

In concluding his fascinating study, Ruoff also makes the important point that the mythical “unbroken imperial line” ideology of 1940 has still not been officially disavowed even in Japan today, despite the postwar desacralization of the emperor system. The Japanese government “continues to maintain and to treat as sacred Emperor Jimmu’s Mausoleum” and the “stone monuments marking ‘Emperor Jimmu Sacred Historical Sites’ that were raised at the time of the 2,600th anniversary celebrations remain standing as well, with no appended disclaimers” (186). Thus, he continues, “the unbroken imperial line ideology maintains a measure of influence surprising for an interpretation of the national identity with such pernicious residue” (188). Indeed, this is yet another significant manifestation of the fact that the postwar Japanese political establishment never completely cut its ideological and material links with the fascist wartime regime, at least not in the same decisive and thoroughgoing way as did their German and Italian allies. The wartime *kokutai* or national polity still survives, in a somewhat attenuated form to be sure, but ever ready to be revived by those nostalgic for imperial “greatness” —which is why, of course, Japan’s Asian neighbours continue to eye it with suspicion and unease, and also why the issues discussed in this book are as relevant today as they were in 1940.

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**AIRBORNE DREAMS: “Nisei” Stewardesses and Pan American World Airways.** By *Christine Yano*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2011. xv. 228pp. (B&W photos.) US\$22.95, paper. ISBN 978-0-8223-4850-4.

*Airborne Dreams* is a title that tells many more stories than those of the stewardesses who worked for Pan American World Airways in the period from 1955 to 1972, the main historical window covered by this book. True, the main focus is on the so-called “Nisei” or second-generation Japanese who worked for the airline, but through the lens of their stories, Yano weaves a complex narrative of American imperialism in the technologically empowered jet-age that gathered momentum as the years unfolded. The tale is limited to that period because the plan of the airline was essentially motivated by preferences of a racial and gendered nature that eventually became unacceptable to the society which it represented, but while it lasted, a lot of people had a lot of fun, and the airline’s architect, Juan Trippe, achieved most of his own dreams as well.

It was only ten years after the end of the Second World War when Pan Am had the bold idea of employing second-generation Japanese, mostly from Hawaii, who would be able to speak the language, while still being patriotic Americans. Trippe’s idea for airborne travel was to carry curious Americans

out to see the world in a spirit of friendship and understanding, and his stewardesses were to offer the best service they could muster. In fact many of the girls he employed had little Japanese language, and they weren't all Nisei, but if they looked the part, he would send them for training, and they would soon learn the basic requirements for the flights. They turned out to be employees beyond his expectations, and the scheme was a success both for the airline and for the girls. Often from rural backgrounds, with little prior sophistication, these stewardesses were introduced to all the niceties of the lives of the rich and famous, and they travelled to and enjoyed exotic locations around the world.

At the same time, they made an important contribution to the claim of the company's logo that it was the "World's Most Experienced Airline," a claim that also symbolized the gathering postwar dominance of America in the world. Another of the airline's dreams was to embody the old frontier ideology, but this time across the oceans, and the Nisei girls nicely did that, also highlighting the "aggressively competitive, masculinist business culture that constantly emphasised its primacy," (3) expressed as a sense of creating an American-style empire. Yano sees the endeavours of Pan Am as successfully leading the way in the "emergent sense of globalism," and her book provides ample evidence of her argument, demonstrating ways in which all kinds of other diplomatic, commercial and even political practices followed in its wake.

The ethnography for this volume was gathered from former employees who still meet regularly, and who still talk happily about the wonderful experience it was for them, for America and for the world, working for the airline. Through the personal stories of the women—not only the "Nisei," but focussed primarily on them—the volume has an intimate quality that brings it alive with detail, and that truly recounts dreams realized. Yano says it matters little that the airline eventually failed (in 1991) but her book makes so real the links with the American imperialist venture that the two attacks on the airline—a hijack in Pakistan in 1986 and the bomb that brought down Flight 103 over Lockerbie in 1988—would actually seem to bear out her argument. In my view, this is a book that looks at first to be an interesting and fairly innocuous account of the glamorous lives of a few young Japanese-American women who demonstrated an exemplary citizenship in the rebuilding of postwar international relations, but it actually opens up a much more crucially important period in recent American history.

For a non-American reviewer, the book contains a lot of references that may not be familiar, but it certainly paints a fascinating picture of the background to the American gender and racial issues that still fill the big screens of the world, and it broadens out the stereotypical anti-communist image that preceded America's entry into Vietnam. Yano does briefly consider the roles of other airlines, including European ones like BOAC and Air France, which also flew jets around their actual imperial provinces, offering

stewardesses of various backgrounds, but she just as quickly dismisses them. This is an American story, through and through, and I think it is definitely worth the telling. The storytellers were not only a wonderful asset to the airline as it built up its global image. They also do a great job of telling the story, and in case anyone is wondering how much agency they had in changing their image over the years, I can only encourage you to take a look! Definitely an anthropology book worth taking out into the big wide world!

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**SEX IN JAPAN'S GLOBALIZATION, 1870-1930: Prostitutes, Emigration, and Nation Building. *Perspectives in Economic and Social History, no. 13.* By Bill Mihalopoulos. London: Pickering & Chatto, 2011. xi, 181 pp., US\$99.00, cloth. ISBN 978-1-84893-201-2.**

*Sex in Japan's Globalization, 1870-1930* is a thought-provoking re-examination of the history of "poor Japanese peasant women who ventured overseas and worked as sex labourers" (1), in a period of increasingly intensified globalization from the early Meiji (1868-1910) through to the early Showa periods (1925-). The author, Bill Mihalopoulos, contends that these women, generically referred to in the literature as *karayukisan*, received problematic treatment both at the hands of their contemporaries as well as later scholars who increasingly wrote about them from the 1970s. Contemporaneous Japanese, with little or no knowledge of these women or their plight, and usually from different class backgrounds, came to label these women in various ways that disparaged them. Later scholars usually failed to place these women in their proper historical and social context when writing about them, and retrospectively embarked upon a moralistic "policing of their conduct" (7). Mihalopoulos, dissatisfied with the treatment received by these women, rearticulates their story through an act of "problematization" (10), reading historical sources about them and their activities "against the grain" through the lens of what he terms (following L.M. Agustín) "radical equality" (8, 136). What this means is that the author maintains a methodological commitment to seeing these women as labour migrants who engaged in economic activities in order to support their families back home in Kyushu. Debates and policies about the suitability and social permissibility of their specific form of labour according to the author became issues only later in the hands of people from other classes who had their own agendas within a broader context of colonialism, global capital formation and nation-building.

When historical records concerning these women are carefully re-examined, what is found, according to Mihalopoulos in chapter 1, is a