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According to these authors, the Nazi regime may have fallen and the death camps may have been liberated in 1945. But, they argue, the *Geist*, residue, presence, collective consciousness, or something else about the events has endured to the present and is likely to do so for generations to come. Their task in *The Holocaust and Memory in the Global Age* is to examine why and how the social construction that we call "the Holocaust" (which, they argue forcefully, remains under construction) was created and is sustained.

The Holocaust and Memory in the Global Age was first published in 2001 in German as *Erinnerung im globalen Zeitalter: Der Holocaust*, and was translated into English by Asenka Oskiloff. Thus, only in the English edition was it possible for the authors to cite and discuss Jeffrey Alexander's closely related article "On the Social Construction of Moral Universals: The Holocaust from War Crime to Trauma Drama." Like Alexander, Levy and Sznajder analyze the issues at hand with what Alexander refers to as the "strong program" in the sociology of culture. This approach, which shares much with semiotics, seeks to avoid any quest for an ultimate reality or the essential facts. From this perspective, what "actually" happened is not only inaccessible, it is inconsequential. The important thing is what the world has made of it.

In comparing the memorializing process in three nations: the U.S., Israel, and Germany, the authors give new meaning to the global/local dialectic. Through the act of bracketing the events of 1938–45, the world has impinged on the nation in ways that negate both. The collective construction and reconstruction of the *Schoah*, and only these collective acts, can have consequences so profound because the *Schoah* (however we choose to label and characterize it) altered forever the human equation. Levy and Sznajder identify the year 1989 as the turning point in this crisis; that is, the date of the collapse of Communism in Europe. But one can complete the chain of causation from the camps to the Nuremberg tribunal to the fall of the Communist regimes by noting the role of two intervening critical episodes. These are the ending of European colonial rule in the third world (and the founding of the State of Israel) as a response, in part, to the inhumanities revealed at Nuremberg; and the U.S.

Civil Rights Movement, 1954–68, as a response, in part, to the third world liberation struggles. When one considers this sequence as a sequence, the enormity and urgency associated with the creation of official memories of the episode that initiated it become self-evident.

The Holocaust and Memory in the Global Age is densely written. Its ideas and its heavy use of the technical terminology of the strong program assault the reader relentlessly. Some books are difficult to put down. This one needs to be put down on occasion, if only to reflect on all that is being claimed. During one interval of putting it down, I happened to come across an article by Arthur Krystal, entitled "My Holocaust Problem," which provided a refreshing contrast. Krystal touches on many of the same themes as Levy and Sznajder, but from a first-person perspective that differs sharply from their de-personified style. Krystal speaks as the child of survivors, a veritable genre in the vast and multi-genre literature on the subject. He wonders aloud if it is a mistake or a *mitzvah* to make a public spectacle of all of that suffering. In the end, Krystal concludes that it really doesn't matter what he thinks about it; the spectacle—in all of its best and worst senses—has taken on an undeniable and unstoppable life of its own. This, in a phrase and notwithstanding the book's many texts and subtexts, is precisely the thesis of *The Holocaust and Memory in the Global Age*.

References

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Miraculous Response: Doing Popular Religion in Contemporary China, by Adam Yuet Chau. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005. 336 pp. \$60.00 cloth. ISBN: 0804751609.

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Shaanbei (northern Shaanxi Province) was once the most important base of the Chinese Communist Party, saving it from annihilation

by the Guomindang (Kuomintang) in the 1930s and cradling it into the rule of China in the 1940s. By the 1990s, however, Shaanbei people appeared to have abandoned Communism for popular religion, evidenced by the tens of thousands of popular religious temples recently rebuilt. And the rebuilt temples are often many times larger than those before the Communist revolution, the author reports.

Make no mistake. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is still in power, and it continues to be committed to an atheistic ideology. Then, how is the religious revival possible? What are the social factors that have enabled the revival of religious expressions that are still prohibited by law and regulations? This ethnographic monograph focuses on the Great Black Dragon King Temple in Shaanbei. By examining the organizational and cultural logics that inform the staging of folk religious activities, this detailed and meticulously written work sheds light on shifting state-society relationships in reform era China.

In its first thirty years of rule, the CCP state suppressed all religions and campaigned repeatedly to eradicate folk religions as "feudalistic superstitions." In the reform era since 1979, the CCP's priorities have shifted away from political campaigns toward economic development. Five religions—Buddhism, Catholicism, Christianity (Protestantism), Daoism, and Islam have been legalized. The CCP state continues to impose strict restrictions to religious organizations and activities, and maintain its fundamental views toward "superstitions." But anti-superstition campaigns have become sidetracked. According to the author, there has been no crackdown on superstitious activities in Shaanbei since the 1980s because local state officials may not derive any benefit from cracking down.

Some China observers argued that the revival of popular religion shows the retreat of the CCP state or it demonstrates the resistance of local communities against the state. The author says that it is not so simple. It is true that the temple association has emerged in rural Shaanbei as the most prominent non-governmental organization. But temple activities are essentially apolitical. Temple affair gatherings are not religious congregations, but agrarian individuals seeking "red-hot" excitements in the presence of large crowds.

Moreover, many of the temple leaders are current or former CCP secretaries on the village or township levels. Indeed, some local state bureaus and agents are directly involved in and contributed to the revival of this and many other folk religious temples. For example, the county Bureau of the Historical Relics Preservation provided the initial legality for the restoration of the Great Black Dragon King Temple by officially recognizing the temple association; a government official of the township Culture Station wrote the script on the reconstruction commemorative stele; the Bureau of Public Security (police) officers were hired to keep order during temple fairs; the Bureau of Industry and Commerce and the Bureau of Taxation collected fees and taxes at temple fairs. More interestingly, some government officials have been the most generous patrons. The temple boss told the ethnographer: "Even though the high officials don't come to the temple to worship because they are afraid that people would know, they secretly send their subordinates or relatives to bring money to [the temple]. Otherwise, where do you think some of the big-sum donations come from?" (p. 197).

Some scholars attribute religious revivals in China to spiritual emptiness as the Communist ideology wanes. Not so simple either, the author argues. The first and foremost reason that people do popular religion is because of magical efficacy, or perceived "miraculous response" of the deity to the worshippers' request for divine assistance, thus is the title of the book. Worshippers' requests may include granting a son, granting magical medicine, bringing rain, resolving a dilemma through divination, granting prosperity, etc. There are also social, economic, and cultural reasons to practice the popular religion. "Shaanbei people 'do' popular religion not only by praying and presenting offerings to the deities, but also by building temples, organizing, and participating in temple festivals, sponsoring and watching local operas, making and buying incense and spirit paper money, bribing local state officials, networking with other temples and other institutions, fighting over temple leadership positions, and even planting trees and building schools" (p. 2). The author provides a good overview of the social stratification and popular religion in Shaanbei, expounds upon the various social forces and agents involved in

the revival of the Great Black Dragon King Temple, and offers nuanced analysis of the temple as a nucleus of various social relations and interactions.

Perhaps the most ironic reality is that Shaanbei people have turned the greatest Communist heroes to gods/spirits of popular religion. For instance, during the height of the Cultural Revolution when religion and superstitions were severely repressed, Shaanbei people called the spirit/god of Norman Bethune to cure people's illnesses. Bethune was a Canadian volunteer doctor for the Communist army in the late 1930s and died of a blood infection on the battlefield in the northwest. "In one village in Zizhou County, the mass of worshippers became so large that the local militia (*minbing*) had to throw a hand grenade next to the crowd to disperse it" (p. 47). The author also observed temple structures erected recently for the three most prominent CCP leaders: Chairman Mao Zedong, Premier Zhou Enlai, and General Zhu De. And "in Yan'an City a female medium's possessing deity is General Zhu De and that she was very powerful and popular" (p. 257).

This book has a few evident weaknesses. For one, the author depicts an "agrarian society" that seems to be in a more or less "pristine" form with no urbanization in sight, although national and transnational non-governmental organizations have become present in this area. For another, while elaborate in describing the popular religious context within which the Great Black Dragon King Temple has been revitalized, the author completely neglects other religions, especially Christianity that is present and growing in Shaanbei. Nonetheless, meticulous in detail and extensive in reference, this superbly written monograph exemplifies the best of ethnographic research. It is likely to become a standard reference for the study of popular religion and Chinese society.

POPULATION, COMMUNITIES, AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Crossing National Borders: Human Migration Issues in Northeast Asia, edited by **Tsuneco Akaha** and **Anna Vassilieva**. Tokyo, Japan: United Nations University Press, 2005. 260 pp. \$35.00 paper. ISBN: 9280811177.

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The analysis of globalization has become so central to research on immigration that it can easily obscure the importance of regionalism. This book's focus on Northeast Asia is an important reminder that migration dynamics are heavily influenced by geographic proximity. Land and sea borders often establish the structural parameters of international migration, and for historical reasons, remain important for national identity. Whether it is the Rio Grande River becoming a border for Mexico and the United States in 1848, or the Amur River demarcating China and Russia since 1858, globalization has not yet erased the symbolic significance of place.

Geography's influence, however, is mediated by demography, economy, and especially politics, and the case of Northeast Asia represents an intriguing anomaly. Mexico and the United States have long been connected by international migration. But immigrants from China, Korea, Russia, and Japan have usually settled outside the region. For example, the Chinese diaspora during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries spread as far afield as the Caribbean, yet did not take root in Japan. Historical enmity and isolationism compounded by Cold War hostility were the main reasons, according to the fourteen authors in *Crossing National Borders*. They persuasively argue, however, that regional dynamics in Northeast Asia have started to reverse this pattern and the anthology explores various aspects of what I would term "next-door immigration."

The increase in next-door immigration in Northeast Asia is occurring for several rea-