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## Rezensionen – Comptes rendus – Reviews

**Bondy, Christopher:** *Voice, Silence and Self: Negotiations of Buraku Identity in Contemporary Japan*. Cambridge (MA): Harvard University Asia Center, 2015, 200 pp., ISBN 978-0674088405 (hardcover).

**Hankins, Joseph D.:** *Working Skin: Making Leather, Making a Multicultural Japan*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014, xxii&277 pp., ISBN 978-0520283299 (paperback).

**Cangià, Flavia:** *Performing the Buraku: Narratives on Cultures and Everyday Life in Contemporary Japan*. Zurich: LIT Verlag, 2013, 280 pp., ISBN 978-3643801531 (paperback).

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According to the standard definition, Burakumin are arguably the biggest ethnic minority living in Japan. Burakumin are of Japanese ethnicity, descendants of former outcastes eta and hinin who, from feudal times until now, have suffered from discrimination especially in employment and marriage. This minority group has been well described, explained, redefined and argued about in the Japanese literature. The amount of research written in English is, understandably, far below that written in Japanese. In terms of quality, however, Western authors show confidence and in-depth knowledge, and offer interesting and sound perspectives. The fact that they are foreigners seems to facilitate their access to the field. For research on Burakumin in English, those interested in the issues will naturally come across the respected authorities in Buraku studies such as DeVos/Wagatsuma (1966), Yoshino (Roger 1977), and Neary (1989) who provided the framework for understanding these issues in the second half of the twentieth century.

The issue of Burakumin, though still tasting of taboo, has been researched widely and from many perspectives. The “*Buraku mondai*” as it is commonly called in Japanese, is arguably less visible nowadays for reasons such as the end of the Dōwa Special Measures Law, improved infrastructure, increasing rates of intermarriage, the choice of silence by many Burakumin, and a shifting focus of human rights discourse in Japan (away from Burakumin). Despite that, Buraku issues still exist and resonate within Japanese society, and therefore deserve to be researched further.

Literature on Burakumin in Japanese consists not only of academic research but also of books that target the general public. That is understandable as it is a domestic Japanese issue that concerns society at large, local communities, families, and personal relationships. The literature in English is mostly academic, based on anthropological, sociological, or other research, so its outreach is more limited and rarely extends beyond researchers and graduate students.

As mentioned above, Western researchers introduced and debated the issue to a rather limited extent in the second half of the twentieth century. Towards the end of that century, and early in the twenty-first century, there was a rapid increase in Western interest, which produced a boom (compared to previous scarcity) in published research as academics became increasingly interested in a diversity of approaches to Buraku issues.

While some authors focus primarily on historical circumstances and developments, three scholars wrote books between 2013 and 2015 that provide an update on the Buraku issue and show that this social, economic and political issue has been going through a whirlwind of changes. Their books are essential to the understanding of the current situation concerning this “invisible” minority.

The three authors are Cangià, Hankins, and Bondy. Flavia Cangià, a social anthropologist of the University of Neuchâtel, Switzerland, published her study, *Performing the Buraku: Narratives on Cultures and Everyday Life in Contemporary Japan*, in 2013. Joseph D. Hankins, a sociocultural anthropologist of the University of California, San Diego, published *Working Skin: Making Leather, Making a Multicultural Japan*, in 2014. And Christopher Bondy, a social scientist of the International Christian University in Tokyo, published *Voice, Silence and Self: Negotiations of Buraku Identity in Contemporary Japan*, in 2015.

We first examine the work of Christopher Bondy, whose analysis is probably the most accessible of the three. His comparison of how two communities approached Buraku identity shows that perceptions of the issue can differ radically with people’s background, education, experience, and the interpretive frameworks they gain from their social and political networks.

Bondy compares different approaches to the Buraku issue in two communities, Takagawa in Shikoku, and Kuromatsu in Kansai, Western Japan. His comparison focused particularly on education, namely local elementary and junior high schools. Bondy’s main goal was to provide answers to questions about why there are differences between the way Buraku issues are treated in schools in these two communities, and what impact those differences have on how students view their identity, including their Buraku heritage.

Bondy concluded that most of the differences could be traced to the formative influence of the dominant Buraku organization in each community. In both communities the dominant organization decided the contours and content of the Buraku discourse. In Kuromatsu, the most influential organization was the Jiyūdōwakai (JDK), while in Takagawa, the Buraku Liberation League (BLL) shaped the approach to the issue. It became clear that the approaches of these two highly influential organizations could not have been further apart.

The Kuromatsu community, under the strong influence of the JDK, embraced Silence as its primary response to the Buraku issue. The JDK promoted general human rights, with rarely a mention of Buraku, even under this relevant heading. Instead, groups such as the Nikkei Brazilians became the center of their human rights campaign. Their silence about Burakumin was naturally reflected in the way the issue was discussed in Kuromatsu schools. Avoidance was the main approach. Hence students were being tacitly instructed to bracket out the Burakumin aspects of their identity. Bondy shows that, though the extent of this avoidance was high, including taboos against using the words *buraku* and *Dōwa*, some students were not even sure about what it was they were bracketing out (p. 145). An advantage of shunning the Buraku issue (out of sight, out of mind) in the schools was that students faced a relatively smooth transition from the “protective cocoon” of the local school to high schools in another city, then to university, and the labor market. The reason for this smoother transition was that, in most cases, society outside the protective cocoon assumes the same approach of silence and avoidance. Bondy gives the JDK’s reasoning behind the silence. In their view, all discrimination should be treated equally. To focus primarily on Buraku discrimination might help perpetuate or even promote the prejudice and discrimination that remains.

The Takagawa community, on the other hand, protesting against silence, chose to promote openness about the town’s Burakumin heritage. The Buraku Liberation League (BLL) was instrumental in making this an essential and public part of the town culture, as seen by the *Kaihō no matsuri* (Liberation Festival) that became a focus for all residents, regardless of their background. Bondy notes that the friendly face of the festival represented a significant shift from the *kyūdan* strategy common especially in the 1960s and 70s. The BLL’s approach was to combat discrimination with education about positive identity. The BLL had a strong, even dominant, presence in the community. The city mayor was of Buraku heritage, signs on public buildings declared their Buraku history, and the school and Children’s club had an overt BLL Burakumin presence. For the BLL, children were the key to their fight against discrimination, and they taught



them to be proud of their Buraku identity. Unlike in Kuromatsu, students in Takagawa did not need to bracket out their Burakumin identity while in the school's protective cocoon. The students were taught that the outside world was prejudiced against Burakumin, and they would certainly experience discrimination. Bondy demonstrates that while the strong us-versus-them dichotomy made for a cohesive community, it also made the transition beyond school a challenging task. Once they left the protective cocoon, the students were alone in their fight against prejudice they were convinced exists. The cozy school environment left them unprepared to face a real world in which silence and avoidance of Buraku identity were the norm, and where human rights concerns made little or no mention of Burakumin.

Bondy concludes that after 2002, when the Special Measures Law for *Dōwa* Projects was terminated, and following a series of town mergers, the BLL has lost much of its clout in Takagawa so that the town's approach to Buraku issues quickly came to resemble that of Kuromatsu.

Bondy carried out his research in two locations. Takagawa, the one that was more open to his investigation, and showed greater pride in its Buraku heritage, receives much more detailed treatment in the book. It is difficult to escape the perception that Bondy had a greater initial interest in the BLL approach, and perhaps confidence that it would produce the best outcomes. While that seems logical given their openness, and desire to promote their cause, the reader might want to learn more about Kuromatsu to get the complete picture, in order to make more careful comparisons.

The tone of the book suggests Bondy was more impressed with the BLL approach in Takagawa. While he mentions some pitfalls of this approach, Bondy seems to think (at least until the end of the book) that silence and bracketing provide only temporary security, and the alternative JDK approach would only marginalize and suppress Buraku concerns. As he presents it, the case against silence appears quite strong on both a theoretical and an empirical level. As history unfolds, however, and Bondy brings his research to a conclusion, we see evidence from both the communities examined, that the policy of silence may actually be a better choice in current Japanese society. The apparent turnaround within the book, which Bondy does not overtly examine, strongly suggests a more in-depth and balanced comparison of the BLL and JDK approaches would be beneficial.

Bondy endorses BLL claims of discrimination but, without hard data, he is unable to gauge its extent. He describes an incidence of toilet graffiti that became significant in Takagawa's discussion of discrimination but, since toilet graffiti tends to be vulgar and racist in any setting, this is not real evidence. Doubtless, most discrimination against Buraku will go undetected,

unrecognized, and unreported, but it's hard to make general conclusions on the basis of a few anecdotal cases.

Since the BLL collects annual data on Buraku discrimination, being able to analyze such information could provide useful evidence on its extent. Using annual data to develop an historical perspective would also enable an assessment of how discrimination against the Buraku might be improving or worsening.

Bondy's field research, especially Takagawa, is unique and may never be replicated. By the end of his account, he reports that the community he described no longer existed. Many other former buraku areas that became amalgamated into larger townships, also lost their Buraku distinctiveness.

Bondy's conclusions beg two intriguing questions: How will the continued silence about Buraku in Japan change prejudice and discrimination against Burakumin? What is the future of groups like the BLL which, until recently, found their primary rationale in highlighting Buraku discrimination?

Now we turn to the work of sociocultural anthropologist Joseph Hankins, published in 2014 as *Working Skin: Making Leather, Making a Multicultural Japan*.

Hankins looks at Burakumin issues from an anthropological point of view. However, he was not merely a detached outside observer, as he gained access to Burakumin people through involvement in the key Buraku organizations, namely, the Buraku Liberation League (BLL), the Buraku Liberation and Human Rights Research Institute (BLHRRI), and the International Movement Against All Forms of Discrimination and Racism (IMADR). In addition to what he learned about Buraku issues from an institutional viewpoint, he also rubbed shoulders (quite literally) with Burakumin by working as an intern at a Tokyo tannery, one of the industries that has traditionally defined Buraku identity. Hankins's analysis is thus a mix of content from official sources and from Buraku laborers in their workplace.

As the title of the book suggests, Hankins is concerned with the space the Burakumin minority currently occupy in multicultural Japanese society. There are three parts to the book.

In the first part, Hankins describes how Buraku organizations were able to achieve a high level of recognition for Buraku issues after the end (in 2002) of the Special Measures Law that left an initial void in which the movement struggled to keep Buraku issues in the multiculturalism discourse. The movement quickly became successful in lobbying the United Nations to recognize (the same year, 2002) a new category of discrimination: Discrimination Based on Work and Descent.

Hankins discusses the characteristics of being Burakumin. He points out that the traditional trio of workplace, location, and kinship as best markers of

Burakuminness seems outdated because it no longer reflects changes within workplaces, cross cultural marriages, and increasing mobility. Buraku people have greater freedom moving in and out of buraku areas, and greater ease in hiding their family heritage, with new restrictions on access to the *koseki* registry.

The movement that identifies with the BLL, aspires to promote pride in Buraku identity. Pride that can challenge stigma. The BLL has actively reinvented and promoted aspects of Buraku culture that can serve as a source of pride in Buraku identity. Examples include *taiko* drumming, foods that include offal, and *kabuki* theater. Now that the choice to pass as Japanese without reference to Burakumin is much less complicated, this actual improvement in their status presents a new challenge for the BLL: How can they persuade Burakumin to openly identify themselves?

Hankins shows that the BLL approach is somewhat schizophrenic. On one hand, the organization's goal is Buraku liberation, to openly claim Buraku identity without fear of discrimination. But, on the other hand, they insist that Buraku claim and own their identity (p. 69, 89), thus making the freedom not to claim it as unacceptable. In their view one is entitled only to this pseudo-freedom: Choose what you want but to retain our acceptance, choose the right thing, publicly owning your Buraku identity. This is an understandable response, perhaps, for an organization, in post-*Dōwa* times, that needs financial members and supporters to survive.

Hankins's descriptions of his experience at IMADR and his work at the tannery gave him insights into two different but connected worlds for understanding Buraku issues. He came to an interesting conclusion. While the IMADR (and BLL) seek to champion the rights of people like the tanners, they do not see themselves in need of such a guardian of their rights. Rather than feeling stigmatized by their work, they associate it with masculinity and professionalism. Hankins observes: "around the guys, keloids are something to be eased into; they are less emblems of a stigmatized Buraku-ness than they are signs of gnarled but firm virility or the smooth operation of expert ability attained after years of trial and error" (p. 54). Hankins describes the arduous work roles of the tannery in the political and economic context of an industry in decline. These factors made this unique workplace, in Christopher Bondy's words, a "protective cocoon". While the stigma of working in a tannery is real, the workers do not feel it when they are insiders.

Hankins mentions an observation described by other researchers. Parents have become unwilling to pass on the stigma attached to Buraku to the next generation. They know that what they say and how they say it is highly sensitive, and words out of place can have grave consequences. Hankins

observes that teenagers need a sense of groupness in the face of the heightened peer pressure prevailing in Japan. With the over-riding need for acceptance, a generation of “unknowing Buraku” has emerged, of people unaware they might be, or are considered to be, Buraku. In addition, fewer people are willing to “produce marks of [Buraku] social identity” (p. 62). From the viewpoint of the movement, this amounts to hiding one’s true identity, and an obvious challenge for the future of the movement.

In the second part of his book, Hankins continues his description of Tokyo’s tanning industry. Strict new environmental laws had brought additional costs that many tanneries were unable to afford. Liberalization of the leather trade has brought stiff competition to a long-protected Japanese industry. As for stigma, he mentions a neighbor’s surprise that Hankins was prepared to work at such a smelly (*kusai*) place. He came to conclude there is “a vast range of ways in which Buraku-ness can be located in different people” (p. 110). Bad smell is real, and can readily be used as justification for discrimination. Hankins says the “Buraku contagion” affected him via his neighbor’s comment, although he admits he may have been referring solely to the smell of the place, without making the link with Buraku.

Pondering his diverse experience, Hankins asks: Who then are Buraku? Those working in tanneries, with no Buraku bloodline? What if one is, technically, Buraku by blood but works in an upscale department store, or a profession? Hankins contrasts the unclear definition illustrated by this question with the work of private detectives (usually commissioned by parents anxious about the background of their child’s intended partner) who claim the power to decide who is of Buraku origin. No longer able to access the *koseki* registry, they inquire less about generations back and rely more on methods fraught with inaccuracy, such as talking to neighbors, looking at the subject’s earlier addresses, and checking social media.

Hankins concludes part two with an overview of an aggressive strategy the movement used last century known as denunciation sessions or demonstrations (*kyūdan* or *kyūdankai*). He notes that current approaches, based on cultivating public attention through education, are much less polarizing and have fewer negative side-effects. Organizing forums seems a more effective tool than publicly embarrassing an offender who acts in a discriminatory way, and demanding a formal apology. Hankins questioned the value of these human rights forums, however, after observing that many people in the audience were dozing. Sleepers can hide in the anonymity of an audience that attends only to listen, so they become a mere show while lacking passion, involvement, or even curiosity. He concludes that the movement faces the constant challenge of attracting public attention.



In the third part of his book, Hankins describes the international dimensions of his work with IMADR. He attended a United Nations consultation in Geneva where people from around the world were representing those who fall under the new category: “Discrimination based on work and descent”. They met to discuss how to support programs that endorse this newly recognized category. They concluded that it is the similarities rather than the differences that give this heterogeneous group its sense of purpose. Hankins also discusses political changes within the Buraku groups, with mention of the *Yuwa* movement, *Suiheisha*, *Dōwakai*, and their take on Buraku issues and their approach to the state. Last century the Japanese government initiated a variety of laws, and pledged support to lift the standing of Buraku in society. When compared with India, for example, it’s clear that Japan made great progress for the betterment of the Buraku. Japanese policies are viewed by some as a beacon of hope for what India’s Dalits could achieve in future. As Hankins says: “The discursive device of linear progress provides a framework for the amelioration of differences among the various groups that gathered for the UN “Informal Consultation”. It provides a means by which people create apparent unity by putting others into their own stories, either as ‘our past’ or ‘our future’” (p. 181).

“Shared woundedness” functions as a force for empathy and solidarity between Dalits and Buraku. The BLL organizes trips to India every year, and Hankins gave English lessons to the participants when he attended. While the focus on similarities at a theoretical level worked well to produce empathy, Hankins noted participants struggled to reconcile the shocking differences in practice between the status of Dalits and Buraku. It is the common experience of social marginalization that connects disparate groups like these on both political and personal levels.

In his conclusion, Hankins discusses the need to identify signs of Buraku. When minorities produce these signs, they help to create a multicultural society. For Buraku, production of the signs, the “labor of multiculturalism”, has changed in the recent years. The Buraku identity promoted by the organizations does not need to rely solely on the experience of discrimination; it can also be based on pride in Buraku culture and its traditional occupations. The future of the movement is precarious as the call for pride in traditional Buraku occupations and products coincides with their disappearance. Authenticity can draw on credible exhibits in museums, but the movement needs more than a history. It needs a future that maintains involvement of people and motivates them to “produce signs of Buraku-ness”.

Whether or not Japan can be described as a multicultural country seems to have always been an undisputed issue. For much of the twentieth century it was

widely held that it was not multicultural, while more recently it is believed that it certainly is. Perhaps this is more a reflection on how multiculturalism is defined. But, of equal importance, it may also be an issue of awareness. By seeing that multiculturalism (*tabunkakyōsei*) exists in Japan, minorities are encouraged to become aware of, and to claim their minority status. At the same time, an increasing number of Japanese are becoming aware of different peoples living in Japan, as they now appear in the media, or live next door, or work for the same company.

How strong, then, is the case that Burakumin are a major (some say the biggest) minority component of multicultural Japan? Hankins's conclusions on this question are open to interpretation. The movement and tannery workers quite independently embody Buraku identity, but they are very small subsets of this minority group. While there is a distinct culture with a history, few people claim to positively identify with that culture and history. Who do groups like the BLL and IMADR represent? Is this a culture for and by the very few people represented by these lobby groups, or if there is something bigger how can it be defined?

Hankins's analysis prompts another important question. Under what circumstances can movements like the BLL succeed in encouraging more people to associate with an identity now officially ignored which arose from a problem now regarded as solved. If even partial identification with Buraku identity is a necessary precondition for Buraku liberation, is it realistic to expect that liberation ever to materialize? It is surely a challenge for the movement to persuade people they are part of a minority when they are not easy to convince they feel that way. Their diluted identity as Burakumin seems to disprove the notion that Buraku is the largest minority in multicultural Japan.

While Hankins's book covers a wider range of topics than Bondy's and has a less defined focus, it presents a coherent mix of related issues. By including *kyūdan*, Dalits, tanneries, forums, IMADR, along with identity and sociopolitical issues, Hankins makes a very significant contribution to the literature.

The third book in this review, published in 2013 by social anthropologist Flavia Cangià is, *Performing the Buraku: Narratives on Cultures and Everyday Life in Contemporary Japan*.

Cangià's goal is to "investigate how the marginality and otherness associated with Burakumin are not denied but transformed through process of positive resistance" (p. 14). By interview, observation, participation and visiting museums, she explores how the unsteady concept of Burakumin transforms itself for the diverse group of people who participated in her case studies.

In the introduction and first part, Cangià describes how she prepared for her research in Japan. She discusses the labeling problem saying that Burakumin is



a “fluid social construct ... [in] constant reconfiguration” (p. 12). Using this label to describe a heterogeneous group, setting Buraku and non-Buraku as opposite identities, is simplistic and not useful for research. Cangià doesn’t forget to mention, however, that this approach has been a key tool of the Buraku Liberation League (BLL) for creating a sense of belonging in their fight against Buraku discrimination. Related to labeling are the timing and situations in which such a label can be used effectively. In this, political correctness and self-censorship are among factors that further obscure the issue. Cangià explains that her perspective is based on the “four-fold analytical grid” of Spaces, Body, Material, and Images. These categories can be used to describe fairly precisely both how otherness is transformed and how otherness is lived.

Cangià’s account of her changing roles and identities during field work is also interesting. Depending on context, she alternates during her research between the roles of foreigner, performer, ethnographer, and spectator. Each of these roles allows her to gain different perspectives on the identities and functions of Buraku.

In the second part of the book, *Whose History? Whose Tradition?* Cangià offers a brief historical (but without a focus on dates) insight into Buraku issues, emphasizing the changing views of buraku by historical context. Specifically, she asks: “How are categories concerning the ‘buraku’ and diversity socially produced, institutionalized, articulated and tabooized” (p. 69). She starts this historical excursion in the Edo and Meiji periods and continues into the Taishō period, *Suiheisha*, to the postwar left leaning BLL and legislation on Special Measures for *Dōwa* projects. She also mentions the more recent issues: Buraku lists, Buraku industries, and Buraku identity. Cangià points out that this identity, however clearly defined by the BLL, is quickly becoming vague as Buraku districts and occupations undergo significant change. In this, she provides a useful summary of theories that explain the substance of the Buraku mondai.

The next section introduces a long description of the Agency of Cultural Affairs, possibly more useful to researchers whose area of study is not specifically Japan. Cangià draws upon Yoshikazu Kawamoto’s concept of the “culture of everyday life”. Buraku cultures in her orbit include the leather culture, meat culture, and entertainment culture, that was “hidden, discriminated against, and ultimately stolen by the majority.”

After this long, scholarly introduction, full of insights on the Buraku issue, Cangià takes us on a journey during which she tells of her personal encounters with three Buraku cultures. Along the way, she stops to examine the Archives Kinogawa museum in Tokyo, the taiko hometown of Naniwa in Osaka, and the monkey trainers of Monkey Dance Company from Hikari city in Yamaguchi

prefecture. It is fascinating to observe the ways these three types of actors mention or avoid mentioning their Buraku identity and connections.

Archives Kinégawa is modern in its style as a community museum in Tokyo's pig leather producing Higashi Sumida, which Cangià claims is officially recognized as a *Dōwa* district! The museum's main aim is to impress the visitor with how leather objects produced in the area are integral to the lives of all Japanese people (e. g. festivals *matsuri*). And, secondly, it seeks to show how leather workers' lives were shaped by prejudice, as illustrated by the Kurobe story. The museum exhibits diaries of children from the 1960s in which they describe their town and say what they would like to change. They show a remarkable ambivalence toward their hometown. On one hand, they like its cozy feeling but, on the other hand, they don't like its narrow streets, dirt, or bad smell. The museum ostensibly avoids being a museum only for Burakumin about Burakumin to foster Buraku identity. It is a place that tells "marginal experiences, and local and community stories" through products and producers in order to reveal undeniable links between the locality and broader Japanese culture. It is a place that illustrates the complexity of human beings having a human rights identity, rather than a subgroup with a Buraku identity. Cangià also describes an interesting trip to the museum with two leather workers who came to observe themselves within the museum's portrayal of their lives.

Cangià's next stop in her journey towards contemporary representations of Buraku culture was the Monkey Dance Company. The monkey dance performances, that before the Meiji period were performed by low-status people, had disappeared by the 1920s, and not revived until 50 years later by Shuji Murasaki. Cangià tells the story of her travels, observations, and conversations with Kōhei, Shuji's son who continues his family's tradition. The monkey dance that, at first, seems to be entertainment for children, is viewed by the trainers in a historical perspective that presents it as a way to connect with traditional Japanese art forms. As for Archives Kinégawa, performers do not openly emphasize their connection with Buraku or past discrimination. Kōhei says few spectators now associate monkey-dancing with Buraku and the trainers' background is not an issue for today's children. Kōhei himself has rather neutral feelings about Buraku identity. He said that if the job makes him Buraku then that's fine, but otherwise he does not feel strongly about it as he has no connection to Buraku areas. Cangià's field experience of monkey-dancing is testimony to how profoundly the livelihoods and social status of monkey trainers have changed in the past 100 years.

Both the monkey performances and Archives Kinégawa that interact with the public and the community "represent a tactical attempt to make the

marginal less peripheral through a constant movement from the inside to the outside and vice-versa” (p. 250).

The book is well researched, has a clear framework, and presents Buraku issues in a balanced, realistic way. Nevertheless, there are few minor downsides. Many pages are highly academic and difficult to read unless one’s field of study is anthropology. There are too many typos, a number of factual inaccuracies, and claims poorly supported by facts. Cangià states a conclusion that “Buraku people are still affected by huge social gaps and a high percentage has remained unemployed, illiterate and socially marginalized” (p. 256). Throughout the book, however, she purposefully shies away from marking boundaries between Buraku and non-Buraku. The claim begs questions: What is the reference year for the claim? What groups of people does she have in mind? Is she referring to residents in former *Dōwa* districts, those doing typical Buraku jobs, or those whose ancestors used to reside in Eta villages?

Cangià writes: “Nowadays, the identification of these spaces by the government is characterized by the official denomination as *Dōwa chiku* (literally “assimilation area”) used to identify areas of implementation of affirmative action and development measures” (p. 33). Writing in the past tense might be more appropriate for such a statement, otherwise the reader might be led into believing that *Dōwa chiku* and affirmative action policies still exist. The reality is that government at all levels avoids labeling, be it Burakumin or *Dōwa chiku*, especially since the *Dōwa chiku* support program was terminated in 2002. Cangià also writes of *kyūdan* continuing until today (p. 53) which is technically true, but this practice became rare in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Cangià claims “Higashi Sumida ... is included among the few areas in Tokyo officially recognized as *Dōwa* districts” (p. 163). There were no official *Dōwa* districts in Tokyo but, as Hankins writes, certain industries received *Dōwa* support.

Cangià’s study of Buraku culture and its minority-majority relations via “skilled practices, material culture, public spaces and visual images” provides a good introduction to and summary of the Buraku issues. More importantly, it also gives an update of the issue by presenting different ways of negotiating identity, everyday life, work, and public encounters. While heterogeneousness of Buraku, and differences in approach to the issues between governments favoring assimilation, and the movement fostering Buraku identity and culture, have been apparent for a long time, Cangià’s firsthand experience sheds light on the constant evolution of Buraku culture and identity and minority-majority relations. An interesting question remains: How are other people unrelated to Buraku skills and art, or the movement, to negotiate the ideas of Buraku culture, tradition, and identity?

In conclusion, here are a few observations about common characteristics of the three books.

Reading these books will probably suffice for readers with little knowledge of the Burakumin who want to be initiated. But they are also essential reading for those who research minorities in general or study the Buraku issue in particular. These three books together provide an update about Buraku issues, a solid historical account, a variety of political responses, and international aspects of the movement. They show young people processing their identity, and people in traditionally Buraku jobs relating to Buraku issues. The books are a set that complement one another. Where Cangià writes about a leather museum, Hankins describes hands-on experience in a tannery. Where Hankins writes about general challenges the movement faces, Bondy offers a real example from Takagawa.

Each of the books gives estimates of the number of Burakumin, with numbers ranging from about 1 million to 3 millions. If we wanted to present Japan as a multicultural country, this would be a meaningful, even impressive, figure. This number is important to Buraku organizations that need to demonstrate they work on behalf of a fairly large number of people. But we need to ask: What significance do these numbers have today? How accurate are they? Each book more or less directly suggests these numbers are almost impossible to calculate or substantiate, which means they are arbitrary at best, possibly misleading. Numbers like these stem from the traditional Burakumin definition trio. As the contours of Buraku identity have become more obscure, the number should also have been updated so it more accurately reflects the current situation. It is highly unlikely that a new, revised number of Burakumin will ever be produced. The books show that quoting the old numbers must be done with caution.

It is interesting to read how the researchers went about gaining data on this sensitive subject. Depending on their situations, they essentially had to obfuscate the research theme. Effectively, they had to bracket out their real research intention and researcher identity. In some contexts they would, for example, present their research as dealing with rather neutral issues such human rights, education, or youth.

In reading these books, you can't help but notice that labels used by the authors show inconsistency. What is the correct way to label this minority group: Buraku or buraku, Burakumin or burakumin? Do Buraku and buraku refer only to location or also to the people? These authors give different answers. In this review, the term Burakumin is often used, even though it is not in common use in Japan.

A final comment. A common trait of the three books, and perhaps their most valuable and novel contribution, is their testimony to the fading of

Buraku as an identity, as traditional borders between Buraku and non-Buraku become more blurred. While the groundbreaking work of DeVos/Wagatsuma (1966), Yoshino (Roger 1977), and Neary (1989) mainly described historical complexities, the recent authors Bondy (2015), Hankins (2014), and Cangià (2013) look at the increasing complexity of what being Buraku stands for in the twenty-first century. Even the monkey dancers, tanners, and people of Takagawa, easily identified as traditional Burakumin, produced ambiguous signs of belonging. In addition, non-Buraku Japanese now usually identify Buraku in a random manner. It will be interesting to see whether these trends intensify in the future.

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## Rezensionen – Comptes rendus – Reviews

**Hayes, Anna/Clarke, Michael (eds.):** *Inside Xinjiang. Space, Place and Power in China's Muslim Far Northwest*. Routledge Contemporary China Series. London and New York: Routledge, 2016, 267 pp., ISBN 978-1-138-78079-8.

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Since the break-up of the Soviet Union, many publications in the field of Xinjiang studies have focused on the consequences that the new political ordering of nation states in Central Asia has exerted upon inter-ethnic relations and on the geopolitical situation of this region. Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, located in northwest China, is the largest province of the People's Republic of China and connects the country territorially to Central Asia. Its geostrategic position was recently strengthened through the Chinese central government's proclamation of the "One Belt, One Road" (一带一路) initiative. This large-scale development plan aspires to create a New Silk Road, mainly through investments in transport and trade infrastructures across Chinese frontiers. Analysed from an 'outside-in' perspective, Xinjiang is of the utmost importance for the Chinese state, in terms of its strategic territorial position, which is further linked to a rich availability of natural resources. In recent years, however, the regular occurrence of violent inter-ethnic incidents between the Muslim, Turkic-speaking Uyghur and Han Chinese parts of the population have resulted in an unease in the everyday lives of the population.

The anthology *Inside Xinjiang. Space, Place and Power in China's Muslim Far Northwest*, edited by Anna Hayes and Michael Clarke, successfully complements the geopolitical 'outside-in' view of this contested area with diverse 'inside-out' perspectives that highlight the internal dynamics of space, place and power, especially concerning ethnic relations between Han and non-Han ethnic groups within the region. These grassroots perceptions offer a valuable counterpart to the political analyses that have predominated in Xinjiang studies, especially since the proclamation of the New Silk Road strategy. The volume aims to analyse "[...] the factors that contributed to Xinjiang's transition from the frontier *par excellence* throughout Chinese history into the contemporary 'integral' province of the PRC [...]", with a particular focus on "[...] the political, economic and social interactions among and between the non-Han and Han peoples of the region" (p. 1). The volume successfully achieves this by revealing different



perspectives on everyday social and ethnic realities in Xinjiang, providing inspiration for researchers interested in topics like rural and urban differences, Uyghur and Han identity processes, social stratification, health and education issues, as well as media and museum representations in Xinjiang.

Twelve years after Frederick Starr's anthology *Xinjiang. China's Muslim Borderland*,<sup>1</sup> which became one of the best-known publications in the field, Hayes and Clarke bring together a number of well-established Xinjiang scholars from different disciplines including Chinese studies, history, security studies, anthropology, political sciences and sociology. This book provides new insights into many of the geopolitical issues raised in Starr's earlier volume, but includes the social and political developments of the last decade.

The two editors, as well as most of the authors, have gained a sound knowledge of the internal social dynamics in Xinjiang through extensive field-work periods or comprehensive qualitative data analysis. Anna Hayes is a senior lecturer in Humanities in the College of Arts, Society and Education at James Cook University. Having conducted research on HIV/AIDS in Xinjiang,<sup>2</sup> she is currently working on aspects of human security as well as tourist site representation.<sup>3</sup> The co-editor, Michael Clarke, is Associate Professor at the National Security College of the Australian National University, and he has more than a decade of research experience in Xinjiang, with a particular focus on the region's history and politics. Clarke has published extensively on Xinjiang,<sup>4</sup> including the monograph *Xinjiang and China's Rise in Central Asia*<sup>5</sup> and a volume co-edited with Colin Mackerras: *China, Xinjiang and Central Asia: History, Transition and Crossborder Interaction into the twenty-first Century*.<sup>6</sup>

Starting from the research question "What is life like in China's 'new frontier'?" (p. 5), the book's contributions address a broad range of everyday life situations in Xinjiang. In chapter one, Ildikó Bellér-Hann examines the oral

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1 Starr 2004.

2 Hayes 2012; Hayes/Qarluq 2011.

3 As well as her regional focus, Hayes has published on migration, security and the state, including the volume she co-edited with Niklaus Steiner and Robert Mason (2013): *Migration and Insecurity: Citizenship and Social Inclusion in a Transnational Era*.

4 Clarke's contributions to Xinjiang studies include numerous articles on policy, security, human rights and geopolitics published in journals such as *Middle East Policy*, *Global Change, Peace & Security*, *The International Journal of Human Rights*, *Terrorism and Political Violence*, *Asian Ethnicity* and *Asian Studies Review*.

5 Clarke 2011.

6 Mackerras/Clarke (eds.) 2009.

history among rural Uyghurs in the Kashgar region who narrate their memories about the government's forced land collectivisation in 1949, revealing how their shared view of the past strengthens the communal Uyghur identity of today.<sup>7</sup> In chapter two, David O'Brien highlights internal diversities among the Han, showing that power issues are at play within ethnic groups – not only between them.<sup>8</sup> In chapter three, Anna Hayes focuses on the official representation of ethnic minorities in the Xinjiang Regional Museum in Ürümqi, where the different groups are described in detail in the Nationalities chamber but are not included as part of the other regional history exhibitions in the museum.<sup>9</sup> In chapter four, Joanne Smith Finley unveils identity frictions in the words of the singer Dao Lang, a Han immigrant who creatively transforms local Uyghur songs into his own repertoire of fusion rock.<sup>10</sup> In chapter five, Yangbin Chen analyses how Chinese state media take advantage of two prominent Uyghur portrayals (the peasant 'Uncle Kurban' and the migrant worker 'Brother Alim') to transmit the message that ethnic groups can live a multi-ethnic and harmonious coexistence in China.<sup>11</sup> In chapter six, James Leibold and Danielle Xiaodan Deng examine the impact of Xinjiang's highly-segregated residential areas on inter-ethnic relations through an analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data.<sup>12</sup> In chapter seven, Alessandra Cappelletti emphasises the bridging role of the Uyghur élite by exercising its power in between poor rural Uyghur farmers and the central government in Beijing.<sup>13</sup> In chapter eight, Hankiz Ekpar demonstrates how structural differences between Han and Uyghur parts of society affect the vulnerability of adolescent Uyghurs to becoming infected with HIV/AIDS.<sup>14</sup> In chapter nine, Timothy Grose discusses the challenges for well-educated young Uyghurs returning to their Muslim and Uyghur social environment in Xinjiang after eight or more years of university education in China proper.<sup>15</sup> Finally, in chapter ten, Michael Clarke explores the different national and international geopolitical interests at stake, highlighting the importance of including everyday experiences in order to understand the geopolitical realities of the region.<sup>16</sup>

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7 Chapter one by Bellér-Hann, pp. 15–31.

8 Chapter two by O'Brien, pp. 32–51.

9 Chapter three by Hayes, pp. 52–72.

10 Chapter four by Smith Finley, pp. 75–99.

11 Chapter five by Chen, pp. 100–121.

12 Chapter six by Leibold and Deng, pp. 122–148.

13 Chapter seven by Cappelletti, pp. 151–182.

14 Chapter eight by Ekpar, pp. 183–205.

15 Chapter nine by Grose, pp. 206–224.

16 Chapter ten by Clarke, pp. 225–259.

The editors have grouped the ten chapters into three main sections: 'Identity formation and sense of belonging'; 'Inter-ethnic relations in Xinjiang'; and 'Government policies in the region and beyond'. However, most of the contributions would fit into several of these categories, since they all address issues of identity belongings, inter-ethnic relations and political power. All of the texts were written soon after the violent inter-ethnic riots in Ürümqi in 2009 when around 200 (mostly Han) people were killed. Most authors refer to the tense post-riot situation and to subsequent incidents like the Tiananmen Square attack in 2013, the deadly knife attack in Kunming (Yunnan province) in 2014, and smaller incidents which sporadically happen in different parts of Xinjiang. The government and official media ascribe these incidents to Uyghur separatists, which reinforces inter-ethnic hostilities. Despite large-scale economic investments and rigid military control, Xinjiang remains a place shaped by social conflicts which are partly related to its larger geopolitical setting.

When conducting research in Xinjiang, ethnicity and ethnic belongings are inherent parts of everyday lived realities. Choosing which residential area to buy an apartment in, which restaurant to eat dinner at with friends, or which supermarket to buy everyday products from, is always shaped by an ethnic performance based on people's cultural and religious background, which determines where they prefer to locate themselves through these daily practices. Ethnic performance is a way to form places, as Basso explains: "Deliberately and otherwise, people are forever presenting each other with culturally mediated images of where and how they dwell. In large ways and small, they are forever performing acts that reproduce and express their own sense of place – and also, inextricably, their own understandings of who and what they are".<sup>17</sup> From my own fieldwork experiences in Xinjiang, I know that it is no exaggeration to state that social life in Xinjiang is divided predominantly by ethnicity. People constantly draw ethnic boundaries through their activities, and ethnicity is an integral part of public discourses – whether in the university campus, at local markets or in urban parks.

In this context, ethnicity also figures prominently in the book's contributions. About half of the chapters discuss one ethnic group (either Han or Uyghur), while the other half focus on inter-ethnic negotiation in particular settings. Bellér-Hann, Cappelletti, Ekpar and Grose concentrate almost exclusively on Uyghur lifeworlds and provide insights into the daily challenges for this Muslim section of the population. The contributors address a broad range of identity issues and show how different parts of Uyghur society (e. g. farmers,

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<sup>17</sup> Basso 1996: 57.

élites, structurally-disadvantaged groups and highly-educated youth) deal with social and ethnic belongings. When reading the chapters, I appreciated the diversity of topics as well as the discussion of internal dynamics at play within the Uyghur population. On the other side, only O'Brien targets the large Han population living in Xinjiang, by meticulously revealing the intra-ethnic distinctions that various Han immigrants draw among themselves. This underrepresentation of studies on the Xinjiang Han is no surprise, but rather a structural feature permeating Xinjiang studies. Even if a number of Han-oriented studies have recently appeared,<sup>18</sup> studies on the lives of ethnic minority groups would still predominate within studies about China's border regions. Compared to the chapters focusing on either one or the other ethnic group, those by Hayes, Smith Finley, Chen, Leibold and Deng, and Clarke discuss the negotiation of identities in specific surroundings (museum, music, media, residence and geopolitics). These chapters highlight interactions between Han and non-Han groups in particular settings where ethnicity becomes articulated or even exploited.

The book only reviews interactions between Han and Uyghur parts of the population, and omits those with other ethnic groups, such as Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Mongols or Tajik, who also form part of 'multi-ethnic' Xinjiang. This could be criticised as a shortcoming of the publication but, because the contributions are linked to the 'outside-in' perspective of the broader geopolitical context and through the predominant foci on urban areas (mainly Ürümqi and southern Xinjiang), it seems reasonable to focus on interactions between these two groups.

There is a lack of discussion about the region's close cultural connections to Central Asia throughout the volume, probably because it aims to present aspects of social life in this 'bordered' area of China. The borders between Xinjiang and Central Asian countries are strictly controlled and difficult to traverse but, especially because of the recent 'New Silk Road' intention to intensify economic relations, this connectedness to Central Asia in linguistic, religious, cultural and social terms could benefit from more prominence in the volume. Most contributions link Xinjiang to the rest of China, which is congruent with the approach previously taken in Starr's edited volume.<sup>19</sup> However, Starr aimed to provide insights into a *remote* region of China, while this publication instead highlights the *linkages* with the rest of China. This becomes particularly apparent in the chapters covering different forms of Han immigration to Xinjiang (O'Brien);

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<sup>18</sup> For example, Joniak-Lüthi 2014 or Cliff 2016.

<sup>19</sup> Starr 2004.



tourism and national representations in a museum (Hayes); singer Dao Lang's itinerant life between Sichuan, Ürümqi and Beijing and the spread of his interpretation of Xinjiang music all over China (Smith Finley); the shaping of a certain depiction of an Uyghur migrant worker, 'Alim', in recent state discourses on multi-ethnic national harmony (Chen); or the discrepancies between Xinjiang graduates' life in their university classrooms in eastern China and their families' expectations in Xinjiang (Grose).

As a researcher interested in analytical conceptualisations of 'space' and 'place', the book's title, *Inside Xinjiang. Space, Place and Power in China's Muslim Far Northwest*, led me to expect some introductory words about the spatial localisation and implications of the articles. However, only half of the ten-page introduction outlines the region's shift from a 'frontier' to a 'bordered' land and discusses Xinjiang's the geopolitical setting, before moving on to an overview of the book's structure and chapter contents. A second edition might benefit from clarifying the linkages between the individual chapters with regard to space, place and power, as there is no explicit reference to these in the introduction. It seemed to me, when reading the book, that the common ground the chapters address are inter- and intra-ethnic relationships and identity constructions, rather than primarily space and place. This raises the question why the word 'ethnic' is missing from the book's title.

At the same time, 'power', which is part of the title, is omnipresent in all of the contributions. This not only includes the power of Chinese central government, which intervenes in everyday lives through policies or prohibitions, but also the power which is inherent within ethnic and social relations. O'Brien shows how ordinary Han residents criticised the lack of power that the (Han) government had to create stable living environments for the local population, following the violent incidents in 2009. The Han hostilities against the Uyghur are here heightened by resentment about the failure of authorities' power (pp. 42–43). Hayes explicitly discusses the power of institutions, in her case the power of a museum to shape common discourses about the region's history. She highlights the marginalisation of ethnic groups from official narratives: "This reinforces the anxious history of the region, because regional nationalities' history, and even the presence of minority nationalities in the region, is completely overshadowed by the dominant Han collective history and memory in Xinjiang" (p. 68). Another perspective on power – not as a top-down, but a bottom-up impetus – is provided by Leibold and Deng. The two authors mention that everyday practices can also have the power to change politics. For instance, as a result of inhabitants' practices of living in highly-segregated residential areas in Xinjiang, official institutions have now shifted their social work policy focus onto mitigating any further partition of society. The government

administration has responded to the implicit grassroots critique of current power structures and the organisation of society by segregated communities by strengthening programmes for “urban ethnic work” and “ethnic conflict management” (p. 143). Cappelletti provides another perspective on power relations, addressing the role of the Uyghur élite – who she asserts have even more power within Xinjiang than the central government in Beijing. In the context of development programmes for poor rural Uyghur farmers, local Uyghur authorities often profit financially by manipulating new land right regulations for their personal gain (pp. 173–174). These examples deconstruct the commonly-held assumption that power is entirely in the hands of central government, revealing that the power to change social circumstances can also emerge from everyday lived practices.

As well as these kinds of insights into different forms of power relations, the broad approaches to inter- and intra-ethnic variance taken in the different contributions are particularly enriching. In addition to the omnipresence of inter-ethnic boundary-making in everyday life in Xinjiang, the chapters also provide discussions of intra-ethnic variety in terms of social class. From my own experience, class cleavages are an important factor for explaining diversity within ethnic groups. For example, middle-class Uyghurs who can afford to buy an apartment adopt similar criteria to their Han counterparts in making their choice: an apartment has to be located in a pleasant neighbourhood and must provide a modern, green and internationalised urban lifestyle. They would only express their ethnic belonging in the internal decoration of their apartment, mainly through their choice of furniture or ornamental elements (like wood carvings or carpets). Thus, a person’s social status (including knowledge of Mandarin, frequent travel to eastern China or abroad, or membership of the Chinese Communist Party) can have a decisive impact on how they live out their ethnic identities in everyday life. The similar social lifestyles of Han and Uyghur middle-class residents shows that some inter-ethnic connections do exist, even if they are often not as pronounced as intra-ethnic cohesion or ethnic boundary-making. Cappelletti discusses the intra-ethnic class cleavages that are expressed in the divide between Uyghur élites and the Uyghur rural farmers who they refer to in derogatory terms whilst, in some ways, “exploit[ing]” them (p. 171). Here, we learn that class distinctions make a difference in terms of behaviour and the drawing of identity boundaries within an ethnic group. Similarly, O’Brien’s chapter on intra-Han differentiations clearly shows the intra-ethnic variety among Han immigrant groups. He indicates that many second- and third-generation Han citizens draw clear distinctions between themselves and recent Han immigrants. While they consider themselves “Xinjiang people”,



they classify recently-arrived migrants, in a sometimes hostile way, as being from another place (pp. 45–46).

The book's attempt to reveal the dichotomic representations of ethnic relations in Xinjiang is successfully achieved through the different topics addressed in its chapters. Additionally, the diversity of the contributions allows the reader to immerse themselves in the manifold expressions of ethnic identities being presented, and to obtain a nuanced picture of everyday identity negotiations in the multi-ethnic borderland of Xinjiang. Both the disciplines and the research methods for data gathering are diverse, and support this 'inside-out' perspective. The methods applied comprise ethnographic research, fieldwork, media analysis, historical analysis, statistics, and qualitative interviews.

As well as the merely implicit – rather than theoretical – engagement with 'place' and 'space' issues in the chapters, the book also lacks a deeper engagement with religion, despite it featuring prominently in the title: *Space, Place and Power in China's Muslim Far Northwest*. Although religion plays into most of the topics discussed, it would have been worthwhile to engage more with the intersectionality and mutual constitution of religion and ethnicity in Xinjiang, especially since many aspects of Uyghur identity are closely linked to religious practices and discourses. Nevertheless, aspects of religion are referred to in most of the chapters. Bellér-Hann mentions the disruption of everyday religious practices during the collectivisation period which wrought drastic changes to the everyday space and time rhythms of Uyghurs who, for example, were stopped from practicing their morning prayers (pp. 19–20). Smith Finley touches on the Han singer Dao Lang's lack of reference to local Muslim customs, despite the fact that he embraces many other aspects of Uyghur cultural identity. It would be interesting to know more about why religion as part of identity is so rigorously neglected by Dao Lang (p. 89). The deliberate omission of Muslim religion as a representation strategy is discussed in Chen's chapter, which explores how the Chinese media's positive image campaign using 'Uncle Kurban' and 'Brother Alim' to create sympathies for the Uyghur population downplays being Muslim and foregrounds other identity aspects, such as patriotic and nationalist activities (p. 113). The importance of Islam in everyday life is most pronounced in Grose's chapter. He emphasises the ambiguous role that religion plays in the lives of young graduates: while they are forbidden from participating in religious practices while studying in China proper (pp. 207–208), their return to Xinjiang is often interpreted as a kind of (re-)commitment to Islam, whose practice is easier to integrate into everyday life in Xinjiang when it comes to buying ritually pure food or finding prayer opportunities (p. 211). These different references

indicate the important role of religion in everyday identity boundary-making of the Uyghur population. Islam also plays a relevant role in international alliance building in wider political and cultural terms of the region's geopolitical setting. Religious practices connect Uyghurs to their Central Asian neighbours much more than to their Han colleagues, neighbours or friends. Therefore, the volume might have benefited from a more in-depth engagement with religion.

Despite the lack of a more profound discussion of linkages between the texts with regard to space, place and religion, all of the chapters provide a genuine insight into 'inside-out' perspectives of everyday life in Xinjiang, which is the core contribution of this volume to contemporary Xinjiang studies. Framed by the focus on the geopolitical importance of Xinjiang's borderlands and by the ethnic tensions within the area, this volume edited by Hayes and Clarke provides a thorough insight into a variety of issues related to everyday life as an inherent part of the geopolitical narratives of the region, and reveals the diverse ways that the population deals with power and identity politics. To conclude, the compilation undermines the premise that Xinjiang is no longer a far-away frontier region, but is firmly embedded within the rest of China, especially through migration movements, social networks, media communication, trade connections and political relations.

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## Rezensionen – Comptes rendus – Reviews

Ihrig, Stefan: *Justifying Genocide: Germany and the Armenians from Bismarck to Hitler*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2016, 460 pp., ISBN 978-0674504790.

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Hitler apparently got it wrong when he asked, in a popularly cited question: “Who, after all, speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?” Stefan Ihrig, professor of history at the University of Haifa, argues in his latest book, *Justifying Genocide: Germany and the Armenians from Bismarck to Hitler*, that there was actually a broader awareness in Nazi Germany of what happened to Ottoman Armenians in 1915. Ihrig’s book is about how the extermination of the Armenians was intellectually processed and politically justified – “justification” being Ihrig’s key analytical term in this regard – in a society that would go on to commit, support, and justify yet another genocide.

*Justifying Genocide* is told in 15 chapters in addition to a prologue, an introduction, and an epilogue. In his Prologue, Ihrig introduces Franz Werfel, the Nobel laureate author of the *Forty Days of Musa Dagh*. For Werfel, himself a Jew, the Armenians were the “stand-in Jews” (*Ersatzjuden*) of his story, also an indirect warning of the rise of Nazis. In the Introduction, Ihrig explains why his book is about “Germany and its road toward the Holocaust” (p. 6) rather than about the Ottoman Empire, Turks, and the tragic fate of the Armenians in Anatolia. In many ways, Ihrig brings the history of the Armenian Genocide home – first to Germany and then to Israel, where he lives. In Chapter 1, Ihrig traces the origins of German anti-Armenianism in Bismarck’s foreign policy doctrine, in which Armenian suffering was – in Bismarck’s famous words – not worth the life of a single “Pomeranian musketeer” (p. 23). Ihrig goes on in his Chapter 2 to discuss the official and public discourse about the massacres of Ottoman Armenians in 1890s. He convincingly underlines the political continuity from Bismarck to Wilhelm II, in which Armenians served as “the sacrificial lamb [...] of intensifying Ottoman-German relations” (p. 32). This is also when the German public saw the gradual emergence of racial and anti-Semitic depictions of Armenians (p. 46, 57) and a new “genocide language” (p. 55). In Chapter 3, Ihrig establishes how the anti-Armenian “racial prism” (p. 59) fully replaced the previous pro-Armenian “religious prism” (p. 80). These racial stereotypes started to justify anti-Armenian violence (p. 64) whereby the image of Armenians as the

“Jews of the Orient” (p. 74) was becoming an ever more popular discourse. (pp. 76–77). The developments from the Young Turk Revolution of 1908 to the eve of World War I are summarized in Chapter 4. From the Belgian atrocities of 1914 (p. 95) to the Armenian Genocide of 1915, Chapter 5 discusses the German culture of “military necessities”. Civilian populations were seen through the notions of total war as potential combatants and collaborators (p. 96). The struggles of Max Erwin von Scheubner-Richter, the German consul in Erzurum, against the deportations and massacres of Armenians in 1915 are told in Chapter 6. In numerous alarming reports and requests to the rather reluctant German embassy in Constantinople, Scheubner documented the horror of the deportations as “a policy of violent extermination” (p. 123). In Ihrig’s judgement, Germany was “guilty in failing to stop the Young Turks” (p. 134). In Chapter 7, Ihrig returns to the public debate in Germany. Although circumscribed by censorship, the Armenian deportations were discussed through different channels and on different occasions, and more importantly, as Ihrig argues, increasingly in genocidal terms. The question “What Germany Could Have Known” is further discussed in Chapter 8. While German officialdom “knew almost everything” (p. 157), most of the press was “aggressively agitating against the Armenians” (p. 157). Nevertheless, as Ihrig concludes, “even the most naive reader must have realized that something of note had happened to the Armenians of the Ottoman Empire” (p. 185). After the defeat in 1918, anti-Armenianism was once again combined with anti-Semitism in revanchist stab-in-the-back myths (p. 187–189). Ihrig shows in Chapter 9 how a “fully fledged ‘genocide language’” (p. 195) was established in a great debate on the Armenian Genocide. The German Foreign Ministry’s efforts to whitewash the German responsibility (p. 210) created a series of cross-paper debates in national and provincial newspapers that further contributed to the general knowledge of the Armenian Genocide (pp. 214, 219). Once Germany’s role was whitewashed, a “denialist backlash” (p. 220) took over the debates in 1920 with countless incarnations of old anti-Armenian stereotypes. Ihrig explores in Chapter 10 the “media event” (p. 229) that took place after the assassination of Talat Pasha by an Armenian in Berlin, March 1921. Although this episode started with success for denialism (p. 233), it became impossible after the sensational trial of Talat Pasha’s assassin Soghomon Tehlirian to deny the extent and intent of the genocide. In Chapter 11, Ihrig retells in great detail how Tehlirian’s defense attorneys were able to illustrate the jury (and the public) that Talat Pasha was responsible for the “systematic management” of the mass murder of Armenians (p. 257). While anti-Armenian newspapers tried to justify the massacres, many other newspapers came to terms with the shocking reality of the Armenian Genocide (p. 266). Although what Ihrig calls a “pre-Lemkin definition of genocide” was established in the debates surrounding the Talat Pasha Trial (p. 271), as Chapter 12’s title puts



it, racial arguments about Armenians and the national tropes of “stab-in-the-back” led rather to “The Victory of Justificationalism” (p. 275). Genocide was already considered by many Germans, as Ihrig illustrates, as a “universal phenomenon” that could readily be committed against Europe’s own “foreigners”, namely Jews (p. 294). Chapter 13 turns to the intellectual history of racial and racist literature and explores how an “Armenian-Jewish conflation” was intellectually constructed in 1920s and 1930s. The so-called “Armenoid” race was increasingly depicted as similar, same, or even worse than as the “Jewish race”, both associated with the “lesser”, “Oriental”, or “Near Eastern” races (pp. 306–307). Many emerging Nazi ideologues, including Hitler, used to refer to Armenians as a lesser race similar to Jews (p. 318). In Chapter 14, Ihrig summarizes his previous research on how the Nazis perceived Kemalist Turkey as a “postgenocidal wonderland” (p. 320). The Nazi personality cult about Atatürk (p. 327) went on to celebrate the annihilation of Armenians and the population exchange of Greeks (p. 331). The final Chapter 15 delivers “cumulative evidence” that implies that the Nazis were aware of and influenced by the Armenian Genocide (p. 334). Ihrig demonstrates how a complex of people epistemically connects the Armenian Genocide to the Holocaust (pp. 333–338, 352). Thanks to “Turkish lessons”, as Ihrig argues, the Nazis knew that war could create an opportunity and cover for genocidal measures without facing international punishment or domestic outrage (pp. 353–354). Ihrig draws the conclusion that the Armenian Genocide and the Jewish Holocaust are “intimately and directly linked” in German experience and knowledge (p. 357). The Epilogue closes the narrative circle by going back to Franz Werfel and his *Forty Days of Musa Dagh* which is considered a literary testament of genocidal struggle and survival by both Armenian and Jewish genocide survivors (pp. 364–369).

This excellently written book covers diverse aspects of anti-Armenianism in Germany within a complex but well-structured narrative. The general contextualization of Ottoman and Turkish history could have surely profited from a denser engagement with the recent scholarship in Ottoman history, but Ihrig mostly keeps a safe distance and sticks to German discourses. A chance to discuss the relationship between German Orientalism and anti-Armenianism is, however, unfairly dismissed by Ihrig (p. 60), implying that the latter was more similar to anti-Semitism and, thus, something else or even something worse. On the contrary, anti-Semitism (as well as anti-Armenianism) has always been part and parcel of Orientalism. Only few mistakes in the book caught my attention. It was, of course, Shakib Arslan, the former Ottoman deputy of Hauran and a close associate of Enver and Talat, and not “Şefik Arslan” (p. 274), who wrote an open letter to Johannes Lepsius. Walter Rößler, German consul in Aleppo, is twice mentioned as the German consul in Adana (pp. 130, 352); the latter was, in fact,



Eugen Büge. Recent studies of the Turkish-German revanchist milieu in post-war Berlin could have been used to provide a more vivid context on the German public debates. One of the most vocal anti-Armenian public figures, Hans Humann, was not only an old friend of Enver Pasha, as Ihrig rightly notes, but was also intimately linked to underground and propaganda activities of the fugitive Young Turk leaders in Berlin. Theodor Wolff and his *Berliner Tageblatt*'s editorial turn from pro-Armenian to anti-Armenian reporting (pp. 211–213, 231, 233) was perhaps indeed the outcome of an alleged interview which Wolff conducted with Talat Pasha, as it is told by journalist Arif Cemil (Denker) who claims to have arranged this secret meeting. But such details do not take anything away from the book's main thesis that the Armenian Genocide was well-known but politically justified in the German public discourse and even more in racial arguments.

Most importantly, Ihrig offers a subjective and discursive understanding of genocide. Although the term "genocide" was coined by Raphael Lemkin in 1940s, the way the incidents of 1915/16 were framed both by pro-Armenian and anti-Armenian authors in Germany left no doubt that they were all referring to (or justifying) an idea of a genocide. This is a very important intervention that extends the analytical use of genocide in historical contexts. Ihrig correctly asserts that his "book is more about the discourses and the realities these discourses created than about the realities on the ground" (p. 8). Therefore, historians should be cautioned not to simply project German racial discourses onto the minds of the Young Turk leadership and their local accomplices who most certainly had their own genocide discourses. Unfortunately, there is no theoretical discussion of how genocide discourses are constructed and meditated, and how to deal with such discursive realities. For example, Ihrig shows that the 1890s massacres of Ottoman Armenians were already discussed in "genocidal terms" (p. 38). This is an important observation, but does it make this "string of massacres" (p. 34) a genocide? Even more, how do we deal with public authors' cognitive and factual relativism based on their (pro-Armenian or anti-Armenian) predispositions? The issue gets even more perplexing, because Ihrig takes – for good reason – a very critical stand against the moral relativism in genocide denials and justifications. For example, Tehlirian's emotional court-room testimony on how he witnessed the murder of his family during the Armenian Genocide is told in great detail and with acknowledgement, but only to be revealed, as an aside, to be a false testimony (p. 263). But how should we deal with manipulated and manipulating discourses, not only in cruel cases of genocide denialism and justification, but also when these genocide discourses were on the right end of the moral compass? In this

post-truth age, such complex considerations deserve more theoretical discussion than a straightforward moral contention.

Despite the lack of theoretical discussion, Ihrig's book's intellectual merits will find well-earned attention not only in the growing body of comparative, cultural, and global approaches in genocide studies, but also in the intellectual histories of anti-Semitism. For comparative and complementary insights into Turkish genocide discourses, I advise students of Armenian, Turkish, and Ottoman studies to read Ihrig's book in conjunction with Fatma Müge Göçek's (2015) *Denial of Violence: Ottoman Past, Turkish Present, and Collective Violence against the Armenians, 1789–2009*. All in all, Ihrig conducted rich empirical research on the "dark intellectual history of genocide" in Germany (p. 302) that is unlikely to be surpassed in its comprehensiveness. *Justifying Genocide* is a timely contribution to various fields and offers complex and thought-provoking arguments. Both specialist and non-specialist readers will find it accessible and engaging.



## Rezensionen – Comptes rendus – Reviews

**Schmidtke, Sabine (ed.) (2016):** *The Oxford Handbook of Islamic Theology*.  
Oxford: Oxford University Press. 832 pp., ISBN 978-0-1996-9670-3

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The Oxford Handbook of Islamic Theology (OUP, 2016) is a splendid and hefty volume (832 pp.) that provides a comprehensive overview of Muslim theologies from their earliest manifestations until the present. A collection of forty-one innovative articles, the volume widens the scope of scholarship to include geographical areas and theological topics that have remained explored. Indeed, the collection ventures to cover the entire sweep of Islamic theology. In doing so, it pays due attention to the reception and development of Islamic theologies in diverse geographical locations – Iran and Central Asia, Yemen, Egypt, Ottoman lands, and the Indian Subcontinent. The volume even makes its way into the modern period; Wielandt's article discusses the challenges that arose for Muslim theology from the dominance of European colonialism and “western-type modern civilization's technical achievements,” social and political values.

Sabine Schmidtke, the editor of the volume, acknowledges that given certain limitations of the field, the collection of articles is more of a guide to the nature and development of Islamic theologies than it is a comprehensive overview of them. The limitations she alludes to are now familiar to those working within any of the fields treated in the volume, and they will also be apparent to anyone who reads Schmidtke's introduction. Many works in the field remain unpublished. A staggering number are still unstudied, and the vast majority have not yet been translated into European languages.

The introduction to the volume, authored by Schmidtke, is a useful essay that discusses the current state of scholarship on leading Muslim theologians and the movements that they engendered. Schmidtke describes the editions that have recently been published in the field, notes some of the works that remain extant in manuscripts, and draws attention to the authors who have been given attention and to those who deserve further attention. The reader seeking guidance on the published and unpublished sources in the field would find no better place to begin than here.



The volume presents Islamic theologies diachronically. Part one, the most detailed, is devoted to the origins of Mu'tazilism, its formative and early middle periods, and the reception of Shī'ī theology among Zaydīs and Twelvers. It is also deals with the predecessors of Ash'arism, Ibadi theology, the Karramiyya, Maturidism, Ismaili theology, and Sufi theological thought. Part two consists of case studies on intellectual interactions of Islamic theologies. Part three focuses on the later middle and early modern period. Part four consists of case studies that examine the impact of social history on Islamic theology. Part five addresses theological thought from the end of the early modern period to the present.

Among the great achievements of the volume are the following: coverage of the gamut of Islamic theologies, including Ash'arism, Ibadi theology, the Karramiyya, Maturidism, Ismaili theology, and Sufi theological thought; investigations into the ways that the *mutakallimūn* engaged with other intellectual schools of thought (including the *falāsifa* and *Isma'īlīs*); treatments of the "inter-communal exchanges" between Muslims and Christian as well as Jewish thinkers; and examinations of intramural discussions among Muslim theologians that shaped core doctrinal positions.

One article in particular, Zysow's lucid and insightful exposition of Karrāmī theological cosmology, expresses a profound appreciation for the ways that Karrāmī doctrinal positions developed through engagement with other social and intellectual movements – Mu'tazilis, Ash'arites, and Māturīdis (256–257). In his exposition of Karrāmī theology, Zysow persuasively argues that the Karrāmī doctrine of the spatialization of God – which opponents of the Karramiyya dismissed as a naïve kind of anthropomorphism – is in fact based on an elaborate philosophical cosmology that betrays an influence of Stoicism. Zysow persuades his reader that Karrāmī theologians, just like the Mu'tazila and other theological schools, engaged in serious reflection on core issues, including the nature of religious belief, God's attributes, and divine causality. A reader interested in understanding the ways that the Karrāmīyya delved into such issues would do well to begin with Zysow's exposition.

The volume's expansive approach and extensive scope are significant. The volume recognizes that the topics discussed by Muslim theologians (*mutakallimūn*) were wide in scope, including cosmology, political theory, logic, and causality. Furthermore, it appreciates that as a social force, the discipline of dialectical theology (*kalām*) defined the identity of Islamic schools of thought and that it shaped non-Muslim (especially Jewish and Christian) social and intellectual movements. Proceeding on the notion that the methodologies deployed by Muslim theologians are "highly variegated" and that they exhibit a "complex interdependence," the volume successfully places diverse

movements – from the Karramiyya to the Ibadiyya to the Ismailiyya – in conversation with one another. And it accomplishes this feat by venturing deep into unexplored territory – theologies that emerged in Central Asia, Ottoman lands, the Yemen, and the Indian subcontinent.

The expansive scope of the volume's treatment of theologies is evinced in the articles devoted to Ash'arī theology and its wide reception in Muslim institutions of learning. Taken as a whole, these articles enable the reader to discern the many ways that Ash'arī theology was refracted in Islamic intellectual history. Serrano Ruano's article ventures into the reception of Ash'arī theology in North Africa and al-Andalus – where the school doctrine was publicly acknowledged – by describing the way that figures like Abū Bakr Ibn al-'Arabī, who studied directly under Ghazālī and brought his books to al-Andalus, formed part of a broader trajectory of Ash'arite theology. Eichner pays due attention to the importance that theological handbooks or manuals played in the lengthy process through which Avicennian philosophy became integrated into Sunnī theology; and she underscores that Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī was the most important channel through which this process took place.

Spevack's article on Egyptian Ash'arism focuses on the role that centres of learning played in the development "from North Africa to Persia to the Levant" from the 12<sup>th</sup> century until the present day (534–535). Importantly, the author identifies three mainstays of the theological and legal education of Egyptian scholars: the study of logic and *kalām*; the prominent influence of the Persian and Maghribī "scholarly verifiers" who emphasized the role of *taḥqīq* – "giving evidential grounds ... for a scientific proposition" (quoting el-Rouwayheb); and the prominence of the commentary as the literary genre of choice for scholars, which Spevack takes as evidence for the vibrancy and originality of Ash'arī scholarship that took place in Egypt (542–543). One of the important take-aways of Spevack's article is that the Egyptian Ash'arites scholars worked "unencumbered by the absolute reliance on *taqlīd*" ("following the opinions of others without knowing their proofs") and that the evaluation the late 19<sup>th</sup> century Muslim reformists and Orientalists was not based on firm textual evidence but speculation (544).

In her innovative excursus, Crone focuses on the way that certain "ungodly" cosmologies and methods of scepticism that emerged in late antique thought were assimilated into Muslim theology. Crone uses the term "ungodly" to refer to thinkers (often labelled *zindīqs* or *mulḥids*) who denied that God had created the world from nothing, or who denied government, the ultimate judgment of the world or any form of afterlife (103). The term "ungodly" in her vocabulary can refer to Marcionites, Bardesanites, or Manicheans – branches that stemmed from Christian communities but had become so heavily Iranized in early Islamic times

that they were no longer recognizable as Christians. Such loose clusters of individuals were not cohesive enough to form united social and intellectual movements. Because they were considered neither Muslims nor true adherents of the religions they had left behind, and because they seemed to have lost faith in any positive religion or even any God, they were often classified as dualists (104–105).

One of the important insights of Crone's article is that Muslim theologians engaged with thinkers who lacked a positive religion or conviction in a deity (105), and that such engagement led to the assimilation of certain argumentative techniques within *kalām*. Such techniques were designed to induce scepticism; and Muslim theologians assimilated such techniques – Crone's names *takāfu' al-adilla* ("equivalence of proof") as an example – into theological argumentation (110).

El-Rouyaheb's contribution provides insight into the way that Muslim theologians assimilated or naturalized Greek logic into *kalām*, a process that was underway by the mid- and late eleventh centuries when "Eastern" Muslim theologians began studying Avicennian philosophy. El-Rouwayheb notes that Ghazālī played a role in this process by promoting Greek logic to theologians and jurists (412); and he notes that after Ghazālī, theologians from the Ash'arī and Māturidī schools continued to write works on logic. Furthermore, and more broadly, he describes the robust tradition of "logically informed theology" in the 14<sup>th</sup> through 19<sup>th</sup> centuries (culminating with Sanūsī, 426), and he documents how such logically informed theology became integrated into the curricula of learning in most parts of the Islamic world, and he points out that this took place despite the protests against the naturalization process, underscoring that logic was considered necessary for theological training and a communal duty for Muslims. In addition to describing the various kinds of analogical reasoning that constituted the mainstay of logical reasoning in Muslim theology, El-Rouwayheb also provides a lucid and exemplary exposition of the way that Ibn Taymiyya reasoned about the syllogism and analogy.

Although I cannot discuss each article contained in this impressive substantial collection of articles, let me conclude by stating that the *Oxford Handbook of Islamic Theology* is a go-to place for the latest scholarship on Islamic theologies that flourished in diverse Islamic lands, and for lucid expositions of a number of philosophical and theological difficulties that the *mutakallimūn* sought to resolve. It is also a brilliant introduction to the ways that the Mu'tazila, the Ash'arī and Māturidī schools of thought (among others) were refracted in the Islamic intellectual tradition.

## Korrigendum – Rectificatif – Corrigendum

Mikaël Philip J. Bauer\*

### Corrigendum to: “The Chronicle of Kamatari Kamatari den 鎌足傳”

A short introduction to and translation of the first part of the  
History of the Fujiwara House

<https://doi.org/10.1515/asia-2017-4041>

**Corrigendum to:** The Chronicle of Kamatari Kamatari den 鎌足傳. A short introduction to and translation of the first part of the History of the Fujiwara House. *Asiatische Studien – Études Asiatiques*. Volume 71, Issue 2, pages 477–496 (DOI 10.1515/asia-2017-0041):

- [1] Read “Yamashiro no Ōe” instead of “Yamashina no Ōe”.
- p. 482: Read “[...], Soga no Iruka plotted with several princes, wishing to damage Prince Kamitsumiya’s son, Yamashiro no Ōe, and others, stating: ‘Yamashiro no Ōe was born in my family’” instead of “[...], Soga no Iruka plotted with several princes, wishing to damage Prince Kamitsumiya’s son, Yamashina no Ōe, and others, stating: ‘Yamashina no Ōe was born in my family’”.
  - p. 483: “Several months and days later, Yamashiro no Ōe was assassinated at Ikaruka Temple.” instead of “Several months and days later, Yamashina no Ōe was assassinated at Ikaruka Temple.”
- [2] Read “to put out rebellion” instead of “to rise in rebellion”.
- p. 482: “[...], then only Naka no Ōe was ingenious and heroic and able to put out rebellion” instead of “then only Naka no Ōe was ingenious and heroic and able to rise in rebellion”.

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- p. 483: “The Great Minister stated in detail the plot to put out rebellion and rectify the wrong” instead of “The Great Minister stated in detail the plot to rise in rebellion and rectify the wrong”.
- p. 483, Fn. 28: “To put out rebellion and rectify the wrong” instead of “To rise in rebellion and rectify the wrong”.