

In a 1997 paper, Nancy Tomes and John Harley Warner wrote about the ultimate outcome of the revisionist historiography of bacteriology that was unfolding in those years. Their prediction was that historians were bound to return to the germ theory-narrative and its status as a watershed in modern medical history: 'even when the germ theory receives the revisionist scrutiny it merits, freshly reconfigured and historicised, it is likely to retain the status of an icon, both in popular understandings of the medical past and in the way historians construct their accounts of medical history'.<sup>21</sup> Rosemary Wall has, to date, delivered one of the finest stories to put them right: encompassing the sheer magnitude of changes that medical bacteriology brought about, familiarising her readers with lots of new actors and doing all this without falling into neo-heroism.

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**John Paul DiMoia**, *Reconstructing Bodies: Biomedicine, Health, and Nation-Building in South Korea since 1945* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2013), pp. xvi, 280, \$45.00, hardback, ISBN: 978-0-8047-8411-5.

John DiMoia's *Reconstructing Bodies: Biomedicine, Health, and Nation-Building in South Korea since 1945*, is a much awaited work in English in the field of Korean history of science, technology and medicine. Korean history, in general, remains less well known than its Chinese and Japanese counterparts to English-language readers, and this is even more the case in the field of Korean history of science, technology and medicine. Given this, John DiMoia's work will be remembered as the first work in English on the history of health and medicine in Korea. The work deserves much praise for this fact and also for introducing materials previously unknown to researchers in the world. However, as deserving as this may be, questions arise as to whether this work fulfils the expectation as a comprehensive introduction into the history of Korean health and medicine. In other words, in DiMoia's work, there is a fascinating collection of selected records, mostly in English, pertaining to biomedical interventions that occurred in 'South Korea', but whether they form a cogent history with compelling conclusions drawn on the role of biomedicine in the building of the health and nation of South Korea, remains inconclusive.

To show how biomedical interventions carried out on bodies, or, to be exact, Korean bodies, were 'reconstructions' that enabled the development of the South Korean nation, DiMoia presents six case studies of various biomedical activities that took place in Korea organized under six headings. The first two chapters examine the legacies of traditional medicine (1392–1910), the introduction of biomedicine during Japanese colonisation (1910–45) and the public health activities of the American military government (1945–8). These two chapters function as an introductory survey of the health and medical conditions in Korea prior to the establishment of the Republic of Korea or South Korea in 1948. The four chapters that follow examine the biomedical activities that have taken place in South Korea since the end of the Korean War (1950–3) to the present. The four activities that DiMoia selected for the remaining four chapters are: the introduction of open-heart surgery at the Seoul National University Hospital by the University of Minnesota team, the trial experiments conducted by Seoul National University and Yonsei University on Family Planning from the mid-1960s to late 1970s, the anti-parasite campaign of the same

<sup>21</sup> Tomes and Warner, *op. cit.* (note 9): 16.

era and lastly, the historical ‘origin’ of South Korean plastic surgery as seen through two American surgeons – Ralph Millard and Howard Rusk – and their involvement in Korea.

What emerges in the author’s selection of these six case studies is the author’s keen awareness of some of the important issues pertaining to biomedical and public health activities in postwar South Korea. Family planning and anti-parasite campaigns, in particular, came to intrude so deeply into the South Korean bodies in ways like no other so that to this day, the impact of these two policies can be felt in Korean society. Yet, as appropriate as the author’s selection of these cases has been, one puzzling feature that emerges in the author’s examination of the rising ascendancy of biomedicine in South Korea is the very absence of the South Korean state. In other words, the readers were promised they would see the creation of the nation-state of South Korea through these biomedical interventions. The author, in fact, emphasised this as much in the title for Part II of the book, ‘Meet the State,’ where the chapters on family planning and the anti-parasite campaign are located. On finishing the book, the reader is still left asking, ‘Where is the state?’

For example, in Chapter 4, the author catalogues an impressive array of family planning campaigns that were pursued by international aid agencies and South Korean medical professionals. However, the problem arises when the author fails to ground these activities on the actual subject of the state or to be more specific, the material bodies of South Koreans. That is, the impact and the significance of family planning as far as they change the body and contribute to nation-state building can only be assessed in so far as there is an actual ‘reconstructed’ body or bodies to speak of. After all, the title of this book, *Reconstructing Bodies*, promised this much. In other words, by taking ‘bodies’ for granted or by simply assuming that new bodies were being made as result of these plans, the author never developed a clear and compelling evidence to show the transformation of South Korean bodies from the previous Korean bodies and the type of the state that emerged as result of the biopower acquired through these technologies of governance.

Missing citations, sloppy copy-editing and wrong Romanisation, and poor translation of Korean terms are some of the other more unfortunate features that mar the accomplishment of the book. The author should have paid attention to the correct Romanisation of terms such as ‘*chungin*’ (p. 26), the trade and artisan class that the traditional medicine practitioners belonged to, and for accurate translation of *Hyangyak chipsŏngbang* (1433) and *Tongŭi pogam* (1613), the two important medical texts published by the Chosŏn Dynasty (1392–1910). The author has translated *Hyangyak chipsŏngbang* as *Great Collection of Native Korean Prescriptions* and, as for *Tongŭi pogam*, DiMoia has translated it as *A Treasury of Eastern Medicine* on page 30, only to translate it again as *Thesaurus of Eastern Medicine* on page 35 of the book. My preferred translation is one by Soyoung Suh (Dartmouth): *Hyangyak chipsŏngbang* as *Standard Prescription of Local Botanicals*, and *Tongŭi pogam* as *Precious Mirror of Eastern Medicine*. Her translations not only accurately convey the meaning of each Sinographic character, but also highlight the history of these texts that were published in 1433 and in 1613, respectively. In other words, the notion of ‘Korean nation’ as assumed by DiMoia in his translations, did not exist until the late nineteenth century.

The above is one of but many examples that prevent from this book from being recommended with absolute confidence, as a good introduction on the history of biomedicine, health and nation-building in South Korea. As noted in the beginning of this review, there is a rich English collection of biomedical records pertaining to post-1945 South Korea, but the absence of theoretical insight and more grounded knowledge on the Korean historiography of health, medicine and nation-building produces consternation

for students of Korean history, such as myself, as to the capacity of this book to act as an appropriate guide for the English-speaking readers interested in the history of Korean health and medicine.

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## *American Psychiatry Scholarship: The Pendulum Maintains its Momentum*

**Hannah S. Decker**, *The Making of DSM-III: A Diagnostic Manual's Conquest of American Psychiatry* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 443, £35.99, paperback, ISBN-10: 0195382234.

**Edward Shorter**, *How Everyone Became Depressed: The Rise and Fall of the Nervous Breakdown* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 246, £19.99, hardback, ISBN-10: 0199948089.

**Deborah Weinstein**, *The Pathological Family: Postwar America and the Rise of Family Therapy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013), pp. 251, £19.88, paperback, ISBN-10: 0801478219.

**Gary Greenberg**, *The Book of Woe: The DSM and the Unmaking of the Psychiatry* (New York: Blue Rider Press, 2013), pp. 416, £43.02, hardback, ISBN-10: 0399158537.

**Lawrence R. Samuel**, *Shrink: A Cultural History of Psychoanalysis in America* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2013), pp. 288, £21.21, hardback, ISBN-10: 0803244762.

In the last year or two there has been a surge in American psychiatric scholarship and a small sampling of the contributions helps to identify the diversity of the field and future directions in it. According to Nicholas Rasmussen and Jonathan Metzl, among other medical historians, psychiatric practice in the United States should be conceptualised 'as more diverse and eclectic, and less polarised' than previous accounts had argued.<sup>1</sup> In short, the biological versus psychodynamic schism in psychiatry was far more complicated than once thought. Even more recently, the work of the sociologist of medicine Martyn Pickersgill on changing discourses of social personality disorders confirmed that while the 'pendulum metaphor' in histories of psychiatry has a certain heuristic importance, it obscures continuity amongst psychiatrists and psychiatric discourses, and reduces a complex set of theories and practices to a simplistic either/or binary.<sup>2</sup> Yet, what

<sup>1</sup> This revisionist scholarship has gathered momentum on both sides of the Atlantic. See Nicholas Rasmussen, 'Making the First Anti-Depressant: Amphetamine in American Medicine, 1929–1950', *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 61, 3 (2006): 291; Jonathan Metzl, *Prozac on the Couch: Prescribing Gender in the Era of Wonder Drugs* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003); See also Lucas Richert, "'Therapy Means Political Change, Not Peanut Butter: American Radical Psychiatry, 1967–1975', *Social History of Medicine*, 27, 1 (2014): 104–21.

<sup>2</sup> Jonathan Sadowsky, 'Beyond the Metaphor of the Pendulum: Electroconvulsive Therapy, Psychoanalysis, and the Styles of American Psychiatry', *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 61, 1 (2005): 200; Martyn Pickersgill, 'From Psyche to Soma? Changing Accounts of Antisocial Personality Disorders in the American Journal of Psychiatry', *History of Psychiatry*, 21, 3 (2010): 305.