

## Aberystwyth University

### *Review of Faithful Fighters*

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# Book Review

## TRANSNATIONAL AND COMPARATIVE

### *Frontier Encounters and State Formation in Northeast Asia*

*Making Borders in Modern East Asia: The Tumen River Demarcation.*  
By NIANSHEN SONG. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019. 324 pp.  
ISBN: 9781316626290 (paper).

*Beyond the Steppe Frontier: A History of the Sino-Russian Border.* By SÖREN  
URBANSKY. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2020. 392 pp. ISBN:  
9780691181684 (cloth).  
doi:10.1017/S0021911820004040

If frontiers could have life stories of their own and historians could write their biographies, Nianshen Song's *Making Borders in Modern East Asia: The Tumen River Demarcation, 1881–1919* and Sören Urbansky's *Beyond the Steppe Frontier: A History of the Sino-Russian Border* would be part of this genre. Both books examine the history of the formation of national borders in two river basins at the intersection of three states in Northeast Asia, raising questions about the significance of border regions in the making of modern nation-states. They both decenter conventional narratives by bringing out the voices of farmers, herders, intellectuals, activists, and officials living in border areas, with a focus on interactions between different groups. However, the approaches they take in terms of source bases and analytical frameworks are notably different.

Song's book focuses on the Tumen River region located in the southeastern part of modern-day Jilin Province in China, historically at the intersection of Korea, China, colonial Japan, and Russia. Combining Qing and Chosŏn institutional histories; officials' writings; unpublished archives held at Japanese, Korean, and Japanese institutions; and published provincial archival collections, maps, and other primary sources, Song demonstrates how nationalist narratives in Korea, Japan, and China were mutually constituted at the intersection of expansive empires and states, where local communities interacted and ideas collided. These frontier interactions were tied to international politics, group identities, and the formation of national myths rooted in the Tumen River region. The Korean communities that settled in the Tumen River region were central actors in the conceptualization of the border, as they were successively a source of political disputes between the Qing and Chosŏn, acted both as pawns and resisters

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47 to Japanese imperial policies, and constituted important agents in the competition for  
48 state building.

49 In chapter 1, Song situates Qing-Chosŏn disputes over Korean settlements and  
50 boundary demarcation within larger multilateral diplomatic negotiations. In the 1880s,  
51 while the Qing moved to register Korean squatters as Qing subjects as part of an “empire-  
52 wide enterprise of borderland integration” (p. 37), the Korean king insisted on strictly  
53 forbidding Korean subjects from settling north of the Tumen River. Local Koreans lever-  
54 aged discrepancies in the transcription of the Manchu/Mongol term *Tumen* (Chinese:  
55 土門; Korean: 豆滿), arguing that, in fact, there were two rivers, one called T’omun  
56 (土門) and the other Tuman (豆滿), and that the real boundary was the Tuman  
57 (豆滿), while the T’omun (土門) was a domestic Korean river. This debate sparked a  
58 series of territorial disputes and rounds of boundary demarcation, in which Qing and  
59 Chosŏn officials used a “hybrid” (p. 49) system incorporating Western-style diplomacy  
60 and *zongfan* rhetoric backed up by state-led production of geographical knowledge  
61 and maps.

62 Chapter 2 examines the Qing-Chosŏn boundary demarcation of 1885–87 led by the  
63 officials Yi Chung-ha and Wu Dacheng, which ultimately failed to reach a final  
64 agreement. Song’s close reading of documents and maps related to this mission reinforces  
65 the idea that power structures intersected with the production of geographical  
66 knowledge, as different visions of frontiers and boundaries coexisted and influenced  
67 one another in the context of a flexible international relations framework.

68 Chapter 3 focuses on local society, covering issues of landownership, registration,  
69 mobility, trade, and bandits. Evocative stories and statistics depict how local populations  
70 shaped this frontier region. The example of banditry illustrates how local dynamics  
71 related to larger national issues. Armed rebel groups provided upward mobility, as  
72 some of their members were recruited into state armies, while others formed resistant  
73 militias.

74 In chapter 4, Song documents what he calls the “interiorization” (p. 129) of the  
75 Manchurian frontier, which was characterized by Qing attempts to implement adminis-  
76 trative reforms aimed at expanding state capacity in response to the larger context of  
77 competition for state building among Russia, Korea, and Japan in early twentieth-century  
78 Manchuria. Those reforms entailed the creation of a civil administration departing from  
79 the banner system, the increase of troops, the regulation of settlers, and attempts to  
80 assimilate Koreans by making them adopt the Qing hairstyle. Japan also engaged in  
81 state building on the northern bank of the Tumen River as it sought to prevent the  
82 area from becoming a “hotbed for anti-Japanese activism” (p. 159). Song shows how  
83 the Japanese official Shinoda Jisaku manipulated international norms to legitimize the  
84 Japanese colonial enterprise in the Kantō 間島 region (the area north of the Tumen  
85 River, Chinese: Jiandao; Japanese: Kantō). For example, he sought to represent Kantō  
86 as a no-man’s land or *terra nullis* (p. 159), relying on Qing Jesuit works from Jean-Baptiste  
87 Regis and Jean-Baptiste Du Halde published in 1735. Similar to the tactics employed by  
88 European colonizers in Africa, Australia, and North America, Japan invoked the *terra*  
89 *nullis* principle to justify imperial expansion and occupation.

90 The penultimate chapter moves to an intellectual history of the border focusing on  
91 the formation of nationalist ideologies. Early twentieth-century Manchuria became a  
92 space encapsulating “all important political imaginations in early twentieth-century  
93 East Asia” (p. 173). Drawing on writings from Japanese, Korean, and Chinese intellectu-  
94 als such as Naitō Konan, Song Jiaoren, and Sin Ch’ae-ho, Song shows that while their  
95 views of the Tumen border region diverged, their narratives were mutually constituted

and borrowed from each other. For example, Sin Ch'ae-ho's framework borrowed from the historical approach of the Chinese reformer Liang Qichao and the sinologist Naitō Konan's carefully studied Chinese views, including Song Jiaoren's *Jiandao Issue*.

In the final chapter, Song examines the formation of ethnic identity among Koreans living in the Yanbian region. Focusing on the issue of citizenship laws and naturalization, Song shows how multiple views of what it meant to be Korean were contested among Yanbian Koreans along the lines of reformism vs conservatism. Such debates alimeted Korean nationalist movements that developed within educational institutions in Yanbian/Kantō. Song suggests that the March First Movement (1919), a turning point in the formation of Korean nationalism, was rooted in resistance movements in Yanbian (p. 251).

Attempting to use a similar regional focus that moves the reader away from imperial centers, Urbansky looks at the Argun River basin as a regional unit, which stretches from the intersection of Mongolia-China-Russia border triangle on the western edge, to the Hailar River on the southern edge, to the Cossack village of Olochi in the north. Adopting a *longue durée* approach contrasting with Song's narrow time frame, Urbansky's sweeping narrative spans the seventeenth century to the 1990s and focuses on cross-frontier encounters, migration, trade, and diplomatic exchanges. Using a quasi-encyclopedic approach that draws on a large number of mostly Russian-language sources including governmental archives, travel accounts, newspapers, propaganda images, and ethnographic surveys, the book uncovers numerous stories that paint a picture of how life at the frontier changed with shifts in political regimes. For Urbansky, the frontier changed from an abstract entity defined by treaties (Nerchinsk, 1689 and Khiakta, 1727), to a porous state border crossed by smugglers and herders (1911–1920s), to a heavily militarized barbed-wire fence that eliminated most possibilities for the movement of human and commodities (1930s–1950s), and finally to a place of renewed trade and encounters in the 1980s.

The main contribution of the book lies in the fourth and fifth chapters, where Urbansky depicts the 1929 Sino-soviet conflict as a watershed moment in the transformation of the frontier from a site of exchange and encounters to a strictly controlled and heavily militarized zone. In chapter 4, the reader learns about large-scale migrations of Buryat herders who crossed the Argun River to flee collectivization and taxation in the Soviet Union and settled in Hulunbuir in the 1920s. Chapter 5 argues that such border-crossing along with large-scale smuggling became nearly impossible in the 1930s, as the “open steppe” came “under lock and key” (p. 150). Calling the transformation process of the border one in which “the nation-state concept of a boundary emerged triumphant” (p. 217), Urbansky's work mixes a teleological narrative centered around “a general evolution towards territorial boundaries” (p. 14) with an implied hierarchy of ethnic groups in which indigenous populations are represented as “borderless” (pp. 8, 38), relying on an “archaic economy” (p. 70), “noble savages” (p. 98) successfully tamed by Moscow (p. 143), seeing their ambitions “absorbed into the objectives of” (p. 137) larger empires, or “neutralized by the metropolises” (p. 180). Urbansky promises to offer a bottom-up perspective centered on the frontier; yet, by excluding sources produced in languages other than Russian—existing Chinese archival collections on this region are only cursorily mentioned—this work amplifies the perception of a frontier shaped by great power politics while overlooking the diversity of voices and perspectives.

In terms of audience, Song's book has much to teach to scholars of modern Chinese, Japanese, and Korean history, as well as researchers interested in the formation of state borders at the turn of the century. Graduate seminars would be greatly enriched by Song's book to reflect on topics such as historical methods in the field of frontier

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139 studies, critical use of multilingual sources, and deconstruction of nation-centered para-  
140 digms. Selections could also be assigned to undergraduate students in survey courses on  
141 East Asian history. Urbansky's book could satisfy the curiosity of readers interested in  
142 accounts on the Sino-Russian border from a Russian perspective.

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### 146 147 148 149 **Manchukuo Revisited: Transnational Culture and Radical Politics**

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151 *Manchukuo Perspectives: Transnational Approaches to Literary Production.*  
152 Edited by ANNIKA A. CULVER and NORMAN SMITH. Hong Kong: Hong Kong  
153 University Press, 2020. xii, 315 pp. ISBN: 9789888528134 (cloth).

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155 *Fascism in Manchuria: The Soviet-China Encounter in the 1930s.* By SUSANNE  
156 HOHLER. London: I.B. Tauris, 2017. ix, 262 pp. ISBN: 9781784535223 (cloth).  
157 doi:10.1017/S0021911820004052

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160 The study of Japan's client state Manchukuo 满洲国 (1932–45) by historians of  
161 modern China, Japan, Korea, Russia, and broadly defined Northeast Asia is a fast-growing  
162 field. Yet writing a comprehensive history of Manchukuo remains a challenging enter-  
163 prise, as during its fourteen-year history, this colonial "state" did not maintain fixed  
164 borders, its multicultural population was on the move, and its highly militarized govern-  
165 ment and ideology were in stark contrast with the daily lives of urban and rural commu-  
166 nities. Competing nationalist narratives and interpretations of Manchukuo's history in  
167 China, Japan, and the Soviet Union during World War II persisted under new political  
168 regimes during and after the Cold War. Recently, social and cultural historians have  
169 turned their attention to the experiences of the Manchu, Chinese, Japanese, Korean,  
170 and Russian diasporas, while other historians have focused on elusive notions of moder-  
171 nity, defined by urban growth, economic development, and technological and scientific  
172 transformation, while downplaying the horrific crimes conducted by the Japanese military  
173 against the local, predominantly Chinese, population. The two books reviewed here focus  
174 on media, literary productions, and transnational experiences, opening new venues for  
175 the study of Manchukuo's history.

176 *Manchukuo Perspectives: Transnational Approaches to Literary Production*, edited  
177 by Annika A. Culver and Norman Smith, brings together eighteen multinational contrib-  
178 utors—Chen Shi, Chen Yan, Jiang Lei, Li Zhenglong, Liu Chao, Liu Xiaoli, Wang Yue,  
179 Ying Xiong, Zhan Li, and Zhang Quan from the People's Republic of China; Okubo  
180 Akio and Wanatabe Naoki from Japan; Kim Jaeyong from South Korea; Olga Bakich  
181 and Norman Smith from Canada; and Junko Agnew, Stephen Poland, and Karen  
182 Thornber from the United States—from such fields as literature, history, cultural  
183 studies, and film. They analyze the personal lives and cultural impact of the Chinese, Jap-  
184 anese, Korean, and Russian intellectuals who lived in Manchukuo and pursued careers in  
literature, translation, and publishing despite ideological and regulatory obstacles  
imposed by authorities.

185 This volume's multidisciplinary and sociological approach to the study of Manchukuo's literary scene is inspired by French historian Gisele Sapiro's analysis of the challenges faced by writers in German-occupied Vichy France (1940–45).<sup>1</sup> During China's War of Resistance against Japan (1937–45), Manchukuo's government put new restrictions on local writers and publishers, including the policy of *Ba bu* 八不 (Eight Abstentions), which banned negative depictions of the regime and its ideals. Despite these pressures, as the individual chapters demonstrate, Manchukuo's multinational writers often ignored or violated these regulations by using creative techniques to produce a bleak picture of daily life there.

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193 The eighteen chapters of this book are divided into three parts. Part one, “Manchukuo's Print Media and the Politics of Representation/Translation,” looks at contrasting depictions of Manchukuo by various media outlets. While the official Manchukuo State Council's Chinese-language newspaper *Datong bao* 大同报 (Great Unity Herald), published from 1932 to 1945 in Xinjing 新京 (Changchun), disseminated official propaganda and optimism about New Manchuria's bright future (p. 19), its literary supplements, *Datong Julebu* 大同俱乐部 (Great Unity Club) and *Manzhou Xinwentan* 满洲新文坛 (New Literary World in Manchuria), published resistance literature, for which many contributing editors and writers were persecuted (p. 46).

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202 Part two, “Chinese Writers in Manchukuo and ‘Manchukuo’ Writers in Japan,” presents a complex picture of “border-crossing” Chinese writers, who were not a homogeneous group. Some of them were inspired by the May Fourth literary movement in China in the 1920s, while others borrowed from European and Japanese literary traditions. Chinese writer Shan Ding 山丁 (1914–95) reflected exclusively on the landscape and social conditions of Manchukuo. Chinese writers Gu Ding 古丁 (1909–64) and Mei Niang 梅娘 (1916–2013) were bilingual, contributing to Chinese and Japanese publications and cross-cultural dialogue. Gu Ding created a hybrid Chinese language by using the elements of the Japanese language to “capture Manchukuo society as broadly as possible, and appeal to readers from various social strata” (p. 100). Mei Niang gained prominence as a writer by giving voice to women in the highly patriarchal society of Manchukuo, exposing social inequality and ethnic hierarchies within the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere (Daitōa Kyōeiken 大東亜共榮圈) (p. 193). Living in Xinjing, Osaka, and Beijing, translating from Japanese and writing in Chinese, gave her a unique perspective on the colonial nature of the Manchukuo regime.

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215 The careers of Chinese and “Manchukuo” writers and their literary productions are discussed in chapters 5–13, explaining the evolution of Chinese literature in Manchukuo. From 1932 to 1937, these writers formed different literary associations and competed with each other, while during wartime, control and censorship over Chinese-language publications intensified, and they had to operate within the framework of Japanese-controlled “national” organizations and literary events such as the Greater East Asia Writers' Congress (Daitōa Bungakusha Taikai 大東亜文学者大会).

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222 Part three, “Russian, Japanese, and Korean Writers in Manchukuo,” discusses the challenges faced by Russian émigré poets, who did not fit into the official pan-Asian motto “harmony of the five ethnicities” (五族协和); Japanese writers, some of whom shared a double burden of being colonizers and left-wing critics of the colonial regime in Manchukuo; and Korean writers, whose status as Japan's colonial subjects in Korea

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<sup>1</sup>Gisele Sapiro, *La Guerre des Écrivains, 1940–1953* [The war of the writers, 1940–1953] (Paris: Fayard, 1999).



231 changed when they moved to Manchukuo, causing their conflicting attitudes toward the  
 232 Japanese Empire, Manchukuo, and Chinese society.

233 Chapters 14–18 demonstrate that the variety of personal experiences and writings in  
 234 multiple languages complicate the narrative of resistance-versus-collaboration in Man-  
 235 chukuo’s cultural productions. Several authors in this groundbreaking volume argue  
 236 that the literature of Manchukuo, marginalized for ideological reasons in postwar  
 237 China and the Koreas, should be further studied and recognized for its contribution to  
 238 modern Chinese and East Asian literary history. This volume, with original translations,  
 239 comprehensive textual analysis, multisource research, and detailed social scrutiny recre-  
 240 ate a colorful and vivid historical panorama of literary life in Manchukuo. It will be a stan-  
 241 dard reference book about Manchukuo’s culture for years to come.

242 Susanne Hohler’s *Fascism in Manchuria: The Soviet-China Encounter in the 1930s*  
 243 analyzes the evolution of Russian fascists in Harbin, from their beginnings in the Law  
 244 Faculty in 1925 and the establishment of their party (Rossiiskaia fashistskaia partiia) in  
 245 1931, to the peak of their activities in 1937 and subsequent fragmentation and  
 246 decline.<sup>2</sup> This is the second major study of the Russian fascists in English, after John Ste-  
 247 phan’s comprehensive study published more than four decades ago.<sup>3</sup> Hohler’s study  
 248 focuses on ideology, propaganda, and the social impact of Russian fascists on the  
 249 Russian émigré society, organizations and youth in Harbin, only briefly mentioning the  
 250 ties between Russian, Japanese, and Chinese militant political organizations, Manchukuo  
 251 government and society.

252 In *Fascism in Manchuria*, Hohler argues that the Russian Fascist Party had a sub-  
 253 stantial influence on Harbin’s Russian émigré society by engaging in aggressive propa-  
 254 ganda and by infiltrating émigré organizations, societies, clubs, cultural and sports  
 255 associations, the Orthodox Church, and education (p. 4). She employs the concept of  
 256 “civil society” used by American political scientist Robert D. Putnam in his analysis of  
 257 broken American society and the strategy to make it more democratic through acquiring  
 258 social capital and building social networks.<sup>4</sup> Focusing “on the functions rather than nar-  
 259 rowing the conceptual scope with a normatively charged definition” of civil society (p. 6),  
 260 Hohler argues that there is a dark side to civil society and that the norms and values that  
 261 people learn within a civil society organization can become racist and xenophobic and not  
 262 democratic or universal (p. 7). Russian fascists exploited numerous civil society organiza-  
 263 tions in Harbin to their advantage by propagating their ideas, values and anti-Jewish  
 264 sentiments.

265 *Fascism in Manchuria* is organized into five chapters. Chapter 1 discusses the histor-  
 266 ical development of the Russian community in Harbin, which lost its privileges with the  
 267 collapse of imperial Russia in 1917 but continued to grow until mid-1930s, receiving new  
 268 émigrés and refugees from the Soviet Union. Japan’s occupation of Manchuria in 1931  
 269 immediately affected the lives of Russian émigrés, contrary to the Hohler’s statement  
 270 that in the early 1930s, “Russian community structure and civil society remained  
 271 mostly intact, apart from a few exceptions” (p. 36).

272 Chapter 2 discusses the evolution and ideology of the Russian Fascist Party in  
 273 Harbin. Hohler distinguishes Russian fascism in Manchuria from the German and  
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275 <sup>2</sup>In 1934, the Russian Fascist Party was renamed the All-Russian Fascist Party.

276 <sup>3</sup>John Stephan, *The Russian Fascists: Tragedy and Farce in Exile, 1925–1945* (Harper & Row, 1978).

<sup>4</sup>Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000).

277 Italian brands, in that it combined European fascist theory with imperial Russia's glorious  
 278 past and anticommunist/anti-Soviet rhetoric. This "exile and diaspora fascism" was based  
 279 on ultranationalism and "the idea of mystical rebirth of the Russian nation through  
 280 fascism" (pp. 60–61). Russian fascists saw themselves as part of global fascist movement,  
 281 but there is little discussion in the book as to their ties to other fascist organizations. The  
 282 Japanese officials in Manchukuo supported Russian fascists only as long as they were  
 283 useful (p. 64).

284 Chapters 3 and 4 analyze how the Russian Fascist Party used education and youth  
 285 organizations to indoctrinate the émigré youth. To reach out to the adults, the Russian  
 286 fascists took over the Russian Club, Harbin's major cultural center, turning it into a plat-  
 287 form for attacking old leaders of the émigré community and "Judeo-Masonic conspiracy."  
 288 (p. 109). Chapter 5 further discusses anti-Jewish agitation and propaganda from 1933  
 289 until 1937, when it reached its peak. Several leaders of Harbin's Jewish community left  
 Harbin when the political situation in the city became intolerable.

290 This book raises further questions: Can stateless Russian émigré organizations and  
 291 associations in Harbin after 1934 be considered "civil society," when the Japanese military  
 292 mission exercised control over Harbin's society? What were the links between the  
 293 Russian and Jewish members of Harbin's "civil society" and their communities in  
 294 Tianjin and Shanghai? What were the attitudes of the Russian émigré, Chinese, and Jap-  
 295 anese communities in Harbin and Manchuria toward each other? While this book does  
 296 not provide clear answers to these questions, it effectively portrays controversial political  
 297 campaigns, associations, debates, and personalities of Harbin's Russian-speaking commu-  
 298 nity. This book will appeal to those interested in the history of Manchukuo, fascism,  
 Russian and Jewish diasporas, and transnationalism.

299 The two books discussed here offer new perspectives on Manchukuo culture, society,  
 300 and politics. They use a variety of historical periodicals and publications in multiple lan-  
 301 guages, now scattered in private collections, libraries, and archives around the world. The  
 302 full picture of Manchukuo's culture and society will be incomplete without further inter-  
 303 disciplinary research and international scholarly dialogue.

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310 *American Exodus: Second-Generation Chinese Americans in China, 1901–1949.*

311 By CHARLOTTE BROOKS. Oakland: University of California Press, 2019. xviii, 309

312 pp. ISBN: 9780520302686 (cloth).

313 doi:10.1017/S0021911820004064

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315 Charlotte Brooks's *American Exodus* provides a captivating account of the immigra-  
 316 tion of Chinese Americans from the United States to China. Within migration studies,  
 317 there has been a long-standing effort to diversify the field with studies that pay increased  
 318 attention to transnational movements of students, funds, and personal or familial net-  
 319 works. Immigration from the United States to China, along with return migration, is  
 320 an understudied phenomenon. This book makes great strides to remedy that.

321 Brooks identifies two types of Chinese American immigrants. The first consisted of  
 322 the sons and daughters of Chinese immigrants who returned to Guangdong Province or

Hong Kong through family and merchant networks to study or work. The second included Chinese Americans who studied at US universities and then sought the kinds of vocational opportunities in China that were closed to them by American racism. Because in many cases they dreamed of using their knowledge to aid in China's development, Brooks terms this population the "modernizers." The line between these two types of migrants proved most stark before the 1920s, though Brooks argues that they "never fully lost their meaning" (p. 9).

Brooks follows these migrants in five roughly chronological chapters beginning at the turn of the twentieth century and concluding at the end of World War II. Throughout these decades, the merchants/students and modernizers grappled with thorny questions about what it meant to be a citizen. Both China and the United States maintained a rhetoric of acceptance and belonging that did not match the lived experience of these immigrants. The United States after *Wong Kim Ark* acknowledged US citizens by virtue of place of birth, but the reality was that the full benefits of citizenship were conferred only on those who were also white. When Chinese Americans traveled to China, American consular officials invoked their dual citizenship to dismiss them, even going so far as to invent their own interpretations of nationality law to determine at what point Chinese Americans might be considered to have lost their US citizenship (p. 94). In both legal disputes in the late Qing era and in existential crises such as the Japanese invasions of the 1930s, US representatives in China abandoned Chinese Americans or provided only limited support.

Meanwhile, Brooks demonstrates that the rise of the Republican era and Sun Yat-sen's infamous laudatory tributes to the support of the overseas Chinese did not prevent the Guomindang-led government from treating many Chinese American immigrants as suspect. With their Western ideals and limited facility in Chinese, Brooks explains, new arrivals from the United States often sought refuge in foreign enclaves and colonized spaces in Shanghai and Hong King, where they could carve out a livelihood that did not require them to support political goals or tactics of the Guomindang.

Chinese American immigrants to China have been largely overlooked in histories of the migrations and diplomatic relationships between the two countries they bridge. *American Exodus* is a welcome remedy to this problem, making impressive use of the archival records generated by the intricacies of Exclusion Era immigration paperwork, available newspapers, and the records of private institutions and businesses to overcome the challenges of archival access in the present-day People's Republic of China. In this, Brooks weaves a thoughtful and deeply engaging narrative that brings to light a population that we have long known existed in a vague sense but had no systematic understanding of to consult. In the process, she ably bridges the migration and diplomatic histories of China and the United States, offering new insights about how constructions of citizenship and activist immigrants contribute to each. With its frequent use of colorful individual life stories, photographs, and lively, jargon-free language, this book will appeal to undergraduates as well as seasoned scholars of immigration history, overseas Chinese, and Sino-American relations.

In the course of her fascinating narrative, Brooks notes that Chinese migrants with citizenship in other Anglophone countries faced a similar "in-between" status, but she does not delve far into the extent to which overseas Chinese from Southeast Asia did as well. To what extent were Chinese Americans inherently set apart from the rest of the Chinese diaspora? Brooks makes passing reference to these comparisons on several occasions in the book, and a more complete comparison is far beyond the scope of her project. But it appears to be a fruitful avenue for future inquiry. Overseas

Chinese and Chinese American histories have not often spoken directly to one another, but *American Exodus* suggests there might be more room to do so, at least with respect to returning migrants in China in the first half of the twentieth century.

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*Remapping the Sinophone: The Cultural Production of Chinese-Language Cinema in Singapore and Malaya before and during the Cold War.* By WAI-SIAM HEE. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2019. 242 pp. ISBN: 9789888528035 (cloth). doi:10.1017/S0021911820004076

This monograph makes a significant contribution to Sinophone studies through its investigation of the relationships among Sinitic-language cultural production, historical experiences of overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia, and the imaginary homeland (China proper). *Remapping the Sinophone* complicates Shu-mei Shih's definition of Sinophone by examining the depictions of "Chineseness" in Malayan and Singaporean films made before and during the Cold War period. It not only addresses the omission of film in the scholarship on Southeast Asian Sinophone cultural production, which has primarily focused on literary texts after 1960, but also expands the scope of Sinophone cinema studies, which have been limited to works from Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Anglophone regions outside Asia. Wai-Siam Hee contests the epistemology of the term "Sinophone," which is deployed to question Euro-American colonialism and neocolonialism, China-centrism, diaspora, and national identity.

Culling through declassified documents, archives, newspapers, tabloids, magazines, and other print media, Hee contends that heterogeneous "Chinese-language cinemas" had already appeared in Singapore and Malaya during the Cold War period. This book studies the way multilingual Chinese films were disseminated as a powerful form of cultural production, popular memory, and propaganda in Malaya and Singapore from 1926 to 1965. In the moving images, "Chineseness," "Chinese-language," and "Chinese identity" are represented as fluctuating concepts, reflecting filmmakers' negotiation with imperialist colonialism and ethnic nationalism.

In the introduction, Hee traces the development of Sinophone theory since the 1990s. Chen Peng-Hsiang's definition focuses on anticolonial and anti-imperialist resistance and the juxtaposition between Chineseness and Western modernity. Shu-mei Shih's Sinophone discourse deconstructs Chinese Han nationalism and the identity of Chinese people who are outside China. Wang Der-Wei's revision replaces Shih's postcolonialist framework with a "postloyalist" framework. Hee also invokes Wang Gung-wu's categorization of overseas Chinese into three groups during the Cold War, to analyze different degrees of nationalist identification with China in early Malayan and Singaporean Chinese-language films.

The book's first two chapters examine films that represent "Chineseness" as a cultural and historical affiliation for overseas Chinese people in Malaya and Singapore. The first chapter unpacks the linguistic and cultural creolization in *New Friend* (1927, directed by Guo Chaowen) and argues that it was the first locally produced film in Malaya. Reflecting

415 on the biography of the producer and co-screenwriter of *New Friend*, Liu Beijin, Hee  
 416 observes that Liu's works and life ironically foreground the difference between the  
 417 "Chinese-ness" he promotes and the "China-ness" represented by both the Kuomintang  
 418 and the Communist parties. The second chapter rethinks the term "Mahua" (Malaysian  
 419 Chinese) as it examines Wu Cun's three Chinese-language films made in 1940s Singa-  
 420 pore. Emphasizing the "non-Chinese," "non-Malaysian" characteristics of the films,  
 421 Hee scrutinizes the nationalist and colonialist discourses that erase the working class's  
 422 anti-imperialist struggle and delves into the way the female characters undermine patri-  
 423 archal and nationalist ideologies.

424 Chapters 3 and 4 focus on propagandist film production overseen by colonialist  
 425 and imperialist institutions. Chapter 3 discusses the Malayan Film Unit (MFU), the  
 426 organization affiliated with the British colonial government that produced anticom-  
 427 munist propagandist films in the 1950s and 1960s. Hee analyzes these films portray-  
 428 ing the New Village as case studies. The fourth chapter examines Hollywood  
 429 productions of anticommunist, multilingual Chinese films in Singapore, commis-  
 430 sioned by the US State Department during the global "Campaign of Truth" in the  
 431 1950s. Whereas the MFU's production fostered Malaysians' national identity by deni-  
 432 grating Malayan communists and conflating them with Han-chauvinist Chinese in  
 433 Malaya, the anticommunist films made by the New York Sound Masters, Inc., estab-  
 434 lished the trend for the censorship of Singaporean and Malaysian cinema after the  
 435 Cold War.

436 Chapter 5 turns to Yi Shui, a Singaporean Chinese director who made "Malayanized  
 437 Chinese-language cinema" that reflected a multilingual and hybridized Chinese culture  
 438 and resisted the oppression from English- and Malay-speaking groups. Yi supported a  
 439 multicultural nationalism that bolstered a self-governed Malaya. Hee analyzes Yi's two  
 440 films, *Lion City* (1960) and *Black Gold* (1963), in the framework of Third World  
 441 Cinema, a 1950s film movement that used realism to promote anticolonialism and  
 442 anti-imperialism.

443 In the afterword, Hee points out the constant struggles of overseas Chinese filmmak-  
 444 ers with the left/right political forces in their representation and interpellation of Chinese  
 445 into the Malayan nationalist discourses. Hee argues that "the borders of the Sinophone  
 446 were gradually and silently forming from the 1920s to the Cold War" (p. 176) in Singa-  
 447 porean and Malayan cinema, before it was marginalized and forgotten. In this sense,  
 448 the Cold War Singaporean and Malayan cinema also "provides an early demonstration  
 449 of the difficulty and complexity of the Sinophone" (p. 177).

450 In Hee's "cultural approach to tracing the theory of heterogeneous Chinese lan-  
 451 guages" (p. 2), two vexed, correlated issues in current Sinophone studies are  
 452 addressed. First, Hee's research on Cold War Chinese cinema in Malaysia and Singa-  
 453 pore illuminates the fact that present knowledge production of the Sinophone has  
 454 been motivated and restrained by ideological underpinnings. Second, as Hee views  
 455 the dichotomy of "'East/West' and 'diaspora/against-diaspora' discourses" (p. 178)  
 456 in Sinophone studies as something left over from Cold War politics, the book cau-  
 457 tions against the monolithic position of current Sinophone studies. Hee notes, "if  
 458 this early anti-imperialist, anticolonial original memory and history is erased from  
 459 the territory of the Sinophone, this is tantamount to erasing any possibility of the  
 460 Sinophone taking part in local practice in Singapore and Malaysia (p. 178). Hee's  
 research into the forgotten history of Southeast Asian cinema is a commendable  
 and crucial intervention into the field of Sinophone studies. His research not only  
 unsettles the notion of heteroglossia in multilingual Chinese cultural practices

461 compromised by political hegemonies. But it also foregrounds the perennial tension  
 462 between Sinophone cultural production and theorization.

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468  
 469 *Opening the Gates to Asia: A Transpacific History of How America Repealed*  
 470 *Asian Exclusion*. By JANE H. HONG. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina  
 471 Press, 2019. xii, 264 pp. ISBN: 9781469653358 (cloth).  
 472 doi:10.1017/S0021911820004088  
 473

474 Asian exclusion connotes a uniformity of immigration regulation that conflates the  
 475 piecemeal process by which limits on Asian migration actually emerged in white settler  
 476 societies and some Central and South American nations.<sup>1</sup> As early as 1862, the US Con-  
 477 gress began by banning the importation of “coolies,” then prostitutes in 1875, before  
 478 severely limiting legal entries by Chinese, defined by race to a few exempt classes in  
 479 1882. Japanese restriction resulted from a 1908 negotiated agreement whereby the Jap-  
 480 anese government limited emigration by laborers. In 1917, Congress banned immigra-  
 481 tion from a “barred zone” that covered most of Middle, South, and Southeast Asia but  
 482 not the Philippines, a US colony, or Japan and Korea. Not until the 1924 Immigration  
 483 Act were all Asians, except for Filipinos, uniformly excluded as “aliens ineligible for cit-  
 484 izenship.” Even after Filipinos came under restriction with the 1934 Tydings-McDuffie  
 485 Act, they received an annual entry quota of fifty.

486 The dismantling of “Asian exclusion” was similarly fragmented and influenced by  
 487 foreign relations considerations, as described in Jane H. Hong’s broadly researched  
 488 and insightful monograph, *Opening the Gates to Asia*. Chinese, Indian, Filipino, and Jap-  
 489 anese American community advocates campaigned largely separately for immigration  
 490 and citizenship rights, and sometimes at cross-purposes with representatives from their  
 491 homelands who prioritized gaining international status by receiving immigration rights  
 492 matching those of the United States’ most favored European allies. Asian American activ-  
 493 ists, in contrast, sought immigration reforms to substantively improve their lives in the  
 494 United States—particularly immigration rights for women to unite or form families—  
 495 while international lobbyists were content with symbolic gestures that barely changed  
 496 conditions. Moreover, repeal bills had to be framed narrowly to pass through a Congress  
 497 that remained committed to sharply limiting Asian immigration through the 1960s. When  
 498 the Indian revolutionary and scholar Taraknath Das, with whom Hong begins her narra-  
 499 tive, urged an end to *all* Asian exclusion laws, he seriously undermined the campaign for  
 500 the repeal of only *Chinese* exclusion.  
 501

502 <sup>1</sup>See Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line: White Men’s Countries*  
 503 *and the International Challenge of Racial Equality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,  
 504 2012); David C. Atkinson, *The Burden of White Supremacy: Containing Asian Migration in the*  
 505 *British Empire and the United States* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017);  
 506 David FitzGerald and David Cook-Martin, *Culling the Masses: The Democratic Origins of Racist*  
*Immigration Policy in the Americas* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2014).

507 As the United States' chief World War II ally in Asia, China was positioned to be the  
 508 first to leverage the repeal of Chinese exclusion but accepted terms that dismayed com-  
 509 munity activists such as Albert Lee, who had long campaigned for immigration of wives of  
 510 noncitizen Chinese American men. The 1943 repeal brought a presidential acknowledg-  
 511 ment of exclusion as a "historic mistake" and naturalization rights, but it allotted a token  
 512 fifty entries per year, determined through the existing "national origins quota" system.  
 513 This compromise set the pattern for future repeals in which the US government  
 514 removed the stigma of outright exclusion that advanced its diplomatic agendas while  
 515 still blocking Asian immigration almost entirely.

516 Independence campaigns characterized US negotiations with Indian and Filipino  
 517 representatives. For the former, the United States first sought Britain's sanction to  
 518 deal with its soon-to-be former colony, then laid the foundations for future diplomatic  
 519 relations through conciliatory gestures anticipating India's eventual autonomy. For the  
 520 latter, however, the United States already wielded significant influence and reneged on  
 521 promises that Filipino soldiers would receive US military veterans status while conferring  
 522 narrow immigration and citizenship rights. These two repeal movements operated sepa-  
 523 rately yet became conjoined in the 1946 Luce-Celler Act. These are the two most trans-  
 524 national of Hong's chapters in drawing on archives of the Indian and Filipino  
 525 independence movements.

526 Japanese Americans were the last to receive repeal, but they wielded the greatest  
 527 influence in Washington, D.C., of any of these ethnic communities through the efforts  
 528 of lobbyist Mike Masaoka. Masaoka spearheaded the rapid reintegration of Japanese  
 529 Americans through the martial patriotism of the 442nd Infantry Regiment and civic com-  
 530 pliance with incarceration. These displays of hyperpatriotism, combined with Masaoka's  
 531 political access, gained Japanese Americans citizenship rights and an immigration quota  
 532 of 185 in the 1952 McCarran-Walter Act. Masaoka acknowledged the token nature of  
 533 these measures while prioritizing the symbolic acceptance that they conveyed for the  
 534 former "enemy aliens." Not until 1965 would overt racial and national preferences in  
 535 immigration laws end.

536 Hong presents the many complexities impeding enactment of immigration policy,  
 537 including attempts and agendas that failed and the abortive character of laws that  
 538 passed. Her comparative lens reveals the divided character of Asian American activism  
 539 before the civil rights era and the considerable influence of long-distance nationalism  
 540 over ethnic communities that have been for most of their histories predominantly  
 541 foreign born. Because immigration laws are enacted by Congress in Washington, D.C.,  
 542 access to national leaders is necessary to influence policy. Local communities are hand-  
 543 capped while representatives of foreign governments have guaranteed access through  
 544 the US Department of State. Not until Asian Americans held congressional or cabinet  
 545 seats, positions more reliably attained after Hawaii gained statehood in 1959, could  
 546 they more directly influence immigration laws to advance their own agendas.

547 A key flaw of this book is its lack of a chapter about Korean migration, even though  
 548 the comparison is intriguing, with independence claimed in 1945 by activists such as  
 549 Syngman Rhee, who spent decades campaigning in the United States, followed by the  
 550 crisis of the Korean War. This monograph will nonetheless speak to scholars concerned  
 551 with migration, international relations, and immigration policy studies.

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553 *Faithful Fighters: Identity and Power in the British Indian Army.* By KATE IMY.  
 554 Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2019. 328 pp. ISBN: 9781503610743  
 555 (paper).  
 556 doi:10.1017/S002191182000409X  
 557

558 In *Faithful Fighters*, Kate Imy undertakes a refreshing investigation into the Indian  
 559 Army between the 1910s and 1930s to trace the roots and development of religious mil-  
 560 itarism and racial masculinity in the colonial military institution of British India. In doing  
 561 so, she also provides a snapshot of the civilian communities from which the Indian Army  
 562 recruited and that it protected. As Imy makes clear, the decision to examine the three-  
 563 decade span covering World War I and the interwar period allows us to observe the  
 564 Indian Army in war and peace, the ever-changing contexts of political demands from  
 565 within, the collapse of a global economy, and the British Empire on the international  
 566 stage.

567 Imy strategically posits this topic at the intersection of key scholarship as varied as  
 568 World War I colonial soldiers (Das), the discourse of “martial race” (Streets), and colonial  
 569 masculinity (Sinha), to name just a few. She also engages with specific works on individual  
 570 religions (Sikhism, Islam, Hinduism, and Christianity) and regions (Punjab and Nepal). A  
 571 major contribution of the book is to draw on a wide range of scholarly debates, which she  
 572 skillfully integrates into her own focused narrative. The result shows the reader a pano-  
 573 ramic view of the army and its transformation over nearly thirty years.

574 While the book’s cover, opening sentences of the introduction, and conclusion all  
 575 point to Sikh soldiers’ World War I engagement on the Western Front in Europe, Imy  
 576 manages to tackle a much broader array of topics. In the first three chapters, she  
 577 focuses on three major ethno-religious communities (Sikh, Muslim, and Hindu  
 578 Gurkha) represented in the Indian Army and their positions around World War  
 579 I. Discourse of “martial race” dictated who would be recruited into the Indian Army  
 580 and how to discipline, train, and deploy each ethno-religious group in segregation. Yet  
 581 South Asian soldiers “simultaneously internalized and challenged” (p. 11) these  
 582 imposed identities for their own communal and political agenda. They also demanded  
 583 secular benefits under the disguise of “religious complaints” of rituals and provisions.

584 Imy presents one compelling example of contradictions in practice. This concerns  
 585 the Indian Army’s food provision and how that met or denied the varied religious  
 586 needs (chapter 4). The army was reluctant, for example, to cater to the Hindu  
 587 “Brahmin diet” and saw it as “incompatible with military service due to [its] perceived  
 588 stringency” (p. 126). Meanwhile, fasting for Ramzan and the feast of Eid were allowed  
 589 to be observed, because they were accepted as “a legitimate form of community belong-  
 590 ing that could solidify. . . military discipline and loyalty” (p. 139). Following this line, the  
 591 military authority deemed the 1914 Muslim mutiny in Singapore a religious complaint  
 592 over a forced premature end of the Ramzan that year. As a result, the army failed to  
 593 understand the mutiny was instead a protest from the rank and file concerning inade-  
 594 quate food supply and distribution in anticipation of the war (p. 138).

595 While individual episodes like this are carefully presented and revealing, readers may  
 596 ask what underlay all these institutional contradictions beyond any specific religion or  
 597 specific ethnic group. What was—if at all—the colonial consistency, or a colonial  
 598 “master plan” in thoughts and practice, for these seemingly inconsistent treatments  
 599 that favored Islam over Hinduism in terms of food provision? Similarly, what explains  
 600 contradictions within the same religion, such as in the case concerning Muslim Panthans’  
 601 removal from the World War I front line, whereas Muslims from Punjab and other



599 regions were extensively deployed in the Middle Eastern theater? Alternatively, were  
 600 these cases merely an incidental, chaotic consequence of an assortment of uncoordinated  
 601 improvisation at local levels?

602 The increasing impact of the Indian Army's religious hierarchy and segregation on  
 603 interwar India is a focus of the last two chapters. In these sections, Imy assesses the  
 604 process and consequences of the "Indianization" reform that encouraged military and  
 605 political participation of the South Asian population. The strict ethno-religious boundar-  
 606 ies, being so diligently safeguarded by the army, were apparently abandoned in India's  
 607 new military educational institutions, which invited applicants from all corners of the  
 608 society. Yet their control over and emphasis on individual ethno-religions, according to  
 609 Imy, were indeed enhanced via regulated places of worship on campus, and institution-  
 610 alized rites of "parades" (pp. 173–80). Outside the army, the concept of "martial race" was  
 611 deeply internalized by subject communities to form a principal criterion for anticolonial  
 612 campaigns (or the lack of it, in the case of Hindu nationalists). As it had been so closely  
 613 associated with the army and its practice, it inevitably embraced a military and violent  
 614 outlook, and in some cases, a fascist ideology. As Imy points out, the rigid division  
 615 based on religion and race spilt from the army to the entire society, and no doubt  
 616 paved the way to the disastrous partition with extensive violence that took place soon  
 after World War II.

617 *Faithful Fighters* gives us many vivid examples of regulating the body—for example,  
 618 the close association between male bodies' physical prowess and *kirpan* (a Sikh sword),  
 619 sexual intimacy between British and South Asian officers and soldiers, and a ritual to  
 620 purify Hindu Nepalese soldiers who crossed the inauspicious *kala pani* (black water)  
 621 during overseas campaigns. Each of these examples illustrates the struggle of myriad  
 622 faiths in "family, community, nation and empire" (p. 10). One wishes Imy could have  
 623 taken this further to explore a general ponderance over the intricated relation and  
 624 strange interplay of the culture of body and faith, including, but not limited to, religion.

625 Overall, *Faithful Fighters* is an engaging and informative read that includes an  
 626 impressive number of sources to paint a mosaic of the Indian Army in the first  
 627 decades of the twentieth century. Moreover, this work helps explain the social divisions  
 628 and mass violence that followed in the second half of the century in India's military  
 629 and civilian spheres. Students of modern India and British Empire at all levels, with a  
 630 wide range of interests in military formation, religious conflict, body politics, nationalist  
 631 demand, and colonial reform will all find inspiration here.

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635  
 636 *On the Brink: Trump, Kim, and the Threat of Nuclear War.* By VAN JACKSON.  
 637 Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018. 236 pp. (cloth) ISBN:  
 638 9781108473484.

639 doi:10.1017/S0021911820004106

640  
 641  
 642 Van Jackson, a former Pentagon insider and a Korean security expert currently teach-  
 643 ing at Victoria University of Wellington in New Zealand, has succeeded in writing a highly  
 644 accessible book that traces the roots of the often-hostile relationship between the United

645 States and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) that nearly led to nuclear  
 646 war in 2017. Jackson’s investigation of North Korea’s strategic culture is especially illumi-  
 647 nating, as it highlights the “I die, you die” approach of the Kim family regime. As Jackson  
 648 explains, the standoff between Donald Trump and Kim Jong Un was a long time in  
 649 coming, and a Hillary Clinton presidency likely would have encountered similar circum-  
 650 stances in Northeast Asia.

651 As US policymakers struggle to understand North Korea’s rhetoric and actions, Jack-  
 652 son’s explanation of Pyongyang’s strategic culture offers valuable insights. For example,  
 653 he highlights the “theory of victory” that undergirds North Korea’s behavior abroad.  
 654 North Korea’s resolve to show strength, rather than weakness, makes Northeast Asia a  
 655 particularly volatile space for US intervention. In addition, as Jackson explains, North  
 656 Korea’s historical legacy of “anti-Great Power-ism” under the rubric of its *juche* ideology  
 657 still influences how the Kim family regime interacts with larger powers on the world  
 658 stage. Jackson states, “And to North Koreans, survival required risk-taking; superior  
 659 resolve could compensate for inferior size. North Korea’s nuclear obsession was not  
 660 ‘caused’ by *juche* strategic culture, but the latter enabled the former” (p. 24). As a histo-  
 661 rian of international relations myself, I found Jackson’s use of historical context and  
 662 emphasis on North Korea’s ideological traditions particularly enlightening and  
 663 perceptive.

664 Jackson offers a play-by-play analysis of Trump’s nuclear standoff with the Kim family  
 665 regime. From analyzing the US president’s mystifying (dare I say, idiotic) tweets to exam-  
 666 ining the impact of Otto Warmbier’s tragic death, Jackson’s book is one of the most read-  
 667 able and intellectual examinations of contemporary US-DPRK relations. One of the  
 668 general themes that Jackson evokes in his writing is the sheer lack of restraint from  
 669 the Trump administration. The White House’s ratcheting up of sanctions, military exer-  
 670 cises, and fiery rhetoric did little to help ease the situation on the Korean peninsula but  
 671 instead fanned the flames of nuclear brinkmanship.

672 As Jackson makes explicit, the Trump administration’s bellicose rhetoric and actions  
 673 nearly started a second Korean War. Jackson gives South Korean president Moon Jae-in  
 674 due credit in alleviating tensions on the Korean peninsula. Moon’s rapprochement with  
 675 Kim Jong Un resulted in a unified Korea women’s hockey team at the Winter Olympics  
 676 and a successful PyeongChang Olympic Games. Kim Jong Un’s strategic decision in 2018  
 677 to move away from a policy of nuclear development to economic growth was also her-  
 678 alded by Jackson as an important step in deescalating the nuclear crisis with the  
 679 United States.

680 Jackson aptly argues that the US “maximum pressure” policy toward North Korea’s  
 681 nuclear arsenal is too rigid and comprehensive. As a regime with a paranoid fear of a US  
 682 invasion and a siege mentality, the North Korean government will never surrender its  
 683 nuclear weapons. As the US government maintains an inflexible policy of compete denu-  
 684 clearization, Jackson argues that working-level diplomatic talks, a nuclear arms reduction  
 685 rather than total dismantlement of the DPRK’s nuclear program, and a gradual rollback  
 686 of US sanctions would yield a more peaceful and friendly US-DPRK relationship. Primar-  
 687 ily because of the Kim family regime’s horrendous record of human rights violations, I am  
 688 a bit of a hawk on North Korea-related issues. However, I, too, believe that all-out inter-  
 689 national sanctions have exceeded their lifespan in curbing North Korea’s nuclear devel-  
 690 opment and subversive behavior abroad. Unfortunately, Trump is far too impatient and  
 691 selfish to pursue such a delicate process of diplomatic normalization with Pyongyang.  
 692 He prefers the superficial photo ops of flashy summits with Kim Jong Un in luxury  
 693 hotels in Southeast Asia.

691 One of my minor criticisms is that Jackson does not go far enough in examining  
 692 North Korea's official rhetoric. English-language statements from North Korea's  
 693 state-run media and quotes from DPRK Foreign Ministry officials to Western journalists  
 694 are highly sanitized for foreign consumption by Pyongyang's propaganda apparatus. The  
 695 Kim family regime's internal messaging to its own people would have been an interesting  
 696 perspective to look at. An in-depth investigation of North Korea's internal Korean-  
 697 language publications, such as the party organ *Rodong Sinmun* and cultural magazines  
 698 such as *Chollima*, may have yielded additional insights into the Kim family regime's  
 699 mindset during the nuclear standoff. Most, if not all, of Jackson's sources come from  
 700 English-language materials. In addition, the constant sectioning in the chapters made  
 the reading jarring at times.

701 However, these are minor quibbles and Jackson should be commended for his excel-  
 702 lent book. I highly recommend this book to international relations scholars, Korea spe-  
 703 cialists, and especially those in Beltway policy circles.

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709  
 710 *Tales of Southeast Asia's Jazz Age: Filipinos, Indonesians and Popular Culture,*  
 711 *1920–1936.* By PETER KEPPY. Singapore: National University of Singapore  
 712 Press, 2019. xiii, 269 pp. ISBN: 9789813250512 (paper).  
 713 doi:10.1017/S0021911820004118  
 714

715 Peter Keppy fills an important gap in Anglophone Asian popular music scholarship  
 716 by investigating the musicians who created hybrid modernist—and, importantly for  
 717 Keppy, middle-brow—popular music forms in the Philippines and Indonesia during  
 718 the early twentieth century. Keppy surveys critical journalism in both locations,  
 719 arguing that the role of interested audiences, or fans, helped shape these newly emergent  
 720 forms in a mediated form of collaboration with popular artists of the day. Theoretically, he  
 721 rallies pop cosmopolitanism and participatory pop as theorized by Henry Jenkins, as well  
 722 as Joel Kahn's idea of popular modernism, to argue for the importance of these “non-  
 723 elites in actively shaping and engaging in cosmopolitanism and modernity without asso-  
 724 ciations of high culture and elite manipulation” (p. 7).

725 Keppy first explores the deep relationship between Luis Borromeo, a Filipino from  
 726 an elite family who was formally trained in classical music, and an audience of middle-  
 727 and upper-class fans who began shaping a middle-brow popular culture that borrowed  
 728 from older Spanish entertainments as well as newer American styles. Borromeo is  
 729 placed within a richly drawn historical context in which official culture, as represented  
 730 by the University of the Philippines's Conservatory of Music, which privileged the Euro-  
 731 pean concert tradition, was simultaneously undermined by music professors' interests in  
 732 popular music and dance, allowing both ends of the cultural spectrum to mingle in  
 733 concert as well as dance halls. Drawing from newspaper articles, advertisements, and  
 734 concert programs, Keppy is alert to the tensions inherent to such high-low mixings as  
 735 well as the impact of commercial culture on the discursive and performative facets of Fil-  
 ipino popular music culture at the time.  
 736

737 As Keppy expertly delineates, Filipino nationalism and conceptions of modernity  
 738 shaped this dance between Borromeo and the cultural guardians of high culture and  
 739 their allies in the government who sought to more sharply demarcate the very lines  
 740 that Borromeo and the popular audiences he attracted were blurring between legitimate  
 741 culture and the music and dance bubbling up from the demimonde world of the dance  
 742 hall. However, it is the impact of media—phonograph recordings, sound films, song  
 743 sheet publications, and radio, not to mention the newspapers and journals Keppy  
 744 productively engages throughout the book—that helped institutionalize and normalize  
 745 the hybrid popular music styles that shaped mass popular audiences while creating an  
 746 “in-between’ culture that remained awkwardly situated between high art and vulgar  
 entertainment” (p. 2).

747 In the second part of the book, Keppy illuminates the career of another forgotten  
 748 star, the Indonesian singer and dancer Miss Riboet. Unlike Borromeo, Riboet came  
 749 from humble beginnings, using her work in the vernacular Javanese theater genre  
 750 dubbed “Malay opera” as a way to claim social authority. In her rise to popular celebrity,  
 751 Riboet transformed older Malaysian opera forms through her use of topical songs, advo-  
 752 cating the virtues of respectability that mirrored the aspirations of Malay opera aficiona-  
 753 dos in seeking legitimacy and cultural parity with European opera and other cultural  
 754 idioms. Formed by the merging of earlier forms of vernacular theater, *Komedi Stamboel*  
 755 and *bangsawan*, in “European eyes, Malay opera represented diluted Euro-American  
 756 plays and songs” (p. 144). Early ethnomusicologist Jaap Kunst, for example, viewed devel-  
 757 opments such as Malay opera with some derision due to his shared interest with other  
 758 elites in preserving cultural forms deemed premodern and unsullied by foreign elements  
 759 (pp. 140–41). Kunst, like many other elites, particularly during this time of social  
 760 upheaval in Indonesia, “found it difficult to accept that cultural transformations had  
 761 occurred in Indonesia (for centuries, in fact), and assumed that indigenous musical tra-  
 762 ditions were under threat due to ‘the hybridizing influence of alien music influences’” and  
 763 remained “averse to theater or music as vehicles for social or political critique” (p. 141).  
 764 Riboet challenged both ideas by helping to create a contemporary form of Malay opera  
 765 unmoored from the earlier vernacular traditions such as *Stamboel* theater while simulta-  
 neously producing pointed social critique in her music.

766 Keppy does an admirable job of detailing the successes as well as the tribulations of  
 767 both Borromeo and Riboet in their respective arenas of endeavor. While at first glance  
 768 their efforts seem somewhat distant from each other and their coupling idiosyncratic,  
 769 Keppy manages to build a bridge between these two case studies by (re)presenting the  
 770 two artists “as cultural brokers, opening up a popular modernity and popular cosmopol-  
 771 itanism for the working to middle classes. *It did not produce an avant garde cosmopolitan*  
 772 *art for elites*” (p. 238; emphasis added). Significantly, Borromeo and Riboet serve as early  
 773 examples of expressive cultural workers as important mediators of the ways in which  
 774 Asian nations and populations managed the often contradictory, if not conflictual,  
 775 demands of the local and the global. Their middle-brow hybrid cultural forms parallel  
 776 a number of other better-known cultural forms that were shaped by similar jostlings  
 777 between tradition and modernity in Japan, India, and China, and in this sense, Keppy  
 778 is to be commended for showcasing artists relatively unknown to Anglophone  
 scholarship.

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783 *Postcolonial Grief: The Afterlives of the Pacific Wars in the Americas.* By  
 784 JINAH KIM. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2019. ix, 185 pp. ISBN:  
 785 9781478002932 (cloth).  
 786 doi:10.1017/S002191182000412X  
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788 To silence the mourning of dead victims is to legitimize the violence against them. In  
 789 *Postcolonial Grief*, Jinah Kim refuses such a closure of the settler colonial Pacific Arena  
 790 order by revealing the “missing Asian bodies” as spectral beings of insurrection. The exist-  
 791 ing framework for dealing with the victims of Japanese and American militarism in the  
 792 Pacific Arena has focused on seeking closure and reconciliation. Kim pungently criticizes  
 793 this neoliberal framework for co-opting biopolitical narratives of healing that legitimize  
 794 state violence and for muffling the dissenting narratives of colonialism. Drawing on the-  
 795 ories of Fanonian anticolonial psychoanalysis and neoliberal biopolitics, Kim offers a  
 796 comparative analysis of grief and mourning practices as a resistance to imperial reconcil-  
 797 iation, drawing from examples including Los Angeles, Japan, Peru, and South Korea. This  
 798 book is well suited for scholars and students in Asian American and postcolonial studies,  
 799 as well as readers who are interested in the themes and theories of mourning and mel-  
 800 ancholia in general.

801 Kim’s interdisciplinary and transnational investigation of the abject subjects in liter-  
 802 ary and filmic representations provides remarkable insights into discussions of melanco-  
 803 lia and state violence. For instance, in chapter 1, through a reading of Frantz Fanon’s  
 804 “Colonial Wars and Mental Disorder” from *Wretched of the Earth* and Hisaye Yamamo-  
 805 to’s “A Fire in Fontana,” Kim demonstrates how melancholia has been pathologized  
 806 among Algerians by the French colonial state and how postcolonial grief is co-opted by  
 807 the state as racialized injury in the US neoliberal context. Kim deftly connects the racial-  
 808 ized injury of Japanese American internment to Black dispossession during Jim Crow,  
 809 “[linking] the histories of loss and of racism” (p. 39) to challenge a resolved, settled  
 810 past through the practice of grievance.

811 This linkage dovetails with Kim’s reading of the Los Angeles Riots of 1992 in chapter  
 812 2, in which she connects Asian American and Black struggles in a postcolonial ordering.  
 813 Instead of understanding the riots as simply racial conflict, Kim harshly criticizes the gov-  
 814 ernment interregnum during the LA Riots, by interrogating US militarism and articulat-  
 815 ing the ways that white supremacy justified the racial construction of Others and pitted  
 816 them against each other. As Kim notes, “immigrants . . . were forced to fratricide” (p. 62).  
 817 Kim captures the confluence of military violence and white supremacy over Guatemalan  
 818 and South Korean immigrants in this context through her analysis of two literary works.  
 819 The setting of *Sa-I-Gu*—state absence during the LA Riots—enables the protagonist’s  
 820 revenge killing within the chaos in *The Tattooed Soldier*.

821 The third and fourth chapters examine the postcolonial afterlives “as abject ghosts  
 822 and conjured spirits,” providing perhaps the most interesting analysis of the book. Japa-  
 823 nese colonization and US geopolitical dominance over the Korean peninsula has resulted  
 824 in a lingering *han* (grief and resentment) among Koreans; however, such violence “is  
 825 sought to be covered over by a narrative of American heroism and interracial fraternity”  
 826 (p. 78). To prevent victims’ stories from being covered and closed, Kim gives shape to the  
 827 analytic “transpacific noir” to draw our attention to “the margins, border zones, and minor  
 828 subject” (p. 71), calling for an acknowledgment of American empire—and so a refusal to  
 forget the past trauma. The most intriguing analysis of “afterlives” leads to Kim’s concep-  
 tualization of *bachi* (罰 divine punishment) in reading Naomi Hirahara’s *Summer of the  
 Big Bachi*. Kim argues for *bachi* as “an alternative juridical, ethical, and religious model to

829 think about the afterlives of the atomic bomb” (pp. 82–83). This insight provides new per-  
 830 spective to understand postcolonial afterlives by employing the concept of *bachi* not only  
 831 to surpass the limits of existing moral and judicial system but also to problematize the  
 832 current models for reconciliation.

833 Continuing the lines of her arguments about disrupting this closure of reconciliation  
 834 through mourning the dead victims in chapter 4, Kim contributes a gendered reading of  
 835 death and mourning through an investigation of Teresa Ralli and José Watanabe’s *Anti-*  
 836 *gona*. In this version of the well-known story of Antigone, Kim points out, Antigone is  
 837 murdered by the state for refusing to stop mourning her dead brother. Kim interprets  
 838 Antigone’s later choice not to become a mother as being “equated to a life lived in  
 839 death” (p. 107). Death is erased to be disappeared by state terrorism in liberal humanist  
 840 frameworks. Drawing on Diana Taylor’s concept of “percepticide” and “the disappeared”  
 841 of Peru’s civil war, Kim critiques a hypervisibility of state violence relative to the US  
 842 knowledge production that blinds people and even forces “looking away” to become  
 843 instinctive (p. 89). The book ends with Kim’s figurative “watery graves,” which refers  
 844 to the bones risen from the seas between Japan and Korea as an unsettling force to  
 protest against Barack Obama’s historic visit to Hiroshima in 2016.

845 Kim gathers disparate material from Asian diasporic literature and culture into a  
 846 coherent argument of how liberal nation-states silence past violence and police the speak-  
 847 ing of loss. *Postcolonial Grief* covers new ground by providing a new understanding of the  
 848 biopolitical regime of mourning in the Pacific and connects this biopolitics to theories of  
 849 grief and melancholia. Kim problematizes the ways that representations of Asian bodies  
 850 in pain “are sensationalized, aestheticized, and reproduced as desired image in American  
 851 popular culture and politics” (p. 22). She also insightfully raises the ideas that political  
 852 violence has constructed the Pacific “as a rejuvenating site for U.S. capitalism” (p. 17)  
 853 and that the pain of Asian bodies has been forcefully forgotten. This is not a book  
 854 seeking healing or reconciliation. It contributes a much-needed call to rethink the  
 855 neglected trauma and pain that has been co-opted by the current neoliberal framework,  
 856 stressing that “to be healed” is to “accept colonialism as a regular state of being for the  
 857 colonized” (p. 25). This book allows the dead and disappeared Asian bodies to come to  
 858 light, and in doing so to destabilize the postcolonial order by resisting being forgotten.  
 It is crucial to remember the dead through forms of mourning and grievance for the  
 purpose of preventing future violence.

859 Still, further questions linger around the ethics of forgetting: Is forgetting solely tied  
 860 to appeasement or betrayal? How can we be cautious of fetishizing wounds and wound-  
 861 edness as we mourn the past? In this sense, I wish this book had pursued discussions of  
 862 mourning loss vis-à-vis stopping violence, discussions of ways that victims might find  
 863 within the refusal to forget a new start devoid of violence, and discussions that would  
 864 allow readers to better understand the politics of mourning at both disruptive and con-  
 865 stitutive levels. In sum, however, *Postcolonial Grief* contributes an important work of cau-  
 866 tioning the state violence and militarism by beautifully weaving transdisciplinary archives  
 867 together to produce a richly documented and mind awakening volume.

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875 *Chinese Migrant Workers and Employer Domination: Comparisons with*  
 876 *Hong Kong and Vietnam.* By KAXTON SIU. Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan,  
 877 2020. xvi, 232 pp. ISBN: 9789813291225 (cloth).  
 878 doi:10.1017/S0021911820004131

880 Kaxton Siu's new book is an impressive comparative study of garment factory workers  
 881 in Hong Kong, China, and Vietnam. It provides ethnographic detail and rigorous analysis  
 882 of our understanding of labor, economics, and the state with a recognition of change over  
 883 time.

884 Siu argues that the image that most readers might have of Chinese garment factories,  
 885 with young girls migrating to factories, living in dormitories, with no autonomy, is out-  
 886 dated. It was more accurate in the 1990s, but he argues that scholars need to see  
 887 beyond what he calls the "subjugation model" (p. 6).

888 His study is organized into three parts. First, Siu examines Hong Kong garment  
 889 workers in the 1980s and early 1990s to provide a historical counterpoint to China and  
 890 Vietnam's contemporary industries. Next, he looks at factories in Shenzhen in southern  
 891 China (near Hong Kong) and the growing diversity of labor control and negotiations.  
 892 He ends the study by traveling to Vietnam to compare how the government does (or  
 893 does not) protect its workers in the international garment industry. Throughout it all,  
 894 Siu analyzes the relationship between the state and the economy, with an emphasis on  
 gender and workers' rights in all three locales.

895 Siu begins with the history of garment work in Hong Kong from the late 1970s  
 896 through the early 1990s. His relationship to the topic is personal: his mother was a  
 897 garment worker, and he visited the factories with her as a child. He uses two life  
 898 stories to provide personal and compelling stories about Hong Kong women's experi-  
 899 ences in the garment industry. He highlights their pride in the skills they achieved,  
 900 arguing against the notion that they were unskilled workers. Despite their experience  
 901 and skill, macroeconomic forces shifted the factories to China, and these women  
 902 entered Hong Kong's low-wage service sector in the 1990s.

903 The heart of the book is in chapters 3, 4, and 5, in which Siu analyzes contemporary  
 904 garment factories in Shenzhen. In these chapters, he provides detailed information about  
 905 gender politics, maximum hour and minimum wage laws, and the relationship between  
 906 the shop floor and workers' leisure time. He opens with a study of letters written by  
 907 Chinese women garment workers in the early 1990s that outline their struggles and  
 908 desires. He argues that today's factory workers are more heterogeneous than they  
 909 were twenty years ago, and he explores the relationship between their factory work,  
 their social lives, and village-based networks.

910 Next, Siu turns to the factory floor. Siu conducted a survey of 389 factory workers,  
 911 and through this tool, he learned that most knew about China's minimum wage laws  
 912 but were unaware of any maximum hour laws. In fact, undercompensated overtime  
 913 was a fact of life for almost all workers. He writes, "Workers simply did not believe the  
 914 Chinese labor law could be so good. The content of the law contradicts their everyday  
 915 working experience" (p. 96).

916 In contrast to the 1990s, Siu argues that there was more negotiation in the  
 917 twenty-first-century Chinese factory. It continued to be difficult for Chinese workers  
 918 to quit their factory jobs (because of recruitment deposits) or avoid "voluntary overtime."  
 919 However, at the same time, there were also regular negotiations between workers and  
 920 supervisors, demonstrating how "affective ties" added to more coercive forms of

921 control. He calls this “a new regime of ‘conciliatory despotism’” that has “replace[d] the  
922 dormitory labor regime” (p. 146). While I imagine there was also negotiation on the shop  
923 floor in the 1990s, Siu demonstrates that management had less of an iron-clad grip on  
924 their employers than they did previously.

925 Finally, he turns to Vietnam. Unlike in China, more Vietnamese workers come from  
926 nearby the factory-sites, and more people migrate in family units. This means that both  
927 women and men have responsibilities outside the factory than individuals who migrate to  
928 Shenzhen. The result is that workers spend less time on-the-job in Vietnam. In contrast to  
929 China, Siu argues that the Vietnamese minimum wage law is so low as to be negligible  
930 and invisible in workers’ lives. At the same time, Vietnamese workers were far more  
931 likely to go on strike than Chinese workers. (There were more than eight hundred  
932 strikes in 2011.) Siu suggests that the government tolerated this level of worker activism  
933 to increase the overall financial investment in the country without having to change its  
934 laws.

935 Overall, the book succeeds in integrating macro-level analysis at the state level in  
936 Hong Kong, China, and Vietnam while still providing personal stories of workers in all  
937 three locales. It also provides a strong gender analysis that emphasizes women’s experi-  
938 ences. At times, Siu’s discussions of Karl Marx, Michel Foucault, and E. P. Thompson dis-  
939 tract somewhat from his original research. That said, the combination of comparative  
940 qualitative and quantitative methods is exemplary, and Siu succeeds in documenting  
941 larger economic trends and workers’ lived experiences. *Chinese Migrant Workers and  
942 Employer Domination* is a valuable contribution for scholars of labor, migration, and cap-  
943 italism in the twenty-first century.

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