

throughout several chapters, a thorough treatment of this significant rival to Chinese influence in the Indo-Pacific would add to the contributions of the book. To what extent, how, and where may the United States or Japan potentially challenge China's ambitious infrastructure project?

Third, we believe the insight from the book could be strengthened further by a more detailed treatment of the implications for the host countries' national security of massive Chinese investments. Surely, investment flows are positive sanctions that can be flipped around to negative ones if the Chinese leadership finds it necessary. Moreover, controlling nodes in infrastructure networks provide several opportunities for coercion through choking (although such actions may have undesirable long-term consequences for Chinese influence). At the same time, investments in infrastructure, resources, and corporations in the host countries also boost the potency of other types of tools of influence and (covert) coercion, such as cyber, information, espionage, and intelligence operations. This becomes particularly timely when analyzed in light of new technologies, e.g., 5G, artificial intelligence, Internet of Things; cutting-edge technologies in which China aims to push the frontiers in the years to come. What additional implications – if any – do such considerations have for the trade-offs between economic prosperity and national security that the BRI brings with it, the willingness to accept a Sino-centric *economic* order, and the ability to separate the economic and the security realms more broadly?

To conclude, we think that the *The Belt and Road Initiative and the Future of Regional Order in the Indo-Pacific* should interest academics and policymakers inside and outside the region. The book offers insightful up-to-date analyses and perspectives for understanding the BRI's implications (and challenges) in the years to come, and it zeroes in on important questions that remain unanswered. Although we recommend reading all the contributions, each chapter can be digested individually as well. But, make sure to read the introduction and the conclusion.

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Imperial Romance: Fictions of Colonial Intimacy in Korea, 1905–1945

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The celebrated Korean Fauvist painter of the early twentieth century Lee Jung Seop (Yi Chungsoöp) met Yamamoto Masako, a fellow art student at Bunka Gakuin, during their studies in Tokyo. In 1945 Yamamoto journeyed to Korea where the two married and lived until the Korean War broke out, forcing Yamamoto to take their two sons to Japan in 1952 for safety. Four years later Lee died alone in Korea unable to be reunited with his wife and children in Japan. Su Yun Kim's *Imperial Romance: Fictions of Colonial Intimacy in Korea, 1905–1945* opens with this brief biography of Lee's life to powerfully illustrate how Lee's art has been recently celebrated and commemorated in Korea but aspects of his family life, especially the romantic and intimate aspects of his relationships with his

Japanese wife and their Japanese–Korean children, were understated if not buried behind translation. With this example and other pertinent cases, *Imperial Romance* addresses an important aspect of a colonial legacy that has often been swept under the rug in narrating Korean history. This uneasy history of intimate and sexual relationships between the colonizer and the colonized contrasts with the more visible legacies of colonial atrocities. Yet, as Kim suggests, these intimate relationships have left an indelible imprint in Korean culture and society that is just as piercing as the more manifested legacies. By addressing this uncomfortable and complex issue of intimacy between Koreans and their former colonizers through analysis of Korean colonial period literary, film, and media representations of romance, family, friendship, sex, and intimacy – all matters of the heart, Su Yun Kim’s book admirably contributes to the understanding of a dimension of Japanese colonialism and assimilation policy that has long been considered taboo in the public imaginary and received stilled attention from even scholars who study the colonial period.

The past decade has witnessed a wave of English language scholarship on colonial Korean literary studies with a focus on early twentieth-century texts, authors, and their transnational connections and global colonial modernist impulses. Some of these include works by Kwon (2015), Poole (2015), and my own work (Kim 2019). *Imperial Romance* stands apart from these works in that its key interest is on the theme of intermarriage between Koreans and non-Koreans in social reality and as representations in cultural productions whereas previous scholarship dealt more specifically with ideologies of language, time, and space under Japanese colonial rule. Kim’s study is also in close conversation with recent scholarship on centering marginalized figures, such as women, children, and laborers who moved across and within the peripheries and “underworlds” of the Japanese empire (Ambaras 2018). Most closely related to the book under review is Kono’s (2010) monograph on representations of Japanese experiences of encountering the colonial other in Korea, Manchuria, and Taiwan. Xiong (2014) takes a similar approach as Kono but limits her geographical space to Taiwan and Manchuria. Su Yun Kim makes a critical intervention to this growing body of scholarship on borderlands, frontiers, and underworlds of the Japanese empire by centering Korean authors and their texts that were unmistakably informed by their colonial circumstances.

The core question Kim asks is how did Japanese imperial policies of integration, assimilation, and imperialization (*tonghwa*, *yunghwa*, and *hwangminhwa*) as well as campaigns such as *naisen ittai*, among others, also govern the sphere of intimate and private relationships and how did elite Koreans writers apply the themes of romance and intermarriage in their literary fiction to negotiate their identities and place within the colonial hierarchy? What Kim delineates throughout the book is that in contrast to the various policies and campaigns for assimilation, Japanese colonial authorities were neither consistent nor constant in advocating for interethnic marriage between Koreans and Japanese as a strategy for empire building. For instance, Kim culls census data and family registers to show that officially recorded intermarriages were historically insignificant in number. She, therefore, questions the historical data to further ask about the underlying reasons for these skewed numbers and brings forth literary fiction as additional, if not, a more complicated data for interrogating imperialist policies. The core argument Kim puts forth, therefore, is that amidst the various contradictions that swirled around life under colonial rule, Korean authors, in particular elite male writers, presented a much more complicated and “layered relationship” about what it means to become imperial subjects and their identities within the web of colonial relations through literary fiction that “envisioned passing, intermarriage, mixed families, and full integration” (p. 4). The author goes on to further argue that these literary imaginations or fantasies were entangled not only in individual identity constructions but extended to the social and the national and is still evident in contemporary film productions.

Imperial Romance consists of five chapters with each chapter moving chronologically and underscoring aspects of love, marriage, and family in the historical space of colonial Korea and the textual spaces of literature and film. Chapter one begins with the once towering and controversial authors Yi Injik and Yi Kwangsu, who are known for their pioneering writings in the forms of the new fiction (*sin sosŏl*) and modern fiction, respectively. Kim provides fresh readings of familiar texts through focused

analysis of interethnic family constructions and same-sex love to show the failings of the initial colonial ideologies of unity which underscored civilization in the early stages of colonization. Chapter two explores fiction and media discourses published during the early decades of colonial rule, especially in the wake of the royal marriage between Korean Prince Yi Ŭn and Nashimotonomiya Masako, a woman from a Japanese aristocratic lineage. Kim analyzes the ways in which the royal wedding also set the stage for changes in family laws brought on by intermarriage. Despite the legal reforms and rhetoric of assimilation, many formal and informal legal hoops continued to draw strict distinctions between Koreans and Japanese even within the institution of family where intermarriage would have blurred the lines while also allowing Koreans greater mobility within Japan's metropole. These legal matters, while significant, were not the wherewithal when it came to fictional representations. Here, Kim takes up Yŏm Sangsŏp's fiction to argue that inter-ethnic romance involved more than race and ethnicity. Korean writers rather boldly depicted matters of class, status, and gender to enliven the trope of imperial romance. Kim also brings in the discussion of domestic space as an integral site for how intermarriage and relationships were configured so as to show the modern home – a Japanized or Westernized domestic space – for organizing colonial hierarchies and relationships.

The next three chapters move to the period of total war mobilization (ch'ongdongwŏn ch'ejegi, 1937–1945), which commanded vast changes on the part of the Japanese colonial government regarding assimilation so that intermarriage was no longer simply at the level of ideology but became an intentional campaign. In these chapters, Kim effectively shows that literary representations and non-fictional essays prompted narratives of these tensions from the perspective of the colonized. Kim provides particularly convincing evidence to show that colonial and postcolonial political tendencies to categorize compatriots as either collaborators or anti-colonialists is “overdetermined” at best (p. 58) especially when we examine the historical census data and texts written in Japanese by Korean authors. In fact, the theme of intermarriage becomes an avenue through which colonial writers, such as the bilingual writers Yi Kwangsu and Ch'oe Chŏnghŭi, worked out multiple meanings of “compliance” and resistance. Kim analyzes Yi's two serialized novels, *Kŭdŭl ũ sarang* (Their love, 1941) and *Kokoro aifurete koso* (When hearts truly meet, 1940) written respectively in Korean and Japanese, to argue that depicting intimate feelings is neither categorical nor undeviating. What is fascinating about this chapter is Kim's demonstration of how the long novel form and film, opposed to the short story or non-fictional essay, permits different registers of recognition on the part of both creators and consumers.

The above argument extends into the following chapter's examination of works by Yi Hyosŏk and wartime films through which Kim explores (mis)representations of racial and ethnic identities through visual and vocal markers. Yi Hyosŏk's works are notable in that they depict foreign characters not limited to Japanese but others such as Russian women, who aspire to become more Korean rather than the other way around (p. 86). Kim demonstrates that Yi's construction of foreign characters “highlights transgressing bodies and challenges conventional and fixed notions of race, gender, and class and thus produces the possibility of disrupting the colonial order” (p. 97). Kim juxtaposes Yi's literary representations with the 1940s talkie films which not only allowed the actors to speak but it also made speech and accents audible to the viewers; thereby, further assigning racial and ethnic identities problematic. In both chapters, Kim's argument about “representations of racial hierarchy” is strengthened by her discussion of gender, class, and status as equally important “signifiers of...colonial hierarchy” (p. 87). The question of gender and status becomes even more provocative when we consider the gender imbalance of the writers. As Kim points out in her critique, the relationships that elite Korean male characters forge with non-Korean female characters were constructed by Korean male authors to show that they can embody “universal modernity.” It is this narrative strategy that Kim identifies as one through which Korean male writers attempted to “reverse the social hierarchy” of colonial society (p. 102).

The final chapter moves away from literary representations to the discourse analysis of lives of real couples who were featured in newspapers and women's magazines. It is not surprising that *Yŏsŏng* (Women), one of the popular magazines aimed at a female readership, included a special series on

international marriage – marriages between Koreans and non-Koreans as distinct from Japanese-Korean marriage. These features made erstwhile efforts to create images of sophistication and cosmopolitanism by including photographs of the international couples' western houses and other "sweet home" accessories signifying putative modernity. However, Kim's attentive analysis reveals otherwise. She points out that these articles very often presented the opposite narratives in which the non-Korean spouse participated in upholding Korean customs whether through language learning or domestic practices. These real-life stories, then, are not too dissimilar from literary representations examined in the earlier chapters where instead of outright Japanization due to assimilation policies, the realities of everyday life were much more equivocal. In this sense, this chapter would have benefited from engaging with Ji-Eun Lee's *Women Pre-scripted: Forging Modern Roles through Korean Print* (2015). Finally, the short Epilogue examines Korean feature and documentary films that include themes of intermarriage from two crucial postcolonial periods marking South Korea's shifting relations with Japan – the 1960s and the 2000s. *Imperial Romance* concludes by demonstrating that while much has changed on the Korean peninsula since Liberation in 1945, not the least of which is the Division System and Cold War politics, the matter of romance and intimacy between Koreans and Japanese remain an uncomfortable subject due to the incomplete decolonization process in South Korea and greater East Asia.

One of the obstacles that Korean literature studies scholars often face is providing a sufficient historical context for the broader readership. At times historical analysis overtakes the literary analysis. However, even within the compact chapters of *Imperial Romance*, Kim provides balanced explanations of historical and political circumstances and the authors' biographies along with analyses of the literary and media texts. For example, she astutely lays out the evolving discourses of *naesŏn kyŏlhon* (Japanese-Korean marriage) and *naesŏn ilch'e* (the unity of Japan and Korea) campaigns by underscoring the historical processes of Japanese colonial rule. Set against these discussions, she further clarifies how the terms such as *tonghwa* (assimilation) and *yunghwa* (harmonious co-existence) were not simply one-time, top-down policies, but ones that required tense negotiation especially at the level of human-to-human relationships. Another significant example from the book is Kim's admirable discussion of family law and civil law within the Japanese empire and more specifically the way that they operated in and between Japan and Korea. This allows Kim to account for the triangulation of rhetoric, law, and matters of the heart. Despite the rhetoric of Japan and Korea as one, these laws were complicated precisely because they had far wider implications extending beyond legal matters of immigration and residency to messier notions of *minjok* (race and nation), status, patriarchy, and love. Popular culture and other cultural productions present in Kim's commendable study illuminate these microhistories particularly well.

Imperial Romance contains a concise analysis of selected Korean literary and media texts that include the themes of intermarriage and romance. Kim admits that there are many more Korean and Japanese stories that contain this theme, and this study is not to be an exhaustive list of works and their analysis. What is apparent is that even this selective list of works constitutes a sufficient sample with which to enrich our understanding of Japanese colonialism and to take literature studies in a new direction. Su Yun Kim's *Imperial Romance* presents the beginnings of an exciting conversation and prepares us to ask further questions regarding race, love, and romance, whilst evaluating not only the past, but the contemporary moment of globalization.

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Prisoners of the empire: inside Japanese POW camps

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Sarah Kovner's *Prisoners of the Empire: Inside Japanese POW Camps* promises bold revision. She dismisses popular narratives that represent the Allied POW experience as "martyrs to unmitigated cruelty" of guards and camp commanders; downplays the role of the Japanese army's military code that mandated death over surrender; and reminds readers that Allied "friendly fire", torpedo attacks on Japanese transport and bombing of army bases housing POW camps, accounted for a significant number of POW deaths. *Prisoners of the Empire* offers an alternative narrative that locates the staggeringly high mortality and everyday abuse of Allied POWs in historical contingencies that signify nothing about the Japanese as a people or culture. It evidences: slowness in developing guidelines against abuse; civil-military turf battles that obstructed implementation; dispersion of bases over vast geographic expanses making coordination of policy difficult; low quality and poorly trained camp commanders and guards; shortages of food and medicine even for its own army; and logistical challenges which multiplied as the war wore on. Combined with the unanticipated large numbers of Allied soldiers and civilians taken captive early in the war, institutional failings overwhelmed the state's capacity to supervise, feed, and provide medical care to its charges. That's the argument.

At its best, the book rejects representations of the Japanese as uniformly brutal and sadistic and the POW experience as one of unrelenting victimization. Least supportable is Kovner's central claim: "what stands out in the Japanese military's approach to POWs is its *unwitting* [emphasis in the original] cruelty", a conclusion made possible only by an act of denial of ideology in historical explanation that calls to mind Sir John Sealey's – first Regius Professor of Modern History at Cambridge University – claim that Great Britain acquired its global empire in a fit of absentmindedness.

Comparative data on POW mortality in WW II call into question the book's contingency/functionalist explanatory model. Of the 93,000 American POWs held by Germany, somewhat less than 2% died. Over 21,000 Americans became captives of the Imperial Japan Army (IJA), of whom 7,200 or 33% died in captivity. To put the mortality rate in context, during the 5-week battle of Iwo Jima, about 6% of the US fighting force were killed or subsequently died of wounds sustained in battle, the highest ratio of casualties sustained in the Pacific War. In other words, the American soldier who became a POW of the IJA incurred a five-times greater risk of not surviving the war than his peers engaged in frontline combat during the height of the Pacific War. The other Allied Powers did not fare much better. While mortality rates for British and Canadian soldiers were 10% lower, the mortality rate among Australian forces was marginally higher. In World War II, only Soviet soldiers captured by Germany fared worse: 60% mortality, a horrific and long-ignored fact of the European war. The