

Professor Rivinius has devoted much space to his many achievements under most difficult and stressful conditions. He has highlighted Anzer's utter commitment to the missionary cause. The chapter on the processes of transforming catechumens into faithful members of the Church is particularly helpful. This balanced account of Anzer's life and work is a welcome addition to the growing body of China mission studies.

R.G. TIEDEMANN

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MAX KO-WU HUANG, *The Meaning of Freedom. Yan Fu and the Origins of Chinese Liberalism*. With a Foreword by Thomas A. Metzger. Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 2008. xxviii, 408 pp. US\$ 55.00 (HB). ISBN 978-962-996-278-4

This book sets out to reevaluate Yan Fu's understanding of Millian liberalism and his role in Chinese liberalism in general. Certainly, Yan Fu has been the object of several studies already, and consequently the entire first chapter of the book is devoted to arguing for the necessity to write yet another book on Yan Fu. For the English readership to whom this book (which is based on a previous Chinese book of the author) is addressed, the standard reference is Benjamin Schwartz's study on Yan Fu, against which the author tries to posit his own interpretation. Reading through the book it becomes clear that the author's interpretation does, in fact, provide many new insights into Yan's rendering of John Stuart Mill's thought, and that his endeavor is not at all futile. By meticulously following Yan's translations by back-translations to highlight specific changes and shifts, Huang demonstrates that in these divergences there is some systematic thread to be detected. This opens up the question whether these systematic divergences are due to Yan's misconception of Mill's ideas or rather to his deliberate effort to introduce his own concepts. The author argues that it is both, thus making room in the last part of the book for a discussion of Yan as a political thinker in his own

right after having presented him as a translator of Western ideas, namely Mill's liberalism.

The basic interpretation the author follows is to show that Yan, having grasped Mill's appreciation of the individual and of the value of "liberty" (which is used in the book interchangeably with "freedom"), however failed to understand and/or share Mill's premises of epistemological and moral pessimism. This failure, the author argues, is due to Yan's Confucian socialization (the "vertical intellectual continuity" that led to a "horizontal discontinuity" between Mill's and Yan's liberalism) and one point which links him to basically all modern Chinese thinkers, whether the "accommodative"-reformist ones or the "transformative"-revolutionary ones. The question that lingers in the background throughout is the "timeliness" of Yan's version of liberalism for the Chinese future. Time and again it becomes clear that this study is driven also by this "political" impetus, though this does not diminish its scholarly meticulousness. Rather it explains why certain key arguments like Yan's "Chinese" face vis-à-vis his "Western" face, his stress on "positive freedom" (in the sense of Isaiah Berlin) vis-à-vis Mill's stress on "negative freedom" and his particular accommodative view are repeated over and over in the book. In fact, as the foreword of the author's Western mentor, Thomas A. Metzger, points out, the political implications of this study were also sensed by many Chinese critics of the earlier Chinese version of the book. Metzger picks up their arguments one by one and refutes them in favor of the author, thus adding to this political "feel" the book comes with.

The approach to back-translate Yan's translations of Mill and to contextualize them with other translations done by him proves very fruitful and provides some interesting details. For example, a minor, though very telling case the author presents in the context of Yan's translations is that Yan, in spite of being well versed in English, missed irony and metaphorical uses in Mill's texts. Furthermore, the logical structure of Mill's line of argumentation was lost in Yan's translation who was rather interested in getting the basic content across. Even the vocabulary used was not consistent, sometimes because Yan substituted certain cha-

acters assumed to evoke “negative” associations with the Chinese readership through less emotionally “charged” ones. Interestingly, at times even Japanese-derived new vocabulary slips in, in spite of Yan’s endeavors to create his own terminology by translating directly from English to challenge the Japanese coinages so influential in China since the turn of the 20th century. As the author provides the English original and Yan’s Chinese translation together with his own back-translations, the reader is always in grade to check the latter. The basic line of argument the author develops to prove his points is convincing and well matched by the evidence he forwards. He does not deny and even names evidence for the fact that Yan was also a personality of many contradictions and underwent changes in his views to a certain degree during his life-time. Nevertheless, Huang stresses the need to pay heed to the consistencies in his basic outlook to overcome a “Janus-like” (Schwartz) reading of this important Chinese intellectual figure. What remains as a disturbing feature of Yan-style liberalism or – as the author terms it – the “Chinese kind of liberalism” created by him, however, is its “elitist” approach which becomes obvious in its comparison of society with a school, thus arguing for the need of some “guidance” by those who are supposed to be a “vanguard” or “teachers” to the others. Should Yan’s views be, as the author suggests, in line with a newly emerging twenty-first century Chinese intellectual mainstream, and even be considered to offer a solution to the question of “where China should go,” then the challenge to deal with this kind of “liberal view” will become more than an academic endeavor, but a very salient one for a future Chinese society.

GOTELIND MÜLLER-SAINI

VIREN MURTHY, *The Political Philosophy of Zhang Taiyan. The Resistance of Consciousness*. Leiden Series in Comparative Historiography, 4. Leiden – Boston: Brill, 2011. viii, 242 pp. Bibliography, Index. € 105, \$ 144. ISBN 978-90-04-20387-7

Among Chinese thinkers of the late Qing and early Republican periods, Zhang Taiyan (1868–1939) was the most complex and controversial. In the seventy years of his life, he had assumed a wide variety of roles including a classicist of the Old Text School, an anti-Manchu revolutionist, a Buddhist philosopher, a critic of Yuan Shikai’s presidency, and a Confucian thinker. In some of these roles, he adopted unconventional positions. For instance, as a political leader, he split with Sun Yat-sen in leading the anti-Manchu revolution; as an established political figure, he failed to adjust to the parliamentary system of the new Chinese Republic; as a classicist, he inspired both the cultural conservatives (e.g., Huang Kan, 1886–1935) and the cultural iconoclasts (e.g., Lu Xun, 1881–1936). Since the mid-1980s, these conflicting images of Zhang have been further complicated by two groups of contemporary Chinese scholars who compete to honor him. On one side, the supporters of New National Learning (*xin guoxue*) promote him as an exemplar of China’s uniqueness in its march to modernity. On the other side, the New Leftists regard him as the origin of their critique of the iron law of evolution and the belief in linear progression. More than seventy years after Zhang’s death, we are less certain about his role in modern Chinese intellectual history as he seems to lend support to opposing ideologies and political agendas.

In *The Political Philosophy of Zhang Taiyan*, Viren Murthy makes a rigorous attempt to sort out some of the confusions of this controversial thinker. Focusing on Zhang’s “Buddhist period” (1906–1910), Murthy offers an inspiring argument that explains his seemingly unconventional move to promote Buddhism while leading the anti-Manchu revolutionary movement. For many historians, the uncommon decision was explained away by treating Zhang’s promotion of Buddhism as a means to mobilize supporters. But Murthy does not accept this simplistic answer. To explain Zhang’s decision, he goes back to the source of all modern antinomies – the dialectic of the “use-value” and the “exchange-value” that Karl Marx identifies as the “logic of capital.” And it is this Western