

Mr Moser's book describes briefly the historical background of the community studied and presents extensively the various forms and layers of contemporary semi-formal and formal procedures employed to resolve disputes among private citizens.

Government-established structures for mediation are analysed, with added synopses of individual cases, and the work of judicial agencies is discussed, with particular reference to landlord-tenant relationships in farming, and family matters. The emerging conclusions will reassure us that the considerations of a would-be applicant for mediation, or a prospective litigant, are not so different from our own: Tactical expectations as to the necessary or acceptable scope for compromise and the balance of harm and benefit resulting from judgments sought, and then to be enforced against persons likely to remain members of one's immediate community, prevail over traditional precepts in the choice of procedures employed in pursuit of perceived rights. The intrusion of the market economy into rural areas, with its concomitant spread of impersonal relationships, and the entrance of more women into the labour market, and their consequently reduced economic dependence on traditional family ties, are further factors enhancing the attractiveness of recourse to the formal legal process.

Taiwan is a special case within China: Its long experience of highly organised colonial rule by Japan and its modest size have favoured the working of administration in comparison with the vast mainland. Still, Mr Moser's study demonstrates for Taiwan that Chinese traditional values regarding the law are as easily susceptible to change under pressure of social circumstances as other peoples'. Wrong characters have been given in the Glossary (pp 188 ff.) for »-chou«, in »baochou«/revenge, and »li«/propriety.

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*Norton Ginsburg/Bernard A. Lalor (eds.)*

**China: The 80s Era**

Boulder, Colorado, and London: Westview Press, 1984, 378 S. US \$ 37.00

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**China und der Weg der vier Modernisierungen – Probleme und Möglichkeiten der Zusammenarbeit**

Materialien zum Internationalen Kulturaustausch, Band 19, Stuttgart: Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen, 1983, 238 S., DM 19,80

The dramatic new departures in Chinese politics, and particularly in the post-»Gang-of-Four« leadership's economic strategies, have been captured by the Western media primarily in terms of political dissidence, an outward reinvigoration of the arts and intermittent euphoria as to the prospects for exports to the Middle Kingdom.

The present two collections of papers provide convenient introduction to various aspects of the new régime's drive for 'modernisation', the perennial goal of Chinese reformers since the Opium War of 1840–42.

The cardinal changes initiated by the group around Deng Xiaoping, in a move away from Maoist dogma, concern the decollectivisation of agriculture, the increased autonomy in the decision-making of industrial enterprises and the restoration of a more meritocratically oriented system of higher education. As a result of these measures large sections of the population suddenly found their status diminished and their hopes of advancement sharply reduced: The armed forces where technical expertise became more highly valued than the guerilla's ardour, the bureaucracy emphasising managerial skills before ideological fidelity, and the new rigour in education policies barring from higher education numerous graduates from low-quality Maoist educational establishments – they all released new potential for development but also offended important interest groups in Chinese society. In addition to these conflicts, the relaxation of some controls by Party and government over the 'masses' constantly bred demand for more, unlicensed, freedoms and set the CCP on a precarious course between the devil of Maoism and the deep blue sea of 'liberalisation' as a creeping dilution of Party autocracy.

The papers, read at conferences in Chicago in November 1981 (Ginsburg & Lalor) and in Tübingen in June 1982 (Bechtold et al.), present concise, often pointedly formulated, analyses of the new policies in agriculture, industry, education, demography, science and technology, defence and foreign affairs. The Tübingen papers, as part of a wider series dealing with developing countries, include extensive discussion of agricultural reforms and problems of farming technology and land use.

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*Albrecht von Gleich/Rainer Godau/Michael Ehrke*

**Mexiko – Der Weg in die Krise**

Rüegger Verlag, Diessenhofen, 1983, 187 S.

Mit diesem Sammelband wird der Versuch gewagt, ausgehend von einem inhaltlich noch durchaus optimistischen Vortrag des Präsidenten des Colegio de México, Víctor Urquidí, gehalten in Hamburg Februar 1981 (S. 18–39) zum Thema Erdöl, die einzelnen Aspekte für Wirtschaft und Politik durch deutsche Sachkenner mit dem Erkenntnisstand Anfang 1982 weiterverfolgen zu lassen. Die Herausgeber sind damit bewußt das Risiko eingegangen, daß die einzelnen Beiträge die Krise Mexikos 1982/3 nicht in ihrer aktuellen Bedeutung haben berücksichtigen können. Die Untersuchungen verstehen sich daher nicht mehr als Prognose, sondern als Erklärung für den derzeitigen wirtschaftlichen Kollaps Mexikos. Die sehr gut lesbaren und fundierten Beiträge vermögen in der Tat, den von der rasanten Entwicklung in die Krise überraschten Leser zu informieren und ihm Hintergrundmaterial an die Hand zu geben.