

V. Dennis, Jr. who provides an excellent account of Kampuchea's ecology and resource base as well as the natural limitations of food production strategies. Several articles deal competently with topics like appropriate development aid for Kampuchea (Joel R. Charny), the rebuilding of Kampuchea's food supply (Orlin J. Scoville) and the "concentration camp syndrome" among Cambodian refugees (J.D. Kinzie). A well written introduction by the editors M. Hood and D. Abling on the "path to Cambodia's present", research on Khmer village culture and on the Cambodians in the United States complete this commendable volume.

Several of the contributors have been working for Oxfam (in Phnom Penh) and hence derive their experiences mainly from the Heng Samrin-government side of the conflict which holds a bias against the "other side", namely the three so-called coalition forces which regrouped along the border with Thailand in 1979. Only the former correspondent of the French daily *Le Monde*, Serge Thion, ventures (with his contribution on the patterns of Cambodian politics) into truly hot water by claiming that events and mechanisms in Cambodia under Prince Sihanouk, General Lon Nol, Pol Pot and Heng Samrin were in fact quite similar and should be interpreted within the same framework of cultural and social analysis. Further, according to S. Thion the real plight of the Khmer people was that in their recent history they were not blessed with a *dharmaraja*, a just and righteous ruler. This is certainly a sociological dream and in this reviewer's opinion such a "source of harmony" (S. Thion) would probably not have survived the turmoils of current Khmer history, if he chose to stay in the country.

Hans U. Luther

BETTINA GRANSOW/MECHTHILD LEUTNER (eds.), *China: Nähe und Ferne. Deutsch-chinesische Beziehungen in Geschichte und Gegenwart. Zum 60. Geburtstag von Kuo Heng-yü*. Frankfurt am Main/Bern/New York/Paris: Peter Lang, 1989. 456 pages, DM 90.-

The celebration of Kuo Heng-yü's 60th birthday provided the appropriate occasion to invite more than twenty-five Chinese and European scholars to participate in the publication of a joint volume that would do due justice to the event. For more than twenty-five years Professor Kuo has been engaged in supervising, carrying out and inspiring studies in a field of research that has been attracting wider interest among German sinologists and historians only since the late '70s. Through his tutorials, his published works and his initiative

in fostering German-Chinese academic exchange, Kuo Heng-yü has substantially contributed to promoting research in an area, the academic and political importance of which is reflected in this carefully edited volume. The title hints justly at the problem of distance inherent not only in intercultural research; it also denotes awareness of the persistent ambiguities that underly seemingly clear-cut and self-evident observations.

This book is divided into four well-chosen sections that structure the wide-ranging diversity of its contents. The first and second sections - both focusing on questions specifically pertaining to German-Chinese relations - are devoted to "Present-Day Cooperation and Exchange" and "Historical Attitudes and Expectations" and cover the period from the mid-nineteenth century up to the recent years of increased "opening". Section three contains articles dealing with practical and theoretical linguistic questions and with German and Chinese films, the latter being viewed both as a medium for conveying cultural stereotypes as well as a useful means to complement language teaching and sinological studies. The section concludes with a bibliography of modern Chinese literature in German translation, listing about 170 books published between 1938 and 1988. The brief analysis introducing the bibliography - albeit omitting to furnish evidence based on the relevant statistical data - points out the impact of changing political circumstances on translation activities - not only in centrally planned countries. The final section entitled "Politics in China: Problems and Tendencies" consists of six articles that discuss issues relating to Chinese political history and ideas - in part from highly original points of view; like most of the other contributions to the book they testify to the fruitful results of international, interdisciplinary research, carried out in a spirit of openness to critical understanding. The book is rounded off by English abstracts of the articles (about one third of them in English), and with biographical notes on the authors.

Although the final editing of this volume took place just before the events of June 1989 put a sudden end to many a hope and promise not only in China, the recent changes in the Chinese political landscape have in no way diminished the significance of the book's contents. Quite on the contrary. It may be assumed that it will continue to retain its importance as a weighty *homage* to serious scholarship that cannot be restrained by the imponderables of distance.

Stephan v. Minden