

***Chinese Society: Change, Conflict and Resistance.* Edited by Elizabeth J. Perry and Mark Selden.** London and New York: Routledge, 2000. 249pp.

China has been registering consistently high economic growth since the late 1970s. The social problems and discontent of various social classes and groups that have accompanied the high growth rates cannot be overstated. Popular unrest arises despite impressive economic performance. This book investigates the different social, political, and cultural frictions in Chinese society, the state's responses and efforts at control, and the strategies adopted by various resistance movements.

The introduction, written by Elizabeth J. Perry and Mark Selden, depicts a general picture of social change and conflicts as a result of economic reform and opening to the outside world since the late 1970s. The change and conflicts include, among others: the dilemma generated from freedoms gained as a result of the expansion of a market economy, on the one hand, and the still highly confined political environment, on the other; labour and peasant unrest owing to loss of income, security, and prestige associated with reform policies; the widening income gap between rich and poor; and, the economic disparity between the coastal and inland regions. Economic disputes can be said to be the most common cause of conflict and source of resistance in the reform era.

Each of the chapters in this volume elucidates a particular type of resistance movement. One inadequacy of this book, however, is that it lacks a common analytical framework to link, consolidate, and guide the different chapters. Each chapter follows its own approach and has its own focus of analysis. The chapters are not linked together to form an integrated work. Some chapters have more general descriptions and historical accounts of the development of resistance movements, such as urban worker opposition to the state's labour reform policy (Chapter 2), women's discontent with employment conditions (Chapter 3), the passive resistance of rural labour to the strict urban employment and residence requirements (Chapter 4), peasant resistance to the one-child campaign (Chapter 5), religious practitioners' struggle for religious autonomy and local authority (Chapter 8), and urban intellectuals' disagreement with official ideology (Chapter 10). Some chapters' analyses of the resistance movements are based predominantly on case studies with empirical data, such as the challenge of political dissidents to the regime (Chapter 1), village protests over the problems of development (Chapter 6), peasant environmental lobbies for increased well-being (Chapter 7), Mongols as a minority group questioning the

state's ruling method (Chapter 9), and rural women who find the only way to protest is through suicide attempts (Chapter 11).

Different resistance movements use different "weapons", or protest techniques. These techniques include legal challenges, issuing open letters, sit-ins, demonstrations, strikes, disrupting traffic, violence, and so on. Resistance refers herein to actions counteracting repression, not intellectual disagreement. From this perspective, Chapter 10, by Geremie R. Barme, which focuses on urban intellectuals' disagreement (with the official ideology or among themselves), uses the term "resistance" differently from the common usage. The chapter focuses more on disputes among different intellectual thinkers and less on the strategies of resistance adopted by them.

Defiance and dissent are shown to develop into rebellion and revolution. Deepening inequality generates discontent and exacerbates frustrations. The accumulation of these frustrations may eventually lead to collective resistance to the regime. Different resistance movements in the reform era of China have their own peculiar backgrounds and demands. They take the form of single-issue conflicts rather than in the form of a mass-based opposition political party, independent trade union, or any wide social-based organized movement. With the partial exception of religious practitioners and ethnic minority groups, there is usually no ideological and organizational connection among the protest groups. They do not possess the strength to challenge the rule of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Any signs of cross-class, cross-ethnic, and cross-regional associations, such as the 1989 June Fourth Massacre at Tiananmen Square and the 1999 Falungong movement, have been suppressed instantly and harshly.

Resistance in Chinese society today is not an unwavering open opposition against the state. One cannot examine conflict and resistance in China as that of open state-society confrontation. "Resistance may take the form of a reaction to suppression, or it may constitute a negotiated compromise with state agencies" (p. 167). As pointed out by Perry and Selden, with evidence showing local cadres assisting local protesters, a theme that runs through many chapters in the volume is the important role played by local authorities "in shaping, legitimating and articulating the demands of social movements" (p. 10). That also explains why social protests often receive a sympathetic hearing rather than harsh repression from the government. An example, provided by Tyrene White, explains that the one-child campaign has not been successfully carried out in the Chinese villages partly because peasants have colluded with family planning officials to avoid the one-child limit.

More evidence of non-state–society confrontation in China is that resistance groups adopt a strategy of “a double-barrelled attack that [has] combined legal process and civil disobedience” (p. 136). This is an effective strategy in attempting to achieve stated aims. New political and legal reforms have been launched to contain the problems of economic development. These reforms include the use of courts, the enforcement of the Administrative Litigation Law, the holding of direct elections of popular representatives and of the director for the Villagers’ Committees, petitioning government agencies, and others. These reforms provide legal channels for “policy-based resistance”. Individuals or groups use them to seek redress and to challenge party cadres if necessary.

The legal and political reforms provide an institutional framework for, but also encourage greater expectations about, the protection of rights among the general public. With the public’s increasing political efficacy and more discussion of civic affairs, there has been more civil resistance. Minxin Pei testifies that the dissident movement in the post-Mao period was motivated by “rights consciousness”. The movement in the late 1990s, compared with the direct and confrontational 1980s movement, relied increasingly on both indirect and legal means. In Wang Zheng’s analysis of the feminist movement’s struggle for the rights of Chinese women, it is shown that feminists never openly confronted the state but worked through official and legal channels. David Zweig finds that Chinese villagers have been developing a strong “rights consciousness” and that they have used both the law and protest interchangeably to redress their grievances. According to Jun Jing, “the rise of environmental protests in the past 20 years is emblematic of the growing consciousness of community and individual rights among ordinary citizens as well as the cumulative effect of newly promulgated laws” (p. 159).

A deficiency of this volume is the lack of a true comparison between various resistance movements and/or protest groups. Thus, it would have been appropriate to have added a concluding chapter where the editors could have compared different social unrests in terms of, for example, their roles played in the readjustment of the state–society relationship, their different degrees of seriousness in jeopardizing the legitimacy of the Chinese Communist Party regime, and the effectiveness of using different resistance strategies.

As a whole, however, this is a highly informative and interesting book. China scholars with interdisciplinary and international backgrounds have contributed to the book. It is one of the few which provide a comprehensive survey of the topic on change, conflict, and resistance in Chinese society. The reviewer recommends this volume to

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