

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-

vide a guide especially for foreigners planning projects in China. The present book was preceded by a pilot study published in 1984 under the title *Stand und Entwicklungsperspektiven des beruflichen Bildungswesens in der Volksrepublik China*. It was drawn up as a first introduction to the problems of vocational training. In parts, especially in the historical parts, the pilot study is more detailed than the study under review. Whereas the former is based mainly on written source materials, the latter draws its information largely from firsthand knowledge gained through a research trip to China.

It is the merit of the book under review that it presents the structure of the present-day Chinese vocational training system in a concise and precise form. The historical perspective is limited to a minimum and only applied where it is necessary for understanding the particular Chinese context.

A brief introduction presenting the framework and the historical development is followed by a part dealing with the structure and the problems of vocational education in China at the beginning of the eighties. There are two avenues for vocational education: one is the regular system of vocational schools (mainly vocational middle schools, specialized middle schools, technical schools and specialized colleges), the other is adult education. The latter is still an essential part of the vocational training system as long as the regular vocational and specialized schools cannot meet the demand for trained people.

The structural analysis of each type of school and course is supplemented by a section on the problems connected with the respective type of school or course. This method undoubtedly helps clarify the situation and leads to a better understanding of the system. The same is true for the 18 recommendations enunciated in the third part. Though these recommendations are primarily directed towards China, they are no less enlightening for the foreign reader, because they draw attention to concrete problems and structural short-comings.

Scholars may regret that on the whole the historical and the geographical perspectives are missing, that the changes of the last few years have not been elaborated on and that a comprehensive bibliography is missing. These "deficiencies", however, will probably make the book more suitable for practical use. Therefore it is a book for practitioners rather than for scholars.

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