

common ground in solving the historical issues that continue to roil this region. The process that led the Japanese government to compensate Koreans living in Japan *and* Korea, along with the support Japanese lawyers provided victims in Korea, is one path for resolving remaining controversies, including forced labour during Japan's colonization of Korea, Japanese textbooks' descriptions of that colonial history, and the treatment of Koreans now living in Japan.

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Shahla F. Ali. *Governing Disasters: Engaging Local Populations in Humanitarian Relief* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017) pp 346. Paperback: \$32.00.

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The highlight of this masterpiece by Dr Shahla F. Ali, Associate Professor on the Faculty of Law at the University of Hong Kong, is her comparative investigation into various forms of “constellation” between international, state, and local institutions in recent mega-disasters around the world. She applies a grand perspective, ranging from the developing countries highly dependent on international humanitarian aid, such as Indonesia (2004 Aceh Tsunami), Haiti (2010 Haitian Earthquake), and Myanmar (2008 Cyclone Nargis), to advanced economies that generally conduct disaster relief independently from international intervention, such as Japan (2011 East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami) and the US (2005 Hurricane Katrina). Throughout the thick volume, consisting of 13 chapters, the author maintains her fundamental concern—the building of local institutional capacity for better co-ordination in a timely and effective manner with international humanitarian support in the disaster emergency phases.

The methodological approach here is mainly a “meta-analysis”: she intensively reviewed many publicly accessible articles that were written about the emergency phase operations of the mega-disasters which she covered. In this sense, her main source of information is an abundance of secondary information, instead of her own surveys, except the questionnaire survey conducted with 69 humanitarian aid practitioners for the purpose of supporting the findings from the proceeding “meta-analysis,” which is summarized in Chapter 12. This basic dependency on secondary information is, however, not at all a weakness of this volume. To the contrary, this is the true contribution of this work, since a “meta-analysis” has been long-awaited and highly necessary in the field of disaster management. Particularly in relation to emergency phases, most of the “academic” writings tend to be temporary reports containing the subjective observations of authors. Only a thorough review from chronological and comparative perspectives can yield true lessons from the phenomena of disaster operations.

In this significant attempt at “meta-analysis,” the author has successfully identified a number of valuable lessons. One remarkable suggestion is the necessity for leading international institutions to pay more attention to the importance of constructing a trusting relationship with existing local institutions, not only public administration, but also local communities, so as to better access existing local knowledge and resources. In this sense,

various experimental attempts being implemented by international bodies, such as the cluster approach recently taken by the UNOCHA (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs), will be in vain unless they pay more serious attention to improving the interface with the existing local system and knowledge.

If any shortcoming of this volume is to be pointed out, it is the short span of the disaster-management phase that the author chose to deal with in this study. The author's interest is directed only to the stage of emergency response for rescue and relief, without referring to the issues of humanitarian concerns connected with the succeeding stages of early recovery and reconstruction, even though the world's humanitarian concern is expanding to the issues that arise in succeeding stages, after the international emergency aid is closed and various donors leave. Since the author's attractive title of *Governing Disasters* stimulates the readers' expectation of knowing more about what should happen in the succeeding stages of disaster governance, we trust that the author will respond to this expectation in her future work.

In summary, this volume is an excellent and challenging contribution, reflecting her energetic expertise as a lawyer, and offering an intensive and comprehensive "meta-analysis" of this emerging interdisciplinary field of disaster-management studies.

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Joachim Zekoll, Moritz Bälz, and Iwo Amelung, eds., *Dispute Resolution in Asia and Beyond: Formalization and Flexibilisation in Dispute Resolution* (Leiden: Brill/Nijhoff, 2015) pp 401. Hardcover: \$190.

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This edited volume offers an interdisciplinary analysis on the development of the relationship between extrajudicial and judicial conflict resolution in different times in history and in different regions in the world. The 13 authors in this volume critically analyze the assumption that extrajudicial dispute resolution develops as an alternative to a formal procedure in court. It is an ambitious undertaking of the editors to focus on a wide variety of dispute-resolution procedures in four different continents at different periods in time. It has to be said, the editors succeeded in defining common themes and approaches that makes this volume relatively coherent and of interest for legal scholars.

The first part sets the scene focusing on the issue of formalization and asking critical questions about the implication of informal justice with regard to the rule of law. This part starts with a contribution by Michael Palmer explaining the process and implications of the hybridization of dispute-resolution techniques. Palmer focuses on mediation in China arguing that path-dependent choices and learning effects made mediation central to the pallet of dispute-resolution mechanisms. Yet, he raises questions about due process that this long-time primacy of mediation entails. Another contribution by Deborah Hensler treats the blurring boundary between public and private dispute resolution drawing on the case of the US