

property, interest from loans, and shares in collected taxes, among other things. This book is strengthened by its extraordinary attention to local detail, four maps by Faiz Habib (a noted cartographer at Aligarh Muslim University), and tables that invariably clarify everything from revenue details to competing lines of Goswamis. This book might be fruitfully read in conjunction with others that are focused on the region in the Mughal period—including Farhat Hasan’s *State and Locality in Mughal India* (2004), Suraj Bhan Bhardwaj’s *Contestations and Accommodations* (2016), Sugata Ray’s *Climate Change and the Art of Devotion* (2019), and Nandini Chatterjee’s *Negotiating Mughal Law* (2020).

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## Transwar Asia: Ideology, Practices, and Institutions

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‘Periods,’ Prasenjit Duara writes, ‘are shaped by structures emerging from centres of power that tend to dominate historical life. Like all hegemonic formations, such structures tend to channel and restrict the imagination of the social, the political, and selfhood, but these structures also have wildly uneven effects and there are many zones of life that are quite untouched by them.’ As Duara urges, one ought to ‘attend to the emergent differences, counter-movements, and resistances that crack, weaken, or sometimes strengthen the hegemonic order’. In seeking to acknowledge these contrasts, features, and challenges against the grain of a ‘hegemonic order’ of periodisation, Reto Hofmann (University of Western Australia) and Max Ward (Middlebury College) have assembled a range of contributors in their volume, *Transwar Asia*. Each contributor sheds important light on the concept of the namesake of this volume—an analytical category that purportedly allows one to trace continuities, ruptures, and ruptures *with* continuities between the interwar years and first decade onwards after World War Two.

It is no surprise that Hofmann and Ward have collaborated on such an ambitious volume. Hofmann broke new ground in tracing interwar fascist ideological links between Italy and Imperial Japan with his first book, *The Fascist Effect* (Ithaca, NY, 2020), whereas Ward’s *Thought Crime* (Durham, NC, 2019) is an exemplary study of an ‘emperor system’ ideology that crystallised during that same epoch (the focus of his contribution in this volume). In *Transwar Asia*, the editors bring together their collective expertise to highlight three important aspects, or more accurately ‘afterlives’, of their concept of ‘transwar Asia’—an intersection of cultural studies with scholarship on Japan’s shift away from empire; a concept that places primacy on Asian agentic reception of, and engagement with, so-called ‘transwar elements in the postwar settlement’ (p. 8); and a model that

engages dialogically with recent scholarship that is unmentioned by the editors, but publications such as Tim Harper's *Underground Asia* (London, 2021) and John T. Sidel's *Republicanism, Communism, Islam* (Ithaca, NY, 2021) spring to mind—on the flow of ideas and peoples across cultures throughout Asia during the interwar and post-World War Two years.

*Transwar Asia* follows in the footsteps of, among others, Aaron S. Moore's pioneering *Constructing East Asia* (Stanford, CA, 2013) on Imperial Japanese infrastructure projects and the roles of engineers on the ground, and Sayaka Chatani's innovative *Nation-Empire* (Ithaca, NY, 2018) on Japanese nationalism, militarism, and rural youth mobilisation in the colonies of Imperial Japan. The goal of *Transwar Asia*, and what distinguishes it from its forebears, as Hofmann and Ward state unequivocally in the opening pages, is to 'rethink the relationship between the Japanese Empire and American Cold War hegemony in Asia' (p. 7). Yet, as this reviewer notes further on in this review, the resonating power and efficacy of their ambitious conceptual model are somewhat limited by the case study selections and frequent emphases on the purported 'uniqueness' of them across an Asia-Pacific (the editors' words for their area of coverage) that omit analysis of much of Asia and the Pacific worlds. The afterword even acknowledges that Pacific peoples are 'all too often forgotten or at best marginalized' in histories of the Asia-Pacific theatre of World War Two (p. 200).

Contributors focus on select East and Southeast Asian countries that were hosts to what the editors have classified as either an institutional or ideological transwar regime. Of the seven core chapters of the book, two are on Korea, with one each on Manchukuo/Japanese-occupied Sinosphere, Indonesia, and Chinese Civil War-era mainland China/postwar Taiwan, as well as one on Japan during the 1920–60 period of coverage. In two chapters on Korea, Yumi Moon (Stanford University) and Do Young Oh (Lingnan University Hong Kong) track the afterlives of colonial-era rice production and the shift by Japanese-educated Korean elites to investing in the education sector as a response to land reform in the postwar period, respectively. In chapters 2 and 3, Victor Louzon (Sorbonne Université) and Colleen Woods (University of Maryland) place the lens of analysis squarely on militarism, with a view toward identifying legacies of colonial-era war and labour mobilisation. Louzon's contribution focuses on militarism across the Japanese-occupied Sinosphere, though he surprisingly sidesteps the efforts of Imperial Japan in Shanghai and Nanjing, among other locales in mainland China, to highlight East Asian militarism as per the Japanese not as an *ex nihilo* phenomenon, but as 'a variant of a global trend'. Japan, he notes, served more as a 'regional interface', whereby the purported insulation of Taiwan, Manchukuo, and Korea from state-led militarisation initiated in each society a trend of 'continued militarization, although under different, postcolonial political powers' (p. 69).

The second part of *Transwar Asia* shifts the focus to ideological transmission and trans-iteration in mainland China, Taiwan, Indonesia, and Japan. In the exceptional opening chapter, Brian Tsui (Hong Kong Polytechnic University) continues his exciting work on Chinese conservatism to track the 'transwar legacy' of the Guomindang (GMD) as it crossed over from the Chinese mainland to Taiwan (p. 142). The mainland 'conservative revolution' of anti-colonialism, anti-Communism, and centralised capitalist development, he contends, resurfaced in 1950s Taiwan to inform regional Cold War American geopolitics. One of the great contributions of this chapter is the re-examination of ideological and 'meta-texts', notably Chiang Kai-shek's *China's Destiny* (中國之命運/*Zhongguo zhi mingyun*), and two 'supplementary' chapters on education and leisure (育樂兩篇補述/*Yu le liangpian bushu*) to Sun Yat-sen's *Three Principles of the People* (三民主義/*Sanmin zhuyi*), as well as senior GMD cadre diaries. As Chiang repackaged Sun's *Three Principles* into a 'developmentalist, welfarist vision ... that accorded more with the GMD's Cold

War alignments' (p. 10), Tsui's scrutiny of these texts also reveals that certain figures such as so-described Marxist Tao Xisheng, among others, left indelible imprints on these ideological texts in postwar Taiwan. Such imprints were present to the point that their 'fingerprints', in the case of Tao's experiences and viewpoints from his time on the mainland, permeated throughout these writings (p. 137).

The subsequent two chapters of this part, by David Bouchier (University of Western Australia) and Max Ward, shift our attention to the legal realm, particularly legal thinking and praxis in Indonesia and Japan, respectively. Chapter 6 first tracks romantic German nationalist, then Dutch legal theory, *Volksgeist*-ism as it traversed Western European bounds in the late nineteenth century to influence Japanese cultural and Indonesian civic nationalists, then post-G30S Indonesian legal thought. Bouchier defines his concept as the enmeshment of the *Volksgeist* (each culture contains within it a distinctive spirit) with the *Historische Rechtsschule* view that 'law, like language and custom, was valid only if it was the product of slow, unconscious distillation of the historical and living traditions of particularly nations' (p. 149). Although it is at times unclear whether 'Java' is a stand-in to represent a more holistic 'Indonesia', Bouchier succeeds in tracing the *longue durée* of the afterlife of this legal theory in the words and deeds of the Indonesian constitution primary author Supomo and as a conservative variant during the Suharto years. Ward, meanwhile, builds upon his pioneering work in *Thought Crime* to highlight the transwar history of Japanese criminal rehabilitation across the transwar era. As Ward describes, importantly, interwar criminal rehabilitation placed imperial benevolence at the centre so as to render criminal reform as inextricable from its association with loyalty to the Imperial House of Japan. But, during the postwar era, the Japanese royal family stood as a 'symbol' and 'cultural value' for those rehabilitated offenders as they reintegrated into postwar Japanese society (p. 186). Lastly, in the concise afterword, Takashi Fujitani (University of Toronto) ponders the 'transwar' concept as 'method'—that is, recognition of 1945 as a 'transit moment'. For him, 'transwar as method' means identifying and acknowledging 'persistent forces that derailed alternative possibilities around 1945 [so that] in our historical analyses we might more effectively employ a past conditional temporal lens, "what might have been", in addition to what we have become' (p. 202).

On the whole, the contributions to *Transwar Asia* shift the paradigm forward in their respective efforts to move beyond the hazards and hegemonies of the extant, oft-facile periodisation of historical eras and trends. Their endeavours to identify and track afterlives across transwar Asia make for fascinating reading and fill extant gaps in interwar and postwar scholarship on the region. This reviewer is reticent to voice too much criticism for the volume that the editors and contributors did not write rather than the one that they did and, indeed, the broad scope and ambitious conceptual model are definitely worthy of plaudits. The goal of the volume, as the co-editors lay out in the introduction, is to 'reexamine policies, ideas, and practices that had been originally announced as "new" in the 1940s and 1950s within this *longue durée*, [and] to reassess the claims of "continuity" or "naturalness" that informed the postwar projects of nation-state formation throughout Asia' (pp. 1–2). The key words here are 'throughout Asia'; this is the main objective of the volume, yet the focus is clearly on a selection of case studies rather than a holistic study that may require a longer, or multiform, volume.

The introduction sets out to foreground 'an array of political, cultural, artistic, literary, and philosophical solutions with different political valences' and acknowledges the 1920s and 1930s as decades during which 'active nationalist movements, cultural experimentation, revolutionary parties, and the intensification of imperial competition throughout much of Asia' (p. 1) emerged. Mainland Southeast Asia, however, is completely absent from this volume. Why include two chapters (and snippets of a third) on Korea, but none on the countries of former French Indochina (Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos), whether

under French rule in the interwar years, under Japanese occupation, or during that early decade-and-a-half of the Cold War? One wonders why the editors elided recognition, analysis, and even scrutiny of such features, continuities *with* ruptures, and afterlives that were omnipresent in these polities. This is a missed opportunity, as only a handful of studies have shone a light on this region during the occupation of Imperial Japan and, in the case of Cambodia, only Geoff Gunn's *Monarchical Manipulation in Cambodia* (Copenhagen, 2018) devotes chapter-length analysis to this period in its history. One might also point out the absence of Thailand and Burma from the equation here. As this reviewer is a scholar of modern Chinese history, mainland China also feels fairly glossed over: Louzon's chapter examines Manchukuo, among other areas in the Japanese-occupied Sinosphere, and Tsui's excellent chapter tracks continuities in conservatism from the Civil War-era mainland to the postwar USA-backed Republic of China. One wonders, for instance, why there is no contribution on ideas and ideologies that traversed spaces in what became Japanese-occupied coastal China. Even if there is scholarship on such sites, the absence of a chapter that traces such features, trends, and afterlives before, during, and after the Japanese occupation of mainland China appears to be rather an important omission.

Lastly, there is a matter of semantics. The editors mobilise the word 'unique' often in the introduction. It is difficult to see anything 'unique' at work here and, indeed, 'uniqueness' is a rather empty term. Everything is 'unique', and this non-word distracts from having to actually engage with the ways in which the trends, characteristics, patterns, and events that occurred during the transwar period and in the region under analysis were, or in fact were not, 'unique' at all. For this reason, this reviewer returns to Duara's article on the Cold War as a historical period. As Duara avers, historians ought to resist a conception of historical hegemony—that is, a history that is bereft of genealogical recognition of ruptures, differences, and continuities with these ruptures/differences intact. Contributors to *Transwar Asia* accomplish this task in their establishment of a transwar period of 1920–60, but repeated claims of uniqueness ignore the ways in which these cases were not, and elide the important work of tracing threads and identifying global trends between Asian cases and, say, continental Africa and Latin America (also sites of inter- and postwar imperialisms, in one accretion or another).

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