FROM THE EDITOR

The subject matter of this issue of *East Asia* breaks new ground for our journal. However, "East Asian Sexualities" are not irrelevant to the expanding horizon of our journal as the new sexualities have become part and parcel of the process of liberalization, democratization, and commercialization—in short, the globalization of East Asia. As the forces of globalization penetrate deeper and deeper into remote parts of Asia, not only the metropolitan centers, the lives of ordinary people in rural areas are effected. As anthropologists Sara Friedman and Sandra Hyde, who did field work in China, have found, even in the isolated rural community of Hui'an county in the southeastern coastal province of Fujian and in the remote minority district of Xishuangbanna in the inland province of Yunnan ("South of the Clouds"), startling changes have taken place in sexual practices and attitudes.

In her article "Spoken Pleasures and Dangerous Desires: Sexuality, Marriage, and the State in Rural Southeastern China," Sara L. Friedman examines sexual practices in Hui'an county where "reproductive sexuality" is the norm and "sex for pleasure" is not spoken of. Friedman tells the story of A Ying, a young woman who voices her desire for sexual pleasure when her longing for her boy friend, who died in a motorcycle accident, overwhelms her. Her vocalization of sexual pleasure is only symptomatic of greater changes in moral and social values that are taking place in China today as a result of the state's policy of market reforms and reproductive policy of one child per family. As Friedman points out, increasing commercialization of the country and growing wealth have begun to erode the old traditions of strict "reprosexuality" and the natal residence marriage system; simultaneously, prostitution and "pre-marital sexual relations and even cohabitation have begun to make their appearance in rural society."

Sandra Teresa Hyde's article "Selling Sex and Sidestepping the State: Prostitutes, Condoms, and HIV/AIDS Prevention in Southwest China" points out that in the minority district of Xishuangbanna, where the forces of globalization and commercialization have impinged, the consequences are not an unmixed blessing—a veritable "explosion of sexual practices, the commercialization of women's bodies, and the rampant increase in sexually transmitted infections, and now HIV/AIDS" have occurred. The new market economy in the region has brought about an increase in prostitution and a rise in sex tourism. Hyde's article focuses on the various changes that have taken place in the region and the interaction between the state, local practices, and the market economy in shaping condom use in the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases. China will play host to the 2008 Summer Olympics and whether or not it joins the WTO, China has joined the international family of nations as far as the global AIDS pandemic is concerned.

As a result of the Korean economic "miracle" in the 1980s and continuing political liberalization and democratization, there has been an unprecedented proliferation of "commodification and diversification of the sex industry." However, Cheng Sea-ling's article on "Assuming Manhood: Prostitution and Patriotic Passions in Korea" approaches the problem from the point of the males who frequent the pleasure-seeking establishments, such as nightclubs, bars, beer halls, barbar shops, etc., and the formation of Korean masculinity and male cultures. A complex of three factors enters into the formation of Korean masculinity—the Confucian ideals of the gentleman, the macho military culture, and modern Christianity with its accompanying nationalism. This mix of ideals and desires creates "profound ambiguities" in the Korean middle-class males' pursuit of sexual pleasures. But the males seem to be able to make these transformations from one set of behavioral patterns to another with little difficulty.

The site of desire for John Wiggins' "ethnographic fiction" based on his ethno-sexual encounters is the metropolitan city of Taipei, Taiwan, and, in particular, Taipei New Park. His article, "May I Talk to You?: Ethno-Sexual Encounters in Taipei's New Park—A Queer Ethnography," discusses the emergence of a gay community in the heart of Taiwan and is a testament to the continuing

liberalization, democratization, and globalization of Taiwan. The establishment of a gay community is particularly telling in that the demands of Confucianism run counter to the gay life-style—"responsibility to one's family first ... [and] to greater society, as well as to the nation; obligations to marry, raise a family, care for one's parents." Wiggins' article is also an interesting experiment in the recording of "ethno-sexual encounters" and innovative case studies of cross-ethnic and interracial homoerotic sexuality—another sign of increasing globalization.

Finally, Gretchen Jones' "Subversive Strategies: Masochism, Gender and Power in Kono Taeko's 'Toddler-Hunting'" is a literary study of the works of Kono Taeko, a noted Japanese female author whose sadomasochistic narratives won her the coveted Akutagawa Prize in 1963. Jones argues that Kono's use of the poetics of masochism is a guerilla tactic for subverting the restrictions imposed on Japanese women that confine them strictly to motherhood thus depriving them of the enjoyment of sexual pleasure. Seen in this way, the poetics of sadomasochism, which may appear to be anti-feminist, are actually a commentary on the hierarchies of power, gender, and modern Japan.

These studies bring home the reality that with increasing globalization, sexuality is no longer a matter of merely personal pleasure and intimacy or encounters in the bedroom, but that sex, sex work, and sexual practices have a profound impact on the society as a whole and extend to the welfare of the state and the nation. Great strides have been made since the ethnographic studies of "primitive" societies by Margaret Mead and Malinowski in such works as—*Coming of Age in Samoa* (1928) and *Growing Up in New Guinea* (1930). In fact there has been a paradigm shift, as Louisa Schein states in her introduction, "these articles are hoped to contribute to a postorientalist treatment of sexualities that does not resort to painting the other's exotic practices and mores..."

A special word of thanks and appreciation to Louisa Schein, the guest editor, for her efforts in locating the contributors and putting this special issue together.

Peter Li
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