model of typographical economy and lucidity. It is clear at a glance whether a text is integral or (as in the majority of cases) abstracted and whether it is contemporary or (as in a few cases) retrospective. In the integral texts, editorial insertions (clearly marked as such) supply dates, the full forms of abbreviated names, and other useful supplementary information. The names of Chinese organizations and institutions, which appear in a confusing variety of translations in foreign reports, have been reduced to uniformity and given in *pinyin* in a separate glossary. This glossary is followed by an extremely useful list of several hundred of the main actors, official and unofficial, in the events of April, May and June, together with relevant maps.

Peter Schier admits in his foreword that he and his colleagues have only partly achieved their aim of "helping truth vanquish the lie" and instead have been forced to present a number of different and conflicting "truths" (though they do conclude that the deaths on 3 and 4 June probably numbered several hundred rather than several thousand, and that probably no more than five or six students died on the Square itself). But while no reconstruction of the events can be complete or definitive as long as official reports (including video tapes) of them are kept secret, to my knowledge this study is easily the best and most comprehensive available. One cannot but stand in awe of the speed and thoroughness with which the Institut für Asienkunde put together this documentary masterpiece (now in its third revised edition) and the prodigious effort they invested in it, while at the same time continuing to produce a monthly journal, *China aktuell*, that for years has been one of the richest and most dependable sources of instantaneous documentation and comment about China's politics and economy.

GREGOR BENTON

*The Broken Mirror: China After Tiananmen.* Edited by GEORGE HICKS. [Harlow, Essex: Longman Current Affairs, 1990. 526 pp.]

Written in the immediate aftermath of the 4 June 1989 massacre, this book has put together an interesting collection of articles on this most dramatic episode of contemporary Chinese history. But the contributions are uneven, sometimes eclectic and often emotional in their approach. Thus, many developments now seem, two years after Tiananmen, somewhat outdated.

The book is divided into five parts plus a useful chronology of selected documents, and a short "who's who." The first part – probably the most interesting – deals with the "actors" of the tragedy. Jane Macartney clearly shows how the Chinese students started to think independently about their future and that most of them became conscious of the nature of their government only after the crackdown. David Kelly gives an in-depth account of the role of the intellectuals who, too much associated with the Communist Party reformers, became involved in the protest only after the beginning of the hunger-strike on 12 May, and eventually refused to play a leading role in a movement which grew far beyond the boundaries of the student community. Geremie Barmé's detailed analysis of "the case of Liu Xiaobo" underlines both the courage and the dependency – or

repentance (*huiguo*) – syndrome of many maverick intellectuals in today's China. "The thought and the spirit of Fang Lizhi," which are presented by Perry Link, prove also that independent and heterodox ideas (e.g. the downgrading of the concept of nationalism) do exist in China. The rulers, for their part, explains Jürgen Domes, continue to act according to the same traditional factional pattern: they are an informal group of elderly leaders who convinced Deng Xiaoping to sack his second chosen successor and order the Army to restore Party control of the city of Beijing.

The second part puts into historical perspective the 1989 democratic movement. Lucian Pye convincingly shows how in what he calls an "escalation of confrontation," both those in power and society obeyed the ritual of the Chinese political culture. Jan Prybyla analyses the dilemmas of the economic reform on the eve of Tiananmen, and Thomas Gold elaborates on the concept of autonomy of society which no Leninist state has been ready to acknowledge.

The third part measures the impact of the massacre on some of China's external relations. William McGurn reveals much of the mood of the American administration after 4 June, with contradictory strategic, economic and humanitarian interests. Byron Weng demonstrates that the 1989 conservative take-over has strengthened Taiwan's position in its relations with the mainland, while Joseph Cheng explains that the Beijing massacre has put Hong Kong in crisis and jeopardized the democratization of the British colony. And Asai Motofumi tries hard to convince the reader that Japan's response to Tiananmen has been a "pattern of consistency."

The fourth part assesses the impact of the massacre in China, in particular on law and diplomacy. For instance, according to Jerome Cohen, "Tiananmen has not undone all the achievements of the last decade's law reform efforts," although "by manipulating the legal system," the Chinese leaders "have devaluated the currency of not only their country's domestic legislation but also its international agreements" (p. 340).

The last part suggests some factors of change. "The reemergence of the realm of the private" (Orville Schell), the weight of the bureaucracy (Wojtek Zafanolli), the crisis of communism (Franz Michael) and the respective strength of the different political factions (Ramon Myers) will determine the probability of four scenarios put forward by Domes.

Many contributors, writing only a few months after the events they describe, have adopted a moralistic approach to a political reality: has China, as Chalmers Johnson puts it in his foreword, "less excuse" than the other communist countries for failing to promote democracy (p. xi)? China is no more a human rights exception (at last!) but we have to bear in mind that Chinese society has only just started to contest the legitimacy of its leaders and its regime. The political opposition is weak, disorganized and, as the 1989 movement and its aftermath have showed, not completely used to working according to democratic procedures. Finally, *The Broken Mirror* describes a reality which has changed, and not always in the direction suggested by the contributors. Some of them were even expecting a quick overthrow of the communist regime: "the CCP sits on a political powderkeg" (p.

464). In the long run, probably, but today, the conservatives are still in power and have noticeably moved to more relaxed policies, in particular in the economic realm. Yes, the rosy image of Communist China was destroyed on 4 June 1989; but another mirror should be broken now: the image of a ready-to-die totalitarian rule which can only give birth to a democratic regime.

JEAN-PIERRE CABESTAN

*Hunger Trilogy.* By WANG RUOWANG, translated by KYNA RUBIN with IRA KASOFF. [Armonk, New York & London: M. E. Sharpe, Inc., 1991. 170 pp. $19.95.]

When first published in 1980 – a year that already feels as if it were a generation or two ago in the Chinese literary world – Wang Ruowang's *Ji'e sanbuqu* (*Hunger Trilogy*) was a sensational piece of writing to find in an official literary journal in China. In the first and last of the three stories linked by the same narrator that make up this novella, life in Shanghai gaols run by the Nationalists and, 30 years later, the communists, is compared. The Nationalist gaol is shown as just as bad as Nationalist prisons always have been in communist fiction and film, with all the usual brutality, cruelty and torture. What was so amazing in 1980 was to read that the communist gaol was even worse. Informed readers would have known that Wang was able to make the comparison from personal experience, and that there was almost certainly a very large component of autobiography in the stories.

The miseries of slow starvation are the main feature of the first story, dealing with life and death behind bars in the mid-1930s. In their desperation the narrator's cell-mates resort to the agonies of a hunger strike, and when they are on the point of collapse they win. Nationalist prison officials give in because they are actually alarmed by the prospect of their victims dying on them.

Between the claustrophobia-inducing crowded prison cells of the first and last stories comes an episode in a wild corner of Shandong during the Japanese war as the author and his companions, non-combatant members of the Eighth Route Army, manage to get hopelessly lost, run out of food, and are barely able to walk when they are found and led to safety by a peasant's dog. This story is almost light relief by comparison with the other two. Though the characters suffer it is through their own incompetence, not because of calculated cruelty.

This comparison makes the third story all the grimmer. It brings us back in the late 1960s and early 1970s to the very gaol in which the narrator had been held as a teenager before the Japanese war. But now the 1930s seem like the good old days: prisoners could study, all sorts of books were available, and the authorities had enough humanity to yield to their prisoners' threat of self-destruction. The iron fist of the proletarian dictatorship is even stingier with food than the Nationalist one, and this time the reason is not corruption but policy: prisoners are deliberately kept hungry. If a prisoner wants to kill himself by smashing his head against concrete, so much the worse for him. The only mitigation of the hellishness of prison life is the kindness of the other prisoners, who sometimes defeat the calculated cruelties of the authorities.