

docks and construction sites) activities to more modern service-oriented lines of racketeering: loan sharking, control of entertainment facilities (from snack bars to coffee shops), real estate operations, control of trucking companies, drug smuggling and political activities - usually fundraising, campaigning and occasional dirty business on behalf of selected LDP luminaries.

The authors convincingly demonstrate that the links between gangsters and rightwing politicians are based on rigid social structures (appealing to both), a shared mystical world view that worships power and a joint resentment of foreigners and foreign ideas (socialism or liberalism in particular).

The gangs' primary motivation, however, is clearly derived from straight profit motives: the defense of their rackets and the opening of new business ventures, facilitated by political protection. While the Kuromaku of old may be a dying breed, the prominence of LDP dietman Koichi Yamada (Takeshita faction, also of Inagawa-Gumi) *et alii*, as well as the omnipresence of black trucks with loudspeakers, manned by right-wing thugs, in all major Japanese cities, suggest continued gangland/politics links.

Japan's police tolerates the 110,000 men strong gangs not only for their political clout: the gangs discipline their own members and do not tolerate petty 'independent' street crime in their turf, and hence keep Japan's waste entertainment districts 'safe' on their terms. Yet, recent flare-ups of inter-gang wars and the decline of the Yamaguchi-Gumi - Japan's largest crime syndicate - suggest that younger gangsters (mostly originating from the *boso-zoku* motorcycle gangs) are more difficult to control and less loyal to their bosses, indicating social change also in one of the most conservative institutions of modern Japan.

Kaplan and Dubro have done thorough research work (though most of their sources are in English), and interviewed even a few gang leaders. Though aimed at a larger public and 'easy reading' (it is slightly repetitive at times), the book is well footnoted and a useful reference source for anyone interested in the shadier sides of Japan's political economy.

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THOMAS HEBERER (ed.), *Ethnic Minorities in China: Tradition and Transform.* Papers of the 2nd Interdisciplinary Congress Sinology/Ethnology, St. Augustin. (Forum 10). Aachen: Alano, 1987. 126 pp., DM 32.- .

This book has seven chapters discussing contemporary trends among China's minorities. Three chapters are written by the editor, Th. Heberer; the others

are contributed by Hubert Seiwert, Wu Bing'an, Jan-Ojvind Swahn and F. Georg Heyne. They are selections from the 2nd Interdisciplinary Congress on Ethnology/Sinology held at St. Augustin near Bonn in 1984.

The authors describe many aspects of the culture and history of some of China's least known national minorities and the reforms they are seeking, including 1, further development of the minority languages and scripts (e.g., Yi and Daur), 2, the ineffectiveness of the Cultural Revolution in the destruction of minority cultures, and 3, the influence of Deng Xiaoping's liberalization of the Communist Party's minority policies on both the protection of minority cultural and religious traditions, and increased utilization of wealth generated by minorities in their own autonomous regions.

It is obvious from reading the various contributions that China's minorities recognize that political power will remain basically in the hands of Han party members. The authors also make it clear that present Communist liberalism towards minorities is a direct response to discontent among them, caused by the former far more oppressive policy of the Chinese government towards national minorities.

In chapter 1 Th. Heberer explains the role of culture in determining interaction within and without the Yi community of the Liangshan mountains. He provides a fine review of the dynamics of the clan system among the Black and White Yi, in addition to the impact of Communist reforms on the Yi slave system, land ownership and Yi culture in general. He accurately points out that while radical reforms during the Cultural Revolution temporarily submerged many aspects of Yi traditional culture, the Yi still retain many salient features of their culture, especially Shamanism.

In chapter 2 Heberer discusses the contradictions in China's autonomy policies and reviews the successes and failures of the Communist Party in implementing its goals over the past 30 years. Heberer examines the impact of China's autonomy legislation on minorities throughout the country.

Heberer makes a valid case for the fact that most minorities regard the success of autonomy in terms of how it affects their economic well-being. As a result, economic policies which improve the living conditions of the minorities, especially increased incomes, encourage minority support of the government.

In chapter 3, H. Seiwert examines the minority religions of China. After a short review of the major religious trends in minority areas including the universal religions like Islam and Christianity and tribal religions, China's folk-religions, Taoism and Buddhism are treated in detail. Although Seiwert registers a regional element in the folk-religions of China, he makes it clear that national Chinese traditions have dominated the expression of minority folk-

religions, as the Communist Party attempts to integrate the minorities into greater Han society. Seiwert thus maintains that the present Chinese religious policies are a continuation of the Confucian policy of "civilizing barbarians".

In chapter 4 Th. Heberer discusses Shamanism in China as illustrated by the Yi. He compares Wuism and Shamanism, to highlight the long tradition of this form of belief. Heberer makes it clear that Shamanism is tolerated among the Yi, though the Communists hope to eliminate this form of belief because they consider Shamanism a superstition.

In chapter 5 Wu Bing'an describes the polytheistic belief of the Daur, including their complex religious concepts and the categories of their gods. The Daur (Dagur) beliefs are important because they highlight the primitive religion of the Mongols. In annexes Wu provides a valuable review of books concerning the Daur and the Daurian language.

In chapter 6 Swahn offers a few suggestions on the recording of folklore. Although not focused on China, this article provides many methodological points ethnographers should consider when collecting folktales. Swahn's major principle is that folktales must be indexed both for type and motif.

In the final major chapter F. Georg Heyne examines the Ewenki people of northeast China, who breed the arctic reindeer. It is a valuable survey of this little known Tungus group, whose culture is gradually dying out.

The book also contains two extensive lists of Chinese publications dealing with national minorities (pp. 94-104; 125-126).

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