

*Elusive Refuge: Chinese Migrants in the Cold War.* By Laura Madokoro. Cambridge, MA and London, England: Harvard University Press, 2016. Pp. x + 331. \$45.00/£33.95.

Focusing on Chinese refugee migrations in the three decades after World War II, Laura Madokoro develops several sets of comparative analyses that underscore the compromised goals and functions of refugee programmes, particularly as enacted by white settler societies including South Africa, New Zealand, Australia, Canada, and the United States. With several of these nations claiming the status of progressive liberal democracies, Madokoro is unflinching in her critique of how the anti-Sinicism of their immigration policies infused and sharply curtailed their reception of Chinese refugees. *Elusive Refuge* makes these failings explicit by contrasting the ready welcome provided for white, European refugees—who gained visas and ready welcome in the hundreds of thousands—against a trickle of Chinese resettled; the varying manipulations of definitions, policies, and programmatic stratagems deployed to justify and limit assistance to Chinese; consensus negotiated by international organizations that also sought to fix solutions for the Chinese refugee problem within Asia; and the humanitarian concerns of the many religious organizations advocating for Chinese refugees weighed against the political and pragmatic priorities that constrained the willingness of governments of white settler nations to provide aid. Madokoro finds that the exigencies of human rights discourses and the global calamity of displaced persons that followed the most large-scale war in human history failed to apply to Chinese in the face of the entrenched racism of several acclaimed liberal democracies.

Of all categories of migrants, perhaps refugees command the highest *moral* grounds for compelling rights of access and support from countries of settlement. The threatened losses of life—stemming from a range of tragedies including the political, religious, and environmental—require succor from societies claiming any modicum of civilization and humanitarian values. During the 1900s and 1910s, for example, the United States struggled to pass general immigration restriction laws because concern for the continued rights of entry of *Europeans* fleeing political and religious persecution led both the House of Representatives and the White House to oppose measures banning entry by the poor and illiterate. At the same time, few disagreed with the goal of ending Asian immigration altogether and in 1917 the Barred Zone Act banned immigration from a section of the world extending from the Southeast Asian peninsula to Palestine. Such open discriminations enacted in immigration and citizenship restrictions—which have limited entry not only on the basis of race and national origin but also gender, education, health, mental condition, employability, and socioeconomic status—predict the unwillingness of white settler nations to seek meaningful solutions for the plight of Chinese refugees.

Seen as racially inferior and unassimilable, Chinese were the earliest targets of systematically enforced immigration restrictions in the United States, Australia, and Canada. New Zealand and South Africa also sought to preserve the predominantly white racial composition of their populations by severely restricting entry, settlement conditions, and citizenship rights for Chinese as essentialized foreigners. Chinese fell far short of being able to claim the protections and privileges due to refugees, which required that their basic humanity be fully acknowledged and valued. As scrupulously described by Madokoro, Chinese sufferings and dangers received scant attention among white settler nations, despite widespread acknowledgement that the estimated 1.5 million Chinese refugees struggling in Hong Kong during the 1950s constituted the world's severest demographic emergency and clearly resulted from a sequence of wars. Dating back to the 1930s, millions of Chinese had experienced displacement and relocation, albeit domestically, stemming from the Japanese invasion and the Sino-Japanese War. These problems projected abroad as the Chinese civil war and consolidation of Communist authority drove Chinese to flee their homeland, which forced foreign governments of historically white nations to respond to the now international emergency. The struggle for Chinese to gain more equitable standing, as refugees and as immigrants, would take decades.

Madokoro situates the neglected history of Chinese refugees within the much better known and celebratory accounts of the post-World War II welcome of displaced Europeans. The scale of the Chinese losses of homes and homeland was significant, with an estimated 1.5 million Chinese ending up in Hong Kong and an additional 2 million fleeing to Taiwan with Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist Party. As the introduction lucidly explains, political and ideological exigencies sharply constricted white settler nations' acknowledgement of and responses to the Chinese calamity, despite their eagerness to resettle and even recruit European refugees viewed as more compatible racial stock. Enfolding the neglect of Chinese into this global account of refugee policies and programmes underscores the dismaying selectiveness of human rights discourses and the claims of liberal egalitarianism put forth by key countries of resettlement. Such ideals fell far short of providing for dislocated Chinese, as Madokoro's comparative study reveals systematic efforts and the strategies deployed to disavow the claims of Chinese refugees and to maintain barriers against Chinese immigration; and it documents the provision of aid primarily in the form of highly limited and politically staged gestures of sympathy.

The racism of refugee relief operations is illustrated by Australian programmes for refugees from China. During the 1950s, the Australian government made strenuous efforts to deport several hundred Chinese who had arrived seeking safety during the Sino-Japanese War, including many women and children, proclaiming the risks to national unity if such persons were allowed to remain. In contrast, it facilitated the

resettlement of about 14,000 White Russians who had fled to China after the 1917 Russian Revolution, and were escaping communism once again with the founding of the PRC. The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) worked with the World Council of Churches (WCC) to ensure their safe resettlement. Not until 1954 did the LWF turn to helping Chinese (pp. 60–61).

International agreements enabled and sanctioned these evasions of responsibilities to Chinese. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees sought to develop an international policy statement to regularize aid to refugees around the world, yet drafted the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees with a narrow definition for refugees that precluded committing any signatory nations to assisting the tens of millions of Asian refugees produced by military conflicts, decolonization, and the Cold War. On the Indian subcontinent alone, an estimated 14.5 million had been dislocated by the sudden and catastrophic way in which Britain withdrew from authority and enacted partition (pp. 22–23). In its last remaining colonial territory of Hong Kong, British authorities showed scant more concern for the well-being of Asian subjects. The colonial administration refused to categorize any of the million-plus influx of new residents as “refugees,” in part at pressure from the PRC which did not want these migration choices politicized, but also to ensure that the Chinese “problem of people” would remain confined within Asia without requiring Western nations to receive racially undesirable immigrants, even as refugees. Madokoro pointedly observes, “Once they were written out of the convention, refugees in Asia were also written out of the historical record, as population movements in Cold War Europe came to embody the very notion of what it meant to be a refugee” (p. 23).

Recently, several scholars have undertaken to fill the vacuum of studies about Chinese Cold War refugees. *Dajiang dahai yi jiu si jiu* 大江大海一九四九 by Lung Ying-tai (Long Yingtai) 龍應台,<sup>1</sup> *China's Homeless Generation* by Joshua Fan,<sup>2</sup> and *Remembering China from Taiwan* by Mahlon Meyer<sup>3</sup> all seek to capture and publicize the stories and voices of this once ignored generation of exiled Chinese, on Taiwan and around the world. In an ongoing project titled, “The Great Exodus: Trauma, Diaspora, and the Chinese Mainlanders in Taiwan,” Dominic Yang categorizes as traumatized refugees the mainlanders (*waishengren* 外省人), many of whom suffered political persecution alongside native Taiwanese (*benshengren* 本省人) as outsiders

<sup>1</sup> *Dajiang dahai yi jiu si jiu* (Taipei: Tianxia zazhi, 2009).

<sup>2</sup> *China's Homeless Generation: Voices from the Veterans of the Chinese Civil War, 1940s–1990s* (London and New York: Routledge, 2011).

<sup>3</sup> *Remembering China from Taiwan: Divided Families and Bittersweet Reunions After the Chinese Civil War* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2012).

to Chiang Kai-shek and Chiang Ching-kuo's autocratic control of Taiwan. My monograph, *The Good Immigrants*,<sup>4</sup> traces the international education programmes and liberalization of US immigration laws that enabled educated Chinese from Taiwan and Hong Kong to gain legal entry into the United States, lawful employment, and eventually permanent resettlement. Meredith Oyen's *The Diplomacy of Migration*<sup>5</sup> scrutinizes efforts by the Nationalists to influence US immigration policies for greater admissions of Chinese. The anthology, *Hong Kong in the Cold War*, edited by Priscilla Roberts and John M. Carroll,<sup>6</sup> demonstrates how intrinsic refugees were to the emerging society and culture of Hong Kong, as depicted so evocatively in the movies of Wong Kar-wai (Wang Jiawei) 王家衛 such as *Huayang nianhua* 花樣年華 (In the Mood for Love, 2000) and *Yidai zongshi* 一代宗師 (The Grandmaster, 2013).

Madokoro's key contribution is to address the big picture of international refugee policy, organizations, and programmes and to hold white settler nations accountable for their systematic evasions and limiting of aid for Chinese. For example, between 1946 and 1967 the United States admitted about 1,050,000 refugees born in Europe and 374,726 from Cuba, compared to only 16,751 Chinese.<sup>7</sup> Requiring that refugee programmes operate on racially egalitarian terms levels a potent critique of the generosity and benevolence often claimed by countries providing refuge. Instead, Madokoro tracks the evolution of administrative machinations and policy stratagems by which these governments sought to avoid acknowledging the humanitarian crises in Asia. Chinese were represented as less deserving of humanitarian aid as "economic" rather than "political" refugees. With a simple switch of adjectives, Chinese became greedy opportunists rather than desperately displaced. In the face of the efforts of white settler nations to maintain their barriers against Chinese immigration, international pressures to act mounted from humanitarian organizations, public concerns developed with sympathetic media coverage, and increasingly vocal postcolonial nations demanding greater racial equity as an international standard.

With its aspirations of leadership of the "Free" world, the United States was the most attentive to its reputation, domestically and internationally, with Canada, Australia, and New Zealand responding less concertedly. In contrast, South Africa cared not at all for its global reputation as it moved to open racial segregation. The

<sup>4</sup> *The Good Immigrants: How the Yellow Peril Became the Model Minority* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015).

<sup>5</sup> *The Diplomacy of Migration: Transnational Lives and the Making of U.S.-Chinese Relations in the Cold War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015).

<sup>6</sup> *Hong Kong*: Hong Kong University Press, 2016.

<sup>7</sup> Abba P. Schwartz, *The Open Society* (New York: William Morrow, 1968), pp. 225–27. This last statistic does not include about 15,000 Chinese paroled between 1962 and 1966 then allowed to remain permanently.

other four white settler nations came to respond but in a limited, politically and economically expedient fashion, as illustrated by the operations of Aid Refugee Chinese Intellectuals, Inc. (ARCI) in Hong Kong. Purportedly a non-governmental humanitarian organization, ARCI was in fact founded by a cluster of China Lobby cronies, under the leadership of Representative Walter Judd, and actually drew most of its funding from the State Department and had at least two staff members who were CIA operatives. Genuine humanitarian groups, such as the WCC, justifiably viewed its activities with scepticism as serving political ends. Rather than focusing on programmes to alleviate population problems in Hong Kong, ARCI's initial goals were to identify Chinese intellectual refugees and relocate them to Taiwan to fortify Chiang Kai-shek's anticommunist "island fortress," a solution to Hong Kong's problems that did not require racially integrating white nations. ARCI staff were largely thwarted in these efforts, however, by Chiang's paranoia about infiltration by communist agents and Taiwan's own severe refugee problems including lack of housing, food shortages, and limited employment even for well-educated urbanites. ARCI's agenda shifted aim, and changed key personnel, to manage the Chinese aspects of the 1953 Refugee Relief Programme (RRP).<sup>8</sup> RRP authorized just over 200,000 refugee admissions into the United States, of which only 5,000 were designated for Asians. Despite the apparently symbolic nature of this programme, which was never intended to address anywhere near the full scope of the catastrophe in Hong Kong, the US State Department, the Far Eastern Refugee Program (FERP), and the US Information Agency sought to maximize the optics of US aid to Chinese through publicity campaigns featuring the human faces and stories of Chinese "saved" through the benevolence of the United States. ARCI played its part by drawing on its rosters of Chinese intellectuals to ensure that as many RRP beneficiaries as possible were employable, readily assimilated, and financially self-supporting. Media coverage, however, tended to emphasize the generosity and benevolence of the United States, thereby dehumanizing the Chinese refugees as abject victims, without their own agency and capacities to adapt and overcome extremely adverse circumstances, even as refugee programmes served the political and economic purposes of countries of settlement.

In response to the renewed refugee influxes into Hong Kong of 1962, the Canadian Prime Minister John Diefenbaker announced plans to admit 100 Chinese refugee families, amidst a contested political campaign and under pressure from the

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<sup>8</sup> See Hsu, "'The Best Type of Chinese' Aid Refugee Chinese Intellectuals and Symbolic Refugee Relief, 1952–1960," chap. 6 in *The Good Immigrants*, pp. 130–65, for more details about ARCI as a front operation for the CIA. Staff used debriefing interviews of newly arrived refugees to identify and recruit potential agents for US actions in Southeast Asia.

Chinese Canadian community. The Canadian Chinese Refugee Program prioritized skilled workers with families, even though few of the new refugee influxes matched these traits. Canada emulated US programmes in overlaying political expedience and economic priorities onto highly limited programmes of refugee relief, rather than developing programmes targeting the needs of the refugees themselves. Such pragmatism later infused reforms of general immigration policies, as the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand would replace overt racial discrimination in their immigration laws and render Chinese immigration more acceptable by capping their numbers and handicapping for the immigration of the most desirable workers and investors, along with their families. In ways not required of European counterparts, Chinese refugees and immigrants confront higher barriers but have lesser access for immigration into white settler nations.

By time of the 1970s Southeast Asian refugee crisis, Asians could no longer be categorically denied aid. The United States, in particular, felt and acted upon its great obligations to the Vietnamese, Cambodians, Laotians, and Hmong whose homelands experienced such devastations from the prolonged wars it had waged. Other parts of the developed world, however, continued to mark Asian refugees as less deserving of human rights, with many languishing for years in temporary camps set up in countries of first landing such as Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Hong Kong. The most proximate white settler nation, Australia, adopted strict policies to limit landings, to deflect taking responsibility for Southeast Asian refugees. Prioritization of national, rather than human rights and interests continued to prevail, masked by even more elaborated systems of administrative practices and coding of refugee statuses and needs. If the title of Madokoro's study of global refugee programmes is melancholic, it has good reason to be so.

*Elusive Refuge* brings together fields focusing on the studies of migration, East Asia, refugee policy, human rights, and immigration along with Asian American studies with a nod to critical race studies in its focus upon white settler societies. The connections it draws among these subjects are compelling and particularly timely, considering the magnitude and nature of refugee emergencies besetting Africa, Central America, and the Middle East in 2016 and the looming crisis of massive displacements from global warming. Whose calamities will attract global attention as needed, and who will receive refuge? The outlook for most, based on Madokoro's careful study, is bleak and will fall out along lines of racial difference, lack of education, and poverty.

A few shortcomings mar this study. A great strength, its comparative analysis of five white settler nations and their policies toward Chinese refugees, also produces some unevenness in coverage. Starting with chapter one, the page number listings for endnotes start to fall out of alignment with the sequence of notes. Nonetheless,

these minor flaws do not change the urgency of Madokoro's call to confront honestly the self-serving and compromised terms on which refugee relief has developed and continues to operate today.

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***Fire and Ice: Li Cunxu and the Founding of the Later Tang.*** By Richard L. Davis. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2016. Pp. xii + 237. \$60.00/HKD450.00.

Professor Richard Davis has done more than any scholar to bring the history of the Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms period into the mainstream of Chinese historical studies. This important period had, previous to his work, languished in the liminal state of a time of chaos between two great dynasties, the Tang and the Song. Very few works were written in any language on the period, and it mostly seemed to be a confusing interregnum without significant historiographic value. The few studies that did exist tended to search for the developments that would lead to the creation of the Song dynasty. Those developments were primarily found in institutions, rather than battles, people, politics, or culture. The history of the Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms, like much of Chinese history in Western languages, was devoid of biographies. With *Fire and Ice*, Professor Davis has continued his efforts to bring the lives of some of the emperors who ruled during the Five Dynasties to our attention, and to make available the complex military, political, and cultural landscapes in which those emperors operated.

*Fire and Ice* is a history of the life of the Later Tang emperor Li Cunxu 李存勖 (885–926), posthumously known as Zhuangzong 莊宗. It is an updated version of a manuscript that Professor Davis wrote a decade ago and was subsequently translated into Chinese and published in Beijing in 2009. Davis returned to the biography after publishing a biography of Zhuangzong's successor, Li Siyuan 李嗣源 (867–933), posthumously known as Mingzong 明宗,<sup>1</sup> revising the manuscript in light of nearly a decade of new secondary scholarship. Davis modestly describes his goal as making the history of this period accessible to the undergraduate audience. While this book

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<sup>1</sup> *From Warhorses to Ploughshares: The Later Tang Reign of Emperor Mingzong* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2014).