

is arranged in alphabetical order with a detailed index as an additional aid. A chronological table from the Shang Dynasty (1500 to 1030 B. C.) up to January 1974 A. D. and a bibliography provide the reader with additional information. The unannotated bibliography is divided into 13 sections. Because literature of extremely different quality and written from different political standpoints is mentioned, this compilation is not very helpful.

Dittmar attempts to give his book an academic touch. The passage on Chinese language, pronunciation and transcription is not really necessary. The text is more confusing than instructive. The author writes that "mao-tun" means contradiction and antagonism. However, in Chinese Communist literature "tui-k'ang hsing" is used for antagonism and not "mao-tun". This is just a small example which underlines the reviewer's feeling that the pages on the Chinese language are — in their present form — not necessary, but a ballast which should be revised in the next edition or dropped.

The explanations given in the book for the more complex terms are somewhat vague, but this is tolerable as well as understandable. The condensed information is handy but presents some statements which should not be accepted without critical thought.

For example, were Tseng Kuo-fan and Li Hung-chang really models for the warlords as Dittmar states on page 177? Was Mao Tse-tung really the undisputed leader after the Tsunyi Conference in 1935 as stated on page 189?

All this can be regarded, however, as minor criticism. The book presents a great amount of information which is necessary in order to understand modern China. This publication is a very useful compilation especially since the author does not confine himself to the events of the People's Republic but includes the period beginning with the Opium War.

Werner Pfennig

Helmut Erlinghagen, Japan. Ein deutscher Japaner über die Japaner. Stuttgart (Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt) 1974. 439 pages, DM 35,—.

To give a summary in advance: this is the most widely informative and didactically most intensive book on Japan to be written in any European language since the last world war. The abundance of information flows from the author's 34 years' experience of living and working together with the Japanese; the didactic intensity, from his striving to narrow the gap of mutual misunderstanding between the Japanese and the Europeans.

Helmut Erlinghagen avoids — for the most part of his book — the most dangerous temptation facing any writer on Japan: to try to describe this country by comparing it directly with Europe. Without confronting a "center" of Japan with a "center" of Europe, Erlinghagen unfolds his insights into Japan in a complex pattern of arguments: by tracing back each single phenomenon of Japanese strangeness to its historical origin and by connecting every one of these details with some strands of contemporary society. The impression on the reader resulting from such a process of presentation is that of an unparalleled continuity of Japanese tradition and consistency of the attitude of the Japanese towards themselves and their role in society — the most significant result that an introduction into Japan can produce. Thus, in a very inconspicuous manner, the reader is made to realize the uniqueness of this social entity which, over long periods of its development, was totally cut off from the rest of the world, i.e. from "world history" according to its European definition.

The presentation of the historical background — including the geographic pre-conditions — contains surveys of the history of religion and the history of literature and art (parts 1, 6 and 7); within the explanation of present day Japan the strongest emphasis is laid on the analysis of the socio-economic complex (parts 2, 3 and 4).

It is with great precision, precaution and didactic energy, that the reader is led to accept the strangeness of Japan as an alternative to European civilisation. The special attraction of some parts of Erlinghagen's book stems from the fact that in some situations depicted as model-situations of social importance, for example a Japanese wedding-ceremony (396 ff.), the European stranger (gaijin) is present as sceptical spectator but at the same time as a loyal and understanding participant, reflecting his own behaviour among the Japanese and showing (not without self-irony) the reactions of the Japanese to him.

Quite unexpectedly, the last parts of the book tend to return to an evaluation of Japan in "absolute" terms, which, as far as I can see, is not quite up to the standards already set



in the critique of the practice of comparing cultures springing from completely different historical backgrounds: Japanese morality is assessed according to whether it lives up to the European ideas of "Wahrheit" and "Nächstenliebe" or not. Here the author is taking the position of positivism supported by religious beliefs. This becomes especially apparent in the author's judgement on the part that Christianity has played in Japan and will play in the future (320 ff.), and also in his "wertphilosophischer Schlußbetrachtung" (409 ff.). Here the European idea of "Allgemeinmenschlichkeit" is regarded as the better option for Japan. Stilistically, this tendency of argumentation leads to a kind of Jargon der Eigentlichkeit, discernible for example in the following passages: "Die Liebe zur Wahrheit als solcher (...) lebt noch nicht voll im Bewußtsein vieler Japaner. (412 f.) (...) Eine echte Konfrontation mit religiösen Problemen könnte dem Japaner wirkliche Tiefe geben (414) (...) Ob Japan jemals einen eigenen echten Beitrag zur Sozialethik (...) hervorbringen wird, läßt sich nur schwer voraussagen. Anzeichen dafür gibt es bis jetzt nicht." (419) And the last sentence of this generally unprejudiced book runs as follows: "Religion und echte Wahrheitssuche liegen einstweilen im argen." (420)

At the end of such a praiseworthy book it is with a light heart that we depart from some of the author's basic assumptions. For it is the picture Erlinghagen has drawn of Japan, and not his philosophical or religious beliefs, that is up for evaluation here.

Dietrich Krusche

Franke, Wolfgang und Staiger, Brunhild (Hrsg.): China Handbuch. Düsseldorf, Bertelsmann Universitätsverlag 1974, 1768 Spalten, Glossar, Indizes, 16 Tafeln, zahlreiche Fotos. DM 152,—.

This voluminous handbook was published by the "Deutsche Gesellschaft für Ostasienkunde" in connection with the "Institut für Asienkunde" (Hamburg), and backed by the "Stiftung Volkswagenwerk". It was only after a delay of several years that the book was at long last printed at the end of 1974.

To review a book with 1768 columns is no easy task. There is always the danger of overlooking the whole through concentrating on individual articles, and vice versa. Avoiding this danger poses a problem here; thus, this review tries to take both aspects into account.

The book itself contains 324 articles in all, some of which are very short. They are in alphabetical order and are intended to cover the period from the Opium-War of 1840 up to the present. The aim of the book is "to give factual information on modern China. In the first place the book is not aimed at the specialist but at the educated layman, to provide him with basic information... A major concern of the China Handbuch... (is) ... to elucidate the relation between traditional and modern China..." (the editor, p. XII). Biographical articles are, however, not included.

Indeed, taken as a whole the book is unique, and not only in the German speaking world: from "Agrarreform" to "Eisen und Stahl", "Geheimgesellschaften", from "Islam" to "Shantung", "Subjektivisten" to "Verskunst des 20. Jahrhunderts" and "Zweiter Weltkrieg", the reader learns about China in a very comprehensive form. In most cases modern China is presented on the basis of traditional China. At the end of each article a bibliography indicates further reading. Use of the book is simplified by a systematic overview of the articles (p. XXVII—XXXII), indices of persons, geographic names and subjects.

However, the impression made by the book is quite different when the individual articles and authors are reviewed. In the preface the editor states how difficult it was "to find the proper authors for the particular articles" (p. XIII) and there is some truth in this statement — there are some articles which have certainly not been written by the most qualified expert on the respective subject. So there must be some doubts in the editor's statement, as to whether the basis for the selection of authors, at least in individual cases, was indeed "exceptional scholarly qualification and not political or ideological motivation" (p. XIV). It is not possible to check this in the case of foreign authors even though important names are missing (Bettelheim, Brandt, Fairbank, Cohen, Garthoff, Halperin, Oksenberg, Schwartz, Vogel etc.). But this is not the case with the German specialists. It cannot wholly be accepted that the number of specialists in the FRG who were prepared and available to