

SABINE DABRINGHAUS, RODERICH PTAK (eds.), *China and Her Neighbours. Borders, Visions of the Other, Foreign Policy. 10th to 19th Century.* (South China and Maritime Asia, 6). Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1997. XII + 268 pages, DM 148,-. ISBN 3-447-03942-8

In recent years many conferences and publications were dedicated to China's identity and self-conception. Although we know that parts of China were originally neighbouring countries integrated into the empire only later, thus causing, among other reasons, China's multi-ethnicity, the question of China's relation to her neighbours has been very much neglected. The present volume on China and her neighbours is therefore a welcome contribution to this field of research. In a time when the concept of "Greater China" has become a topic of international concern, Sinologists should study more intensely than in the past the history of the borders of China.

In the volume under review Dabringhaus and Ptak present the results of a conference held in Munich in 1997. The series of case studies is preceded by a preface outlining some of the major topics of interest at the conference that apparently fitted into an intellectual mainstream interested in the concept of borders and boundaries, which could be demonstrated by many publications of which I will mention only *Borders of Chinese Civilization* by D.R. Howland (Duke University Press 1996). Another topic not focussed by any of the contributions is the concept of internal boundaries, a concept which is not only interesting here because it is related to the border-concept but because there seems to be an interdependence between outer and inner borders/boundaries (see e.g. *Boundaries in China*, ed. by John Hay, London: Reaction Books, 1994).

The volume includes 11 contributions. Christian Lamouroux takes up the Song-Liao border dispute of 1074/75 already studied by Herbert Franke and others. But here especially geographical arguments are referred to, and the author points out the close relationship between the existence of state-power and its limits and the development of geographical sciences to serve the needs of establishing and maintaining well-defined borders between two sovereign states. Diplomacy is also the issue of the contribution by Johannes L. Kurz who deals with the negotiations between the Southern Tang and its northern neighbours. Views of the border are the topic of several papers, one by Marion Eggert on "Korean travelers' views of the Chinese border", another by Gudula Linck on "Visions of the border in Chinese frontier poetry" which deals refreshingly at some length with anthropological and diachronic aspects of the experience of borders. Morris Rossabi concentrates in his contribution on the case of Hami in Ming foreign policy, whereas Sabine Dabringhaus discusses the relationship between Chinese emperors and Tibetan monks under the subtitle "Religion as an instrument of rule".

The other papers are oriented to the south, e.g. Geoff Wade's "Some topoi in southern border historiography during the Ming", Roderich Ptak's paper on maritime borderlands deals with the Paracel and the Spratly Islands on textual evidence from the Song, Yuan and early Ming.

António Graça de Abreu writes in "Macao, Miguel de Arriaga, and the Chinese" about "the failed British occupation of Macao in 1808". Thomas Höllman takes up a border without markings in Taiwan under the title "Ohne Pfosten und Posten: Die Grenze zur Alishan-Region im Taiwan der Qing-Zeit", and Ng Chin-keong deals with the concept of *hai-fang* (coastal defence) in his article on "Maritime frontiers, territorial expansion and *hai-fang* during the Late Ming and High Ch'ing".

This collection of rather diverse contributions to a common topic is stimulating in many respects. It is of special merit that there are papers on different kinds of frontiers. It is left to the reader, however, to find out similarities and differences. To sum up, this is a collection of well-researched papers which will interest a variety of scholars. Those working in the field of frontier studies will all have to refer to it, but it will also be indispensable for those interested in understanding "Greater China" in historical perspective.

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HUA LING FU, RICHARD CULLEN, *Media Law in the PRC*. Hongkong: Asia Law and Practise Publishing Ltd, 1996. 297 pages, US \$ 175.00

Printed publications, radio, television and the new information and communication technologies are essential elements of a modern industrial society. Modern democracies cannot exist without them and neither can totalitarian states using mass media for political reasons. Technologies change as well as the people using them, and emphasis may shift from one medium to another. This is where the power of the mass media lies, and at the same time its danger to the individual and the state. Media law protects the freedom of media and excludes its abuse. *Media Law in the PRC* by Hua Ling Fu and Richard Cullen, Assistant Professor resp. Associate Professor at the Faculty of Law, University of Hongkong, is a result of a research project on regulation of expression in the People's Republic of China (PRC) addressed to lawyers, people involved in media and academics. The information and data used cover the period up to mid-1996. The authors not only pay attention to laws, but also to the fact that media regulation in China depends also to a very large extent on political decisions, administrative practices and tentative regulations.