tension between divine kingship (in which the king is a Buddha-to-be) and frequent political insurrections (which are eventually legitimized by the sangha).

The second half of this volume is an anthropological and sociological study of the Thai sangha, from village level to Bangkok: the composition and distribution of religious personnel, monkhood as an avenue of social mobility, monastic networks, legitimation of the polity and patronage of the sangha, the use of the sangha in national integration and development. Much of this section consists of statistical surveys, biographical sketches and analyses of interviews and questionnaires.

The traditional Thai political system is pictured as a three-tiered scheme: (1) kingship grounded in dharma but dependent on charismatic leadership and hence often short-lived; (2) a galactic, patrimonial bureaucracy with autonomous provincial governors, princes and chiefs; (3) a passive peasantry, occasionally mobilized for public works and warfare, and squeezed for surplus grain. This galactic polity was integrated through collective cosmic rituals in which the king was the focal point, and through public works which embodied the collective aspirations and fantasies of heavenly grandeur. “It was thus a theater state providing the masses with an awe-inspiring vision of a cosmic manifestation on earth as well as providing the rulers with an ideal paradigm to follow in their actions” (p. 487).

In the modern polity, the king has changed into a constitutional monarch, a more stable position since it is removed from the turmoil of everyday politics. The king can represent dharma and grant legitimacy to the ruling clique (into whose hands power has passed) by officiating at ceremonial occasions. The bureaucracy has been transformed into a radial, bureaucratic polity dominated by factional military, police and civilian cliques concentrated in Bangkok. The base of the society remains a largely passive, unengaged and autonomous peasantry, in spite of the increasing incorporation of villagers within a national administrative system through development projects and improved transportation and communications. This “radial polity” has reached a position of strength and stability previously unknown in the “pulsating, galactic polity.” National integration, centralization and modernization have affected the sangha, which has been incorporated in the polity’s actions to a degree previously unknown.

Although the jargon sometimes gets thick, this book is packed with valuable facts and rewarding insights, and is destined to become an indispensable reference on the subject.

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A decade ago the impact of the Cultural Revolution led western observers to a revision of their “Mao commands everything” view of Chinese politics. And as the old concepts of a monolithic Chinese state began to give way, more complex theories of the political process emerged. Since then, we have toyed with a number of alternative frameworks, including those that emphasize the role of revolutionary parties, “2-line” models, and a variety of theories based on the activities of factions.

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Work on earlier periods of Chinese history has produced a number of exciting accounts based on these models. Andrew Nathan’s studies of factionalism during the earlier part of this century, for example, demonstrated the possibilities for innovative analysis even where evidence is limited. Unfortunately, these same insights have not yet been generated for the current period, and existing models have so far offered only a partial explanation of the complex political events of the past several years.

Parris Chang’s *Power and Policy in China* is an important step in the direction of more precise analysis in this area, offering important insights into the relationship between leadership and policy formation. Building on the work of earlier observers, Chang has outlined a political process in which power has increasingly diffused to a large number of groups and individuals active in the Chinese system. The result of his effort is an interesting and subtle analysis of the Chinese political scene during the past two decades, providing new insights to both China-watchers and students of comparative government alike.

Chang begins his analysis with a discussion of the workings of the Chinese political process from a functional point of view. The functions he outlines include a series of steps in the formation of policy: identification, initiation, consensus building, and implementation. Using these functions as a basis, he then describes a political process for policy formulation which revolves around both a network of complex personal conflicts and a system of consensus building on the part of a large number of groups and individuals.

These themes are elaborated through the use of five case studies which include the 12 year agricultural program, administrative decentralization, the commune movement, the socialist education drive, and the decisions on ideological rectification. By evaluating the relationship of political leaders to the decisions made in each case, Chang suggests that these decisions were not hard and irrevocable, but were rather part of an ongoing process in which different actors took a dynamic and changing role over time. The logic of the political situation was such that important Chinese politicians often changed their general position as the issue shifted.

The case studies are well drawn, and Chang concludes by outlining a pluralist policy making process for the Chinese political system. He points out that not only were there serious cross-cutting disagreements within the political leadership group in all of the cases discussed, but that the decisions often also included large numbers of individuals and groups not normally considered active in the Chinese political process by western analysts. The result, states Chang, is a policy making structure in which Mao’s role was severely constrained by such factors as the presence of strong interest groups and complex patterns of elite activity.

The book contains an abundance of original material, drawn from a wide diversity of sources, and includes appendices outlining the positions held by Chinese Communist officials and a list of Party meetings with their known agendas. The appendices are a valuable research tool, although the listing of Party meetings has recently been superceded by Kenneth Lieberthal’s invaluable compilations on the same topic.

Gerard Corr’s *The Chinese Red Army* touches on a subject which adds yet another dimension to the study of political leadership. In this discussion of Chinese military history since 1950, Corr points to the role of formal interest groups in the Chinese political process and outlines some of the issues which may move this group to action.

Since Corr is a professional journalist, his account is not couched in the terms and jargon normally used by western observers. He nonetheless argues that the army’s *raison d’etre* has not only made it one of the most influential groups in the Chinese