

In This Issue

MARIKO ASANO TAMANOI explores the fixity and fluidity of racial and national categories that emerged in the process of Japanese colonization of Manchuria in the 1930s and 1940s. She concentrates in particular on the “officializing” practices and procedures that the “Japanese” agents of colonization pursued in classifying the different “races” and peoples inhabiting this northeast region of China. The author argues that Japanese colonial racism defined in the Japanese empire—and continues to define in contemporary Japan—“Japanese” and “Japaneseness” in complex and even contradictory ways.

PAUL HUTCHCROFT traces the beginnings of the modern Philippine polity to its colonial roots, specifically to the American phase during the Taft years (1900–1913). He shows that the policies and strategies employed by the American colonial state in this era promoted administrative and political decentralization that enabled provincial elites to gain considerable power and influence at the local as well as the national level. This interpretation of colonial state formation and state-local relations takes issue with current devolution initiatives in the Philippines that are made in the name of correcting (mis)perceived colonial emphases on overcentralization.

MADLINE Y. HSU recounts the recent history of migrants from Taishan county, Guangdong, particularly by focusing on the significant role played by overseas Chinese-language magazines called *qiaokan*. She analyzes these magazines in order to demonstrate that they served to remind the overseas Taishanese of their obligations to remit money home and to support the community that they had left behind. These magazines were especially effective in consolidating native place ties during the decades leading up to World War II.

SABINE FRÜHSTÜCK examines the Japanese state’s interest in the physical health of the population during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Her search for the “truth of sex” and its management during and after the Meiji period leads her to highlight practices and discourses that reflect and reveal the government’s preoccupation with the body and with sex education and sexual questions. The author links these concerns to efforts aimed at maintaining and enhancing the integrity of the Japanese state and “race.”

ALVIN Y. SO focuses on the processes leading up to Hong Kong’s democratic transition in 1997. He characterizes this transition as “problematic” and Hong Kong democracy as “embattled” not only because of extralocal political circumstances and conditions but also because of local political actors and social forces. His “societal explanation” of these dynamics casts the local population in key roles and is intended as an alternative to a more state-centered approach that views Hong Kong’s “contested democracy” solely from the perspective of actions initiated by London and Beijing.