduktion ist abhängig von Interdisziplinarität und grenzüberschreitender Kooperation, wenn sie nicht zu einer armseligen Nischenveranstaltung werden will.

16 Fulda und Missal (2021a: 14) argumentieren dagegen: „While such soft measures of mainstreaming China competence are to be welcomed there is also a need for hard measures of change management, e.g. HRK-led audits of university compliance with new transparency and accountability requirements.“ In einem anderen Text schreiben sie: „One key step would be the much-discussed and long-overdue establishment of a national security council, which Germany does not yet have, to coordinate security issues, including the defense of academic freedom from autocracies, across ministries and agencies.“ (Fulda und Missal 2021b).

Chinaforschung einer schwierigen Zukunft entgegen. Sie muss Antworten auf das Positionalitätsproblem finden, so weit wie möglich den Zugang zum Land erhalten und ihre Kooperation mit chinesischen Universitäten neu austarieren. Umso mehr brauchen wir eine unaufgeregte, auf eine solide empirische Faktenbasis gestützte, fach- und hochschulinterne sowie gesellschaftliche Diskussion über unser Verhältnis zu China, unter Einschluss der Frage nach einer realitätsgerechten Vermittlung chinabezogenen Wissens. Kein Chinawissenschaftler, keine Chinawissenschaftlerin kann sich dieser schwierigen Diskussion entziehen – auch die nicht, die sich gar nicht im gegenwärtigen China „zu Hause“ fühlen. Die Chinaforschung darf sich dabei nicht von ihren Kritiker*innen, die teilweise aus ihren eigenen Reihen kommen (was gut ist!), vor sich hertreiben lassen. Vielmehr muss sie sich zu allen hier aufgeworfenen Problemen verhalten und dabei die falsche Antinomie zwischen den sogenannten Chinaversteher*innen und den „herrschaftskritischen“ Chinawissenschaftler*innen, wie sie in der jüngsten FAZ-Debatte und ihren Verästelungen in den sozialen Medien stilisiert worden ist, überwinden. China zu „verstehen“, ist das Bemühen eines jeden Chinaforschers und einer jeden Chinaforscherin; die eigene wissenschaftliche Arbeit kritisch zu reflektieren, ist es auch – oder sollte es zumindest sein. Das gilt für die Lehre, die Forschung und die individuelle und institutionelle Kooperation mit China.

Natürlich wird es weiterhin Unterschiede in den Antworten auf die drei Probleme geben, die wir in diesem Beitrag konturiert haben: Positionalität, Feldzugang und Wissenschaftskooperation. Wir plädieren für eine faire Diskussion auf allen Ebenen, die vor allem auf hochschulpolitischem Feld unter Einbeziehung verschiedener Perspektiven – und nicht durch eine normativ geleitete Engführung – institutionalisiert werden sollte. Auch müssen die deutschen Hochschulen eigene „Chinastrategien“ entwickeln. Dabei können sie sich inzwischen an zahlreichen Leitfragen und Kriterienkatalogen orientieren, die für eine transparente Zusammenarbeit mit China entwickelt worden sind.¹⁷ Transparenz, Augenhöhe, kontinuierliche Prüfung der bestehenden Universitäts- und Programmpartnerschaften sowie die Bereitschaft, eingeschlagene Wege auch wieder zu verlassen, wenn sie nicht mehr gangbar sind, gehören jedenfalls zu den unabdingbaren Voraussetzungen der deutsch-chinesischen Hochschulkooperation.

17 Siehe etwa die Leitfragen der Hochschulrektorenkonferenz zur Hochschulkooperation mit der Volksrepublik China vom September 2020, die einen Orientierungsrahmen für eine transparente, faire und nachhaltige Kooperation mit China auslegen. Dabei wird u. a. explizit die Notwendigkeit der Einrichtung von inneruniversitären Anlaufstellen bzw. eines China-Koordinators erwähnt: https://www.hrk.de/fileadmin/redaktion/hrk/02-Dokumente/02-07-Internationales/Leitfragen_Hochschulkooperation_VR.pdf. Siehe auch DVCS (2018), European Commission (2022).

Literatur

- Alpermann, Björn. 2012. „Qualitative Interviewforschung in China“. In *Qualitative Interviewforschung in und mit fremden Sprachen: Eine Einführung in Theorie und Praxis*, edited by Jan Kruse, Stephanie Bethmann, Debora Niemann, and Christian Schmieder, 169–189. Weinheim: Beltz Juventa.
- Alpermann, Björn. 2022. „Ethics in Social Science Research on China“. *Made in China Journal*, June. Zugriff 12.09.2022. <https://madeinchinajournal.com/2022/06/27/ethics-in-social-science-research-on-china/>.
- Alpermann, Björn und Gunter Schubert. 2022. „Gegen das moralische Kreuzrittertum“. *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 9. März 2022.
- Correctiv. 2022. „Chinesisches Militär Made in Germany. Wie Deutschland China hilft, zur Militärischen Supermacht aufzusteigen“. *Correctiv*, 19. Mai 2022. Zugriff 19.09.2022. <https://correctiv.org/aktuelles/wirtschaft/2022/05/18/wie-deutschlands-wissenschaft-china-hilft-zur-militaer-supermacht-aufzusteigen/>.
- De Seta, Gabriele. 2020. „Three Lies of Digital Ethnography“. *Journal of Digital Social Research*, 2(1): 77–97.
- DVCS. 2018. „Handlungsempfehlungen der Deutschen Vereinigung für Chinastudien e. V. zum Umgang deutscher akademischer Institutionen mit der Volksrepublik China“. Zugriff 19.09.2022. <https://www.dvcs.eu/dokumente/handlungsempfehlungen.pdf>.
- Erdal, Gülnisa. 2022. Banus Erlösung 巴奴的救赎. Aus dem Chinesischen übersetzt von Andreas Guder. Schweinfurt: Ostasien Verlag.
- European Commission. 2022. *Tackling R&I foreign interference. Staff Working Document*. Brüssel: European Commission Directorate-General for Research and Innovation.
- Fabian, Horst und Fulda, Andreas (2022): „Die große China-Illusion. Warum wir einen anderen Blick auf die Volksrepublik brauchen“. *Blätter für Deutsche und Internationale Politik*, August: 69–76.
- Feldwisch-Drentrup, Hinnerk. 2021. „Einheitsfront im Ausland“. *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 5. Oktober 2021.
- Fuchs, Daniel, Patricia Fuk-Ying Tse und Xiaojun Feng. 2019. „Labour Research under Coercive Authoritarianism: Comparative Reflections on Fieldwork Challenges in China“. *Economic and Industrial Democracy*, 40(1): 132–155.
- Fulda, Andreas. 2021. „The Chinese Communist Party’s Hybrid Interference and Germany’s Increasingly Contentious China Debate (2018–21)“. *Journal of the European Association for Chinese Studies*, 2: 205–234.
- Fulda, Andreas und David Missal. 2021a. „Mitigating threats in academic freedom in Germany: the role of the state, universities, learned societies and China“. *International Journal of Human Rights*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13642987.2021.1989412>.
- Fulda, Andreas und David Missal. 2021b. „German Academic Freedom is Now Being Decided in Beijing“. *Foreign Policy*, 28. Oktober 2021. Zugriff: 12.09.2022. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/10/28/germany-china-censorship-universities-confucius-institute/>.
- Fulda, Andreas, Mareike Ohlberg, David Missal, Horst Fabian und Sascha Klotzbücher. 2022. „Grenzenlos kompromissbereit“. *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 16. März 2022.
- Glasius, Marlies et al. 2018. *Research, Ethics and Risk in the Authoritarian Field*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Göbel, Christian. 2014. „Let’s Not Go There: Coping with (Pre-) Selection Bias in Collaborative Field Research“. *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs*, 43(2): 87–106.
- Godehardt, Nadine und Björn Alpermann. 2022. „Jeder gute Garten will gedüngt sein“. *Der Tagesspiegel*, 9. September 2022.

- Greitens, Sheena C. und Rory Truex. 2019. „Repressive Experiences among China Scholars: New Evidence from Survey Data“. *China Quarterly*, 242: 349–75.
- Holz, Carsten A. 2007. „Have China Scholars All Been Bought?“. *Far Eastern Economic Review*, April: 36–40.
- Kinzelbach, Katrin, Staffan I. Lindberg, Lars Pelke und Janika Spannagel. 2022. *Academic Freedom Index 2022 Update*. FAU Erlangen-Nürnberg and V-Dem Institute. DOI: 10.25593/opus4-fau-18612.
- Klotzbücher, Sascha. 2014. „‘Embedded Research’ in Collaborative Fieldwork“. *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs*, 2: 65–85.
- Missal, David. 2022. „Chinas Geld an deutschen Unis. Die große Recherche zu Zuwendungen von Chinas Regierung, Huawei und Co.“. Zugriff 19.09.2022. <https://unis.davidmissal.de/>.
- Niedenführ, Matthias. 2022. „China selbstbewusst und kritisch begegnen“. *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 28. April 2022.
- Roetz, Heiner. 2022. „Kritik und Kompromiss“. *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 29. März 2022.
- Scholars at Risk Academic Freedom Monitoring Project. 2019. *Obstacles to Excellence. Academic Freedom and China’s Quest for World-Class Universities*. New York: Scholars at Risk. Zugriff 19.09.2022. https://www.scholarsatrisk.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Scholars-at-Risk-Obstacles-to-Excellence_EN.pdf.
- Statistisches Bundesamt. 2020. *Bildungsfinanzbericht 2020*. Wiesbaden: Statistisches Bundesamt.

Prof. Dr. Björn Alpermann

Lehrstuhlinhaber für Contemporary Chinese Studies,
Universität Würzburg
bjoern.alpermann@uni-wuerzburg.de

Prof. Dr. Gunter Schubert

Professor, Lehrstuhl für Greater China Studies am
Asien-Orient-Institut, Universität Tübingen
gunter.schubert@uni-tuebingen.de

Forschung und Lehre

Debating Academic Autonomy in the German-Speaking Field of China Studies: An Assessment

Sabrina Habich-Sobieggalla and H. Christoph Steinhardt

Summary

Geopolitical tensions between China and the West, and hardening authoritarianism in China, have sparked a debate in the German-speaking field of China Studies on how individual scholars and higher education organizations ought to position themselves and how to ensure academic autonomy. Most participants agree that the Chinese government's increasing domestic repression and growing inclination to project state punishments abroad and onto foreign researchers are major problems for China scholarship. However, one side of the debate places China scholars and universities that collaborate with China under suspicion of self-censorship, while the other side fails to address how China scholars can maintain autonomy in an environment of increased Chinese assertiveness. We suggest the following paths to strengthen academic autonomy in the German-speaking China Studies field, and in the process of cooperation between other disciplines and Chinese counterparts:

- Funding for China Studies needs to be increased and existing China expertise should be more comprehensively used in academic institutions collaborating with China, as well as in government and business organizations.
- In the China field, we advocate for continued exchange with Chinese colleagues wherever possible. International cooperation with China and other countries with problematic records in academic freedom and human rights should, during all its stages, routinely be accompanied by individuals with respective country expertise. These specialists can help to assess whether the type of cooperation is in line with principles of academic freedom or whether potential issues of dual-use technology might occur.
- The issues of access (including visas) for scholars who want to do field research in China and restrictions (including sanctions) against scholars directly affects the generation of reliable and open knowledge on China. This is a public good of strategic importance and belongs on the agenda of diplomatic engagements with Chinese counterparts at the national and EU levels.
- Foreign government and private funding to public universities and research institutes must be subject to public scrutiny and therefore should be made transparent.

Prof. Sabrina Habich-Sobieggalla, Ph.D., Professorin, Institut für Chinastudien, Freie Universität Berlin; sabrina.habich-sobieggalla@fu-berlin.de

Prof. Dr. H. Christoph Steinhardt, Assoziierter Professor, Tenure track Professur für Politik und Gesellschaft des modernen China, Institut für Ostasienwissenschaften, Universität Wien; hc.steinhardt@univie.ac.at

Introduction

In the face of rising geopolitical tensions between China and the West, as well as hardening authoritarianism and human rights violations inside China, the field of China Studies is under increasing pressure. First, in recent years, the Chinese government has sanctioned foreign scholars, launched domestic campaigns against “foreign spies,” and discouraged domestic researchers from international academic cooperation and publications (Feng 2022). This has resulted in narrowing access for foreign scholars and an increased perception of the risk of travel to China among many (Benner 2021; China File 2021). Since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, access for foreign scholars to China has been *de facto* closed (Thorpe 2021). Second, due to these undesirable developments, political debates have ensued on how individual scholars and higher education organizations ought to position themselves vis-à-vis Chinese entities, including research cooperation on dual-use technologies and the future of Confucius Institutes.¹ Similarly, the question of how to ensure academic autonomy in the China Studies field under these conditions and to what extent it is threatened, has come to the fore with increasing ferocity.

For the China field, such debates are not entirely new. The challenges China’s political regime poses for academic integrity and the associated risks for foreign researchers, local collaborators and research subjects have long been an issue in scholarly debates (Alpermann 2009; 2022; Göbel 2014; Greitens and Truex 2020; Heimer and Thøgersen 2006; Shih 2015). Similar issues have also been discussed by area specialists focusing on Southeast Asia (Morgenbesser and Weiss 2018), Russia (Johnson 2009) and the Middle East (Clark 2006), and those working in hostile environments across regions (Grimm et al. 2020).

In recent years, debates about Chinese relations with academic institutions and scholars have spilled over into the public domain. For example, in 2011 it became known that thirteen American professors who had been involved in a book publication on Xinjiang had been denied visas to travel to China. This incident of Chinese political interference in US academic freedom sparked a public debate about the role of Confucius Institutes at American universities, the decision by American universities to set up branch campuses in China, and US-China relations more generally (Business Insider 2011; de Vise 2011; Gladney 2011). More recently, a similar public debate ensued in Germany when it became known that Freie Universität Berlin (FU Berlin) was establishing a professorship at its Institute for Chinese Studies that was partly funded by Hanban, affiliated with China’s Ministry of Education (Feldwisch-Drentrup 2019, 2020).² The discussion received further

1 For some recent examples from Germany, see e.g., Correctiv (2022) and Himmelrath et al. (2022).

2 While this was not the first German professorship that received funding from China, the contract between FU Berlin and Hanban was problematic as it required FU Berlin to abide by Chinese law and stipulated that any disputes must be resolved before a Chinese arbitration court. According to FU Berlin, the contract was renegotiated in 2020 after the Berlin Senate had raised concerns about several points in the original contract (Freie Universität Berlin 2021).

impetus when the Chinese government denied access to European researchers working in China, including China specialists working at the Mercator Institute for China Studies (Forschung und Lehre 2021).

Against this background, an increasingly heated debate about the positioning of the German-speaking field of China Studies vis-à-vis the Chinese state and other entities emerged among China scholars. The dispute reached a climax in a recent newspaper op-ed exchange that spilled over into online forums such as H-Asia (Alpermann and Schubert 2022a, 2022b; Fulda et al. 2022; H-Asia 2022). This debate is less event-driven and more concerned with fundamental questions of engagement and academic autonomy. In the following, we take stock of this discussion. We first summarize the main points raised by different participants. We then add our own thoughts on how to move forward under increasingly difficult conditions. Before we do so, a brief reminder of what we refer to when we discuss academic freedom or autonomy is in order.

According to the German Federal Constitutional Court, academic freedom protects individuals, practices, and institutions involved in academic speech, research, and publications against state influence aimed at steering, controlling, and sanctioning science. Further, neither the state nor society may decide what or who lives up to scientific standards. Instead, the responsibility to control and sanction lies with the scientific community. Anything that can be regarded as a serious attempt to determine the truth in terms of content and form is protected by freedom of science, including minority opinions, faulty research approaches, unconventional, unfruitful, erratic hypotheses, theories, and positions (BVerfG Beschluss vom 11. Januar 1994 – 1 BvR 434/87).³ With this definition in mind, is academic autonomy under threat and if so, from where?

Diverging views on the problem

Assessing this question, different parties have provided dissimilar problem descriptions, which lead to diverging solution strategies. Although we regret the one sidedness and bitterness in tone that have come through on some occasions, we believe this debate is necessary and, overall, healthy. We assume that all participants share a common goal: a maximally autonomous, solidly financed field of China Studies in Germany and the German-speaking countries, which contributes to international scholarly discussion and effectively informs the public about a country that is of the greatest geopolitical significance. The question is how to achieve this objective.

- Most parties to the debate agree that the Chinese government's increasing domestic repression and its growing inclination to project state punishments abroad and onto foreigners (including researchers) is a major problem for

3 For relevant rulings in Austria and Switzerland, see Austrian Constitutional Court (1996) and Swiss Federal Court (2001).

China scholarship (Alpermann and Schubert 2022b; Benner 2018, 2021; Fulda 2021; Fulda and Missal 2021; Levy 2021; Tatlow 2018; Roetz 2022). Disagreement exists regarding the severity of the issue and whether this is the only problem. However, a group of senior Sinologists specializing in cultural studies and history appear to neglect these problems entirely, as they make no mention of them in their—in the editors’ words—“partly polemic” (Schaab-Hanke 2020) contributions to a special issue on the “China threat” (our translations) published in the journal *Minima Sinica* (Ptak and Mondschein 2020).

- Critics bemoan that some German-speaking China scholars rarely discuss these issues or downplay them in their communication with the public (Benner 2018; Fulda and Missal 2021; Fulda 2021).⁴ Didi Kirsten Tatlow argues that these scholars are subject to “late orientalism”—a mindset that renders them “blind to how the [Communist] party is furthering its interests” (Tatlow 2018). Andreas Fulda and co-authors further claim that many German-speaking China scholars would not “question the official narrative” in their choice of topics and methodology (Fulda et al. 2022).
- A key reason for this alleged self-restriction is, according to Andreas Fulda and David Missal, scholars’ and universities’ financial and institutional dependencies on Chinese state and business entities (Fulda and Missal 2021).
- Others highlight that the increasing pressure from the Chinese government coincides with rising pressure from its critics, which puts China scholars in a bind. Arguing along these lines, Björn Alpermann and Gunther Schubert have vocally criticized what they perceive as “moral crusaderism” (Alpermann and Schubert 2022b). The board of the German Association of Asian Studies (DGA) has issued a similar warning (German Association for Asian Studies 2020) in a statement on its website. The contributors to the above-cited “China threat” special issue single out pressure from China critics as the only problem (Ptak and Mondschein 2020).

Before we can discuss mitigation strategies, we need to look into the validity of the diagnosed problems. We take issue with the following arguments.

- It is hard to overlook that some German China scholars, curiously often those who have no expertise on contemporary Chinese politics, tend to downplay the repressive side of the Chinese government in their opinionated assessments of the problem (e.g., Kubin 2020; Leutner 2020). Critics have the right to challenge them on normative and empirical grounds. However, although Fulda and Missal sometimes admit that their examples can be selective, they repeatedly fall into language suggesting that these comments represent the bulk

4 Fulda and Missal also criticize that the German Association of Asian Studies (DGA) barely touched upon the issue in their public statements of 2020 and 2021, and failed to mention Chinese sanctions against European China scholars (Fulda and Missal 2021).

of the field (Fulda and Missal 2021). We are not aware of a systematic assessment of German China scholars' public statements on Chinese politics. However, according to our observations, these positions do not represent the field.

- As far as the alleged widespread failure to “question the official narrative” in research goes (Fulda et al. 2022), even a casual look at the topics German-speaking China scholars cover should lay this claim to rest.⁵ It should also be self-evident that researching the implementation of a government policy, which Fulda would probably call “official China” (Fulda and Missal 2021, 13), does not imply that scholars do not critically assess “the official narrative” or obfuscate power structures. As a generalizing descriptor of the field, such a claim has no basis.
- Fulda and Missal present selective evidence of financial grants from Chinese state and private entities to German universities and rightly bemoan a lack of funding transparency among universities. However, they then jump to the surprising conclusion that “many degree programmes at German universities could not be offered without funding from PRC entities” (Fulda and Missal 2021, 8). While we agree that financial flows from Chinese entities to German universities should be made public (see below), this claim cannot simply be inferred from the evidence they provide. Extraordinary claims require extraordinary proof. Fulda and Missal's conjecture not only sounds both dramatic and vague, but also lacks any evidence that would permit this inference to be drawn.⁶
- Fulda and co-authors paint a picture in which German China scholarship is at high risk of being subdued by a multi-pronged Chinese influence operation. We concur Benner's observation that the so-called “late Orientalism” seems to be more widespread among a generation of China scholars in retirement or in advanced stages of their careers (Benner 2018; see also, Alpermann and Schubert 2022b).⁷ If Fulda and co-authors were right and Chinese “sharp-power” strategies which have emerged over recent years are the cause behind some scholars' political views, we would have to assume that the young, non-tenured, often precariously employed scholars would be most affected. Why do we seem to observe the opposite? In the absence of any systematic insights,

5 The authors of this statement, for instance, study popular protests, civil society, labor conditions, involuntary resettlement and surveillance, among other topics.

6 The only support offered for this statement are unreferenced claims about two German universities having accepted “funding from PRC entities which are directly controlled by the CCP,” the above-mentioned case of a Chinese-funded professorship at Free University Berlin, and a reference to an unpublished working paper (Fulda and Missal 2021, 8–9).

7 This older generation also co-authored a position paper in support of Confucius Institutes (Clart et al. 2020), which Fulda and Missal cite as corroborating evidence for the impact of institutional dependencies (Fulda and Missal 2021), and penned the “China threat” special issue (Ptak and Mondschein 2020).

such an inconsistency between alleged cause and effect should at least caution us not to jump to conclusions.

- Both the restrictions imposed by the Chinese government and over-zealous counter-pressure by its critics are threats to academic autonomy. It is not only tiresome when China scholars speak to some journalists who seem to be interested only in the Chinese government's repressive side and fail to compute the more complex reality we discern in our research. The Covid-19 pandemic has also shown that media campaigns against scholars can have serious consequences on scientists' willingness to speak publicly (Nogrady 2021). That being said, only the Chinese government side sanctions and imprisons scholars. This deserves emphasis.

How can we move forward?

The debate highlights several solutions to preserve (or regain) academic autonomy in China Studies. We critically discuss some of these suggested solutions.

- Fulda et al. put all those who cooperate with Chinese scholars and Chinese scholarly institutions under suspicion of collaboration with the Chinese government. Drawing a line between those who cooperate with "potentially rotten compromises" and those who undertake "free scholarship in the pursuit of truth" (Fulda et al. 2022) implies that scholars with access to the field in China cannot conduct unbiased and open-ended research. We regard such polemic broadsides against peer-reviewed research as unacceptable, even in an op-ed. We believe cooperation and exchanges with Chinese colleagues are more important than ever (see also, Alpermann and Godehardt 2022; Levy 2021). In addition to continued exchange with the many Chinese social scientists who are critically observing their government despite their need to be much more careful in their public statements in recent years, we also need continued interaction with party institutions and scholars who advise the government. This provides insight into the rationalities of decision-makers. Such knowledge is important for understanding policy processes and any kind of future engagement (see also, Alpermann and Godehardt 2022).
- Fulda and Missal suggest forming a multi-agency government "task force which critically examines systematic challenges of the CCP." It should "not only address the issue of academic freedom but also investigate the threat of industry cooptation, IP theft, cyber-attacks and disinformation campaigns" (Fulda and Missal 2021, 14). While deeper research into China's international engagement is much needed, a state institution investigating academic freedom runs serious risk of restricting academic freedom as defined above.
- We share Fulda and co-authors' point that it is the task of academic organizations to take a stance against acts of repression against academics by the Chinese government (Fulda and Missal 2021). Sanctions against scholars

are undeniably attacks against academic freedom. Hence, we also hold the view that the DGA, of which we are both members, has not lived up to this task in its recent statements.

- Alpermann and Schubert (2022b) advocate field research in China and suggest framing cooperative scholarship in a way that allows Chinese colleagues to communicate it to their institutions. This has been an established practice since the 1990s. However, as field research is becoming increasingly difficult and restrictions on Chinese scholars increase, we fear the time for relying on this as a key research strategy may be over. Instead, the scholarly community may need to consider alternative practices for gaining first-hand evidence from China. This can include inviting Chinese scholars and activists to Europe, undertaking interviews with emigres, analyzing leaked internal documents from China—research strategies used by China scholars during the Mao period (Baum 2010). It also includes field research by Chinese doctoral students and post-docs who are able to access China and remote research through online means. These methods entail their own practical and ethical challenges and require a reorientation of graduate training. The scholarly community must reflect on these issues.⁸

We would like to propose the following alternative paths that, in our understanding, would serve to strengthen the academic autonomy of the China field and other scholarly disciplines collaborating with Chinese entities.

- Funding for China Studies needs to be increased and existing China expertise better used in academic institutions collaborating with China. Despite the importance of China in global politics and economics, China Studies are still heavily under-financed. Our own academic environments are cases in point. Research and teaching on contemporary China in universities in Austria is limited to four professorships at the University of Vienna. This compares to thirteen professorships in American Studies at five public universities.⁹ At FU Berlin, only five professors of China Studies cover the same fields (culture, politics, literature, history, sociology, economics) that seventeen professors at the John F. Kennedy Institute of North American Studies cover. In addition to that, knowledge on the United States is diffused throughout government and society, whereas knowledge on China is not broadly accessible (Rudyak 2021). As a result, China competency in Germany and even more so in Austria, remains feeble and does not reflect the importance of China to the German-speaking world. Beyond scarce financing for university professorships, funding for secondary schools to extend their teaching on China, including classes on language, politics, culture and society, is insufficient (see also,

⁸ The Arbeitskreis Sozialwissenschaftliche Chinaforschung (ASC, Work Group on Social Scientific China Research) under the DGA ran two workshops on such new challenges in 2021 and 2022.

⁹ Including tenure track and a.o. (extraordinary) professors. Data collected by Steinhardt.

Godehardt and Frenzel 2021). At the same time, graduates of China Studies need better appreciation on the job market, especially in political and business consulting. For instance, the international offices of universities and research institutes that collaborate with China should have at least one staff member with a background in China Studies. Our graduates would be highly qualified for such positions.

- The issues of field access (including visas) for scholars who want to do field research in China and restrictions against scholars (including sanctions) belong on the agenda of diplomatic engagements with Chinese counterparts at the national and EU levels. Since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, field research (if at all possible) seems to be granted only in those rare cases in which international university presidents directly reach out to their peers in Chinese partner universities, who then request that their administrations issue the invitation letters needed for visa applications. The generation of reliable and open knowledge on China is a public good of strategic importance that should not be left unattended by governments.
- The public has a right to know who funds what kinds of academic activities and the sums involved in a university financed by the taxpayer. The debate on Confucius Institutes is a complicated one. There have been problematic interference attempts and their presence on campuses is delicate (Hughes 2014). We share Fulda and Missal's (2021) critique of a lack of transparency of funding to universities from China. We believe that any foreign government and private funding to public universities must be subject to public scrutiny.
- With regards to institutional cooperation with universities in China more broadly, we believe these should not be blindly cut out of the fear of potentially negative influence from China or negative media attention. Instead, international cooperation with China and other countries with problematic records in academic freedom and human rights should, during all its stages, routinely be accompanied by individuals with respective country expertise who can help assess whether the type of cooperation is in line with principles of academic freedom or whether potential issues of dual-use technology might occur. Graduates of China Studies institutes are well-equipped for such tasks.
- As an example of an attempt to govern academic cooperation, in 2021 FU Berlin established a China commission (in German: China Beirat) filled with China experts and other stakeholders at the university engaged with China, to discuss and recommend strategies regarding the university's current and future cooperation with Chinese entities. Such structures, if successfully implemented, are arguably close to the German Federal Court's definition of academic freedom that requires state institutions to stay away from steering science and leave that task to academic institutions.

Conclusion

In an increasingly tense political climate, potential and manifest threats to academic autonomy have emerged from both ends of the spectrum. A scholarly and public debate on these issues is important. However, emphasizing threats from one side while pretending that threats from the other do not exist does not help. It is important to remain vigilant against both. It is equally necessary to rely on solid evidence when assessing the size of the threat. In this spirit, we are looking forward to empirically grounded assessments of the German-speaking field of China Studies that are currently underway. We hope to have brought further nuance and workable solutions to the problem of academic autonomy in times of tense political relations with China.

References

- Alpermann, Björn. 2009. "Political Science Research on China: Making the Most of Diversity." *Journal of Chinese Political Science* 14 (4): 343–56. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11366-009-9069-3>.
- Alpermann, Björn. 2022. "Ethics in Social Science Research on China." *Made in China Journal*. <https://madeinchinajournal.com/2022/06/27/ethics-in-social-science-research-on-china/>.
- Alpermann, Björn, and Nadine Godehardt. 2022. "Deutsch-chinesische Beziehungen: Jeder gute Garten will gedüngt sein." *Der Tagesspiegel*, 2022. <https://www.tagesspiegel.de/meinung/deutsch-chinesische-beziehungen-jeder-gute-garten-will-gedungt-sein-8621146.html>.
- Alpermann, Björn, and Gunter Schubert. 2022a. "Keine normativen Fesseln anlegen." *FAZ.NET*, March 19, 2022. <https://www.faz.net/aktuell/politik/briefe-an-die-herausgeber/leserbriefe-vom-19-maerz-2022-17888582.html>.
- Alpermann, Björn, and Gunter Schubert. 2022b. "Chinaforschung: Gegen das moralische Kreuzrittertum." *FAZ.NET*, September 3, 2022. <https://www.faz.net/aktuell/karriere-hochschule/chinaforschung-sinologen-wehren-sich-gegen-konformismusvorwurf-17859757.html>.
- Austrian Constitutional Court. 1996. Austrian Constitutional Court, verdict of 10 June 1996, B696/96, 14485. <https://archive.ph/KYGsx>.
- Baum, Richard. 2010. *China Watcher: Confessions of a Peking Tom*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.
- Benner, Thorsten. 2018. "Die romantischen Jahre sind vorbei." *libmod.de* (blog). December 18, 2018. <https://libmod.de/thorsten-benner-ueber-das-deutsch-chinesische-verhaeltnis/>.
- Benner, Thorsten. 2021. "Warum ich nicht mehr nach China reise." *Der Tagesspiegel Online*, May 10, 2021, sec. Politik. <https://www.tagesspiegel.de/politik/chinesische-sanktionen-gegen-deutsche-wissenschaftler-warum-ich-nicht-mehr-nach-china-reise/27172172.html>.
- Business Insider. 2011. "The Xinjiang 13 and Chinese Appeasement," 2011. <https://www.businessinsider.com/the-xinjiang-13-and-chinese-appeasement-2011-8>.
- China File. 2021. "Will I Return to China?" *ChinaFile* (blog). June 21, 2021. <https://www.chinafile.com/conversation/will-i-return-china>.
- Clark, Janine A. 2006. "Field Research Methods in the Middle East." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 39 (03): 417–24. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1049096506060707>.
- Clart, Philip, Thomas Heberer, Ralph Kauz, Heinrich Kill, Michael Lackner, Mechthild Leutner, Steffi Robak, et al. Positionspapier. 2020. "Konfuzius-Institute Stärken - Deutsch-Chinesischen Wissenschaftsaustausch Ausbauen," August 14, 2020. <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5ebbbb868d47f71183d9fb64/t/5fb3a21564513a6739c26c9f/1605607957309/Konfuzius-Institute+st%C3%A4rken+-+Positionspapier.pdf>.

- Correctiv. 2022. "Chinesisches Militär Made in Germany: Wie Deutschland China Hilft, Zur Militärischen Supermacht Aufzusteigen." 2022. <https://correctiv.org/aktuelles/wirtschaft/2022/05/18/wie-deutschlands-wissenschaft-china-hilft-zur-militaer-supermacht-aufzusteigen/>.
- Feldwisch-Drentrup, Hinnerk. 2019. "„Eine Art Ideen-Wäsche“: Erste Deutsche Unis Überdenken Umstrittene Konfuzius-Institute." *Tagesspiegel*, 2019.
- Feldwisch-Drentrup, Hinnerk. 2020. "Umstrittene Konfuzius-Institute: Senat Will von China Finanzierte Professur an Der FU Überprüfen." *Tagesspiegel*, 2020. <https://www.tagesspiegel.de/wissen/senat-will-von-china-finanzierte-professur-an-der-fu-ueberpruefen-7050091.html>.
- Feng, Emily. 2022. "China Tightens Restrictions and Bars Scholars from International Conferences." *NPR*, 2022.
- Forschung und Lehre. 2021. "China Verhängt Konter-Sanktionen Gegen Wissenschaftler," 2021. <https://www.forschung-und-lehre.de/politik/china-verhaengt-konter-sanktionen-gegen-wissenschaftler-3591>.
- Freie Universität Berlin. 2021. "Fakten Zur Stiftungsprofessur „Didaktik Des Chinesischen Sowie Sprache Und Literatur Chinas“ an Der Freien Universität Berlin." 2021. <https://www.fu-berlin.de/presse/informationen/fup/faq/china/index.html>.
- Fulda, Andreas. 2021. "The Chinese Communist Party's Hybrid Interference and Germany's Increasingly Contentious China Debate (2018-21)." *The Journal of the European Association for Chinese Studies* 2: 205–34. <https://doi.org/10.25365/jeacs.2021.2.205-234>.
- Fulda, Andreas, and David Missal. 2021. "Mitigating Threats to Academic Freedom in Germany: The Role of the State, Universities, Learned Societies and China." *The International Journal of Human Rights* 0 (0): 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13642987.2021.1989412>.
- Fulda, Andreas, Mareike Ohlberg, David Missal, Horst Fabian, and Sascha Klotzbücher. 2022. "Chinaforschung: Grenzenlos kompromissbereit?" *FAZ.NET*, March 16, 2022. <https://www.faz.net/aktuell/karriere-hochschule/die-chinaforschung-muss-ihre-rolle-ueberdenken-17877701.html>.
- German Association for Asian Studies. 2020. "Beware the Polarisation." June 12, 2020. <http://asienforschung.de/beware-the-polarisation/?lang=en>.
- Gladney, Drew. 2011. "An Unpredictable Process." *The New York Times*, 2011.
- Göbel, Christian. 2014. "Let's Not Go There: Coping with (Pre-) Selection Bias in Collaborative Field Research." *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs* 43 (2): 87–106. <https://doi.org/10.1177/186810261404300207>.
- Godehardt, Nadine, and Andrea Frenzel. 2021. "Mehr Chinakompetenz für eine strategische Chinapolitik: Ein systemischer Ansatz beginnt bereits in der Schule." *bpb.de*, no. 07–08. <https://www.bpb.de/shop/zeitschriften/apuz/326887/mehr-chinakompetenz-fuer-eine-strategische-chinapolitik/>.
- Greitens, Sheena Chestnut, and Rory Truex. 2020. "Repressive Experiences among China Scholars: New Evidence from Survey Data." *The China Quarterly* 242 (June): 349–75. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0305741019000365>.
- Grimm, Jannis J., Kevin Koehler, Ellen M. Lust, Ilyas Saliba, and Isabell Schierenbeck. 2020. *Safer Field Research in the Social Sciences: A Guide to Human and Digital Security in Hostile Environments*. 1st edition. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- H-Asia. 2022. "Germany's Contentious China Debate." H-Net. 2022. <https://networks.h-net.org/node/22055/discussions/9952622/germany%E2%80%99s-contentious-china-debate>.
- Heimer, Maria, and Stig Thøgersen, eds. 2006. *Doing Fieldwork in China*. [NIAS Reference Library, 1]. Copenhagen: NIAS Press.
- Himmelrath, A., M Olbrisch, and S. Arp. 2022. "Der Lange Arm Peking's." *Der Spiegel*, no. February 19: 40–41.

- Hughes, Christopher R. 2014. "Confucius Institutes and the University: Distinguishing the Political Mission from the Cultural." *Issues and Studies* 50 (4): 45–83.
- Johnson, Janet Elise. 2009. "Unwilling Participant Observation among Russian Siloviki and the Good-Enough Field Researcher." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 42 (02): 321–24. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1049096509090647>.
- Kubin, Wolfgang. 2020. "Feindliche Hermeneutik Und Erregte Zeit: Der Fall Der Frankfurter Allgemeinen Zeitung." *Minima Sinica* 32.
- Leutner, Mechthild. 2020. "Die Repräsentation Des Hongkonger Sicherheitsgesetzes in Den Medien: Zur Konstruktion Aktueller Chinabilder Und Zu Forderungen Nach Einer Neuen Chinapolitik." *Minima Sinica* 32. https://www.ostasien-verlag.de/zeitschriften/minima-sinica/ms.html#Vol_032.
- Levy, Katja. 2021. "Die deutsche China-Forschung darf sich nicht isolieren • China.Table." *China.Table* (blog). June 16, 2021. <https://table.media/china/standpunkt/grunde-fur-china-forschung/>.
- Morgenbesser, Lee, and Meredith L. Weiss. 2018. "Survive and Thrive: Field Research in Authoritarian Southeast Asia." *Asian Studies Review* 42 (3): 385–403. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10357823.2018.1472210>.
- Nogrady, Bianca. 2021. "'I Hope You Die': How the COVID Pandemic Unleashed Attacks on Scientists." *Nature* 598 (7880): 250–53. <https://doi.org/10.1038/d41586-021-02741-x>.
- Ptak, Roderich, and Ylva Mondschein, eds. 2020. "Dossier: China Als Drohkulisse." *Minima Sinica* 32. https://www.ostasien-verlag.de/zeitschriften/minima-sinica/ms.html#Vol_032.
- Roetz, Heiner. 2022. "Sinologie-Debatte : Kritik und Kompromiss." *FAZ.NET*, August 4, 2022. <https://www.faz.net/aktuell/karriere-hochschule/hoersaal/sinologie-debatte-den-vorgaben-der-chinesischen-kp-entgegenkommen-17917188.html>.
- Rudiyak, Marina. 2021. "Keine Orchidee: Über Chinakompetenz und Sinologie." *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, no. 07–08. <https://www.bpb.de/shop/zeitschriften/apuz/326883/keine-orchidee/>.
- Schaab-Hanke, Dorothee. 2020. "Vorbemerkung Der Herausgeberin." *Minima Sinica* 32. <https://www.ostasien-verlag.de/zeitschriften/minima-sinica/ms.html>.
- Shih, Victor. 2015. "Research In Authoritarian Regimes: Transparency Tradeoffs And Solutions." <https://doi.org/10.5281/ZENODO.893087>.
- Swiss Federal Court. 2001. Swiss Federal Court, verdict of 27 June 2001, 127 I 145. <https://archive.ph/UFmC8>.
- Tatlow, Didi Kirsten. 2018. "Cultural Relativism and Power Blindness: Some Critical Observations on the State of Germany's China Debate." *Libmod.De* (blog). November 22, 2018. <https://libmod.de/en/didi-kirsten-tatlow-on-late-orientalism-in-germany/>.
- Thorpe, James. 2021. "Understanding China Is Getting Harder Every Month." *Foreign Policy* (blog). May 27, 2021. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/05/27/china-expels-foreign-journalists-crackdown-transparency/>.
- Vise, Daniel de. 2011. "U.S. Scholars Say Their Book on China Led to Travel Ban." *The Washington Post*, 2011.

Forschung und Lehre

Die Diskussion um die moralische Positionierung der deutschen Sinologie – von Taiwan aus betrachtet. Ein Kommentar zur Ausgabe Nr. 32 der *minima sinica*

Thilo Diefenbach

Einleitung

Im Frühjahr 2022 widerfuhr der deutschen Sinologie die Ehre, gleich zweimal prominent in der *Frankfurter Allgemeinen Zeitung* diskutiert zu werden: Am 9. März bezogen Björn Alpermann und Gunter Schubert unter dem Titel „Gegen das moralische Kreuzrittertum“ Stellung, worauf Andreas Fulda u. a. am 16. März mit „Grenzenlos kompromissbereit?“ antwortete.¹ Gegenstand der Auseinandersetzung war die Frage, wie chinakritisch sich die deutsche Sinologie zu positionieren und zu äußern habe – und ob das überhaupt vonnöten sei. Die Untertitel der beiden Artikel umreißen die jeweiligen Standpunkte recht gut. Bei Alpermann/Schubert heißt es: „Chinaforschung ist kein politischer Aktivismus. Sie muss taktische Zugeständnisse machen, um den Weg der Erkenntnis offen zu halten. Die Konformismusvorwürfe mancher Beobachter entbehren der Grundlage.“ Und bei Fulda: „Angesichts von Xis Repressionspolitik muss die Chinaforschung ihre Rolle überdenken. Die Ausblendung von Problemen und die Stigmatisierung kritischer Stimmen sind der falsche Weg.“

Es ist nicht meine Absicht, die Diskussion an dieser Stelle direkt fortzuführen; mein Ausgangspunkt ist stattdessen Ausgabe Nr. 32 der *minima sinica*, die Alpermann und Schubert in ihrem Artikel erwähnen und der sie bescheinigen, bei dieser Auseinandersetzung „in Teilen ebenso einseitig zu argumentieren wie die Gegenseite.“ Diese Aussage ist ein guter Grund, sich das Heft einmal genauer anzuschauen.

Ich lese die *minima sinica* seit Jahren mit großem Interesse und ebenso großem Gewinn, aber der aktuelle Band – genauer gesagt, das darin enthaltene Dossier – irritiert in der Tat (Ptak und Monschein 2020).² Das entspricht in gewisser Weise

1 Neben Fulda sind als Verfasser genannt: Mareike Ohlberg, David Missal, Horst Fabian und Sascha Klotzbücher.

2 Alle folgenden Zahlen in Klammern beziehen sich auf dieses Dossier.

auch dem Willen der Herausgeber, denn die Textsammlung ist als „durchaus provokative Gegenrede“ (5) zu dem in der deutschen Presse vorherrschenden Konsens gedacht. Dieser besteht nach Ansicht der beteiligten Autoren kurz gesagt darin, China pauschal zu verteufeln, den Chinesen immer nur böse Absichten zu unterstellen und keinerlei Respekt vor ihrer Kultur und ihrer Geschichte zu zeigen.

Die am Dossier beteiligten Autoren – außer den Herausgebern sind das Karl-Heinz Pohl, Hans van Ess, Mechthild Leutner und Wolfgang Kubin – beleuchten diesen Sachverhalt aus unterschiedlichen Perspektiven: Ptak und Pohl zum Beispiel versuchen die historischen Hintergründe der aktuellen Chinafeindlichkeit zu ergründen, während van Ess und Leutner die einseitige Darstellung der Hongkonger Proteste von 2019 in den deutschen Medien analysieren. Alle führen eine beeindruckende Zahl von chinakritischen Presseartikeln ins Feld, um zu belegen, dass deutsche Journalisten China weitgehend ignorant und voreingenommen gegenüberstehen.

Ich kann das Anliegen der Autoren – die ich sehr schätze – vollkommen nachvollziehen. China hat in Deutschland in der Tat eine schlechte Presse, und wer sich selber der Sinologie verschrieben hat und/oder als sinophil definiert, kann das nicht leichthin akzeptieren. Allerdings übersehen sie dabei, dass die deutschen Medien insgesamt in den letzten Jahren immer mehr zur Einstimmigkeit ebenso wie zur Einseitigkeit neigen, nicht nur beim Thema China. Man erinnere sich nur an die fast völlig kritiklose Haltung zur „Willkommenspolitik“ 2015 oder an die bemerkenswert zahme Kommentierung der erratischen Corona-Politik in Deutschland.

Es ist auch verständlich, dass die Autoren im Eifer des Gefechts gelegentlich etwas übers Ziel hinausschießen, etwa wenn die Herausgeber im Vorwort die Entsendung einer deutschen Fregatte nach Ostasien zu einer potenziellen Kriegsgefahr hochstilisieren, oder wenn Monschein die Aufhebung der Amtszeitbegrenzung durch Xi Jinping mit dem Satz kommentiert, dass er sich dabei „wohmöglich [sic] an der deutschen Kanzlerschaft“ (128) orientiert habe (als ob es keine nennenswerten Unterschiede zwischen den politischen Systemen beider Länder gäbe). Unangenehm ist es jedoch, dass die von der Kommunistischen Partei (KP) verbreitete Halbwahrheit, sie habe Abermillionen Chinesen aus der Armut befreit, hier völlig unkritisch wiederholt wird (35, 115) – denn man sollte nicht vergessen, dass die KP insbesondere vor 1979 Hunderte Millionen Menschen ins absolute Elend stürzte und dass sie darüber hinaus dieses tiefschwarze Kapitel ihrer Geschichte (ebenso wie viele andere) bis heute mit einem strikten Tabu belegt. Wer das im Hinterkopf hat und dann auch noch Kubins erschreckende Aussagen über die alltägliche Zensur an chinesischen Universitäten liest (189–90), auf den wirkt die nonchalante Feststellung, „viele in China [sei] nicht perfekt“ (5), eher deplatziert. Und wenn sich die Herausgeber über die Bezeichnung „chinesisches Virus“ für Corona aufregen (8), drängt sich die sachliche Frage auf: Woher stammt es denn sonst? Und welches Land hat die den Ausbruch wochenlang zu vertuschen versucht?

Und wer hat die internationalen Forschungen zum Ursprung des Virus eigentlich am meisten behindert?

Einige Autoren des Dossiers üben heftige Kritik an den USA, letztlich mit der Intention, diese als noch schurkischer als China hinzustellen. Das verwundert nicht und fällt letztlich auch nicht schwer – bei all den schweren Verfehlungen, die die US-Amerikaner in den vergangenen Jahrzehnten weltpolitisch begangen haben. Und Kubin kann man leider auch nur zustimmen, wenn er schreibt: „Als Europäer haben wir wenig Recht, uns moralisch aufzuplustern.“ (191) Von dieser Grundlage ausgehend versuchen einige Autoren allerdings, das chinesische Regime insgesamt zu verharmlosen – so verspottet beispielsweise Ptak die taiwanische Sicht auf China als Gerede vom „angeblich so üblen Festland“ (171). Man kann über viele Details dieses Dossiers trefflich streiten, aber mit diesem Satz sind wir bei dem einen Punkt angekommen, der mich bei der Lektüre überaus stört – nämlich bei der latent unfreundlichen, sogar aggressiven Haltung gegenüber Taiwan.

Wer von China spricht, kann nicht einfach verschweigen, wie massiv es Taiwan bedroht, eine Insel, die nie zur Volksrepublik gehört hat und deren Bevölkerungsmehrheit auch nicht zur Volksrepublik gehören will. Die kommunistische Führung betont dennoch unentwegt, dass die Inbesitznahme Taiwans für sie höchste Priorität habe und dass sie jederzeit bereit sei, das „Problem“ auch gewaltsam zu lösen.³

Pohl und Leutner ignorieren Taiwans prekäre Lage in ihren Beiträgen trotzdem so weit wie nur möglich, d. h., sie nehmen nicht zur Kenntnis, dass sich China, das dem Dossier zufolge ausschließlich auf Verständigung und friedliche Koexistenz bedacht sein soll, aus taiwanischer Sicht völlig anders darstellt. Wären die Autoren immer noch so begeistert von China, wenn die Luftraumüberwachungszone ihres Landes jeden Tag durch mehrere Rotten chinesischer Jagdflugzeuge und atomwaffenfähiger Langstreckenbomber heimgesucht würde? Oder wenn die chinesische Regierung alles unternähme, um die Lieferung von Impfstoffen nach Deutschland zu verhindern?

Auf S. 118 weist Monschein darauf hin, dass die Frau, die sich über die bei Thalia prominent präsentierten Bände von Xi Jinpings Werken aufregte, „offenbar Taiwan-Bezug“ hatte. Kann Monschein nicht nachvollziehen, dass diese Frau den Mann, der ihre Heimat unterjochen will, einfach nur verabscheut? Mit unverhohlener Empörung weist sie außerdem auf S. 110 darauf hin, dass in irgendwelchen „sozialen Medien“ Karten kursierten, auf denen China als von Taiwan besetzt dargestellt werde. Mir ist wirklich schleierhaft, wie man jeden ins Netz gestellten

3 Fulda et al. erwähnen in ihrem Artikel kurz, dass Taiwan von China militärisch bedroht wird; Alpermann und Schubert dagegen sprechen lediglich von der „Taiwanfrage“ – ein Begriff, der wiederum insinuiert, dass der Inselstaat selbst in irgendeiner Form das Problem oder gar dessen Urheber sei.

Blödsinn derart ernstnehmen und als Beweis für aggressive Absichten Taiwans einstufen kann.

Kubin unterstellt Taiwan und den USA, gemeinsam die Hongkonger Proteste von 2019 unterstützt und angeheizt zu haben. Sein Beleg dafür? Ein Artikel aus der *South China Morning Post*. Dabei gehört dieses Blatt seit 2016 dem Alibaba-Konzern und hat seitdem massiv an journalistischer Qualität verloren. Als ich 2007 in einem deutschen Büro in Peking arbeitete, wurde uns die *SCMP* jeden Tag geliefert – in einen blauen, blickdichten Plastiksack eingeschweißt, damit nur ja kein des Englischen mächtiger Chinese von den oft sehr kritischen Schlagzeilen aufgewiegelt werden konnte. Mittlerweile erübrigt sich diese Vorsichtsmaßnahme, denn die Zeitung unterscheidet sich nur noch in Nuancen von der *Global Times*. Aber auch dieses Propaganda-Sprachrohr ist laut Kubin eine „eigentlich brauchbare Tageszeitung“ (190) – ein Blatt, das zum Beispiel am 19. November 2021 schrieb, man müsse Litauen für seine „Unbotmäßigkeit“ in der Taiwan-Politik bestrafen, so wie man eine Fliege an der Wand zerquetsche.

Zum Schluss sei noch eine besonders auffällige Stelle erwähnt. Auf S. 85 schreibt Kubin: „Und wenn Taiwan sich gern als Hort von Freiheit sowie Demokratie feiern lässt, schenkt niemand seiner Vergangenheit einen Augenblick der Betrachtung.“ Ich weiß nicht, wen Kubin hier mit „niemand“ meint, aber erstens gibt es zahlreiche Bücher und Artikel zu diesem Themenbereich, im deutschen Sprachraum wie in Taiwan, und zweitens entwickeln die Taiwaner gerade eine Auseinandersetzung mit der eigenen Vergangenheit, von der man in China nicht einmal träumen kann. Kubin fährt fort: „Zu diskutieren blieben weiterhin: der unbeendete Bürgerkrieg“ – welcher Bürgerkrieg? Die ‚Vorläufigen Bestimmungen für die Phase der Mobilisierung zur Niederschlagung der [kommunistischen] Erhebung 動員戡亂時期臨時條款‘ wurden 1991 von der Kuomintang (KMT) aufgehoben, damit war der Bürgerkrieg mit den Kommunisten einseitig beendet. Als einziger Kriegstreiber verbleibt somit die KP. Die ‚Republik China‘ ist heute nur noch eine dem taiwanischen Staat aufgezwungene Hülle. „... die Diktatur bis 1986“ – wessen Diktatur ist hier gemeint? Doch wohl die von Chinesen, genauer von der Nationalen Volkspartei Chinas 中國國民黨 installierte, unter der vor allem die gebürtigen Taiwaner zu leiden hatten. Und wieso eigentlich 1986? Die Demokratisierung Taiwans war ein längerer Prozess, der sich nicht an einem einzigen Jahr festmachen lässt. „... die ehemalige Entfremdung vom Festland unter japanischer Besetzung“ – für die Entfremdung sorgte in erster Linie die Kolonisierung Taiwans durch die KMT, spätestens im Februar 1947. „... die militärischen Eigeninteressen der Amerikaner“ – darüber sind sich die Taiwaner sehr wohl im Klaren. Nur, was ist so schlimm daran, wenn die Interessen der USA zur Abwechslung mal wieder dazu dienen können, etwas Gutes zu tun, in diesem Fall: eine Demokratie zu schützen? Man könnte sogar noch weitergehen und einen Satz von Marcel Reich-Ranicki zitieren, den er im *Literarischen Quartett* Nr. 6 vom 16. Juni 1989 bei der Besprechung von Klaus Manns *Mephisto* äußerte: „Mir ist egal, was für Motive derjenige hat, der mich rettet,

wie mir eigentlich auch egal ist, was für Motive jener hat, der mich erdrosseln oder töten will.“

Taiwan ist in der Diskussion um die Positionierung der deutschen Sinologie kein bloßer Nebenaspekt, im Gegenteil: Es stellt, um es einmal pathetisch zu formulieren, jedem Sinologen die Gretchenfrage. Es bleibt zu hoffen, dass dies im weiteren Verlauf der Debatte berücksichtigt wird.

Literatur

Roderich Ptak / Ylva Monschein (Hrsg.): „Dossier – China als Drohkulisse“. In: Dorothee Schaab-Hanke (Hrsg.): *minima sinica. Zeitschrift zum chinesischen Geist* (Nr. 32 / 2020), S. 3-180.

Björn Alpermann / Gunter Schubert: „Gegen das moralische Kreuzrittertum“. In: FAZ, 09.03.2022.

Andreas Fulda / Mareike Ohlberg / David Missal / Horst Fabian / Sascha Klotzbücher: „Grenzenlos kompromissbereit?“. In: FAZ, 16.03.2022.

Dr. Thilo Diefenbach
Berlin

12. Jahrestagung des Arbeitskreises Südasien in der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Geographie

Geographisches Institut der Universität Bonn,
21.–22. Januar 2022

Bericht von Judith Müller und Carsten Butsch

Am 21. und 22. Januar 2022 fand die zwölfte Jahrestagung des Arbeitskreises Südasien statt; in diesem Jahr am Geographischen Institut der Universität Bonn. Die Veranstaltung wurde pandemiebedingt als zweitägige Online-Veranstaltung durchgeführt. Insgesamt gab es in fünf thematischen Sitzungen zwölf Vorträge von Forschenden aus Südasien und Deutschland, denen insgesamt über 40 Teilnehmende folgten. Eine positive Entwicklung im Arbeitskreis ist die wachsende Beteiligung von Forschenden aus Südasien. Digitale bzw. hybride Formate haben hier in den letzten beiden Jahren dazu geführt, dass die Hürden deutlich gesenkt wurden. Dies war auch der Grund, weshalb beim diesjährigen Treffen erstmals Englisch die offizielle Tagungssprache war.

Der erste Veranstaltungstag begann mit einer Eröffnung durch die Mitglieder des Vorbereitungsteams Juliane Dame und Carsten Butsch, gemeinsam mit Sneha Sharma und Annika Heck. Die erste inhaltliche Sitzung befasste sich mit aktuellen Thematiken im Hochgebirge. Im ersten Vortrag stellte Stanzin Passang (Heidelberg) sein Dissertationsprojekt vor, in dem er mit multiskaligen Fernerkundungsmethoden die räumliche Schneedeckenverteilung im Transhimalaya von Ladakh untersucht. Er zeigte, dass die saisonale Schneedeckenverteilung über die letzten zwei Dekaden stark variierte. In Folge schneeärmerer Winter kommt es immer häufiger zu begrenzter Wasserverfügbarkeit in dieser ariden Region. Anschließend berichtete Sebastian Forneck (Bonn) über seine ethnografische Forschung im Zangskartal. Ein Ergebnis seiner Arbeit ist, dass Straßen zwar neue Verbindungslinien zwischen Menschen auf größerer Distanz erschließen, gleichzeitig jedoch durch veränderte Mobilitätspraktiken dazu führen, dass bestimmte soziale Verbindungen in der Dorfgesellschaft verloren gehen. Abhimanyu Pandey (Heidelberg) stellte seine Forschung zur Materialität von Straßen im Spiti Tal vor. Seine Doktorarbeit zeigt ebenso auf, wie Straßen lokale Praktiken verändern. Gleichzeitig ging er darauf ein, dass durch den Straßenbau angestoßene Verbesserungen, etwa für einen leichteren Marktzugang für Landwirt:innen, aufgrund der oftmals schlechten Qualität der Straßen und ihrer temporären Unpassierbarkeit nicht ihre volle Wirkung entfalten können.

Die zweite Sitzung des widmete sich den Folgen von COVID-19 in Südasien. Beide Vortragende, Arslan Waheed und Pablo Holwitt, stellten Arbeiten vor, die aus coronabedingten Veränderungen ihres ursprünglichen Forschungsansatzes hervorgegangen waren. Arslan Waheed (Bonn) beschrieb die Wahrnehmungen der staatlichen Vorgaben zum Social Distancing von Bewohner:innen informeller

Siedlungen in Islamabad und die Stigmatisierungen, denen sie aufgrund von COVID-19 ausgesetzt sind. Pablo Holwitt (Heidelberg) befasste sich in seinem Vortrag mit den sich während der Pandemie verändernden Praktiken von Vermittlungsplattformen für Fahrdienste wie Uber und Ola in den indischen Metropolen Mumbai und Delhi. Theoretisches Fundament seiner Arbeit ist das Konzept der „Atmospheric Citizenship“, das sich mit dem Recht auf gute Luft befasst.

In der Mittagspause gab es die Möglichkeit des informellen Austauschs im „India Coffee House“ auf der Plattform Wonder. Der Nachmittag begann mit einem Themenblock zu landwirtschaftlichen Entwicklungen. Als erste stellte Sarah Luft (Köln) Ergebnisse ihres Dissertationsvorhabens vor, das sich mit der Transformation der „Waterscapes“ im periurbanen Raum Punes beschäftigt. Sie zeigte die Ergebnisse einer Delphistudie, in der Expert:innen und lokale Akteurinnen und Akteure nach möglichen Transformationen zur Nachhaltigkeit befragt wurden, woraus sich konkrete Handlungsansätze für kurz- und mittelfristige Prozesse ableiten lassen. Mehwish Zuberi und Michael Spies (Eberswalde) widmeten sich in ihrem Vortrag der Frage, ob die kleinbäuerliche Landwirtschaft in Pakistan eine Zukunft hat. Auf Grundlage ihrer Arbeiten zeigten sie, dass Kleinbäuerinnen und -bauern durch zahlreiche Prozesse aus der Landwirtschaft gedrängt werden und viele ihre Erwerbsquellen differenzieren, um so, auch mit Blick auf folgende Generationen, dauerhaft außerlandwirtschaftliche Erwerbsquellen zu erschließen.

Nach einer kurzen Pause standen (peri-)urbane Dynamiken im Zentrum der vierten Sitzung. Alexander Follmann (Köln) zeigte am Beispiel der indischen Stadt Faridabad, dass lokale Governance-Prozesse entscheidend für das Verständnis von Periurbanisierung sind. Verschiedene räumliche Entwicklungsmuster ergeben sich aus lokal eingebetteten Handlungslogiken, weshalb periurbane Räume sehr unterschiedliche Entwicklungspfade nehmen. Als zweite Vortragende der Sitzung stellte Huda Javaid ihre Arbeiten zu Urbanisierungsprozessen in Lahore (Pakistan) dar, wobei sie einen Schwerpunkt auf die Entwicklung sogenannter Housing Societies durch die Defense Housing Authority legte. Sie zeigte, dass sowohl der ansässigen Bevölkerung als auch den Bewohner:innen der neuen Siedlungen hohe Kosten entstehen. Insbesondere die emotionalen und sozialen Kosten durch Entwurzelung wurden hierbei thematisiert.

Am Abend des ersten Tages fand die alljährliche Mitgliederversammlung des Arbeitskreises statt, während der über zukünftige Aktivitäten der Gruppe sowie administrative Angelegenheiten, wie die Website des AK und die Ausrichtung der Jahrestagung 2023, gesprochen wurde. Ein zentrales Thema war die gemeinsame Arbeit an einem Sammelband zu Geographien Südasiens, der im Springer-Verlag erscheinen soll.

Anknüpfend an die Diskussion vom Vorabend begann der zweite Tag mit einem Workshop, bei dem Ideen und Vorstellungen zu dem geplanten Sammelband zu Geographien Südasiens diskutiert wurden. Zentrale politische, wirtschaftliche,

sozialgeografische und ökologische Dynamiken und Problemstellungen auf dem Subkontinent wurden gesammelt und die inhaltliche Struktur der geplanten Publikation diskutiert. Abschließend formierte sich ein Herausgabeteam, das diesen Prozess in den nächsten Monaten weiter gestalten wird.

Thematisch ging der Morgen mit der fünften und abschließenden Sitzung über das Thema Wasser weiter. Deepal Doshi (München) gab einen Überblick über eine von ihr konzipierte Twitter-Analyse, die Sichtweisen der Bevölkerung Mumbais auf Anpassungsstrategien an Flutereignisse aufzeigen soll. Der Fokus auf Twitter als soziales Medium ermöglichte, die Perspektiven der zunehmend einflussreichen, aufstrebenden urbanen Mittelschicht sichtbar zu machen und das Potenzial von „social listening“ in der städtischen Risikoforschung aufzuzeigen.

Am Beispiel von Coimbatore (Indien) lenkte Saravanan Subramanian (Bonn) den Blick auf die meist wenig sichtbare Situation und die alltäglichen Herausforderungen der Beschäftigten im Abwassermanagement. Er zeigte auf, wie nationale und internationale Entwicklungsakteurinnen und -akteure durch ihre Projektvergabe philanthropisches Engagement zeigen, aber zugleich ihre eigenen Interessen stärken und lokale Vorstellungen unzureichend einbinden. Im abschließenden Beitrag stellten Juliane Dame und Judith Müller (Bonn und Heidelberg) am Beispiel der Stadt Leh im indischen Transhimalaya Veränderungen der „urban mountain waterscape“ im Kontext von Urbanisierung und Klimawandel vor. Neben den Folgen eines steigenden Wasserverbrauchs (Engpässe der Wasserverfügbarkeit, Auswirkungen auf den Grundwasserspiegel) beeinträchtigen Schwierigkeiten im Abwassermanagement die Wasserqualität, mit potenziellen gesundheitlichen Auswirkungen. Das Beispiel und die Kritik an einem zentralstaatlichen Infrastrukturprogramm verdeutlicht die Notwendigkeit, weitere Akteurinnen und Akteure aus der Zivilgesellschaft in die Gestaltung zukünftiger Entwicklungsperspektiven einzubinden.

Die nächste Jahrestagung des Arbeitskreises findet am 3. und 4. Februar 2023 an der Hochschule für nachhaltige Entwicklung in Eberswalde statt. Extended Abstracts zu der Jahrestagung erscheinen in der Open-Access Schriftenreihe des Arbeitskreises. Informationen hierzu sowie zum Arbeitskreis allgemein finden sich auf der Website des Arbeitskreises: <http://www.geographien-suedasiens.de>.

Dr. Judith Müller

Heidelberg Center for the Environment/Südasiens-Institut,
Universität Heidelberg
judith.mueller@uni-heidelberg.de

PD Dr. Carsten Butsch

Wissenschaftlicher Mitarbeiter, Universität zu Köln,
Geographisches Institut
butschc@uni-koeln.de

International workshop “Navigating Sino-Russian relations in the 2010s: role claims and mutual expectations”

University of Duisburg-Essen, March 29–30, 2021

Report by Elizaveta Priupolina

The international workshop “Navigating Sino-Russian relations in the 2010s: role claims and mutual expectations” took place at the University of Duisburg-Essen as an online meeting on March 29th – March 30th, 2021. The workshop was organised within the framework of the DFG project 238920157 “Rollenwandel und Rollenkontestationsprozesse in der VR China: Globalisierung ‘chinesischer’ Ordnungskonzeptionen?”. The organisers, Prof. Dr. Dr. Nele Noesselt and Dr. Elizaveta Priupolina, University of Duisburg-Essen, sought to initiate the discussion of Sino-Russian relations from the perspective of National Role Theory and welcomed a group of Russian and Chinese scholars focusing on the analysis of Sino-Russian contemporary relations to present their research providing an outlook on mutual perceptions, expectations, and role claims articulated by Russia and China vis-à-vis each other. The workshop consisted of four panels covering a wide range of issues at the global and bilateral level.

The first panel discussed China’s and Russia’s mutual perceptions and expectations regarding the great/major power role. Prof. Dr. Artyom Lukin (Far Eastern Federal University, FEFU) presented his analysis of the alignment dynamics between Russia and China. Based on the analysis of the relations in the field of geo-economic and military connections and strategic interaction in East Asia, he characterised the current state of the Sino-Russian relationship as a quasi-alliance, or entente, and outlined a range of scenarios for the future. Prof. Dr. Liu Jun (East China Normal University, ECNU) reflected on the role of history and the approaches to the contemporary construction of the new type of major power relations between Russia and China. Prof. Dr. Zhang Xin (ECNU) talked about the evolution of mutual perceptions and role expectations between Russia and China in the changing US-Russia-China triangle since the early 2000s.

The second panel centred on mutual perceptions and expectations in Sino-Russian relations in the context of Central Asian politics. Prof. Dr. Andrei Ostrovskii (Institute of Far Eastern Studies, IFES) discussed the problems and prospects of Sino-Russian economic relations regarding the promotion of China’s BRI. Dr. Elena Bazhenova (IFES) reflected on the problems and prospects of the conjunction of the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) and China’s BRI, which is an essential element of contemporary Sino-Russian relations. Prof. Dr. Yang Cheng (Shanghai International Studies University, SISU) took a broader perspective focusing on constructing the new continentalism in the context of coordination among such formats as EU, EEU, and BRI.

Opening the second day of the workshop, the third panel shifted the focus to the hurdles and challenges facing Sino–Russian relations. Prof. Dr. Leonid Kozlov (FEFU) provided an overview of the domestic origins of Russian foreign policy and their impact on the bilateral relations between Russia and China. Dr. Elena Feditchkina Tracy (University of Illinois) challenged the existing literature on energy relations between Russia and China by arguing that Russian and Chinese approaches to energy policy are likely to diverge in the future.

The final panel discussed how the agents employ visual politics to construct role/status claims and articulate expectations. Dr. Anna Kuteleva (Higher School of Economics, HSE) presented her research on China’s experiments with new media and new identity representations, highlighting the way how videos on China’s BRI posted on social media platforms provide new tools for China to (re)imagine itself and narrate China’s relations with the world to the international audience. Dr. Elizaveta Priupolina reflected how Sino–Russian relations are narrated in the CCTV documentary “Major Country Diplomacy” (Daguo Waijiao) and how the identified narratives correspond to the narratives developed by Russian mainstream media.

Dr. Elizaveta Priupolina
Universität Duisburg-Essen
elizaveta.priupolina@uni-due.de

2022 DGA Young Scholars Group Methods Workshop

Würzburg, March 4–6, 2022

Report by Franca Balster, Jonas Lindner, and Lena Wassermann

The biennial DGA Young Scholars Group (YSG) method workshop took place from the 4th to the 6th of March 2022 in Würzburg. Young academics with a background in Asian Studies came together to learn about and discuss qualitative and quantitative methods that are relevant for doing research in times of the pandemic.

The workshop was opened on Friday evening by the current YSG representatives Philipp Immel, Helen Hess, Hannes Gohli, Wiegand Körber, and Dissa Paputungan. After the participants got to know each other, Prof Dr Björn Alpermann, Chair of Contemporary Chinese Studies at the University of Würzburg, gave the keynote lecture on the topic of “Ethics in Research”.

Prof Alpermann identified three dimensions of ethics that are relevant to research: professional, personal, and political. Using this lens, Alpermann discussed the practicability of highly formalised recommendations by ethics commissions, such as the principle of “informed consent” in the field. Drawing on a wide range of academic sources and his own rich experience of conducting fieldwork in China, he advocated for research ethics that are informed by the individual circumstances of the research environment and the researcher, instead of blindly following prescribed checklists of supposedly ethical research.

On Saturday, the three workshops on the topics of “Discourse Analysis”, “Quantitative Text Analysis”, and “Online Interviews” took place.

The workshop on discourse analysis was led by Dimitry Okropiridze. The morning session established a general understanding of the three approaches to discourse analysis: (1) the linguistic approach; (2) the sociological approach, and (3) the philosophical approach. In the afternoon, the course discussed relevant literature on the topic of “sociology of knowledge approach to discourse analysis” in more detail. Afterwards, the participants had the opportunity to present their own projects to the class and receive feedback from the other participants and Mr Okropiridze.

The workshop moderated by Du Keli focused on “Quantitative Text Analysis”. In the morning, the participants were provided with the theoretical background of “Authorship Attribution” with the Delta method, followed by a hands-on session, where learnt material was tested on a real-life dataset. In the afternoon, “Topic Modelling” with Latent Dirichlet Allocation was introduced as a second method for quantitative text analysis. In a later hands-on exercise, the participants could experiment with a provided dataset to see the method work in reality. The course ended with the discussion of remaining questions and advice on how to familiarise oneself further with methods of computational science.

The third workshop group, led by Anna-Katharina Schaper and Theresa Krause, dealt intensively with the topic of “Online Interviews”. Throughout the day, the workshop was characterised by exchange in small groups and the active discussions among the groups. Initially, the participants dealt with the challenges of digital research and online interviews and, finally, how and with which tools these could best be overcome. Afterwards, the participants were asked to create an exemplary guide for a fictitious online interview, which was then tested in a simulated interview. Above all, the workshop offered the opportunity to exchange experiences between the leaders and participants, to share new helpful tools and to obtain inspiration for one’s own research project.

On Sunday, the groups reconvened to reflect on what they had learnt in their respective workshops. Then, the participants presented and discussed their findings in the plenum. Afterwards the workshop was closed by the current YSG representatives.

Franca Balster

Master Student and Student Research Assistant, Chair of China Business and Economics, University of Würzburg
franca.balster@uni-wuerzburg.de

Jonas Lindner

Doctoral Student and Research Assistant, Chair of China Business and Economics, University of Würzburg
jonas.lindner@uni-wuerzburg.de

Lena Wassermann

Doctoral Student and Research Assistant, Chair of China Business and Economics, University of Würzburg
lena.wassermann@uni-wuerzburg.de

Jan Schmidt und Katja Schmidtpott (Hgg.): The East Asian Dimension of the First World War. Global Entanglements and Japan, China and Korea, 1914–1919

Frankfurt/New York: Campus Verlag, 2020. 413 S., 45€.
ISBN 9783593507514

Rezension von Kevin Bockholt

Lange Zeit hat sich die Forschung zum Ersten Weltkrieg hauptsächlich mit dessen Ursachen, Verlauf, sowie Auswirkungen in Europa beschäftigt. Abgesehen von den USA spielten außereuropäische Länder dabei nur eine untergeordnete Rolle. Dies änderte sich erst vor kurzem, als vor dem Hintergrund des hundertjährigen Gedenkens an den Weltkrieg eine Reihe von Studien veröffentlicht wurde, deren AutorInnen die globale Dimension des Konfliktes betonten und die Beteiligung von Regionen in den Blick nahmen, die bis dahin weitestgehend unbeachtet geblieben waren. Letzteres ist auch das Ziel des vorliegenden Sammelbandes, der aus dem internationalen Symposium „The East Asian Dimension of the First World War: The German–Japanese War and China, 1914–1919“ hervorgegangen ist, das 2014 an der Ruhr-Universität Bochum stattgefunden hat. Im Vorwort geben die HerausgeberInnen Jan Schmidt und Katja Schmidtpott an, die Weltkriegsforschung um die „ostasiasische Dimension“ ergänzen zu wollen. Dafür bringen sie aktuelle Studien zu Japans, Chinas sowie Koreas vielschichtiger Beteiligung am Ersten Weltkrieg sowie zu den in diesen Ländern stattgefundenen medialen und intellektuellen Auseinandersetzungen mit dem Konflikt zusammen. Die insgesamt 16 Beiträge sind in fünf thematisch unterschiedliche Teile aufgegliedert, die im Folgenden anhand einiger ausgewählter Artikel kurz vorgestellt werden.

Der erste Teil umfasst Beiträge, deren Autoren sich mit der Weltkriegsrezeption ostasiatischer Intellektueller beschäftigen. Eugene W. Chiu geht in seinem Artikel der Frage nach, welchen Einfluss der Krieg in Europa auf chinesische Konzeptionen der Moderne hatte. Sein Hauptargument ist, dass die Grausamkeit und das Ausmaß des Konfliktes dazu führten, dass AutorInnen der einflussreichen Zeitschrift *Dongfang zazhi* den universalen Anspruch der europäischen Modernisierung in Frage stellten. Diese sahen, so Chiu, den Krieg als direkte Folge der vielfältigen Probleme des Westens – z. B. exzessiver Materialismus, blinder Glaube an Wissenschaft, Zerfall moralischer Werte – denen sich China nur durch die Suche nach einem alternativen Entwicklungsweg entziehen könne. Letzteres ist auch Gegenstand der Studie von Yamamuro Shin'ichi. Er argumentiert, dass in den 1920er Jahren unter Intellektuellen in Ostasien Bewegungen zur „Erneuerung“ (chin. *gaizao*, jap. *kaizō*, ko. *kaejo*) entstanden, die durch eine umfassende Veränderung der internationalen Ordnung sowie ihrer jeweiligen staatlichen und gesellschaftlichen Systeme eine Wiederholung des von ihnen kritisch beobachteten Krieges verhindern wollten. Diese Aufrufe zur „Erneuerung“, so Yamamuro, waren

Ausdruck einer neu gewonnen Subjektivität und damit einhergehenden Pluralisierung von Weltanschauungen, die eine Neubestimmung der eigenen Zukunftspfade unabdingbar erscheinen ließ.

Im zweiten Teil geht es um mediale Auseinandersetzungen mit dem Ersten Weltkrieg in Ostasien. In seinem zusammen mit dem Tamai-Kiyoshi-Seminar verfassten Beitrag untersucht Morohashi Eiichi die Reaktionen der japanischen Presse auf den Ausbruch des Krieges. Er stellt fest, dass nicht die Gefechte in Europa, sondern deren Bedeutung für Japans Stellung innerhalb Ostasiens im Vordergrund der Berichterstattung stand. So sei einerseits in vielen Publikationen der Krieg als große Chance dargestellt worden, um den politischen und wirtschaftlichen Einfluss des Landes in China auszuweiten. Andererseits seien in den in Zeitungen und Zeitschriften geführten Diskussionen Befürchtungen zum Vorschein gekommen, dass der Krieg sich negativ auf das japanische Verhältnis zu Russland oder den USA auswirken könne. Ein weiterer Beitrag in diesem Teil ist die Studie von Ogawa Sawako zu medialen Repräsentationen des Ersten Weltkrieges in Japan. Sie argumentiert, dass sich filmische Darstellungen des Krieges großer Beliebtheit erfreuten. Es seien nicht nur importierte Kriegsdokumentationen aus Europa gezeigt worden, sondern auch japanische Produktionen mit Bezug zum Weltkrieg hätten ihren Weg in japanische Kinos gefunden. Darüber hinaus, so Ogawa, wurde der Krieg in Form von Fotos und Illustrationen einem breiteren Publikum zugänglich gemacht, die beispielsweise bei Vorführungen in Kōdan-Theatern oder bei Diashows mit tragbaren Projektoren, den sogenannten magischen Laternen (jap.: *gentō*), gezeigt wurden. Ogawa stellt zudem fest, dass politische und militärische Akteure in Japan die potenzielle Wirkkraft des Mediums Film während des Ersten Weltkrieges entdeckten, das es daraufhin mit Zensurmaßnahmen zu kontrollieren und mit eigenen Produktionen, z. B. über die Einnahme deutscher Kolonien in Mikronesien, für propagandistische Ziele einzusetzen galt.

Der dritte Teil beinhaltet Beiträge, in denen sich die AutorInnen mit verschiedenen politischen und wirtschaftlichen Auswirkungen des Krieges in Ostasien auseinandersetzen. Darunter fällt auch die Studie von Ono Yasuteru, in der er argumentiert, dass der Erste Weltkrieg maßgeblichen Einfluss auf die Bestrebungen koreanischer ExilantInnen zur Beendigung der japanischen Kolonialherrschaft hatte. Ono legt dar, dass sich deren Situation bereits kurz nach Kriegsbeginn schlagartig veränderte, als Japan den Alliierten beitrug und Russland zur Auflösung der bis dahin wichtigsten Basis der koreanischen Unabhängigkeitsbewegung in Wladiwostok zwang. Als Reaktion auf die neuen Umstände, so Ono, wurden die Aktivitäten nach China verlegt, wo man versuchte, aus der im Zuge der „Einundzwanzig Forderungen“ vorherrschenden anti-japanischen Stimmung Nutzen zu schlagen und sich die Unterstützung von chinesischen Revolutionären zu sichern. Zudem hätten koreanische AktivistInnen in Beijing während des Weltkrieges versucht, ein militärisches Bündnis zwischen dem Deutschen Kaiserreich und der Republik China in die Wege zu leiten, in der Hoffnung, dass sich dies gegen Japan richten und Korea zu Unabhängigkeit verhelfen würde.

Im vierten Teil beschäftigen sich die Autoren in ihren Beiträgen mit Studien des japanischen Militärs, die zur Zeit des Krieges in Europa und den USA durchgeführt wurden. In der Untersuchung von Kūdo Akira steht die Forschung der japanischen Armee im Deutschen Kaiserreich im Mittelpunkt. Er legt dar, dass japanische Militärs dort seit Ende 1915 die Kriegsplanung und -führung beobachteten und in ihren Berichten eine positive Evaluierung der industriellen und gesellschaftlichen Mobilisierung Deutschlands vornahmen. Diese Berichte, so Kūdo, spielten trotz der Niederlage der Mittelmächte eine wichtige Rolle in den japanischen Nachkriegsdiskussionen über die Vorbereitung auf zukünftige Konflikte. So hätten einflussreiche Militärs, bedingt durch ihre positive Beurteilung der deutschen Kriegspolitik, sich für die Einführung von militärischen Übungen für Jugendliche stark gemacht, um eine „geistige Grundlage“ für das geplante System der „allgemeinen Mobilmachung“ zu schaffen.

Der fünfte Teil umfasst Studien zu individuellen Kriegserfahrungen in Ostasien bzw. von OstasiatInnen in Europa. Dazu zählt auch Zhang Yans Analyse der chinesischen Arbeiter aus Shandong, die seit 1916 im Zuge der britischen Rekrutierungskampagne zur Unterstützung der alliierten Truppen nach Europa geschickt wurden. Er gibt an, dass es ihm im Gegensatz zur bestehenden Forschung nicht um die übergeordnete politische bzw. historische Bedeutung der ca. achtzigtausend Arbeiter der nordöstlichen Provinz geht, sondern um deren Beweggründe, die weite, mit Gefahren verbundene Reise anzutreten. Einerseits, so Zhang, beeinflussten die Lebensumstände in Shandong die Entscheidung der Arbeiter. Starkes Bevölkerungswachstum, Knappheit an kultivierbarem Land, weitverbreitete Armut sowie regelmäßige Dürren und Überflutungen hätten bei vielen jungen Männern die Bereitschaft geschaffen, Shandong zu verlassen. Andererseits sei der Erfolg der Rekrutierungskampagne auf die Überzeugungsarbeit der involvierten Akteure vor Ort zurückzuführen. Eine wichtige Rolle hätten beispielsweise MissionarInnen gespielt, die zur Unterstützung der Kampagne auf ihre weitreichenden sozialen Netzwerke in Shandong zurückgriffen. Zudem leisteten, so Zhang, die Berichte der Arbeiter aus Europa, die nach sorgfältiger Zensur in Form von Briefen die Familien in China erreichten, den Rekrutierungsbemühungen entscheidenden Vorschub.

Der Sammelband ist ein gelungener Versuch, aktuelle Studien zum Thema Ostasien und der Erste Weltkrieg zusammenzubringen. Viele der Beiträge bereichern die Weltkriegsforschung durch völlig neue Forschungsfragen oder ergänzen bereits beforschte Bereiche mit neuen Perspektiven. Besonders hervorzuheben ist, dass die HerausgeberInnen in Form von Übersetzungen auch Forschungsergebnisse einbezogen haben, die zuvor nur in ostasiatischen Sprachen verfügbar waren. Kritisch anzumerken ist jedoch, dass die Beiträge innerhalb der fünf Teile thematisch teilweise sehr weit voneinander entfernt sind, wodurch die Einteilung eher organisatorischer als konzeptioneller Natur erscheint. Zudem wird die Textsammlung dem von den HerausgeberInnen formulierten Anspruch, die Weltkriegsforschung um die „ostasiatische Dimension“ zu ergänzen, nur bedingt

gerecht. Der Großteil der 16 Beiträge beschäftigt sich ausschließlich mit Japan; China und Korea stehen nur in drei bzw. einer der Studien im Vordergrund. Insgesamt ist der Sammelband ein wichtiger Beitrag zur Erforschung der vielschichtigen Beteiligung ostasiatischer Länder am Ersten Weltkrieg und bietet zudem eine Vielzahl von Anknüpfungspunkten für weitere Untersuchungen.

Kevin Bockholt

Doktorand, Universität Hamburg

k.bockholt@hotmail.com

Gregory Rohlf: Building New China, Colonizing Kokonor. Resettlement to Qinghai in the 1950s

Lanham: Lexington Books, 2016. 301 S., 41,92 €

Rezension von Felix Rheinfelder

Rohlf untersucht in seinem Werk ein Thema, das aus der internationalen Perspektive bisher relativ wenig Beachtung gefunden hat. Die vom chinesischen Regime forcierte Arbeitsmigration auf nationaler Ebene, um dünn besiedelte Randgebiete sozial und ökonomisch an die Kerngebiete anzugleichen, wurde bisher ebenfalls tendenziell auf nationaler Ebene untersucht. Rohlf entschied sich dabei, die Bezeichnung Kokonors als mongolisch geprägten Begriff in den Titel aufzunehmen, um die Natur Qinghais als ungezähmtes, multiethnisches Grenzgebiet hervorzuheben, in dem nun Han, Hui, Mongolen und Tibeter in Interaktion treten, wobei explizit der Kontext als sino-tibetisch beschrieben wird. Im Vorwort werden dabei die verschiedenen Begrifflichkeiten diskutiert, welche die untersuchten Entwicklungen am passendsten beschreiben. Die Begriffe Umsiedlung, Migration und Kolonisation können dabei, je nach Perspektive, allesamt als passend betrachtet werden. Rohlf stellt dabei die Ereignisse um 1950 in Beziehung zur *Develop-the-West*-Politik, die auch zum Zeitpunkt der Buchveröffentlichung noch nicht abgeschlossen sei. Zur systematischen Aufarbeitung des Themas wurde das Buch dabei in sieben Kapitel gegliedert.

Im ersten Kapitel stellt Rohlf den Kontext der Entwicklungen vor. Die Push- und Pull-Faktoren für Arbeitsmigration sowie die Motive der politischen Führung Chinas werden beschrieben. Die politische Führung folgte der These, dass ein einheitlicher Staat ein starker Staat sei. Das bedeutete, das Ziel müsse eine Angleichung der westlichen Randgebiete an die östlichen Kerngebiete sein, um China als Ganzes zu stärken. Daneben wurde ein starkes Qinghai als Bollwerk gegen die britischen Bestrebungen in Tibet gesehen, ebenso wie, aus der Perspektive der kommunistischen Regierung, eine starke Agrarkultur eine Abwehr gegenüber ausländischen Kultureinflüssen darstellen würde. Schlussendlich gab es Pläne, Qinghai als Kornkammer Chinas zu nutzen. Die Agrarproduktion sollte angekurbelt werden, um damit den Rest des Landes, konkret die rapide wachsenden Industriestädte, versorgen zu können. Rohlf hat daraus zwei Leitlinien der politischen Führung abgeleitet, die sich am ehesten mit „2 ideologischen Kontinuitäten“ übersetzen lassen: Zum einen würde eine sichtbare Entwicklung in Qinghai repräsentativ für eine sichtbare Realisierung der neuen kommunistischen Staatsordnung sein. Zum anderen wäre der Wechsel von einer Viehhaltung zur Selbstversorgung der lokalen Ethnien hin zur Agrarwirtschaft eine volksökonomische Notwendigkeit.

Das nächste Kapitel widmet sich der konzeptionellen Entwicklung der ersten Phase des Siedlungsprogrammes. Zwei Bevölkerungsgruppen standen im Fokus der Maßnahmen: Die eine Zielgruppe waren die Mitglieder der Kommunistischen Jugendliga. Diese sollten als „Youth Volunteer Reclamation Teams“ Projektfarmen gründen und damit zuvor ungenutzte Landstriche der Volkswirtschaft zuführen. Man baute hierbei auf die patriotisch-enthusiastische Einstellung der Ligamitglieder, die man in der Propaganda durch eine metaphysische Verknüpfung an das zu besiedelnde Land binden wollte. Beide, Land wie Jugend, wären gleichermaßen voller Potenzial. Neben diesem patriotischen Ansatz für die Jugend gab es dann noch einen pragmatischen Ansatz für eine ältere Zielgruppe: Ehemaligen Soldaten, sozial schwächeren Bürgern oder auch Sträflingen wurde die Umsiedlung nach Qinghai als Chance versprochen, sich eine neue, finanziell lukrative Existenz aufzubauen, wodurch man soziale Problemfälle lösen wollte. Rohlf führt hier eine Begriffsdiskussion, um den passendsten Begriff für diesen Zeitabschnitt auszuwählen: „Resettlement“ (freiwillige Migration) gegen „Rustication“ (Zwangshandlung). Schlussendlich präferiert er den Begriff des „Resettlements“, weil die Maßnahmen keine Degradierung des sozialen Standes darstellen, sondern einen Neustart ermöglichen würden.

Im dritten Kapitel beschreibt Rohlf die anfänglichen Perspektiven der beteiligten sozialen Gruppen auf Basis von Erfahrungsberichten. Die Jugendlichen hätten generell gute Startpositionen gehabt, da ihre Migration patriotisch motiviert und von der Jugendliga organisiert gewesen sei. Sie wären daher intrinsisch wie extrinsisch gut vorbereitet gewesen. Die Einheimischen dagegen wären zwar von der Politik zur Gastfreundschaft gegenüber den Neuankömmlingen angehalten und instruiert worden, konnten sich aber xenophoben Befürchtungen bezüglich des Verlustes von Besitz und Kultur nicht entziehen, was regelmäßig zu Zwischenfällen führte. Die Politik selber war zwiegespalten. Einerseits wurde eine freiwillige Migration propagiert, andererseits gab es Quoten zu erfüllen.

Das nächste Kapitel beschreibt die geografisch-kulturellen Begebenheiten und Entwicklungen vor Ort anhand diverser Fallstudien, wobei man Rohlfs Beschreibungen eines Umsiedlungsablaufes in vier Phasen gliedern kann: Ankunft (Reise + Beziehen einer Unterkunft), Initiationsphase (Vorbereitung auf die eigentliche Agrartätigkeit), Realitätskonfrontation (Arbeit, Klima, Entlohnung) und Reaktion (besteht der Wille zu bleiben oder nicht). Das Problem, das Rohlf hier anführt, ist, dass alle schriftlichen Quellen offizieller Natur sind, also kein objektives Bild bieten.

Im fünften Kapitel werden die Konflikte zwischen Einheimischen und Zugezogenen beschrieben. Die Grundproblematik beruht dabei auf der gegenseitigen Wahrnehmung: Die Einheimischen betrachten die Neuankömmlinge als arrogante Konkurrenten um die spärlichen Ressourcen der Region. Die Umsiedler sehen sich als den Einheimischen höhergestellt, da die Propaganda der Politik den Eindruck vermittelte, dass man sie nach Qinghai geschickt hätte, um eine rückständige

Randregion auf das Niveau der östlichen Kerngebiete zu heben. Verstärkt wird diese Grundproblematik unter anderem durch unbekannte Krankheiten oder Schwarzarbeit.

Das sechste Kapitel widmet sich der zweiten Welle des Migrationsprogramms, die eine Reaktion auf den Kontrollverlust über die vorherigen Entwicklungen darstellt. Die politische Führung definierte hier vier Probleme als Ursache des Kontrollverlustes: soziale Spannungen, falsche Zielgruppen, Diskrepanz von Propaganda und Realität sowie ethnische Konflikte. Neben diversen Ansätzen zur Vermeidung dieser Probleme beschreibt Rohlf hier die Idealisierung des Traktors als Wundermittel durch die politische Führung, da dieser alle geografischen und sozialen Unterschiede aufheben und eine Gleichheit aller Bewohner bewirken würde.

Abschließend reflektiert das siebte Kapitel die Hochphase des Programms (1958–1962). Rohlf widmet sich hier den Themen Schwarzmigration, Rebellion der tibetischen Bevölkerung, Gleichstellung von Mann und Frau, Technologisierung sowie dem Paradigmenwechsel von Agrar- zu Militärpolitik. Haben sich die vorherigen Kapitel gezielt einem bestimmten Thema gewidmet, werden hier viele Themen angerissen.

Am Ende zieht Rohlf das Fazit, dass das Programm als gescheitert anzusehen sei. Natur und Sozialgefüge hätten schwere Schäden davongetragen. Versprechen an Umsiedler und Einheimische wären nicht eingehalten worden. Keine dauerhaften Veränderungen. Das Ziel der Kornkammer des Reiches wurde nicht erfüllt. Insgesamt plädiert Rohlf dafür, diesen Zeitabschnitt nicht isoliert zu betrachten, sondern als Teil eines Prozesses der Sinisierung der Region zu sehen, der unter der Qing-Dynastie begonnen hat und aktuell unter Xi Jinping immer noch andauert. Er stellt die These auf, dass bald die Urbanisierung Chinas das bewirken könnte, was ein agrar-kultureller Ansatz nicht geschafft hat.

Insgesamt hat Rohlf mit diesem Buch eine ausführliche Basis für die Forschung zu einem international bisher unterrepräsentierten Thema der chinesischen Geschichte gelegt und es dabei in Beziehung zu zeitgenössischen politischen Entwicklungen gesetzt, was zeigt, dass es nicht nur eine historische Randnotiz, sondern von aktueller Relevanz ist.

Felix Rheinfelder
felixrheinfelder@gmail.com

Klaus Mühlhahn: Geschichte des modernen China: Von der Qing-Dynastie bis zur Gegenwart

München: C.H. Beck, 2021. 760 S., 39,95 €. ISBN 9783406765063

Rezension von Thomas Weyrauch

Unter dem Titel „Making China Modern. From the Great Qing to Xi Jinping“ wurde dieses Buch bereits 2019 bei der Harvard University Press veröffentlicht und von Kritikern positiv aufgenommen. So bezeichnete es etwa der ehemalige Sprecher des US-Repräsentantenhauses Newton Gingrich als „masterpiece“. Die deutsche Fassung ist nun in der bei C. H. Beck verlegten Historischen Bibliothek der Gerda Henkel Stiftung erschienen, die „ausgewiesenen Wissenschaftlern die Möglichkeit“ gibt, „grundlegende Erkenntnisse aus dem Bereich der Historischen Geisteswissenschaften einer interessierten Öffentlichkeit näher zu bringen“ (s. www.chbeck.de/buecher/reihen-sachbuch/historische-bibliothek-der-gerda-henkel-stiftung/). Mühlhahn befindet sich in dieser Reihe in Gesellschaft weiterer bedeutender Autoren wie Hermann Parzinger, Jürgen Osterhammel oder David Nirenberg.

Der Verfasser und sein Verlag bringen zu einer Zeit ein Buch heraus, in der es an Arbeiten zur Geschichte Chinas nicht mangelt. Warum sollte man also gerade dieses Buch schreiben, verlegen, lesen oder besprechen?

Bei seiner Buchvorstellung an der University of Southern California am 3. Oktober 2019 nannte er seine Ziele, nämlich die verborgene Vergangenheit hinter der Gegenwart zu enthüllen, auszuführen und den Sinn zu ergründen, sowie Muster, Gründe und Konsequenzen geschichtlicher Abläufe aufzuzeigen.

Schon nach wenigen Seiten der Lektüre wird diese Absicht erkennbar, denn im Gegensatz zu den meisten Darstellungen historischer Entwicklungen Chinas beschränkt sich Mühlhahn, der explizit den Schwerpunkt seiner Untersuchung auf die Institutionengeschichte legt, nicht nur darauf, Herrschaftshistorie um einige Informationen zu wirtschaftlichen oder kulturellen Fakten zu ergänzen. Vielmehr zieht er alle Register moderner Geschichtswissenschaften zur Methodik und zu den oft vernachlässigten Feldern der umwelt-, ideen-, sozial-, regional- oder weltgeschichtlichen Vorgänge.

Mühlhahn definiert „modern“ nicht normativ, sondern rein zeitlich, d. h. im Hinblick auf China seit dem Beginn der Qing-Dynastie 1644. Folglich gliedert er sein Werk in drei Systemabschnitte, nämlich der letzten kaiserlichen Dynastie, der republikanischen und der volksrepublikanischen Epoche. Über die Sinnhaftigkeit bestimmter Untergliederungen kann man streiten, wenn der Verfasser beispielsweise das „ruhmreiche Zeitalter“ der Qing von 1644 bis 1800 und nicht bis 1820, dem Jahr der maximalen territorialen Ausdehnung, oder den Sturz des Kaiserreiches nicht 1911, sondern auf den ersten Blick neblig zwischen 1900 und 1919 verortet.

Mühlhahns Begründungen seiner zeitlichen Einordnung sind jedoch gegen derartige Kritik gewappnet.

Der Niedergang des Qing-Systems ist gewiss am Verlauf der Boxer-Rebellion im Jahr 1900 ablesbar, doch schon lange zuvor waren ökologische Veränderungen für den Niedergang der Kaiserherrschaft ursächlich, wie Mühlhahn unter Berufung auf Historiker wie Kenneth Pomeranz oder Jack Goldstone konstatiert. Hinzu fügen sich weltweite Herausforderungen für solche Reiche.

Echtes Reformbemühen „in Richtung des Aufbaus eines intrusiveren, expansiven und mächtigen Staates“ erfasste Qing-China erst nach 1900 (S. 231). Mühlhahn sieht damit noch lange nicht das Ende, das staatsrechtlich folgen sollte, sondern mit einem radikal neuen „Ansatz auf der Grundlage wissenschaftlicher Vernunft und objektiver Wahrheit – kurz gesagt: einer neuen Kultur – als die einzige Lösung“ (S. 253). Damit wären wir mit Mühlhahn beim 4. Mai 1919. Aber konnte sich die neue Kultur durchsetzen, gab es nicht in der Folgezeit eine Neuauflage feudalistischer Denkweisen und neue „Kaiser“?

Ein kleiner Schnitzer ist die Bezeichnung „Provinz Liangjiang“ (S. 180, 214), die man vergeblich auf der Karte der Qing-Provinzen (S. 45, 124 f.) suchen wird. Sie ist nämlich irreführend und sollte besser im Plural in „Liangjiang-Provinzen“ geändert werden. Damit waren in der späten Qing-Dynastie die Provinzen Jiangsu, Jiangxi, and Anhui (兩江 „Zwei Jiang“, für die erste Silbe von Jiangsu und Jiangxi) gemeint, die unter der Supraverwaltung eines Zongdu (總督 „Generalgouverneur“, engl. „viceroy“) standen.

Zur Republik China: Die Politik der Warlords 1916 bis 1927/28 wird nur sehr cursorisch behandelt, etwa ihre Zahl, ihre zentralen Führungspersonen, die von ihnen erhobenen erdrückenden Steuern, die Misswirtschaft und ihre Kriege zwischen 1920 und 1926.

Viele Wahlen, Parlamente und Verfassungsentwürfe der republikanischen Epoche zwischen 1911 und 1949 bleiben unberücksichtigt. Wenn die Institutionengeschichte im Mittelpunkt steht, dann sollten die Parteienvielfalt, darunter die Bedeutung der Sozialdemokratie als oppositionelle Organisation für Menschen- und Bürgerrechte und ihr Vorsitzender Zhang Junmai als Architekt der Verfassung von 1946 erwähnt werden.

Zudem bleiben einige Fragen offen: Es wird nicht deutlich, warum beispielsweise Jiang Jieshi (Chiang Kaishek) 1927 mit den Kommunisten brach. War es lediglich Machtgier oder Undankbarkeit gegenüber den sowjetischen Unterstützern? Man vermisst als Gründe vorangegangene Gewaltakte der KP oder die Einmischung sowjetischer „Berater“ bzw. den Anlass einer Putschvorbereitung, welche die Stürmung der sowjetischen Botschaft in Peking durch Soldaten des Warlords Zhang Zuolin offenbarte. In allen chinesischen Medien wurde darüber breit berichtet, was zum Bruch der GMD mit der KP führte und zugleich die verfeindeten GMD-Faktionen zusammenschweißte.

Für den Zeitraum ab 1945 beschäftigt sich Mühlhahn weniger mit der Peripherie Chinas (Tibet, Xinjiang, Mongolei, Taiwan oder Hongkong), als er das für den Zeitraum der Qing tut, doch dürfte dem Leser hierbei sehr schnell deutlich werden, dass der Fokus jener Geschichtsdarstellung auf dem chinesischen Kernland liegt.

Es wäre jedoch wünschenswert gewesen, wenn er beispielsweise die Entwicklung Hongkongs vor 1997, die Retrozession Taiwans an China auf der Basis des Kapitulationsvertrages von Tōkyō bzw. des republikchinesisch-japanischen Vertrages von Taibei (1945, 1952), die Verlegung der Verfassungsorgane von Nanjing nach Taiwan, das weitere Schicksal der Insel sowie die völkerrechtliche Situation der Republik China ausgeführt hätte. In diesem Zusammenhang hätte er möglicherweise darauf verzichtet, von einer „Flucht der Regierung ins Exil nach Taiwan“ (S. 392) zu schreiben. Wenn die Regierung 1949 ihren Sitz von Nanjing auf die seit vier Jahren wieder zum chinesischen Staatsverband gehörigen Insel verlegte, dürfte nicht von einem Exil ausgegangen werden.

Den größten Raum in Mühlhahns Geschichtsdarstellung nimmt die Volksrepublik China ein, deren globale Wirkung in 72 Jahren wesentlich größer als die 268 Jahre währende Mandschurendynastie werden sollte. Der KP-geführte Staat entstand aus dem Niedergang der Republik China, die eine Phase großer intellektueller Freiheit und künstlerischer Kreativität geprägt hatte. Zugleich wurde sie nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg als schwach, korrupt und repressiv wahrgenommen. „Die von Krieg und Zerstörung erschöpfte Bevölkerung sehnte sich nach einem Neuanfang“ (S. 382, 386).

Spätestens an dieser Stelle wäre es angebracht zu erwähnen, dass der Sieg der kommunistischen Einheiten in erster Linie ein militärischer war. Es sollte erläutert werden, warum die KP an von Sowjettruppen erbeutete japanische Waffen in der Mandschurei gelangte, obwohl diese vertragsgemäß von der Sowjetunion an die chinesische Nationalregierung übergeben werden sollten.

Den dritten Teil „Die Umgestaltung Chinas“ eröffnet Mühlhahn literarisch mit einem sonnigen Herbsttag, an dem der neue Staat ausgerufen wurde, macht aber schnell deutlich, was folgen sollte:

Als Mao Zedong fast drei Jahrzehnte später 1976 starb, waren die Hoffnungen auf Erneuerung verflogen [...]. Die Geschichte der ersten drei Jahrzehnte der Volksrepublik China ist daher eine Geschichte von ehrgeizigen Bestrebungen und bitteren Enttäuschungen, von Neuanfängen und harten Landungen, von Experimenten und deren Scheitern (S. 386).

Die Folgeseiten offenbaren sowohl sonnige Versprechungen als auch deren Kehrseite in Gestalt einer Gewaltherrschaft der Kommunistischen Partei Chinas: Die erzwungene Kollektivierung, die Diktatur der KPCh unter der Bezeichnung „Neue Demokratie“, zahllose Einschüchterungskampagnen, Hinrichtungen, öffentliche Tribunale, Folter, Säuberungen, ein Netz von Gefangenenlagern, Hungersnöte von 16 bis 45 Millionen Todesopfern.

Die Zeit der Reformen und Öffnung des Landes nach Maos Tod und der Entmachtung seiner engsten Anhänger brachte eine Wende in der Wirtschaftspolitik und sogar eine begrenzte Liberalisierung, die aber mit der Verhaftung Oppositioneller bzw. mit der Niederschlagung der Demokratiebewegung 1989 ihr Ende fand. Dies verhinderte nicht den steilen Wirtschaftsaufschwung und die wachsende Stärke in der Weltpolitik. Im Gegenteil: China scheint eine lange Phase der Stabilität nach 1989 zu durchleben. Doch eine Analyse von Xi Jinpings Politik lässt Zweifel zu. Die Phänomene einer scheinbaren Geschlossenheit der Partei mit ihrer elitistischen Ausrichtung, des stärkeren Wettbewerbs um Funktionen (Ämter im öffentlichen Dienst, Dorfwahlen), des – nicht zuletzt durch den günstigen Verlauf der Covid 19-Pandemie bedingten – verbreiteten Nationalstolzes, der elektronischen Überwachung der Bevölkerung, des Sozialkreditsystems, einer absurden Verbotskultur und nicht zuletzt von Xis unangefochtener Autokratie führen nach Mühlhahns Überzeugung nicht zu einer dauerhaften Herrschaft der inzwischen hundertjährigen Kommunistischen Partei Chinas. Vielmehr resultiert die repressive Innenpolitik in einem Reformstau, der ungelöste Probleme perpetuiert. Eine „Übergangsfalle“ (*trapped transition*) (S. 617) erinnere an das Dilemma, in der man sich während der späten Qing-Zeit befunden habe. „Wann und wie China ein partizipatorischeres und legitimeres System einführen und ob die Partei den Prozess überleben wird, sind die wichtigsten Fragen zu Chinas politischer Zukunft“ (S. 665). Mühlhahns gewinnbringende Makrogeschichte bietet Stoff zu neuen Überlegungen, Diskussion und Widerspruch einer weitreichenden Leserschaft, die auch Entscheidungsträger in Wirtschaft und Politik einschließen sollte.

Stil und Sprache sind auf gute Lesbarkeit abgestellt. So verzichtet der Autor auf eine (noch) größere Fülle von Personennamen und benutzt populäre Umschriften oder Termini statt der in Sinologie oder Politologie gebräuchlichen (Chiang Kaishek statt Jiang Jieshi, Fraktion statt Faktion für eine innerparteiliche Gruppierung).

Einige Bilder, wie das des Eis essenden Warlords Ma Hongkui, auf den Mühlhahn ansonsten nicht eingeht, sind entbehrlich, keinesfalls aber das hervorragende Kartenmaterial.

Würde der Verfasser sämtliche Wünsche des Rezensenten berücksichtigen, so könnte das Werk auf über 800 Seiten anschwellen. Die Freude des Kritikers wäre immens, die Zahl der Leser jedoch möglicherweise kleiner. Einem großen Wurf verzeiht man diese Unterlassung.

Alice Grünfelder: Wolken über Taiwan. Notizen aus einem bedrohten Land.

Zürich: Rotpunktverlag, 2022. 264S., 28 €. ISBN 978-3-85869-943-5

Rezension von Thilo Diefenbach

Dieses Buch geht auf Notizen zurück, die die Autorin während eines etwa halbjährigen Aufenthalts auf der Insel im Jahr 2020 anfertigte – also genau zu Beginn der leider bis heute andauernden Corona-Zeit. Sie besuchte dort einen Intensiv-Sprachkurs und übersetzte Gedichte von taiwanischen Lyrikerinnen. Wie sie im Verlauf des Buches mehrfach erwähnt, verbrachte sie vor etwa zwanzig Jahren zwei Jahre in Chengdu, was darauf schließen lässt, dass sie zu der wachsenden Zahl von Sinologen gehört, die sich, wenn nicht von China ab-, so doch verstärkt Taiwan zuwenden.

In den vergangenen Jahren sind im deutschen Sprachraum einige Bücher über Taiwan erschienen, die eine Mischung aus Reisereportagen, persönlichen Erfahrungsberichten und landeskundlichen Abhandlungen darstellen: etwa Ilka Schneiders *Zwischen Geistern und Gigabytes. Abenteuer Alltag in Taiwan* (2008), Deike Lautenschlägers sehr amüsanten *Fettnäpfchenführer Taiwan. Wo Götter kuppeln und Ärzte gebrochene Herzen heilen* (2016), und ganz neu Stephan Thomes *Gebrauchsanweisung für Taiwan* (2021). Alice Grünfelders neues Buch gehört ebenfalls in diese Reihe, auch wenn es sich schon rein formal deutlich von den anderen hier genannten Werken unterscheidet. Es besteht aus 93 Kapiteln, die gemäß ihrem meist nur aus einem Wort bestehenden Titel alphabetisch angeordnet sind. Aber auch stilistisch hebt sich das neue Buch merklich ab: es ist weitaus reflektierter, meditativer, intellektueller, ja lyrischer. Das ist vielleicht nicht jedermanns Sache, aber gewiss eine interessante Abwechslung.

Schon gleich das erste Kapitel, „Ahnung“, beinhaltet eigentlich gar keine Informationen, sondern nur eine Stimmung, ein Gefühl der Unsicherheit, das nicht unbedingt Taiwan-spezifisch zu nennen ist. „Ankommen“ umfasst nur zwei Sätze, „Gewöhnung“ und „Ruhe“ gar nur einen. Manche dieser Kurzkapitel sind sehr gelungen, etwa „Nach Corona“; andere bestehen lediglich aus einem Gedicht, so etwa „Götter“ und „Shilin“. Einige Kapitel greifen Dinge auf, die in den anderen Büchern nicht oder nur sehr am Rande auftauchen, u. a. „Drachenboot“, „Hunde“, „Jazz“, „Meer“; besonders bemerkenswert fand ich das Kapitel „Obdachlose“. In „Pinselnotizen“ schließlich präsentiert die Autorin eine Art Programmatik ihres Buches.

Intellektueller als üblich wirken Grünfelders Ausführungen vor allem wegen zahlreicher Verweise, so z. B. auf den Lyriker Klaus Merz (10), den Architekturkritiker Vittorio Lampugnani (12), den Philosophen Michel Foucault (13), die Peripatetiker (14), die Theaterwissenschaftlerin Freda Fiala (15), den

Regisseur Werner Herzog (241) und zahlreiche Autoren, die nichts mit Taiwan oder auch nur mit Ostasien zu tun haben. Viele dieser Assoziationen sind zunächst überraschend, oft aber auch originell und erhellend.

Literatur spielt eine große Rolle in diesem Buch, was man nicht zuletzt daran erkennt, dass die Autorin die großartige Literaturzeitschrift *volltext* zitiert; Grünfelder erwähnt aber natürlich in erster Linie taiwanische Autoren, und zwar nicht nur die von ihr übersetzten Lyrikerinnen (Wei-yün Lin-Gorecka 林蔚昀, Yeh Mi-mi 葉覓覓, Mani Niwei 馬尼尼為, Tsai Wan-shuen 蔡宛璇 und andere), sondern z. B. auch Hung Hung 鴻鴻 und Cheng Chiung-ming 鄭炯明 (wobei sie leider konsequent darauf verzichtet, die Schriftzeichen zu den Personennamen anzugeben). Literarisch muten auch viele ihrer Sätze an, etwa dieser: „Leere Häuser sprechen erst recht von den Abwesenden, in der Syntax der Verlassenheit, sie sind wie ein Splitter im Auge des Nachsinnens. Die Ruinen ergeben kein Bild.“ (40) Grünfelders Neigung, in vielen Straßenszenen vor allem Rätsel oder Geheimnisse zu sehen, verleiht dem Text zusätzliches literarisches Flair. Manchmal klingt das jedoch etwas sehr bemüht, zum Beispiel wenn sie einen Satz mit „Nicht wusste ich, dass man...“ (22) beginnt oder die Formulierung „solchartige Texte“ (168) benutzt. Etwas verunglückt wirkt auch der Satz „Die Flüsse befangern die Insel“ (106).

Angesichts der offensichtlich hohen künstlerischen Ansprüche, die die Autorin an sich selber stellt, fällt allerdings ihr inflationärer Gebrauch von Anglizismen negativ auf. Auf S. 183 schreibt sie: „Das Schreiben hilft manchmal bei der Vergewisserung, hilft auch gegen das Verschwinden von Wörtern, wenn mir mitunter ein Wort nur noch auf Englisch oder Chinesisch einfällt, weil es im Deutschen keine Entsprechung gibt oder sie mir zu umständlich erscheint.“ Die Vergewisserung ist jedoch offensichtlich in einigen Fällen ausgeblieben, und so stolpert man über Hot Pot, Zines, contact tracing, Central Weather Bureau, sit-ins, domestic airport, freeway, skytrail, Hot Spring Museum, White Terror Memorial Park, walled city, Futai Street Mansion und so weiter. Mal ist die Rede vom Machangding execution ground (171), mal von der Hinrichtungsstätte Machangding (136), mal von Straße, mal von Road (193). Unschön sind auch Zusammensetzungen wie Highspeedzug (124) oder Care-Bereich (170) sowie wortwörtliche Übersetzungen wie „Identifikationszone zur Luftverteidigung“ (36) oder Komfortfrauen (13). Sogar die Titel literarischer Werke gibt sie auf Englisch wieder („The old capital 古都“, „Death in a stone cell 石室之死亡“, „The Orphan of Asia 亞細亞的孤兒“), nur weil diese eben in englischer Übersetzung vorliegen (immerhin übersetzt sie Hou Hsiao-hsiens 侯孝賢 Filmtitel „Stadt der Traurigkeit 悲情城市“ ins Deutsche). Überdies haben noch einige Modewörter Eingang in ihr Buch gefunden, z. B. Resilienz (29), Profession (30), Aktivitäten (99) und Fake News (169). Unter Mode-Erscheinung verbuche ich auch den Ansatz, die Qualität eines Kabinetts nicht anhand der Qualifikation, sondern des Geschlechts seiner Mitglieder zu beurteilen (89). Sprachlich fragwürdig sind überdies Sinismen wie „Jilong-Fluss“ (95) oder „Bailingqiao-Brücke“ (115).

Auch sachlichen Schnitzern begegnet man gelegentlich, etwa wenn von „Nationalitäten“ statt von Ethnien oder Volksgruppen die Rede ist (30), oder wenn der Name der Sonnenblumenbewegung 太陽花運動 auf die „Übergabe einer großen Menge an Sonnenblumen ans Parlament“ (74) zurückgeführt wird – tatsächlich stellte lediglich einer der jungen Leute, die 2014 das Parlament besetzten, einen Strauß Sonnenblumen auf das Rednerpult. Verwirrend ist, dass sie die im Nationalen Palastmuseum 國立故宮博物院 ausgestellten Kunstwerke als „Raubkunst“ bezeichnet (195) – das sind sie höchstens aus chinesischer Sicht. Die von Helmut Martin und Wolf Baus herausgegebene Anthologie *Blick übers Meer* erschien nicht erst 1991 (258), sondern bereits 1982. „Taiyu [台語]“ ist nicht „eine der Landessprachen“ Taiwans (59), sondern die häufigste Muttersprache auf der Insel. Ob man es als „Dialekt“ bezeichnen will oder nicht, ist linguistische und politische Definitionssache; jedenfalls war es während des Kriegsrechts (1949–1987) nicht pauschal verboten (97), sondern vorrangig in öffentlichen Räumlichkeiten (Schulen, Universitäten, Behörden). In der Unterhaltungsindustrie dagegen, sowohl in Filmen wie auch in der Musik, war das Taiwanesische auch damals gar nicht so selten anzutreffen.

Der Untertitel des Buches hat eine eindeutig politische Dimension, die insgesamt allerdings relativ wenig Raum einnimmt und vor allem oft in nicht sehr überzeugender Weise behandelt wird. Im Kapitel „Bedrohung“ heißt es beispielsweise, China sei „nicht einmal Feindesland“, sondern spräche „dieselbe Sprache“ wie Taiwan (29) – beides zweifelhafte Aussagen. Und anders als es im Kapitel „Krieg“ dargestellt wird, haben chinesische Militärflugzeuge bislang noch nie den taiwanischen Luftraum verletzt, und natürlich sind sie auch noch nie über Tainan hinweggefliegen (127–128). Hier verwechselt Grünfelder die Luftraumüberwachungszone mit dem Luftraum, dessen Verletzung nicht mehr nur ein provokativer, sondern ein kriegerischer Akt wäre. Außerdem: Litauen hat keine Botschaft in Taipeh eröffnet (33); nicht Taiwan drohte mit „Rückeroberung des Festlands“, sondern Chiang Kai-shek 蔣介石 (35); und nicht Taiwan wurde der UN-Sitz entzogen, sondern der Republik China (191). Im Kapitel „Frieden“ wird die Floskel vom „status quo“ (82) bemüht, die sich schon lange erledigt hat, denn welcher status quo soll damit gemeint sein? Der vom letzten Jahr? Der vor zehn Jahren? Die stetig zunehmenden chinesischen Provokationen und Aggressionen verändern die Lage faktisch im Wochentakt, so dass es dringend vonnöten wäre, den erwünschten Status präziser zu definieren. Und auf die vorwurfsvoll klingende Feststellung, dass es in Taiwan gar keine Friedensbewegung gebe (83), kann man nur entgegenen: Zum Glück! Denn sobald Taiwan zum Pazifismus konvertiert, wird es innerhalb kürzester Zeit kommunistisch werden. Zum Glück gibt die Autorin der Taiwan-Expertin Simona Grano von der Universität Zürich die Gelegenheit, einiges zurechtzurücken und die Dinge realistischer zu betrachten.

Die Autorin konnte darüber hinaus nicht ahnen, dass zwei Kapitel ihres Buches, nämlich „Bedrohung“ und „Frieden“, bereits zum Zeitpunkt der Drucklegung von

der Wirklichkeit überholt wurden – der Wehrwille der taiwanischen Bevölkerung ist mittlerweile, nämlich seit dem russischen Angriff auf die Ukraine, deutlich ausgeprägter als noch von Grünfelder wahrgenommen.

Trotz gewisser Schwächen ist dieses Buch eine unterhaltsame Lektüre für alle, die an Taiwan interessiert sind, vor allem dann, wenn sie einen Hang zur Literatur haben.

Thilo Diefenbach
thdfb@hotmail.com

Björn Alpermann: Xinjiang – China und die Uiguren

Würzburg: Würzburg University Press, 2021. VI + 262 S., 29,80 €

Rezension von Johannes Küchler

Hatte Mao Zedong noch 1956 vor dem Groß-Han-Chauvinismus gewarnt, so hat sich dieser in der Folgezeit gegenüber den zunehmend marginalisierten Minderheiten durchgesetzt. Das belegt exemplarisch das vorliegende Buch mit der Rekonstruktion des Wechselspiels zwischen dem Einparteienstaat und seinen muslimischen Turk-Ethnien in Xinjiang. Gefragt „ist eine wissenschaftliche Auseinandersetzung [...], die sich zu allen Seiten kritisch und prüfend verhält [...], fokussiert auf die heutige Situation [...]“. Sie ist schwierig, weil spätestens, seit 2014 Xinjiang einer weitgehenden Kontaktsperre unterworfen ist, die nicht nur für die Repräsentanten ausländischer Wissenschaft und Medien, sondern genauso für die uigurisch/kasachische Diaspora gilt. Gleichzeitig ist aber seit den 1980er-Jahren ein eindrucksvoller Korpus chinesischer Quellen und ausländischer geschichts- und sozialwissenschaftlicher Forschung entstanden. Diese Quellenvielfalt ermöglicht externen Beobachtenden eine ausgewogene Bewertung der Lage, selbst dann, wenn der physisch-persönliche Kontakt zum Untersuchungsgegenstand verwehrt ist. Das dokumentiert Alpermann, der Xinjiang nur einmal vor Ort studieren konnte. Mit Rückgriff auf mehr als 600 chinesische und englischsprachige Publikationen schuf er eine umfangreiche Monografie, wobei alle Detailfragen der einen großen untergeordnet sind: Wie konnte es zur heutigen ausweglosen Situation kommen?

Das Buch ist ausgerichtet auf den Zeitraum seit der Implosion der Sowjetunion, besonders das knappe Jahrzehnt 2017/2021. Untersuchungsgegenstand ist der „Xinjiang-Konflikt“, als „weitgehend neutraler Terminus [...], um nicht von vornherein Schuldzuweisungen vorzunehmen“. Nur *ein* Akteur ist klar zu identifizieren, der Staat der Partei, dem eher diffuse Akteurs-Gruppierungen, letztlich aber die lokalen islamischen Turk-Ethnien in ihrer Gesamtheit gegenüberstehen.

Zwei Untersuchungsebenen bestimmen den Aufbau des Buches. Die eine – diachron – besteht aus einer Langzeitanalyse, in der die wechselnden Interessenkonstellationen im Ringen um die Vorherrschaft über das heutige Xinjiang ausgebreitet werden. Schon hier kann Alpermann auf wirkmächtige Vereinfachungen verweisen, die das antagonistische Selbstverständnis von Han-Chinesen und Minderheiten maßgeblich beeinflussen.

Die Kenntnis dieser Beziehungsgeschichte ist unverzichtbar für das Verständnis der heutigen Situation, denn sie offenbart Vorläufer aktueller Probleme und Strategien und ihrer Bewertung, z. B.:

- Das Produktions- und Aufbaukorps erweist sich als Neuaufgabe traditioneller Agrarkolonisation (*tuntian*).

- Die Konzepte für das Verhältnis der Han zu den Turkvölkern schwankten mehrfach zwischen ethnischer Segregation und Integration, zwischen kolonialistisch-rassistischer Argumentation und konfuzianischem Bildungs- und Zivilisierungsauftrag.
- Wenn heute von Genozid gesprochen wird, sollte man sich jenen an den Dunganen 1756/57 vergegenwärtigen.

Als synchrone Darstellung folgt Teil II, „Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft im 21. Jahrhundert“, mit den Schwerpunkten: Große Westerschließung, Produktions- und Aufbaukorps, neue Seidenstraße. Alpermann referiert hier die divergierenden Bewertungen einerseits aus der Sicht von Uiguren und ausländischen Beobachtern (koloniale Situation, Parallelen zur israelischen Besatzungspolitik), andererseits aus dem staatlichen Blickwinkel, bei dem auf die erhoffte stabilisierende Wirkung der han-chinesischen Ansiedlung und der beeindruckenden Infrastruktur-Investitionen verwiesen wird. Es ergibt sich das komplexe Bild einer zunehmend disparitären sozialen und territorialen Entwicklung: Segregation statt Integration.

Weiter geht es um verschiedene Aspekte von „Identität“, die Alpermann „interaktiv, wandelbar, prozesshaft“ verstanden wissen will. In Xinjiang ist sie einerseits von oben „Objekt staatlicher Formungsversuche“, andererseits von unten das Resultat uigurischer „intensiver gruppeninterner Auseinandersetzungen“. Innerhalb dieser Polarität entfaltet und verändert sie sich. Das wird zunächst erläutert anhand des Begriffs der Nationalität, weiter an der Sprach- und Bildungspolitik, mit der letztlich eine Verdrängung des Uigurischen durchgesetzt werden soll zugunsten des Aufgehens aller Minderheiten in einer *zhonghua minzu* (chinesischen Nation). Dieses Ziel soll auch erreicht werden durch eine interethnische Durchmischung (*minzu jiaorong*), die aber, von oben angeordnet, den alltäglichen Rassismus eher verstärkt.

Sprache als Medium jeder Kommunikation, als Trägerin emanzipatorischen Denkens und kultureller Identität genauso wie als Instrument der Repression – das alles kann Alpermann differenziert ausbreiten. Die amtlich verkündete Zweisprachigkeit zum Beispiel beinhaltet im Alltag vom Kindergarten bis zur Hochschule die Durchsetzung des Chinesischen.

Auch der Abschnitt über „ethnische Identität in Religion und Musik“ verdeutlicht den Widerspruch zwischen Verfassung und Alltag, indem religiöse Praxis als rückständig und extremistisch denunziert wird. Gerade weil sie sich im Gegensatz zur amtlichen Unterdrückung entfaltet, erweist sich die Re-Islamisierung als Weg zur Ausbildung uigurischer Identität. Besonderes Gewicht gibt Alpermann der Musik als Schlüsselbereich uigurischer Nationalkultur. Er betont die kulturpolitische Bedeutung der Musik mit ihrer Bandbreite von den religiösen Wurzeln über ihre Rolle als subtile Form des Widerstands bis hin zu ihrer säkularen Vereinnahmung durch die offiziöse Unterhaltungsindustrie. Eng verknüpft mit der Musik-Tanz-Thematik schildert Alpermann die sozialpsychologischen Aspekte der Gender-

Beziehungen innerhalb der uigurischen Gesellschaft wie auch des han-chinesisch-uigurischen Verhältnisses.

Damit hat der Autor den Kontext der sich selbst verstärkenden Polarisierung aufbereitet, die im neuen Jahrtausend im offenen Konflikt kulminiert. Diesem ist der umfangreichste Teil des Buches gewidmet. Hier erfährt – außenpolitisch konditioniert – „Terrorismus“ mit seiner Vorstufe, dem religiösen Extremismus, einen Bedeutungsgewinn gegenüber dem Vorwurf des Separatismus. Alpermann stellt die internationalen und chinesischen Terrorismus- Definitionen vor und deren Implikationen für die Bewertung von sozialem Protest.

Er betont die Rolle der politischen Führungsebenen für das interethnische Verhältnis, indem er die Aussagen chinesischer und ausländischer Quellen zu den einzelnen Ereignissen referiert. Er hat ein Gespür für sprachliche Feinheiten und Schlüsselbegriffe, in denen sich das hierarchische und ethnozentrische Verhalten der han-chinesischen Seite äußert. Insgesamt sieht Alpermann die Jahre bis 2015 dominiert von einer innen- und außenpolitisch bestimmten „securitization“, mit der die polizeilichen Kompetenzen ausgeweitet werden im Dienste einer Kriminalisierung beliebiger turko-muslimischer Alltagspraktiken. Ereignisse wie die „Unruhen“ in Urumqi 2009, die diesen Prozess vorantrieben, hebt er hervor. Eine genauere Vorstellung der Vorschläge İlham Tohtis zur Sprach- und Bildungspolitik wäre hier angebracht gewesen, weil sie – politisch unerwünscht – belegt, dass eine eigenständige uigurische Position innerhalb einer VR China denkbar ist.

So erweist sich die „Versicherheitlichung“ als Präludium für jene Zwangsmaßnahmen, die seit 2017 Chinas Xinjiang-Politik in das internationale Rampenlicht rückten. Alpermann sieht die Umerziehungslager, begründet auf einer Verrechtlichung des Unrechts, verbunden mit der Religionsbekämpfung als „Ent-Extremisierung“, der willkürlichen Inhaftierung uigurischer und kasachischer BürgerInnen und den katastrophalen Lebensumständen. Er bestätigt die Untersuchungen von Adrian Zenz im Abgleich mit anderen Quellen. Komplizierter verhält es sich mit der Zwangsarbeit im Kontext der Armutsbekämpfung. Er hält die Kritik dann für berechtigt, wenn Lohnarbeit nur deshalb angenommen wird, um so der Einweisung in ein Lager zuvorzukommen. Unstrittig ist der Zwangscharakter der Geburtenkontrolle. Trotzdem kann Alpermann dem Vorwurf des Völkermords nicht folgen, während die genannten staatlichen Eingriffe in der Summe auch von ihm als „kultureller Genozid“ eingestuft werden.

Das letzte Kapitel ist der internationalen Dimension des Konflikts gewidmet: der kritisch-verurteilenden Rezeption im „Westen“ wie auch der eher verhaltenen in der islamischen Welt. Eine von Alpermann erarbeitete Analyse der chinesischen medialen Gegenoffensive erweist sich für offene Gesellschaften als zu grobschlächtig, wird aber bei einem ungeübten Publikum ihre Werbewirksamkeit nicht verfehlen.

Das Buch konzentriert sich auf einen noch nicht abgeschlossenen Prozess. Entsprechend vorsichtig ist der Autor mit Schlussfolgerungen. Mit seiner

thematischen Breite und inhaltlichen Fülle, in der abwägenden Auseinandersetzung mit den verschiedenen Analysen und Argumenten erfüllt es den eingangs gesetzten Anspruch. Erschwerend bei der Lektüre ist die fehlende Anschaulichkeit. Eine Neuauflage sollte unbedingt mit Karten und den vielfältig vorliegenden historischen und aktuellen, auch künstlerischen Zeugnissen illustriert werden.

Prof. Dr. Johannes Küchler

China Zentrum, TU Berlin

Johannes.kuechler@campus.tu-berlin.de

Bu Yuanshi (Hg.): Das chinesische Zivilgesetzbuch. Gesamtstruktur und Einzelfragen.

Reihe Recht in Ostasien. Baden-Baden: Nomos 2022. 218 Seiten.
ISBN 9783848787395.

Bu Yuanshi (Hg.): System des Zivilrechts und Struktur der Kodifikation. Europäische und ostasiatische Perspektive.

Reihe Schriften zum Ostasiatischen Privatrecht 10. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2022.
258 Seiten. ISBN 9783161617416.

Sammelrezension von Thomas Weyrauch

Zivilrechtliche Kodifikationen können stabile und langlebige Gebilde sein, die selbst politische Systemwechsel relativ unbeschadet überstehen, wie etwa der französische Code civil von 1804, das österreichische Allgemeine Bürgerliche Gesetzbuch von 1812, das japanische Minpō (民法) von 1896/98 oder das deutsche Bürgerliche Gesetzbuch von 1900 beweisen. Ihre Existenz kann gesellschaftlich, wirtschaftlich und politisch stabilisierend wirkend. Es lohnt sich folglich nicht nur für Juristen, sich mit der Materie zu beschäftigen.

Das seit 1. Januar 2021 in der Volksrepublik China gültige Zivilgesetzbuch (中华人民共和国民法典, nachfolgend: ZGB) wurde von der Staats- und Parteiführung nach Plan durchgepaukt und von einer Juristenkommission in Worte gefasst. Die Freiburger Direktorin des Instituts für Internationales Wirtschaftsrecht mit Schwerpunkt Ostasien Bu Yuanshi räumt folglich ein, es verwundere kaum, „dass in offiziellen Narrativen Euphorie und Lobgesänge um das neue Gesetzbuch herrschen, obwohl in der Rechtswissenschaft dezente Kritik geübt wird“ (Bu, Das chinesische Zivilgesetzbuch, 11).

Die Kodifikation ersetzt bisherige bürgerlich-rechtliche Einzelgesetze und ist in sieben Abschnitte gegliedert, nämlich in die Allgemeinen Bestimmungen, das Sachenrecht, das Vertragsrecht, die Persönlichkeitsrechte, das Ehe- und Familienrecht, das Erbrecht und die Haftung für unerlaubte Handlungen.

Mit dem im September 2021 beendeten Band „Das chinesische Zivilgesetzbuch“ und dem auf der Basis einer Online-Tagung vom 13./14.01.2022 entstandene „System des Zivilrechts und Struktur der Kodifikation“ kommen neben Bu Yuanshi maßgebliche Rechtswissenschaftler aus den chinesischen Staaten westlich und östlich der Taiwan-Straße, Deutschland, Japan, den Niederlanden, Österreich und der Schweiz zu Wort, von denen Zhu Qingyu (朱庆育), Professor an der Nanjing University Law School und Direktor des Forschungszentrums für Kommentarkultur, sowie Su Yeong-chin (Su Yongqin 蘇永欽), Professor an der Chengchi-Universität

in Taipei und zwischen 2010 und 2016 Vizepräsident des Sifa Yuan (Justizhofes) der Republik China, besonders hervorzuheben sind.

In Bu Yuanshis Arbeit „Das chinesische Zivilgesetzbuch“ eröffnet Zhu Qingyu mit der rechtshistorischen Betrachtung „Von den Allgemeinen Grundsätzen zum Allgemeinen Teil“, die den weiten Weg der modernen Zivilistik Chinas zu einer Kodifikation aufzeigt. Zhu bestreitet, dass jenes erste Kapitel des Zivilgesetzbuches im Gegensatz zum Allgemeinen Teil des deutschen BGB einen pandektistischen Charakter besitze. Vielmehr sei die chinesische Systematik des AT durch die Aufzählung der subjektiven Rechte ohne gemeinsame Nenner, die vor die Klammer gezogen werden könnten, vielmehr einem Spiralbinder mit losen Blättern vergleichbar (52 ff., 59 ff.). Was Zhu mit „vor die Klammer ziehen“ meint, ist das Verständnis der nach der römisch-rechtlichen Pandektenwissenschaft agierenden Juristen, alle in den Folgekapiteln auftauchenden Gemeinsamkeiten in einem Allgemeinen Teil voranzustellen. Ursprünglich, d. h. 2002, sollte das ZGB sogar aus neun Elementen bestehen, nämlich den Allgemeinen Bestimmungen, dem Sachenrecht, dem Vertragsrecht, den Bestimmungen zu Persönlichkeitsrechten, dem Ehrerecht, dem Adoptionsrecht, dem Erbrecht, dem Recht über die Haftung für unerlaubte Handlungen sowie den Vorschriften über die Rechtsanwendung bei Zivilrechtsbeziehungen mit Auslandsbezug (61). Zhus Fazit: „Durch das dichte Geflecht aus Worten des Gesetzgebers und angesichts des Gesetzbuches selbst kann festgestellt werden, dass der „Erfindergeist“ und der „systemische Durchbruch“ unseres ZGB in dem ersten Loseblattspiral liegt, der das Loseblattgesetzbuch anführt“ (67).

Su Yeong-chin vergleicht das ZGB mit der auf Taiwan gültigen privatrechtlichen Kodifikation, deren Entwicklung in der ausgehenden Qing-Dynastie begann und in der Republik China zwei Phasen durchlebte, nämlich durch die Vorlage eines weiteren Entwurfes während der von Warlords ausgetragenen Konflikten geprägten Beiyang-Phase (1912–1928 Regierungssitz Beijing) und durch die nach der Errichtung eines Zentralstaates unter der Nationalpartei (1928–1949 Nanjing-Phase) verabschiedeten Teilgesetzes eines ZGB in den 1930er Jahren. In dem aus japanischem Kolonialbesitz an die Republik China 1945 rückabgetretenen Taiwan habe sich jenes ZGB „als wichtiger Motor der Marktwirtschaft und Zivilgesellschaft erwiesen und bemerkenswerte Ergebnisse erzielt“. Inzwischen hätten sich viele Staaten neue Zivilrechtskodizes gegeben oder wie Deutschland, Frankreich und Japan bereits Revisionen vorgenommen (71 f.).

Die konsequente Abstrahierung und das „vor die Klammer Ziehen“ habe in der Republik China und damit auf dem heutigen Taiwan zu folgender fünfteiliger Pandekten-Gliederung des ZGB geführt: Allgemeiner Teil {Schuldrecht (Allgemeiner Teil (Besonderer Teil)) Sachenrecht (Allgemeiner Teil (Besonderer Teil)) Verwandtschaft (Allgemeiner Teil (Besonderer Teil)) Erbrecht (Allgemeiner Teil (Besonderer Teil))}.

In der Volksrepublik China habe hingegen das dreißigjährige Schwanken zwischen einem Zivilgesetzbuch und einem sektoriellen Zivilrecht schließlich zur Entscheidung zugunsten eines größeren Projekts der Rekodifizierung geführt. Für den tatsächlich verpassten Kodifizierungszeitpunkt sei gewiss ein hoher Preis durch ein kompliziertes Gesetzeswerk zu zahlen, durch das man in einem „komplizierten und schwer auflösbaren Abhängigkeitspfad gefangen“ sei (102).

Von weiteren wertvollen Beiträgen unterschiedlicher Autoren ergänzt, ist das von Bu herausgegebene Buch „Das chinesische Zivilgesetzbuch“ zweifellos ein bedeutendes Mittel, die zivilrechtliche Dogmatik Chinas besser kennenzulernen und zu verstehen.

Dies gilt auch für Bu Yuanshis weiteres Werk aus dem Jahr 2022, das „System des Zivilrechts und Struktur der Kodifikation“, das nach Ansicht des Rezensenten größere Brisanz besitzt. Hier stört zwar zunächst der sehr allgemein gehaltene Titel, bei dem kein Bezug zum Recht der Volksrepublik China bzw. zur Komparatistik erkennbar ist.

Eingangs greift Bu die Kritik der nachfolgenden Autoren auf und konstatiert, es werde übersehen, dass es weder ein vollkommen widerspruchsfreies materielles Rechtssystem noch ein vollkommenes formelles Kodifikationssystem geben könne. Sie stellt die Frage, warum überhaupt eine Kodifikation benötigt werde und an wen sie sich richte. So gebe es ein inneres System der Juristen und ein äußeres der Laien, doch seien sich die Autoren des Bandes einig, dass es eine unrealistische und verfehltete Vorstellung sei, Laien als Adressaten des ZGB zu betrachten. Die Gesamtkodifikation in China sei eine Konsolidierung des geltenden Rechts. Da Chinas Rechtsordnung auf der Rechtsrezeption aufgebaut sei, seien tradierte Dogmen zu hinterfragen und herauszufordern (4 ff., 13 f.).

Wiederum stehen neben der Herausgeberin die kritischen Autoren Zhu Qingyu und Su Yeong-chin, aber auch der emeritierte Rechtsordinarius und ehemalige OLG-Richter Rolf Stürner sowie Keizō Yamamoto (山本 敬三), Professor an der Universität Kyōto, im Vordergrund, flankiert mit Stellungnahmen zu deren Ausführungen von Helmut Koziol, Xue Jun (薛军), André Janssen, Ye Jinqiang (叶金强), Peter Jung, Christoph A. Kern, Wolfgang Wiegand, Xie Gen (解亘) und Maja Ruhl.

Ergänzend zu den erwähnten Positionen Su Yeong-chins kritisiert Xue Jun gleichfalls handwerkliche Fehler in der Gestaltung des ZGB. So hätten die Schöpfer des ZGB vorrangig die bereits erlassenen Zivilgesetze in das ZGB eingearbeitet, ohne die ursprüngliche Grundstruktur zu ändern, was dazu führe, dass die Kodifikation des chinesischen ZGB in gewisser Weise zu einem „Tanz in Fesseln“ geworden sei. Dass etwa Vertragsrecht, Deliktsrecht, Bereicherungsrecht und Geschäftsführung ohne Auftrag nicht unter dem Gesichtspunkt der Zugehörigkeit der Einheit der Obligation betrachtet werde, werde zur Verwirrung unter den Jurastudenten führen. (Erläuterung des Rezensenten: die genannten Rechtsinstitute

sind im deutschen BGB im Zweiten Buch unter „Schuldrecht“ zusammengefasst). (47). Eingangs betonend, dass ihn seine Kritik am neuen ZGB unter vielen Juristen Chinas unbeliebt gemacht habe, fordert Xue dessen Nachbesserung, darunter die „Entschlackung“ des Allgemeinen Teils sowie die Einführung eines Allgemeinen Teils für das Schuldrecht (43 ff., 51).

Vor einer Überbewertung der Pandektistik warnt hingegen Stürner unter Bezugnahme der deutschen BGB-Genese vor 1900. Er halte zudem die allzu grundsätzliche Kritik am chinesischen ZGB für überzogen (59 ff.).

Dass eine traditionsreiche Zivilrechtskodifikation nicht in Stein gemeißelt ist, beweist Yamamoto anhand der japanischen Reform des Minpō zum Zweck der Integration des Allgemeinen Vertragsrecht in das Allgemeine Schuldrecht aus dem Jahr 2020 (105 ff.).

Yamamotos Erfahrungen beweisen die Praktikabilität von Su Yeong-chins Initialzündung einer nachzuholenden Zivilrechtsreform. Zhu Qingyu befeuert diese Option in seinem Beitrag „Das Große Zivilgesetzbuch und das neue Zivilbuchparadigma“. Zunächst fordert er von einem neuen Zivilrechtskodex auf der Basis des deutschen BGB eine Systemneutralität entsprechend der These, dass öffentliches Recht vergänglich sei, während das Privatrecht ewig bleibe. Für manchen Juristen der Volksrepublik China muss dies als Schlag ins Gesicht empfunden werden, denn Zhu kalkuliert einen Systemwechsel ein: „Das deutsche BGB hat nach seiner Verabschiedung ein Jahrhundert der ideologischen Veränderungen in der Monarchie, der Weimarer Republik, dem Nationalsozialismus, dem kapitalistischen Föderalismus der Nachkriegszeit, in modifizierter Form in der DDR und dann in der vereinigten Bundesrepublik Deutschland überlebt und ist mit dem Geist der Neutralität untrennbar verbunden“ (175). Zhu bleibt es den Lesern schuldig, auszuführen, worin er eine fehlende Neutralität des ZGB sieht. Einige Beispiele, etwa die Art. 206 oder 260 aus dem Sachenrecht (sozialistisches System, sozialistische Marktwirtschaft, Kollektiveigentum) hätten dafür ausgereicht. Es verwundert sehr, dass diese provokative Forderung nach Systemneutralität in den Diskussionsbeiträgen der Tagung vom 13./14.01.2022 unbeachtet blieb, während lebhaft auf Nebenschauplätzen zur Trennung oder Verbindung des Obligationen- und Sachenrechts gefochten wurde.

Dr. Thomas Weyrauch

dr.thomas.weyrauch@gmx.de

NEUERE LITERATUR ÜBER ASIEN

Zusammengestellt von Uwe Kotzel

uwe.kotzel@giga-hamburg.de

Die Mitglieder der DGA sind herzlich aufgefordert, ihre neuesten Veröffentlichungen der Redaktion zu melden.

ASIEN

- Abe, Satoshi; Lim Tai Wei (Hgg.): *Modernization in Asia. The environment/resources, social mobilization, and traditional landscapes across time and space in Asia*. Singapur: World Scientific, 2022, 226 S.
- Almunawar, Mohammad Nabil; Md. Zahidul Islam, Patricia Ordonez De Pablos (Hgg.): *Digital transformation management. Challenges and futures in the Asian digital economy*. London: Routledge, 2022, 268 S.
- Anas, Omar (Hg.): *Turkey's Asia relations*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022, 240 S.
- Baginda, Abdul Razak: *The global rise of China and Asia. Impact and regional response*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021, 197 S.
- Bajpace, Chietigj: *China in India's post-cold war engagement with Southeast Asia*. London: Routledge, 2022, 302 S.
- Balasingam, Ann Selvaranee (Hg.): *Asian tourism sustainability*. Singapur: Springer, 2021, 202 S.
- Ball, Desmond et al.: *Asia's new geopolitics. Military power and regional order*. London: Routledge, 2021, 233 S.
- Bossuyt, Fabienne (Hg.): *European Union, China and Central Asia. Global and regional cooperation in a new era*. London: Routledge, 2022, 293 S.
- Ciorciari, John D. (Hg.): *Courteous power. Japan and Southeast Asia in the Indo-Pacific era*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2021, 321 S.
- Buzan, Barry: *Re-imagining international relations. World orders in the thought and practice of Indian, Chinese, and Islamic civilizations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022, 188 S.
- Cannon, Brendon J.; Kei Hakata (Hgg.): *Indo-Pacific strategies. Navigating geopolitics at the dawn of a new age*. London: Routledge, 2021, 243 S.
- Dhyani, Shalini et al. (Hgg.): *Blue-green infrastructure across Asian countries. Improving urban resilience and sustainability*. Singapur: Springer, 2022, 518 S.
- Dittmer, Lowell (Hg.): *New Asian disorder. Rivalries embroiling the Pacific century*. Hongkong: Hongkong University Press, 2022, 272 S.
- Dossani, Rafiq: *Democracy in the Asia-Pacific region*. Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2021, 56 S.

- Formichi, Chiara (Hg.): *Routledge handbook on Islam in Asia*. London: Routledge, 2021, 369 S.
- Gao Yanjun (Hg.): *ASEAN-China cooperation for poverty reduction*. Singapur: World Scientific, 2021, 183 S.
- George, Sam (Hg.): *Journeys of Asian diaspora. Mapping organisations and destinations*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2021, 243 S.
- Green, Michael J.: *Enhancing democratic partnership in the Indo-Pacific region*. Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2022, 66 S.
- Guo Yanjun (Hg.): *Preventive diplomacy, peacebuilding and security in the Asia-Pacific. Evolving norms, agenda and practices*. Singapur: World Scientific, 2022, 250 S.
- Heiduk, Felix (Hg.): *Asian geopolitics and the US-China rivalry*. London: Routledge, 2022, 238 S.
- Hsiao, Hsin-Huang Michael (Hg.): *Volatility and future of democracies in Asia*. London: Routledge, 2022, 191 S.
- Jal, Murzban: *Essays on Marxism and Asia*. London: Routledge, 2022, 169 S.
- Jobin, Paul; Ho Ming-Sho, Michael Hsin Huang Hsiao (Hgg.): *Environmental movements and politics of the Asian anthropocene*. Singapur: ISEAS, 2021, 374 S.
- Kuyakanon, Riamsara; Hildegard Diemberger, David Sneath (Hgg.): *Cosmopolitical ecologies across Asia. Places and practices of power in changing environments*. London: Routledge, 2022, 275 S.
- Liu Hong: *The political economy of transitional governance. China and Southeast Asia in the 21st century*. London: Routledge, 2022, 220 S.
- Mahbubani, Kishore: *The Asian 21st century*. Singapur: Springer, 2022, 270 S.
- Marwah, Reena: *India-Vietnam relations. Development dynamics and strategic alignment*. Singapur: Springer, 2022, 199 S.
- Mayilvaganan, M. (Hg.): *ASEAN and India-ASEAN relations. Navigating shifting geopolitics*. London: Routledge, 2022, 277 S.
- Medcalf, Rory: *Contest for the India-Pacific. Why China won't map the future*. Carlton: La Trobe University Press, 2022, 310 S.
- Medhekar, Anita (Hg.): *Evaluating trade and economic relations between India and Southeast Asia*. Hershey: Business Science Reference, 2022, 347 S.
- Murayama, Mayumi (Hg.): *Northeast India and Japan. Engagement through connectivity*. London: Routledge, 2022, 325 S.
- Narayanan, Raviprasad: *Decision-making in foreign policy and India-China bilateral relations*. New Delhi: Sage, 2022, 260 S.
- Panda, Jagannath P. (Hg.): *Quad Plus and Indo-Pacific. The changing profile of international relations*. London: Routledge, 2022, 296 S.
- Patman, Robert G.; Patrick Köllner, Balazs Kiglics (Hgg.): *From Asia-Pacific to Indo-Pacific. Diplomacy in a contested region*. Singapur: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021, XX, 353 S.
- Peou, Sorpong: *Peace and security in Indo-Pacific Asia. IR perspectives in context*. London: Routledge, 2022, 373 S.

- Phua, Charles Chao Rong: *Towards strategic pragmatism in foreign policy. Comparing the US, China, and Singapore*. London: Routledge, 2022, 152 S.
- Ramesh, M.: *Health policy in Asia. A policy design approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021, 257 S.
- Ritthaler-Andree, Ronja: *Klimagerechtigkeit und Klimaschutzpolitik. Die Verhandlungspositionen der USA, Chinas und Indiens von 2009–2018*. Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2021, 350 S.
- Sakai, Kazunari (Hg.): *Migration governance in Asia. A multi-level analysis*. London: Routledge, 2022, 201 S.
- Sharma, Anukrati; Azizul Hassan (Hgg.): *Future of tourism in Asia*. Singapur: Springer, 2021, 313 S.
- Shastri, Vasuki: *Has Asia lost it? Dynamic past, turbulent future*. Singapur: World Scientific, 2021, 332 S.
- Van der Veere, Anoma P. (Hg.): *Public health in Asia during the Covid-19 pandemic. Global governance, migrant labour, and international health crises*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2022, 272 S.
- Wang, Q. Edward; Michihiro Okamoto, Li Longguo (Hgg.): *Western historiography in Asia. Circulation, critique and comparison*. Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2022, 645 S.
- Wei, C.X. George (Hg.): *Asian culture, diplomacy and foreign relations. Vol. II. Individual nations and cases*. Leiden: Brill, 2022, 235 S.
- Westcott, Stephen P.: *Armed coexistence. The dynamics of the intractable Sino-Indian border dispute*. Singapur: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022, 301 S.
- Zaman, Mohammad; Reshmy Nair, Shi Guoqing (Hgg.): *Resettlement in Asian countries. Legislation, administration and struggles for rights*. London: Routledge, 2021, 294 S.

SÜDASIEN

- Acharya, Sanghmitra S.; Stephen Christopher (Hgg.): *Caste, Covid-19 and inequalities of care. Lessons from South Asia*. Singapur: Springer, 2022, 394 S.
- Ghosh, Partha S.: *India-South Asia interface. Religion, politics and the wider world*. London: Routledge, 2022, 232 S.
- Grare, Frederic: *The Indian Ocean as a new political and security region*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022, 232 S.
- Ibrahim, Farhana; Tanuja Kothiyal (Hgg.): *South Asian borderlands. Mobility, history, affect*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021, 286 S.
- Islam, Maidul: *Political theory and South Asian counter-narratives*. London: Routledge, 2021, 210 S.
- Khan, Shahruxh Rafi: *Economic successes in South Asia. A story of partnerships*. London: Routledge, 2022, 200 S.
- Mishra, Atul: *Sovereign lives of India and Pakistan. Post-partition statehood in South Asia*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2021, 261 S.
- Moolakkattu, John S.; Jos Chathukulam (Hgg.): *Challenges to local governance in the pandemic era. Perspectives from South Asia and beyond*. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2022, 354 S.

- Mukhopadhyay, Ujjaini (Hg.): *Internal migration within South Asia. Contemporary issues and challenges*. Singapur: Springer, 2022, 256 S.
- Rajan, S. Irudaya: *Tamil migrants. A demographic, social and economic analysis*. Hyderabad: Orient Blackswan, 2021, 312 S.
- Raju, Adluri Subramanyam (Hg.): *Bilateral and multilateral cooperation in South Asia*. London: Routledge, 2022, 195 S.
- Riaz, Ali (Hg.): *Religion and politics in South Asia*. London: Routledge, 2021, 222 S.
- Roy, Himanshu (Hg.): *Political thought in Indic civilization*. New Delhi: Sage, 2021, 314 S.
- Sahoo, Sarbeswar (Hg.): *Civil society and citizenship in India and Bangladesh*. New Delhi: Bloomsbury, 2021, 169 S.
- Sengupta, Nabanita (Hg.): *Understanding women's experiences of displacement. Literature, culture and society in South Asia*. London: Routledge, 2022, 220 S.
- Shamsi, Zia Ul Haque: *South Asia needs hybrid peace*. New York: Peter Lang, 2022, 96 S.
- Stylidis, Dimitrios (Hg.): *Tourism planning and development in South Asia*. Wallingford: Cabi Pubsihing, 2021, 159 S.
- Tripathi, Dhananjay (Hg.): *South Asia. Boundaries and beyond*. London: Routledge, 2022, 129 S.
- Uddin, Nasir (Hg.): *Rohingya crisis. Human rights issues, policy concerns and burden sharing*. New Delhi: Sage, 2022, 428 S.
- Widmalm, Sten (Hg.): *Routledge handbook of autocratization in South Asia*. London: Routledge, 2022, 378 S.

AFGHANISTAN

- Ali, Tariq: *The forty-year war in Afghanistan. A chronicle foretold*. London: Verso, 2021, 244 S.
- Giustozzi, Antonio: *The Taliban at war*. London: Hurst, 2022, 408 S.
- Jackson, Ashley: *Negotiating survival. Insurgent relations in Afghanistan*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2021, 271 S.
- Kilcullen, David; Greg Mills: *The ledger. Accounting for failure in Afghanistan*. London: Hurst, 2021, 368 S.
- Myrick, Nathaniel G. (Hg.): *Afghanistan. The pathway to peace*. New York: Nova Science, 2021, 345 S.
- Rashid, Ahmed: *Taliban. The power of militant islam in Afghanistan and beyond*. 3rd ed. London: I.B. Tauris, 2022, 323 S.

BANGLADESCH

- Anica, Fairuj; Muhammad Sayadur Rahman: *Development and decay of public administration in Bangladesh. A three generations study*. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2022, 130 S.
- Engelsen-Ruud, Arild (Hg.): *Masks of authoritarianism. Hegemony, power and public life in Bangladesh*. Singapur: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022, 250 S.
- Habibul, Khondker (Hg.): *The emergence of Bangladesh. Interdisciplinary perspectives*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022, 443 S.

Hassan, Azizul (Hg.): *Tourism in Bangladesh. Investment and development perspectives*. Singapur: Springer, 2021, 438 S.

INDIEN

Baloch, Bilal A.: *When ideas matter. Democracy and corruption in India*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021, 325 S.

Batra, Amita: *India's trade policy in the 21st century*. London: Routledge, 2022, 180 S.

Beitelmair-Berini, Bernhard: *India's grand strategy and foreign policy. Strategic pluralism and subcultures*. London: Routledge, 2021, 200 S.

Chakraborty, Bidyut: *Electoral dynamism of Indian politics. Deciphering the enigma*. New Delhi: Sage, 2021, 348 S.

Chakravarty, Prasanta: *Populism and its limits. After articulation*. New Delhi: Bloomsbury, 2021, 285 S.

Chandani, Arti (Hg.): *Achieving \$5 trillion economy of India*. Singapur: Springer, 2022, 382 S.

Chaudhuri, Rudra (Hg.): *War and peace in contemporary India*. London: Routledge, 2022, 164 S.

De, Indranil et al. (Hgg.): *Covid-19 pandemic, public policy, and institutions in India. Issues of labour, income, and human development*. London: Routledge, 2022, 224 S.

DeSouza, Peter Ronald; Mohd. Sanjeer Alam, Hilal Ahmed (Hgg.): *Companion to Indian democracy. Resilience, fragility, ambivalence*. London: Routledge, 2022, 307 S.

Diduck, Alan P. (Hg.): *Advancing environmental justice for marginalized communities in India. Progress, challenges and opportunities*. London: Routledge, 2021, 243 S.

Geetha, V.: *Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar and the question of socialism in India*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021, 341 S.

George, Irene (Hg.): *Gendered experiences of Covid-19 in India*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021, 370 S.

Goswami, Manu (Hg.): *Political imaginaries in twentieth-century India*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2022, 306 S.

Hooda, Shailender Kumar: *Health sector, state and decentralized institution in India*. London: Routledge, 2022, 253 S.

India Forum (Hg.): *India and the pandemic. The first year*. Hyderabad: Orient Blackswan, 2021, 335 S.

Jacob, Babu; Suraj Jacob: *Governing locally. Institutions, policies and implementation in Indian cities*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021, 293 S.

Jha, Sadan (Hg.): *Home belonging and memory in migration. Leaving and living*. London: Routledge, 2022, 296 S.

Joseph, Josy: *How to subvert a democracy. Inside India's deep state*. London: Hurst, 2022, 392 S.

Joshi, Vasant Chintaman; Lalitagauri Kulkarni: *The future of Indian banking*. Singapur: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022, 142 S.

Kapoor, Ria: *Making refugees in India*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022, 254 S.

- Karnam, Gayithri: *Public expenditure in India. Policies and development outcomes*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022, 336 S.
- Kim, Chanwahn; Misu Kim (Hgg.): *Great transition in Indian society. Religion, economy and foreign policy*. Singapur: World Scientific, 2022, 263 S.
- Kumar, Pramod: *The idea of new India. Essays in defence of critical thought*. London: Routledge, 2021, 388 S.
- Kumar, Sanjay: *Elections in India. An overview*. London: Routledge, 2022, 227 S.
- Kundu, Abijit; Nupurnima Yadav: *Sociology of India*. New Delhi: Sage, 2021, 348 S.
- Mallick, Krishna: *Environmental movements of India. Chipko, Narmada Bachao Andolan, Navdanya*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2021, 190 S.
- Menon, Nikhil: *Planning democracy. Modern India's quest for development*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022, 276 S.
- Misra, Girishwar (Hg.): *Psychology in modern India. Historical, methodological, and future perspectives*. Cham: Springer, 2021, 534 S.
- Mitra, Subrata Kumar: *Governance by stealth. The Ministry of Home Affairs and the making of the Indian state*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2021, 476 S.
- Mitra, Subrata K.; Markus Pauli, Jivanta Schöttli: *India. Statecraft and foreign policy*. Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2021, ca. 300 S.
- Narang, Harpreet Kaur: *Food insecurity in India's agricultural heartland. The economics of hunger in Punjab*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022, 304 S.
- Newman, Alexander: *Entrepreneurship in India*. London: Routledge, 2021, 187 S.
- Pai, Sudha (Hg.): *Constitutional and democratic institutions in India. A critical analysis*. Hyderabad: Orient Blackswan, 2020, 490 S.
- Patra, Swati: *Adolescence in India. Issues, challenges and possibilities*. Singapur: Springer, 2022, 473 S.
- Pradhan, Prasanta Kumar: *India and the Arab unrest. Challenges, dilemmas and engagements*. London: Routledge, 2022, 179 S.
- Qadeer, Imrana (Hg.): *Universalising healthcare in India. From care to coverage*. Singapur: Springer, 2021, 401 S.
- Raj, Rajesh S. N.; Komol Singha (Hgg.): *Routledge handbook of post-reform Indian economy*. London: Routledge, 2022, 562 S.
- Rajadhyaksha, Ashish: *Hunger of the republic. Our present in retrospect*. New Delhi: Tulika Books, 2021, 404 S.
- Rajasekhar, D.; R. Manjula, M. Devendra Babu (Hgg.): *Decentralisation in contemporary India. Status, issues and the way forward*. London: Routledge, 2022, 258 S.
- Roy, Tirthankar: *Moonsoon economies. India's history in a changing climate*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2022, 230 S.
- Sabharwal, Sharat: *India's Pakistan conundrum. Managing a complex relationship*. London: Routledge, 2022, 228 S.
- Sagar, Rahul: *To raise a fallen people. The nineteenth-century origins of Indian views on international politics*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2022, 289 S.
- Sethi, Manisha (Hg.): *Communities and courts. Religion and law in modern India*. London: Routledge, 2022, 141 S.

- Shah, Alpa: *Nightmarch. Among the guerrillas of India's revolutionary movement*. London: Hurst, 2021, 342 S.
- Shastri, Sandeep; Ashutosh Kumar, Yatindra Singh Sisodia (Hgg.): *Electoral dynamics in the states of India*. London: Routledge, 2022, 391 S.
- Singh, Gurhpal; Giorgio Shani: *Sikh nationalism. From a dominant minority to an ethno-religious diaspora*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021, 250 S.
- Sitapati, Vinay: *India before Modi. How the BJP came to power*. London: Hurst, 2021, 409 S.
- Sridharan, E. (Hg.): *Eastward ho? India's relations with the Indo-Pacific*. Hyderabad: Orient Blackswan, 2021, 487 S.
- Subrata, Sah (Hg.): *Economic and societal transformation in pandemic trapped India*. Singapur: Springer, 2022, 490 S.
- Tanabe, Akio: *Caste and inequality in India. A historical anthropology of diverse society and vernacular democracy*. London: Routledge, 2022, 321 S.
- Thakur, Baleshwar et al. (Hgg.): *Resource management, sustainable development and governance. Indian and international perspectives*. Cham: Springer, 2022, 605 S.
- Tharoor, Shashi: *The struggle for India's soul. Nationalism and the fate of democracy*. London: Hurst, 2021, 375 S.
- Vesvikar, Meghna (Hg.): *Case studies from social science research in India*. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2022, 205 S.
- Zainal, Humairah: *Primordial modernity of Malay nationality. Contemporary identity in Malaysia and Singapore*. London: Routledge, 2022, 188 S.

MALEDIVEN

- Zahir, Azim: *Islam and democracy in the Maldives. Interrogating reformist islam's role in politics*. London: Routledge, 2022, 197 S.

PAKISTAN

- Amin, Shahid M.: *Pakistan's foreign policy. A reappraisal*. 3rd ed. Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2021, 296 S.
- Brasher, Ryan (Hg.): *The politics of ethnicity and federalism in Pakistan. Local, national, and comparative perspectives*. Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2022, 222 S.
- Hasan, Masuma: *Pakistan in an age of turbulence*. Barnsley: Pen & Sword, 2022, 262 S.
- Hussain, Zahid: *No-win war. The paradox of US-Pakistan relations in Afghanistan's shadow*. Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2021, 355 S.
- Rahman, Taimur: *The class structure of Pakistan*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022, 328 S.
- Sajjad-Akhtar, Asim: *The struggle for hegemony in Pakistan. Fear, desire and revolutionary horizons*. London: Pluto, 2022, 176 S.
- Waseem, Mohammad: *Political conflict in Pakistan*. London: Hurst, 2022, 576 S.

SRI LANKA

- Chattoraj, Diotima: *Displacement among Sri Lankan Tamil migrants. The diasporic search for home in the aftermath of war*. Singapur: Springer, 2022, 180 S.

- Jayasundara-Smiths, Shyamika: *An uneasy hegemony. Politics of state-building and struggles for justice in Sri Lanka*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,
- Peiris, Pradeep: *Catch-all parties and party-voter nexus in Sri Lanka*. Singapur: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022, 268 S.
- Whitaker, Mark P.; Darini Rajasingham-Senanayake, Pathmanesan Sanmugeswaran (Hgg.): *Multi-religiosity in contemporary Sri Lanka. Innovation, shared spaces, contestations*. London: Routledge, 2021, 267 S.

SÜDOSTASIEN

- Aljunied, Syed Muhammad Khairudin (Hg.): *Routledge handbook of Islam in Southeast Asia*. London: Routledge, 2022, 436 S.
- Aspinall, Edward et al. (Hgg.): *Mobilizing for elections. Patronage and political machines in Southeast Asia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022
- Aun Lee Hwok (Hg.): *Inequality and exclusion in Southeast Asia. Old fractures, new frontiers*. Singapur: ISEAS, 2021, 344 S.
- De Rugy, Marie: *Imperial borderlands. Maps and territory building in the Northern Indochinese peninsula (1885–1914)*. Leiden: Brill, 2022, 324 S.
- Feraru, Atena Stefania: *Weak states, vulnerable governments, and regional cooperation. An ASEAN case study*. London: Routledge, 2022, 222 S.
- Mahanty, Sango: *Unsettled frontiers. Market formation in the Cambodia-Vietnam borderlands*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2022, 198 S.
- Mardiah, Andri N.R. (Hg.): *Post-disaster governance in Southeast Asia. Response, recovery, and resilient societies*. Singapur: Springer, 2022, 307 S.
- Molland, Sverre: *Safe migration and the politics of brokered safety in Southeast Asia*. London: Routledge, 2022, 219 S.
- Parameswaran, Prashanth: *Elusive balances. Shaping U.S.-Southeast Asia strategy*. Singapur: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022, 211 S.
- Ratten, Vanessa (Hg.): *Driving entrepreneurship in Southeast Asia*. London: Routledge, 2022, X, 122 S.
- Wisaijorn, Thanachate: *Riverine border practices. People's everyday lives on the Thai-Lao-Mekong border*. Singapur: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022, 204 S.

INDONESIEN

- Formichi, Chiara (Hg.): *Religious pluralism in Indonesia. Threats and opportunities for democracy*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2021, 261 S.
- Hiariej, Eric; Christian Stokke (Hg.): *The politics of citizenship in Indonesia*. Singapur: Springer, 2022, 290 S.
- Hutchinson, Francis E. (Hg.): *The Riau Islands. Setting sail*. Singapur: ISEAS, 2021, 466 S.
- Prugl, Elisabeth (Hg.): *Gender in peacebuilding. Local practices in Indonesia and Nigeria*. Leiden: Brill Nijhoff, 2022, 186 S.
- Suryana, A'an; Nur Syafiqah Mohd Taufek: *The serious social impact of non-violent extremism in Indonesia*. Singapur: ISEAS, 2021, 65 S. (Trends in Southeast Asia; 21: *From colonization to nation-state. The political demography of Indonesia*. Singapur: Springer, 2021, 253 S.

Toha, Risa J.: *Rioting for representation. Local ethnic mobilization in democratizing countries*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022, 309 S.

KAMBODSCHA

Bratrop, Paul R. (Hg.): *Cambodian genocide. The essential reference guide*. Santa Barbara: ABC-Clio, 2022, 232 S.

Fossati, Diego: *Unity through division. Political islam, representation and democracy in Indonesia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022

LAOS

Kittikhoun, Alounkeo: *Small countries, big diplomacy. Laos in the UN, ASEAN and MRC*. London: Routledge, 2022, 141 S.

Wilcox, Phill: *Heritage and the making of political legitimacy in Laos. The past and present of the Lao nation*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2021, 190 S.

MALAYSIA

Lim, Wen Marc: *Covid-19, business, and economy in Malaysia. Retrospective and prospective perspectives*. London: Routledge, 2022, 159 S.

Rasiah, Rajah; Kamal Salih, Cheong Kee Cheok (Hgg.): *Malaysia's leap into the future. The building blocks towards balanced development*. Singapur: Springer, 2021, 361 S.

Samah, Mohd Armi Abu; Mohd Khairul Amri Kamarudin (Hgg.): *Environmental management and sustainable development. Case studies and solutions from Malaysia*. Cham: Springer, 2022, 137 S.

Welsh, Bridget; Vilashini Somiah, Benjamin Y.H. Loh (Hgg.): *Irregular migrants and the sea at the borders of Sabah, Malaysia Pelagic alliance*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021, 174 S.

MYANMAR

Bulbul, Kudret (Hg.): *Rohingya refugee crisis in Myanmar. Ethnic conflict and resolution*. Singapur: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022, 424 S.

Jordt, Ingrid: *How generation Z galvanized a revolutionary movement against Myanmar's 2021 military coup*. Singapur: ISEAS, 2021, 33 S. (Trends in Southeast Asia; 21:7)

MacLean, Ken: *Crimes in archival form. Human rights, fact production, and Myanmar*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2022, 300 S.

Nishikawa, Yukiko: *International norms and local politics in Myanmar*. London: Routledge, 2022, 171 S.

Schmidt-Leukel, Perry (Hg.): *Ethnic and religious diversity in Myanmar. Contested identities*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2022, 298 S.

Steinberg, David I.: *The military in Burma/Myanmar. On the longevity of Tatmadaw rule and influence*. Singapur: ISEAS, 2021, 37 S. (Trends in Southeast Asia; 21: Demystifying Myanmar's transition and political crisis. Singapur: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022, 352 S.

OSTTIMOR

Khoo Ying Hooi (Hg.): *Rethinking human rights and peace in post-independence Timor-Leste through local perspectives*. Singapur: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022, 138 S.

PHILIPPINEN

Rafael, Vicente L.: *The sovereign trickster. Death and laughter in the age of Duterte*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2021, 173 S.

Webb, Adele: *Chasing freedom. The Philippines' long journey to democratic ambivalence*. Eastbourne: Sussex Academic Press, 2022, 238 S.

SINGAPUR

Da Cunha, Derek: *Breakthrough 2.0. Singaporeans push for parliamentary democracy*. Singapur: World Scientific, 2022, 361 S.

Kwa Chong Guan (Hg.): *1819 & before. Singapore pasts*. Singapur: ISEAS, 2021, 127 S.

Tan, Andrew; Angee Neo: *Covid-19 chronicles. Singapore's journey from pandemia to peri-pandemic limbo*. Singapur: World Scientific, 2022, 197 S.

THAILAND

Connors, Michael Kelly (Hg.): *Thai politics in translation. Monarchy, democracy and the supra-constitution*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2021, 248 S.

De Vienne, Marie-Sybille: *Thailand's buddhist kingship in the 20th and 21st centuries. Power, influence and rites*. London: Routledge, 2022, 278 S.

Jackson, Peter A.: *Capitalism magic Thailand. Global modernity and the making of enchantment*. Singapur: ISEAS, 2022, 381 S.

Subrahmanyam, Arjun: *Amnesia. A history of democratic idealism in modern Thailand*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2021, 195 S.

VIETNAM

Bui, Huong T.: *Vietnam tourism. Policies and practices*. Wallingford: Cabi, 2022, 215 S.

Gillen, Jamie: *Vietnam at the vanguard. New perspectives across time, space, and community*. Singapur: Springer, 2021, 263 S.

Lincoln, Martha: *Epidemic politics in contemporary Vietnam. Public health and the state*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2022, 220 S.

Morris-Jung, Jason: *Unearthing politics. Environment and contestation in post-socialist Vietnam*. Singapur: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021, 254 S.

Nguyen Dien An Luong: *The growing salience of online Vietnamese nationalism*. Singapur: ISEAS, 2021, 41 S.

Tran Nu-Anh: *Disunion. Anticommunist nationalism and the making of the Republic of Vietnam*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2022, 240 S.

Veith, George: *Drawn swords in a distant land. South Vietnam's shattered dream*. San Francisco: Encounter Books, 2021, 632 S.

Vu, Anna (Hg.): *Vietnamese diaspora in a transnational context. Contested spaces, contested narratives*. Leiden: Brill, 2022, 204 S.

OSTASIEN

- Ari, Tayyar: *Inter-state and intra-state conflict in global politics from Eurasia to China*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2022, 336 S.
- Bossuyt, Fabienne (Hg.): *European Union, China and Central Asia. Global and regional cooperation in a new era*. London: Routledge, 2022, 293 S.
- Carothers, Christopher: *Corruption control in authoritarian regimes. Lessons from East Asia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022, 293 S.
- Chung, Eunbin: *Pride, not prejudice. National identity as a pacifying force in East Asia*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2022, 313 S.
- Doner, Richard F.; Gregory W. Noble, John Ravenhill: *The political economy of automotive industrialization in East Asia*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022, 384 S.
- Fukunari, Kimura: *Handbook on East Asian economic integration*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2021, 496 S.
- Hattori, Ryuji: *China-Japan rapprochement and the United States. In the wake of Nixon's visit to China*. London: Routledge, 2021, 154 S.
- Huang Xiaoming: *Political order in modern East Asian states*. London: Routledge, 2022, 212 S.
- Jones, Catherine (Hg.): *East Asia, peacekeeping operations, and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief*. London: Routledge, 2022, 114 S.
- Kidd, Sophia: *Culture paves the new silk roads*. Singapur: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022, 238 S.
- Kwon Huck-Jo (Hg.): *International development cooperation of Japan and South Korea. New strategies for an uncertain world*. Singapur: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022, 334 S.
- Lim Tai-Wie: *East Asian entrepreneurs. A study of state role, education and mindsets*. Singapur: World Scientific, 2022, 187 S.
- Liow, Joseph Chinyong; Hong Liu, Gong Xue (Hgg.): *Research handbook on the Belt and Road Initiative*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2021, 488 S.
- Noesselt, Nele (Hg.): *Visualized narratives. Signs, symbols and political mythology in East Asia, Europe and the US*. Baden-Baden: Tectum, 2021, 206 S.
- Oh, Ingyu (Hg.): *East Asia in transition. Democracy, diaspora, and the new culture war*. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2021, 185 S.
- Pakhomov, Oleg: *The political culture of East Asia. A civilization of total power*. Singapur: Springer, 2022, 129 S.
- Richardson, Eric N.: *The art of getting more back in diplomacy. Negotiation lessons from North Korea, China, Libya, and the United Nations*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2021, 189 S.
- Rok Kwon-Kyung: *Confucian sentimental representation. A new approach to Confucian democracy*. London: Routledge, 2022, 128 S.
- Tanaka, Hitoshi (Hg.): *Historical narratives of East Asia in the 21st century. Overcoming the politics of national identity*. London: Routledge, 2021, 224 S.
- Taylor, Jeremy E. (Hg.): *Chineseness and the Cold War. Contested cultures and diaspora in Southeast Asia and Hong Kong*. London: Routledge, 2022, 206 S.

Tiberghien, Yves: *The East Asian Covid-19 paradox*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021, 85 S.

Winter, Tim: *The Silk Road. Connecting histories and futures*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2022, 260 S.

JAPAN

Akimoto, Daisuke: *Japanese prime ministers and their peace philosophy. 1945 to the present*. Singapur: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022, 456 S.

Botsman, D.V. (Hg.): *Commemorating Meiji. history, politics and the politics of history*. London: Routledge, 2022, 116 S.

Dadabaev, Timur (Hg.): *The grass is always greener? Unpacking Uzbek migration to Japan*. Singapur: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022, 209 S.

Foret, Francois (Hg.): *Value politics in Japan and Europe*. London: Routledge, 2022, 187 S.

Frühstück, Sabine: *Gender and sexuality in modern Japan*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022, 280 S.

Fujishige, Hiromi Nagata: *Japan's peacekeeping at a crossroads. Taking a robust stance or remaining hesitant?* Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022, 236 S.

Green, Michael J.: *Line of advantage. Japan's grand strategy in the era of Abe Shinzo*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2022, 311 S.

Hattori, Ryuji: *Japan at war and peace. Sidehara Kijuro and the making of modern diplomacy*. Canberra: Australian National University Press, 2021, 362 S.

Inoguchi, Takashi: *Japan's international relations at the crossroads. Wars, globalization and Japanese theorizings in the extended twentieth century*. New York: Peter Lang, 2021, 270 S.

Kawaguchi, Hiroshi: *A history of economic thought in Japan, 1600–1945*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2022, 263 S.

Kingston, Jeff: *Japan in transformation, 1945–2020*. London: Routledge, 2021, 226 S.

Kumagai, Fumie: *Shrinking Japan and regional variations. Along the Hokurikudo and the Tosando-I*. Singapur: Springer, 2021, 94 S.

Kumagai, Fumie: *Shrinking Japan and regional variations. Along the Hokurikudo and the Tosando II*. Singapur: Springer, 2021, 103 S.

Maslow, Sebastian (Hg.): *Crisis narratives, institutional change, and the transformation of the Japanese state*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2021, 328 S.

Mayer, John C. (Hg.): *Language communities in Japan*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022, 272 S.

Nagatomi, Kazuaki: *Operation of the Japanese electoral system since 1994*. Singapur: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021, 279 S.

Nakajima, Tamie (Hg.): *Overcoming environmental risks to achieve sustainable development goals. Lessons from the Japanese experience*. Singapur: Springer, 2022, 176 S.

Nichaus, Andreas (Hg.): *Challenging Olympic narratives. Japan, the Olympic Games and Tokyo 2020/21*. Baden-Baden: Ergon Verlag, 2021, 305 S.

Pekkanen, Robert J. (Hg.): *The Oxford handbook of Japanese politics*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2022, 984 S.

- Prough, Jennifer S.: *Kyoto revisited. Heritage tourism in contemporary Japan*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2022, 277 S.
- Sommet, Moritz: *Mediale Interferenzen. Literatur und Popmusik in Japan (1955–2005)*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2021, 464 S.
- Tanigaki, Mariko: *Japan and Asia. Business, political and cultural interactions*. Singapur: Springer, 2022, 298 S.
- Thornton, Michael Alan: *Mito and the politics of reform in early modern Japan*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2021, 249 S.

KOREA

- Casarini, Nicola et al. (Hgg.): *The Routledge handbook of Europe-Korea relations*. London: Routledge, 2022, 457 S.
- Kim Dong Jin; David Mitchell (Hgg.): *Reconciling divided states. Peace progresses in Ireland and Korea*. London: Routledge, 2022, 203 S.
- Lee Eun-Jeung: *Korea und der Konfuzianismus*. Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2022, 192 S.
- Park, Eugene Y.: *Korea. A history*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2022, 414 S.

NORDKOREA

- King, Robert R. (Hg.): *The North Korean conundrum. Balancing human rights and nuclear security*. Stanford: Walter H. Shorenstein Asia-Pacific Research Center, 2021, 238 S.
- Shin, HaeRan (Hg.): *North Korean defectors in diaspora. Identities, mobilities, and resettlements*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2022, 241 S.

SÜDKOREA

- Chang Kyong-Sop: *Transformative citizenship in South Korea. Politics of transformative contributory rights*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022, 287 S.
- Cicchelli, Vincenzo: *The sociology of Hallyu-pop culture. Surfing the Korean wave*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021, 356 S.
- Kim Kyung Hyun: *Hegemonic mimicry. Korean popular culture of the 21st century*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2021, 303 S.
- Lee Yoonkyung: *Between the streets and the assembly. Social movements, political parties, and democracy in Korea*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2022, 277 S.
- Pak Chae-Chang: *Covid-19, familism, and South Korean governance*. London: Routledge, 2022, 64 S.
- Woo Jaejoon: *Confronting South Korea's next crisis. Structural rigidities, social polarization, and fear of Japanification*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022, 704 S.

CHINA

- Barish, Daniel: *Learning to rule. Court education and the remaking of the Qing state, 1861–1912*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2022, 257 S.
- Breslin, Shaun (Hg.): *China debates its global role. Chinese scholars on Chinese scholarship*. London: Routledge, 2022, 230 S.
- BRI International Green Development (Hg.): *The Belt and Road Initiative Green Development case studies report 2020*. Singapur: Springer, 2022, 112 S.

- Chun Lin: *Revolution and counterrevolution in China. The paradoxes of Chinese struggle*. London: Verso, 2021, 352 S.
- Clarke, Michael (Hg.): *The Xinjiang emergency. Exploring the causes and consequences of China's mass detention of Uyghurs*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2022, 364 S.
- Clifford, Mark L.: *Today Hong Kong, tomorrow the world. What China's crackdown reveals about its plans to end freedom everywhere*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2022, 306 S.
- Elleman, Bruce A.: *Taiwan Straits standoff. 70 years of PRC-Taiwan cross-strait tensions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021, 173 S.
- Guo Qitao: *Huizhou. Local identity and mercantile lineage culture in Ming China*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2022, 251 S.
- Hinsch, Bret: *Women in Qing China*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2022, 195 S.
- Höllmann, Thomas O.: *China und die Seidenstrasse. Kultur und Geschichte von der frühen Kaiserzeit bis zur Gegenwart*. München: C.H. Beck, 2022, 528 S.
- Hua Shiping (Hg.): *Paradigm shifts in Chinese studies*. Singapur: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022, 309 S.
- Lauer, Uta: *Leaves unfurl. The iconography of the banana plant in Chinese art*. Beijing: China Academy of Art Publishing House, 2022, 552 S.
- Ma Guang: *Rupture, evolution, and continuity. The Shandong peninsula in East Asian maritime history during the Yuan-Ming transition*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2021, X, 304 S.
- Millwar, James A.: *Eurasian crossroads. A history of Xinjiang, revised and updated*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2022, 494 S.
- Rhoads, Edward J. M.: *War and revolution in South China. The story of a transnational biracial family, 1936–1951*. Hongkong: Hongkong University Press, 2022, 232 S.
- Sabattini, Elisa Levi (Hg.): *Between command and market. Economic thought and practice in early China*. Leiden: Brill, 2022, 407 S.
- Shih Chih-Yu: *Eros of international relations. Self-feminizing and the claiming of postcolonial Chineseness*. Hongkong: Hongkong University Press, 2022, 140 S.
- Siebert, Martina (Hg.): *Making the palace machine work. Mobilizing people, objects, and natura in the Qing empire*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2021, 333 S.
- Stone Fish, Isaac: *America second. How America's elites are making China stronger*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2022, 276 S.
- Wassermann, Jeffrey N.: *The Oxford handbook of modern China*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022, 512 S.
- Yang, Mayfair (Hg.): *Chinese environmental ethics. Religions, ontologies, and practices*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2021, 270 S.
- Zani, Beatrice: *Women migrants in Southern China and Taiwan. Mobilities, digital economies and emotions*. London: Routledge, 2022, 224 S.
- Zhou Jianbo: *The westernization movement and early thought of modernization in China. Pragmatism and changes in society, 1860s -1900s*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022, 388 S.

HONGKONG

- Carrico, Kevin: *Two systems, two countries. A nationalist guide to Hong Kong*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2022, 234 S.
- Hung Ho-fung: *City on the edge. Hong Kong under Chinese rule*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022, 300 S.
- Liu Pak-Wai, Kit-Chun Joanna Lam: *Mainland Chinese migrants in Hong Kong. How well do they fare?* Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2022, 259 S.
- Wen Liu: *Reorienting Hong Kong's resistance. Leftism, decoloniality, and internationalism*. Singapur: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022, 283 S.
- Wong Man-Kong (Hg.): *Hong Kong history. Themes in global perspective*. Singapur: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022, 284 S.

TAIWAN

- Barss, Edward J.: *Chinese election interference in Taiwan*. London: Routledge, 2022, 269 S.
- Chow, Peter C.Y. (Hg.): *A century of development in Taiwan. From colony to modern state*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2022, 376 S.
- Lim Song Hwee: *Taiwan cinema as soft power. Authorship, transnationality, historiography*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022, 256 S.

VR CHINA

- Abels, Sigrun; Tania Becker, Philipp Mahltig (Hgg.): *Mobilität in China*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2021, ca. 220 S. (Jahrbuch der Deutschen Vereinigung für Chinastudien; 15)
- Ba Shusong: *The new cycle and new finance in China*. Singapur: Springer, 2022, 374 S.
- Bao Jigang (Hg.): *Hospitality and tourism education in China. Development, issues, and challenges*. London: Routledge, 2022, 231 S.
- Barnett, Ross (Hg.): *Smoking environments in China. Challenges for tobacco control*. Cham: Springer, 2021, 353 S.
- Belcher, Marc: *Class and the Communist Party of China, 1978–2021. Reform and market socialism*. London: Routledge, 2022, 215 S.
- Birtles, Bill: *The truth about China. Propaganda, patriotism and the search for answers*. Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 2021, 310 S.
- Blanchette, Jude: *China's new red guards. The return of radicalism and the rebirth of Mao Zedong*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022, 224 S.
- Blanke, Anja: *Der Kampf um Chinas kollektives Gedächtnis. Offizielle und inoffizielle Narrative zur Kampagne gegen Rechtsabweichler (1957–58)*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2021, XI, 321 S.
- Brown, Robert E. (Hg.): *Global foundations of public relations. Humanism, China and the West*. London: Routledge, 2021, 288 S.
- Bunkenborg, Mikkel: *Collaborative damage. An experimental ethnography of Chinese globalization*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2022, 294 S.
- Byler, Darren; Ivan Franceschini, Nicholas Loubere (Hgg.): *Xinjiang year zero*. Acton: Australian National University Press, 2022, XIII, 324 S. (ISBN: 9781760464943)

- Bytceyi, Enver: *In the shadows of Albania-China relations (1960–1978)*. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2022, 241 S.
- Cai Cuihong: *Cyber politics in US-China relations*. Singapur: World Scientific, 2021, 396 S.
- Cai, Kevin G.: *China's foreign policy since 1949. Continuity and change*. London: Routledge, 2022, 252 S.
- Chang Kyung-Sup (Hg.): *Developmental citizenship in China. Economic reform, social governance, and Chinese postsocialism*. London: Routledge, 2022, 115 S.
- Chen Shuhan: *Chinese social media. Face, sociality and civility*. Bingley: Emerald Group, 2021, 153 S.
- Chen Xinren: *Exploring identity work in Chinese communication*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2022, 249 S.
- Cheshmehzangi, Ali (Hg.): *Green infrastructure in Chinese cities*. Singapur: Springer, 2022, 514 S.
- Cho, Lily: *Mass capture. Chinese head tax and the making of non-citizens*. Montreal: McGill Queens University Press, 2021, 244 S.
- Cissé, Daouda: *China in Africa. From macro-level engagements to grassroots interactions*. Washington, D.C.: Academia Press, 2021, 307 S.
- Clements, Jonathan: *A short history of Beijing*. Rev ed. London: Haus, 2022, 208 S.
- Colakoglu, Selcuk: *Turkey and China. Political, economic, and strategic aspects of the relationship*. London: World Scientific, 2021, 165 S.
- Donnet, Pierre-Antoine: *World leadership in the balance. China and the US clash for supremacy*. Singapur: World Scientific, 2021, 208 S.
- Dossani, Rafiq: *Implementing China's grand strategy in Asia through institutions. An exploratory analysis*. Santa Monica: RAND corporation, 2021, 52 S.
- Economy, Elizabeth C.: *The world according to China*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2022, 292 S.
- Faligot, Roger: *Chinese spies. From Chairman Mao to Xi Jinping*. (updated paper ed.) London: Hurst, 2022, 538 S.
- Ferguson, R.J.: *Greening China's new silk roads. The sustainable governance of Belt and Road*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2021, 360 S.
- Frank, Johann; Doris Vogl (Hgg.): *China's footprint in strategic spaces of the European Union. New challenges for a multi-dimensional EU-China strategy*. Vienna: National Defence Academy, 2021, 327 S.
- Fulton, Jonathan: *Handbook on China-Middle East relations*. London: Routledge, 2022, 415 S.
- Gao Qian: *History and memory in the marketplace. Cultural representations of mid-20th century China*. New York: Peter Lang, 2022, 126 S.
- Gao Ruiquan; Wu Guanjun (Hgg.): *Chinese social sciences and humanities studies. Collection of important topics*. Singapur: World Scientific, 2022, 299 S.
- Geinitz, Christian: *Chinas Griff nach dem Westen. Wie sich Peking in unsere Wirtschaft einkauft*. München: C.H. Beck, 2022, 208 S.

- Gueorguiev, Dimitar D.: *Retrofitting Leninism. Participation without democracy in China*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2021, 237 S.
- Guo Zhonghua: *Routledge handbook of Chinese citizenship*. London: Routledge, 2022, 516 S.
- Gürol, Julia: *EU-China security paradox. Cooperation against all odds?* Bristol: Bristol University Press, 2022, 209 S.
- Haitiwaji, Gulbahar; Rozenn Morgat: *Wie ich das chinesische Lager überlebt habe. Der erste Bericht einer Uigurin*. Berlin: Aufbau, 2022, 259 S.
- He Baogang (Hg.): *China and human rights in North Korea. Debating a 'developmental approach' in Northeast Asia*. London: Routledge, 2021, 190 S.
- He Xuefeng (Hg.): *Northern and Southern China. Regional differences in rural areas*. London: Routledge, 2022, 288 S.
- Herman, Rebecca: *Influence and escalation. Implications of Russian and Chinese influence operations for crisis*. Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2021, 72 S.
- Hong Yinxing: *Theoretical study on China's political economy*. Singapur: World Scientific, 2022, 394 S.
- Huang, Mab: *Intellectuals, utopian dreams, and the quest of human rights in China*. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2022, 304 S.
- Hui Jiang: Xin Xiangyang, Gong Yun (Hgg.): *China's fight against the Covid-19 epidemic. Its international contribution and significance in the eyes of the world*. Reading: Paths International, 2021, 304 S.
- Huang Qihai (Hg.): *Entrepreneurship in China*. London: Routledge, 2022, 117 S.
- Ilham, Jewher: *Because I have to. The path to survival, the Uyghur struggle*. New Orleans: University of New Orleans Press, 2021, 250 S.
- Ji Min: *Chinese foundations and grassroots social organizations. Characteristics and interactions*. Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2021, 241 S.
- Jones, Lee; Shahar Hameiri: *Fractured China. How state transformation is shaping China's rise*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021, 299 S.
- Kaufman, Lena: *Rural-urban migration and agro-technological change in post-reform China*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2021, 306 S.
- Khan, Samra Sarfra: *Sino-Russian policies in the center and periphery. A comparative analysis*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2022, 269 S.
- Kinzelbach, Wolfgang: *Groundwater overexploitation in the North China plain. A path to sustainability*. Singapur: Springer, 2022, 157 S.
- Krusche, Jan: *Die chinesischen Gebietsansprüche im Südchinesischen Meer*. Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2022, 108 S.
- Levy, Katja; Annette Zimmer, Ma Qingyu (Hgg.): *Still a century of corporatism? Models of state-society cooperation in China and Germany*. Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2021, 185 S.
- Li Anshan: *China and Africa in global context. Encounters, policy, cooperation and migration*. London: Routledge, 2022, 534 S.
- Li Hak Yin: *China's new world order. Changes in the non-intervention policy*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2021, 288 S.

- Li, Mimi; Xinran Lehto (Hgg.): *Family, children, and tourism in China*. London: Routledge, 2022, 161 S.
- Li Peilin: *Life expectations of the people. A comparative sociological analysis of China and Russia*. Singapur: Springer, 2021, 303 S.
- Li Shaomin: *The rise of China, Inc. How the Chinese Communist Party transformed China into a giant corporation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021, 225 S.
- Liu Huawen: *China's path of human rights development*. Singapur: Springer, 2022, 229 S.
- Liu Yihong: *Crisis rhetoric and policy change in China*. Singapur: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022, 253 S.
- Lu Yanbin: *Evaluation on government transparency index in China (2009–2016)*. Singapur: Springer, 2022, 211 S.
- Luo Jian Ming: *Cultural tourism and Cantonese opera*. London: Routledge, 2022, 108 S.
- Ma Xinxin: *Public medical insurance reforms in China*. Singapur: Springer, 2022, 246 S.
- Margolies, David; Cao Qing (Hgg.): *Utopia and modernity in China. Contradictions in transition*. London: Pluto, 2022, 157 S.
- Mattheis, Philipp: *Ein Volk verschwindet. Wie wir China beim Völkermord an den Uiguren zuschauen*. Berlin: Ch. Links Verlag, 2022, 207 S.
- Meijer, Hugo: *Awakening to China's rise. European foreign and security policies toward the People's Republic of China*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022, 304 S.
- Meng Xie: *Internationalizing the social sciences in China. The disciplinary development of sociology at Tsinghua University*. Singapur: Springer, 2022, 220 S.
- Murphy, Dawn C.: *China's rise in the global South. The Middle East, Africa, and Beijing's alternative world order*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2022, 392 S.
- Nee, Au Yong-Hui (Hg.): *China's Belt and Road Initiative. Going global and transformation in the global arena*. Singapur: World Scientific, 2022, 330 S.
- Pan Chengxin: *China's rise and rethinking international relations theory*. Bristol: Bristol University Press, 2022, 253 S.
- Plummer, Franziska: *Rethinking authority in China's border regime. Regulating the irregular*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2022, 317 S.
- Qiaoan Runya: *Civil society in China. How society speaks to the state*. London: Routledge, 2021, 148 S.
- Ratigan, Kerry: *Local politics and social policy in China. Let some get healthy first*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022, 200 S.
- Roquet, Paul: *The immersive enclosure. Virtual reality in Japan*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2022, 254 S.
- Rossabi, Morris: *China and the Uyghurs. A concise introduction*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2022, 164 S.
- Rühlig, Tim Nicholas: *China's foreign policy contradictions. Lessons from China's R2P, Hong Kong, and WTO policy*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2022, 265 S.
- Simon, Hermann: *Hidden Champions. Die neuen Spielregeln im chinesischen Jahrhundert*. Frankfurt: Campus, 2021, 280 S.
- Spakowski, Nicola: *China seit 1978. Politik, Wirtschaft, Gesellschaft*. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2022, 185 S.

- Stroup, David R.: *Pure and true. The everyday politics of ethnicity for China's Hui muslims*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2022, 245 S.
- Sullivan, Lawrence R.: *Historical dictionary of the Chinese Communist Party*. 2nd ed. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2022, 555 S.
- Sun Yixian: *Certifying China. The rise and limits of transnational sustainability governance in emerging economies*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2022, 276 S.
- Temiz, Kadir: *Chinese foreign policy toward the Middle East*. London: Routledge, 2021, 210 S.
- Wang Huiyao (Hg.): *China and the world in changing context. Perspectives from ambassadors to China*. Cham: Springer, 2022, 222 S.
- Wang Jinnan (Hg.): *Environmental policy and reform in China*. Singapur: Springer, 2022, 401 S.
- Wang Jinnan (Hg.): *Environmental strategy and planning in China*. Singapur: Springer, 2022, 251 S.
- Wei, C.X. George (Hg.): *Asian culture, diplomacy and foreign relations. Vol. I. China*. Leiden: Brill, 2022, 301 S.
- Xing Yuqing: *Decoding China's export miracle. A global value chain analysis*. Singapur: World Scientific, 2021, 216 S.
- Xu Bin: *Chairman Mao's children. Generation and the politics of memory in China*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021, 274 S.
- Yang Guobin: *The Wuhan lockdown*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2022, 305 S.
- Yu Keping (Hg.): *Chinese perspectives on global governance and China*. Leiden: Brill, 2021, 261 S.
- Yu Maojie: *China's miracle in foreign trade*. Singapur: Springer, 2022, 308 S.
- Yuan Yiming: *Studies on China's special economic zones 4*. Singapur: Springer, 2021, 240 S.
- Zhang Chi (Hg.): *Human security in China. A post-pandemic state*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022, 200 S.
- Zhang Juwei (Hg.): *Chinese research perspectives on population and labor, vol. 7. Forty years of China's population and labor economy (1978–2018)*. Leiden: Brill, 2022, 126 S.
- Zhang Le-Yin (Hg.): *Conducting and financing low-carbon transitions in China. A governmentality perspective*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2021, 223 S.
- Zhao Suisheng (Hg.): *China's big power ambition under Xi Jinping. Narratives and driving forces*. London: Routledge, 2022, 276 S.
- Zheng Yongnian: *The China model. Experience and challenges*. New York: Pater Lang, 2021, 303 S.

ZENTRALASIEN / TIBET / MONGOLEI

- Caron, Jean-Francois (Hg.): *Central Asia and the Covid-19 pandemic*. Singapur; Palgrave Macmillan, 2022, 173 S.
- Fauve, Adrien (Hg.): *European handbook of Central Asian studies. History, politics, and societies*. Stuttgart: Ibidem Verlag, 2021, 1021 S.

Ji Yingfeng: *Before China's Belt and Road. Central Asian connectivity through time.* Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2021, 122 S.

AUSTRALIEN / NEUSEELAND / SÜDPAZIFIK

Cuffe, Honae: *The genesis of a policy. Defining and defending Australia's national interest in the Asia-Pacific, 1921–57.* Canberra: Australian National University Press, 2021, 249 S.

Dixon, Keith: *Acclimatising to higher ground. The realities of life of a Pacific atoll people.* Leiden: Sidestone, 2021, 254 S.

Doyle, Randall Jordan: *The tragedy of Australian foreign policy. Voices of dissent and visions of independence in the twenty-first century.* Lanham: Lexington Books, 2022, 220 S.

Droessler, Holger: *Coconut colonialism. Workers and the globalization of Samoa.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2022, 288 S.

Economou, Nick; Zareh Ghazarian: *Australian politics for dummies.* Milton: John Wiley, 2022, 351 S.

Elder, Edwar (Hg.): *Political marketing and management in the 2020 New Zealand general election.* Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021, 186 S.

Eppel, Elizabeth: *Retrofitting collaboration in the the public management. Evidence from New Zealand.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021, 82 S.

Hayward, Janine (Hg.): *Government and politics in Aotearoa and New Zealand.* 7th ed. Locklands: Oxford University Press, 2021, 424 S.

Hoskins, Ian: *Australia & the Pacific. A history.* Sydney: University of New South Wales, 2021, 489 S.

Lewis, Jenny M. (Hg.): *The Oxford handbook of Australian politics.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021, 608 S.

Mazey, Sonia (Hg.): *Policy making under pressure. Rethinking the policy process in Aotearoa New Zealand.* Christchurch: Canterbury University Press, 2021, 233 S.

Pepper, Matthew: *Continuous improvement practice in local government. Insights from Australia and New Zealand.* London: Routledge, 2022, 129 S.

Possamai, Adam: *Religion and change in Australia.* London: Routledge, 2022, 213 S.

Prasser, Scott: *Royal commissions and public inquiries in Australia.* Chatswood: Lexisnexis Australia, 2021, 416 S.

Shearer, Christine: *Constructing the craft of public administration. Perspectives from Australia.* Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022, 318 S.

Szollosi-Cira, Laszlo: *New Zealand's global responsibility. A small state's leading role in establishing progressive ideas.* Singapur: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022, 363 S.

Watson, Bruce J.: *Forgotten island. Australia, realism and the Timor crisis.* North Melbourne: Australian Scholarly, 2021, 299 S.



Call for papers

ASIEN – The German Journal on Contemporary Asia bietet eine Plattform für Forschungsbeiträge, Berichte und Kommentare, deren Untersuchungsgegenstand im Großraum Asien verortet werden kann. Beiträge aus verschiedenen Disziplinen sind willkommen und können in englischer oder deutscher Sprache eingereicht werden.

Wir führen sieben verschiedene Formate, die Veröffentlichungen unterschiedlichen Umfangs mit unterschiedlichen Schwerpunkten ermöglichen und eine geeignete Plattform für Asienforscher*innen verschiedener Karrierestufen bieten:

- **Wissenschaftliche Artikel (double blind peer reviewed)** werden von zwei externen Gutachter*innen begutachtet.
- **Wissenschaftliche Artikel (non peer reviewed)** werden durch die ASIEN-Redaktion betreut und erhalten kein externes Expert*innengutachten. Diese Form der Veröffentlichung wird daher eher erfahreneren Wissenschaftler*innen empfohlen.
- **Research Notes** sind keine vollständig ausgearbeiteten Artikel, sondern eher Berichte aus der laufenden Forschung.
- **Asien aktuell** beschäftigt sich mit besonders aktuellen Themen. Hierbei handelt es sich nicht um wissenschaftliche Artikel im klassischen Sinne, sondern eher um reflektierte Darstellungen von und Kommentare zum Tagesgeschehen in bzw. mit relevantem Bezug zu Asien.
- **Stimmen aus Asien** ist ein freies Format für kommentierte, selbständige Übersetzungen zeitgeschichtlich relevanter asiatischer Texte. Die unterschiedlichsten Quellen kommen infrage: Publiizierte Texte, amtliche Schriftstücke, Interviews, Reden etc.
- **Forschung und Lehre** ist eine formal sehr offene Rubrik für Beiträge aller Art, die sich mit Studium und Lehre zu Asien und den Entwicklungen in der Forschungslandschaft im deutschsprachigen Raum auseinandersetzen.
- **Konferenzberichte und Rezensionen**

Wir laden alle DGA-Mitglieder sowie andere interessierte (Nachwuchs)wissenschaftler*innen, Lehrende und Studierende dazu ein, Beiträge einzureichen und sich an dem lebhaften Diskurs in unserer Zeitschrift zu beteiligen.

Ausführlichere Informationen finden Sie unter:

asien.asienforschung.de



DGA CONFERENCE ON CONTEMPORARY ASIA

DGA-TAGUNG GEGENWÄRTIGES ASIEN

ROSTOCK, SEPTEMBER 14–16, 2023

Sustainability “Made in Asia” — Challenges, Trends and Opportunities

Call for Papers

The German Association for Asian Studies (DGA) is inviting paper proposals for the upcoming DGA Conference on Contemporary Asia, which will be held **14–16 September in Rostock, Germany**. The conference language will be English. Presentations in German are possible if the entire panel will be conducted in German. The deadline for paper abstract submissions is **1 March, 2023**, 6:00pm (CET).

To submit a paper abstract, please follow the link dga-conference.de/panel-overview/, select the panel from the list of panels that you are interested in. Click on a title, and you will find a detailed panel description and a form for submitting your paper proposal. Follow the instructions. Since each panel will only be able to accommodate 3-4 papers, we strongly advise early submission of paper proposals. If you have any questions on the respective panel please contact the panel convenor.

If you want to submit a proposal for an individual paper that does not seem to fit into any of the listed panels, please click at the respective link at the bottom of the list. Only a limited number of individual papers not assigned to any panel will be accepted.

Paper proposals will be reviewed by the panel organizers in cooperation with the conference organisers. Notification of paper acceptance/rejection will be sent until 30 March 2023.

In addition to the call for papers the call for panels is also still open via the link dga-conference.de/dga-conference-2023-panel-proposals/. However, this only applies to full panel proposals which already include the names panel presenters and title of papers (up to four). Proposals for panels based on roundtable discussions are also welcomed.

Registration for the conference will start on 1 March 2023.

For more information, please visit our conference website, dga-conference.de.

dga-conference.de