

CROSS-CURRENTS



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Dear *Cross-Currents* readers,

We are pleased to present you with the twenty-first quarterly issue of the open-access *Cross-Currents* e-journal.

The discussion framing the articles in this special issue on “Cartographic Anxieties” began as a panel at the 2016 American Association of Geographers’ annual meeting. The contributions by **Edyta Roszko** (University of Copenhagen), **Alexander Akin** (Bolerium Books), **Uranchimeg Tsultenim** (UC Berkeley), guest editor **Franck Billé** (UC Berkeley), and **Martin Saxer** (Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich) focus on China and its neighbors from the perspective of different disciplines: anthropology, history, and history of art. Billé explains in his introduction that this geographic convergence is timely given China’s recent economic and political trajectory: “In tracing and analyzing the cartographic tremors of a geopolitical formation in flux, the different articles offer an outline of the mechanics of ‘cartographic anxiety’ and together contribute to a better understanding of the affective power of mapping.”

This issue also features three review essays. In the first review, **Peter C. Perdue** (Yale University) ambitiously puts six recent publications on Xinjiang in conversation with each other, describing them as a “third wave” of scholarship that “put[s] Xinjiang at the center of Eurasia, rather than on the periphery of China, and... place[s] strong emphasis on the autonomy and power of actors in Xinjiang, rather than on their subordination to the Chinese state.” The titles reviewed by Perdue include: Kwangmin Kim’s [*Borderland Capitalism: Turkestan Produce, Qing Silver, and the Birth of an Eastern Market*](#) (Stanford, 2016); Rian Thum’s [*The Sacred Routes of Uyghur History*](#) (Harvard, 2014); David Brophy’s [*Uyghur Nation: Reform and Revolution on the Russia-China Frontier*](#) (Harvard, 2016); Judd Kinzley’s *Production and Power in China’s Far West: Gold, Wool, and Oil in the Transformation of Xinjiang, 1893–1965* (Chicago, forthcoming); Justin M. Jacobs’s [*Xinjiang and the Modern Chinese State*](#) (Washington, 2016); and Tom Cliff’s [*Oil and Water: Being Han in Xinjiang*](#) (Chicago, 2016).

The third review essay, by **Kenneth Pomeranz** (University of Chicago), takes as its starting point the fact that “for as long as there has been a recognizable Chinese state, the management of the Yellow River has been seen as a major indicator of its performance.” He discusses the contributions of Micah S. Muscolino’s [*The Ecology of War in China: Henan Province, the Yellow River, and Beyond, 1939–1950*](#) (Cambridge, 2014) and David A. Pietz’s [*The Yellow River: The Problem of Water in Modern China*](#) (Harvard, 2015) to our understanding of this centuries-old challenge. He concludes that “Pietz’s tale of long-run transformation clearly takes

us to the present, with the technocrats very much in charge, but not necessarily in control,” while Muscolino’s focus on unintended consequences, incomplete reversibility, and destabilized environments has more than just historical interest in an age in which “human decisions—often based on the short-term pursuit of power—may shape even the broadest long-standing background conditions of human societies.”

Finally, **Shellen Wu** (University of Tennessee) reviews “two excellent new works [that] reveal the multifaceted and complex nature of science in the PRC”: *Farewell to the God of Plague: Chairman Mao’s Campaign to Deworm China* (UC Press, 2016), by Miriam Gross, and *Red Revolution, Green Revolution: Scientific Farming in Socialist China* (Chicago, 2016), by Sigrid Schmalzer. Wu examines how both works “demonstrate the manifold ways science filtered into the countryside and became the basis of the party’s interactions with the rural populace.”

This issue’s photo essay—“The Cartographic Evolution of the Sino-Mongolian Border at Zamyn Üüd/Erliaan”—features a diverse selection of maps curated by librarian **Susan Powell** (UC Berkeley) to explore how the shifting of the Sino-Mongolian relationship throughout the twentieth century was played out on the ground in one “small but distinctive” area of the border, where the Trans-Mongolian Railway both perforates the boundary and links the two nations. The maps, Powell says, “reflect both the general hardening of borders and the desire for spatial fixity that progressed over the twentieth century.”

In this issue’s “Readings from Asia” section, an essay entitled “An Homage to the Bleak and Dismal World,” **Kim Yerim** (Yonsei University) introduces English-language readers to Korean novelist Yŏm Sang-sŏp (1897–1963) by reviewing *Chŏsuha ũi sigan: Yŏm Sang-sŏp ũl ikta* [저수하의 시간, 염상섭을 읽다] [Time under the heaven tree: Reading Yŏm Sang-sŏp] (Somyŏng ch’ulp’an, 2014), edited by Han Kee Hyung and Lee Hye-Ryoung. This collection of twenty essays explores the “multiplicity, complexity, confusion, and marginality that create productive chaos, which in turn invite constant rereading of Yŏm Sang-sŏp and his texts.”

We hope you enjoy reading this issue. As always, we look forward to receiving your feedback. Be sure to register here on our website in order to leave comments for our contributors and join the conversation.

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Co-editors