

ular state there. A generation after the “superstition-smashing calamities” of the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution, tens of millions of Chinese have become practicing Buddhists, several hundred million observe ancestral and temple rites, and perhaps as many as 60 million consider themselves Christian. Women are disproportionately represented in the leadership of lay Buddhist associations, new Christian groups, and neo-traditionalist temple worshippers.

Even Islam, a religion that has historically shared little common ground with Western capitalism, has in Asia been revived with a market-friendly flavor. In Indonesia, *Islam de marché* (or market Islam) has arrived, borrowing freely from American Protestant evangelicalism. One of its stars is Craig Abdurrohim Owensby, an American convert to Islam who was a Protestant preacher and worked with Moral Majority leader Jerry Falwell before he made a fortune in Indonesia selling subscriptions to cell phone messages from the Qur’an.

Instead of destroying religious faith, globalization and modernization have created new needs among those whose lives have been changed, Hefner concludes, and religious entrepreneurs have succeeded by answering their call.

EXCERPT

China’s Foodies

We, the people of Chengdu, love to eat. Food is more important than life itself. . . . My grandpa told me how, in the 1930s, when warlords were battling for control of Chengdu, and artillery fell on the Huangchengba area, deluging streets with debris as houses collapsed, customers in a packed mapo tofu restaurant watched the bedlam creep closer as they waited for their meals, urging the chef to hurry so they might take shelter. The chef maintained his steady pace in the open kitchen, responding, “Mapo tofu cannot be rushed; that would ruin my reputation.”

—LIAO YIWU, a writer in Sichuan Province,
in *Asia Literary Review* (Winter 2010)

OTHER NATIONS

Defying the Democracy Cure

THE SOURCE: “When Democratization Radicalizes: The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in Turkey” by Günes Murat Tezcür, in *Journal of Peace Research*, Nov. 2010.

SPURRED BY THE HOPE OF joining the European Union, Turkey embarked on a wave of reform between 1999 and 2004. It abolished its death penalty, liberalized regulation of political parties and the press, and expanded the rights of non-Muslim minorities. Ankara even eased up on treatment of the country’s ethnic Kurds, who are concentrated near the borders with Iraq and Iran, and who have been subjected to a long-standing Turkish policy of repression and

forced assimilation. In 2002, the Grand National Assembly voted to allow radio and television programs to be broadcast in Kurdish (albeit for a limited amount of time each day). In 2004, when possibilities were the brightest they had ever been, the Kurdish insurgent group the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK) announced an end to a four-year-old cease-fire and resumed a two-pronged campaign of urban bombings and rural insurgency.

Why did the PKK not seize the moment? The group needed to assert its power or risk fading into irrelevance, argues political scientist Günes Murat Tezcür of Loyola University

Chicago. The conservative ruling party of Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the Justice and Development Party (AKP), was growing in power in Kurdish Turkey and taking votes from the Democratic Society Party, a Kurdish party. Moreover, without the galvanizing effect of state repression, the PKK would have trouble signing up recruits.

Since 2005 the pace of reform has slowed, and the AKP’s power in the Kurdish region of Turkey has waned. This has led the PKK to modify its behavior, as evidenced by the declaration of a temporary cease-fire in 2009.

Democratization is often thought to be a salve for ethnic conflict, Tezcür observes, but when ethnic insurgencies are unable to translate their power into electoral gains, the medicine may not work.