

MAPPING MONGOLIA: Situating Mongolia in the World from Geologic Time to the Present. *Penn Museum International Research Conferences, vol. 2. Edited by Paula L.W. Sabloff.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology; Distributed by University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011. xxvi, 273 pp. (Tables, figures.) + 1 CD-ROM US\$65.00, cloth. ISBN 978-1-934536-18-6.

This welcome new book examines the place of Mongolia in the world. The book is a collection of papers originally prepared for the four-day international research symposium on “Mapping Mongolia,” held at the University of Pennsylvania in 2007. The strength of the book is that it is the result of the collaborative efforts of 15 authors from diverse areas of expertise (ecology, genetics, archeology, history, anthropology and international security). The impetus for writing this book is a widely shared concern among scholars that small countries are marginalized by a configuration of area studies programs and groupings in the Western academia and diplomacy. Mongolia is often left out or uncomfortably tacked onto various grouping schemes, which have created ambiguity over its regional identity. Using Appadurai’s (Arjun Appadurai, “Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy,” *Public Culture* 2, no. 2 [1990]: 1-24) conception of “-scapes” as an analytical tool to explore other ways of thinking about grouping nations in general and finding Mongolia’s niche in particular, the book provides an interesting and timely discussion of what Mongolia is and where it belongs. Appadurai suggests “thinking beyond the nation” (Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural dimensions of Globalization* [Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1996]). The authors of this book critically engage with the concept of “-scapes,” comparing its efficacy with area studies groupings of nations or what one of the authors describes as the historically rooted “-scapes” approach (78).

This book has three sections. The first section, “Theorizing Mongolia’s Connection,” includes four chapters. In chapter 1, Hurst discusses the institutionalization of area studies in the US after World War II. While showing how area studies are connected to the national security dynamics, he suggests some possibilities for locating Mongolia within the area studies programs in the US. Chapter 2, written by the editor Paula L.W. Sabloff, conceptualizes the “-scapes” approach. Unlike other authors of the book she applies the “-scapes” approach in mapping networks among nation-states rather than interactions among individuals and people. In chapter 3, Sneath argues that “for much of its history, the peoples and territories that might be described as Mongolian have not been subject to a single sovereign power or centralized state as it is commonly understood. Instead they were linked by a common aristocratic order—a ‘headless state’” (35). Chapter 4, written by C. Atwood, conceptualizes Mongolia’s position vis-à-vis Central Eurasia. Is Mongolia part of Central Eurasia? He provides an interesting answer: “definitely ‘yes’

for the ancient historian (up through the breakup of the Mongol Empire), pretty much ‘no’ for the medieval historian (from the 14th century to the 19th), and a qualified ‘yes’ for the modern historian” (77).

The second section, “Extending Beyond Current Borders,” also includes four chapters. Goulden, Nandintsetseg and Aruintsetseg use a “landscape ecology” approach in their discussion of the geological landscape, climate and ecology of Mongolia, showing both the uniqueness of Mongolia’s ecosystem and its connection to the neighbouring regions. By discussing the impact of climate change on pastoral nomadism, they warn that a “combination of overgrazing and recent climate changes may lead to a more serious problem with desertification” (101). A vivid demonstration of pastoral nomads on the Mongolian Plateau as a unique ethnoscapes is presented by T. Barfield in chapter 6. He discusses the origins, evolution and current developments of pastoralism. By looking at the changing pastoral economies in Russia, China and Mongolia, he argues that “as long as people have the means to preserve it as a way of life, the nomadic pastoral landscape will endure.” In Chapter 7, Schurr and Pipes present a review of data from studies of cranial and dental morphological traits and genetic diversity in Asian and Siberian populations, drawing on literature written in Chinese, Mongolian, Russian and English. They provide a fascinating review of the biogenetic origins and affinities of Mongolians (“geno-scapes”) (152). Chapter 8, written by Fitzhugh and Bayarsaikhan, presents cutting-edge knowledge of the cultural landscape of the late Bronze Age by describing the types and spatial distribution of deer stones and *khirigsuurs* in Mongolia.

The final section, “Connecting to Other Polities,” begins with a chapter written by Honeychurch and Amartuvshin, which argues that a long-term view from archeology may “chart the earliest networks of interaction that initiated and partly guided the later growth of Mongolia or the Mongol Empire.” In chapter 10, Goulden tells a fascinating story of how Chinese attitudes toward their northern neighbours profoundly changed after the formation of the Xiongnu. The final chapter, written by Enkhsaikhan, examines contemporary Mongolia’s stance on its relations with the peoples of Mongolian descent living beyond the territory of the independent Mongolia and also provides helpful insights on emerging issues of nuclear policy.

The volume as a whole offers an illuminating coverage of Mongolia’s position in the world, looking at the dynamics and processes of the past and present. Although the book includes 33 maps reproduced in colour on the accompanying CD, which is a very useful supplement for research and teaching, they are accessible only as a .pdf file. A more interactive version could perhaps be created in an online edition. One thing I did miss are the stories of the present. None of the chapters contains discussions of the interconnectedness of individual Mongolians beyond the nation-state shaped by current global processes of migration and communication nor tries to plot it on maps. In addition, it would have been good to have a conclusion

in which the editor drew on the rich material in the chapters to summarize its content. However, these omissions do not diminish the value of the book. *Mapping Mongolia* is essential reading not just for anyone interested in Mongolia, but perhaps more importantly, for those with Mongol identities.

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THE KOREAN STATE AND SOCIAL POLICY: How South Korea Lifted Itself from Poverty and Dictatorship to Affluence and Democracy. International Policy Exchange Series. By Stein Ringen et al. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011, vii. 137 pp. US\$49.95, cloth. ISBN 978-0-19-973435-1.

The Korean State and Social Policy is an excellent volume. Not particularly long (only 113 pages, not including notes and index), the book provides a fresh perspective on South Korea's social, political and economic development over the course of the postwar period to the present. As the authors point out, quite rightly, if one were to "go back to around 1950, not much was expected of East Asia. The region was seen as underdeveloped, lacking in resources and already overpopulated. Africa was then the arena of hope" (101); history has proven that prognostication clearly wrong. Much has already been written about East Asia's—and Korea's in particular—miracle and the developmental state. Ringen et al. nonetheless provide a provocative interpretation of Korea's development.

As a relatively short book, *The Korean State and Social Policy* does not offer new empirical evidence about Korea's postwar development. Rather, the authors reassemble what we already know but in ways which shed new light on Korea's political and economic transitions from authoritarian developmentalism to a democratic and increasingly robust welfare state. The authors revisit the state, the core actor in the book's analysis, through the lens of social policy, and find that though the authoritarian state cannot be forgiven "the ugliness of dictatorship" (102), one must nonetheless consider the significant, even if instrumental, investments of state power in social development. As the authors write, it "was in the interest of these governments to do good socially in order to prevent their populations from turning against them politically. When the autocrats in South Korea started very early to develop a welfare state there, this kind of purchase of legitimacy was very much what they were up to" (103).

For Ringen et al., leadership by the authoritarian developmental state should not be considered the exercise of power for itself, but rather evaluated in terms of governance, and in particular what they refer to as "mixed governance," or the strategic inclusion, when necessary, of other non-state actors. Authoritarian Korea, after all, was not Mobutu's Zaire, just as democratic Korea today is not Mugabe's Zimbabwe. Mixed governance