

## ***MIGRATION AND BORDERS IN CHINA***

### **The Second International Conference of Political Geography on Migration and Borders**

**Yunnan Normal University, Kunming, China / August 27-30, 2016**

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The 2016 International Geographical Congress in Beijing was preceded and followed by several specialty conferences and workshops throughout China. One of these meetings focused on Migration and Borders, and engaged mainly geographers from China and abroad in a conference designed to develop a dialogue on migration and borders between specialists in both migration and border studies. Furthermore, the conference focused on migration and borders research in Southeast Asia while it gained perspective from both borders and migration research in other world regions. Participants were selected through a call for participation distributed widely in 2015. Foreign and Chinese presentations were paired in both plenary and concurrent sessions beginning in the evening of August 27 and ending after a field excursion on August 29. The result was a convivial and stimulating meeting of 30 Chinese and 15 international participants, including a representation of leaders in the two fields, emerging scholars and graduate students. The impact promises to be greater collaboration and joint research among border and migration specialists, and between Chinese and international partners.



On August 27, the Migration and Borders conference opened with welcoming comments from Professors WU Youde and LUO Huasong of Yunnan Normal University, and Victor Konrad of Carleton University. Professor Rachel Silvey delivered an inspiring keynote address on “Borders Across Scales: Migrant Labour and the Transnational City” to begin the conference. Spirited dialogue and discussion were led by Professor Ian Baird (University of Wisconsin, Madison). An

opening reception and dinner at the conference hotel on the Yunnan Normal University campus concluded the first day of the meeting.

August 28 was a very full day of plenary and concurrent sessions engaging almost all the conference participants in roles of presenting papers, chairing sessions and leading off discussion and dialogue. The opening plenary session on International Perspectives on Migration and Borders featured six presentations by Chinese and international leaders in the fields. Professor LUO Huasong examined the geopolitical risks of Chinese hydro-electric development in Myanmar; Professor Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly (University of Victoria) established an interdisciplinary perspective on migration and borders in an era of globalization; Professor ZHOU Shangyi (Beijing Normal University) explored the identity of the Korean Chinese living out of China; Professor James Scott (University of Eastern Finland) evaluated “Borders, Migration and Ontological Security”; Professor WANG Limao (Chinese Academy of Sciences) addressed the “South China Sea Disputes and China’s Energy Security”; and Professor WU Dianting (Beijing Normal University) offered a “Model of Control Power of Foreign Affairs and its Application in China”. Professor Victor Konrad presented a paper on “Geopolitical and Geovisualization Challenge” for Professor Stanley Brunn (University of Kentucky) who was unable to attend. Professor Vladimir Kolosov (Russian Academy of Sciences) provided comments and led the dialogue and discussion. Concurrent sessions followed on Migration and Security, Borders, Migration and Development, Migration and Borders of China, and India’s Borders. The 25 papers presented in these sessions offered a rich array of case studies and conceptual approaches, focused mainly on Asia but also integrating selected European and North American perspectives. The papers are listed in Table 1 along with the presentations of keynote and plenary speakers. Please contact the authors directly by email for more information. The concurrent sessions were chaired by Professors CHENG Yang (Beijing Normal University), GE Yuejing (Beijing Normal University), ZHOU Shangyi (Beijing Normal University), Brenda Yeoh (National University of Singapore), and SONG Tao (Chinese Academy of Sciences). Discussants were Jussi Laine (University of Eastern Finland), Ian Baird (University of Wisconsin, Madison), Ted Boyle (Kyushu University), and Randy Widdis (University of Regina). Professor Rachel Silvey chaired the plenary session on “Migration and Borders—A new world order?” Presentations included: Professor Vladimir Kolosov “On a wrong side of the border: geopolitical shifts, border regimes and migrations in the Post-Soviet space”; Professor Martin van der Velde (Radboud University) “People, Borders, Trajectories: Approaches to Migration and Borders”; and Professor Randy Widdis “The Spatial Grammar of Migration”. Professor Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly led the dialogue and discussion. Professor Brenda Yeoh provided the closing keynote: “Living across borders: Time, temporalities and transnational families”. The presentation was an ideal complement to the opening keynote by Rachel Silvey, and a sensitive and grounded focus on the impact of living across borders in globalization. Professor Martin van der Velde chaired the closing keynote and Professor James Scott served as discussant for the session.

Table 1: Conference Presentations (in order of presentation)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Title of Presentation</i>	<i>email</i>
Rachel Silvey <a href="mailto:silvey@utoronto.ca">silvey@utoronto.ca</a>	“Borders across scales: Migrant labor and the transnational city”	
LUO Huasong	“The geopolitical risks of overseas major project”	<a href="mailto:huasong22@qq.com">huasong22@qq.com</a>
Stanley Brunn	“A geopolitical and geo-visualization challenge”	<a href="mailto:brunn@uky.edu">brunn@uky.edu</a>
Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly <a href="mailto:ebrunetj@uvic.ca">ebrunetj@uvic.ca</a>	“Migration and borders in globalization: an interdisciplinary perspective”	
ZHOU Shangyi	“The identity of the Korean Chinese living out of China”	<a href="mailto:twizsy@163.com">twizsy@163.com</a>
James Scott <a href="mailto:james.scott@uef.fi">james.scott@uef.fi</a>	“Borders, migration and ontological security”	
WANG Limao <a href="mailto:lmwang@igsnrr.ac.cn">lmwang@igsnrr.ac.cn</a>	“South China Sea disputes and China’s energy security”	
WU Dianting <a href="mailto:wudianting@bnu.edu.cn">wudianting@bnu.edu.cn</a>	“Model of control power of foreign affairs and its application in China”	
Edward Boyle <a href="mailto:tedkboyle@gmail.com">tedkboyle@gmail.com</a>	“Local concerns, regional visions, national security: towards a multi-scale theory of borders in Asia”	
XIONG Liran <a href="mailto:xiongliran001@163.com">xiongliran001@163.com</a>	“The cross-border flow of Chinese labor population along the Sino-Myanmar border”	
LIANG Haiyan <a href="mailto:303031904@qq.com">303031904@qq.com</a>	“Study on the influence of population security from illegal cross-border marriage in Dian-Gui border regions”	
HONG Juhua <a href="mailto:46020903@qq.com">46020903@qq.com</a>	“Energy security research from the perspective of inter-subjectivity and the construction of the ‘One Belt and One Road’ policy”	
LIU Yuli <a href="mailto:yuli881102@126.com">yuli881102@126.com</a>	“The dynamics of Sino-India energy security: an analysis of petroleum security through a power cycle lens”	
NAN Ying <a href="mailto:nanying@ybu.edu.cn">nanying@ybu.edu.cn</a>	“Economic and trade network of port cities and border region cooperation between China and DPRK”	
LI Hong <a href="mailto:luke@gxu.edu.cn">luke@gxu.edu.cn</a>	“Does border region become more livable? The case of Guangxi”	
HU Zhiding <a href="mailto:huzhiding2007@126.com">huzhiding2007@126.com</a>	“Border, migration and regional development differentiation: take the Hekou port for example”	

SONG Tao “China’s direct investment and the future research on Burma”  
[songtao@jgsnrr.ac.cn](mailto:songtao@jgsnrr.ac.cn)

WANG Yu “One country, two systems: the water, food and people that flow across Mainland-Hong Kong boundaries” [wangyu86@mail.sysu.edu.cn](mailto:wangyu86@mail.sysu.edu.cn)

Ian Baird and LI Cansong “Different scales of governance along the China-Myanmar border: considering varied policies and practices” [ibaird@wisc.edu](mailto:ibaird@wisc.edu)

Victor Konrad, HU Zhiding and LIU Yuli “Kunming as borderlands metropolis: Economic focus, development hub, and migration pole” [victor.konrad@carleton.ca](mailto:victor.konrad@carleton.ca)

YANG Zaiyue “Spatial distribution characteristics of Kokang refugees under the conflict of north Myanmar in 2015” [1641473071@qq.com](mailto:1641473071@qq.com)

LI Cansong “Land cover changes and their driving forces in Myanmar based on global land 30, 2000-2010” [cansongli@126.com](mailto:cansongli@126.com)

LIAO Yahui “the formation, present situation and development of the Burma Kokang ethnic group” [31610728@qq.com](mailto:31610728@qq.com)

Jussi Laine “Migration and the changing nature of European borders” [jussi.laine@uef.fi](mailto:jussi.laine@uef.fi)

GU Jiarong “Taphin people’s culture spirit: the studying of Yao people’s social construction and model along the north border area in Vietnam” [276580811@qq.com](mailto:276580811@qq.com)

HE Youlin “the progress of the cross-border economic cooperation zone of China Mohan-Lao Moding” [0871163@qq.com](mailto:0871163@qq.com)

LI Yinhe “Transnational migration of Korean Chinese between Northeast China and neighboring states” [yinhe1105@126.com](mailto:yinhe1105@126.com)

MA Teng “Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPP) and economic containment: a comparison of China and Vietnam” [mateng0119@163.com](mailto:mateng0119@163.com)

GAO Dashuai “study on the development model of urban tourism in Yunnan border ports” [305926385@qq.com](mailto:305926385@qq.com)

Dhananjay Tripathi “Borders for political bargain” Case study of the India-Nepal borders during the recent Madhesi Movement” [dhananjay@sau.ac.in](mailto:dhananjay@sau.ac.in)

Jasnea Sarma “The India-Myanmar borderlands: Narrating strategic transformations and the politics of ethnic and identity delusions in forgotten geographies” [jasneasarma@gmail.com](mailto:jasneasarma@gmail.com)

Mirza Zulifiquir Rahman “India’s Look East Policy and Act East Engagement: Opening the Stilwell Road” [mirzalibra10@gmail.com](mailto:mirzalibra10@gmail.com)

CONG Xiao Nan “the potential impact of Arctic northeast route on the global economy base on CGE model” [36741123@qq.com](mailto:36741123@qq.com)

ZHAO Yabo “The influence of currency-politics and a path of ascension about Renminbi” [zhaoyabo3@163.com](mailto:zhaoyabo3@163.com)

XIONG Chenran “the geopolitical characteristics of South Asia under the lead of India and its enlightenment to china” [619577931@qq.com](mailto:619577931@qq.com)

Vladimir Kolosov “On a wrong side of the border: geopolitical shifts, border regimes and migrations in the Post-Soviet space” [vladimirkolosov@gmail.com](mailto:vladimirkolosov@gmail.com)

Martin van der Velde “People, borders, trajectories: Approaches to migration and borders” [m.vandervelde@ru.nl](mailto:m.vandervelde@ru.nl)

Randy Widdis “The spatial grammar of migration” [randy.widdis@uregina.ca](mailto:randy.widdis@uregina.ca)

Brenda Yeoh “Living across borders: Time, temporalities and transnational families” [geoysa@nus.edu.sg](mailto:geoysa@nus.edu.sg)

After the intensive presentation and discussion schedule of August 28, the following day began at a more leisurely pace with a field trip to the Yunnan Nationalities Village, where participants were introduced to the diversity and complexity of ethnicity and migration in the borderlands of Yunnan Province. The day was completed with one final session. This roundtable discussion featured brief comments by Rachel Silvey, Brenda Yeoh, Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly, James Scott, LUO Huasong, WANG Limao, WU Dianting, GE Yuejing and LI Hong. A lively discussion followed for more than an hour before closing comments and thanks were offered by Professor ZHANG Tianming (Yunnan Normal University).

During the final session, a list of observations and conclusions was assembled to guide further discussion and research collaboration in work on the intersection of migration and borders. This compilation is not meant to be a finite research agenda but rather a set of guidelines for continued dialogue. Since most conference participants contributed to this roundtable conversation, the following ideas are not attributed to specific individuals. The points are not listed in any specific order of importance.

- The confluence of migration and borders may not herald a new world order but it is evident that a major shift is taking place as both migration and borders grow and expand

- Both migration studies and border studies are experiencing paradigm shifts as old ideas vie with new ideas of society, territory, motion, scale and other fundamental concepts
- Eurocentric views of migration and borders have been over-theorized and more theorization is welcome from other world regions including Asia
- Commonalities prevail worldwide in both migration and bordering processes because both are inherently social; thematics are consistent across continents thus allowing replication of findings
- Migration has moved beyond territory rendering the migration/border relationship more complex than previously conceived
- Time/Space compression has contributed to precariousness and permanent temporariness in migration across borders
- Migrations transcend barriers as diasporas become global networks with attendant proliferation and complication of securitization and fragmentation processes
- Feminization of labor migration has led to the transformation of family and the establishment of transnational families
- Commercialization of migration and commercialization of borders adds to the cost and toll of both migration and borders
- Temporalities contribute to a new characterization of global migration and borders
- Information technology enables linkage and sustainability in diasporic communities and also becomes an agent of control and regulation at borders
- Borders don't solve migration problems yet a focus on the nexus of migrations and borders enables social, cultural and political un-layering and analysis of this complex intersection
- The nexus of migration and borders provides a continuum for studying borders and migrations within countries as well as at the edges of nation-states, and this is critical when exploring borders in globalization
- Study of migration and borders is at the heart of developing a geopolitics of peace and stability, and formulating global and local (glocal) collaboration networks
- Collaboration and linkage of research in migration and borders gains from sustained engagement with micro-cases and their situation and connection within theoretical frameworks shared by international teams of researchers
- The recent attention to borders of China, and the emergence of cross-border migration, identify China as an ideal laboratory for research on migration and borders. This research opportunity extends to all aspects of migration and borders, and it may engage a new generation of scholars in China and abroad.

One of the most significant outcomes of this conference was the agreement among participants to develop partnerships and to initiate collaborative projects. Prominent among these was the engagement of both Beijing Normal University and Yunnan Normal University as international partners in the Borders in Globalization Project. In addition to this extensive partnership

agreement, numerous collaborations between individual scholars emerged from this meeting. The future for migration and borders research, and specifically the prospect for research partnerships between Chinese and international scholars, is bright indeed.

The conference was hosted by the Yunnan Normal University Collaborative Innovation Center for Geopolitical Setting of Southwest China and Borderland Development. Also involved in organization of the meeting were Beijing Normal University, Sun Yat-sen University, Carleton University, and the Borders in Globalization Project. The organizing Committee President was Dadao Lu, the executive included Huasong Luo, Yuejing Ge, Victor Konrad, Martin van der Velde, Jussi Laine, Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly and Virginie Mamadouh, and the administrative team was led by Zhiding Hu. Support was provided by the IGU Commission on Political Geography, Geographical Society of China, Geographical Society of Yunnan Province, and the Association of Borderlands Studies.