

way that even a non-specialist can find both enjoyable and informative (1).

*Marc Meehan*

Adam M. McKeown. *Melancholy Order: Asian Migration and the Globalization of Borders*. New York: Columbia University Press. 2008. Pp. 472. Cloth \$32.50.

In studying the ideas and methods used to control Asian migration in the Pacific during the late nineteenth century, Adam M. McKeown seeks to correct the prevailing notion that borders have become irrelevant in a globalized world. Instead, he argues that global migration and migratory control played an integral role in defining the nation state and its borders as essential components of power and prestige in the modern world. To support this argument, he draws on official correspondence, inspection records, case files, letters, and legal documents from government archives in the United States, China, Great Britain, Canada, and Australia. By placing the exclusionary policies of individual nations in an international context, McKeown demonstrates how the principles behind modern border control and identity documentation figure into a global history that helped construct the notion of an international system made up of self-governing nation states and free and mobile individuals.

McKeown begins his study with a broad exploration of global migration and regulation up to the second half of the nineteenth century. Among the many issues covered, this section gives particular attention to the shift from private networks to state institutions in the organization of migration. This greater government involvement ultimately resulted in an emphasis on the border as the site of migratory control and individual migrants as the focus of regulation. In the next section, McKeown examines attempts by nations such as The United States, Canada, and Australia to restrict Asian migration beginning in the 1850s. He details the difficult task these nations faced in regulating the movement of migrant laborers due to the lack of international laws and contests over how to categorize different migrants. Even when nations did agree on legal status,

enforcement mechanisms remained dispersed and inconsistent. This difficulty motivated the creation of a more organized and standardized system of migratory regulation developed around a general idea of national sovereignty and the free individual.

In the third section, McKeown explores the policies and methods developed for this new system of migratory control. Focusing particularly on Chinese exclusion laws in the United States, he explores how control of identification became central to reshaping previous migratory patterns. Government agencies began to generate migrant information through predictable methods and centralized their location in more accessible forms. This allowed nations to remove migrants from informal networks, place them under greater administrative control, and ultimately give them new identities that would better reflect the values and customs of their host nations. McKeown ends by describing how these new methods of migratory control spread across the globe in the early decades of the twentieth century. The adoption and enforcement of migratory laws formed a key element in identifying the ability of states to participate in international institutions. Those nations that did not adopt modern forms of migratory control faced a lesser status and exclusion from world affairs. Even among movements critical of this expanding network of control, the link between enforcement and issues of national identity limited protest to specific policies or methods and not the general need for regulation.

This wide-ranging study has much to offer scholars studying global history, U.S. and Asian history, and the history of migration. Its methodology also provides a useful example for those interested in transnational and postmodern approaches. In the end, McKeown presents a complex and ambitious study of migratory control that gives new insight into the contest between the individual and nation in a globalized world.

*Shaine Scarminach*