INTRODUCTION

I am honored to provide the Foreword to this volume.

Race in Asia remains understudied, although the situation is improving slowly. Social science scholarship at a global level has tended to see race and racism as "western problems," and has evinced a general lack of interest in Asian racialities: in China, India, Japan, and elsewhere. This combines with (and in many ways results from) the West's endemic racism towards Asia.

Indeed the West has always looked at Asia through racist eyes. Although western views are not the principal subject of this book, it is necessary to acknowledge their influence. Anti-Asian racism has taken many different forms in the West; this is so well-known that it requires little documentation here. Eugenics, Orientalism, imperialism, slavery and abusive labor policies, assaults and degradations of Asian women, and domestic racisms practiced against Asian immigrants and their descendants in all the European and American countries (even in Africa) provide ample evidence of this. Western racisms have infected various Asian countries as well, often as a result of imperial projects, war, migration flows, and through economic processes. Though not negligible, these adopted attitudes and practices -- Negrophobia, anti-semitism, and so on -- are far less endemic in Asia than they are at home.

Yet, as the contributions to this book make clear, race and racism operate autonomously across Asia as well. They are not only imported from the West.

So what is meant by venturing "beyond the western paradigm"? Both comparative and nationally-oriented approaches are needed. The issues are multiple. We are examining race in the most populous territories on earth, and the loci of some of the world's most venerable civilizations. Even leaving modern western imperialisms aside, we see that conquest and empire -- racializing social forces par excellence -- have swept through much of Asia for millennia.¹ In many cases, excluded and stigmatized groups are demarcated by caste, rather than by phenomic criteria: the quasi-racial categories Dalit in India, Burakumin in Japan, and Paekjeong in Korea exemplify such designations. Equally relevant: despite all the warfare, imperialism, slavery, mass migration, exclusion, and genocide
that has taken place across Asia, substantial areas also remain indigenous. Indigeneity is also prone to racialization. Adivasi in India, Turkic peoples in China, numerous Igorot groups in the Phillipines, Acehnese and many other peoples in Indonesia, and Ainu in Japan are examples here. These terms are often blanket categories, themselves encompassing many distinct peoples with their own languages, cultures, and territories. Asian indigeneity is both widespread and varied.

To study race in Asia, or indeed anywhere else, we must have a global perspective. From the theoretical standpoint, race cannot be divided or sectioned off. Just as we understand Blackness in relation to Whiteness, settler in relation to native, slave in relation to free, we must approach different areas of the world relationally, with a fundamentally sound set of theoretical tools: I refer of course to racial formation theory.

To approach racial studies via any discipline -- sociology, history, literary studies, philosophy -- is to address how racial meanings are made. It is now widely accepted that race is “socially constructed.” But this recognition is merely a starting-point for our explanatory work. Race remains unstable, as indeed the race-concept remains unstable, because of the ineluctable presence of the racial body. The body, phenomic, corporeal, ocular, reproductive, intersectional (that is, classed, sexed, and gendered), and now the genomic body as well, limits and complicates the social construction dynamic.

**Racial Formation Theory**

Omi and I argue that racial formation processes occur through a linkage between social structure and racial (that is, phenomic or corporeal) representation. Identities and interests are represented (or signified) in respect to human bodies; these “embodied” racial meanings reciprocally become embedded in social structures (Omi and Winant 2015). There is an inescapable tension, we suggest, between the social construction of race and the phenomic dimension of racialization. This results in constant blurring of the boundaries between race and ethnicity, race and nationality, and race and class. These three “paradigms” of race all reduce the concept, linking racialization to their preferred framework of social structuration: cultural phenomena such as religion and language ( ethnicity), political unity and sometimes territoriality (nationality), and economic positionality (class). Each of these paradigms, so to speak, “claims” the racial body.

But just as race cannot be contained within these three reductionist paradigms, neither can race be contained within phenomic boundaries. What is Black, what is White, what is Yellow, what is Yamato, Han, or Hangook? No attempts to demarcate human beings racially, to specify ineluctable racial boundaries, whether in terms of individual or group identities, can be successful (Barth 1998
Human beings differentiate and integrate, they segregate and assimilate, they migrate, they subjugate others and emancipate themselves, they transgress boundaries, and they interbreed. Historically and in the present, groups considered "ethnic" have been racialized, while racial distinctions have been reframed as ethnic ones. It may seem paradoxical or even irrational, but as lived experience, as a matter of praxis, race still remains a foundational social category, a predominant component of human identity. Despite all its uncertainties as a social scientific concept, despite its seemingly permanent instability, race continues to shape the social world.

The meanings of race, Omi and I argue, are composed and recomposed by sociohistorical processes that are politically driven. Racial concepts, identities, and social structures are produced by war and peace, social inequality, cultural framing (what john a. powell calls "othering and belonging"), and movement-state relationships. But of course that configuration, whatever it may be -- inclusive, tolerant, and egalitarian or exclusive, aversive, and unequal, or more likely an uneven melange of these and other political "flavors" -- will itself be unstable, prone to deterioration or rapid meltdown.

APPROACHING ASIAN RACIALITIES

This book's great achievement is that it addresses Asian racialities from a variety of racial formation-oriented perspectives. Of course I am not sure if all the authors included here would accept such a designation....

Yasuko Takezawa, this volume's editor, has been steadily developing her own comparative theory of race, an important contribution that overlaps in important ways with the racial formation approach. She has proposed a three-part definition of race, suggesting three interrelated dimensions:

--"race" (lower-case "r"): everyday notions of race, heritable (thereby corporeally oriented) and unchanging;
--"Race" (upper-case "R"): scientific conceptions and approaches, both those based in the natural sciences and in the social sciences;
-- "Race as Resistance" ("RR"): opposition based among racial "minorities themselves," that challenges discrimination and mobilizes "identity politics" (Takezawa 2011, 9).

This framework has a lot to offer and merits a more extended critical engagement than I can provide here. Still, I recognize and applaud some of the key components of Takezawa's formulation. She emphasizes the presence of race and racism across historical epochs as well as in comparative settings, thereby rejecting the commonly-held notion that race is entirely a "modern" concept, born of the appearance of the capitalist world-system, the Enlightenment, European imperial conquest, and so on. She judiciously navigates the terrain of the body, of
phenomic raciality, emphasizing the naturalization of socially-based differences. She thereby establishes that the corporeal dimensions of race -- color for example, or eye-shape, or for that matter the human genome -- do not exhaust the potentialities of racialization. This important point is developed both in her own theoretical framework and in many of the case studies presented here.

Takezawa also makes room for historical developments and movement shifts: notably the racially framed self-activity that she designates as "RR," which shapes racial identities in ways deeply compatible with a racial formation approach. For example, when B.R. Ambedkar led more than half a million Dalit to convert to Buddhism in 1956, thereby repudiating the Indian caste system, he and they were incontrovertibly engaging in what Omi and I would call a racial project. This amazing mass movement action was an eruption of racial politics, but of course it went beyond race: The intersectionality of this event is apparent: it was not only a repudiation of the categorization of "untouchability," but also a religious, class-based, and gender-oriented intervention (Maitland 2019).² No wonder that the Dalit have politically mobilized so profoundly since that moment (Rawat and Satyanarayana, eds. 2016)! In 2001 at the United Nations World Conference Against Racism in Durban, South Africa (which I was privileged to attend), an enormous Dalit delegation insisted upon the anti-racist character of their movement, and forcefully equated “untouchability” -- supposedly a caste distinction -- with racism.

In this Foreword I do not attempt to comment on all the contributions to this volume; that is properly the task of the Editor’s Introduction. I honor this book’s efforts to theorize the importance of Asian raciality, which Takezawa and her collaborators hereby bring to the attention of race scholars worldwide. In what follows, I draw attention to three important themes in the study of Asian racialities. These are first, the importance of the political demography of race in Asia; second, the role of migration in shaping Asian raciality and racial politics; and third, the relationship, both national and global, between Asian raciality and democracy.

THE POLITICAL DEMOGRAPHY OF RACE IN ASIA

I mentioned the politicization of the Dalit, which combines religious, racial, class, and gender determinations. What does it mean when a community of this size, this geographical and social diversity, and politically engaged organizations of its own, becomes mobilized in the face of repression and discrimination that it had previously endured for generations? The same general question can be applied to religiously-based populations of large size, both Hindu and Muslim (see below). In South Asia these issues date back to the Partition period after 1947, when tens of millions of people were uprooted and about one million died (Khan 2017 [2007]).
The enormous Dalit community, numbering around 200m people and today religiously quite diverse, poses a significant challenge to the Hindutva chauvinism of Narendra Modi and his ruling Bharatiya Janata Party. For this reason, and because of course millions of Dalit remain Hindu, Modi has been forced into a politically contradictory position vis-à-vis this group. Inequality and disdain for the Dalit (especially among the paramilitary wing of the BJP, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh [RSS]) are sustained by nationalism and what many would label conservative Hindu beliefs (Nussbaum 2009). These can also be seen as entrenched structural racism. Without repudiating the basic tenets of caste, Modi demonstrates some political adroitness by offering economic reforms to the Dalit, whose protests against inequality and discrimination constitute an ongoing political obstacle for the BJP project of Hindu nationalism.

Hindutva ideology (one balks at using the term "theology" here) refuses to recognize Buddhism -- and Islam as well -- as distinct religions, classifying both as varieties of Hinduism. Of course this enrages adherents of both faiths (Varagur 2018).

Acting against Muslims as well -- Modi has a long history of Islamophobia -- The Indian government has revoked or threatened to revoke the citizenship of hundreds of millions of Muslims, notably those in Kashmir and those concentrated in the states of Assam and Gujarat. India's Muslim population parallels its Dalit numbers: more than 200m Indians identify as Muslim. Massive demonstrations against Modi's discriminatory policies are convulsing India as I write.

These are varieties of population politics -- political demography -- that Asian nation-states practice fairly widely. Of course, political demographic state action is a global phenomenon: census politics are much discussed, for example, and genocide and ethnic cleansing -- very much "population policies" -- are staples of state politics in the Americas, Africa, and in Europe (Simon et al, eds. 2015).

That political demography has an endemic racial/racist component seems an obvious claim. Settler colonialism and imperialism set the stage here, beginning in the modern era with the conquest of America (Todorov 1984). Takezawa would argue that these processes began earlier still. Clearly they have become more predominant in the modern era, not only in South and East Asia, but across the planet: consider Israel/Palestine, assaults on indigenous peoples by petro-capitalism and climate crisis (Australia, Canada), the rise of anti-immigrant politics in Europe, Brazil, and the US.... Political demography is at work everywhere.

In China government attacks on Muslims and other non-Han peoples have escalated dramatically, also taking political demographic form. China is currently detaining c. 10% of the approximately 11m total population of Uyghurs living in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, the geographically largest province in
the country. Xinjiang is predominantly Muslim. The Beijing policy of roundups and "re-education") has been widely condemned as repressive, and is often seen as racist (Kuo 2018; Mai 2019).

Here again we note intersectional dimensions: the Uyghur are a Turkic, non-Han people, whose complex origins have been described as "Eurasian" and who were largely converted to Islam after conquest in the 11th century. The Xinjiang region has historically been fractious and was the scene of territorial disputes with the former Soviet Union as recently as the 1960s. A movement group of uncertain political orientation, the East Turkestan Liberation Organization, appeared in Turkey around 2003, declaring separatist and possibly Islamist allegiances in Xinjiang (Milward 2004). With political repression clearly underway on a mass scale, a rising level of conflict in Xinjiang is inevitable, and will necessarily take on a racial character. Racial tensions are emerging not only in Xinjiang but also in Tibet and other non-majority Han regions of China, as ethnic (notably religious, but also educational, linguistic, and cultural) tensions, national claims, economic inequalities, and popular resentments loom. Large population shifts are also underway in China.

The Indian and Chinese cases, I suggest, should be seen as political demographic processes of racial formation. In part, this understanding is a reflection of their large scale. In both countries, state power has been deployed not only in a repressive fashion, but also in a concerted effort to remake the population profiles of contested regions. The Chinese drive to transform the demographics of non-Han majority areas of the country by strategically repopulating them with Han settlers has been widely documented (Han and Paik 2017). In the Indian case, not only is repression in Muslim Kashmir escalating rapidly, but exclusionary demographic experiments are being developed in Assam and elsewhere, with the objective of reducing the numbers and thus political influence of the "others," particularly Dalit and Muslim (and also indigenous) peoples. How can these initiatives avoid increasing racialization in the medium- to long-term, since they operate by sowing fear and division amongst the general population? They generate a series of intersectional social structures oriented to economic and political inequality, ethnocultural favoritism, gender inequality, and often phenotypically framed "othering and belonging." Because these political demographic programs operate on such a large scale -- involving the stigmatization, disenfranchisement, and confinement of millions or even tens of millions of people – it is difficult to imagine peaceful and stable social outcomes for them. Will they not provoke widespread conflict and violence?

THE ROLE OF MIGRATION

Asian emigration to the West has been a leading factor in capitalist development for about 200 years. Chinese, Japanese, and Filipino workers built much of the
western United States. All the European imperial powers maintained large pools of migrant Asian labor. As a result of these practices, people of Indian descent can be found in the Caribbean and Africa, the Japanese-Brazilian community is the largest Japanese-descended group outside Japan itself, Indonesians and Vietnamese and their descendants constitute permanent racialized minorities in the Netherlands and France, and a vast "offshore" Chinese diaspora circles the world. In a related development, the US (and various other western imperialisms too) have assaulted Asian territories and pillaged Asia for centuries. One sustained outcome of these practices, often noted in the literature, is augmented Asian emigration to these formerly imperial metropoles. This is a particularly important factor in US racial politics (Park 2018).

Internal migration in Asian countries, and regional migration within Asia, however, has been neglected in the literature. While there have been important studies, more attention has focused on race and migration to the West.

Intra-Asian migration patterns can be approached through a variety of fields: the sociology of labor and family patterns, "development," historical and political economic angles, and so on. For example, before WWII the British imported large numbers of Chinese workers into Burma for their mining operations (Baillargeon 2019). More recently, migration flows from the Asian "South" have generated tensions in Japan and Korea (Lie 2008) and echoed earlier colonial and wartime conflicts. Australian hostility to Southeast Asian migrants (and non-White immigration in general) has been marked by explicit racism and brutal confinement offshore (Inglis 2018). Chinese expansionism on the Pacific Rim has sparked ethnic/national/racial conflict (Nathan and Scobell 2014). Internal migration to urban and more “capitalist” areas in China has spurred class conflict and social instability, as well as occasional ethnic conflict (Ye et al. 2013).

In her dissertation on "marriage migrants" in South Korea, Daisy Kim (2015) demonstrates that race/nation/ethnicity/class/gender dynamics all come into play as relationships between Korean men and women from the Philippines, China, or Malaysia become more common. Helene K. Lee looks at "return migration" to South Korea from the US and China. Some of Lee's Korean American returning migrants are well-educated (in the US) young professional men; they seek to marry a local Korean woman and obtain a job at the Seoul office of a Chaebol (Samsung, say) that does a lot of business in the US. Lee compares this group to Korean immigrants to Seoul from China; this second group are Jaeson -- Korean Chinese whose citizenship status is shaky, who often work in the informal economy, and who may experience the attribution of Paekjeong status.

So what is "Koreanness"? Is it national belonging and citizenship? Is it ethnic/cultural belonging such as proficiency in the language and religious conformity? Is there a race-based Korean identity that might call itself Hongkook, Chosun, or even Jaeson? Similar questions are asked, in this book and elsewhere, about such identity categories as Han in China, Yamato in Japan,
and Pribumi in Indonesia. Are they ethnic, national, racial, or some fusion of these concepts? How are they situated in terms of social class? How are they shaped by issues of gender? How can their unstable social location, and their "status honor," be understood, both in social scientific terms and those of everyday life?

**ASIAN RACIALITY AND DEMOCRACY**

In the 2018 *Economist* Intelligence Unit "Democracy Index," an annual assessment of the un/democratic character of nation-states around the world, Asia did not fare well. The Index took into account 60 criteria, grouped into five broad categories: electoral processes and pluralism, functioning of government, political participation, democratic political culture, and civil liberties (*Economist* 2018). The Index suggests that Asian democracy is in short supply. It designates China an "authoritarian regime," and demotes India from the "full democracy" to the "flawed democracy" column. Across the entire vast region, only South Korea is characterized as a "full democracy," a label that is withheld even from Japan.

Dominated by political scientists, the study of democracy in Asia has tended to focus on electoral systems, political repression, and more recently, on women's rights (Ichihara 2017; see also Center for Asian Democracy 2019). These are certainly worthwhile themes. But such assessments of democracy generally emphasize institutionalized political processes, neglecting or taking for granted such social conflicts as racial exclusion and long-standing patterns of discrimination. In Asian settings, recent assessments of democracy's resilience have stressed such matters as the post-2012 Hong Kong protests and the 2016 impeachment of South Korean President Park Geun-hye on corruption charges. Islamophobia and "ethnic cleansing" in Xinjiang, the Rohingya genocide in Myanmar, state-sponsored assaults on Muslims in Gujarat, Kashmir, or Assam, or the aftermath of ethno-national civil war in Sri Lanka are recent examples of democracy "dying in darkness."

Prolonged experience, not only in Asia but around the world, indicates that even in nation-states designated as democratic, social and political institutions are often simultaneously and structurally racist. Somehow it remains possible to validate and acclaim as instances of democracy social policies, political institutions, and cultural practices that are publically recognized, and sometimes even explicitly celebrated, for their racism. Indeed structural racism has endured for centuries in societies deemed democratic. The *Economist* and similar research efforts routinely include the United States on their lists of "full democracies," for example. Although they recognize that the US has since its founding maintained an endemic racism against Black people and a long history of anti-immigrant nativism directed particularly against Latinx and Asian people (not to mention US settler colonialism and genocide toward indigenous peoples),
this somehow does not demote the country even to the status of "flawed
democracy" in the Economist ratings.

Democracy in Asia is a fairly recent development. It is usually considered to have
originated in Japan, where it was imposed by the US occupation after WWII, and
to have emerged next in India after the Union Jack was finally lowered there in
1947. Western imperial occupation was never particularly compatible with
democracy, as the experience of the Philippines, Indonesia, South Korea, and
Vietnam, among others, amply illustrates. Nor were the imperial powers much
inclined toward racial inclusion. The British empire specialized in indirect rule,
which pitted religious, regional, and phenotypically distinct groups of natives
against one another, utilizing an often explicit "divide and conquer" ethnoracial
logic. Examples include Hindus and Muslims in India; South Asians and Blacks in
the Caribbean (Rodney 1981); Igbo, Hausa, and Yoruba in Nigeria (Mamdani
1999), and many other cases as well. The Dutch were no different in Indonesia,
Mollucca, or for that matter Surinam (Kahin 2009 [1952]).

As today we view Narendra Modi's, Rodrigo Duterte's, or Xiyan Ping's current
practices (and sadly, those of Aung San Suu Kyi in Burma), the headlines do not
instill much hope for a greater racial democracy in Asia. Research on racial
matters and on the dire prospects for democracy in the region requires
substantially more attention than it receives. The present volume, Race in Asia
Beyond the Western Paradigm, organized and edited by the eminent scholar
Yasuko Takezawa, is a welcome step in that direction.

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NOTES

1 For a critical account of Chinese and Japanese identities – Han and Yamato – as examples of ethnic nationalism and racism, see Dikötter 1997. For a critique of Hindutva as religious nationalism and racism, see Nussbaum 2009.
2 Ambedkar was influenced by pan-African movements and had corresponded with W.E.B Du Bois. Later Dalit radicals identified with the Black Panther Party (Maitland 2019).
3 Mohan Bhagwat, leader of the RSS, has equated Hinduism with Indian national identity, forcefully reiterating Hindutva ideology's commitment to authoritarian nationalism. See Bremmer 2017.
This subject invokes the "biopolitics" framework developed by Michel Foucault, an important topic that I cannot address adequately here. It should be noted that amid Foucault's numerous discussions of biopolitics we find an idiosyncratic theory of race. In Society Must be Defended Foucault tells us that the development of a biopolitical concept of society, which he contrasts with previous understandings based on the idea of sovereignty, signifies the emergence of a battle that has to be waged not between races, but by a race that is portrayed as the one true race, the race that holds power and is entitled to define the norm, and against those who deviate from that norm, against those who pose a threat to the biological heritage (Foucault 2003, 61).

In other words, a Korean husband runs off with the Filipina maid, young and single Korean men marry Thai, or Malay, or Taiwanese women..., etc. Feminist organizations are sometimes split by their attitudes toward these practices. An aside: the reverse gender pairing (Korean women and "offshore" men) does not seem to be happening much.

Viewed as more docile than Korean American women.