



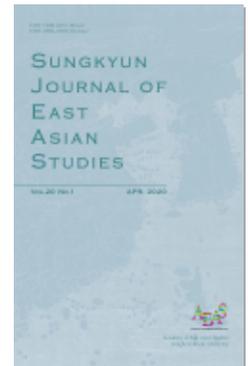
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Diminishing Conflict, Fostering Reconciliation: Essays in East Asian History in Honor of Hilary Conroy ed. by Jonathan Goldstein and Kenneth Wells (review)

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BOOK REVIEW

Review of Jonathan GOLDSTEIN and Wayne PATTERSON, eds, with a foreword by Lee CASSANELLI, *Diminishing Conflict, Fostering Reconciliation: Essays in East Asian History in Honor of Hilary Conroy*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2018. 250 pages. ISBN-13: 9781937385576 (Hardback). US\$ 45.

As Goldstein notes in his introductory remarks, this collection of essays began as an appreciative *Festschrift* in honour of Hilary Conroy by a number of his former students and colleagues but turned into a *Gedenkschrift*, or grateful memorial, after his death in 2015. His passing is felt also by many of us who never had the fortune to meet him in person. In my own case, I met him through his famous study of Japan's seizure of Korea when beginning my master's thesis in New Zealand back in 1976, and like many others the impact of his book on my own approach to research, evidence, historical argument, and hermeneutic fairness was profound and has remained an important element in my work.

As explained in Lee Cassanelli's prefatory essay on Hilary Conroy as a colleague, Conroy's proposal for including "Cosmic History" at the University of Pennsylvania was motivated in large part by a huge aspiration, namely, "to explore the proposition that there might be a coherent and explicable historical process at work in the world" (12). Conroy's quest here is one that goes far beyond the realm of historical research and resonates with the physicist Brian Greene's endeavour expressed recently in an interview (*The Guardian*, Feb 8, 2020) to understand "how we fit into the largest possible landscape, the longest possible timeline." In Conroy's case, this search is also a personal matter, and one in which he recommends a contemporary link be made even in studies of ancient history.

This demand for a contemporary link finds remarkably close agreement in the work of a Korean historian, the late Kang Man'gil, who in 1978 argued that a history of any period in Korea's past must be a history that addresses the issues of Korea's present. In both scholars this might well relate to their activism, Conroy in the anti-Vietnam war movement and his founding of the Committee for Concerned Asian Scholars, and Kang as an active critic of the erstwhile South Korean military regimes and leading member of the Korean People's History Research Society (Han'guk Minjungsa Yon'guhoe). The essay in this volume that directly applies this linkage is Edward Drackman's, in which he delineates the lessons the USA could draw from its experience in Vietnam for its military involvement in Syria.

Whether one can identify patterns in human history and the relation of concerned individuals to such are of course still unfinished debates, and are taken up in Jonathan Goldstein's essay on Nathan Dunn and John Shrecker's essay on the Burlingame Mission of 1868. Goldstein suggests that whereas the opium trade in China represents in itself a pattern, the individual actions of Dunn militate against it to the extent that if he had not existed, "we would have a very different story to tell about Sino-Western interactions" (41). But the question remains whether Dunn,

beyond his valuable contribution to knowledge of China in England and Europe, had any effect on either the course of the opium trade or the crucial influence of the Sinophobes in the USA. Shrecker's essay makes a strong case for considering the anti-slavery politician Burlingame to have made a difference, in this instance more on the Chinese encounter with the USA, although he attends more to Conroy's belief in the ultimate or underlying compatibility of peoples of different traditions. In his essay on the early-twentieth-century journalist Thomas Millard, however, Mordechai Rozanski tends to agree with Millard's plaintive self-description as "a solitary voice attempting to educate the American public" about China (113). The salient point here is the choice to study individuals who strove for good relations between peoples—a mark of the inspiration Conroy gave to his former students, the power of his historical vision, and research method and aims.

Tsing Yuan, in his essay on Chinese ceramic exports in the seventeenth century, examines how far this trade served both as a participant in the kind of broad historical-economic patterns of the time and as a determinant of intercultural relations between China and Southeast Asia. Paul Regan, for his part, takes up the theme of compatibility through a perceptive and sensitive examination of the impact on Japanese modern debates over democracy of the ethical "personalist" philosophy of the Japanese thinker Abe Jirō, in his fusion of German idealist and Kantian philosophy with Japanese notions of "personhood," or *jinkaku*. His research reflects the rigour exemplified by Conroy, but I am curious how it happened that the long-vowel macron is missing in most cases, and that when it does sometimes appear, we find *ō* instead of *ō̄*. Clearly, the publisher was able to use the proper diacritics, for not only the long-vowel macron but also the much rarer Korean vowel diacritic necessary for McCune-Reishauer romanization (̇) appear in Wayne Patterson's essay, both in their proper places.

Conroy's enduring influence on Wayne Patterson is evident in his essay on the Korean nationalist movement in Hawai'i, which not only recalls Conroy's recommendation long ago that he take up a study of Korean immigration to Hawai'i for his doctoral dissertation, but also reflects the encouragement he received to unearth primary sources that reveal the personal dramas within broad historical movements. On the basis of these personal dramas, including outright conflicts within the Korean immigrant community in Hawai'i, Patterson concludes with the bold suggestion that more than Japanese repression, it was factionalism within the Korean movements in Hawai'i and indeed also inside Korea that impeded them from achieving their national liberation aims. It is difficult to conceive of a historical method to test this claim, but it nevertheless serves as a pointer to how attention to personal details, if supported by an astute micro-historical methodology, might not simply fill in the broader narrative but go further and challenge it.

Overall, this collection of essays in honour of Hilary Conroy by former students, colleagues, and friends derives its coherence from its familiarity with and respect for the core features of Conroy's scholastic and personal ideals and objectives. Whatever the contributors' own paths in life, these essays are a fitting tribute to one

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who, possibly on account of his strong Quaker beliefs, has held to a holistic sense of community that allows us to see our lives within a larger context, and to connect us through rigorous historical research to our forebears, of whom he is now one.

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