

zum Alltag wie der verzweifelte Kampf, auch nur irgendetwas Essbares zu finden.

Insassen in Jiabiangou wurden als Rechtsabweichler verurteilt. Diese Rechtsabweichler wurden deportiert, weil sei teils andere Parteifunktionäre kritisiert oder Maos Politik kritisiert haben sollten. Natürlich stellt Jiabiangou nur einen kleinen Ausschnitt von Maos Kampagne gegen die intellektuelle und politische Elite des damaligen Chinas dar. Insgesamt waren mindestens 500.000 Chinesen durch Verfolgungen betroffen.

Das vorliegende Werk Yang Xianhuis lässt sich literarisch in die Gattung der dokumentarischen Literatur einordnen, welche erst seit den 1980er Jahren in China ihre literarischen Wurzeln hat. Natürlich ist das, was Yang Xianhui hier berichtet authentisch und nach journalistischen Maßstäben recherchiert und dokumentiert worden. Doch wäre es für Yang Xianhui nicht möglich, einen Tatsachenbericht in China zu veröffentlichen. Daher hat er sich, wie viele weitere Autoren der dokumentarischen Literatur, noch einigen fiktionalen Elementen bedient. Dieser „Drahtseilakt (..) zwischen Literatur und Fiktion“ (S.13) bewahrt auch Yang Xianhui vor der Zensur. Die chinesischen Verlage publizierten Yang Xianhuis Werk unter dem Deckmantel der fiktionalen Literatur. Besonders in der Provinz Gansu wurde das Buch ein großer Erfolg.

Für den Leser stellen die Geschichten eine Mischung aus Fiktion und historischer Detailverliebtheit dar. Yang Xianhui hat die Augenzeugenberichte und Interviews in gut lesbare Kurzgeschichten verwandelt, die frei von jeglicher propagandistischer Färbung sind. Die Kritik am damaligen politischen Kurs wird sichtbar. Gerade für uns westliche Leser lassen die Geschichten Erinnerungen und Parallelen zum nationalsozialistischen Deutschland nahezu zwingend notwendig erscheinen. Die Geschichten aus Jiabiangou sind eine menschliche Tragödie und es ist eine literarische Meisterleistung Yang Xianhuis, dieses literarische Moment der

Erzählform mit erfunden und weiterentwickelt zu haben.

Volker Stanislaw

### **Swee-Hock Saw, John Wong (Hgg.): Regional Economic Development in China**

Singapur: ISEAS, 2009, 332 S., EUR 67,99

This book, edited by Swee-Hock Saw and John Wong, presents thirteen chapters which are based on contributions to the “International Conference on China’s Regional Economic Development: Cooperation, Challenges and Opportunities” which took place at the National University of Singapore in May 2008.

The compilation’s main aim is to trace the features of regional development in China after the launch of the reform and opening policy in 1978, which started from a heavily disintegrated and fragmented economical basis due to the decades-long Maoist combination of more or less rational central planning and enforced regional self-reliance. The editors note in their introduction that, while the boom easily took off the eastern provinces and came along with intensive world market integration, the development of inland provinces still poses a serious challenge to China’s sustainable growth. They call “regional development” a “critical issue in the nation’s development policy” (p. 1) and first briefly trace the different modes of regional prioritisation under the different leaderships since the founding of the PRC. Acknowledging that the current administration called for an enforced rebalancing of development patterns and an elimination of the huge disparities in the 11<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Plan, the role of the state is however summarized in just one sentence as taking “the lead in providing long-term basic infrastructure development, with the rest being driven by market forces” (p. 2). They then switch over to assigning most power and

meaning for China's successful economic transformation to regional and local initiatives, more specifically, local governments' alliances with local interest groups and local businesses, pushing domestic and foreign investment. Since this is basically competitive, they predict that disparities will continue to exist and even come up with the advice that "for overseas investors looking for business opportunities in China, regional focus should remain their main reference point" (p. 3). Four regionally based economic *clusters*, so the authors, have extensively supported China's development so far, and will thus be the major concern and content of the book.

The two first chapters deal with more macro questions concerning the overall strategies of regional development and its latest trends. Their main efforts are an outline of the central government's official policy and its changing approaches to regional industrial development, which can be summarized mainly as a trend from concentration to diffusion or differentiation. The main findings of these two chapters - which are rather important for the whole book - are: First, there exists a strong correlative relationship between the investment growth rate and GDP growth rate in most regions, which "shows that investment is, to a very large extent, the major driving force of economic growth in most areas" (p. 19). Second, while growth in the inland parts of China is still slower than in the eastern/coastal provinces, regional disparity as benchmarked by per-capita gross regional product has a tendency to narrow since the first half of the 2000s. "If this trend can be stable", predicts Wei Houkai, "regional development of China will arrive at a 'turning point' or a 'point of inflection', entering into a new period in which disequilibrium gradually gives way to relative equilibrium" (p. 40-41). One important reason for this trend is seen in the relative success of the official initiatives to develop the Chinese west, and that it is with government policy support that private businesses in China are quickening their entry into the

western region (p. 49). The following chapters are case studies on specific "dynamos" of Chinese regional development, i.e. the aforementioned industrial clusters and their development over the last decades. Among them, we find three chapters on the Pearl River Delta region, and two studies on the Yangtze River Delta. After that the problems and policy options of the Bohai Rim's regional development are described quite critically, but with a very optimistic outlook. Qingdao's new development strategies are the subject of the subsequent chapter, again with a focus on the existing and extendable cooperation with Singapore. The city state's support for the promotion of Tianjin as an "eco-city" is dealt with in chapter eleven. The following one turns to the economic development of Western China, as compared to "the east and the middle" (p. 260). Interestingly, the author of this chapter - contrary to an earlier one - notes that there has not been such a positive trend in the diminishing of disparities. Chongqing's development strategy and its role in China's development and with regard to cooperation with Singapore is the topic of chapter 13, and the last one deals with the issues and challenges of regions with net outward migration. Almost all chapters conclude with advice on Singapore's opportunities of cooperation with the introduced region or cluster.

Although the many case studies in this book provide a rich information pool for readers interested in economic cluster formation and spatial integration and expansion, the compilation would have benefitted from some more overarching conceptual reflections and conflation, and less marketing and (policy, or rather *investment*) advice. For example, government-business alliances and its importance in attracting investment is touched in passing in some studies, but its inner constitution and operation remains underexposed. Since, according to the editors' introduction, this cooperation is supposed to be the crucial fabric of development in China, it would have been worthwhile to oblige all authors to integrate this aspect, at

least partially, in their contributions. Given that this volume contains such a rich comparative potential, moreover, a more analytic outlook on the role of governments (or in macro terms: the *state*) and also central-local government relations in regional development, would have been adding interesting insights. In most chapters e.g., we just find the term “the government” and no distinction between central and local levels. This becomes even more difficult if one recalls that the editors have somehow downplayed the central governments share in successful regional development and thus arguably also its steering capacity. The empirical analyses, on the contrary, point out that *government* policy frameworks and intervention (central and local) are often the essential explanans for industrial development in the discussed cases, especially in the less to moderately developed regions in western China. Regarding the – less than spectacular – core statement that “China’s national economic growth will continue to be the sum of all its regional growth” (p. 3), it is thus not clear how the authors position themselves towards an assessment of public and private *cooperation* and *interdependence* (or local *collusion* and *corruption*, if put negatively as it is often done in other works) for the course of development. Besides, in most analyses it remains rather blurry whether the central government (at least through its local agents) remains the coordinating upper hand and appears to be a quite successful master of the situation, or whether we deal with a rather loose and possibly instable national framework in which local governments (or “cluster alliances”) are the uncontested forces deciding on the success or failure of regional development. Even though this might not have been the authors’ focus, they should not have shied away from this issue, even more so as it was raised so prominently in the introduction and then becomes contested throughout the book.

Anna L. Ahlers

**Eva-Maria Stolberg: Sibirien – Russlands „Wilder Osten“. Mythos und soziale Realität im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert.**

Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2009, 329 S., EUR 52

Diese Habilitationsschrift behandelt ein vernachlässigtes Kapitel russischer Imperialgeschichte. Als „kulturelle Übergangszone“ und „transkulturelle Kontaktzone zwischen Okzident und Orient“ (S. 11) fand Sibirien in einer auf die Zentrale konzentrierten Russlandforschung kaum Aufmerksamkeit; „transregionale Entscheidungsmechanismen an der asiatischen Peripherie“ (ebd.) wurden außer Acht gelassen. Die vorliegende Studie ist als eine „Kulturgeschichte Sibiriens in einem politischen und sozioökonomischen Rahmen“ (S. 12) konzipiert und leistet damit einen Beitrag sowohl zum expandierenden Forschungsfeld der „frontier and borderland studies“ als auch zur Kolonial- und Imperialgeschichte Russlands, die nicht allein durch die Handlungsweisen und –Motive der Zentrale bestimmt sein sollte, „denn das russische Imperium bediente sich bei seiner inneren und äußeren Machtentfaltung gerade der Ressourcen der asiatischen Peripherie(n)“ (S. 13). Mit der Eroberung Sibiriens wurde Russland zu einer pazifischen Macht, was seinen Aufstieg zur Großmacht und später zur Weltmacht bedingte. „Die industrielle Erschließung der Binnenkolonien auf dem [...] eurasischen Kontinent verband sich mit geopolitischen Hegemonialansprüchen.“ (S. 15)

Der zeitliche Rahmen der Studie erstreckt sich von der Industrialisierung des 19. Jahrhunderts bis zum Ende des Zweiten Weltkrieges. Im ersten Kapitel geht es um allgemeine Raumbetrachtungen zu Geographie und Bevölkerung, zur agrarischen und industriellen Entwicklung und zu Sibiriens Status als Strafkolonie. Im zweiten Kapitel mit dem Titel „Grenzbetrachtungen: Zivilisation und Wildnis“ diskutiert die Autorin die wissenschaftliche Literatur zur Grenz-