

on various festive occasions, will meet again and shape future collaborations in the field of the comparative study of Jainism along these lines. However, it will be interesting to see to what extent academically educated Jain monks and nuns will be able to participate in this endeavour, and how Jain vested interests and the inevitable politicisation of this once 'purely academic' orientalist field of studies will affect the future production of knowledge.

Peter Flügel

Second International Conference on Yi-Studies, Trier University

Trier/Germany, 19-23 June 1998

"Processes of Social Change, Rising Ethnic Identity, and Ethnicity among the Yi Nationality in China" was the topic of the conference, bringing together more than 40 scholars from China, France, Germany, Japan, Poland, Switzerland, Taiwan and the US. The majority were scholars from among the Yi themselves. Altogether 29 papers were presented. Conference language was Chinese. Parallel to the conference an exhibition on culture and society of the Yi was shown in the library of Trier University. The conference was sponsored by the German Research Association (DFG).

Three topics were covered: (1) Processes of change in various aspects of Yi culture; (2) Effects of economic and social change on Yi society and identity; (3) Mechanisms of protecting identity developed among the Yi people themselves.

Part 1 addressed the issue of ethnic identification and definition. Stevan Harrell (University of Washington) exemplified with the Yala, a group of people in Miyi county (Sichuan), the complexity of the term *minzu* (nationality) in China. The Yala are classified as belonging to the Yi nationality, even though they do not recognize any kinship between themselves and the local Nuosu branch of the Yi, and neither group will intermarry, though they live side by side. They are components of the same *minzu*, but they are two different ethnic groups. Therefore there is a difference between the objective characteristics of a group as fixed by the state (nationality or *minzu*) and the subjective consciousness of that group (ethnic group). Pan Jiao (Central University of Nationalities, Beijing) argued that the ethnoscapes in China seem to have confirmed the thesis that ethnicity is created by the nation-state. Although the diversity within the Yi is tremendous, so-called similarities are arbitrary and the tremendous diversity be-

tween the Yi groups is ignored, the designation of Yi nationality seems to have been accepted by the Yi population. This was not only because they have no choice, but also because they are aware of the advantages of forming a larger nationality in political and economic bargaining with the state. Wugashinuimo Louwu (University of Michigan) compared narratives from the classics of Sichuan, Yunnan, Guizhou and Guangxi and concluded therefrom that even though "Yi" is a constructed official term, the majority of the "Yi" population share many cultural elements and a common consciousness.

Charles F. McKhann (Whitman College, USA) criticized the view that ethnicity in China is fundamentally a bipolar structure, in which all minorities are opposed to the majority Han. According to McKhann the issue of relations between minorities in the peripheral areas has been addressed surprisingly rarely. If one takes Han cultural practices as the gauge of civilization, then there is much to be said for this model, for it accurately reflects a certain kind of historical change - Sinicization. But the model breaks down if one considers other external sources of cultural change, namely the influence of neighboring minority ethnic groups.

Part 2 discussed issues of social change. Martin Schoenhals (Dowling College, USA) showed how education does, or does not, influence Yi culture and society. He argued that arranged marriage, say, may probably decline, but marriage will continue within the confines of caste. Bajie Rihuo (Institute of Ethnic Studies, Liangshan Prefecture, Sichuan) demonstrated that despite three "marriage reforms" there was no considerable change in the caste-oriented marriage system.

Part 3 considered changes within the religious systems of various Yi groups. The revival of traditional local practices was demonstrated by the papers of Margret Byrne Swain (University of California, Davis) on the revival of women shamans among the Sani, of Ang Zhiling (Office of Historical Chorography of Lunan County, Yunnan) on the revival of wizards among the Yi in Lunan, of Wang Lizhu (Office of Chorography of Dali Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan) on the revival of ancestor worship and Tu-Zhu temples, of Fan Xiuli (Hiroshima University) on the function of funeral ceremonies for moral education in Liangshan prefecture and of Shaha Gatse (Cultural Centre for Bimo Studies, Meigu County, Sichuan). The latter argued that Bimo (traditional priests and healers) were the core of Yi identity, as the Yi as a nationality possess no common language, customs or blood relations. Bamo Ayi (Central University of Nationalities, Beijing) pointed to the phenomenon of the growing number of Bimo not only in rural but also in urban areas. Bimo are not only priests and healers, intermediaries between men, ghosts and ancestors, but also intermediaries between people, between clans and between men and nature. The ethics of the Bimo

is by no means only a traditional one, Bimo are also models for a modern system of ethics and education. Benoit Vermander (Ricci Institute for Chinese Studies, Taipei) presented eight theses on Nosu (Liangshan Yi) religion, arguing that it is not a 'primitive' one, but the result of a deep and continuous historical evolution that is still going on. There exists no homogeneous religion, but rather many local variations. Although there are differences in rituals and beliefs, a "world vision" proper to Nosu religion can be identified.

Part 4 addressed the historiography of the Yi: Is there one history of the Yi people or several histories (as He Yaohua, Yunnan Academy of Social Sciences claimed), do the Yi as a nationality exist since the Zhou dynasty or are they the descendants of various historical persons? And what is the difference between the Chinese state's view of Yi history and the historical perception of various Yi groups and social strata within the Yi? Ann Maxwell Hill (Dickinson College, USA) argued that the Yi in Xiao Liangshan were not a slave society, if that term connotes a society in which the mode of production was based on the slave-master relationship. Nuosu society bore little resemblance to economies that relied significantly on slave labor. Slavery was rather the main institution through which outsiders became Nuosu. Nuosu consciousness of slavery was also a chance of social stratification. Based on this paper and that of Ma Erzi (Institute of Ethnic Studies of Liangshan Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan), who claimed that there was no term for 'slave' in the Yi language but that different words were used for specific situations and that therefore the English and Chinese terms for 'slave' do not correspond to the Yi terms and thus present a wrong view of traditional Yi society, a lively discussion arose on class, caste and slavery definitions.

Part 5 addressed issues of language and bilingual education. Huang Jianmin (Central University of Nationalities, Beijing) considered Yi scripts and literature to be important for the identification and identity of the Yi. Zhang Heping (Office of Minority Languages, Guizhou) spoke on the use of the Yi language in Guizhou education, Zeng Guopin (Lunan Autonomous County, Yunnan) on bilingual education in Lunan, Qumu Tiexi (Central University of Nationalities, Beijing) on bilingual education in Liangshan prefecture and Halina Wasilewska (Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland) on the Yi writing system and its multiple presentation. Although there are different local developments, e.g. in Lunan county only very few people are interested that their children learn the Yi language, as most of the Yi already use the Han language, in Liangshan only a few people understand Han-Chinese and therefore are strongly interested that their children receive a bilingual education. As a tendency, less and less Yi are interested in bilingual education, preferring education in Han-Chinese. As Thomas

Heberer (University of Duisburg, Germany) pointed out, there still exists a considerable inequality as regards minority languages, since access to higher education, employment and professional career depends on mastering the Han language and not on mastering minority languages. This has also a material foundation and could change under specific conditions, e.g. the development of an ethnic-based economy in the non-state sector, the emergence of a system of higher learning for non-Han nationalities or even modernization processes that may lead to the revival of the languages of minorities (as examples all over the world demonstrate quite clearly).

After the First International Yi Conference in Seattle 1995 (organized by Stevan Harrell) and the second in Trier (organized by Thomas Heberer) the third will be held in September 2000 in China in Lunan Yi Autonomous County.

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Thomas Heberer

15th European Conference on Modern South Asian Studies

Prague, 8-12 September 1998

Between 8-12 September 1998 more than 190 scholars from Europe, North America and South Asia met in Prague for the 15th European Conference on Modern South Asian Studies. The Charles University which was celebrating its 650th anniversary was a dignified setting for the biennial conference and the Institute of Indian Studies proved to be a very good host. Originally more than 30 different panels had been planned, but some were cancelled while others were merged under a common heading so that the programme finally comprised the following panels (missing numbers indicate panels either cancelled or merged):

1. The First Century of British Rule in South Asia, Convener: Dirk H.E. Kolff
3. Integration of Princely States/Princes in Post-Colonial India, Convener: Enrico Fasana
4. Regional Cooperation in South Asia, Conveners: Jindřich Kovář, Wolfgang-Peter Zingel, Willem van der Geest