

The international mobility of the highly skilled and development: a comparison of China and India

Xiang Biao

Centre on Migration, Policy and Society
University of Oxford

Primary concern in current thinking:

how emigrants contribute *back* to home countries *after* migration

My arguments:

to stress the process of migrating *out*

to see migration as an integral part of global high-tech economy

Structure of presentation:

case of China

comparison to India

policy discussion

'Sea Turtles': Reverse brain drain to China



China Daily. 27 September 2005. "The return of the 'Sea Turtles': Reverse brain drain to China."

Sending out, attracting back, and keeping in touch

sending students out as a first step of open up in the 1970s

encouraging return in the 1980s -1990s

Late 1990s, “serve the homeland (from abroad)”

“Transnational” approach: Dumb-bell model, fly-kite model, “flexible” mobility

Government diaspora programmes I

Fund-based Programs

To Encourage Short-term Visits (Chunhui Plan)

To Support Collaborative Research Projects (Special Fund for Short-term Return to Work and Teach of the National Natural Science Foundation)

To Support Overseas Professionals to Start Research Projects in China (Fund for Returning Overseas Students on the Basis of Competition of the MoP)

To Set Up Special Chairs for Overseas Professionals on a Contract Basis (Distinguished Young Scholars Program at the National Natural Science Foundation; Cheung Kong Scholar Program)

Government diaspora programmes II

Activity-based Programs

Diaspora delegations (One Hundred PhD Holders Homeland Visit Delegations)

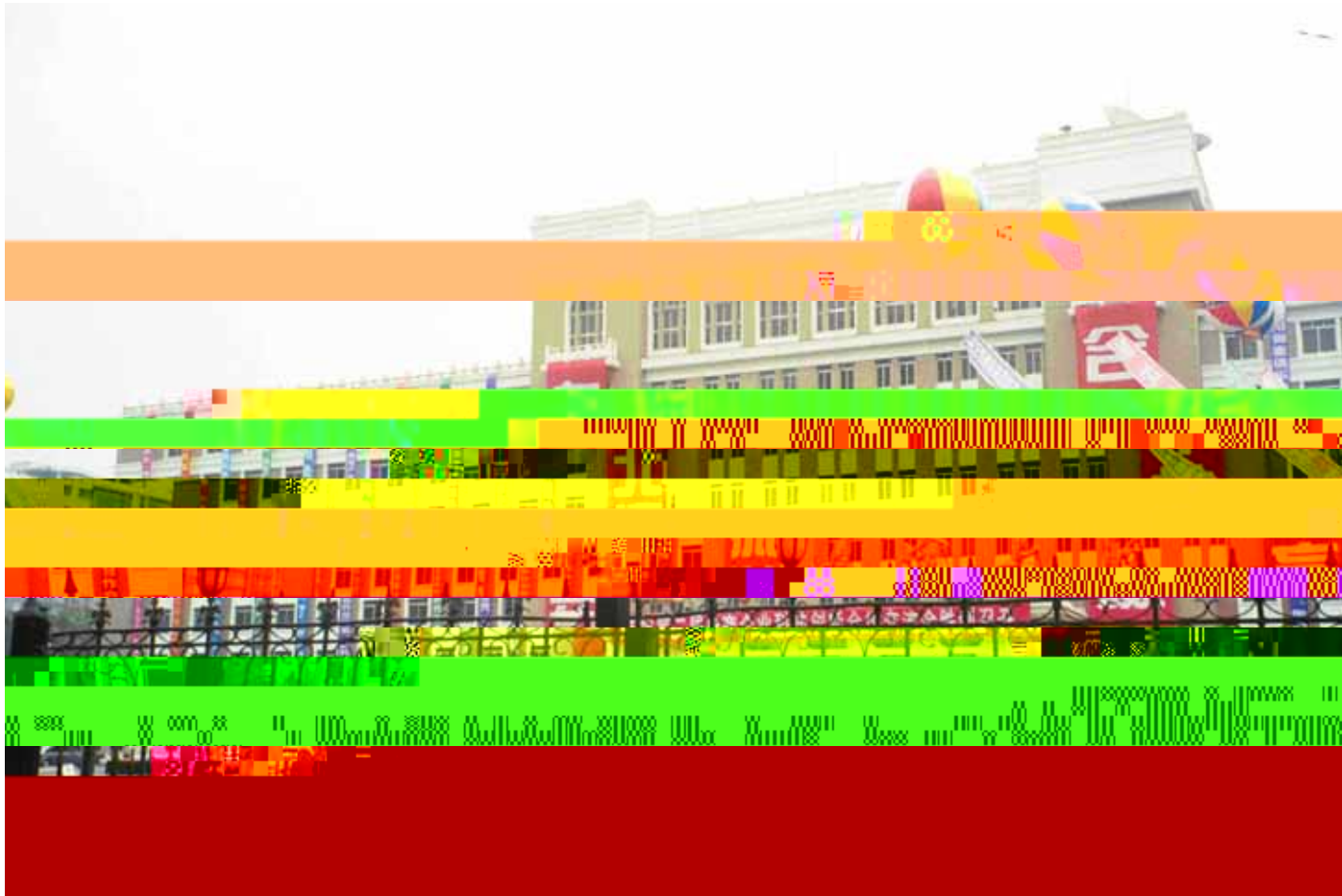
Diaspora forums (CAS Young Scholars Academic Forums)

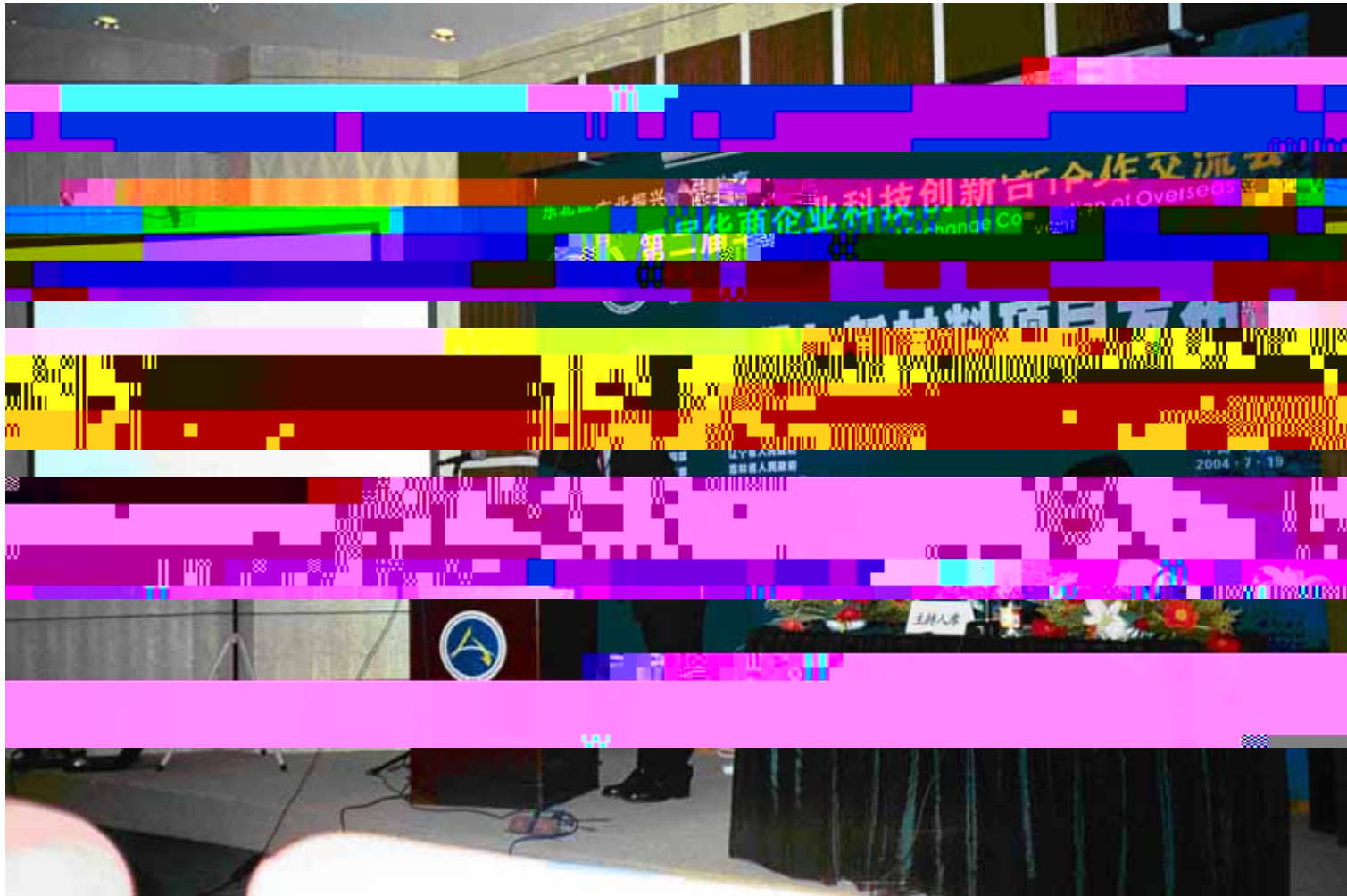
Diaspora conventions/ fairs

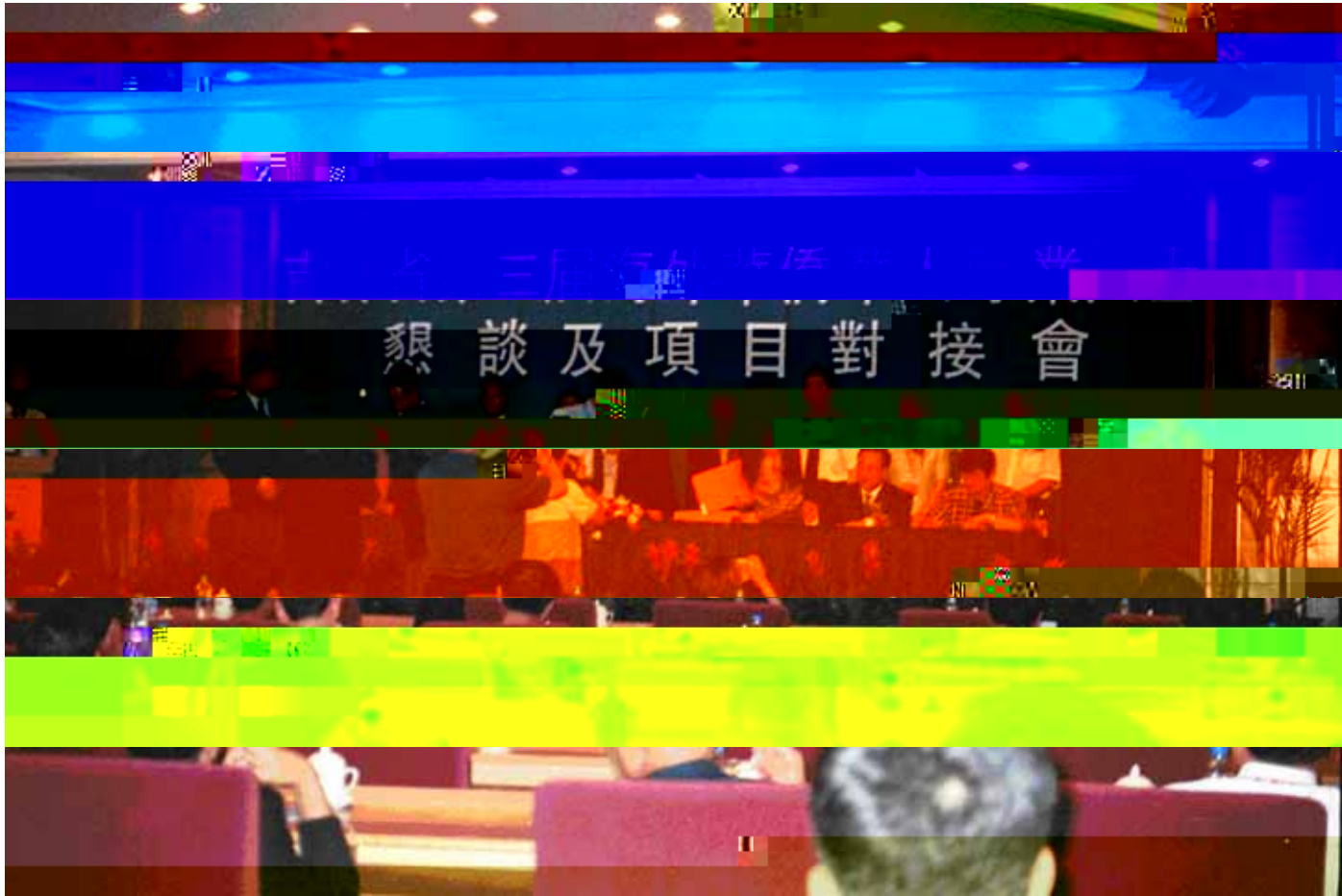
Guangzhou Overseas Students Fair

Wuhan/ Hangzhou Convention for Overseas Chinese Professionals' Business Development

Jilin Convention of Consultation and Cooperation between Overseas Chinese Professionals and Domestic Enterprises







A puzzle

India: outflow: 40,000 + to the US per year
IT export: USD 23.4 billion (2006)

China: return: 7,000 + per year
IT export: USD 3.5 billion (2005)

Why do Indian IT professionals contribute more by *leaving* than the Chinese counterparts who are *returning*?

Indian “body shopping”:

Macro: institutionalized flexible labour market

Meso: a central link between IT industry in India and global market

Micro: a launching pad for IT professionals to become technopreneurs

Productive Outflow (not only to attract back, but also to send out)

China: Paradox of Inward flows

Local government: FDI focused and figure focused

Overseas professionals: market focused

Domestic enterprises: investment focused

General institutional environment: lack of venture capital

Policy discussion

To integrate mobility into global economy system

sending countries: synergies between R&D policy, labour market regulation, and industrial policies

receiving countries: a more open and flexible migration regime

reconceptualization: “brain” and “bridge”