

any reader who aspires to know more about contemporary Chinese society.

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***Ethnic Minorities and Nationalism in Southeast Asia.* Edited by Thomas Engelbert and Andreas Schneider.** Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2000. 194pp.

Professor Hans Dieter Kubitscheck is most deserving of a *festschrift*, and his colleagues, friends and former students have duly come together to acknowledge and celebrate his career following his retirement in 1999. The *festschrift* contains a summary biography, a bibliography of Professor Kubitscheck's main publications, and an editorial preface outlining his contribution to the study of Southeast Asian history and culture and his key role in its institutional development in eastern Germany. Kubitscheck has been one of the leading scholars and undoubtedly the most prominent champion of the study of Southeast Asia, particularly Indonesia, in the former German Democratic Republic. He spent most of his career at Humboldt University, Berlin, first as a student of ethnology and Indonesian studies in the 1950s, then as a Junior Fellow in ethnography from 1957 to 1961, and a Fellow in the Department of Indonesian Studies at the East Asian Institute from 1961 to 1976. Subsequently, he was promoted to a Senior Lectureship in Southeast Asian History in 1976, having also served as the Head of the Department of Southeast Asian Studies within the Department of Asian Studies in the mid-1970s. He took up the departmental mantle again between 1996 and 1999. In 1990 he won election as the first Director of the newly formed Institute of Asian and African Studies and was also promoted to a Chair (Professor Extraordinarius) in the History of Southeast Asia, followed by an appointment in 1993 to the Chair of the History and Society of Southeast Asia.

The editors draw attention to Professor Kubitscheck's contribution to the comparative and historical understanding of Southeast Asian societies and cultures, to the breadth and depth of his knowledge of the region, embracing both history and ethnology, and to his major administrative and managerial role at Humboldt University, especially

during the reorganization of Asian Studies there following the fall of the German Democratic Republic. During this crucial period of institutional and political change, Kubitscheck not only succeeded in ensuring the future of Asian Studies in Berlin but also almost against the odds managed to strengthen the base of scholarship in this field.

This edited collection focuses on some central research themes which have preoccupied Professor Kubitscheck during his long and distinguished academic career in Berlin. In 1963, he completed a dissertation on Batak social organization at the Friedrich-Schiller-Universität, Jena, and began to develop a special expertise on Sumatra. Given his interest in the minority populations of outer Indonesia, he then submitted a second doctoral dissertation at Humboldt University on the wide-ranging and ambitious subject of "autochthonous nationalities and national minorities" in Southeast Asia, and the specific characteristics of government ethnic and minority policies (*Nationalitätenpolitik*) in the region. From 1994, he also served as Director of the major research project on "*Nationalitätenpolitik* in Southeast Asia" sponsored by the German Research Society. One of the main thrusts of Kubitscheck's work has been to contextualize government policies on minorities and ethnic groups, both comparatively in the region and in terms of the concrete processes of identity formation and change, and the interrelations between ethnic groups. He has also examined historically the main forces which have influenced the direction, shape, and content of nation-building and nationalism in Southeast Asia, and the substantial variations between the constituent nation-states in their approaches to ethnic identities and aspirations. This important research, going back over some thirty years, has probably not had the exposure and attention which it deserves among English-speaking researchers. Professor Kubitscheck's main studies have been published almost exclusively in the German language, and for a considerable period of his career he was working within the constraints imposed by the Cold War and the scholarly distance which existed between Western and Eastern Europe prior to the reunification of Germany and the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

The volume provides a valuable compendium of recent research on Southeast Asia by German and German-trained scholars, some of them very well known to the English-speaking world, others not so well known. The ten chapters examine various relationships between nations and ethnic groups, although they do not give a comprehensive view of Southeast Asia nor, as the editors point out, do they present a unified all-embracing theory of national and ethnic development. As one might expect, given Professor Kubitscheck's country interests, there

are several papers on Indonesia: Bernard Dahm provides a historical overview of anti-colonial protest and response in Sumatra in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (especially among the Batak, Minangkabau, and Acehnese); Vincent Houben considers briefly post-Soeharto conflicts between Muslims and Christians in Maluku; Mary Somers Heidhues, in another post-Soeharto contribution, reflects on the recent plight of the Chinese in the context of the official differentiation between *pribumi* and *non-pribumi*, and gives some evidence of the discussion of human rights issues in Indonesia since 1998; Sri Kuhnt Saptodewo examines the development and transformation of Ngaju Dayak identity in Kalimantan in relation to the successful official registration and institutionalization of the Kaharingan religion as a variant of Hinduism; and, finally, Wilfried Wagner takes up a subject dear to Professor Kubitscheck's heart, and that is the emerging identity of the Toba Batak in the context of German Protestant missionary activity in Sumatra from the mid-nineteenth century. Wagner analyses debates among German writers about the creation of group or community consciousness as a result of Christian conversion and other changes set in train by the Dutch.

The remaining five chapters focus on mainland Southeast Asia. Annemarie Esche briefly considers the problems of ethnic minorities and inter-ethnic relations in a military-dominated and controlled Myanmar; Wilfried Lulei presents an overview of state policies in Vietnam — pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial — towards ethnic minorities, and Thomas Engelbert, in a long and detailed chapter, compares communist ethnic policies and their consequences between northern and southern Vietnam, mainly during the period of the First Indochina War and, in the south, specifically policies towards the Khmers; Laohoua Cheutching examines the experience of the Hmong in Laos, their role in the Indochina conflict, and French policies towards the ethnic minorities, the Royal Lao Government, the Lao People's Revolutionary Party before 1975, and the post-1975 Lao People's Democratic Republic; and, Andreas Schneider then presents a historical analysis of ethnic relations and nationalism in Laos up to 1946.

The problems associated with the maintenance and development of ethnic identity in multicultural post-colonial states are considerable when governments wish to ensure national integrity and resilience in a fast-changing, economically unstable, globalizing world. Interestingly, the several contributions tend not to rely overly on the substantial literature on ethnicity, identity, and minorities provided by anthropologists but are much more closely concerned with contributions to our understanding of nation-building, nationalism, and policy formulation provided by political scientists and historians.

The general prognosis for the region seems to be mixed. There is a rather pessimistic view of Indonesia, which is not surprising owing to the recent violence there. Dahm raises the issue of Acehnese separatism and the separatist rejection of the concept of Indonesia; Houben makes a plea for "more local participation of all groups in government and less top-down management by uninspired bureaucrats" (p. 47) if there is to be any hope of addressing the violence and conflicts in Ambon; Hedhues suggests that, on the evidence which she uses, the "hoped-for dialogue" between *pribumi* (indigenous) and non-*pribumi* has yet to begin (p. 60). Lulei, Engelbert, and Laohoua Cheutching raise serious issues of inequality, development, and local rights which still require solution for the ethnic minorities in Indochina. However, Esche appears to entertain some hope that the maintenance of a national framework in Myanmar will assist the process of negotiating ethnic aspirations and democratization there.

Overall, this *estschrift* on Professor Kubitscheck's behalf demonstrates that through the work of his colleagues and students, a lively research agenda in Germany has been sustained on the crucial issues of national self-determination, ethnic identity, social and economic equality, and human rights in Southeast Asia. Professor Kubitscheck can feel justly satisfied with his legacy and with the ample evidence of a continuing active academic and practical interest in Southeast Asia among scholars in the German-speaking world.

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***Asian Nationalism*. Edited by Michael Leifer.** London: Routledge, 2000. 203pp.

The ten chapters in this book are revised versions of papers presented in the first seminar series held at the newly established Asia Research Centre, London School of Economics and Political Science, during the 1997/1998 academic year. This is the first major publication from the Centre, and all the authors are sourced from within the school. Although the authors come from a variety of social science backgrounds, exactly half of the ten authors are international relations specialists. The disparate disciplinary backgrounds are manifested in the book by the different approaches to the study of nationalism. Not