

gung engagiert, kann die Autorin seine Bedeutung für die Kultur und die Frauen Vietnams nur mit gemischten Gefühlen darstellen. Der Verleger Helmut Donat gab dem Büchlein ein Taschenbuch-Format, nicht zuletzt fürs Reisen geeignet.

*Klaus Frieder Bastian*

LINDA W.L. YOUNG, *Crosstalk and Culture in Sino-American Communication*. (Studies in Interactional Sociolinguistics, 10). Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994. XXIII, 215 pp. ISBN 0-521-41619-1

Young's work is an academic attempt at understanding intercultural communication problems that inevitably arise when members of cultures as different as the North American and the Chinese try to deal with each other without being aware of the linguistic pitfalls each language bestows. Young's approach is analytic (in contrast e.g. to that of James J. Wang, *Outrageous Chinese*. San Francisco 1994, a practice-oriented publication), trying to elucidate those pitfalls in order to help avoid misunderstandings and *faux pas* in everyday communication.

The author divides her book into seven chapters, each devoted to a specific cluster of problems – scientific as well as practical ones – in intercultural communication. It constitutes a multi-layered in-depth study of very complex processes that are not yet fully nor well understood despite their everyday occurrence.

Young's main, though not exclusive, focus is on the Chinese side of the problems, discussing Chinese communicative strategies in relation to personality characteristics; cultural determinants of behavior in relation to verbal communicative skills and/or shortcomings; interaction of the cultural, behavioral, and linguistic systems in structuring interpretative patterns, ideas, and their perception; and many other problems.

Ms. Young draws extensively on tapes recording everyday interactions between Chinese and Americans in various institutional settings. Her analytical scope ranges from grammar to rhetorical strategies and cultural ideology. The latter two are instrumental in establishing or confirming cultural barriers as they reveal "unstated cultural expectations and customary ways of perceiving and responding which do not coincide at all" (p. 193). "Different ways of viewing the world", "different ways of relating to people", "different sets of communicative conventions", "different methods of generating meaning and eliciting response" (p. 193): all those factors,

and a myriad more, contribute to misunderstandings and failure in intercultural communication processes, thus more often than not reasserting cultural stereotypes and biases.

Could it be that the road to growing mutual understanding among members of distinct cultures is blocked by an intercultural communication vehicle which does not yet have an adequate chassis? It seems paradoxical that an ever increasing number of intercultural contacts obviously leads to greater communicative problems. Or is it that through growing contacts we are just beginning to perceive the range of problems of which we were unaware before? Ms. Young, at least, does not seem to be pessimistic about the possibilities of intercultural interaction; she is realistic enough, though, to see the numerous hidden traps. Her book may be highly recommended as a successful and readable contribution towards coming to grips with those problems.

Armin Sievers

HEIKE FRICK, MECHTHILD LEUTNER, NICOLA SPAKOWSKI (eds.), *Frauenforschung in China. Analysen, Texte, Bibliographie*. (Berliner China-Studien, Bd. 28). München: Minerva Publikation, 1995. 312 pages, DM 56,—. ISBN 3-597-10648-X

NORA SAUSMIKAT, *Nichtstaatliche Frauenforschung in der VR China. Eine Diskussion der Frauenwissenschaft Li Xiaojiangs*. (Berliner China-Studien, Bd. 30). Münster: Lit Verlag, 1995. DM 38,80, 230 pages. ISBN 3-8258-2511-6

Industrialization in Taiwan during the 1970's and the policy of economic reforms in the PRC in the 1980's encourages reflection on the situation of working women. Since then, only very few aspects of women studies in Greater China have become known in the Western academic world.

German sinology started to focus on this theme at the beginning of the nineties, when a conference in Berlin presented first results regarding working women and their specific problems. Serving as basis for further research, the short contributions by different authors in this volume edited by Frick, Leutner and Spakowski try to show the facets of women studies in progress. The first section gives an introduction to the general situation of women studies in China, whereas the second contains important key texts on the topic, translated or commentated by the authors. The third part