

family reunions provides essential insights into the present-day politics and sentiments that permeate these gatherings, including their use as political tools by both governments. This book would work well in both undergraduate and graduate courses that deal with such topics as the Korean War, postwar Korean society and family, and (post-)Cold War politics in the two Koreas.

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*To Stand with the Nations of the World: Japan's Meiji Restoration in World History.* By MARK RAVINA. New York: Oxford University Press, 2017. xiv, 312 pp. ISBN: 9780195327717 (cloth, also available as e-book).  
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Entrenched historical narratives defy change. Certainly, that is true of accounts of the Meiji Restoration, which long have focused on the impact of Westernization and modernization. Emory University's Mark Ravina is a defier, determined in this synthetic survey to demonstrate that other factors better explain Japan's transformation between the 1840s and 1881. His gives us neither new actors nor fresh sources. Rather, he impressively rereads and recasts the old material to provide new interpretations of what caused Japan's course change in the late Tokugawa and early Meiji years.

The central question people were asking then, he says, was: "How could the Japanese polity be turned into a Japanese nation-state?" (p. 7). For answers, he posits, people of all stripes looked everywhere—to the past, to the present, to the West, to the East, to Japan itself—driven by two sets of tensions: "radical nostalgia" that drew on olden times to justify innovation, and "cosmopolitan chauvinism" (p. 9) that tied Western ideas to Japan's own traditions. Explaining radical nostalgia, Ravina quotes new Meiji rulers who saw the "modern" military draft as a "return to ancient ways" (p. 5) and claimed that the powerful Tokugawa domains or *han* had been temporary, created to fill a power vacuum when the imperial institution declined. To illustrate cosmopolitan chauvinism, he shows anti-foreign writers insisting that models from "the contemporary West could help restore a lost Japanese past" (p. 81). One of the work's many astute observations is that these state builders had little reticence about adapting things from abroad, because they saw them not as foreign but as "'universal' best practices": "How could the benefits of 'civilization' possibly make Japan less Japanese?" (p. 9).

Ravina never equates contemporary practices with ancient ones. Premodern East Asian diplomacy, he shows, had demanded ambiguous borders and indirect rule, in contrast to the imperialist nineteenth-century world where "a single sovereign held exclusive political and legal power over a clearly delineated territory" (p. 55). Indeed, it was the inability to grasp adequately the rules of the radically new era that caused the shogunate's collapse. But his argument is that nearly all Japanese actors in the challenging environment of the 1800s drew on whatever practices they found useful, regardless of origin. The loyalist Yoshida Shōin would "repel the Western 'barbarians' by emulating Napoleon" (p. 114), and the early Meiji leaders would justify expansionism by drawing on the "global isomorphism" of Asia's eighth century (p. 205).

Ravina's recasting provides constant fresh insights. It shows that Matthew Perry's 1853 visit created less short-term shock than old narratives suggest, it repositions the late Tokugawa government as a vital regime that anticipated many of the Meiji reforms, and it makes clear that officials who stayed home while the Iwakura Mission was abroad from 1871 to 1873 were far more than caretakers. The analysis of why the "demoralized, disorganized, and seduced" daimyo "quietly faded from the scene" in 1871 ploughs new soil (p. 134). The picture of Ōkubo Toshimichi's people-be-damned approach to governance in the mid-1870s is vivid. And the contention that 1881, when gradualists ousted progressives from the government, "marked the end of the Meiji Revolution" (p. 203) is persuasive.

The work occasionally appears overly eager in its determination to revise—and that leads to some omissions and distortions. In arguing that the Tokugawa's "closed country ... policy emerged only in the 1790s" (p. 58), Ravina sloughs off the intentional exclusion of most foreigners in the early Tokugawa years. His concentration on political thinkers obscures the role strategy and power played in mid-century struggles. He pays scant attention to things that rightly belong in the *bakumatsu*/Meiji narrative: the leadership debates following Perry's initial visit; the unrest created by the radical "loyalist partisans, commonly called shishi" (p. 99); the 1868 Restoration itself; and the roles of leaders like Kido Takayoshi (not even mentioned in a sparse index!) who balanced Ōkubo. Moreover, the heavy emphasis on politics deprives his narrative of much of the dynamism that made this era vibrant, such as the changes in daily life, the personalities (and youthfulness) of the nation-shakers, and the explosion of cultural forms.

As political history, however, *To Stand with the Nations of the World* makes a powerful contribution. Challenging tired dichotomies (Japan versus the West, tradition versus modernity), Ravina provides a provocative framework for seeing the middle decades of the 1800s as a single whole in which leaders on all sides were determined to take "universal" practices from both the contemporary West and their own past to create a strong nation-state. "The revolutionary force of the Meiji Revolution," he concludes, "came from ... the resolute sense that the ancient past could guide the future and that universal truths could enhance and advance local virtue" (p. 214).

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*Figuring Korean Futures: Children's Literature in Modern Korea.* By DAFNA ZUR. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2017. xii, 286 pp. ISBN: 9781503601680 (cloth, also available as e-book). doi:10.1017/S0021911818002838

Dafna Zur's *Figuring Korean Futures: Children's Literature in Modern Korea* introduces us to the kaleidoscopic world of Korean children's literature from 1908 to 1950. As the first book-length English-language study of Korean children's literature, it covers a truly impressive range of primary and secondary materials. Zur sets forth the scope of her research as "poetry, prose, illustrations, and miscellaneous textual forms published in children's magazines or newspaper columns aimed at young readers" (p. 6), but her discussion at times spills over to even more diverse texts, such as a collection of translated folktales (p. 83) and a radio script (p. 129). Her main argument is that colonial-era Korean