



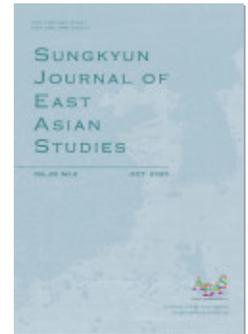
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Mobilities and Migrations in Modern East Asia

Hyung-Gu Lynn

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Mobilities and Migrations in Modern East Asia

Hyung-Gu LYNN
University of British Columbia

TITLES REVIEWED

- Eiichiro AZUMA, *In Search of Our Frontier: Japanese America and Settler Colonialism in the Construction of Japan's Borderless Empire* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2019). xii, 353 pages; 24 cm. ISBN: 0520973070; 9780520973077; 9780520304383.
- Sayaka CHATANI, *Nation-Empire: Ideology and Rural Youth Mobilization in Japan and Its Colonies* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2018). xiv, 347 pages: illustrations; 24 cm. ISBN: 9781501730771; 1501730770; 9781501730764; 1501730762; 9781501730757; 1501730754; 9781501730757.
- Sidney Xu LU, *The Making of Japanese Settler Colonialism: Malthusianism and Trans-Pacific Migration, 1868–1961* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019). xiv, 310 pages: illustrations (black and white), maps; 24 cm. ISBN: 9781108687584; 110868758X; 9781108482424 (hardback); 9781108712316 (paperback).
- Alyssa M. PARK, *Sovereignty Experiments: Korean Migrants and the Building of Borders in Northeast Asia, 1860–1945* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2019). xviii, 284 pages: illustrations, maps; 24 cm. ISBN: 9781501738371; 1501738372; 9781501738388; 1501738380; 9781501738364.
- Bill SEWELL, *Constructing Empire: The Japanese in Changchun, 1905–45* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2019). xv, 295 pages: illustrations, maps; 24 cm. ISBN: 9780774836524 (hardcover); 0774836520.
- Kirsten L. ZIOMEK, *Lost Histories: Recovering the Lives of Japan's Colonial Peoples* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2019). xix, 406 pages: illustrations, maps; 24 cm. ISBN: 9780674237278 (hardcover); 0674237277 (hardcover); 9780674237285 (paperback); 0674237285 (paperback).

Keywords: migration, mobility, colonialism, Japanese Empire, transnational history

Introduction

The hallways of academia have been overflowing with “turns” since the 1990s: linguistic, affective, cultural, post-structural, post-human, relational, reflexive, temporal, narrative, experimental, and infrastructural turns are just some of the larger array of alleged innovations infusing a range of social sciences and humanities disciplines. Aside from prompting thoughts of Marie Kondo, perpetual pirouettes, and vertiginous perspicacity, these have encouraged researchers to focus on some areas of apparent lacuna. Among them the protean mobilities/

immobilities turn, officially inaugurated via the launch of the journal *Mobilities* in 2006, is one that has had staying power, gaining traction in geography, sociology, anthropology, and urban studies, fueling research that shifts focus from fixed sites and territories to flows and eddies of people, objects, feelings, and ideas through spaces, times, borders, and in-between places.¹ Several previous fields of research have imbrications with this particular turn, among them actor network theory and migration history, and have been vivified by this surge in interest in multiple scales, forms, and meanings of mobility and immobility.²

The six titles reviewed in this essay all deal with mobilities in modern East Asia, mainly in the form of histories of transnational migration (one specific subset of mobility), but also state policies, and individual aspirations that took place across geographic spaces and imperial borders, and amidst immense and intricate power structures. They each mobilize an impressive range of archives, interviews, memoirs, contemporary publications, and published scholarship in multiple languages.

Spatial and Linguistic Mobilities

Three of the works reviewed converge in their focus on Japanese migrations: Azuma Eiichiro's *In Search of Our Frontier: Japanese America and Settler Colonialism in the Construction of Japan's Borderless Empire* examines Japanese migrations in the trans-Pacific world from the 1880s to 1945, mapping the routes by which migrants navigated racial hierarchies girding the Japanese Empire, the United States, and other sites in the Asia Pacific. Sidney Lu's *The Making of Japanese Settler Colonialism: Malthusianism and Trans-Pacific Migration, 1868–1961* focuses on what he terms “Malthusian expansionism” in fueling Japanese emigration from Hokkaido to Latin America. Bill Sewell in *Constructing Empire: The Japanese in Changchun, 1905–45*, examines the nouveau imperial city of Changchun (长春, “Long Spring”), re-named Xinjing (新京, “New Capital”) in 1932 when it became the capital city of the ill-fated “puppet state” of Manchukuo, through the activities of Japanese planners, architects, officials, and settlers.

The other three cover different populations of migrants, aspirations, and policies. Sayaka Chatani, *Nation-Empire: Ideology and Rural Youth Mobilization in Japan and Its Colonies* explores social and wartime mobilizations of Taiwanese, Korean, and Japanese rural youths in the Japanese Empire, while Alyssa Park looks at how Korean migrants in the borderlands of Korea, China, and Russia/the Soviet Union provided the impetus for various border-maintenance practices and “sovereignty experiments” (policy responses and tactics) in *Sovereignty Experiments: Korean Migrants and the Building of Borders in Northeast Asia, 1860–1945*. Kirsten Ziomek analyzes four colonial peoples—Ainu, Taiwan's indigenous peoples, Micronesians, and Okinawans in *Lost Histories: Recovering the Lives*

¹ An oft-cited touchstone work is Urry 2000, and the de facto field manifesto, Sheller and Urry 2006.

² Early examples of the network approaches to mobility include Papademetriou and Hopple, 1982; and Callon, 1986. For early texts of migration history in the Asia Pacific, see, Wang 1959; Wickberg 1962; and Sims 1972.

of *Japan's Colonial People*—through physical and virtual mobilities, covering migrations as well as representations in exhibitions, postcards, and photographs.

More specifically, Azuma covers domestic politics of migration in Meiji Japan including the activities of the prefectural Overseas Associations (*kaigai kyōkai* 海外協会) and Overseas Emigration Cooperatives (*kaigai ijū kumiai* 海外移住組合), as well as individual chapters that analyze Japanese migrations to Hawai'i, California, Brazil, Manchuria, and Taiwan, with discussions of Hokkaido, Mexico, and Micronesia interspersed throughout. Regular references to Sakhalin, the Kwantung Leased Territories, Saipan, Australia, Canada, and Peru also help provide a picture of the scale and the scope of Japanese migrations from the mid-1880s to the 1940s. Azuma makes deft use of a formidable range of English and Japanese scholarship, as well as archives in Japan and the United States, ranging from the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archives in Roppongi to the Saga Prefectural Library (67). Lu covers similar spaces, including discussions of domestic migration promotion, more details on the Japan Emigration Association (Nihon imin kyōkai 日本移民協會) than provided by Azuma, as well as migrations to Micronesia, Taiwan, Hawai'i, California, Manchuria, and Brazil. Lu diverges in space allocation, as he has a chapter each on Hokkaido and Texas, two areas that Azuma's book does not cover at equivalent depth, but elides Mexico, Peru, and several places that are mentioned by Azuma. Lu also has a slightly longer chronological coverage, as he starts in 1868 and ends in 1961. There are similarities in the sources, including a laudable gamut of scholarship published in Japanese and English. Rather than Saga, Lu uses the Nagano Prefectural Library, but makes noticeably less regular and deep use of the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archives. Instead, he sprinkles in a public domain poster from the Museu Histórico da Imigração Japonesa no Brasil in São Paulo (176). Sewell ostensibly focuses on one city, but the coverage is transnational—officials, planners, and settlers from various parts of Japan, as well as Western missionaries and Han Chinese and Korean residents of Changchun, all make appearances. The book is also built on a foundation of works published in a particularly wide range of languages—English, Japanese, Chinese, French, and Russian. His archives are far-flung if oblique—National Archives at Kew (not identified as such, but only as British Foreign Office Files for Japan and the Far East), National Archives of Scotland in Edinburgh, several papers in the Hoover Institute Library at Stanford, archives of the Société des Missions-Étrangères in Paris, and the Presbyterian Historical Society in Belfast, Northern Ireland, and complemented by extensive use of publications by the Manchukuo state, the Southern Manchurian Railway, and period publications in Japanese such as *Manshū kenchiku zasshi* (満洲建築雜誌, Journal of Manchurian architecture).

Likewise, the other three titles reflect the fact that virtual, physical, and linguistic mobility, at least prior to the new Covid-19 world order, has increased for researchers since the 1990s. Chatani uses sources in English, Japanese, Korean, and Chinese, and archives from the personal (interviews, letters), the urban (Osaka City), to the prefectural (Miyagi) to the transnational, in addition to publications from several libraries in Japan (e.g. Japan Youth Center), Korea (Naju City), and Taiwan (Academia Sinica). Park makes systematic use of several Russian archives,

namely two in Moscow (the Russian State Historical Archive of the Far East, and the Archive of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Empire), as well as the State Archives of the Primorsky Krai and the Russian State Historical Archives of the Far East, both in Vladivostok. In addition, she uses published compilations of Korean and Chinese government documents, newspapers in Korean and Russian, and a range of secondary sources, although she cites only one Japanese language study, despite an abundance of directly relevant works. Ziomek, like Chatani, has collected interviews, and makes regular use of them. There are also an eclectic selection of newspapers and archives in multiple locations: Taiwan (Institute of Taiwanese History, Academia Sinica), Japan (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archives); United Kingdom (Kew Gardens Botanical Archives and the Hammersmith and Fulham Archives), and the U.S. (MacArthur Memorial Archive), among others.

Intra- and Inter-disciplinary Analytical Mobilities

If multi-sited and multilingual research characterize these works, they also share the common denominator of reflecting the profound and persistent challenges of moving across different scales and fields of analysis, through migration history, national histories, Asian-American history, colonialism, settler colonialism, ethnicity, and race. Whether the focus is on larger patterns (Azuma; Lu); the entwinements of the personal with the national and the imperial (Chatani; Park); or the constellations of individual aims, actions, and achievements attained and failed (Sewell; Ziomek), in attempting to braid individual agency with larger structures, they all provide material for thinking through the limits of mobility and immobility at the meta level, within specialized fields of history and across the borders of social science disciplines. On the one hand, to generate value added for specialists, a book should ideally use the most relevant archives, provide some new or unusual information, engage with and differentiate from directly relevant works, have clear and consistent logic for methodologies and approaches, and also make arguments that inductively and deductively cohere. As is invariably the case, there can be limits to the degree of mobility within a specialized field as well as in comparative and cross-disciplinary contexts. I highlight issues with the analysis not to simply ask for the “book on the subject I would have written,” or because the arguments are not stimulating, but because I think for History or Area Studies to increase the chances of producing mobility across disciplines and fields, more emphasis ought to be placed on precision and persuasiveness in argumentation, and greater weight allotted to logical consistency and robust analysis, even if no work in any discipline on any subject ever fully achieves an unimpeachably perfect integration of the deductive and the inductive.

Azuma raises the banner of “adaptive settler colonialism” to bridge the discrete fields of Japanese colonialism, migration history, and Japanese-American history, and thereby challenge existing Western-centric definitions of and distinctions between settler colonialism and colonialism. He argues that Japanese settler colonialism was “situationally adaptive, historically variable, modally diverse” (5), noting that outside of Hokkaido, central eastern Taiwan, southern Sakhalin and some parts of Micronesia, Japanese settler colonialism diverged

from Euro-American counterparts in its “definitive emphasis on coexistence and assimilation—in rhetoric at least—more than exclusion or annihilation” (6). Instead of a focus on land usurpation, population displacement, or intentions of permanent settlement per the works of Patrick Wolfe and Lorenzo Veracini conceptualizing settler colonialism, Azuma attempts to map the spaces and practices binding migration (*imin* 移民) and colonial settlers (*shokumin* 植民) under the banner of *ishokumin* (移植民) and its cognate, overseas development (*kaigai hatten* 海外発展), asserting that *ishokumin* was the “nativized idea of settler colonialism in prewar Japan,” that was a “borderless empire bound by racial ties and national consciousness, even more than an actual nation-state or a formal empire” (5–6). He also critiques the reliance on culture in lieu of a more rigorous engagement with race and its intersections with ethnicity under colonialism in the recent scholarship, especially as per Azuma, racial thinking among settlers and officials was a constant and salient presence (18–19, 276–277).

The process of using “settler colonialism” to trace the trans-Pacific and inter-imperial migratory paths of individuals such as Ōtsuki Kōnosuke, who moved from Japan to Hawai‘i and finally to Taiwan where he died, and Yokokawa Shōzō, who first migrated to California before settling in Harbin and was ultimately captured and executed by Russians as a spy and agent of the Japanese military, is fascinating and important in its fusion of biographical details to trans-imperial mobilities and its spotlighting of common denominators in modern Japanese migrations. Nevertheless, this conceptual contextualization seems to leave room for elaboration. First, there is no systematic attempt to explain how the category of *ishokumin* might map against existing concepts populating migration studies, such as sojourners, settlers, expatriates, diaspora, or migrants, where intent, time, and interactions with existing populations are parsed.³ Second, there is no explanation of why Azuma argues that “adaptive settler colonialism” was unique to Japanese settler colonialism. To cite one example, a recent edited volume (with a contribution by Veracini to boot) taking a comparative approach to non-anglophone sites of white settler colonialism argues that the contributions show “settler-colonial cultures as—for all their similarities—ultimately divergent constructions, locally situated and produced of specific power relations within the messy operations of imperial domination” (Huang and Weaver-Hightower 2018, 1). Third, within the internal logic of the book, the keyword of “*ishokumin*” dissipates after its initial promising outlines, returning for only a brief appearance (217) after the Introduction. These combine to leave unaddressed the issue of whether “settler colonialism” or *ishokumin* are the most appropriate rubrics to capture the full spectrum of trans-Pacific Japanese migrants. After all, some individuals migrated for economic reasons outside of state migration policies, admittedly to varying degrees willfully blind to the colonial oppression that allowed for new

³ In fact, the notion of the “sojourner” as a temporary resident migrant was first outlined in a study of the Chinese diaspora in America (Siu 1952), albeit as an admonition against ethnic enclaves that would not assimilate, and has been applied to Japanese migrant populations in contemporary contexts (Mizukami 2007).

opportunities to exist, while others were active agents and collaborators of Japanese military expansionism. Others relocated as expatriates, either as officials occupying posts in colonial administration or sent by private companies, with full anticipation of returning to Japan once their terms in the “overseas” ended . . . but if all these forms of mobility can be summarized as settler colonialism, the term itself may veer into the territory of the empty signifier. Fourth, the actual imbrications of ethnicity and race that Azuma points out as missing in other works appear under-explained, leaving readers with questions about the alternative being offered.

Lu, like Azuma, wants to address the “continuities and connections” between migration (*imin*) and settlers (*shokumin*). The primary argument is that Japanese migration was based on “Malthusian expansionism,” the consistent discursive constructions of an “overpopulation” problem for political purposes (4) that launched migrations in the modern period. This in turn, according to Lu, allows for the application of “settler colonialism” as a binding term to Japanese emigrations to various destinations within and outside the boundaries of the Japanese colonial empire. The argument runs into the problems that inevitably arise when emphasizing the common factors across such wide spaces and periods, but in addition, there are contradictory statements in the Introduction. First, the actual agents or scales of analysis are unclear. Early on, Lu states that the book deals with “migration promoters, not individual migrants” (5), then proceeds to note that the book covers sending and receiving countries, rather than focusing on one (10)—hardly consistent with the initial qualifier regarding the focus on pundits and champions of emigration (even if several of them undertook migrations themselves). The inconsistencies are further amplified by subsequent statements that the book will simply take a migration-centered approach that looks at “links, flows, and intersections between Japanese migration within the imperial territory in Asia and that outside of the imperial territories in Hawai‘i and North and South America and the continuities between Japanese overseas migration during and after the time of Empire” (7). This leaves unanswered the questions of what forms of migration are not part of the two catchment areas of Malthusian expansionism and settler colonialism, and whether the focus is on promoters, discourses, emigration policies, migration flows, outcomes, or all these areas. It is one thing to point out commonalities between migrants and settlers, but another to attribute the same dynamics without integrating the very different circumstances of hosting sites for Japanese emigration in, say, Brazil, Manchuria, or Korea.⁴

Second, Lu claims that Taiwan, Korea, and Okinawa were not deemed vital by Malthusian expansionist discourse, and thus are excluded from the book’s coverage, despite publications and institutions that promoted Japanese emigration to these places. But his rationale is that “Japanese agricultural migration rarely succeeded” in these places (6), when the focus of the book was apparently to be on the propagation, uses, and applications of the discourse of Malthusian

⁴ Or, for that matter, land displacement as a result of settlement (see Yamada 2011). There are also recent works on modern migration that provide more qualified analysis of commonalities (e.g. the “diasporic homeland” argument in Chan 2018).

expansionism to fuel settler colonial migrations, regardless of outcomes. The opacity is exacerbated by another statement in the Introduction that Malthusian expansionists saw a “succession of locales,” that included Okinawa, Taiwan, and Korea, as “empty and unworked, eagerly waiting for Japanese settlers to claim” (14). The result is that the issue of how a book that foregrounds settler colonialism can logically exclude the actual colonies, in other words case selection criteria, is undermined by contradictory assertions.

Third, the uses of relevant literature is uneven. This leaves the links between demographic debates among academics, the activities of migration promoters, and migrations sometimes opaque. For example, in dealing with the demographic debates in 1920s Japan, Lu discusses the touchstone work of demographic expansionists such as Takata Yasuma 高田保馬 (1883–1972), known among other writings for his 1926 rebuttal of Malthusian alarmists, titled “Umeyo, fueyo” 産めよ殖えよ (be fruitful and multiply), celebrated by some scholars as a prescient forerunner of the challenges of sub-replacement total fertility rate declines in twenty-first-century Japan. However, one of the main reasons why the “overpopulation” debate became amplified, the 1927 Marxist critiques of Kawakami Hajime 河上肇 (1879–1946), who was still a professor at Kyoto Imperial University (he resigned in 1928) of Takata in particular, but also Yanaihara Tadao 矢内原忠雄 (1893–1961) and several others, and Takata’s responses, are curiously left entirely unmentioned, despite existing academic work in Japanese on the subject. Lu cites Yanaihara’s 1927 article on the “population problem” (184), but his critique of Malthusian fears in the very same piece, inspired in part by the published debates prompted by Kawakami, is not discussed at all. In terms of the current academic context, to generate mobility within and across academic fields, explicit acknowledgement of and differentiation from existing directly relevant literature allows for productive and precise qualifiers and divergences. Oddly, Lu has chosen to bury the citation to my own essay that argued for links between Malthusian discourse and early Japanese emigration projects to Korea (Lynn 2005), without addressing the differences, the extensions, or the pitfalls of conceptual overstretch.

If Azuma and Lu have in relative terms flattened the agency and diversity of migrants’ motivations and experiences in providing varying degrees of overall coherence to the analysis of migrations across multiple spatial and temporal boundaries, Chatani, Park, Ziomek, and Sewell are more explicitly interested in variegated individual histories, even if their arguments likewise reflect the challenges of scaling between individual aspirations and larger structures of power. Chatani asks how colonial authorities were able to mobilize rural youth, and uses interviews that show how individuals attempted to grapple with and digest wartime policies in rural Japan, Taiwan, and Korea. The project of accenting the agency of rural youths in navigating what she calls “social mobility systems” is a useful qualifier to accounts of victimization and oppression, and in fact congruent with the emerging literature on aspiration as a driver of migration (e.g. Carling and Schewel 2018; Shrestha 2018)—although none of this is cited. Two issues, however, trouble the argument, the first of which is the relatively limited basis of the oral histories. Even with contextualization via use of a wide range of publications, the

sample size of her interviews, which features two model youths in Taiwan and one from Korea, unavoidably triggers questions regarding representativeness. If Kim Yŏngghan, Chatani's one interview in Korea, had apparently come to terms with his choices, others such as Yi Inha 李仁夏 (1925–2008), the former minister of the Kawasaki Zainichi Church and human rights activist who died in 2008, were haunted by their choices in late-colonial Japanese Empire for the following decades (Yi confessed in 1989 that he had volunteered as a soldier for the Japanese Imperial Army; Yi 2006). It is of course nearly impossible to account for all the ways in which individuals will deal with the memories of their younger selves, and extremely difficult to access these personal, private materials and memories, but it seems possible to argue that the agency Chatani stresses seems to mirror Horkheimer and Adorno's dolorous observation that "freedom to choose an ideology—since ideology always reflects economic coercion—everywhere proves to be freedom to choose what is always the same (Horkheimer and Adorno 1997, 167); less programmatically, simply that agency is restricted by the structure or the system, whether social mobility or something else.

The second is that Chatani does not engage in any substantive analysis of the state and policy processes, yet mounts an argument about what policymakers thought of empire-building as an extension of nation-building, in other words, a "nation-empire" (4). While it could very well be that colonial officials were often "clueless" and "ineffective," leading to "unexpected and convoluted results" in youth mobilization programs (8), the book does not make a sustained effort to buttress this assertion. There is no discussion of the debates among Japanese politicians and journalists over assimilation and self-rule in Korea that took place in the 1920s, and only a handful of references to self-rule discussions for Taiwan. The figures that appear on the pages are all rather familiar, with Gotō Shinpei 後藤新平 (1857–1929) featuring regularly, and references to other colonial governors dotting the pages, but nary a mention of Den Kenjiro 田健治郎 (1855–1930), the first civilian governor of Taiwan, serving from 1919 to 1923, and a leading advocate for the assimilationist model. Chatani notes the existence of archives of colonial bureaucrats, but makes no substantive use of the Ōno Rokuichirō Papers 大野緑一郎 関係文書 (although there is one passing reference on page 220), one of the most voluminous and long-publicly available set of papers from the former Vice Governor General of Korea (1936–1942), and no evident use of any of the rich archives of the Yūhō Kyōkai 友邦協会 (the most prominent post-1945 association for former Japanese officials and settlers in colonial Korea) she mentions in her section, "On the Archives and Sources" (331).

Park, like Chatani, tackles the Scylla and Charybdis of emphasizing migrant agency and life stories, and state responses. The various waves of Korean migration, especially in the early-1900s, prompted what she calls "sovereignty experiments"—governments of Russia, China, Korea (pre-1905), and Japan responding by jockeying over borders and peoples. The information on Korean migrants, the Chosŏn government's interventions (prior to 1905), and particularly Russian responses are detailed, helping support Park's arguments. However, specific names of Chinese and particularly Japanese officials are in short supply,

meaning that the process of these “sovereignty experiments” seems less clear for Japan and China than for Russia and Korea. Moreover, while this may be captious given the impressively extensive use of Russian archives and secondary work, there seem to be some elisions of sources that would likely have been of use. Archives in St. Petersburg, namely the Russian National Historical Archives and the Russian State Naval Archives, are not listed, although Wada Haruki used them for his two-volume magnum opus on the Russo-Japanese War (Wada 2009–2010). The one Japanese source that Park appears to cite is a book on citizenship in the Japanese Empire, but even closer in subject, chronological period, and sources, Igor Saveliev’s work on Chinese, Korea, and Japanese migrations in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century to the Russian Far East, is not even listed (Saveliev 2005). More puzzlingly, Park does not use any of the plethora of Korean language scholarship on directly related subjects, including Korean migration in the Tumen River area in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Russia’s Far Eastern policies in the same period, and Japanese responses to the border disputes in the 1900s (e.g. Kwōn 2006; Ch’oe 2006; Ha 2005), among many other subjects, while works on more background issues such as Chosŏn social structure appear in the bibliography. Even if encyclopedic coverage is neither necessary nor possible in an age when word limits reign supreme in academic publishing, more systematic use of directly related publications could only have strengthened the empirical density and the argument of the book.

One categorization of mobilities posits that *patterns of movement* are the physical processes of movement that lend themselves to empirical observation and quantitative analysis; *representations of mobility* address the “profound array of meanings from conformity to rebellion” found in various narratives and portrayals of mobility; and *practices of mobility* concern the everyday “embodied and habitualized” experiences of the mobile subject (Cresswell 2010, 19). Unlike the other titles reviewed, Ziomek’s work focuses most on representations, such as exhibitions, travel, and touristic performances, rather than migrations. She argues that racial categories and hierarchies were used by both the colonial state and the colonized for their own advantages and aims, as these formed “an expansive and variegated terrain of networked relationships” (2). The precariousness of colonial rule encouraged Japanese officials to adjust to traditional power structures and to cooperate with local intermediaries (4, 150), which in turn left spaces for “personal, local, and regional agency” (2). She uses life histories, some interviews (mostly secondhand from media sources), and an array of textual and visual sources to sketch captivating portraits of individuals. Just two from a larger assemblage of excavated stories are the changing testimonies of Teshi Toyoji, an Ainu soldier during World War II, and later an artist and tourism booster, who after a lifetime recounting memories of the bonds forged with Okinawan civilians during the Pacific War, confessed just one year before his death to having killed Okinawan civilians on orders of his superior during the war (376); and the death of Ruji Suruchan, an eighteen-year old Taiwanese aboriginal man who died in a faraway land—the Hammersmith infirmary in London (113–114). While the counter to accounts of colonialism based on unidirectional emanations from the metropole to

the peripheries is welcome, there seems to be room for recognition of scholarship published since the 1990s that makes similar points or covers overlapping ground.⁵ It is also unfortunate that Ziomek does not engage with the rapidly burgeoning field of Okinawan migration history, especially to Micronesia and Brazil (e.g. Ishikawa 2011; Mio, Endō, and Ueno 2016; Mori 2017). As with Chatani, the argument concerns the dynamics of individual agency amidst the power structures and racial hierarchies of the Empire (378), admirably addressing the lacuna that Azuma spotlighted regarding the role of race within the Japanese Empire. However, there is not much space allocated to the analysis of state policies on exhibitions or tourism. Thus, while the book certainly shows how the circulations of people, images, and performances between peripheries and the metropole via exhibitions and tourism reflected and reinforced contingent boundaries of race and power within the Japanese Empire, the degree to which colonial administrations were flexible or not in their exploitation of racial hierarchies is less clear, and potentially key figures are left sidelined. Sakuma Samata 佐久間左馬太 (1844–1915), the longest-serving Governor General in Taiwan (1906–1915), makes useful appearances (133–135, 226, 232), but others such as Tōyama Kyūzō 當山久三 (1868–1910), known as the “father of Okinawan emigration,” and the scholar Iha Fuyū 伊波普猷 (1876–1947), the “father of Okinawan Studies” and one of the most prominent advocates of the position that Okinawans and Japanese were of the same race (and thus by implication could and should be assimilated), make no appearances in Ziomek’s pages.

If Chatani focuses on the rural as a counter to the urban proclivity in recent colonial studies, Sewell argues that the city of Changchun was not simply a bastion of state power, but a boundary object (although he does not use the term),⁶ which served as a contact zone for a diverse set of ambitions and aspirations harbored by urban planners, architects, economic bureaucrats, South Manchurian Railway employees, and Japanese settlers of various occupations and political stripes. By proceeding through the range of agents and stakeholders, Sewell documents the chimera-like (to paraphrase the title of Yamamuro 1993)—in both senses of the word, as a hybrid of different parts, and as a goal that is planned or wished for but in fact is illusory—quality of Manchukuo in general and Changchun in particular. Sewell concisely explains the ways in which his work extends that of prolific scholars, such as Koshizawa Akira 越澤明 and Nishizawa Yasuhiko 西澤泰彦, by flagging his analysis of a wider array of civilians in contrast to their focus on urban planning, architecture, and construction. He deftly weaves in references to Henri Lefebvre’s *The Production of Space* (1991) throughout. Still, opportunities to develop the central arguments beyond the notion of the colonial city as a site of catholic aspirations and multiple migrations are left unused. The introduction

⁵ For example, Oguma Eiji’s 1998 book, despite covering many of the same themes, appears once (12) as a source to refer to for additional details, while Agarie Toshiyuki’s touchstone work (1991; although much of it was originally published as articles in the 1960s), which discusses Okinawan views of Japanese, is not cited at all.

⁶ For an overview of the history of the concept, see Trompette and Vinck 2009.

and the conclusion are essentially chronological bookends, with no introduction of a central question. References to existing work in English on settlers and cities in Korea, Manchuria, and others (189) surge and pass without any attempts to differentiate. Thus, the question of whether Changchun was similar to or divergent from other cities such as Dalien (Dairen), Taipei (Taihoku), or Seoul (Keijō) is implicitly raised, but not explicitly addressed.

There are also some empirical issues. Several existing publications on planning, architecture, and Shinto shrines in Manchuria/Manchukuo (e.g. Huo 1991; Sagai 1998; Liu 2011; Gotō 2017) are not cited. Even though access to the archives in China can be inconsistent and challenging, the Jilin Provincial Archives and the Jilin Provincial Library make one appearance each in Sewell's acknowledgments, but dissipate from the rest of the book. In the chapter on economic planning, Hoshino Naoki 星野直樹 (1892–1978), a prominent finance bureaucrat in Manchukuo (1932–1937) and *de facto* top civilian Japanese official in the “country” from 1937 to 1940, appears if rather briefly (192, 194), as does the nearly inescapable Gotō Shinpei, who appears with far greater regularity. But other officials such as Minobe Yōji 美濃部洋次 (1900–1953), an economic bureaucrat who held key economic planning positions in the Manchukuo “government” during 1933–1937, and Sakatani Kiichi 阪谷希一 (1889–1957), who served as Vice Director and Director of the General Affairs Bureau 國務院總務庁 in Manchukuo during 1932–1935, are entirely missing despite the fact that their papers have been publicly available for decades,⁷ further highlighting how Sewell does not make it clear whether he views the launch of the puppet state of Manchukuo in 1932 as an accelerant to or transformation of previous trajectories in Changchun.

Conclusion

While mobilities under colonialism operated under conditions of unequal power structures and persistent racial hierarchies, even within one locale, multiple interpretations and uses were nurtured as individuals navigated physical and social mobilities and immobilities. In other words, a move to a new place of settlement or enlistment in the Army could be interpreted as opportunities or oppressions, escape or enslavement. To be sure, similarly multivalent dynamics existed in local and national rather than imperial contexts and outside Asia and the Pacific. To cite just one example, Monteruga, an agricultural village in the Puglia area in southeastern Italy that has been abandoned since the 1980s, traces its origins to the mid-1920s when the fascist government expanded an existing farm into a larger plantation or village. For some, the ruins of Monteruga represent a forgotten and failed experiment in fascist farming; for others, it is simply a part of Italy's modern agricultural history (Massafra 1981). At the same time, Monteruga still poses a stimulating challenge for village revival and heritage preservation initiatives

⁷ Minobe's papers are held in two locations: the Manchuria/Manchukuo related ones at Hitotsubashi University and others at the Tokyo University Library (Hitotsubashi Daigaku 2000; Tōkyō Daigaku 1990). The Sakatani Kiichi Papers were donated to the National Diet Library, Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room in 2018 (Kokuritsu Kokkai Toshokan 2019), but his forty-one letters to his father, Sakatani Yoshirō, have been publicly accessible since 1980 (Kokuritsu Kokkai Toshokan 2011).

(Cosima 2014), as well as a mnemonic trigger for abiding apolitical personal memories for some former residents (Diso 2013).

But in comparison to one ghost town in Italy, however polyvalent, the obstacles to tracing various forms of mobilities throughout a vast Empire and the larger Asia-Pacific appear to be far more complex and daunting due to the greater scale, scope, and variety of experiences, sites, routes, and policies that must be accounted for. All of the books reviewed in this essay have undertaken impressive amounts of research, using multiple languages and diverse sources located across the world. The empirical contributions alone make these essential reading for researchers of modern Asian history, migration history, and colonialism.

In terms of meta context, intellectual mobilities are constrained by the centrifugal challenges of providing empirical contributions to appeal to specialists of the field, and at the same time making a cogent and sustainable case for the widest conceptual implication possible in order to increase the potential for movement within specialized fields and across social science disciplines. While the discipline of History has often emphasized chronologically sequenced descriptions and new information over analytical value added, all of these books also make laudable attempts to construct, either directly or indirectly, overarching arguments that combine to varying degrees of cogency the irreproducible uniqueness of individual experiences and aspirations with larger structures of colonialism and race. In doing so, they all emphatically contribute to intensifying intellectual flows within and across research fields by stimulating further thinking about and closer assessments of the intersections of mobility, migration, and colonialism.

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