

tidote to an uncritical adulation of the great man. Of special interest is the discussion of Wittfogel's work, especially his highly original *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft Chinas* (1931), a reworking of Ferdinand von Richthofen's data in the light of Marx and Weber. The trouble is that Wittfogel has too little to say about Confucianism – and he does so, as Lee acknowledges, in a somewhat superficial way – to really warrant his inclusion in a study of the “reception” of that world-view.

As the book makes abundantly clear, there have been numerous conceptions of Confucianism throughout European intellectual history and they have served a wide variety of argumentative purposes. The general trajectory of value judgements on Confucianism closely follows the well-known shift from “Sinophilia” to “Sinophobia” – crude terms here wisely used with circumspection. This is not surprising, and we are left with a confirmation of what we suspected in the first place. Eun-Jeung Lee would have strengthened her case and enlivened her book by referring to Lionel M. Jensen's *Manufacturing Confucianism* (1997) – a strange omission from her comprehensive bibliography. While Jensen's spectacular claim that “Confucius” was an “invention” of Jesuit priests may be grossly exaggerated, his constructivism makes an important methodological point and casts new light on the meaning of China as “Anti-Europa”.

The most original and most important part of the study is chapter IV, a discussion of the thesis of “Confucian capitalism” as it emerged around 1980. Here, Eun-Jeung Lee is able to draw on her own earlier work. Much maligned Confucianism was once more transformed in Western eyes: this time from an obstacle to progress and development to their very precondition. German authors, apart from Oskar Weggel (rightly castigated for the shallowness of his notion of *Metakonfuzianismus*), have not taken part in this debate to any significant extent. Strictly speaking, the chapter therefore transcends the thematic frame of the book. However, we should be grateful for a penetrating discussion which admirably points out the obnoxious consequences of an all too simple “culturalism”. It would not be unwise, that is the final message, to forget Samuel Huntington and to return to Leibniz' ecumenical vision.

Jürgen Osterhammel

WANG GUNGWU, *The Chinese Overseas. From Earthbound China to the Quest for Autonomy*. Cambridge (Mass.) / London: Harvard University Press, 2002. 148 pages, £ 10.50. ISBN 0-674-00986-X (pb)

This book by the renowned author Wang Gungwu who has devoted much of his life to the study of Overseas Chinese provides a comprehensible and interesting overview of the most important aspects of Chinese migration overseas. Each of the three chapters of the book is based on lectures delivered by the author at Harvard University in 1997.

Chapter one gives an overview of the historical development of the Chinese relationship with the countries of the South China Sea. It traces the history from the Qin (221–209 B. C.) to the Qing dynasty (1644–1911), carefully highlighting the general attitude of each dynasty towards Southeast Asian countries and the conditions of trade and migration. He concludes that, as a general tendency, the Chinese adhered to an earthbound orientation towards the north because of their cultural origins in the north central plains of the Yellow river and the threats to the empire from northern people. Of special interest are Wang Gungwu's highly informed comparisons with the development of the Mediterranean empires of the Greeks and Romans, which adds a broader perspective.

In the second chapter Wang deals with the situation of the Overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia. His argument is based on the concept of sojourning which implies that – in theory – the Chinese never emigrated to other countries but went only as temporary residents who adhered to their Chinese culture and planned to return to their home country. After centuries of negating and criminalizing migration the empire finally lifted the official ban on travelling abroad in 1893 and the sojourners were eventually given official approval. This and a fresh flow of large numbers of new migrants in the second half of the 19th century contributed to a changing attitude towards and outlook of the Chinese Overseas communities. Whereas the earlier migrants usually married local women and thereby assimilated to the local culture to a certain degree (the best known examples are the "Baba" of Malaysia and the "Peranakan" of Indonesia), the new migrants and the improved contact with the homeland led to a process of resinicization which was further enhanced by the incipient Chinese nationalism. The Chinese nationalists looked to the Chinese Overseas in search of financial aid and offered them protection in exchange for their loyalty and support.

Chapter three looks at the role of the Chinese Overseas in their countries of residence since the 1940s. In the 40s and 50s most of them were caught up in the conflict between patriotism and identification with China and a growing nationalism in their countries of residence in the context of decolonisation. Chinese Overseas had to find a way between assimilation, integration and acculturation. The author pays special attention to ethnic identity questions of the Chinese Overseas communities in relation to their respective host countries and the attitude of the latter towards the Chinese minority. Wang concludes that although most of the Chinese Overseas are local born and hold the citizenship of their respective host country they still retain their distinctive ethnic identity and strive for as much cultural autonomy as possible.

Further, Wang links the development of China as a maritime power to global development and power struggle. With a slight patriotic undertone Wang states that China is in the process of overcoming its earthbound orientation in order to act as counterweight to its greatest rival – the US.

This short book that concentrates on the general lines of development is invaluable for readers seeking a well informed introduction to the background of Chinese migration. The author provides a competent and stimulating account of

a complex topic, offering interesting insights into the question of identity of Chinese Overseas and of China's changing attitude towards migration.

Christine Winkelmann

FRANK UMBACH, *Konflikt oder Kooperation in Asien-Pazifik? Chinas Einbindung in regionale Sicherheitsstrukturen und die Auswirkungen auf Europa*. (Internationale Politik und Wirtschaft, 68). München: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 2002. 395 pages, 2 maps, 65 tables, € 49.80. ISBN 3-486-56648-2

When Thomas L. Friedman asked a White House aide about China's reaction to the goings-on at the UN Security Council during the Iraq crisis ("China ought to be helping", *International Herald Tribune*, February 17, 2003), the reply was: "The Chinese? They don't have a dog in this fight." This comment reveals how little the People's Republic of China (PRC) bothered to take sides in the imminent military action by the U.S. to unilaterally remove Saddam from power.

As Frank Umbach shows in his book *Conflict or Cooperation in Asia-Pacific? China's Integration into Regional Security Frameworks and the Repercussions for Europe*, this kind of reluctant behavior is the rule rather than the exception with Chinese foreign policy, when it comes to multilateral frameworks. Indeed, despite a certain degree of institutional integration, most of the Southeast Asian countries essentially share this skepticism at surrendering part of their national sovereignty to international organizations, preferring instead informal agreements lacking any sanctioning mechanisms whatsoever.

However, there is a whole lot more to this book than this relatively simple insight. Umbach describes the current situation of Southeast Asia and China by covering a wide and diverse range of aspects. He elaborates on the volatile relationships between the individual countries of the region past and present, as well as the region's often ambiguous stance towards its gigantic neighbor.

The book discusses in depth the evolution and results to date of the progressive institutionalization of intra-regional cooperation through such bodies as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), or the Council for Security Cooperation in Asia-Pacific (CSCAP). Although Umbach gives priority to the PRC's involvement in this process, he does not neglect outside participants, foremost the United States. There is also some analysis of various efforts to establish non-proliferation and arms control regimes centering on Northeast Asia. Furthermore, Umbach takes into detailed account the repercussions of the Asian economic crisis of 1997 and the PRC's looming energy challenge. Finally, the book considers the Asian-European group dialogue with the Asia-Europe Meetings (ASEM), as well as perspectives for a trans-Atlantic strategy towards engaging the PRC.