

Wer sich – weit über die im Titel angesprochene Vertragspolitik hinaus – zuverlässig über die strukturellen Ursachen des zentralen Konfliktherds im südlichen Afrika informieren will, dem sei W. Kühnes Arbeit nachdrücklich empfohlen. Es handelt sich um eine aktuelle und intelligente zeitgeschichtliche Analyse, die im deutschen Sprachraum rar sind.

Gerald Braun

Afrika-Verein e. V., Hamburg (Hrsg.)
Afrika 1984 — 50 Jahre Wirtschaftspartnerschaft
Hamburg/Pfaffenhofen, 1984, 507 S., DM 68,—

Die vorliegende Festschrift, die anlässlich des 50jährigen Bestehens des Afrika-Vereins herausgegeben wurde, spiegelt ganz und gar die wirtschaftliche und handelspolitische Ausrichtung des Vereins wider. Die Einzelbeiträge – neben der Chronik, die die Entwicklung und Tätigkeit des Vereins in den letzten 50 Jahren schildert – gelten so überwiegend wirtschaftlichen und branchenspezifischen Themen. Nur ganz am Rande kommen kulturelle Belange zur Sprache, von entwicklungspolitischen ist nirgends die Rede. Dies ist bedauerlich, denn die Festschrift wäre an sich ein Ort gewesen, Wirtschaft, Afrika-Forschung und Entwicklungsländerforschung zusammenzuführen. Hier wären für alle, die sich mit dem afrikanischen Kontinent beschäftigen, interessante Erkenntnisse zu erwarten gewesen. So aber bleibt der Eindruck, daß sich hier ein Forum getroffen hat, das für die breite westdeutsche Afrika- und Entwicklungsländerforschung wenig Interesse zeigt. Und dabei sind einzelne Beiträge nicht zuletzt durch ihre branchenspezifische Ausrichtung durchaus oberflächlich; auch die Aussagen zur wirtschaftlichen Entwicklung dürften in der auf Afrika konzentrierten Entwicklungsländerforschung gewiß nicht unwidersprochen bleiben.

Ulrich Werwigk

Sterling Seagrave
The Soong Dynasty
Harper & Row, New York, 1985, pp vii, 532, US \$ 22.50

Fat paperback novels of Oriental 'family sagas' still enjoy wide appeal. Sterling Seagrave's account of the exploits of the Soong family would, however, seem to prove once again that fact is stranger than fiction. This Shanghai family became prominent, first through the financing, by Charlie Soong,

the 'dynasty's' founder, of Dr Sun Yatsen's (Sun Zhongshan) revolutionary activities, and subsequently through the marital alliances of his three U.S.-educated daughters – Ailing, Mayling and Chingling – with Dr Sun, Chiang Kaishek (Jiang Jieshi) and the Shanxi banker and later Kuomintang finance minister H. H. Kung (Kong Xiangxi), as well as the career of Charlie's son T. V. Soong (Song Ziwen) as finance minister and prime minister during Chiang's régime.

The Soongs being centrally placed in modern Chinese history, Mr Seagrave's narrative, in tracing the family's path to wealth and power, predictably includes much that is familiar: From runaway Charlie's first odd jobs in the U.S. and his spell in college in North Carolina to missionary work, publishing fame in Shanghai and the early Soong links with Dr Sun's anti-Manchu politics; from the beginnings of Republican power in Southern China after the 1911 revolution and the sanguinary rift between the Kuomintang and the Chinese Communist Party in 1927 to Mayling's marriage to Chiang Kaishek in that same year; from the cunctative conduct by Chiang of the anti-Japanese war to the public-relations feats performed in particular by Mayling in her capacity as Madame Chiang during China's wartime alliance with the U.S.; from colossal fortunes made by the family in the course of Sino-American cooperation during the Second World War to an eventual opulent life of exile in the U.S.¹ after the Kuomintang had been driven from the Chinese mainland by Mao Tsetung's (Mao Zedong) armies.

The story has been variously told before, not least by those who, like the late General Stilwell, thought little of the political manoeuvres executed by Chiang and his cast in relation to the Allies. But Mr Seagrave for the first time paints a stark and systematic picture of strong-arm tactics, wheeling and dealing and symbiosis with Chinese organised crime of the period as important catalysts of the Soong/Chiang partnership's success. Having read this book, one understands more easily why Chiang Kaishek may have been readily identifiable to the audiences of a British wartime radio comedy which referred to him as »General Cash My-check«.

A more generally intriguing aspect of Chiang/Soong influence on the U.S. administration during the Second World War lies in the magnetism of the Americanised members of the family which worked itself on a stratum of U.S. decision makers extremely ready to succumb to the suave cultural adaptability and ostensible Christian zeal of shrewd Chinese tacticians. Nationalist China's political stock has since much depreciated in the U.S. and a tale such as Mr Seagrave's, of former Kuomintang self-seeking at the expense of the Chinese and American peoples, is unlikely to arouse adverse comment as it might have done a decade ago. The force of circumstance has now helped the Peking government to the popular status of a new friend of America.²

Wolfgang Kessler

- 1 Cf also the recent reports on the fortress-cum-office built by Louie Kung (Kong Lingjie) in Texas, in: *Jiushi Niandai* (Hong Kong), 1985 (May), pp 71 et seq.
- 2 Cf the appraisal of U.S. polls on popular opinion regarding U.S. cooperation with the People's Republic of China, in: *Zheng Ming* (Hong Kong), 1985 (November), pp 44 et seq.