

Personal surveys and field studies reveal the problems of Chinese statistics. Besides the problems of different qualities or changing categories mentioned by Herrmann-Pillath, there are fake "political" data intended to place local leaderships in a favourable light. Field research examination of the balances of enterprises showed that they usually have different balances: one for the authorities with false data and an other for internal use only which contains the real data.

So in the final consequence one may ask whether Chinese data are so unreliable as to render detailed assessment of the present situation and ongoing processes impossible, or if they may even lead the analyser in a wrong direction. Furthermore, it may be highly problematic to condense and analyse economic and social data and to depend on economic factors and resources alone without referring to the political and cultural resources of a province as well. It is not just economic factors that are important, nor do they alone influence provincial developments. Political factors also play a role. And the cultural disposition has to be considered as well. It would therefore be necessary to approach the provincial level from an interdisciplinary point of view, including economics, politics, culture and society. To understand developments on that level makes it necessary to refer to the sub-provincial level, because from the microperspective one is faced with the same problems between the provincial and the sub-provincial level that formed the starting point of Herrmann-Pillath's study. Further analysis will thus have to deal with the diversity and divergence of the sub-provincial level, with its different resources and different reactions to the provincial capital as well.

Thomas Heberer

INGEBORG GÖTHEL, *Der Untergang des alten Korea*. Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz-Verlag, 1996. 143 pp. + 16 pp. of appendices, 1 map, 13 photographs, DM 68,-. ISBN 3-447-03808-X

The problem with the demise of old Korea is that it has been so inconspicuous. No fierce general trod the peninsula under his feet, and no enthusiastically patriotic youth flocked around their prince to repel the invader, as in the Napoleonic wars in Europe and other campaigns of the kind. The end of monarchical Korea, and this is what Göthel's book is about, is not a matter that lends itself to fabricating heroic tales, as little as the demise of most other countries does which fell victim to 19th and 20th century imperialism. Ignorance of the outside world, if not outright refusal to believe what one

saw and heard, preoccupation with court intrigues and love affairs, incessant in-fighting among cliques and kin groups, extreme misery of the common people and, correspondingly, a pronounced disinterest in their fate on the part of the powerful were enough to make Korea, like so many other countries, an easy prey to the avarice and cunning of foreign powers. Violence was scarcely necessary.

Göthel reacts to the downfall of monarchical Korea mainly by sketching the personalities, the various predilections and the careers of king Kojong (reigned 1863-1907) as well as of some of the foreign counsellors and medical doctors etc. who were active in Seoul at the time. Of the latter category, she concentrates on German-speaking persons, which is understandable in view of the readership she apparently has in mind. However, by doing so, she hardly does justice to the powers and persons who were really crucial to the course of affairs. Still, the author exhibits a keen sense for the often trivial and pusillanimous, self-centred aspirations, the whims, and the preoccupations that ruled the protagonists, the monarch and his court ladies no less than the foreign counsellors, emissaries, and Christian missionaries. Göthel is best where she succeeds in utilising such details as symptoms of the larger, prevailing trends of the time. In addition, she provides some sketches of the intellectual and institutional basis on which the story of misjudgment and failure rests which, on the Korean side, was responsible for the fall of the country. In this part of the book, architecture and geomancy, apparently favourite topics in the author's academic pursuits, figure prominently though unjustifiably so, and she has discharged herself of this task by but the boldest strokes of the brush, to put it mildly.

The book is very much in line with what early visitors to Korea and travel writers have already written on the topic, and that mostly as eye-witnesses of the events. Saying this is, of course, no criticism of travel writing. But it is criticism of an author who lays claim to scholarship and of a publisher who has gained a reputation as a publisher of scholarly works, but here had either not gone to the trouble of reading the book or decided to publish it in spite of its serious shortcomings. I doubt whether Göthel is qualified at all to write a book of the kind she appears to have intended to write. To be more precise, I doubt whether she has read any substantial part of the sources relevant to a student of Korea's fall, the bulk of which is written in pre-modern, so-called classical Chinese. At any rate Göthel does not mention any such sources in her bibliography.

Had she read a number of them, she would have written a more substantial book instead of merely being satisfied with the anecdotal. As a qualified scholar she would also have been in a position to respond adequately to at least one lasting interest any readership could and should have in the fall of old Korea. Korea's demise is interesting, not because it is unique, but be-

cause, to a certain degree, it is quite the opposite. From among the many causes responsible for the downfall of monarchical Korea, one is that the powerful in Korea held fast to a tradition which for centuries had made China and Korea comrades in arms and much more than that. In the eyes of many of the powerful in Korea, China was therefore the country to turn to when looking for rescue. But China at that time found herself in no less dire straits than Korea and she did so for more or less the same reasons. The "comradeship in tradition" and its devastating consequences may teach a lesson to people who throw in their political and economic lot with all too large "traditions", "Asian values" or others, it appears.

The lack of scholarly concern and conscientiousness which mars the book as whole is also seen in the large number of inconsistencies in transcribing Korean names and terms as well as in the even larger number of plain blunders. Also, the attribution of some of the photographs and the map reproduced in the book pose a conundrum. A number of the photographs plus the map are labelled as coming from the author's private archives (Privatarchiv der Autorin, pp. 43, 111, 113, 137), and another is said to have been taken by the author herself (Foto Autorin, p. 79). However, three of the illustrations said to have come from the archives of the author are known to me from publications by people other than Göthel, and from books for that matter which have seen the light of day before Göthel could have contributed to them by lending photos to their authors.

Dieter Eikemeier

WOLFGANG HADAMITZKY, MARIANNE KOCKS, *Japan-Bibliografie. Verzeichnis deutschsprachiger japanbezogener Veröffentlichungen. Reihe A: Monografien, Zeitschriften, Karten. Band 1: 1477-1920. München, London, New York, Paris: Saur, 1990, 419 pp., DM 248,-. ISBN 3-598-22146-0*

WOLFGANG HADAMITZKY, MARIANNE KOCKS, *Japan-Bibliografie. Verzeichnis deutschsprachiger japanbezogener Veröffentlichungen. Reihe A: Monografien, Zeitschriften, Karten. Band 2: 1921-1950. München, London, New York, Paris: Saur, 1993, 258 pp., DM 248,-. ISBN 3-598-22149-5*

WOLFGANG HADAMITZKY, MARIANNE KOCKS, *Japan-Bibliografie. Verzeichnis deutschsprachiger japanbezogener Veröffentlichungen. Reihe A: Monografien, Zeitschriften, Karten. Band 3/Teil 1: 1951-1970. München, London, New York, Paris: Saur, 1995, 282 pp., ISBN 3-598-22152-5*