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Thomas Kampen

He Baogang, Guo Yingjie: Nationalism, National Identity and Democratization in China

Hampshire: Ashgate, 2000, 258 S.

Over the past few years the problem of nationalism in the People's Republic of China (PRC) has drawn considerable attention from social scientists both on the mainland and abroad, and a large amount of work on this topic has been published. Among monographs on Chinese nationalism the present book by He Baogang and Guo Yingjie deserves special respect and attention. There are three reasons in particular. Firstly, in their work He and Guo deal with the knotty question of nationalism not only as a theoretical problem but also in an empirical and practical way. Their interest clearly lies not in merely arguing what the Chinese nationalism is, but rather in the issue of what impact it has and will have in the future and how it might be dealt with in real political terms. Secondly, in their methodology the authors introduce an analytic approach as well as comparative one. Unlike many China researchers on this problem they have taken considerable trouble to define the nature of Chinese mainland nationalism by setting it against corresponding manifestations in Russia and Taiwan. This comparative approach enables the reader to appreciate the special features of Chinese nationalism. Thirdly, the scale of their book is remarkably ambitious. Their analysis covers both Chinese and global history as well as contemporary developments both in China and in the world in general, an interdisciplinary approach required by the multi-faceted and interrelated nature of the Chinese nationalism. The result is a major contribution to research on the issue of Chinese nationalism.

As the authors make clear in their book, the complexity of the problem of Chinese nationalism is immense. Overall there are two significant aspects. One is the phenomenon of inward or internal nationalism, which the many quasi-nation-states including modern China encounter. Like many young states China has to tackle ethnic problems, in this case between the Han-Chinese and the Tibetans, Uigurs and others. Not until 1912 did China have to face such tendencies towards ethnic division, at least not to the same degree as today. At that time imperial "frontiers" ex-

isted rather than "state borders",¹ and the Chinese emperors were content to maintain the status quo and to acknowledge the position of the ethnic minorities in return for outward recognition of their overlordship. Ethnic interest has only become a special issue since the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) claimed to be the legitimate representative of a politically sovereign multination-state. Since then, inappropriate ethnic policies of the PRC have strongly intensified conflicts between the Han Chinese and other large ethnic groups.

Outward or external nationalism involves issues between China and other countries, mainly the industrialised nations. The essence of the problem goes back firstly to the memory of the historical period from late Qing-dynasty, in which China was partly divided up among imperial nations, and secondly to the characteristically strong Chinese cultural consciousness. A further aspect of outward nationalism is connected with relations between Mainland China and Taiwan, which in my mind is rather a political than a nationalist problem. Based on their perception of the different mainland Han-nationalist ideas the authors identify four types of national identity:

	Traditional	Modern
Weak	Han national identity	Socialist national identity
Strong	Confucian cultural national identity	Civic and territorial national identity

These types of national identity in contemporary China are embodied mainly in "cultural nationalism," consisting of the contribution of a small group of critical intellectuals and "popular nationalism" on the one hand and official "state nationalism" on the other. Emphasizing the overlapping features of the four categories the authors focus their analysis on mainland state nationalism which characterizes the CCP's ideology and strategy either in the foreign policy or in the stance towards Tibet, Xinjiang and Taiwan. Without having given enough explanations, the authors substitute "Pan-Chinese nationalism" for "state nationalism".

"Pan-Chinese nationalism" took form in mainland China over the last decades and prevails in the arena of discussion and the policy-making process. Its major concern lies in securing the territorial integrity. On the issue of the reunification of Taiwan, Pan-Chinese nationalists "play up the fact that the Taiwanese are Han Chinese, and that China and Taiwan share a Confucian legacy. At the same time, they make a concession in that socialist elements of Chinese national identity should not be imposed upon Taiwan" (He: 106). According to He and Guo, Deng Xiaoping's proposal of "one nation two systems" can be regarded as a concrete form of this idea.² In this model there are elements of a federalist system which the authors assess positively as a possible solution of China's multinational problems in the future. In support of this (qualified) positive stance towards "Pan-Chinese nationalism" they also advance the following argument: "Pan-Chinese nationalism" can also be seen as

1 Giddens, Anthony: *The Nation-State and Violence*, Cambridge 1985.

2 This positive affirmation is however relativized by the authors' following allegation: "Putting aside the complex issue of what and how federal or confederate institutions should be adopted, federal or confederate arrangements must contain democratic elements" (He: 126).

a move towards civic nationalism, in the sense that it emphasizes equal citizenship regardless of ethnic, cultural and 'racial' backgrounds" (He: 195). However, Pan-Chinese nationalism could be challenged by "the ethnic minorities within China and independence activities in Taiwan, who do not share the Pan-Chinese identity" (He: 101).

Without noticing the inconsistencies in their definitions, the authors apply the notion of "Chinese nationalism" instead of "Pan-Chinese nationalism" or "state nationalism" in the rest of their analysis. From the fifth chapter on the authors present the essential part of the book — the relations between democratisation and nationalism. In contrast to "Taiwanese nationalists" and "mainland democrats", "Chinese nationalists see democracy as a foreign product and alien to the Chinese people" (He: 119). They "do not feel confident that Chinese democratisation will necessarily promote unification, and they worry that the democratisation of China will provide a chance for Taiwan to gain its independence" (He: 129).

By citing the example of the democratisation process in the former Soviet Union the authors in conclusion address a very subtle point which, however, highlights the ambiguity of their own arguments: "democratisation stimulates political competition, but it also encourages ethnic separatism and aggravates elite ethnic divisions by awakening national consciousness through enfranchising minorities" (He: 160). What has happened in the former USSR is explained by the authors as a "paradox of democratisation", namely, it would seem, that if a multination-state endorses democratisation, then it will face territorial splitting and ethnic conflict. The ensuing ethnic division will then lead to further instability of the neighbouring regions.

Based on the assumption that China's territorial integrity and political stability are the major issues of the CCP, the authors appreciate the strategy of the Chinese leadership in the past twenty years, although they also notice that China's potential problems are unpredictable. The authors' answer to the question whether nationalism is in the Chinese context an ally or foe of democracy is more than ambiguous. Nationalism could be an ally of democracy. This conclusion is supported by three quite different assumptions or perceptions. Firstly, the contemporary Chinese state nationalism is in fact not completely opposed to any form of democracy; secondly, in Chinese history there were thinkers like Liang Qichao (1873-1929), who promoted both the nationalist idea and the democratic movement, and thirdly, the students during the protest movement 1988-1989 in Nanjing were both nationalism-oriented but at the same time active supporters of democracy in China. However, nationalism could also undermine democracy especially in a multination-state.

The reader can easily notice that the arguments in the book, though enlightening enough, limp from time to time. Three remarks should be made. Firstly, as I already mentioned, there is a lack of precision in definitions used by the authors. It is difficult to distinguish who exactly represents "state nationalism", "Pan-Chinese nationalism" and "Chinese nationalism". The authors seem to indicate that the Chinese leadership embodies these three notions. But they sometimes tend to apply these notions in identifying other social groups. Moreover, it is not quite clear which kind of nationalism can take an institutionalised or non-institutionalised form in the Chinese context. In my mind, non-institutionalised nationalism could be represented by

unofficial social groups such as the authors of *China Can Say No*.³ Besides, even within the contemporary Chinese leadership many different interest groups have arisen over past two decades, so that a differentiation of it is necessary.

Secondly, it would be easier for the reader to follow the arguments of authors if they had made it clear that the nationalist idea is a matter of political psychology, which has become the agenda only since late 18th century. As many social scientists have already proved, there is a kind of concomitance between (the emergence of) the nation-state and the nationalist idea. The nationalist idea is originally a product of intellectuals based upon the reflection on the history and political environment of the related country. This idea can be easily adopted by the populace because of certain cultural and territorial ties. So far it is a natural phenomenon. But unfortunately the nationalist idea is always instrumentalised and, if necessary, institutionalised mostly by the leading political elite, although multination-states seem to have more difficulties in doing this than nation-states. In the case of today's China, the character of instrumentalization is quite obvious. Since Deng Xiaoping's accession of power there has been switch from the paradigm of class struggle to one of economic construct. The Party still wants to uphold its political monopoly, but not (merely) through political campaigns, rather through offering the populace a better (material) life. It is thus logical that nationalism is used for appealing for investments from rich Chinese abroad. Realizing that orthodox Marxism is no longer attractive to the young generation, patriotism is applied to cement the seeming consensus of the state. After the bombardment of the Chinese embassy the authorities organized (in a hidden form) a nationwide protest, because they apprehended that the pro-American feeling among the young students was on the strong increase. But the Chinese leadership is not always nationalism-oriented if the nationalism (especially in its radical form) is in conflict with values or agenda which the Party perceives to be more important.⁴ The strict control over other "voices" and the playing down of nationalist sentiment after the incident of the American spy plane in April this year shows another feature of the CCP's stance towards nationalism.

Last but not least, the nationalist idea can also be instrumentalised by pro-democracy or simply anti-government social groups in China, although up to now they have hardly been able to institutionalise it. Since China is still an authoritarian country, other social groups or non-official political elites can express their opinions and appeal to the populace only through employing the nationalist idea as a legitimate strategy. Even among pro-democracy dissidents there are some who take a quite radical nationalist stance according to the motto "whatever the CCP supports, we should oppose", or, "the CCP is pseudo-nationalist, we are the real patriots". This kind of abnormality in airing political "voices" derives from official suppression. At the same time, this extreme position could also lead to another kind of suppression if the radical nationalists were ever to come to power.

3 Sometimes there is also a certain connection between authorities and unofficial social groups. Song Qiang/Zhang Zang Zang/Qiao Bian/Tang Zheng Yu/Gu Qing Sheng (eds.): *Zhongguo keyi shuo bu*. Lenzhan hou shidai de zhengzhi juezi (China Can Say No), Beijing 1995.

4 Cf. Junhua Zhang: "Rivale oder Genossen? – Die Spielarten des Nationalismus in der VR China", in: *Asien*, Juli 1997, S. 27-47.

Accordingly, it is hardly relevant to ask if nationalism (in terms of "nationalist idea") will be the ally or foe of democracy. It seems to me to be more important to investigate under which circumstances the nationalist idea can be instrumentalised or institutionalised and which form of instrumentalisation or institutionalisation is likely to be extremely dangerous to the democratisation in countries undergoing transformation.

Junhua Zhang

Adrian C. Seeger: Die Privatisierung von Staatsunternehmen in der VR China. Bedingungen, Transformationsprobleme, Perspektiven

Aachen: Shaker Verlag, 2001, 288 S.

Die Untersuchung von Privatisierungsprozessen in Transformationsstaaten hat sich seit Einleitung der zentral- und osteuropäischen Transformationsprogramme in der Wirtschaftssystemforschung hoher Beliebtheit erfreut. Privateigentum gilt nicht nur als zentrales konstituierendes Systemelement marktwirtschaftlicher Ordnungen, der Prozess der Privatisierung fasziniert zugleich aufgrund seiner hohen politischen Bedeutung und vielschichtigen Interdependenzen als anspruchsvolles Forschungsprogramm. Allerdings, so zeigt eine Sichtung aktueller Transformationsstudien, scheint die Hochkonjunktur der Privatisierungsstudien seit etwa Mitte der 90er Jahre vorüber. Das Wesentliche schien gesagt, die zentralen Argumente für und gegen die unterschiedlichen Privatisierungsstrategien waren bekannt und aus den gängigen Perspektiven von der Ordnungspolitik bis hin zur Neuen Institutionenökonomik hinreichend ausgeleuchtet. Nicht zuletzt machten die Unternehmensbilanzen nach Abschluss der einzelnen nationalen Privatisierungsprogramme deutlich, dass die Bedeutung der Privatisierungsmethode, also der Form der formal-rechtlichen Übertragung von exklusiven Eigentumsrechten, als Erfolgsdeterminante privatisierter Unternehmen offensichtlich überschätzt worden war. Von da an geriet die Gewährleistung und Garantie privater Verfügungsrechte sowie die Etablierung funktionsfähiger Mechanismen einer effizienten Unternehmenskontrolle zunehmend in den Mittelpunkt des Forschungsinteresses.

Gegen diesen allgemeinen Trend hat Adrian C. Seeger das Privatisierungsproblem erneut aufgegriffen und auf den Fall der chinesischen Staatsbetriebe angewendet. Erklärtes Ziel seiner Arbeit ist, "Perspektiven für die Privatisierung der staatlichen Industrieunternehmen in China aufzuzeigen", wobei "gesamt- und einzelwirtschaftliche Gegebenheiten ebenso berücksichtigt werden wie theoretische Ziele und Bedingungen". Neues vermag Seeger dabei jedoch nicht zu präsentieren. Im Wesentlichen bietet seine Arbeit eine Zusammenschau zentraler Erkenntnisse der Wirtschaftssystemforschung, die mit einer Betrachtung der chinesischen Reformen des Staatssektors kombiniert wird. Ausgehend von einer groben Skizzierung elementarer Wirtschaftssystemtypen (Kapitel 2) und zentraler Transformationsaufgaben (Kapitel 3) leitet Seeger zu einer ausführlichen Darstellung der Privatisierung als wirtschaftspolitische Aufgabe über (Kapitel 4). Kursorisch werden hier neben begrifflichen Definitionen Inhalte, Ziele sowie wesentliche Privatisierungsstrategien erläutert und