

Abstracts

The Politics of Sufism: Redefining the Saints of Pakistan

KATHERINE P. EWING

In Pakistan Muslim shrines have traditionally been maintained by hereditary saints (*pirs*), who often command a large following. Leaders of Pakistan have felt that the organization of the shrines has been incompatible with their political and religious goals. This article examines how the governments of Ayub Khan and his successors not only have established an administrative policy aimed at direct control of the shrines and a diminution of the power of the hereditary saints; they have also attempted to present a coherent ideology concerning the significance of the saints, which, though drawing on the Sufi tradition, diverges sharply from many popular beliefs. Despite a basic continuity of policy toward the shrines, however, each administration has also had its own central symbols and has drawn on Islam in different ways. These differences are reflected in the changing significance of the saints from one administration to the next.

A Political History of the Taiwanese Communist Party, 1928–1931

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The Taiwanese Communist Party (TCP) was founded in April 1928 as a "Nationality Branch of the Japanese Communist Party" (JCP) by a small group of intellectuals trained in Japan and China. In its three years of existence, the small party confronted enormous difficulties in organizing a communist-led movement on the tightly controlled island. But the failure of the TCP to survive reflected more than just the efficiency of the Japanese police. Among the leadership of Xie Xuehong, Lin Rigao, Su Xin, and others, there was an incessant factionalism that was rooted in their own diverse political origins and in the often contradictory influence of Comintern, JCP, and Chinese Communist Party (CCP) policies. By 1931, the party was disbanded, but, in its two "Political Theses," the TCP had laid out a revolutionary strategy and a set of political goals that expressed the nationalistic aspirations of many of its leaders.

Excommunication as Everyday Event and Ultimate Sanction: The Nature of Suspension from an Indian Caste

ROBERT M. HAYDEN

The standard view of excommunication as severe, unusual punishment in India is shown to be inaccurate regarding a caste in Maharashtra. An alternative concept, centering on suspension from caste as an inevitable response to the pollution always incurred with any violation of caste rules, fits the particular caste in question and also fits the published descriptions of outcasting as well as or better than the standard view. By applying the alternative concept, it can be seen that panchayats are not like Western courts in the nature of the tasks they perform and that to view them as analogous to courts is seriously misleading.

Foundation Myths of the Two Denominations of Vīraśaivism: *Viraktas* and *Gurusthalins*

R. BLAKE MICHAEL

Vīraśaivism is usually presented as a unified, sectarian, reformation movement founded in the twelfth century by Basava. But within Vīraśaivism there are actually two, separate denominations—*viraktas* and *gurusthalins*. For the former, the beliefs and practices reflected in the Basava legend serve as norms for their sectarian-type religious organization. In contrast, *gurusthalins* derive norms for their basically ecclesiastical organization from the timeless myths of five great gurus. Hence the two accounts of origins serve as legitimizing and normative etiologies for competitive denominations divided by fundamentally different visions of how Vīraśaivism should be organized and what ideals it should propagate.

Soviet Indologists and the Institute of Oriental Studies: Works on Contemporary India in the Soviet Union

NISHA SAHAI-ACHUTHAN

In this article the author studies the main trends in the evolution of modern Soviet Indology in the context of developments in Soviet Oriental studies and examines the extent to which both these were conditioned in turn by shifts in Soviet ideology. The development of Soviet Indology is further examined within the context of the organizational growth of the Institute of Oriental Studies (IVAN) and the evolving expertise of Soviet Indologists on contemporary India (along with a study of patterns in the academic training of these scholars). The author thus investigates both the intellectual and organizational bases contributing to the growth of Soviet Indology in an integrated and interconnected manner.

**Research on the Economy of the People's Republic of China:
A Survey of the Field**

DWIGHT H. PERKINS

For nearly two decades, study of the Chinese economy involved constructing pictures of broad macro trends from extremely limited data painstakingly obtained. Given the quantity and quality of data available, a majority of analysts came surprisingly close to the mark in explaining what happened. A few economists attempted to deny that any economic progress had occurred, while there were others who painted a picture approaching utopia, but these were always in the minority. When China began to open up in the late 1970s and data were once again systematically published, there were some surprises, but much of that written before the opening remained valid. If economists did a reasonably good job of explaining what happened, however, they did much less well explaining why.