

## **WORKSHOP: CHINESE MIGRANTS IN EUROPE, MAY 26-28, 2011**

AT UNIVERSITY CAMPUS 2.3 AND AT ÖAW

Organized by the Department of East Asian Studies/Sinology (University of Vienna)

In collaboration with:

The Commission for Migration and Integration Research (KMI) (Austrian Academy of Sciences, ÖAW)

The Platform for Migration and Integration Research (University of Vienna)

### Discussants and Guest Lecturers (in alphabetical order):

Steffen Angenendt (Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, Berlin), Antonella Ceccagno (guest professor from the University of Bologna, Italy), Marketa Moore (City University, Hong Kong), Carsten Schäfer, Lena Springer (both from the Department of East Asian Studies), Heike Schmidt (guest professor at University of Vienna), Susanne Weigelin-Schwiedrzik (dean of the faculty, professor of Sinology)

Further participants: Network "Communication in transnational space" at the Faculty of Philological and Cultural Studies, MA-Students attending the current seminar on Chinese overseas

### **Program:**

*Thursday, May 26*

14-17:00, SIN 2

Patterns of Chinese migration in Europe: Cases from Italy, and Central Europe (Ceccagno, Moore, Springer)

*Friday, May 27*

9-11:30, SIN 2

Several methodologies: Fieldwork from Austria (Schäfer, Springer)

12-14:00, SIN 2

Three hypothetical patterns in seven countries (Ceccagno, Moore, Schäfer, Springer)

18:00, ÖAW Clubraum

**Panel discussion** (Angenendt, Ceccagno, Moore, Schmidt, Springer(chair))

Comparative migration studies – experiences and future prospects with regard to China and other world regions

*Saturday, May 28*

9-12:00, SIN 1

Germany – still a reluctant country of migration. Patterns, challenges and policy options in comparative perspective (Angenendt)

### Location:

SIN1 and SIN2 both at: Campus, Entrance 2.3, Spitalgasse 2-4, Vienna

Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften (ÖAW), Dr. Ignaz Seipel-Platz 2, 1010 Wien, Clubraum

The workshop brings together scholars from several countries and disciplinary backgrounds. We are going to discuss comparative perspectives on research results about Chinese migrants who live and work in several European locations and are actively involved in several transnational spaces. Our aim

is to test the future prospects of a restudy based on state of the art methodologies.

Antonella Ceccagno from Italy, Marketa Moore from the Czech Republic, and Lena Springer from Austria contribute fieldwork results from the three European countries respectively. Our countries of origins however do not per se restrict our fields of investigation. Re-examining what we know up to now on the first (half) day of the workshop, we expect to underline the fact that, whereas national policies and Schengen regulations in the EU continue to circumscribe the options Chinese may choose, nevertheless the mobility and post-1989 realities of Chinese lives in Europe are not restricted to these official frames of reference.

On the second day we will introduce and compare several methodologies which are in use in the field of diverse studies on Chinese immigrants. For this purpose, some findings of graduates of the department of East Asian Studies/ Sinology on the Chinese in Austria shall serve as an example. In a next step, starting from the comparison of our accounts in specific locations and global cities, we attempt to exchange our insights into translocal networks and flows of goods and people which are on the move in different historical contexts. Thus, our goal is to identify hypothetical patterns of Chinese migration in Europe.

What has changed in research on Chinese in Europe since Benton's and Pieke's groundbreaking book from the late 1990s? The workshop shall frame a publication which does not claim to cover Europe comprehensively but will point out specific new research results and approaches to migration phenomena. We have not reviewed all the relevant literature in a comparative and methodologically grounded frame yet. But we can already identify some patterns, and methodological impulses for restudies in the future.

Contemporary realities differ from popular perceptions of Chinese. While *mobility* both in society and space appears to be a feature prominent in central Europe, mixed feelings about business activities of Chinese who operate in grey zones and enclaves are spread more widely and voiced more forcefully in southern Europe. This raises questions about the data to be collected on these phenomena which deserve further discussion. The *perception* as foreign trouble-makers in countries such as Italy on the one hand is a different attitude towards Chinese than the exemption from politically heated migration discourse in other countries such as Austria, or even the perception of Chinese as model migrants. Identity politics by and within migrant communities themselves are the other side of the face-work of perceiving and representing. Thirdly, in "old" immigration destinations such as the UK and the Netherlands or France in Western Europe, the situation is very different from the two other patterns due to the respective migration histories and consequently the *diversity* of the more dense yet overlapping communities.

Just as research on China, research on Chinese in Europe also makes use of diverse methods and theoretical assumptions. The discussion on Chinese migrants shall prepare us for the broader frame of a panel discussion when two more discussants will join us and we open up towards contributions from discussants of other fields and disciplines. This discussion is framed by our aims for comparison. How can we compare Chinese within Europe and with the situation in other world regions? Obviously this is where insights in migration issues from Africa are becoming highly relevant and important for the dynamic and preliminary outcomes of this workshop. Guest professor Heike Schmidt specializes in migrant workers in southern and eastern Africa. How can we compare results derived by different methodologies and from different kinds of accounts? In what respect is comparison with migrants of other origins necessary to grasp some tendencies in Europe? Steffen Angenendt is advisor to the German government. Finally on the third (half) day he will point out challenges and policy options in the case of Germany which is one of the reluctant EU countries of migration.