REVIEW


Chinesische Fluß-Dschunken ("Chinese river junks") is a sequel to Peter Wieg’s Chinesische See-Dschunken of 1984 (reviewed in Chinese Science 9: 15-17). Like its predecessor designed primarily as a companion for ship-model builders, it is the only book on its subject in German, providing a brief but competent introduction to anyone who would like to know a little about Chinese river junks. Wieg is still no sinologist, of course, nor, apparently, is his collaborator. Their bibliography lists two and a half dozen published sources in German, French and English. This time care was taken to standardize the transliteration (Wade-Giles, oddly without the hyphens, with pinyin frequently added).

Wieg and Freyer start off with an introduction, which could be out of any decent encyclopedia, on the inland waterways of China. They then proceed with a chapter on the types of junks in the Yellow River basin, followed by sections on the construction of seven representative boats, on Chinese “boat people” and on the decoration and ornaments of junks.

The illustrations, especially Wieg’s line drawings on all aspects of boat-building and decoration, make this volume, like its predecessor on ocean and coastal junks, useful even to the expert for whom nothing else in the book would be new. The price should be affordable to virtually everyone with an interest in junks. Anyone keen to construct his or her own model boat will find plans to build a replica of a Hang-chou (Ch’ien-t’ang) junk at the back of the book.

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