

SUMMARIES

Wang Xiaoye: Das chinesische Preissystem im Verlauf der Wirtschaftsreform ASIEN, (October 1993) 49, pp.7-21

The economic reforms means that China will be changed from a planned economy to a market economy. As regards the price reform, it has been getting on first of all with the price regulation and then a relaxation of price control. In respect of the means of production the system of double track and the restriction of the highest price have been in progress for a long time. Since September 1992 the price reform in China has been made at a faster and faster pace and the distribution according to the state plan has constituted a smaller and smaller part in the total commodity circulation. But the price reform requires also the reforms in other economic sectors. The current runaway economic growth and the too high inflation in China clearly show that the price reform needs at least such a bank system that adapts itself to free price movements.

Thomas Jansen: Das Sanxia-Staudammprojekt und die Frage der Modernisierung in der Volksrepublik China ASIEN, (October 1993) 49, pp.22-38

On April 3rd, 1992 the National People's Congress (NPC) of the People's Republic of China approved the government's proposal to construct the Three Gorges Dam on the Yangtze river after more than three decades of intense debate. Against the background of China's long-standing tradition of water conservancy (Part I), the article briefly recounts the history of the dam project beginning with Sun Yat-sen's proposal in 1919 until the final decision of 1992 (Part II). This part is followed by a description of the debate's main participants and their respective views (Part III). The fourth part focuses on some crucial aspects of decision making during the last stage of the debate (1986-92). The Three Gorges Dam is not primarily interpreted as a measure to further the country's modernization, but as an attempt made by the central government to retain political stability and strengthen its hold over the southern provinces.

Helmut Loofs-Wissowa: "Die heißen Töpfe von Ban Chiang". Die Datierung der Bronzezeit in Thailand - der jetzige Stand ASIEN, (October 1993) 49, pp.39-49

As the only Southeast Asian country not have been colonized by a European power or America, Thailand was also the first to allow foreign archaeologists to work within its borders after the war. One of these, the leader of an American expedition from Hawaii, claimed in 1966 to have found signs of prehistoric bronze-working in the northeastern part of the country. In 1969 erroneous dates from another site in the area, Ban Chiang, were taken to mean that bronze there was even older than the earliest bronze in western Asia: the oldest bronze in the world. The theory was soon developed that, therefore, Thailand must have been the "Cradle of Civilization" of all Mankind - a claim which was eagerly propagated by the media throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Today, nineteen years after it had been shown to be unfounded in scholarly publications and nine years after it had finally been withdrawn by its main proponent himself, this claim is still widely believed not only in Thailand but also in America and Europe and it can still be found in archaeological dictionaries and textbooks.

The present article attempts to analyse the reasons why the campaign of dissemination of this claim was so remarkably successful and to offer an alternative view of how to integrate the bronze finds of Thailand into the context of what is known of the Bronze Age of Southeast Asia and the rest of the world.

Helmut Volger: Handelskonflikt und Machtrivalität zwischen Japan und den USA und die Perspektive für die Zukunft

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After referring briefly to the present "war of words" (Dan Quayle) and the increasing tendency towards ethnic stereotyping and nationalistic slogans, the author deals with the structural defects in both economies and their ensuing consequences for the social structures in the two nations: One the one hand the over-capitalized "bubble" economy of Japan being pressed now by stock exchange crashes, the resistance of their own work force and the pressures from outside to reform the aggressive "corporate capitalism" (Hiroshi Okumura), on the other hand the industrial economy of the US lacking adaptability, inventiveness and capital funds, being forced to undergo a far-reaching reform. On the political level the United States copes with the loss of its traditional role as super-power relying on military strength, considering Japan in Pentagon papers still as potential rival and Asian hegemon, while Japan seems to have already learned the lesson of "multilateralism" and "soft power" (Joseph Nye) in world politics, i.e. that political power is increasingly based on economic and diplomatic means and capacity for cooperation in the place of military resources, and engages itself increasingly in United Nations programs and peace-keeping operations. The author recommends a cooperation of the USA and Japan in security policy as well as economic issues within the framework of multilateral regional organisations in the Asia-Pacific region such as the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC).