

Abstracts

The Cult of Mount Atago and the Atago Confraternities

ANNE-MARIE BOUCHY

Pages 255–277

Mount Atago lies northwest of the ancient capital of Kyoto. Because of its long history and the cult that has been associated with it from early times, the mountain provides a typical example of Japanese religion. Like all sacred mountains in Japan, a cult of ancestors was originally attached to Mount Atago. During successive centuries this cult served as a base for other cults: of fire, the *tengu*, the Bodhisattva Jizō, and Shōgun Jizō. It also served as the base for a large popular cult with branches all over the country, which still exists. The complex structure of the popular cult contains a harmonious blend of elements of archaic religion, Shinto, and Buddhism. From early times until the Meiji period, its organization was directed by a group of the mountain ascetics known as *yamabushi*, who lived on the mountain itself. A sad consequence of the Meiji Restoration was the dispersion and disappearance of this group as well as most of the documents concerning Mount Atago. In an effort to reconstruct the history of the cult, the writer has consulted the few documents that still remain, which are found among local chronicles and classical texts. The study also discusses the religious and social characteristics of the Atago confraternities (*kō*), which are found in towns and villages even today, and their position in relation to the general phenomenon of confraternities in Japan.

Party, Society, and Local Elite in the Jiangxi Communist Movement

STEPHEN C. AVERILL

Pages 279–303

In August 1927 the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in Jiangxi seemed moribund, yet by the end of 1930 the movement was larger and more active than ever before. How did this occur? Past studies have especially emphasized Mao Zedong's famous rural guerrilla strategy, but this was only part of the story. Equally significant was the little-studied success of members of the Jiangxi hill-country elite who were also in the CCP in using established schools and educational societies, time-honored traditions of local strongman behavior, and existing bandit–secret society gangs to build many localized base areas. Such techniques were congenial to CCP leaders and essential to the movement's survival in the early days when its prestige and material resources were at a very low ebb, and when radical reforms would almost certainly have failed. Nevertheless, this strategy also fostered parochial attitudes and organizational weaknesses that clashed with the later efforts of Mao and his allies to carry out mass mobilization and fundamental land reform. Only after a prolonged and violent crisis within the base areas did the "Maoist" policies vital for the revolution's long-term growth begin to overcome the policies of elite coalition building that had

been necessary for the movement to obtain its initial foothold in the Jiangxi hill country.

Giving in Asia—A Symposium

Benevolent Societies: The Reshaping of Charity During the Late Ming and Early Ch'ing

JOANNA F. HANDLIN SMITH

Pages 309–337

During the late Ming an entirely new charitable institution, the benevolent society (*t'ung-shan t'ang*), emerged even though there were already in place channels for charity provided by lineage organizations, religious institutions, and the state. To account for the appearance of benevolent societies, this article attempts explanations in terms of worsening conditions and dynastic decline and then moves beyond such considerations for several reasons. Although China had long experienced much poverty and numerous periods of extreme social unrest, it was not until the late Ming that the responses to these maladies took the form of benevolent societies. Although the benevolent societies were sometimes founded in an atmosphere of social tension, they endured long after any sense of crisis had passed and thrived through periods of calm. The benevolent societies arose because they satisfied—in ways that existing forms of charity could not—the emotional and social needs of the sponsors in an environment altered by commerce. To achieve a harmonious society, officials and gentry acquiesced to the investment mentality of merchants, and by making charitable contributions toward a moral society, merchants justified their wealth. Highly visible and tolerated by the state, the benevolent societies expressed social alliances based on money and a spirit of civic pride.

From Tribute to Philanthropy: The Politics of Gift Giving in a Western Indian City

DOUGLAS E. HAYNES

Pages 339–360

During the nineteenth century, South Asian businessmen began to engage in modern forms of philanthropy. Focusing on the western Indian city of Surat, this essay explores the emergence of philanthropic activity within the larger “portfolios” of gift giving held by indigenous merchants from roughly 1600 to 1924. Throughout this period, Hindu and Jain commercial magnates employed gifts as means both of building up their reputations (*ābrū*) within high-caste society and of fostering stable ties with political overlords. Local merchants continuously adjusted their charitable choices to changes in the ideology of these overlords as they sought to obtain influence with and honors from the ruling power. Involvement in philanthropy reflected a “negotiated” accommodation to Victorian values through which elite merchants maintained a relatively secure commercial and political environment in the context of late nineteenth-century British rule. When government policies seriously threatened their *ābrū* during World War I, however, local traders began to view donations to the Indian National Congress as an alternative method of conserving status and credit.

Religious Gifting and Inland Commerce in Seventeenth-Century South India

DAVID WEST RUDNER

Pages 361–379

Most accounts of South Indian commerce in the seventeenth century depend on European documents and focus on Indo-European trade along the Malabar and Coromandel coasts. This article makes use of indigenous documents to analyze the way a caste of itinerant salt traders, the Nakarattars, combined worship and commerce in the interior of Tamil-speaking South India. It focuses on Nakarattar activities in the seventeenth century before they had achieved power under their better-known name, Nattukottai Chettiars, and at a time when their commercial expansion was just getting under way and when the close association of this expansion with rituals of religious gifting was already apparent. The two main purposes of the article are to illuminate the ritual dimension of commercial activity in precolonial South India and to enrich current transactional models of the relationship between temples and small groups in South India by incorporating a mercantile perspective.