

role of women in family and society. Central part is an empirical study of all facts concerning birth, as they were observed in 30 pregnancies. Traditional practices and the requirements of modern risk reduction, normal course of events and correspondent theories are compared. Dr. Sich thus draws a clear picture of the "interacting obstetrical systems", of their mutual positive and negative influences. The carefully documented case studies are illustrated with maps, diagrams, and photographs. An introduction gives a detailed literature review, and the method used is explained. Many footnotes comment the text, and a bibliography is added.

This study is an excellent example of a rare kind: the clear method presents valuable data, and the historical and transcultural comparative analysis puts them into a well-balanced perspective. The personal involvement of the author as a gynaecologist and public health expert and her sympathetic understanding are visible throughout the book. The results are so clearly arranged that they can also serve in new contexts as basic material for different comparisons. The references given are a useful apparatus for further analyses. Medical anthropologists, historians of medicine, development aid specialists, and last but not least medical field workers can certainly profit from studying this book.

Dr. Sich has succeeded in her endeavour to promote understanding of the problems that arise from the "natural sciences orientation in 'modern' medicine in developing countries because of their differing cultures and the consequent client behaviour". She does not offer quick solutions that could easily be copied, but rather encouragement to think ahead. By doing so, she shows the importance of applied ethnomedicine.

Winfried Effelsberg

THOMAS HEBERER: Nationalitätenpolitik und Ethnologie in der VR China.
(Veröffentlichungen aus dem Übersee-Museum Bremen, Series
D, Vol. 11). Bremen: Übersee-Museum 1982. 99 pages.
DM 15.80

The author lived in Peking for some years, which gave him the chance to work on Chinese material and with Chinese ethnologists. The result is this publication of which the first part deals with the policy of the Communist party towards the minorities since 1949, while the second part gives a summary of the development of Chinese ethnology, its influences, research and aims.

The first part gives an account of the minority policy according to the political movements, stating e.g. that the so called "left-wing" errors affected minorities as well as Han. While in the "democratic reforms" of 1949-1957 the right of autonomy and the nationalization (minzuhua) meant a positive start, they suffered a set-back during the "great leap forward" 1958-1960

and in the "cultural revolution". Equalization measures, lack of educational institutions or misrepresentation in the political administration etc. undermined the cultural identity of the minorities. Since 1980, starting with a change in the policy towards Tibet, the general situation was improved by measures taken in the fields of autonomy, economy, education, etc., the author says. It is maintained in the conclusion that in the last some thirty years basic improvements were carried out apart from the times of oppression and forced assimilation which created an atmosphere of mistrust.

Part two describes ethnology in China as a young academic discipline, influenced by European and American scientists, e.g. B. Malinowski. Before 1949 Chinese students went abroad and foreign scholars did field research in China but were excluded thereafter. Ethnology had to fulfill different tasks in different periods, again correlated with the political movements. This created quite a few obstacles to research and development of this science. After 1949 it was engaged in research to classify the various ethnic groups, on which their status of autonomy, for example, depended. Since 1956, research and publications increased in number, but "for ten years there was no ethnological research" during the cultural revolution (p.64). It only revived and became one of the sciences promoted in China thereafter, especially since 1978. Many projects are planned, new societies established and theoretical discussions are flourishing. This section of part two (pp. 64-76) is valuable for a deeper knowledge of the status quo of Chinese ethnology. Many questions are still awaiting an answer like the de facto situation in periods of differing policy, but we are provided with information and insights which are helpful for further studies. Heberer cites from Chinese sources difficult to obtain, so the reader may find the bibliography valuable as well.

Günter Bittner

RUDOLF G. WAGNER (ed.): *Literatur und Politik in der Volksrepublik China*. (Edition Suhrkamp 1151). Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1983. 376 pages. DM 18.-

This book introduces some of the most popular literary works of post-1978 China. The collection comprises short stories, a play and a poem, written by established writers like Wang Meng as well as by young authors such as Zheng Yi and Li Shoucheng.

The topics all stories have in common are the critique of bureaucratism, the unscrupulous abuse of privileges by cadres who were rehabilitated after the fall of the "Gang of Four" and personal unhappiness, stemming from the Cultural Revolution.

These works belong to the "Wounds"-literature named after a story that