

In This Issue

STANLEY TAMBIAH'S Presidential Address takes up the topic of ethnic conflict in the context of South Asia. He begins with a social scientist's sober reflection that ethnic identity itself is a "persistent, boisterous and many-headed beast," and then explores how ethnicity has shaped riots in South Asia. Tambiah sees these ethnic riots, all too common in our present-day world, not as random events, but as a recurring phenomenon with recognizable patterns of participation, premeditation and increasingly ugly violence. In conclusion, Tambiah points out that democracy, as opposed to more authoritarian forms of government, may provide a setting conducive to ethnic violence, and so our theories of politics may have to accept collective violence as a component of democracy at work. In fact, he suggests that the logic of mass politics in homogenized, bureaucratized nation states surely frustrates cultural pluralism and thus may further feed the demons behind ethnic riots.

MATTISON MINES and VIJAYALAKSHMI GOURISHANKAR explore the character of the leader in South Asian cultures, and in the process call upon Stanley Tambiah's insights on how religious leadership can be expanded through mandalas of supporting temples and organizations. They argue that individuality is an essential characteristic for leadership in south India, although they agree that the South Asian concept of the individual is quite distinct from Western notions. They conclude that South Asian style of leadership requires both renunciation of worldly concerns and a contradictory willingness to give worldly markers to others. To be a leader in South Asia, individuals must meet the requirements of heading a hierarchically organized group while asserting unique personal characteristics attractive to others. They show how such leaders can expand their constituencies, but reveal how, as a leader's power grows, so does the tension between that power and group interests. The authors believe this style of leadership contains features reminiscent of medieval South Asian charismatic kingship.

CHIZUKO ALLEN discusses the theories Ch'oe Namsŏn advanced in the 1920s about the greatness of early Korean culture. She argues that his work was a nationalistic interpretation intended to offset Korea's humiliation as a Japanese colony, and as his own challenge to Japanese scholars' unflattering notions of Korean culture. Unable, on Social Darwinist grounds, to sustain a claim for Korean greatness in his own day, Ch'oe turned to prehistory. His interpretations of ancient Korean myths in terms of folkloric studies and linguistic theory led him to advance the notion of a Korean culture called the "Way of *Park*" (*park* = sun, heaven, god) involving shaman-rulers associated with the worship of *park* at prominent mountains. In Ch'oe's nationalistic conclusions, historical Korea became the successor of this Northeast Asian culture tradition and thus equal or superior to Japan and China. Some Korean nationalist scholars have been critical of Ch'oe for his supposed collaboration with the Japanese, but Allen argues that his ideas were an authentically Korean nationalist challenge to prevailing theories about Korean culture.

In a broad-ranging discussion of Chinese demography, WILLIAM LAVELY, JAMES LEE, and WANG FENG stress the historical continuities in the present-day Chinese

demographic order. They survey briefly the dramatic increase in our knowledge of Chinese demography that occurred in the 1980s. They do not emphasize present-day population policy issues and their article went to press before the first results of China's 1990 census were announced. Instead, their attention centers on long-term patterns in Chinese demography, marriage, and the family. They give special attention to the links of demographic studies with sociology, anthropology, and geography.

The idea that efforts at democracy may beget some unanticipated results in Asia, which Stanley Tambiah mentioned in his Presidential Address, also comes into play in JOSEPH W. ESHERICK and JEFFERY N. WASSERSTROM'S analysis of China's 1989 democracy movement. They reject most of the common interpretations, both those offered by Chinese leaders and those of foreign commentators, particularly those that would associate the Tiananmen demonstrations with Western notions of participatory democracy. Instead, they see those events as political theater in which improvised, untitled scenarios were presented to express beliefs about the exercise of political power. They argue that such political theater in Beijing drew both on a borrowed notion of Western political rhetoric introduced in China in the twentieth century and on more traditional Chinese ideas. They think that the traditional Chinese forms probably are more important and emphasize the prominence in the Chinese repertoire of ritual (*li*) to which political actors are supposed to give preeminent attention. The instances of political theater in China during the 1980s, however, unlike those in Eastern Europe, failed to overturn the ruling system. The authors suggest the different outcome in China is a result of an inherited weakness in Chinese civic culture and argue that the Chinese students in the Spring of 1989 wound up petitioning the Communist Party for redress in a manner reminiscent of popular demonstrations from the imperial era. Thus, they conclude that the imported styles of political theater common to the European heritage have yet to be established as legitimating political forms in China.