

**Cultural
Encounters
on
China's
Ethnic
Frontiers**

Edited by

STEVAN HARRELL

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STUDIES ON ETHNIC GROUPS IN CHINA

*Cultural Encounters
on China's Ethnic Frontiers,*
edited by Stevan Harrell

*Guest People:
Hakka Identity in China and Abroad,*
edited by Nicole Constable

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Cultural Encounters on China's Ethnic Frontiers

Edited by Stevan Harrell

A succession of Chinese governments, as well as Western missionaries, have sought to define, objectify, and "civilize" China's ethnic minorities—to make them more like the civilizers. In this volume, ten scholars examine some of these attempts involving groups as culturally different and geographically distant as the Mongols in the North and the Yi in the Southwest.

"This absolutely first-rate collection of scholarly essays by nine anthropologists and one political scientist focuses on the problem of ethnic definition and self-definition among China's peripheral peoples, including the Naxi, Yi, Miao, Mongols, and Manchus. Rejecting the usual catalog of static characteristics as the way to define a people, the authors see national definition as a contentious and negotiated process resulting in a fluid and evolving set of behaviors, customs, linguistic usage, etc. At the core of this process lie Han attempts to impose their values on others in the name of civilization and the struggle of peripheral peoples to resist, adapt, and survive. An important book for students of Chinese society."

—*Library Journal*

"This book contains many excellent essays, mainly by anthropologists, on the cultural and social impact of Han colonialism past and present. The authors focus on the heightened sense of ethnic difference that has emerged in the process, and on the invention of ethnic identities that involve the distortion of the past."

—*Far Eastern Economic Review*

Stevan Harrell is professor of anthropology at the University of Washington. Other contributors are Wurlig Borchigud, Siu-woo Cheung, Norma Diamond, Shih-chung Hsieh, Almaz Khan, Ralph A. Litzinger, Charles F. McKhann, Shelley Rigger, and Margaret Byrne Swain.

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