

## Reviews

JOSIANE CAUQUELIN, PAUL LIM, BIRGIT MAYER-KÖNIG (eds.), *Asian Values: Encounter with Diversity*. Richmond: Curzon Press, 1998. XIX, 207 pages, £ 40.00. ISBN 0-7007-1096-5

In recent years culture-specific values and understandings different from those in the West have become a subject of discussion not only in academic circles like anthropology, cultural studies or sociology. Globalisation does not merely refer to the development of world-wide financial markets, (including financial innovations which profit from new information and communication techniques) but to the global network of societies with their special aspects, which generally develop their socio-cultural and religious phenomena by mutually stimulating communicative processes.

The highly disputed theory of Samuel P. Huntington (1996) that world politics in the 21<sup>st</sup> century will not be determined by political, ideological or economical alterations, but by the conflict between seven great cultures: the Chinese, the Japanese, the Hindu, the Islamic, the Western, the Latin-American and the African, may be questioned.

If we are aware that a lack of understanding and acceptance of values other than the Western is an obstacle to closer relations between the West and the "Other", then every effort has to be made to prevent Huntington's "vision".

*Asian Values* is an important contribution in this regard. Its main purpose is to illustrate the necessity of dialogue between East and West with the common objective of enhancing human creativity and minimising violence. This is the basic impetus for the whole venture, which not only has implications on the ethical level, but is also of great political importance.

While Asian countries in the mid 1970s began to discuss human rights in Asia, connecting human rights violations to development policies and seeking to broaden the interpretation of the human rights framework, the debate changed in the late 1980s to the defence of the Asian style of government and "their" human rights practices. This defence is based on a new self-identity on the part of some Asian countries which have achieved remarkable economic development. Human rights and "Asian resistance" are closely connected to questions of self-identity, which again are related to the understanding of indigenous values and the importance given to them.

The book consists of nine chapters. The first chapter deals with the basic question: what is meant by 'value' in Asia? The authors come to the following conclusions: none of the religions or philosophies in Asia (Confucianism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Jainism, Sikhism, Animism) draws a distinction between religious and secular values, and it is difficult to draw a clear distinction between values and codes of conduct. The authors aspire to present an overview of ways of thinking,

focussing on the Chinese *yinyang* concept, which determines a monist way of thinking (works in terms of and/and), in contrast to European dualism (works in terms of or/or and either/or). The focus in all Asiatic philosophies on the fundamentally holistic, circular and dynamic way of thinking which sees everything as interconnected, overlapping and inseparable is opposed to the Cartesian way of thinking which seeks to look at a part, or an aspect of reality separated from the whole and which adopts an absolutist position. Whereas this first chapter just touches on the most obvious differences in the two ways of thinking and does not go deeply into any historical text but only outlines the approach of the whole book, the following chapters discuss more specific aspects: Chapter 2 is on the debate on human rights. Here again, two opposing approaches are juxtaposed: the Western emphasis on individual rights and the Eastern focus on duties. The author (Yashi Ghai) examines the meaning and implications of the notion of duty. He identifies Asian countries as duty-based societies and claims the necessity of placing society in a historical and comparative context. In exploring the historical development of the human rights debate in China and in other Asian countries, he makes a very differentiated diagnosis, which relativises the stereotype of the notion of duty and self-cultivation in some lay notions on Confucianism. He refers to a view of Confucian studies which demonstrates that the balance between the individual and the community should not be understood as primarily "a subordination of the individual in and to the community, but a recognition of the importance of the individual" (p. 38).

The discussion of the philosophical and religious tradition of Buddhism by Thanh-Dam Truong (Den Haag) in chapter 3 starts with the argument of Giddens (1995) that the recent anxiety and tension in our societies are due to three main processes: globalisation, de-traditionalization and re-traditionalization. She bases her argument on Giddens' perception of violence due to globalisation and seeks 'meeting-points' between modern and ancient, Western and Oriental. She claims that Buddhist teachings on compassion, which emphasise the need to learn to be part of a whole, generating a dialogue process within oneself and with others, can make a significant contribution to a new world of science that would be less destructive, and which would create a new morality changing the character of science and politics.

Yang Baoyun (Beijing) surveys the influential role which Confucianism played not only for the development of China but also for Korea and Vietnam. The investigation of some 20<sup>th</sup> century intellectual interpretations of Islam is the topic of chapter 5 by Fateh M. Malek (Islamabad). He focuses on prominent Muslim ideals of equality, tolerance and rationality. He observes that the roots of the prolonged conflict with the West are due to the Western "dogma of secularism" which does not exist in Islam because no distinction is made between sacred and secular. Debabrata Sen Sharma (Calcutta) delves into the vast corpus of ancient Sanskrit literature. He observes a gap between theory and practice which led to a neglect of the old Hindu values (which aim at living the good life in this world and discovering spiritual nature) by the modern urban elite which favours consumerism. In chapter 7 Raul Pertierra (Manila) describes the effects of the market economy on society in a case study of the Philippines. In chapter 8 Karin Bogart (Brussels) concentrates on three Asian areas (Japan, China and South East Asia), juxtaposing the origin of two cul-

tures: the rice-cultivating culture which brought collectivism and inter-group responsibilities, and Confucianism, the philosophical approach on which most value systems are based. In focussing on Asian business values in general she draws a comparison between two sets of countries, China/Japan and Thailand/Malaysia, and between the countries themselves. The topic of chapter 9 is the historical background of the relations between Asia and Europe from antiquity to pre-colonial times. The author argues that although the relationship in pre-colonial times can only be described in terms of power, competition and conflict, this relationship was held in balance until the beginning of the 19th century. The need to improve our understanding of the past in order to develop useful perspectives for the future should be considered as a background for all further studies in this regard.

The fact that the contributors to this book belong mostly to Asian countries can be seen as an implicit and explicit contribution to the debate on Asian values, because it is their own personal view which is expressed on different levels and with different verve. And as the editors themselves say, the book "may indicate the lines" along which further investigations could be conducted. The book can be seen as one contribution along these lines. However, it requires much more depth and enlargement of historical and methodological reflection.

Angelika Messner

JÖRG ZIMMERMANN, *Kleinproduktion in Pakistan. Die exportorientierte Sportartikel-industrie in Sialkot/Pakistan*. (Abhandlungen – Anthropogeographie, 57). Berlin: Dietrich Reimer, 1997, XV, 331 pages, 12 maps, 123 tables, 16 photographs, DM 62,-. ISBN 3-496-02625-1

The author, a geographer from Berlin's Free University, has studied Pakistan's small scale industry, especially the export-oriented sports articles industry in the Sialkot District of Punjab Province. Sialkot was one of the few industrial towns that Pakistan inherited when the British divided India as well as the Punjab before leaving the subcontinent in 1947. Until then, the areas which became West Pakistan (Bangladesh, then East Pakistan, seceded in 1971) had served as agricultural hinterland of British India. Sialkot was known for its sports articles and surgical instruments. Most of the entrepreneurs were Hindus and Sikhs; they fled or were driven out of Pakistan during the turmoil that accompanied Partition. Soon relations deteriorated between the two new dominions India and Pakistan; Sialkot literally became cornered in the North East of Pakistan's Punjab Province, close to a border that stretched from the Karakorum to the Arabian Sea with just one check point near Lahore, which only a few Pakistanis and Indians were allowed to cross. The Muslim merchant communities, mostly from Bombay, moved to Karachi where they set up various industrial enterprises; in Punjab Lyallpur (now Faisalabad) became the centre of the expanding textile industry. Sialkot, however, could not attract any considerable number of entrepreneurs and never regained its position as a major industrial centre. However, it still has its skills, since the workers had been mainly Muslims, and over the decades the manufacturing industry could make up some of the losses, especially in sports articles, whereas surgical instruments no longer play a prominent role in Pakistan's manufacturing industry.