

In This Issue

In this issue, we publish five of the articles that were presented at the symposium on Dimensions of Ethnic and Cultural Nationalism in Asia, co-sponsored by *The Journal of Asian Studies* and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and Marquette University Joint Center for International Studies, and held on the UWM campus on February 26 and 27, 1993.

In the first article, JOHN ROGERS traces three main lines of interpretation for ethnic and cultural nationalism in South Asia: (1) the modernist position (Anderson, Gellner) that sees nationalism as an indigenous construction, drawing on both Western and indigenous elements, born during colonial rule as a means of resistance and transcendence of colonialism; (2) highly popular primordialist views encountered in present-day political and journalistic discourse in which precolonial identities are believed to reemerge after suppression or submersion; and (3) a new post-Orientalist position (Inden, Dirks) that emphasizes how colonialism created and then imposed ethnic and cultural identities on those under its rule. The post-Orientalists argue, says Rogers, that both primordialists and colonialists accept the "essentialist" nature in their descriptions of ethnicity, caste, language, or religion.

Rogers rejects the essentialist nature of these categories and argues, rather, for a process of constantly changing identities. While agreeing that the modern state created in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries has shown increasing abilities to manipulate and utilize essentialist categories, he still concludes, "The establishment of an essentialist sociology of knowledge was an important watershed in South Asian politics, but its importance is sometimes overstated." He is critical of what he sees as the excesses of Foucaultian claims in the post-Orientalist position, but still finds much of value in the approach and calls for careful empirical investigation of the shifting patterns of identity in Sri Lankan life both in the twentieth century and the pre-colonial era.

STEFAN TANAKA investigates art criticism to find that it can play a critical role in the shaping of nationalism through taking past artistic expressions and placing them within a narrative of national artistic consciousness. His examples are drawn from the interpretations of Japanese art made by Ernest Fenollosa, Okakura Kakuzo, and Kano Tessai during the Meiji period. He shows how Hegelian notions of the spirit were found by these critics in Japanese art. These Hegelian notions were used to erect an interpretative structure that proclaimed the existence of Japanese national art as a separate, distinct historical category. This artistic tradition not only confirmed Japan's emerging identity as a nation-state in the late nineteenth century, but also embodied the concept that Japan was both related to Asia, and yet somehow distinct from it.

JOSEPH ALTER examines the present-day use of the Hindu concept of *brahmacharya* (celibacy) as it relates to questions of gender and nationalism in North India. He argues that the practice of celibacy can be best understood as a form of political action directed against the post-colonial forces of desire. He shows how the discourse on celibacy has focused on the bio-moral nature of semen, and on how

semen is taken to embody truth. Because semen is inherently male, he argues, the present-day discourse on nationalism has become increasingly centered on males as the source of truth. Celibacy thus has become the agency for a form of gendered nationalism.

EDWARD FRIEDMAN argues that the national ethos of the People's Republic of China was built around a myth of how the Chinese Communists successfully repelled imperialism, first by resisting the Japanese invasion, and then by struggling against United States' aggression. This ethos took form in North China and spread southward, but since the 1980s, during the period of Deng Xiaoping's reform, this old ethos is being undermined by a new Southern pride in their own achievements. One form of the new pride, he finds, are interpretations of archaeological discoveries that can be taken to indicate the cultural independence of the South from what the standard texts had previously enshrined as the true core of ancient Chinese civilization in the North China plain. He concludes that this formulation of multiple Chinese identities with the ancient world reflects the reality of identity transformations now taking place in China.

DRU GLADNEY'S article contends that Han Chinese objectivize national minorities as the "Other," paralleling "the valorization of gender and political hierarchies in China." In the process, the state has not only created distorted images of national minorities, but also employs those images to redefine, homogenize and subject to greater state control the Han Chinese. Gladney emphasizes that the Han objectification of national minorities is like the objectification of women by Chinese patriarchal values. He shows that when minority women are objectified as highly sexual, this representation is used to suggest that Han Chinese women are not. He believes that through such binary contrasting of the national minorities with an image of a more progressive, de-ethnicized Han, the present regime in China gains more control over the Han majority.

In our final article, TERUTOMO OZAWA reviews a recent six-volume collection on the economic successes of Japan and her closest neighbors in East Asia. Takashi Inoguchi of Tokyo University edited the project and guided his fellow authors to analyze both the political culture and the political economy of Japan, China, Taiwan, Vietnam, and the two Koreas in separate, volume-length studies. Ozawa finds that Japanese scholars are as fascinated as their Western counterparts with the question of what makes for economic success. He notes that in Japan, as elsewhere, the trend in analyzing both success and failure of states is away from formal economics and toward what he calls the "economic culture" approach. Ozawa suggests that we shall see more and more explanations of current economic situations based on broad social science explanations, no matter in what language the studies are published.