

PETER JÜNGST, JOHANNES KÜCHLER, CHRISTOPH PEISERT, HANS-JÖRG SCHULZE-GÖBEL (Hrsg.): *Brüche im Chinabild. Aufarbeitung von Erfahrungen einer Exkursion.* (Urbs et Regio-Kasseler Schriften zur Geographie und Planung 16/1979). Kassel: Gesamthochschulbibliothek 1979. 371 pages, DM 24.-

The Literature on the Peoples' Republic of China has for some years been enlarged by a new genre: minutes, impressions, and essays of travel groups with different thematic emphases. This volume is the result of an excursion of 24 lecturers and students of geography, all members of the Gesamthochschule Kassel, in autumn 1977. It certainly surpasses the above mentioned literature in being more than just a report. The accounts of the plants, peoples communes, kindergartens, families, etc. visited were inducement to confront their own experiences with similar experiences of other groups and to take account of the Chinese and foreign literature on these subjects. There are three noteworthy results. Firstly, by making use of 9 other reports of German travel groups, partly in the form of tables, between 1973 and 1978, they were able to systematize their own findings, a documentation of the whole range and variety of the information received in the visited places, all of them showpieces. It simultaneously shows up the varied interpretations of this information. Secondly, the significance of such literature is considered. In recent years a certain disillusionment in respect of China has set in reflecting many official confessions about economic and social problems (mass unemployment, housing, malnutrition, criminality, etc.) and the radical political change from the Maoist "gang of four" line to the "pragmatist" line of Deng Xiaoping. One reason for this disillusionment is the formerly positive or even euphorical picture of China drawn by articles in newspapers and journals, by radio transmissions and films, and by most Chinatourists, irrespective of their previous knowledge, their special interests and political attitudes. In those days the reports of these people were intentionally or unintentionally an excellent public relations service in favour of China. In spite of all positive appreciation of what the group has seen and heard they try to avoid the above-mentioned effect by critical comments and by retaining an objective point of view as far as possible. Now I came to the third and most important point. This report is a document of the change (see the title "Cracks in the view of China") in viewing China, alternating between clear-headed stock-taking of successes and problems versus growing criticism. The second position is particularly emphasized in an appendix of two very critical articles on "Hunger in China" by Ivan and Miriam London and on the court Qin Cheng (for political prisoners) by the Chinese dissident Wei Jingsheng. The volume itself contains the usual reports on the agricultural and industrial units visited with many figures, income regulations, street committees, families, kindergartens, schools, films and operas. The spe-

cial interest of the group is documented by two discussions with members of the Faculties of Geography at two universities. These reports are noteworthy insofar as they are based on observations made by the trained eyes of geographers and are, accordingly, much more precise than many similar texts. But the true value of this book lies in its reflection on the common view of China among its western friends, and in its opening up of field of research: the systematic evaluation and analysis of the available and growing number of reports of China tourists with a scientific interest.

Ulrich Menzel

PETER J. OPITZ (ed.): *China zwischen Weltrevolution und Realpolitik. Ursachen und internationale Konsequenzen der amerikanisch-chinesischen Annäherung.* (Reihe: Politik und politische Bildung). München: Ernst Vögel, 1979. 323 pages.

Chinese and American political leadership share a long, complex and often frustrating history of mutual efforts at establishing close ties between these two great Pacific countries. Despite long periods of uncertainty, hostility and sometimes vitriolic rhetoric, the common vision of peaceful coexistence, enhanced by a flourishing and mutually beneficial cooperation, has never completely vanished from the hopes of the peoples and the long-range planning of the governments involved. During the late '60s and early '70s, Beijing and Washington managed to lay the basic groundwork for realising their distant goals. The visits of Kissinger and Nixon and the famous "Shanghai Communiqué" of 1971/72 opened a long road toward the establishment of official relations in 1979. It goes without saying that the very event of political, economic and cultural rapprochement between China and the USA stimulated a proliferation of English-language analyses and essays covering all relevant aspects of the process concerned. German-language studies, illuminating "causes and international consequences" of the rapprochement, are still comparatively few, and the title under review, "China zwischen Weltrevolution und Realpolitik", unquestioningly represents one of the most important publications in this field. This anthology, carefully edited by P. J. Opitz, contains altogether fourteen highly instructive articles on various topics related to and influenced by the development of Sino-American politics and policies. The contributors include reputed German-speaking specialists on Far Eastern and international affairs as well as aspiring younger researchers. The historical and chronological background has been written by the editor himself. In both an introductory and a concluding article he outlines his view