

in China following Mao Zedong's death in 1976, accelerated his country's opposition to the Vietnamese occupation in Cambodia as part of his wider strategy of taking on the perceived Soviet threat in Central Asia and in the South China Sea. Xiaoming Zhang carefully explains Deng Xiaoping's central role in pushing through plans to invade northern Vietnam, even before Hanoi sent its troops into Cambodia. The border conflict was a major point of concern for the Chinese leadership in its decision-making.

This is an important book. Specialists of the Third Indochina War will be grateful to Xiaoming Zhang for shedding new light and information on the Chinese side, in particular on the military aspects of the confrontation and how this shaped relations at the local level along the Sino-Vietnamese border. The information the author provides will also help us achieve a better understanding of the complex, interconnected nature of one of the most important wars in twentieth-century world history. On that note, one small quibble: Xiaoming Zhang argues that the Sino-Vietnamese war was one of the last chapters of the Cold War. He may be right. But after finishing this book and delving into scholarship on this conflict, I couldn't help but wonder whether this war among communists symbolised the end of the Cold War in the Eurasian half of the international system, a decade before the Berlin Wall fell in Europe. Ideology meant little as Chinese troops poured into Vietnam and Vietnamese invaded Cambodia. The Americans were no longer 'containing' China as in 1950 — the Chinese were using the Americans to contain the Soviet Union for reasons very different from those defining a Cold War. Ideology as a component of formulating diplomacy was dead. And it had been for a long time.

CHRISTOPHER GOSCHA

*Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM)*

*Return: Nationalizing transnational mobility in Asia*

Edited by XIANG BIAO, BRENDA S.A. YEOH and MIKA TOYOTA

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Return is often a part of migration. Even in the case of the early migrants, return was intended, even though not all realised their dream of returning to their original homelands. This edited book is about return 'driven by enterprise' (p. 2), that is to say, it is about the return of labour and other migrants who are targets of state migration policy. Their mobility is very much tied to the politics of the nation-state, which 'seeks to regulate mobility through mobility' (p. 3). This theoretical perspective is provided by Xiang Biao in the Introduction, after which the eight-chapter book begins admirably with two interesting chapters on two kinds of Japanese mobility.

In Chapter 1, Koji Sasaki discusses the changing meaning of mobility among Japanese Brazilians from 1908 to 2010. In response to overpopulation and rural poverty during the Meiji period (1868–1912), the Japanese government encouraged

migration overseas, and the first Japanese migration to Brazil began in 1908. Before its imperial expansion in Asia, the Japanese state as well as Japanese 'overseas associations' encouraged migrants to settle down long-term and even to assimilate with the host society. With the rise of imperial ideology, the migrants were encouraged to settle in colonised societies. In the difficult post-war period, the migrants were expected to live overseas permanently and the state even obligated would-be migrants to avow living overseas permanently. Japanese politicians praised *Nikkeijin*, 'the Japanese emigrants overseas and their descendants' (p. 31), for their pioneering spirit and success overseas. The return of the *Nikkeijin* was welcome in the 1980s when Japan was short of unskilled labour. However, during the financial crisis in 2008–09, the Japanese government even provided subsidies to the re-migrants to return to Brazil. This excellent chapter shows that return was differently 'politicized and moralized' at various times, according to changing political and economic conditions.

Chapter 2 by Mariko Asano Tamanoi deals with a different kind of Japanese return, the delayed return of Japanese soldiers who had fought in the Second World War. The returnees were regarded as patriotic by some, but their return was emotionally unsettling for those who wanted to forget about the war. And to families who had been told that their kin had died heroically for the emperor, the returnees were a source of shame. 'Depending on when, how, and from where they returned, the soldiers' delayed returns became ridiculous, confusing, awkward, scandalous, threatening, or normal' (p. 56). Overall the Japanese people wanted to forget about their country's complicity in war violence and the soldiers' delayed return upset this collective amnesia about the past.

Ancestral connection also provides the basis of return for the overseas Chinese. In Chapter 3, Wang Cangbai describes the return of Chinese from Indonesia. These returnees were classified by the Chinese state as *guiqiao* or 'Overseas Chinese returnees'. Those who returned in the 1960s following anti-Chinese discrimination in Indonesia were settled in 'overseas Chinese farms', specially created in remote regions. Described as patriotic on their return, the *guiqiao* were, however, downgraded during the Cultural Revolution as 'undesirable' because of their foreign connection. However, since the opening up of China in 1978, this overseas connection has been seen as desirable and 'guiqiao became a positive category again' (p. 79).

In another case of return that involves ancestral connection, perceptions about returnees is also influenced by the economic agenda of the mother country. Chapter 8 by Melody Chia-Wen Lu and Shin Hyunjoon describes the return of Korean Chinese to South Korea. Unlike the Korean American returnees who are generally well-educated and have a good command of English, the Korean Chinese are mainly labourers. They are not as welcome as other overseas Koreans, since they 'do not fit well in South Korea's vision of globalization' (p. 170). In fact there were regular crackdowns during the financial crisis of 1997, and those who overstayed were repatriated.

In Chapter 4, Xiang Biao analyses another kind of return, the compulsory return of contract labour in East Asia. The state and recruiting agents work hand in hand to enforce compulsory return, a system which benefits the latter as they can earn more money through fresh recruits. Compulsory return is expected, and the chapter has an interesting section that describes strategies of refusing to comply with the order to

return. The circumstances and nature of the migration of contract labour and illegal migrants is further analysed in Chapter 6 by Johan Lindquist on the migration of Indonesians to Malaysia. Frequent chaotic deportations led to the governments of Malaysia and Indonesia agreeing on bilateral deportation. Human trafficking and deportation are the concerns of not only the governments and recruitment agents, but also local NGOs and the mass media.

Chapter 5 by Sylvia R. Cowan describes another kind of forced return, the return of ‘permanent residents in the United States with Cambodian citizenship’ after serving prison sentences for minor offences (p. 100). These people experienced multiple displacements, having in the first place been displaced from war-torn Cambodia. The forced return of young people who had become used to living in the United States is obviously traumatic, especially with the forced break-up with their families.

Chapter 7 by Carol Upadhyia discusses the return of Indian IT professionals. To welcome and to meet the demands of these IT professionals — who include the ‘global Indian’, ‘who is legally a noncitizen yet a true Indian patriot’ (p. 157) — the Indian government introduced the Persons of Indian Origin (PIO) scheme ‘which granted special rights such as visa-free entry and property rights to certain category of people of Indian origin who have acquired foreign citizenship’ (p. 146). The author provides an interesting analysis of the processes of class and place-making, of the returnees reinventing and colonising cities such as Bangalore to make India their own. But as Upadhyia remarks, ‘the home that IT professionals imagine is a future India’ (p. 157).

Overall, this is an informative book about different kinds of return. The editors have done a good job although the Introduction could have engaged a bit more theoretically with the different kinds of return provided by the various contributors, instead of merely highlighting the four generations of return in different eras (pp. 7–8). The contributors’ studies show that migrant return needs to be understood in changing political economy contexts in which the state and various agents are involved.

TAN CHEE-BENG  
*Sun Yat-sen University*

*The Eurasian core and its edges: Dialogues with Wang Gungwu on the history of the world*

By OOI KEE BENG

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This book is a delightful and rare opportunity to listen in on a series of dialogues between two renowned scholars, Wang Gungwu and Ooi Kee Beng, on a variety of interesting topics and global issues. While for the most part the answers and responses in these dialogues are principally Wang’s to questions raised by Ooi, the two agree that the book is the latter’s.