

Wolfgang Bartke: Who's Who in the People's Republic of China. (2nd Edition). München, London, New York, Oxford, Paris: K.G. Saur, 1987. IX, 786 pages, DM 348.-.

What a gargantuan task: to select out of one billion and two million people those "who are who."

Wolfgang Bartke is the man to do it, and he has done it in a remarkable way. For a long time now his tables have enriched publications like "China aktuell" and other scholarly works on the People's Republic of China.

On more than 700 pages we are introduced to 3,500 Chinese from all walks of life: cadres from the centre and from the provinces, from the military and the Communist Party, members of the People's Congress, intellectuals, artists, poets, athletes, and religious personalities. They appear in alphabetical order (pinyin transcription) and more than a thousand have their photo attached to a brief biographical sketch, which is arranged in chronological order. Names are given in Chinese and their pinyin transcription.

There won't be many who read such a voluminous book from cover to cover. The very life and soul of such a work is its arrangement and reference value. Bartke provides us with altogether 16 indices, most of them tables, like e. g. China's Diplomatic Relations and Ambassadors 1949-1986/87. The "Occupations Index" is a special section in its own right, and 25 pages long. It lists in alphabetical order more than 120 professions from actor, aerodynamicist, plasmophysicist to woodcut artist, writer and zoologist. Scientists and authors fill the last six pages of this section. With all these thousands of names no pages are given. But thanks to the alphabetical arrangement, we have no great difficulties in finding those whom we are looking for.

As is to be expected, the individual biographical entries differ considerably in length. Deng Xiaoping covers almost two full pages, others have to make do with only a few lines. The description starts with the most recent position, then lists important steps in the career and provides some more private information (like marriage and offspring); publications are also mentioned.

The book is entitled "who is who" and like the Chinese authorities Wolfgang Bartke also regards a person like Jiang Qing as a non-person, who therefore is not included, although most probably still alive. In the text portraying others, however, groups like the "Gang of Four" are mentioned. If indirect reference is made to people, why not deal with them directly? A counter-argument could be that they are included in the tables anyway.

China's elites consist primarily of old men. Younger generations are moving steadily but slowly up to higher echelons. The book reviewed here is the second

edition. The first was published in 1981 and after six years there are about 2,783 new entries (calculated from information given by the publisher; I did not count the biographies). In Wolfgang Bartke's own words: "The first edition included 2,026 biographies and 300 photos. Due to deaths, purges and resignations of the persons concerned only 917 of these biographies found their way into this new edition. The new edition contains almost 3,700 biographies and 1,058 photographic portraits." (p. VI)

It is essential for such reference books to be regularly updated. But who will buy a new edition every six or seven years and how long will Wolfgang Bartke be able to provide us with new editions?

Apart from all that, "Who's Who in the People's Republic of China" is as useful as it is expensive, and it is very expensive.

Werner Pfennig

Joachim Münch, Matthias Risler: Berufliche Bildung in der Volksrepublik China. Strukturen, Probleme und Empfehlungen. (Herausgegeben vom Europäischen Zentrum für die Förderung der Berufsbildung, Berlin). Luxemburg: Amt für amtliche Veröffentlichungen der Europäischen Gemeinschaften, 1986. 118 pp., DM 9.-

Since its beginnings in the second decade of this century, vocational education in China has been the least developed field of the Chinese educational system. Despite the great efforts undertaken by the Chinese government since the late seventies to strengthen this educational sector, the situation has not changed very much. This is mainly due to the impact of the traditional Confucian ideology according to which general knowledge has always been considered superior to any practical skills. Even today high school graduates would prefer to attend a university rather than a specialized college or vocational secondary school. The only barriers to university education are the strict entrance examinations and the restricted admissions.

The underdeveloped state of vocational training in China is reflected in the fact that the topic has been very little studied in Western countries. This study therefore fills an important gap and will be welcomed not only by those interested in Chinese education but also by those wanting to cooperate with the Chinese in the economic field.

The present study is the result of a project started in 1983 and supported by the German Research Association with the aim of presenting, analysing and evaluating the system of vocational education in China. One purpose of the study was to pro-