

Positionen Liang Shumings auf die Internet-Enzyklopädie Wikipedia verwiesen wird, ist durchaus programmatisch. Vor allem die sprachliche Gestaltung spiegelt die konzeptionellen und inhaltlichen Schwierigkeiten anschaulich wieder. So heißt es etwa gegen Ende des letzten Kapitels, in dem Unterschiede zwischen Chinesen und Deutschen nochmals zusammengefasst werden: "Die okzidental und orientalistischen Menschen haben zwar verschiedenen Perspektive gegenüber der Welt und Menschen, aber ihr Wunsch und Anliegen ist das gleiche, nämlich ein 'sinnvolles Leben' auf der Welt (Erlösung von Gott vs. Einssein mit Himmel) zu führen gerecht wie/oder zu sich selber" (S. 94). Diese Textstelle steht nicht nur exemplarisch für die Qualität der Publikation. Sie ist vor allem auch ein deutliches Indiz für unzureichende Lektoratsarbeit, die gerade bei Autoren, deren Muttersprache nicht Deutsch ist, unbedingt erforderlich ist. Für einem renommierten Wissenschaftsverlag, der für sich in Anspruch nimmt, seit „150 Jahren Wissen für die Zukunft“ bereitzustellen, darf man zweifellos mehr erwarten.

Insofern ist die vorliegende Publikation weder für die skizzierte Zielgruppe noch als Einführung in die Thematik zu empfehlen. Angesichts eines weit verbreiteten interkulturellen Dilettantismus sollte sie vielmehr als Aufforderung gelesen werden, sich in der Wissenschaft verstärkt mit entsprechenden Fragestellungen auseinanderzusetzen und sich an 'praxisorientierten' Debatten konstruktiv zu beteiligen.

Michael Poerner

Monika Gänßbauer: Confucianism and Social Issues in China – the Academician Kang Xiaoguang: Investigations into NGOs in China, the Falun Gong, Chinese Reportage, and the Confucian Tradition.

Bochum/Freiburg: Projekt Verlage, Edition Cathay, Band 56, 2011, 122 S., EUR 12,00

The rise of Confucianism in China in the past two decades has been observed and commented on by many researchers. Exercising her expertise in literary criticism, religious study, and political science, Monika Gänßbauer contributes to the study of Confucianism in contemporary China by introducing the writings of Kang Xiaoguang (b. 1963), a Chinese Academician so far hardly studied outside the Chinese-speaking world.

This book – consisting of four chapters – examines chronologically and critically Kang's writings on a variety of social issues: the Falun Gong case (1999-2000), the NGOs in China (2001), China's social system (2005), and, most controversially, the Confucian tradition and China's political system (from 2005 on). The last chapter was written in cooperation with Klaus Schmutzler. The author suggests in the "Introduction" that the reader should take into account the feature of duality in Kang's writings, that is, he assumes dual roles as a social critic and as a member of the academic and political establishment (as a university professor as well as a member of various government "think-tanks") that he criticizes. Furthermore, Kang's writings probe into the social issues at different depths depending on the different locations of publication – Hong Kong, Singapore, or mainland China.

The author's analysis of Kang Xiaoguang's two texts on the Falun Gong in the first chapter attests to this feature of duality in his social criticism. Holding the view that Chinese government has unjustly treated the Falun Gong, Kang sees the fast growing of the Falun Gong as underlying people's need

for faith, security, social contact and justice in his article published in Beijing, whereas his book published in Hong Kong argues for a much more significant meaning of the Falun Gong: it embodies the commitment to struggling for the principles of social freedom – freedom of assembly and self-organization – and hence helping to advance China's modernization. Kang's study of NGOs in the area of poverty alleviation in China, presented in the second chapter, takes a similar critical attitude towards Chinese government's policy of NGOs home and abroad and stresses the importance of human dignity and solidarity among citizens. The third chapter analyzes Kang's employment of reportage – a literary genre explicitly stating the author's own moral judgment – to inquire into the case of Li Siyi, a three-year-old girl starved to death after her drug-addictive mother was sent for detoxification. Kang believes that the media should play a role in defending social justice and that the fundamental reason of Li's death lies in the failure of China's social system and the general collapse of moral values. Kang traces the reason of the failure and the collapse to the lack of moral values of the ruling political elitists. The last chapter investigates into Kang's views on China's political and social systems through his interpretation of Confucianism. Comparing Kang Xiaoguang's writings with those of Kang Youwei (1858-1927) a century ago, the authors perceive Kang Xiaoguang's advocacy of establishing Confucianism as the state religion and his promotion of a benevolent, authoritarian government as an attempt to set up a civil theology in China, and absolutize religious or secular moral doctrines and bind them to the polity in response to the recurring crises of modernization processes.

The case of Kang Xiaoguang examined in this book provides an exemplar of Chinese intellectuals whose engagements with the current social issues are grounded in their understandings of Confucianism and, meanwhile, throws light on the increasingly

closer ideological connection between the Chinese state and its elitist intellectuals through their interpretations of the Confucian tradition. In my view, Kang's writings presented in the first three chapters, diverse as the topics seem, are strung together by Kang's authorship identified with the elitist Confucian personality, which defines and lives up to the moral values of the society, and takes cooperation with the government as the most practical way of serving the society. If the author of this book had made this thread clearer, then she may have structured all four chapters in a more integrated way and would even have provided more convincing explanations for the change of Kang's political attitude from advocating a civil society as a part of China's social improvement to considering democracy as a "superstition," a change repeatedly observed by the author in the book.

For readers interested in understanding the role of Confucianism in the current Chinese political and cultural life, this book offers a most intriguing case study.

Rui Kunze

Katutugu Yoshida: Taiwan's Long Road to Democracy: Bitter Taste of Freedom.

Cheltenham/Northampton: Edgar Elgar, 2009, 241 S., GBP 65.00/EUR 92.00

Die erfolgreiche Demokratisierung des autoritären Regimes auf Taiwan in den achtziger und neunziger Jahren ist in zahlreichen politikwissenschaftlichen Studien untersucht worden. Die Arbeit von Yoshida will diesen Prozess in eine umfassende historische Betrachtung einordnen.

Das Erkenntnisinteresse des Verfassers liegt jedoch nicht in der Untersuchung von Taiwans 'Weg zur Demokratie'. Er will den Nachweis erbringen, dass bei der Demokratisierung Taiwans der 'Minpon Thought' eine wesentliche Rolle gespielt habe. Dieser