

**AAS 2020 Annual Conference  
March 19-22, 2020  
Sheraton Boston Hotel  
Boston, Massachusetts**



**AAS PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS  
AND  
AWARDS CEREMONY**

**Friday, March 20, 2020 | 5:45pm-7:30pm**

**The Association for Asian Studies  
[www.asianstudies.org](http://www.asianstudies.org)**

<b>I. AAS OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>II. STUDENT PAPER PRIZES</b>	
China & Inner Asia Council (CIAC)	4
Northeast Asia (NEAC)	4
South Asia Council (SAC)	5
Southeast Asia Council (SEAC)	5
<b>III. AAS BOOK PRIZES</b>	
Joseph Levenson Book Prize (Pre-1900 China)	6
Joseph Levenson Book Prize (Post-1900 China)	7
E. Gene Smith Prize (Inner Asia)	8
Patrick D. Hanan Prize (Translation)	9
John Whitney Hall Book Prize (Japan)	10
James B. Palais Book Prize (Korea)	11
Bernard S. Cohn Book Prize (First book on South Asia)	12
A.K. Coomaraswamy Book Prize (South Asia)	13
A.K. Ramanujan Book Prize (South Asia)	14
Harry J. Benda Prize (First book on Southeast Asia)	15
Franklin R. Buchanan Prize for Curricular Materials	16
<b>IV. DISTINGUISHED CONTRIBUTIONS TO ASIAN STUDIES AWARD</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>IV. DISTINGUISHED SERVICE TO THE ASSOCIATION FOR ASIAN STUDIES AWARD</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>V. PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS</b>	<b>19</b>



# *The Association for Asian Studies*

## **OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION**

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**Christine R. Yano**, *University of Hawaii* (Vice President)

**Anne Feldhaus**, *Arizona State University* (Past President)

**Katherine Bowie**, *University of Wisconsin-Madison* (Past Past President)

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**Hilary V. Finchum-Sung**, AAS Executive Director (Ex-Officio)

## CHINA AND INNER ASIA COUNCIL

**GAVIN HEALY**, *Columbia University*

*Visual Culture and the Tourism Industry in Mao-Era China: 'Scenery Export'?*

Gavin Healy's paper incisively explores the changing connotations of tourism in the Mao years from the 1950s through the 1970s. In this period tourism conceived as 'scenery export' not only transmuted into an acceptable source of desired foreign income, but also shifted from a worryingly individualised, elite luxury to a cautiously fostered bourgeois group activity. Healy's discussion of the Mao-era debate about the ideological status of tourism points towards the later acceptance of modern mass tourism as a suitable activity for a socialist economy and society.

**SARAH XIA YU**, *University of Pennsylvania*

*Spitting in the Settlement: Public Nuisance, Health, and Sovereignty in Shanghai, 1911–1941*

Sarah Xia Yu takes up public discourses concerning prohibitions against public spitting by ethnic Chinese in the Shanghai International Settlement in the period following the end of the Qing dynasty and prior to the Japanese military occupation. She insightfully draws on newspapers, pamphlets, and local government reports to show how a seemingly simple matter of hygiene is entangled in broader concerns with modernity, self-governance, and moral norms.

Selection Committee: Jack Chen, *University of Virginia*  
Naomi Standen, *University of Birmingham*

## NORTHEAST ASIA COUNCIL

**YOUJIA LI**, *Northwestern University*

*Push-car Railways in the Japanese Empire: Colonialism, Technology, and the Spatial Construction in Colonial Taiwan*

Youjia Li highlights the historical role that the human-powered railway played in bringing together local entrepreneurial interests and forging new regional connections in colonial Taiwan. Li's nuanced study carefully portrays the new spatial arrangements, which deeply resonated with the larger colonial dynamics. The essay is well supported by deep archival research and notable in its effort to situate what at first sight appears a peculiar local development in a larger colonial context.

Selection Committee: Nayoung Aimee Kwon, *Duke University*  
Yoshikuni Igarashi, *Vanderbilt University*

## SOUTH ASIA COUNCIL

**GERJAN ALTENBERG**, *McMaster University*

*Some Problems with the Theravāda-Vinaya as a Textual Source for the Study of Abortion*

Gerjan Altenberg's paper is a meticulously argued cautionary tale about the unmediated and unresearched use of ancient texts to support modern ethical positions. We unanimously selected it as our top choice for its clearly laid out and well developed argument, its deft use and discussion of textual sources, and its simultaneous contributions to the fields of Buddhist ethics and contemporary debates on abortion and reproductive justice. Altenburg mines a range of Vinaya texts, as well as their commentaries in Sanskrit, Pali, and Tibetan, to show that modern Western concerns with contemporary bio-ethical issues like abortion cannot meaningfully be aided by recourse to texts written specifically for monks, or by having Theravada prescriptions stand in for all of Buddhist ethics. Emphasizing the critical importance of attending to genre, audience and ambiguity in the interpretation of texts, the author reminds us not to apply these prescriptions to US politics without due context. This paper derives from work done for the author's 2014 MA thesis at McMaster University.

Selection Committee: Srimati Basu, *University of Kentucky*  
Rachel McDermott, *Barnard College*

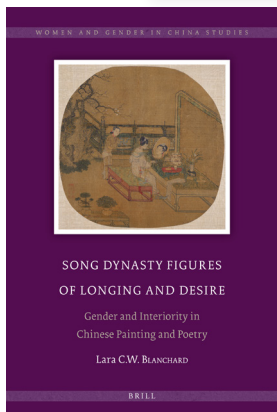
## SOUTHEAST ASIA COUNCIL

**CINDY NGUYEN**, *UC Berkeley*

*The Social Life of the Hanoi Central Library: Reading Cultures & Public Space, 1919-1941*

Cindy Nguyen's paper offers a nuanced and compelling investigation into the role played by the public library in a critical period in Hanoi's history, looking not only at the ideological goals of the library's builders and operators, but also the dynamic ways in which local students and readers reinscribed the space. As Nguyen writes, the library was transformed from being "a storehouse of knowledge" to a public space of Vietnamese sociability.

Selection Committee: Jane Ferguson, *The Australian National University*  
Yosef Djakababa, *Universitas Pelita Harapan*  
Eric Thompson, *National University of Singapore*



## JOSEPH LEVENSON BOOK PRIZE (Pre-1900 China)

**LARA BLANCHARD**

*Song Dynasty Figures of Longing and Desire: Gender and Interiority in Chinese Painting and Poetry*

Brill, 2018

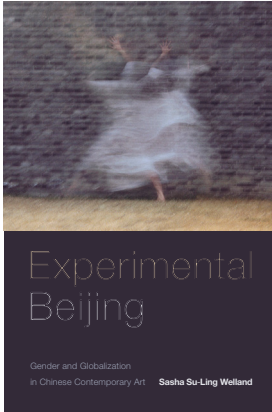
Lara C. W. Blanchard's *Song Dynasty Figures of Longing and Desire: Gender and Interiority in Chinese Painting and Poetry* is a triumph of intertextual and intervisual methods in gender studies. Blanchard investigates Song-dynasty images of lovelorn women and objectified females, traditionally seen as a type of genre scene or prurient subject matter. Instead, she asks serious questions about deeper content. What kinds of functions could paintings of women in love serve? Why were themes of interiority so resonant? Which groups constituted their intended audience? Looking at lyrics and paintings produced by women, Blanchard interrogates representations of emotions in painting and poetry. She interprets certain male-produced pictures containing images of female sexual desire through the lens of allegory and political symbolism, showing how men's emotions represented by female figures parallel interpretations of love poetry as political commentary. Blanchard argues that other images of women represent sites of projected feelings by male artists and audiences. Finally, she imagines female audiences and their reception of images of court women as behavioral ideals. Blanchard arrives at her nuanced interpretations of the text-and-image tradition of the female figure as a site of interiority through detailed research into literature and history synthesized with close readings of famous ancient paintings. Her trenchant analyses of the possible audiences and functions of these works and themes serve as a model for how to write women back into the histories of art and literature in pre-modern times.

### Honorable Mention:

**Wen-Shing Chou.** *Mount Wutai: Visions of a Sacred Buddhist Mountain.* Princeton University, 2018

**Ori Sela.** *China's Philological Turn: Scholars, Textualism, and the Dao in the 18th Century.* Columbia University, 2018

Selection Committee: Amy McNair (Chair), *University of Kansas*  
Yuming He, *University of California, Davis*  
Robert Wue, *University of California, Irvine*



## JOSEPH LEVENSON BOOK PRIZE (Post-1900 China)

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**SASHA WELLAND**

*Experimental Beijing. Gender and Globalization in Chinese Contemporary Art*

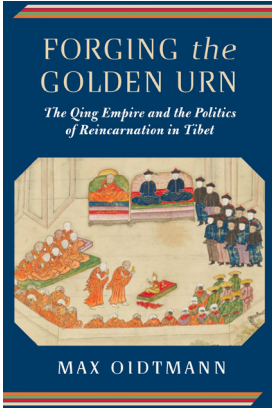
Duke University Press, 2018

In *Experimental Beijing*, Sasha Welland deploys the tools and perspectives of art history, ethnography, and gender studies to give us a vivid description of avantgarde artistic practice in Beijing since the 1990s, with a specific emphasis on the practice of feminist art and artists. Theoretically informed yet never overburdened with theoretical jargon, detailed yet engagingly written, *Experimental Beijing* re-situates Chinese artists and their production vis-à-vis the global circuits of art curation, Western feminism, Chinese male production, and the historical tradition of women's activism. By tracing these connections and tensions, Welland innovatively highlights the subjectivity of Chinese artists and forces us to rethink the emergence of Chinese contemporary art in relation to the global art scene while describing its role in defining the space of Beijing. Her book is essential reading for art historians, anthropologists, scholars of gender, and those interested in urban studies.

### Honorable Mention:

**Gao Hua.** *How the Red Sun Rose: The Origin and Development of the Yan'an Rectification Movement, 1930–1945*, translated by Stacy Mosher and Guo Jian. The Chinese University of Hong Kong Press, 2018

Selection Committee: Gerda Wielander (Chair), *University of Westminster*  
Madeleine Yue Dong, *University of Washington*  
Fabio Lanza, *University of Arizona*



## E. GENE SMITH PRIZE (Inner Asia)

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**MAX OIDTMANN**

*Forging the Golden Urn: The Qing Empire and the Politics of Reincarnation in Tibet*

Columbia University Press, 2018

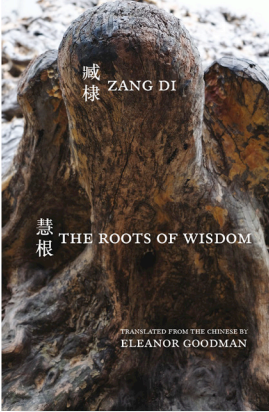
This book is a much-needed addition to the fields of Inner Asian history and early modern Asian studies in general. Drawing together evidence from an impressive range of sources – many hitherto unexplored – in Tibetan, Chinese, and Manchu, Oidtmann develops a complex portrayal of how Qing rulers and Tibetan leaders melded their interests through both conflict and negotiation in reforming the procedures and practices that governed decisions on the reincarnation of high lamas in Tibet. The so-called “Golden Urn lottery” has been standing at the heart of controversies over questions of authority and political, religious and cultural autonomy, and Oidtmann is the first to offer a comprehensive treatment of this sensitive and still-pertinent topic. In addition, the author also provides highly useful appendices, including chronologies, original translations, and a “List of Usages of the Golden Urn.” The book is essential reading for students of Tibetan history, Qing imperialism, and Sino-Tibetan relations from the late eighteenth century to the present.

### Honorable Mention:

**Charlene Makley.** *The Battle for Fortune: State-Led Development, Personhood, and Power among Tibetans in China.* Cornell University Press, 2018

Selection Committee: Ron Sela (Chair), *Indiana University*  
Ruth Dunnell, *Kenyon College*  
Loretta Kim, *University of Hong Kong*





## PATRICK D. HANAN PRIZE (Translation)

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**ELEANOR GOODMAN**

*Roots of Wisdom by Zang Di*

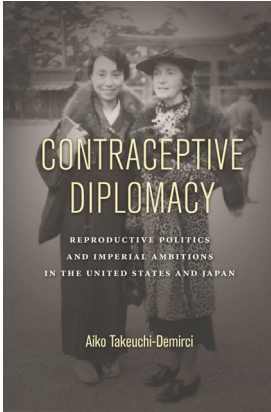
Zephyr Press, 2017

Eleanor Goodman's translations of *The Roots of Wisdom* invite us to linger, reread, and discover. The translator's learned and eloquent introduction also places Zang Di's work in a broader frame of world poetry. As a whole, these poems represent some of the finest translations of poetry being published today.

### Honorable Mention:

**Michael Berry.** *Remains of Life by Wu He.* Columbia University Press, 2017

Selection Committee: Michael Gibbs Hill (Chair), *College of William & Mary*  
William H. Nienhauser, Jr, *University of Wisconsin*  
Chaohua Wang, Independent Scholar



## JOHN WHITNEY HALL PRIZE (Japan)

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**AIKO TAKEUCHI-DEMIRCI**

*Contraceptive Diplomacy: Reproductive Politics and Imperial Ambitions in the United States and Japan*

Stanford University Press, 2018

Aiko Takeuchi-Demirci's *Contraceptive Diplomacy: Reproductive Politics and Imperial Ambitions in the United States and Japan* (Stanford University Press) deserves the prize this year. It impressed the panel as an innovative and comprehensive study of the transformations of birth control discourse over time. Rich in detail and broad in coverage with a transnational approach that suits its subject, *Contraceptive Diplomacy* places Japan in the contexts of the global history of gender studies, racial eugenics, population policy, and imperialism. The book provides a fresh sense of the twentieth century through its exposition of the interwoven fabric of the history of feminism and international relations, revealing the inextricable links and extended interactions between Japanese and U.S. birth control activists. By placing Japan in a broader global context and showing scholars of other locales why they need to pay attention to Japan in terms of this immensely important yet understudied topic, *Contraceptive Diplomacy* will appeal to both Japanologists and those well beyond our field.

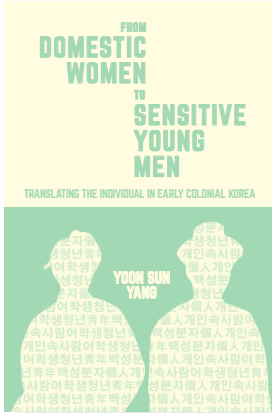
### Honorable Mention:

**Maren A. Ehlers.** *Give and Take: Poverty and the Status Order in Early Modern Japan*. Harvard University Press, 2018

### Selection Committee: Jonathan Abel (Chair), *Penn State University*

Kim Brandt, *Columbia University*

Bryan Lowe, *Princeton University*



## JAMES B. PALAIS PRIZE (Korea)

YOON SUN YANG

*From Domestic Women to Sensitive Young Men: Translating the Individual in Early Colonial Korea*

Harvard University Press, 2017

*From Domestic Women to Sensitive Young Men: Translating the Individual in Early Colonial Korea* is a brilliant work of literary analysis that interweaves Korean and Japanese literary theory, gender studies, and modern Korean history. Yoon Sun Yang explores a neglected but crucial corpus of novels known as ‘New Fiction’ developed by reformed-minded male writers during the early years of Japanese colonial influence. This eloquent book upends the conventional European standard by which literary modernity in Korea has been evaluated and instead uncovers female figures as the earliest iterations of the Korean individual actively engaged in translating individuality and selfhood, while imagining the nation’s future. The analysis shows that the repression that made the explicitly political novel impossible fostered a genre of domestic fiction through which the traumas and tensions of the transition to a “modern” society began to be thrashed out. Peopled not by exemplary individuals but by rather unstable, ambivalent, and transgressive characters, *From Domestic Women to Sensitive Young Men* compellingly shows how the novels question and unsettle existing structures of patriarchy, gender relations, and the notion of modernity itself while being intimately shaped by colonial structures of power.

This superb work of comparative literature traces the uneven emergence of the individual in early colonial Korean literary fiction. Taking as her subject a body of novels written and published after Japan’s 1905 imperial takeover of Korea, Yang shows that these long disdained literary works bring into relief the very question of modernity in colonial cultural life. Peopled not by exemplary individuals but by rather unstable, ambivalent, and transgressive female characters, Yang shows how the novels question and unsettle existing structures of patriarchy and gender relations while being intimately shaped by colonial structures of power.

### Honorable Mention:

**Hwansoo Ilmee Kim.** *The Korean Buddhist Empire.* Harvard University Press, 2018

### Selection Committee: Eujung Kim (Chair), *Syracuse University*

Ruth Barraclough, *The Australian National University*

Steven Hugh Lee, *University of British Columbia*



## BERNARD S. COHN PRIZE (First book on South Asia)

SOHINI KAR

*Financializing Poverty: Labor and Risk in Indian Microfinance*

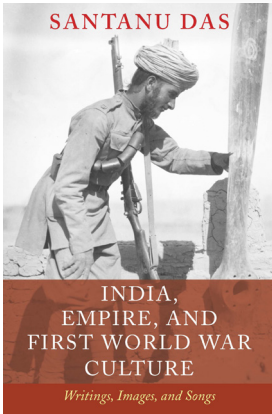
Stanford University Press, 2018

Sohini Kar's *Financializing Poverty* is a remarkable study of neoliberalism's leading edge, the story of how Indian banks and microfinance institutions (MFIs) wring profit from the struggles of poor women by enlisting them in networks of mutual surveillance and control. Kar's heartbreaking ethnography brings to life not just the impossible situation of microfinance's victims, but the complex motives and ethical dilemmas of loan officers who see themselves as agents of emancipation and women's empowerment. Where the former are driven in some cases to "collateralize life" itself, only to discover that even death is no escape if life insurance policies they've been pressured into buying fail to pay, the latter struggle with the mismatch between their mission and the realities around them. Paved with good intentions, the theory of poverty alleviation through "financial inclusion" pushed by the IMF, World Bank, and leading Indian political parties since the nineteen-nineties depends, Kar shows, on the flawed premise that every woman can be an entrepreneur. Far from liberating poor women, *Financializing Poverty* reveals how the extension of market relations into everyday life pits them against one another, reinforcing traditional patriarchy while binding women to global financial networks as they simply try to get by.

### Honorable Mention:

**Ananya Chakravart**, *Empire of Apostles. Religion, Accomodatio, and the Imagination of Empire in Early Modern Brazil and India*. Oxford University Press (India), 2018

Selection Committee: Nathaniel Roberts (Chair), Georg-August-Universität Göttingen  
Anna Stirr, University of Hawai'i at Manoa  
Neilesh Bose, University of Victoria



## A.K. COOMARASWAMY PRIZE (South Asia)

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**SANTANU DAS**

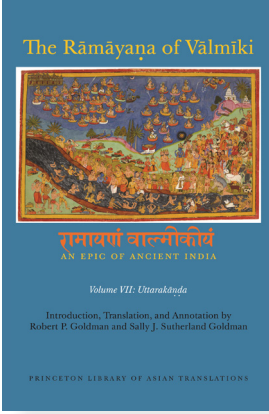
*India, Empire, and First World War  
Culture: Writings, Images, and Songs*

Cambridge University Press, 2018

*India, Empire, and First World War Culture* by Santanu Das opens up a seemingly well-studied historical period to new questions and perspectives by locating and analyzing far flung photographs, phonographic recordings, paintings, diaries, poems, songs, and even censored letters to illuminate lives, experiences, and representations of Indian sepoys deployed overseas on behalf of the British Empire during WWI. By pioneering ways to interpret a new set of oral and visual materials (along with written materials), he reveals sensual and emotional aspects of the war experience for combatants and non-combatants. By refusing to over-simplify diverse evidence, he interprets his materials with the complexity that they deserve.

Das contributes significantly to understanding various aspects of subaltern consciousness among these original subalterns, making it possible to complicate presumptions made about subalterns, who have been the subject of relatively recent revisionist Indian historiography. He also examines the diversity of their treatment ranging from welcomes into local families to stigmatized and isolated from other groups. Das assesses their struggles and sacrifice, given that they were often willing participants in the war, part of a wider Indian effort to prove their loyalty to the British but also that they received insufficient weapons to protect them under fire. Das considers cosmopolitanism not just as the commingling of intellectuals, languages, and ideas but of bodies hurled against each other on the battlefield.

Selection Committee: Paula Richman (Chair), *Oberlin College*  
Naveeda Khan, *Johns Hopkins University*  
Cynthia Talbot, *University of Texas at Austin*



## A.K. RAMANUJAN PRIZE (South Asia)

Introduction, Translation, and Annotation by  
**ROBERT P. GOLDMAN AND SALLY J.  
SUTHERLAND GOLDMAN**

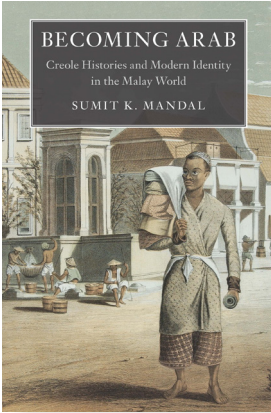
*The Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, An Epic of  
Ancient India, Vol. VII: Uttarakāṇḍa*

Princeton University Press, 2017

The translation of the *Uttarakāṇḍa* of the Sanskrit *Rāmāyaṇa* of Vālmīki by Robert P. Goldman and Sally J. Sutherland Goldman is the winner of the 2020 A. K. Ramanujan Prize for Translation. The tale of Rāma and Sītā is arguably the most significant text of ancient Indic literary culture; its seventh book, *Uttarakāṇḍa*, is easily the most controversial. Based on the critical edition prepared by the Oriental Institute of Baroda, the Goldmans have rendered the text with precision, with a clarity and grace that makes its narrative literary and accessible. For those wanting more, the text is a translator's translation, a gift of high scholasticism, with its extensive introduction outlining the critical and contentious issues surrounding this last book of the epic, voluminous notes which trace and translate alternative and vulgate passages, and close readings of commentaries stretching over the last millennium. It even includes a meticulous genealogy of the antagonist Rāvana's *rākṣasa* lineage. The production is breathtakingly comprehensive.

The publication of the *Uttarakāṇḍa* brings to fruition five decades of the Goldmans's active engagement translating the text entire. The committee wishes to recognize their intrepid effort to oversee the project, a labor of love that was officially inaugurated in the 1970s, the first volume appearing in 1984. The project enlisted several collaborators: Sheldon Pollock, Rosalind Lefebvre, and B. A. van Nooten. While this year's prize is awarded to the seventh and final volume of this effort, we must salute the achievements of the team and Princeton University Press' half-century commitment to see through this monumental translation.

Selection Committee: Tony K. Stewart (Chair), *Vanderbilt University*  
Sunil Sharma, *Boston University*  
Elaine Fisher, *Princeton University*



## HARRY J. BENDA PRIZE (First Book on Southeast Asia)

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**SUMIT MANDAL**

*Becoming Arab: Creole Histories and Modern Identity in the Malay World*

Cambridge University Press, 2018

Sumit Mandal's *Becoming Arab: Creole Histories and Modern Identity in the Malay World* (2018) is a powerful and important work of history, the result of prodigious archival research. Beyond its importance in challenging conventional understandings of the category 'Arab' in the Malay world, it suggests new ways of thinking about the project of colonial racial categorization more broadly. Mandal importantly argues that most scholarship assumes that racial categorizations deployed in postcolonial nations stemmed from colonial practices aimed at dividing populations in order to rule them. He upends this argument by breaking down what the category, *Arab*, meant in historical contexts prior to, during, and after Dutch colonial rule. In particular, Mandal's argument that colonial racial categories are not 'totalizing' but are subject to reinterpretation and subversion, encourages the reader to think hard about the historical processes through which such racial categories come to exist, and shift over time. Working from Malay, Dutch, French and English language sources, this is a book whose importance will center the field of Southeast Asian studies in broader conversations about creole histories and racializing area studies.

Honorable Mention:

**Jun Juno Parreñas**, *Decolonizing Extinction: The Work of Care in Orangutan Rehabilitation*. Duke University Press, 2018

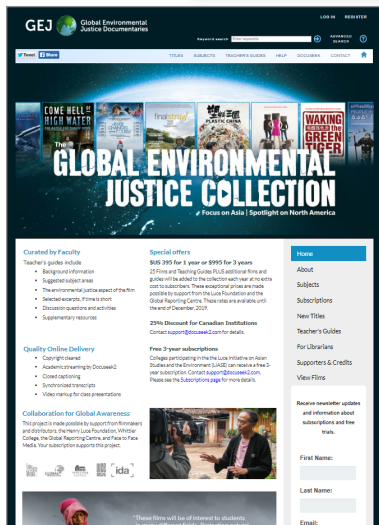
Selection Committee: Celia Lowe (Chair), *University of Washington*

Erik Harms, *Yale University*

Tamara Loos, *Cornell University*

Geoff Robinson, *University of California, Los Angeles*





## FRANKLIN R. BUCHANAN PRIZE FOR CURRICULAR MATERIALS

**JASON A CARBINE, GARY MARCUSE,  
AND REBECCA OVERMYER-  
VELÁZQUEZ**

*Global Environmental Justice Collection*  
<http://gej.docuseek2.com/>

Face to Face Media, 2019

The *Global Environmental Justice Collection* is a collection of twenty-five films, most of which focus on Asia that seek to promote environmental literacy and justice with a global perspective. Selected and curated by faculty members at universities around the US, the *Global Environmental Justice Collection* serves as a clearinghouse for films that may be difficult to obtain. The collection also provides comprehensive Teacher's Guides to accompany most of its films. In addition to providing a synopsis of the film, these Teacher's Guides include crucial background and contextual information while highlighting the environmental justice aspects for the film. They provide discussion questions and suggested activities that relate to the themes, contexts, and issues explored in each film. With a realization of the in-class time constraints that teachers face, many of the Teacher's Guides for the longer films have "short version" viewing recommendations that detail some specific and pertinent excerpts from the films. While the films in the collection are made available through a subscription, the accompanying Teacher's Guides are downloadable for free. Although the *Global Environmental Justice Collection* is primarily geared towards college undergraduate students, many of the films and supporting materials are suitable for middle and high school students.

Selection Committee: Patrick W. Hughes (Chair), *University of Pittsburgh*  
Jared Hall, *Hotchkiss School*  
Duane Johansen, *The Excel Center Kokomo*  
Arnold P. Kaminsky, *California State University, Long Beach*  
Emily Rook-Koepsel, *University of Pittsburgh*



**PATRICIA BUCKLEY EBREY**

Williams Family Endowed Professor of History at  
the *University of Washington*



Patricia Buckley Ebrey is the Williams Family Endowed Professor of History at the University of Washington. Over her distinguished career, she has published five monographs and two book-length translations, edited eight collections of essays, and authored or co-authored general audience histories of China, East Asia, and world societies, as well as two editions of a sourcebook on China for undergraduate teaching. She is also the author of over seventy journal articles and book chapters. A number of her works have been translated into other languages, including Chinese, German, Korean, and Spanish.

While Ebrey is best known as a Song historian, her work has inspired entire areas of study, with groundbreaking works on social class and kinship organization; ritual and religious culture; women's history and family property; art, visibility, and material culture; emperorship and court culture; and funerary inscriptions. By editing or co-editing volumes of scholarly work, and by providing translations and reproductions of primary materials, she has dedicated herself to developing the historical study of China both in terms of research and teaching. Finally, her textbooks have introduced countless undergraduates and general audience readers to Chinese and East Asian history.

The Association of Asian Studies is pleased to present Patricia Buckley Ebrey with the 2020 Award for Distinguished Contributions to Asian Studies.

**THOMAS G. RAWSKI**

Professor Emeritus of Economics and History at the  
*University of Pittsburgh*



Thomas G. Rawski is Professor Emeritus of Economics and History at the University of Pittsburgh. Rawski is among the foremost economists and economic historians of China. Scholars of China have followed his distinguished publication record since the early 1970s when he completed his Ph.D. at Harvard University. Rawski has received many awards for his work and served on innumerable national and international boards and committees.

There are few members of AAS who have served as conscientiously and sincerely in the interests of the Association. With his vast knowledge and experience, he has contributed significantly to the governance of AAS for almost forty years.

His AAS service includes:

- Elected to Board of Directors and China/Inner Asia Council, Association for Asian Studies, 1982-85
- Nominating Committee, 1984-85
- Program Committee, 1985-88
- AAS Budget Committee, 1998-2007
- Elected to China and Inner Asia Council, Association for Asian Studies, 2008-2011
- Finance Committee, 2002 to the present
- Chair, Finance Committee, 2010 to the present

With deepest appreciation, we present Thomas G. Rawski with the Award for Distinguished Service to the Association for Asian Studies.

**PRASENJIT DUARA**

*Duke University*  
AAS President, 2019-2020



***The Art of Convergent Comparison—  
China and India in Modern Times***

Convergent comparisons refer to the ways in which circulatory global forces are institutionalized in different societies. Historical forces have circulated—transmuting as they circulate—since the rise of empires in Eurasia; but the pace of circulation has accelerated since the mid-19th century. What I call the zone of convergence is the impact of circulatory forces that demand a response; the various regional and national responses, in turn, form the basis of convergent comparison. This presentation seeks to develop the methodology by comparing the role of visual culture in China and India.



## *Association for Asian Studies*

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