

will be of great interest both to the students of Chinese and Jewish History.

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Buddhism in Contemporary Tibet: Religious Revival and Cultural Identity. Edited by MELVYN C. GOLDSTEIN and MATHEW T. KAPSTEIN. [Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1998. 217 pp. \$15.95; £11.95. ISBN 0-520-21131-6.]

China's post-1978 religious liberalization policy has permitted a gradual and contested reconstruction of traditional religious cultures. *Buddhism in Contemporary Tibet* is a significant contribution to our understanding of this revitalization process in Tibet. It contains four detailed ethnographic studies, based on field-work by Tibetan-speaking scholars, which describe a tentative yet dynamic process of regeneration and reinvention of traditional structures and practices. Although Tibetans are generally optimistic that the process will be allowed to continue, Melvyn Goldstein reports that pessimism predominates among the leadership of Drepung, formerly the world's largest monastery. Despite a more scholarly emphasis than in former times, its gradual regrowth is threatened by the fundamental conflict between the monks' political aspirations and their religious loyalties. In short, its monks keep being arrested for Tibetan nationalist activities.

David Germano discusses the re-emergence of *terma* (religious "treasure") finders through a profile of the sometimes controversial activities of Khenpo Jikphun in Eastern Tibet. Germano adopts an "insider" approach to his subject, a traditionally charismatic figure who has avoided explicit association with either political activism or Buddhist modernism on the Dharamsala model. Yet despite attracting some Han Chinese followers, Jikphun's activities clearly link past and present Tibetan culture and landscape, and serve to strengthen Tibetan identity.

Mathew Kapstein provides an excellent ethnographic account of the 1992 Drigung Powa Chenmo, a 12-yearly Central Tibetan festival of religious teaching including local pilgrimages, revived after 36 years. This festival reflects the transformations in Tibetan society rather than being a simple recapitulation of the past ceremonies. Lawrence Epstein and Peng Wenbin similarly focus on a festival which challenges traditional understandings and modes of performance, in this case the Luröl festival at Reppong (Qinghai province). More "folk" than Buddhist, this is a local harvest fertility ritual with historico-military and archaic aspects, aimed at pleasing local deities. Certain traditional aspects of the ritual have been altered and new meanings generated, but the rites continue to valorize Tibetan ethnicity as well as local identities, which as we might expect in this cultural border zone, include non-Tibetan elements.

The only weakness in this otherwise impressive research arises from its effort to avoid political aspects of the Tibet-China problem by specifically distancing itself from the perspective of the Tibetan government-in-exile

in Dharamsala. Goldstein's introduction criticizes the "adversarial model" of Dharamsala's relations with Beijing and implies, as I understand it, that Tibetans should accept their integration within China and work within that hegemony. Given that the division of politics and religion is a Western (de)construction absent from the traditional Tibetan system, this approach (understandable though it may be), does impinge on the scholarship in that it appears to distort the Tibetan understanding of certain described practices and events by understating the extent to which the subjects perceive cultural expression as resistance. The Powa Chenmo festival, for example, is described as almost completely avoiding overt political expression, yet those attending are stated to have covertly enacted strong expressions of Tibetan nationalism. Similarly, we read that Khenpo Jikphun avoids political activity, yet close associates of his have been arrested with Tibetan nationalist material, as have Drepung monks. In each process discussed here, an implicit nationalist (as well as local) identity appears to be strengthened. As Kapstein so rightly observes, "Answers to questions of identity may depend in a large measure on who is asking" (p. 90).

This conceptual reservation aside, the work may be strongly recommended. It materially adds to our hitherto scanty knowledge of contemporary Tibetan religious developments and provides valuable insights into questions of local, regional and national identity. An invaluable tool for specialists, it provides a wealth of stimulating material accessible to students and to a wider readership.

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Inside Out: New Chinese Art. Edited by GAO MINGLU. [Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1998. 223 pp. Hard cover \$50.00, ISBN 0-520-21747; paperback \$29.95, ISBN 0-520-21748-9.]

The aim of the exhibition *Inside Out: New Chinese Art*, organized jointly by the Asia Society, New York, and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, was to introduce American viewers to the dynamic new art being produced by artists in China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and by those who had emigrated to the West in the late 1980s, and "to understand contemporary Chinese art as simultaneously belonging to the international art community as well as the new 'Chinese' culture." The catalogue essays explore these issues in a variety of ways, adding up to a fascinating overview of at least some of the leading trends and problems. For, as Leo Oufan Lee asks in his essay, "How can one negotiate one's way across the increasingly transnational Chinese landscape and maintain a cultural sensitivity to all these differences?"

In a brilliant survey, "Towards a transnational modernity," the leading critic Gao Minglu gives the picture as he sees it, while Zhang Tsong-zung (Johnson Zhang, Director of the Hanart TZ Gallery in Hong Kong and a leading promoter of current trends) presents a vivid "insider's view." The exhibition itself ranges across the spectrum of the contempor-