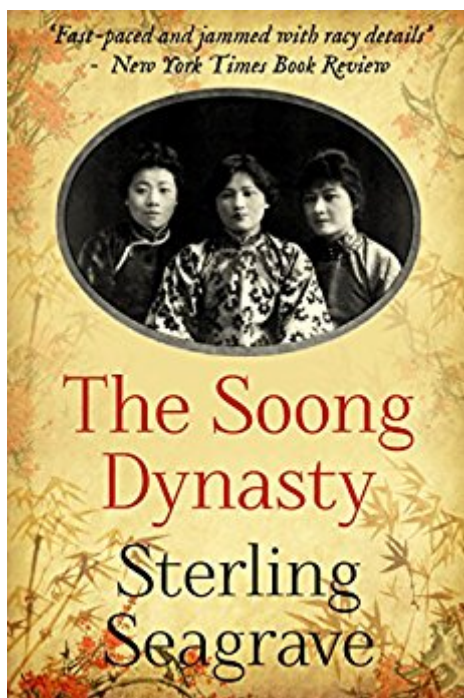


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The Soong Dynasty



Synopsis

Fast paced and jammed with racy details New York Times Book Review The Soong Dynasty is the first full behind-the-scenes account of the extraordinary Soong family whose power and wealth dominated China and American policy towards Asia in the Twentieth Century. It is an extraordinary work of historical detection which traces the family's roots from the middle of the last century and their explosive rise thereafter. Descendants of a runaway, they grew up in America under the protection of the Methodist church and returned to their homeland to make a fortune selling Western bibles. The Soong Family became the principal rulers of China during the first half of the Twentieth Century. In The Soong Dynasty, Sterling Seagrave describes for the first time the intricate and fascinating rise to power of Charlie Soong and his children, whom he married to some of China's most powerful men to create a network of power and influence which was to last for over fifty years. It is a classic tale of power, money, corruption and greed with elements of tragedy and comedy. Praise for The Soong Dynasty: Seagrave knows China, and has caught the atmosphere of that weird, melancholy place he has shed light into so many dark places, and turned a difficult piece of history into an engrossing narrative - Daily Telegraph Seagrave's marathon probe includes much new evidence It is an important segment of twentieth century world history People should therefore be encouraged to read it - Dervla Murphy, Irish Times The Soong Dynasty brings much pungent material to light [it is] a story unraveled with fluency and flair - Time A gripping book. Seagrave has tackled a mighty subject with resourcefulness and spirit - Washington Post Compulsively readable - International Herald Tribune Mr Seagrave is a fine investigative reporter • digging up information from a multitude of sources, much of it original, and piecing together a gripping account of epochal events - Wall Street Journal Sterling Seagrave, who grew up on the China-Burma border in the 1940s (his father was Dr Gordon Seagrave, author of Burma Surgeon), is the author of Yellow Rain, The Marcos Dynasty, Dragon Lady, and Lords of the Rim and has written many articles for major newspapers and magazines. In preparing The Soong Dynasty, he drew on half a lifetime in Asia and on many sources, including the files of Time Inc., the National Archives, many individuals, and the FBI, to produce a riveting and revealing narrative of major historical importance supplemented with much new material. He lives in Europe.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I thought it was a very interesting book and well written and showed both side of the Chinese revolution. It also showed how 3 sisters married very famous men in history.

Incredibly detailed and extremely long. Probably best read on a desert island alone

This is a very long and detailed history of China from about 1880 to the 1960s. It gives a full biography of Charlie Soong, the founder of a powerful family which included his son-in-law Chiang Kai-Shek. This book details Chiang's cruelty. When his sister-in-law begged for the life of a friend and political associate, he let her plead for an hour before telling her that the man had already been put to death. Some of Chiang's prisoners were garrotted by an executioner who was skilled at prolonging death for half an hour. The American public was not allowed to know what kind of monster they were supporting with money and arms. The publisher Henry Luce, for instance, dedicated his magazine to lavish and incessant praise of Chiang and his wife. Mme. Chiang's ambition had no limits. She was a monstrous woman who did not deserve to live as long as she did.

She died in the Waldorf-Astoria where she occupied several floors. A truly sickening history, when Japan occupied much of China during the thirties and Chiang and his wife battled the Chinese communists instead of the foreign invaders of their country. History is told in a smooth and readable fashion by this author.

Muy bueno

So much information about China told while telling the story of the Soongs. A little academic but so interesting.

...about the powerful Soong family. It's so easy to fall under the spell of this seemingly untouchable family who appeared to have it all--wealth, power, education, etc.--but we are reminded of the shady dealings and deeds that catapulted the family to its near-invincible status and its iconic place in world history. If this book sparks your interest, definitely try out an even better read--George Kerr's *Formosa Betrayed*. Kerr's book focuses on the early history of the Taiwan-China conflict: the turnover from Japanese Imperial rule, the subsequent and tumultuous Nationalist/KMT government, the 2-28 Incident and March Massacre, and the U.S.'s part throughout it all. Kerr's book is all-encompassing, but as regards the Soongs, it reminds you that beneath the glamour and wealth of people like the Soongs was the unscrupulous trading that bankrupted millions while feeding personal family fortunes. (Specifically look for allusions to T.V. Soong's influence on the then-impending economic collapse of Taiwan, and you'll never again be dazzled by the Soongs' bright lights and propaganda show.) Read it, not because you dare, but because you CAN.

I had given one copy away and wanted another one for myself. Terrific read. This is an amazing history story that reads like a novel.

If you want to understand anything about the real history of China in the modern era, you must read about the Soongs dynasty.

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