

and exchange with one another in an increasingly competitive environment by establishing associations. But the private economy was not a sufficient condition. A critical condition, the authors argue, was the role of the local government in recognizing the value of business associations and creating a legal environment that would promote their development.

These two claims seem to contradict one another. In their first claim, the authors want to show that the Wenzhou model reflects a more general model of civil society development in China. Yet their second claim that Wenzhou is unique raises the question of how it can represent a more general pattern. This second claim of uniqueness is also put forth without much support. The authors refer to Wenzhou's tradition of private business and the strength of its social networks based on clan ties and religion. But a more persuasive case requires carrying out a comparative analysis of the development of industrial associations in Wenzhou and other localities with similar and different conditions. One of the weaknesses of this book-length study is that it is entirely focused on the Wenzhou case and offers no comparison with other localities.

The book's main contribution lies in its detailed description of the industrial associations, providing examples of relatively independent associations that do seek to serve their members and use multiple channels to influence government policy and behavior. But even here, the authors could have gone further in their surveys and analysis, for example by distinguishing between more independent associations, such as chambers of commerce, and associations with closer ties to government bureaus to see if they differed in their approach and impact in influencing local governments. Or they might have done more comparative analysis of business associations in Wenzhou and other localities. Hopefully the authors will pursue these questions in their future research.

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INNER ASIA

The Mongol Conquests in World History. By TIMOTHY MAY. London: Reaktion Books-Globalities, 2012. 319 pp. \$45.00 (cloth).
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The study of the Mongol empire has made enormous strides in the past two decades, but so far there has been no attempt at an overall scholarly synthesis. Timothy May's work aims to fill this void by presenting an updated summary of the "state of research" of the Mongol empire at the beginning of the second decade of the twenty-first century. The book's major strength is its perspective: it looks at the Mongol empire from a holistic perspective and makes a strong case for the early globalization that characterized "the Chinggis Exchange," as May termed the web of connections that crisscrossed Eurasia in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, many of which were initiated or facilitated by the policies of Chinggis Khan and his heirs.

The book is divided into two main parts, preceded by an introduction, which reviews the book's *raison d'être*, the main sources for the study of Mongol history (including an intriguing reference to an expected English translation of the *Yuanshi*), and the danger of exaggerating the importance of the Mongols. The first part, "The Mongol Conquests as Catalyst" succinctly reviews the formation of the empire and its united phase (chapter 1), the four khanates that emerged after the dissolution of the United Empire in 1260 (chapter 2), and the Mongol political legacy (chapter 3). The third chapter is by far the most illuminating. Its title, "The World of 1350: A Global World," is somewhat misleading since the chapter begins in 1350 but goes all the way up to the twenty-first century, enumerating various dynasties, states, and empires that either saw themselves as successors of the Mongol empire or can be seen as such. While one can question certain interpretations in this chapter—the reference to the Ming dynasty's debt to the Mongols (pp. 94–95), for example, could have benefited from referring to Robinson's work³—and parts of it read as a somewhat technical enumerating of polities, it puts to rest the cliché that the Mongols conquered quickly and disappeared quickly, leaving nothing but destruction behind them. Instead, May convincingly claims that the Mongols ushered in the early modern period, and highlights their lasting political legacy across Eurasia.

Mongol impact on fields other than politics is the subject of the second and larger part, entitled "The Chinggis Exchange." Its various chapters deal with trade, warfare, administration, religion, migration and demographic trends, the Mongols and the plague, and cultural exchange. The informative chapters summarize the recent research in each field, giving the rightful central place to the works of Thomas T. Allsen, by far the most influential historian of the Mongols in the last decades. The chapter on "new forms of warfare" that covers May's specialty, the Mongol military, is especially worthwhile, and I will certainly use it for my Mongol empire classes. Other chapters could have benefited from a more analytical, rather than descriptive, approach. The chapter on the plague is the only one in which May might have fallen into the trap of ascribing too much to the Mongols, as all the effects of the plague are indirectly ascribed to them. Moreover, while the plague's significance for the history of Europe and the Middle East is unquestionable, its presence in and impact on China and Inner Asia have been recently queried by both Brook and Buell.⁴ The migrations chapter could have given more emphasis to the ethnic and religious transformations that these migrations generated, such as the dispersion and subsequent disappearance of long-lived steppe people, including the Uyghurs, Tanguts, Kitans and Qipchaq, and the emergence (in the sixteenth century) of the contemporary Central Asian people, including the Uzbeks and Kazakhs. The huge expansion of Islam in the aftermath of Mongol rule also deserves more attention.

Careful copyediting could have eliminated a few redundant mistakes: the territory of the empire rises from 7.5 million square kilometers (p. 9) to 8.5 million square kilometers (p. 21), John K. Fairbank is curiously renamed as Jonathan Fairbank (p. 12), and so on. Such quibbles notwithstanding, this vividly written book that manifests the author's fascination with its subject will become a useful textbook for world history courses and for classes on the Mongol empire, side by side with David Morgan's classic, *The Mongols* (2nd ed., London: Blackwell, 2007). Moreover, the availability of such synthesis will

³David Robinson, "The Ming Court and the Legacy of the Yuan Mongols," in *Culture, Courtiers, and Competition: The Ming Court (1368–1644)*, ed. David Robinson (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2008), 365–421.

⁴Timothy Brook, *The Troubled Empire: China in the Yuan and Ming Dynasties* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2010), 65–67; Buell, Paul D., "Qubilai and the Rats," *Sudhoffs Archiv* 96, no. 2 (2012): 127–44.

hopefully facilitate the mission of world historians when they come to include the Mongol empire and its legacy in their surveys.

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JAPAN

Queer Japanese: Gender and Sexual Identities through Linguistic Practices. By HIDEKO ABE. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010. x, 199 pp. \$85.00 (cloth). doi:10.1017/S0021911813000272

Queer Japanese is a treasure trove of information about the language practices—and language attitudes—of sexual minority speakers of Japanese, an understudied group of speakers, who are critically important to a realistic understanding of the gendered qualities of Japanese, a language that is typically bracketed off in cross-linguistic research as “unique” in having “separate languages” for (heterosexual, heteronormatively aligned) women and men. As with many treasure troves, the reader will find in this volume an untold wealth of information and much food for thought.

Abe centers her investigation of linguistic practice and performance by Japanese sexual minorities around three key questions: *Why* do queer speakers (the author’s term) make use of certain linguistic categories, and when? *What* do they hope to accomplish? And *how* do these linguistic forms relate to gender, sexual, and social identities? She stresses gender and gender identities as being fluid, and language as an equally fluid resource through which identities are negotiated. She reminds us that choices of which linguistic resources to deploy are at once macro-socially compelled and micro-interactionally negotiated, a point brought home to us repeatedly in subsequent chapters.

Chapter 1 draws data from advice columns in four gay and lesbian magazines; the focus here is less on the language forms used than on the range of advice offered, showing that advice offered focused on tactical possibilities for resolving problems rather than challenging the dominant heteronormative framework.

We get to language specifics in chapter 2, which focuses on lesbian bar talk. The speech practices outlined in this chapter center around lesbians’ search for appropriate first- and second-person pronouns and sentence final forms for use in the bar setting. Pronominal forms and sentence final forms are components of the heteronormatively construed packages of gendered “women’s language” and “men’s language,” so it is hardly surprisingly to find them problematized in the lesbian bar setting. Abe finds that there is both inter- and intra-speaker variation in the pronominal choices and sentence final form choices made in these bars as “lesbians negotiate constraints such as ‘feminine’ or ‘masculine’ attached to linguistic features with the insertion of novel meanings and usages” (p. 51). Much, much more work is needed on lesbian speaking practice, but Abe offers us a tantalizing glimpse. As to the particular language forms that are

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