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## Subject: This Month in Mongolian Studies - February 2015

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### February 2015

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"This Month in Mongolian Studies" is a monthly listing of selected academic activities and resources related to Mongolia. This list is based on information the ACMS has received and is presented as a service to its members. If you would like to submit information to be included in next month's issue please contact the ACMS at [info@mongoliacenter.org](mailto:info@mongoliacenter.org) and/or the editor, Marissa Smith, at [msmith@mongoliacenter.org](mailto:msmith@mongoliacenter.org).

This publication is supported in part by memberships. Please consider becoming a member of the ACMS, or renewing your membership by visiting our website at [mongoliacenter.org/join](http://mongoliacenter.org/join). Thank you!

#### ACMS Announcements

- ACMS Summer 2015 Fellowship deadlines are fast approaching!** Summer 2015 fellowship program applications are due, and the deadline is **February 15, 2015**. This includes the **ACMS Field Research Fellowship**, the **ACMS Library Fellowship**, and the **ACMS Summer Intensive Language Programs**. For full details regarding these fellowship programs, which are supported with funding from the US Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs through a grant by the Council of American Overseas Research Centers, visit our fellowship page at: [www.mongoliacenter.org/fellowship](http://www.mongoliacenter.org/fellowship)
- ACMS Ulaanbaatar Office will be closed for Tsagaan Tsar** on Thursday and Friday February 19th and 20th. We will re-open on Monday February 23rd.
- We are still accepting posters and displays for the ACMS Annual Meeting in Chicago.** The ACMS is organizing a poster session on topics related to Mongolia to be held on **Friday, March 27nd, 2015, 7:30-10:00pm** at the Chicago Sheraton Hotel & Towers in conjunction with the Association for Asian Studies' annual conference and the ACMS Annual Meeting. Posters or displays on any topic related to Mongolia, Mongolian people or historical subjects related to the Mongols are welcome. All presenters are required to appear at the meeting to discuss their work. Posters and displays may be in either English or Mongolian language, and students and scholars from all countries and fields of study are invited to participate in the poster session and reception. The audience is expected to include students, scholars, and local residents from Mongolia, and members of the community interested in Mongolia. To propose a poster or display for the session, please send a brief abstract or description (no more than 250 words) to David Dettmann at [ddettmann@mongoliacenter.org](mailto:ddettmann@mongoliacenter.org) before **March 1, 2015**. Posters and displays will be accepted on a rolling basis. You do not need to be registered for the AAS conference to participate, but poster presenters should be a member of the ACMS at the time of the meetings. For more information on the AAS conference see: <http://www.asian-studies.org/conference/>.
- Mongolia Cultural Heritage Research Fellowship.** The ACMS has announced a new fellowship program offering for 2015-2016, made possible by a grant from the Henry Luce Foundation (<http://www.hluce.org/home.aspx>): the Mongolia Cultural Heritage Research Fellowship Program. This fellowship program will support up to four fellows (two long-term fellowships of up to 9 months, and two short-term fellowships of 1-3 months) to carry out advanced graduate or post-doctoral research on topics related

to the preservation of Mongolia's Cultural Heritage. For more information, including application information, please visit the [Cultural Heritage page](#) at the ACMS website. Deadline for applications is **April 30, 2015**.

## Upcoming ACMS Sponsored Programs and Events

### Speaker Series Events

**February 10th, 5:30pm**, at the American Corner, Natsagdorj Library

#### **Dr. Tsermaa Tomorbaatar - "Tsagaan Sar: Traditions and customs explained"**

Tsagaan Sar is a family festival, which is celebrated on the first day of the Lunar new year to put some cheer in the endless winter months and mark the beginning of spring. As one of the oldest and most important of Mongolian holidays, it is filled with ceremony, symbolism and ritual. This presentation is to focus on how modern Tsagaan Sar is celebrated, looking at the symbolism of the dress, food and associated paraphernalia. For those unfamiliar with the holiday, etiquette and rituals related to the holiday will be demonstrated and explained. Samples of traditional food will also be available. **Dr. Tsermaa Tomorbaatar** has been the head of ACMS Mongolian language and cultural programs since 2008. She has a Ph.D in Linguistics from the State Pedagogical University of Mongolia and has published 16 books and articles on Mongolian language. She has been preparing and participating in Tsagaan Sar celebrations for 29+ years.

**IN PHILADELPHIA: February 18th, 12pm** in Room 641 of Jon M. Huntsman Hall, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.

#### **Oyungerel Tangad - "A Wrestling President? The Cultural Context of the 2013 Mongolian Presidential Election"**

Mongolia is often regarded as a young democratic state that has successfully undergone a transformation from communism to democracy. However, an analysis of the Mongolian political scene from the perspective of cultural anthropology shows a potential difference between the world of ideas organizing social life in Mongolia and those known in societies with advanced democracies. The presidential election in 2013 serves as a good illustration of the Mongolian voters' political imagination, with one of the candidates, Badmaanyambuu Bat-Erdene—both a member of parliament and a famous wrestling champion. Wrestling, along with archery and horse racing, has great significance in the vision of state power in Mongolian culture. Being a great wrestler, Bat-Erdene, embodied symbols connected to the stately glory, and was considered as a person conforming to the traditional image and social expectations of leadership and moral authority. Although he had not won a previous election, he received a large endorsement from voters without any significant financial support or an effective public relations effort. **Oyungerel Tangad** is a cultural anthropologist and Mongolian election observer who studies how Mongolian traditional values relate to electoral outcomes. Dr. Tangad is Assistant Professor of Central Asian Studies at Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland, and is author of *Scheda po Czyngis-Chanie. Demokracja po mongolsku* (Heritage of Chinggis Khan: Democracy in Mongolia). *Co-sponsored with the Wharton School at University of Pennsylvania and the Carol and Lawrence Zicklin Center for Business Ethics Research*

**February 24th, 5:30pm** at the American Corner, Natsagdorj Library

#### **Saha Meyanathan - "Portraits of Change: 25 years of Mongolian Transformation"**

"Portraits of Change" is a project that explores the transformation in Mongolia resulting from the collapse of socialism there, the transition period that followed, and the market economy that emerged. At the heart of the project is a portrayal of the sociological, economic, and environmental changes that swept the country during this time of historic change. It provides snapshots of the past, present, and future of Mongolia. The author will discuss what he has learned for the creation of this book and what future changes he sees. **Saha Meyanathan** has worked for more than 30 years in the field of development. He has taught, published, and practiced development, and he has been associated with Mongolia for over ten years. Saha worked at the World Bank for twenty years and was country manager for the World Bank in Mongolia for six years (2001-2006). He has a PhD in development economics from Stanford University and now works on social projects. In 2006, he was awarded the Order of the Polar Star, Mongolia's highest national honor for foreign nationals.

### Upcoming ACMS Annual Meeting and Reception

Members, friends, and public are invited to join us for our Annual Meeting and Reception, which will be held in conjunction with the Association for Asian Studies (AAS) annual meeting in Chicago, on the evening of **March 27th, 2015**. ACMS members and friends, staff and past fellows will be attending, along with friends in Chicago area Mongolian community. Come learn about what the ACMS has been up to over the past year, meet friends old and new, and enjoy a Mongolian cultural program too! More details will be available on our website closer to the timing of the event, but the meeting and reception will be Friday evening, March 27th, at the Chicago Sheraton Hotel & Towers in downtown Chicago. You do not have to be registered for AAS to attend our meeting and reception. For more information about the meeting please contact David Dettmann at [ddettmann@mongoliacenter.org](mailto:ddettmann@mongoliacenter.org).

### Calls for Papers, Conferences, Workshops

### Call for Proposals

**8th Annual OASIES Graduate Student Conference, "Inner Eurasia Then and Now: Legacies of Thought, Space, and Empire,"** The Richard Ettinghausen Library at the Hagop Kevorkian Center for Near Eastern Studies, New York University, Friday, **March 27, 2015**. This Conference is cosponsored by NYU's Kevorkian Center for Near Eastern Studies and Columbia University's Harriman Institute. Inner Eurasia has been, and continues to be, at the crossroads of civilizations and power contestations. Much of these lands were once dominated by the Mongol, Russian, and Soviet empires, and at the frontier of Chinese and Ottoman influence. This cultural and institutional inheritance continues to impact the region. Bearing this in mind, the conference asks: how does the framework of legacies allow us to identify patterns across the region, and what effects have the region's unique position and history had on processes, from revolution to reform? The conference considers Eurasia past and present, spanning from the Black Sea to Mongolia, from Siberia to South Asia. Stressing multi-disciplinarity, submissions are welcome from a variety of departments, programs, and centers, including but not limited to: Anthropology, Archeology, Art History, Comparative Literature, Fine Arts, History, Political Science, Religion, Sociology, Caucasian Studies, Central Asian Studies, Inner Asian Studies, Middle Eastern Studies, Mongolian Studies, Slavic Languages and Literature, South Asian Studies, and Tibetan Studies. Please include the following information with all submissions: 1) Name of presenter, academic position, and institutional affiliation, 2) Title of the paper, 3) Abstract of no more than 300 words. Send submissions to [oasiesconference@gmail.com](mailto:oasiesconference@gmail.com) **no later than February 15, 2015**. Visit: <http://www.oasies.org/>

**3rd Oxford Interdisciplinary Desert Conference.** Please join us at the School for Geography and the Environment at Oxford University for the 3rd Oxford Interdisciplinary Desert Conference, from **16-17 April 2015**. Information and registration: <http://www.geog.ox.ac.uk/events/deserts/> This event provides a forum for researchers and those interested in desert and dryland environments and societies to present, discuss and debate dryland themes and research. Currently desert issues are atomized in universities, international and governmental organizations and local settings; the conference brings together people researching, working and living across the world's desert and semi-desert regions. The conference focuses on exchanging ideas through talks, discussion sessions and working groups. Generous support from the Wenner-Gren Foundation has allowed us to organize a special workshop focused on pastoralism in Asian drylands and will support the participation of a number of scholars from the Middle East and Central Asia. Natural and social scientists working with mobile pastoralist communities are encouraged to attend. Please let us know if you have any questions. We look forward to welcoming you in Oxford. For inquiries contact Ariell Ahearn or Troy Sternberg at: [deserts@ouce.ox.ac.uk](mailto:deserts@ouce.ox.ac.uk).

**Call for Papers: 2015 Annual Meeting of The Mongolia Society** in Chicago, Illinois. The 2015 Annual Meeting of the Mongolia Society will be held on **Sunday, March 29, 2015** on the University of Chicago campus. The exact time of the meeting and panels will be announced as plans are formalized. The AAS will also be meeting in Chicago, March 26-29, 2015. Please submit your abstract for consideration on the following topics: Mongolian Communities in the US; Mongolia's Foreign Policy and Economic Development; Linguistic, Religious and Cultural Questions in Today's Mongolia. The abstract must be received **no later than February 25**, and contain the paper title, be no more than 300 words and have contact information, including email address. If your abstract is accepted, you will have 15 minutes to present your paper. After the paper presentations, there will be an open discussion with the audience. You must be a Mongolia Society member to present a paper. To join the Society, please either contact the Society office or go to the Society website at [www.mongoliasociety.org](http://www.mongoliasociety.org). Please submit your abstract to Susie Drost, The Mongolia Society, 322 Goodbody Hall, Indiana University, 1011 E. 3rd Street, Bloomington, IN 47405-7005; E-Mail: [monsoc@indiana.edu](mailto:monsoc@indiana.edu); Web: [www.mongoliasociety.org](http://www.mongoliasociety.org)

**Call for abstracts: Special Session 10756 "Ecosystem science in Mongolia: Past research and future prospects under a regime of increasing environmental impacts"** to be held at the 100th Annual Meeting of the Ecological Society of America (ESA), **August 9-14, 2015, Baltimore**, Maryland. Summary: This special session will facilitate a discussion about the ecology of Mongolia from a variety of perspectives spanning disciplines such as landscape and range ecology, biogeography, biological assessment and monitoring, large river and fish ecology, and biodiversity studies, to name a few. Please see [here for link](#) to call for abstracts, and check the [Ecological Science at the Frontier website](#) for abstract deadlines (**some are in mid February**) and updates.

**Call for Panels and Papers: Central Eurasian Studies Society (CESS) 16th Annual Meeting at the Central Asia Program at George Washington University in Washington D.C., October 15-18th, 2015.** The conference program will include paper presentations, roundtable forums, keynote speeches and vendor exhibitions. This event is the largest annual gathering of scholars working in Central Eurasian Studies; the program will include an estimated 350 panelists, and we expect that the number of people attending the conference will exceed 500. The conference will feature about 60 panels on topics covering all aspects of the politics, history, culture, and society of the Central Eurasian region, extending from the Caucasus, Iran, and the Volga Basin (Russia) to Tibet, western China, Mongolia, and Siberia, including all of Central and Inner Asia. Several cultural events will be organized around the convention, among other an exhibition of Central Asian Socialist Realism paintings in partnership with the GW Museum/Textile Museum, a cinema club, musical events and a Central Asian food fair. [Click here for a link to the call for panels and papers](#). Inquires may be directed to Maureen Pritchard at [info@centraleurasia.org](mailto:info@centraleurasia.org) or to the conference committee chair, Marlene Laruelle at [laruelle@gwu.edu](mailto:laruelle@gwu.edu).

## Research Fellowships, Scholarships and Grants

**2015-2016 Fulbright Student Fellowships Funded by the US Department Of State (for Mongolian citizens)** The Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy to Mongolia is now accepting applications for the 2016 -2017 Fulbright Student Fellowship Program. Fulbright Student Fellowships are part of a U.S. Government-funded academic exchange program and fund graduate-level (M.A., M.S) studies at U.S. universities. Fulbright Student Fellows are selected by the Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy. Applicants will be assessed on the contribution that their study would make to greater understanding between the United States and Mongolia, and the likelihood of the applicant performing successfully in a U.S. Academic setting. To qualify, applicants must be a Mongolian citizen, currently living in Mongolia, hold a university degree (at least B.A. or equivalent), and be Fluent in English (hold valid IBT score of 80, Institutional TOEFL 550 or IELTS 6.5). For more information, visit the the [US Embassy page](#).

**The Department 'Resilience and Transformation in Eurasia' of the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology is offering Postdoctoral and Ph.D. positions** for a new Research Group 'Financialization' led by Chris Hann and Don Kalb, starting on October 1, 2015 (subject to agreement, individual projects may also begin on January 1, 2016 or April 1, 2016). Please submit your application electronically by **30 April 2015** following the link for vacancies on our homepage. Visit: <http://www.mpg.de/8809257/postdoc-phd-positions-financialization>

## Resources

### Mongolian Studies Facebook Group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/mongolianstudies/> A public place for sharing articles and videos, calls for papers for journals and conferences, solicitations for research assistance, and other announcements of interest to those of us who study contemporary and historical Mongolia and Mongolian things from an academic perspective. The preference is to post in English or Mongolian, but all languages are welcome. Likewise, we invite members of all academic disciplines to join: history, anthropology, biology, archeology, ethnomusicology, religious studies, linguistics, environmental studies, etc.

### Mongolia and Lake Hovsgol GIS Data Repository

ACMS 2014 Summer Research Fellow Chris Free has put together a repository of GIS (Geographic Information Systems) data from his research in Mongolia and more specifically at Lake Hovsgol. Check it out via his website:

**Mongolia GIS data:** <http://marine.rutgers.edu/~cfree/gis-data/mongolia-gis-data/>

**Lake Hovsgol GIS data:** <http://marine.rutgers.edu/~cfree/gis-data/lake-hovsgol-gis-data/>

**Dissertation Reviews** now includes a section on Inner and Central Asia:

<http://dissertationreviews.org/archives/category/review/innercentralasia>

**Asian Highlands Research Network [AH-RN]** is a scholarly discussion group associated with the journal Asian Highlands Perspectives. This group focuses on the Tibetan Plateau and surrounding regions, including the Southeast Asian Massif, Himalayan Massif, the Extended Eastern Himalayas, the Mongolian Plateau, and other contiguous areas. We aim to promote exploration of cross-regional commonalities in history, culture, language, and socio-political context not served by current academic forums. AH-RN will be of interest to Sinologists, Tibetologists, Mongolists, and South and Southeast Asianists. We welcome group members to share information about events and publications related to the study of the Asian Highlands.

Services: timely and exclusive reviews of new books in the field; semi-regular roundup of new open access publications; announcements of new publications from Asian Highlands Perspectives.

AH-RN is a private group. To join, please contact: Gerald.Roche[at]jymail.com.

For more on Asian Highlands Perspectives:

<http://www.platauculture.org/asian-highlands-perspectives>

<http://www.lulu.com/spotlight/asianhighlandsperspectives>

### TheDukha Ethnoarchaeological Project.

The primary goal of the DukhaEthnoarchaeological Project is the development of spatial theory of human behavior for application to archaeological problems. Visit the website

at:<https://sites.google.com/site/dukhaethnoarch/> .

**Asian Politics and History Association.** Asian Politics and History Association is a non-political, non-profit academic society organized by scholars of Asian studies. Established in 2011 in Hong Kong, APHA currently has members from Asian-Pacific, European and North American countries. APHA supports the Journal of Asian Politics & History, an academic journal published twice a year beginning in October 2012. Visit the website at:<http://www.aphahk.org>.

**Juniper: Online Database for Mongolian and Siberian Studies.** This new French scientific tool is created at the initiative of the Centre for Mongolian and Siberian EPHE. It aims to bring together texts (native), images and multimedia on the peoples of Mongolia and Siberia. Several galleries of images are presented, including collections of old prints and a new series of old photographs of the Tuvan National Museum. Sheets populations gather essential information and links to documents relating to the peoples of Northern Asia.

Subject files (kinship, Personalia, shamanism and soon others) allow you to browse the data according to thematic itineraries. The bibliography contains references to books and articles, some of which have been digitized and can be downloaded for researchers. Visit: [www.base-juniper.org](http://www.base-juniper.org).

**Searchable Ornithological Research Archive (SORA).** Recently the University of New Mexico Library officially announced the launch of the new, upgraded Searchable Ornithological Research Archive (SORA). The ornithological community is once again indebted to the UNM library for investing in the open access distribution of our historical ornithological literature. SORA has been moved to a new platform that will allow the resource to grow and expand over time. Many of the SORA journal titles have been updated with additional articles, and a new ornithological title has been added to the site. SORA now offers a number of new features for users and provides tools for journal publishers to update the SORA repository directly, with little or no technical support. All of these improvements have been needed for some time, and the UNM Libraries SORA team appreciates your collective patience; it has taken over a year to convert the entire SORA article holdings and prepare the new site for production. A number of ongoing improvements are still in the works for 2014, and as with any major system upgrade, there are a countless number of small details that still require attention. The new URL to the site is <http://sora.unm.edu>.

**The Mongolist** is a website dedicated to sharing knowledge about Mongolian politics, business, and society. The website is an ever growing resource built on data and information collected on the Internet and in Mongolia. The aim of this website is to make understanding the complexity of the rapid social and economic change occurring in Mongolia not only accessible but also rewarding. The underlying principle guiding the development of all content on this website is evidence based investigation. Whenever possible, opinion, conjecture, and pure guesswork are replaced with facts, data, and extrapolation. And, when this is not possible, opinion, conjecture, and pure guesswork are advertised as such. Visit: <http://www.themongolist.com/>

**Education About Asia (EAA)** has become an essential resource for teachers dealing with Asian themes or topics; both in the broad trans-continental and regional contexts. Conceived as a publication for K-12 faculty, it has in fact proved to be extremely helpful for higher education faculty seeking insights on many subjects. The Asian Studies outreach activities of many colleges and universities have greatly benefited from EAA materials. Register (for free) to access approximately 900 articles from all thirty-seven back issues from 1996-2008: <http://www.asian-studies.org/EAA/index.htm> and subscribe to the Print Edition at <https://www.asian-studies.org/EAA-Subscriptions.htm>.

**Inner Asian and Uralic National Resource Center:** Indiana University's IAUNRC has updated its website to include not only its regular newsletters but podcasts, lecture videos, teaching resources and more: <http://www.iu.edu/~iaunrc/>.

**Mongolia Focus (formerly "Mongolia Today"):** "This blog is an attempt by three avid Mongolia watchers to share their observations about current developments in Mongolia." By Julian Dierkes and Dalaibulanii Byambajav, social scientists at the University of British Columbia, this blog mostly follows Mongolian politics and the mining sector. Visit: <http://blogs.ubc.ca/mongolia/>.

## Other News and Events

**Monthly Biobeers Talk:** Урлаг кафе нь Соёлын төв өргөөний хойд талаас ордог, (Урлаг кафе нь Соёлын төв өргөөний хойд талаас ордог, Түүшин зочид буудлын өөдөөс харсан хаалга) People are requested to arrive after 6pm, in time for the talk to start at 6.30. Biobeers is a monthly gathering of government and NGO staff, biologists, researchers, and other professionals interested in conservation. Each month, Biobeers sponsors presentations on topics relevant to Mongolian conservation, followed by an informal gathering to discuss activities and issues of interest. Biobeers is an opportunity to find out what is happening in the field of conservation in Mongolia, talk informally to other researchers and peers in your field, and share information about issues critical to the environment and people of Mongolia. Biobeers is organized by the Zoological Society of London's Steppe Forward Programme and the Wildlife Conservation Society. At Biobeers the beer is on us! Join the Yahoo! Group Mongolbioweb for announcements.

## Recent Publications

***Chanter, s'attacher et transmettre chez les Darhad de Mongolie [Singing, attachment and transmission among the Darhad of Mongolia]***, by Laurent Legrain (Centre d'Études Mongoles et Sibériennes (EPHE), 2014). For more information about this publication in French, please visit the editor's website: <http://emscat.revues.org/2476>

***Buddhism in Mongolian History, Culture, and Society***, by Vesna A. Wallace (Oxford University Press, January 2015) explores the unique elements of Mongolian Buddhism while challenging its stereotyped image as a mere replica of Tibetan Buddhism. Vesna A. Wallace brings together an interdisciplinary group of leading scholars to explore the interaction between the Mongolian indigenous culture and Buddhism, the features that Buddhism acquired through its adaptation to the Mongolian cultural sphere, and the ways Mongols

have constructed their Buddhist identity. The contributors explore the ways that Buddhism retained unique Mongolian features through Qing and Mongol support, and bring to light the ways in which Mongolian Buddhists saw Buddhism as inseparable from "Mongolness." They show that by being greatly supported by Mongol and Qing empires, suppressed by the communist governments, and experiencing revitalization facilitated by democratization and the challenges posed by modernity, Buddhism underwent a series of transformations while retaining unique Mongolian features. The book covers historical events, social and political conditions, and influential personages in Mongolian Buddhism from the sixteenth century to the present, and addresses the artistic and literary expressions of Mongolian Buddhism and various Mongolian Buddhist practices and beliefs.

***Sinophobia: Anxiety, Violence, and the Making of Mongolian Identity***, by Franck Bille (University of Hawaii Press, December 2014). Sinophobia is a timely and ground-breaking study of the anti-Chinese sentiments currently widespread in Mongolia. Graffiti calling for the removal of Chinese dot the urban landscape, songs about killing the Chinese are played in public spaces, and rumours concerning Chinese plans to take over the country and exterminate the Mongols are rife. Such violent anti-Chinese feelings are frequently explained as a consequence of China's meteoric economic development, a cause of much anxiety for her immediate neighbours and particularly for Mongolia, a large but sparsely populated country that is rich in mineral resources. Other analysts point to deeply entrenched antagonisms and to centuries of hostility between the two groups, implying unbridgeable cultural differences. Franck Bille challenges these reductive explanations. Drawing on extended fieldwork, interviews, and a wide range of sources in Mongolian, Chinese, and Russian, he argues that anti-Chinese sentiments are not a new phenomenon but go back to the late socialist period (1960-1990) when Mongolia's political and cultural life was deeply intertwined with Russia's. Through an in-depth analysis of media discourses, Bille shows how stereotypes of the Chinese emerged through an internalisation of Russian ideas of Asia, and how they can easily extend to other Asian groups such as Koreans or Vietnamese. He argues that the anti-Chinese attitudes of Mongols reflect an essential desire to distance themselves from Asia overall and to reject their own Asianness. The spectral presence of China, imagined to be everywhere and potentially in everyone, thus produces a pervasive climate of mistrust, suspicion, and paranoia. Through its detailed ethnography and innovative approach, *Sinophobia* makes a critical intervention in racial and ethnic studies by foregrounding Sinophobic narratives and by integrating psychoanalytical insights into its analysis. In addition to making a useful contribution to the study of Mongolia, it will be essential reading for anthropologists, sociologists, and historians interested in ethnicity, nationalism, and xenophobia.

***The Lama Question: Violence, Sovereignty, and Exception in Early Socialist Mongolia***, by Christopher Kaplonski (University of Hawaii Press, December 2014). Before becoming the second socialist country in the world (after the Soviet Union) in 1921, Mongolia had been a Buddhist feudal theocracy. Combatting the influence of the dominant Buddhist establishment to win the hearts and minds of the Mongolian people was one of the most important challenges faced by the new socialist government. It would take almost a decade and a half to resolve the "lama question," and it would be answered with brutality, destruction, and mass killings. Chris Kaplonski examines this critical, violent time in the development of Mongolia as a nation-state and its ongoing struggle for independence and recognition in the twentieth century. Unlike most studies that explore violence as the primary means by which states deal with their opponents, *The Lama Question* argues that the decision to resort to violence in Mongolia was not a quick one; neither was it a long-term strategy nor an out-of-control escalation of orders but the outcome of a complex series of events and attempts by the government to be viewed as legitimate by the population. Kaplonski draws on a decade of research and archival resources to investigate the problematic relationships between religion and politics and geopolitics and bio politics in early socialist Mongolia, as well as the multitude of state actions that preceded state brutality. By examining the incidents and transformations that resulted in violence and by viewing violence as a process rather than an event, his work not only challenges existing theories of political violence, but also offers another approach to the anthropology of the state. In particular, it presents an alternative model to philosopher Giorgio Agamben's theory of sovereignty and the state of exception. *The Lama Question* will be of interest to scholars and students of violence, the state, bio politics, Buddhism, and socialism, as well as to those interested in the history of Mongolia and Asia in general.

***From Yuan to Modern China to Mongolia: The Writings of Morris Rossabi***, by Morris Rossabi (Brill, December 2014). This wide-ranging work, consisting of selected essays of Morris Rossabi, reflects the diverse interests of a leading scholar of China and Inner Asia. It encompasses the eras from the thirteenth century to the present, territories stretching from China to Mongolia to Central Asia and to the Middle East, and religions from Islam to Nestorian Christianity to Judaism and Confucianism in East, Central, and West Asia. Rossabi first challenged the conventional wisdom concerning traditional Chinese foreign relations by showing the pragmatism of Chinese officials who were not bound by Confucian strictures and stereotypes about foreigners and were actually knowledgeable about neighboring regions. His studies of the territories surrounding China led to the discovery of a

major omission in historical writing—the lack of a biography of Khubilai Khan, one of the most renowned rulers in Eurasian history. His biography of Khubilai resulted in further studies of the Mongolian legacy on global history and of the significant role of women in the Mongolian empire. His repeated travels in Mongolia, in turn, stimulated an interest in modern Mongolia, especially the turbulence following the turbulence after the collapse of socialism in 1990, a subject he writes about in this book. The need for greater public knowledge and awareness of China, Mongolia, Central Asia, the Silk Roads, and Islam in Asia prompted Rossabi to write general, occasionally pedagogical, articles about these topics for a wider audience.

***Inner Asia and the Spatial Politics of Empire: Archaeology, Mobility, and Culture***, by William Honeychurch (Springer, November 2014). This monograph uses the latest archaeological results from Mongolia and the surrounding areas of Inner Asia to propose a novel understanding of nomadic statehood, political economy, and the nature of interaction with ancient China. In contrast to the common view of the Eurasian steppe as a dependent periphery of Old World centers, this work views Inner Asia as a locus of enormous influence on neighboring civilizations, primarily through the development and transmission of diverse organizational models, technologies, and socio-political traditions. This work explores the spatial management of political relationships within the pastoral nomadic setting during the first millennium BCE and argues that a culture of mobility, horse-based transport, and long-distance networking promoted a unique variant of statehood. Although states of the eastern steppe were geographically large and hierarchical, these polities also relied on techniques of distributed authority, multiple centers, flexible structures, and ceremonialism to accommodate a largely mobile and dispersed populace. This expertise in “spatial politics” set the stage early on for the expansionistic success of later Asian empires under the Mongols and Manchus. *Inner Asia and the Spatial Politics of Empire* brings a distinctly anthropological treatment to the prehistory of Mongolia and is the first major work to explore key issues in the archaeology of eastern Eurasia using a comparative framework. The monograph adds significantly to anthropological theory on interaction between states and outlying regions, the emergence of secondary complexity, and the growth of imperial traditions. Based on this approach, the window of Inner Asian prehistory offers a novel opportunity to investigate the varied ways that complex societies grow and the processes articulating adjacent societies in networks of mutual transformation.

***The Mongol Empire between Myth and Reality: Studies in Anthropological History***, by Denise Aigle (Brill, October 2014). In *The Mongol Empire between Myth and Reality*, Denise Aigle presents the Mongol empire as a moment of contact between political ideologies, religions, cultures and languages, and, in terms of reciprocal representations, between the Far East, the Muslim East, and the Latin West. The first part is devoted to “The memoria of the Mongols in historical and literary sources” in which she examines how the Mongol rulers were perceived by the peoples with whom they were in contact. In “Shamanism and Islam” she studies the perception of shamanism by Muslim authors and their attempts to integrate Genghis Khan and his successors into an Islamic framework. The last sections deal with geopolitical questions involving the Ilkhans, the Mamluks, and the Latin West. Genghis Khan’s successors claimed the protection of “Eternal Heaven” to justify their conquests even after their Islamization. *Historical Atlas of Northeast Asia, 1590-2010: Korea, Manchuria, Mongolia, Eastern Siberia* by Li Narangoa and Robert Cribb (September 2014, Columbia University Press. Cloth, 352 pages, 78 Maps, ISBN: 978-0-231-16070-4). This atlas tracks the political configuration of Northeast Asia in ten-year segments from 1590 to 1890, in five-year segments from 1890 to 1960, and in ten-year segments from 1960 to 2010, delineating the distinct history and importance of the region. The text follows the rise and fall of the Qing dynasty in China, founded by the semi-nomadic Manchus; the Russian colonization of Siberia; the growth of Japanese influence; the movements of peoples, armies, and borders; and political, social, and economic developments—reflecting the turbulence of the land that was once the world’s “cradle of conflict.” Compiled from detailed research in English, Chinese, Japanese, French, Dutch, German, Mongolian, and Russian sources, the *Historical Atlas of Northeast Asia* incorporates information made public with the fall of the Soviet Union and includes fifty-five specially drawn maps, as well as twenty historical maps contrasting local and outsider perspectives. Four introductory maps survey the region’s diverse topography, climate, vegetation, and ethnicity.

***The Baron’s Cloak: A History of the Russian Empire in War and Revolution***, by Willard Sunderland, Cornell University Press (2014). Willard Sunderland tells the epic story of the Russian Empire’s final decades through the arc of the life of Baron Roman Fedorovich von Ungern-Sternberg (1885–1921), which spanned the vast reaches of Eurasia. Tracking Ungern’s movements, he transits through the Empire’s multinational borderlands, where the country bumped up against three other doomed empires, the Habsburg, Ottoman, and Qing, and where the violence unleashed by war, revolution, and imperial collapse was particularly vicious. In compulsively readable prose that draws on wide-ranging research in multiple languages, Sunderland recreates Ungern’s far-flung life and uses it to tell a compelling and original tale of imperial success and failure in a momentous time. Sunderland visited the many sites that shaped Ungern’s experience, from Austria and Estonia to Mongolia and China, and these travels help give the book its arresting geographical feel. In the early

chapters, where direct evidence of Ungern's activities is sparse, he evokes peoples and places as Ungern would have experienced them, carefully tracing the accumulation of influences that ultimately came together to propel the better documented, more notorious phase of his career. Recurring throughout Sunderland's magisterial account is a specific artifact: the Baron's cloak, an essential part of the cross-cultural uniform Ungern chose for himself by the time of his Mongolian campaign: an orangey-gold Mongolian kaftan embroidered in the Khalkha fashion yet outfitted with tsarist-style epaulettes on the shoulders. Like his cloak, Ungern was an imperial product. He lived across the Russian Empire, combined its contrasting cultures, fought its wars, and was molded by its greatest institutions and most volatile frontiers. By the time of his trial and execution mere months before the decree that created the USSR, he had become a profoundly contradictory figure, reflecting both the empire's potential as a multinational society and its ultimately irresolvable limitations.