

Conference at the German Studies Centre of Peking University: Chinese-German perspectives regarding flight and migration



Participants in the discussions at the German Studies Centre (Zentrum für Deutschlandstudien – ZDS) of Peking University included Professor Yu Gu (German Language and Literature) and Professor Mingrui Qin (Sociology) of Peking University, and in the background, Beate Rogler (Director of Beijing Office of Freie Universität (FU) Berlin) and Benjamin Langer (Director of Coordination Office of German Studies Centre of FU)

The topics of the big annual conference at the German Studies Centre of Peking University in 2016 focussed on flight, migration and integration. Another important step in the cooperation with the Humboldt University and the FU Berlin – and part of the extensive networking activities of the Centres of German and European Studies supported by the DAAD worldwide, which can celebrate a special anniversary this year.

Many people in Germany and all over the world are currently concerned with the subject of flight and migration. This was also demonstrated by the interdisciplinary conference at the German Studies Centre of Peking University in mid-September, which was attended by about 25 German, Chinese and Austrian academics working in fields such as the legal, social or economic sciences and the humanities. “The way the refugees are handled by Germany and the EU is followed closely in China”, says Benjamin Langer, who directs the Coordination Office of the German Studies Centre at the FU Berlin. Migration and integration have become more important and a matter of public interest in China itself as well. China and Germany came first and second in the “Refugees Welcome Index”, which analyses the willingness of the respective population to take on refugees, published by Amnesty International in May 2016.



“Great topicality of the subject of the conference”: Professor Liaoyu Huang, director of the centre

The talks by the Chinese academics at the public conference mainly focussed on Germany and Europe. They contributed their expertise on a wide range of subjects and in German. These included integration of Moslem refugees, the crisis of European democracy from the perspective of the refugee crisis, or the impact of the influx of refugees on the German economy. “The views presented by the scholars in Peking were very differentiated,” reports Benjamin Langer. The German participants in the conference (from Humboldt University and FU Berlin) for example lectured on flight and migration as a challenge for criminal law or the effects of migration on the German language in the Kreuzberg area of Berlin.



Power of language: Martin Walser, his co-author Thekla Chabbi and Professor Liaoyu Huang

“The current so-called refugee crisis may be a challenge, the effects of which cannot be clearly estimated at the moment. When considered from a long-term global-historical perspective however, it is not singular and certainly appears manageable,” Langer sums up the conference. The conclusion drawn by Professor Liaoyu Huang, who has directed the centre since 2013, was also positive: “Apart from highly interdisciplinary lectures and dialogues as well as lively discussions, the conference was characterised by the great topicality of its theme.” It was furthermore exceptionally well attended despite numerous other events taking place at Peking University at the same time and many people still travelling after the Chinese Moon Festival. The director of the German Studies Centre, currently translating the novel “Ein sterbender Mann” (“A dying man”) by Martin Walser from German to Chinese,

including refugee policy. With participants from over twelve countries, the conference offers a chance to demonstrate the multilateral approach of the network of centres through current topics.

Benjamin Haerdle (10th October 2016)

FURTHER INFORMATION

[German Studies Centre \(Zentrum für Deutschlandstudien – ZDS\) of Peking University \[http://www.zds.pku.edu.cn/bdcms/ViewPubArticle.do?id=123211\]](http://www.zds.pku.edu.cn/bdcms/ViewPubArticle.do?id=123211)

[Berlin pages of the German Studies Centre of Peking University \(in German\) \[http://www.fu-berlin.de/sites/zds-pekings\]](http://www.fu-berlin.de/sites/zds-pekings)

[Centres for German and European Studies \[https://www.daad.de/der-daad/unsere-aufgaben/deutsche-sprache/zentren/en/\]](https://www.daad.de/der-daad/unsere-aufgaben/deutsche-sprache/zentren/en/)

[“A world tour”: Series on the anniversary of the Centres for German and European Studies \(in German\) \[https://www.daad.de/der-daad/daad-aktuell/de/43773-zentren-fuer-deutschland-und-europastudien-eine-weltreise-zum-jubilaeum/\]](https://www.daad.de/der-daad/daad-aktuell/de/43773-zentren-fuer-deutschland-und-europastudien-eine-weltreise-zum-jubilaeum/)