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EX ORIENTE LUMINA
HISTORIAE VARiae MULTIETHNICAE

Festskrift tillägnad Juha Janhunen
på hans 61. födelsedag 12.2.2013

Edited by
Tiina Hyytäinen, Lotta Jalava,
Janne Saarikivi & Erika Sandman

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Jyväskylä 2013
The present collection of articles entitled Ex Oriente Lumina: Historiae variæ multietnicae: Festskrift tillägnad Juha Janhunen på hans 61. födelsedag 12.2.2013 is a somewhat unusual work. To begin with, it is not common for a Festschrift to be dedicated to a scholar on his 61st birthday. And it is not all professors who receive a new Festschrift every year. Professor Juha Janhunen was presented just last year with a collection of articles, Per Uralis ad Orientem: litter philomonicum multilingue: Festskrift tillägnad Juha Janhunen på hans 60. födelsedag 12.2.2012. It is in connection with the preparation of this earlier Festschrift that an extraordinary series of events occurred. It turned out that Professor Janhunen’s friends and colleagues were so numerous that it became impossible for all their contributions—seventy in all—to be included in a single volume. For this reason, another volume was inevitable (and also explicitly promised to him on his birthday last year).

The present volume is an independent collection of peer-reviewed academic studies representing many different aspects of Asian studies, from the fields of political and social sciences to ethnic history and comparative religion. Despite their wide range, these various articles share the common theme of change in the local, linguistic, and ethnic identities of human groups living in modern cultural contexts. Around the globe, traditional communities described in classical ethnographic literature face challenges of modernization, urbanization, dislocation, economic development, and globalization, yet at times they also reveal incredible capacities to adapt and survive in the face of these new changes. The articles collected here offer examples of the underlying paradox of the humanities and cultural studies: culture survives by evolution and change, and the only consistent character of cultural semiotic systems is their constant transformation. Almost half of the papers in the present volume deal with issues related to China. Many of them investigate language use in different societal contexts and situations. Anu Niemi analyzes the peculiarities of hunger-related phrases in Chan Buddhism. Taru Salmenkari describes how the choice of language in a multilingual context indicates identities and power relations in Taiwanese social movements. Mikko Suutarinen discusses different aspects of Arabic writing among Muslims in China, analyzing the script of a folk story from the Dongxiang, a little-studied ethnic group in China’s northwestern Gansu province. Gerald Roche and Lcag mo tshering investigate language use in annual rituals performed in the village of Gnyan thog as a means of maintaining cultural diversity in Amdo.