

and a myriad more, contribute to misunderstandings and failure in intercultural communication processes, thus more often than not reasserting cultural stereotypes and biases.

Could it be that the road to growing mutual understanding among members of distinct cultures is blocked by an intercultural communication vehicle which does not yet have an adequate chassis? It seems paradoxical that an ever increasing number of intercultural contacts obviously leads to greater communicative problems. Or is it that through growing contacts we are just beginning to perceive the range of problems of which we were unaware before? Ms. Young, at least, does not seem to be pessimistic about the possibilities of intercultural interaction; she is realistic enough, though, to see the numerous hidden traps. Her book may be highly recommended as a successful and readable contribution towards coming to grips with those problems.

Armin Sievers

HEIKE FRICK, MECHTHILD LEUTNER, NICOLA SPAKOWSKI (eds.), *Frauenforschung in China. Analysen, Texte, Bibliographie*. (Berliner China-Studien, Bd. 28). München: Minerva Publikation, 1995. 312 pages, DM 56,—. ISBN 3-597-10648-X

NORA SAUSMIKAT, *Nichtstaatliche Frauenforschung in der VR China. Eine Diskussion der Frauenwissenschaft Li Xiaojiangs*. (Berliner China-Studien, Bd. 30). Münster: Lit Verlag, 1995. DM 38,80, 230 pages. ISBN 3-8258-2511-6

Industrialization in Taiwan during the 1970's and the policy of economic reforms in the PRC in the 1980's encourages reflection on the situation of working women. Since then, only very few aspects of women studies in Greater China have become known in the Western academic world.

German sinology started to focus on this theme at the beginning of the nineties, when a conference in Berlin presented first results regarding working women and their specific problems. Serving as basis for further research, the short contributions by different authors in this volume edited by Frick, Leutner and Spakowski try to show the facets of women studies in progress. The first section gives an introduction to the general situation of women studies in China, whereas the second contains important key texts on the topic, translated or commentated by the authors. The third part

consists of a very comprehensive bibliography concentrating on monographs and articles of the eighties and early nineties, including a few important Western texts. The first section begins with Heike Frick's contribution on the evaluation of official women studies in the PRC. It becomes clear that the All-Chinese Women's Association is the exclusive organ regarding theory and organization of national women studies, since it defines itself as the only possible connection between the communist party and the female masses, believing in the liberation of women through the socialist revolution after 1949.

Since the mid-eighties a different point of view has emerged, doubting this official version: the non-official branch of women studies, represented by its best-known leader Li Xiaojiang. Nora Sausmikat's study describes non-governmental women studies and Li's model of women's liberation. After a short introduction to Li, born in 1951, Nora Sausmikat shows motivations and causes of a different form of women studies. Since only a few Western resp. Chinese publications provide information on this topic, the author first reviews Li's main works in order to show her theoretical background. The second section deals with Li's model of women studies as a general scientific model, emphasizing the different background of women and men. The author examines Li's theories about a specific form of women's history, anthropology, sociology and female aesthetics, as a complement to men's view of science. Li quotes examples from literature and the fine arts in order to present a female history of civilisation. Having been criticized for basing her female theory on mainly male accounts of history, Li is planning to compile a female history based only on oral descriptions.

From the Western point of view, modern Chinese women studies, as represented by Li, seem quite conservative, her often sweeping judgments unscientific. Chinese critics accuse Li of being anti-Marxist in denying the socialist achievements and of declaring that the industrial revolution during the reform period is the cradle of modern women's lib in the PRC.

The bibliography presented by the three editors – providing Chinese characters and being carefully annotated – is extraordinarily valuable for further research. Unfortunately the reader misses Chinese characters in Sausmikat's publication. Nonetheless, her work remains a very well investigated introduction to non-governmental women studies in China, even if quite a number of new publications on the topic have since appeared.

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