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*Natural Resources and the New Frontier: Constructing Modern China’s Borderlands.*

By JUDD KINZLEY. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2018. 244 pp. \$35.00 (Paper).

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Xinjiang, the new frontier of China, has drawn a great deal of international attention recently because of the persistent ethnic tension in the region. Following recent scholarship on Xinjiang, Judd Kinzley aspires to view Xinjiang’s contemporary dilemma from a material and historical perspective. Focusing on the local products and natural resources of Xinjiang, Kinzley argues that the infrastructure constructed to collect, process, and transport those resources are the all-too-often overlooked bones of state power and authority in the region (p. 8).

The book consists of two major parts. The first part starts with the fiscal crisis faced by late Qing officials in Xinjiang. Despite efforts to expand and consolidate agricultural resettlement in the late nineteenth century, this conventional approach to revenue generation was not very effective. Yet the arrival of foreign geologists and explorers uncovered the lucrative subterranean resources in Xinjiang, thus initiating a fundamental transformation of Xinjiang’s economy and its place in international trade. In contrast to the official Chinese narrative of “the century of humiliation,” Kinzley underlines the agency of Qing and Republican provincial officials, who had no better choice than to actively seek to utilize foreign capital and expertise to extract the mineral ores.

With the end of the Qing empire and rise of the Republic, the Chinese central government still lacked the financial resources or political will to assert its authority in Xinjiang. Without authorization from the central government, local authorities signed a series of agreements with the Soviet Union in exchange for loans and military aid. In the 1920s, it was the conventional local products, such as furs, belts, and wool that the Soviet traders were interested in. To guarantee its control over these local products, the Xinjiang government created a centralized institutional monopoly over local trade. By so doing, it sought to maintain the flow of financial and military assistance from the Soviets.

In Part Two, the focus shifts to the 1930s. The Soviet Union’s five-year plan led to an increasing demand for industrial minerals and petroleum. The Chinese Nationalist government also sought to make its territory more legible. Therefore, state planners of both the Soviet Union and the Chinese Republic began to view Xinjiang as a crucial part of their national strategy. To fuel the rapidly growing armament production and heavy industry, from the mid-1930s Stalin dispatched geological teams to Xinjiang to extract tin, beryllium, tantalum, and petroleum. Following the arrival of the Soviet geological teams, facilities to extract, process and transport these raw materials were built. In particular, the oil apparatus, which included drilling facilities, refinery operations, pipeline networks, and road systems, became one of the essential “layers” of the Soviet informal empire and later the Chinese nation-state.

In the early 1940s, in the wake of defeat on the battlefield against the Germans and the Japanese respectively, both the Soviet Union and the Chinese Republic tried to claim absolute control of

Xinjiang for its strategic raw materials. The simmering tension between the Chinese state and the Soviet “informal empire” finally led to the close of the Soviet–Xinjiang border and the “Three District Rebellion” against Han ethno-cultural domination in the region. The establishment of the People’s Republic of China in 1949, however, did not lead to the immediate end of the Soviet “informal empire” in Xinjiang. Soviet capital and technicians were still badly needed by the Chinese Communists. According to Kinzley, the nonferrous metal operation shipped everything it produced to the Soviet Union in the early 1950s to repay Soviet loans and technical assistance.

Furthermore, Kinzley suggests that the narrative of Xinjiang since 1949 has focused on the Production and Construction Corps, while overlooking the role of capital investments and industrial priorities (p. 152). Petroleum and nonferrous minerals have become the twin poles of resource extraction in Xinjiang. Based on the “layers” laid by the Russian and later Soviet geologists and planners, the author argues that sites such as Dushanzi have become the nodes of state power in Xinjiang, while the Production and Construction Corps have played only a supporting role. Indeed, these industrial sites deserve more attention from scholars. In addition to the comparison of state capital investments, the author’s argument would benefit from such details as the demographic changes and administrative relations to substantiate this part of his analysis.

In the conclusion, Kinzley incisively points out the connection between the economic inequalities in Xinjiang today and the spatial pattern of infrastructure shaped throughout history. The large scale state-sponsored inflow of Han migrants to those industrial and urban centers further complicated the economic disparity with ethnic tensions. There is no doubt that this solid study has successfully unveiled the historical “layers,” a geographic pattern of social and economic inequalities in Xinjiang. Yet this spatial inequality is not unique. We can see it in other parts of the world as well. Regardless of historical contingency or necessity, modern industrial systems and political forces together have shaped the world into a pattern of centers and peripheries.

The archival sources used in this work are impressive. These include archives in Beijing, Xinjiang, Moscow, and Taiwan. In addition to the voices of state leaders, local officials, industrial planners, and geologists, we are eager to hear the voices of thousands of Uyghur and Kazakh laborers, who, as Kinzley admits, are unrepresented in official archives. These archives better represent the voices of the Han Chinese people who migrated to Xinjiang to work on these mineral mines and oil fields. I believe the author would agree that the material dimension should not be restricted to the elites. It is also related to the daily life of the masses, and their voices could provide inspiration and even solutions to the socioeconomic challenges in Xinjiang.

In the end, considering the unsustainability of mineral resources and petroleum, the industrial towns in northern Xinjiang may face resource depletion and population outflow in the near future. Then a new question would emerge: will the withering of the historical “layers” foster an opportunity or another crisis for the Chinese state and Xinjiang?

*Cold War Encounters in US-Occupied Okinawa: Women, Militarized Domesticity, and Transnationalism in East Asia.* By MIRE KOIKARI. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015. 245 pp. £69.99 (Cloth).

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Mire Koikari’s *Cold War Encounters in US-Occupied Okinawa* examines US occupied Okinawa (1945–1972) and situates it within the Cold War context. Through a rigorous and nuanced