

In This Issue

XIAOMEI CHEN focuses on women's theater in post-Maoist China, specifically a trilogy of women's plays written in the 1980s by Bai Fengxi, in order to determine the ways in which this theater addresses women's issues. Her concern is to locate Bai's plays within the context of post-Maoist culture and Chinese patriarchy. She is also interested in exploring whether these plays should be considered "women's theater" as defined by Western feminists. Based on her examination of these plays as texts and performance, the author concludes that women's theater skillfully negotiated the dominant post-Maoist culture by redefining and reinforcing it as well as by interrogating it. Thus, a "women's community was . . . forged on stage with a collective identity of its own, which, however did not preclude it from being associated with the ongoing process of nation building in early post-Maoist China."

ANDRE SCHMID explores the spatial implications of Sin Ch'aeho's historical writing by showing that his concept of *minjok* or a racially defined nation was constructed to incorporate Manchuria into the Korean *minjok*. By weaving together race and territory, Sin's interpretation of Korean history challenged earlier traditions of historical writing that were limited to a "peninsular" vision and paved the way for a new tradition of national history that was not centered exclusively on territory as a marker of national identity. The author highlights the changing concepts of national space during the early twentieth century as well as their implications for postwar narratives of the nation in North and South Korea.

JOHN E. HERMAN examines the early Qing state's efforts to reform Ming policies and practices relating to the Chinese state-native chieftain relationship, particularly as it pertained to the native chieftain inheritance process. He argues that the Qing state successfully tied this inheritance process to the Chinese public education system, thereby enhancing its control over the native chieftain selection process and its own political legitimacy and cultural prestige among the indigenous frontier elite. As a result, the Qing state increased and reinforced its control over the southwestern frontier region even as its new policies endowed native chieftains with more political autonomy and control over their own people.

K. SIVARAMAKRISHNAN traces the effects of ambiguous and contradictory British colonial policies on forest conservancy in late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century India. He emphasizes the differential and uneven effects of the colonial government's application of such procedures as forest reservation and protection, especially when extended to the diversity of social and ecological conditions existing in the northeastern Indian province of Bengal. His study of government forest control and management is also intended to illuminate the processes that were involved in colonial state building and that engendered a competition for the control of territory.

MICHAEL SZONYI's investigation of the Five Emperors (*Wudi*) cult of the Fuzhou area is aimed at challenging the argument that state promotion of popular cults in late imperial China led to the standardization of religious beliefs and practices across regional and class lines. By reconstructing its genealogy and tracking its history across several centuries, he shows that this cult maintained its local uniqueness, at

times persisting by disguising itself as the local version of state-sanctioned cults. Thus, the author's study highlights the "powerful resilience of local culture, of the construction of a complex illusion of standardization of national cults, and of the complicity of local elites in the construction of that illusion."

With this issue, the *JAS* inaugurates a separate book review section for Inner Asia, which was previously lumped together with China. This change fits in well with the growing interest in that region among our membership. Nicola di Cosmo of Harvard University has agreed to serve as the first Inner Asia Book Review Editor. The *Journal* is also pleased to announce a new Korea Book Review Editor, Mark Peterson of Brigham Young University; a new China Book Review Editor will be named shortly. Thanks to Young Whan Kihl and Stephen Durrant for their outstanding past service as Book Review Editors for Korea and China and Inner Asia, respectively.