

ing the policy of the communists. This seems even less comprehensible as Imke Mees herself writes on p.116: "The present research shows that in a crucial part of the Republican period none of the political parties could afford to dispense with the Hui as allies ...".

The brochure "Hui Hui minzu wenti" publ.in 1941 - mentioned by Imke Mees herself - would have called for detailed analysis, on the ground that it is the first coherent Chinese study (from a communist point of view) of the Hui and the Hui issue. It was with explicit reference to the Japanese strategy that the Chinese communist party of China developed in the Yan'an region (where many Hui were living), a theory substantiating the claim that the Hui should be acknowledged as an independent nationality. The Hui were offered national self-determination within a united anti-imperialist China.

Bearing this in mind we consider Imke Mees' contention on p.124 to be rather questionable: "Nothing but the status of an independent people with its own origin and culture could do justice to the self-image of the Hui. That the Chinese Communist Party felt obliged to render such a status to the Hui must, to a certain extent, be attributed to the fact that during the Republican period the self-assurance of the Chinese muslims had grown considerably."

In spite of its deficiencies Imke Mees' book is to be recommended, for it provides a survey of the material available on the Hui before 1949; it should, above all, stimulate more detailed study of this minority, which so far has been thought to be more or less "assimilated".

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WILFRIED SPAAR: Die kritische Philosophie des Li Zhi (1527-1602) und ihre politische Rezeption in der Volksrepublik China. (Veröffentlichungen des Ostasien-Instituts der Ruhr-Universität Bochum, 30). Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1984. IV, 608 pp., DM 62.-

The attraction Li Zhi, the well-known eccentric thinker, has always had for critical minds, certainly owes more to the originality of his invective against petrified interpretations of "Confucianism" than to the depth of his thought. It is not surprising, therefore, that he fell prey to the mass campaigns which overrated "legalism" against "Confucianism" in 1973-1976.

In the present work, a doctoral thesis completed in 1979, Wilfried Spaar tries to combine an interpretation of Li Zhi's genuine philosophical thought with an analysis of the (no doubt favourable) evaluation Li had to endure in the countless anti-Confucianist lampoons that hailed down on the Chinese public during the early 70s.

The book is divided into three parts: Part I is dedicated to the political background of the pro-legalist campaigns (pp.9-22), citing four other cam-

paigns (Confucius/Lin Biao; the shuihu novel; Deng Xiaoping; the fall of the Gang of Four).

Part 2 presents us first with a sound bio-bibliography (pp.23-90), then with a choice of translations which are carefully selected in concordance with the texts the lampoons were directed against (pp.91-153). The translations (three main subjects: criticism of Confucius; historical criticism; literary criticism) all stem from works written by Li Zhi or at least attributed to him in former times. They are throughout readable, and Wilfried Spaar succeeds in rendering the ironical, often sarcastic tone Li Zhi used. On the other hand, the author's commentaries unfortunately display a certain lack of study in the field of Chinese philosophy. It is therefore sometimes difficult to trace Li's thinking back to its origins, as for instance: "Li Zhi tries to give a solution by removing the truth-indicating term *dao* by a new, exact definition: ...the ordinariness of the common man. *Dao* is thus identified with *baixing riyong*" (p.185). In fact, this "new" identification stems literally from the *Xici*-commentary (A,4) of the *Yijing*. Thus, in Spaar's interpretation, Li often turns out as the person the mass campaigns purported he was.

Part 3 is concerned with the analysis of the reception of Li Zhi in the debates of 1973-1976 (pp.154-229). Four positions can be made out: a) Li as "reflecting" the germs of progressive capitalism, b) Li as representing the landowners, c) Li as a reformer among the land-owners, d) Li as "reflecting" both the seeds of capitalism and the land-owners, with the restraints of his time and class. Following Thomas Kuhn, Wilfried Spaar characterizes these rather dreary standpoints as produced by a "paradigm" (i.e. the fight between "legalism" and "Confucianism" serves as a model of interpretation of the development of social contradictions in China). Consequently, the sobering-up after the fall of the Gang of Four (an incident as paradigmatic as one could imagine) has to be called "post-paradigmatic" (p.220). It is mainly this artificial use of the term paradigm that deprives the present work of the chance of giving a more general, both morphological and typological description of the style of mass campaigns in China and the role of the intellectuals in political discussion and decision.

Despite these few methodological shortcomings, the present work is a valuable companion for the further study of Li Zhi, and it contributes more material to the scientific approach in the field of Chinese intellectual and political history.

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