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Note to Readers

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# CROSS-CURRENTS



## EAST ASIAN HISTORY AND CULTURE REVIEW

### Note to Readers

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Dear *Cross-Currents* readers,

We are pleased to present you with the thirty-third quarterly issue of the open-access e-journal *Cross-Currents: East Asian History and Culture Review*.

In this special issue—"Global Island: Taiwan and the World"—guest editors **James Lin** (University of Washington), **Graeme Read** (Australian National University), and **Peter Thilly** (University of Mississippi) bring together eight research articles that explore "Taiwan's ostensible contradiction of being a 'global island,' by highlighting the generative ways of thinking from centering Taiwan within a *worldview*." The contributors—**Weiting Guo** (Simon Fraser University), **Wei Yi Leow** (National University of Singapore), James Lin, **Melissa J. Brown** (Harvard University), **JhuCin Jhang** (University of Texas, Austin), **Jing Xu** (University of Washington), Graeme Read, and **Tzu-Chin Insky Chen** (University of California, Los Angeles)—seek to "reorient Taiwanese subjectivity" by exploring two key themes: (1) reexamining Taiwan not as a special case but as an important site for understanding the major political and economic transformations of the twentieth century; and (2) articulating how Taiwan's history of embeddedness in larger global processes underpins current discussions of its peoples' complex identities.

The themed set of articles on Taiwan is complemented by independent scholar **Ari-Joonas Pitkänen's** photo essay, "Wild Cities: The Renegade Roots of Urban Taiwan." His images explore the features, hazards, and origins of informal residential spaces, focusing on the particularities of Taiwanese society that have contributed to the emergence of "raw" and unregulated cityscapes: geography, population, and the regulatory and enforcement activities undertaken—or, perhaps more accurately, *not* undertaken—by the government. What emerges from this examination, Pitkänen writes, "is no less than

a reflection of Taiwan’s overall societal character: a nebulous existence geared toward survival over splendor.”

A second photo essay by **Lina Koleilat** (Australian National University)—“Spaces of Dissent: Everyday Resistance in Gangjeong Village, Jeju Island”—offers a portrait of the long-term protest against the Jeju Civilian-Military Complex Port in South Korea, a struggle that has been ongoing for more than twelve years, even beyond the naval base’s completion in early 2016. The protesters have included villagers and outsiders from progressive and socially active religious groups (Buddhist, Catholic, and Protestant) who have extended their activities to other development projects that threaten to negatively impact the island’s unique culture and environment.

This issue also includes two review essays covering two recent publications and a museum exhibition. In the first review essay, **Kevin Michael Smith** (University of California, Davis) explores the “contradictory celebration and critique” of the “New Woman” (*Sin yŏsŏng*) featured in *The Arrival of New Women*, an exhibition presented at the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea (Deoksugung branch), December 21, 2017, through April 1, 2018. Through close readings of paintings, video installations, and other works on display pertaining to the topics of objectification, commodity fetishism, and the division of labor, Smith parses the various representations of Korea’s new woman as well as her legacy in the present. He suggests that the tension between the different facets of the modern woman speaks to a wider ambivalence in the collective historical memory of the Japanese colonial period (1910–1945) in contemporary South Korea, which simultaneously embraces two contradictory positions: repudiation of the Japanese colonial project on the one hand and recuperation of the capitalist development initiated by colonization on the other.

In the other review essay, **Balázs Szalontai** (Korea University) concludes that **Cheehyung Harrison Kim’s** *Heroes and Toilers: Work as Life in Postwar North Korea, 1953–1961* and **Immanuel Kim’s** *Rewriting Revolution: Women, Sexuality, and Memory in North Korean Fiction* together provide a “massive” volume of factual information on various aspects of North Korean life not previously explored in depth. As such, he recommends these studies to readers interested in North Korean economic, social, gender, and literary history, particularly when read in tandem with other academic works that examine North Korean and communist labor, gender, and cultural policies from different perspectives.

Lastly, in our “Readings from Asia” section, **Yuanchong Wang** (University of Delaware) reviews a book by **Sun Weiguo**, *Cong “zun Ming” dao “feng Qing”: Chaoxianwangchao dui Qing yishi de shanbian, 1627–1910* 從“尊明”到“奉清”：朝鮮王朝對清意識的嬗變, 1627–1910 [From “honoring the Ming” to “submitting to the Qing”: The transformation of Chosŏn Korea’s attitude toward Qing China, 1627–1910]. Wang concludes that,

although Sun's latest book "will surely stay on the list of must-read books in the East Asian academia for many years to come," it also "leaves much room for future groundbreaking contributions to the literature." In this way, Wang invites younger scholars to challenge the conventional historiographical approach centered on textual research.

We hope you enjoy reading this issue. As always, we look forward to receiving your feedback. Be sure to register here on our website in order to leave comments for our contributors and join the conversation.

Wen-hsin Yeh and Hyongchan Kim  
Co-editors