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**TITLE:**

**China's New Generation Migrant Workers and Anomie:**

**Social Momentum and Modes of Adoption**

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By developing anomie theory, this thesis seeks to explain that the new generation migrant workers (NGMWs) in China are not only receptors under structures, but also a reactive force towards structures.

However, hitherto anomie theory faces ambiguities and lacks the power to explain micro to macro relations. In this context, anomie theory is firstly refined on the basis of its classical roots. Secondly, the concept of social momentum is introduced in order to mend the theoretical lacuna. It is argued that (1) anomie is essentially structural discoordination while deviance and normlessness, though typically seen as its indicators, are only its symptomatic presentations; (2) social momentum, determined by quantity, solidarity and modes of adaption, reveals the social changing capacity of a social category.

In this connection, it is demonstrated that China entered a comparatively anomic age after the economic reform. The NGMWs' social momentum is then analysed according to a field study carried out by the author in 2015 in Shanghai and 2011 Chinese General Social Survey (CSS). The findings show that (1) the NGMWs' social momentum is strong but segmental and fragile due to their solidarity on a primary level; (2) the directions of their social momentum can be narrowed to two modes, but still undetermined.