

Choe's enriching story of discovering neglected worth in the Korean cultural landscape articulates his central purpose clearly and successfully. *Land and Life* is both reader friendly and persuasive despite a few gaffes (entertaining rather than annoying) as a result of awkward translations, editorial lapses, and Choe's own unrestrained exuberance for his subject matter. The book has numerous figures and tables, a glossary, and several categories of references, yet it is in dire need of an index. Photos, diagrams, and maps in support of the text abound and are, for the most part, useful and attractive. Some otherwise excellent maps suffer from the economy of overreduction. Unfortunately, the maps and diagrams featured on the book's front and back covers are illegible.

*Land and Life* pays tribute—mostly indirectly—to the influence and accomplishments of the indigenous American “Berkeley School” tradition of cultural landscape study. Choe's scholarship over his career mirrors the best efforts of some of his close kindred and counterparts in the United States and in Europe, many of whom he references in *Land and Life*—including F. Kniffen, J. B. Jackson, H. Glassie, P. Lewis, J. Needham, Y. F. Tuan, A. Rapoport, H. K. Yoon, H. C. Darby, and E. E. Evans. *Land and Life* in its English translation now offers cultural-historical geographers in the West the opportunity to discover for the first time Choe's many scholarly accomplishments in Korea.

Beyond this specialist audience, I can recommend *Land and Life* as enriching reading to that broader audience of Korean studies and Asian studies specialists across the disciplines interested in the “place” concept and its applications: place in history, history of place, origins of place-names, sense of place, and so on. Given the many virtues of *Land and Life*, I hope that Choe's diligent research on the storied Great Yeongnam Road between modern-day Seoul and Busan (Korea's version of America's legendary Route 66) might soon also be published in English-language translation.

DAVID NEMETH  
University of Toledo

## SOUTH ASIA

*Reproductive Restraints: Birth Control in India, 1877–1947*. By SANJAM AHLUWALIA. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2008. 251 pp. \$60.00 (cloth); \$25.00 (paper).  
doi:10.1017/S002191180800154X

Sanjam Ahluwalia's *Reproductive Restraints: Birth Control in India, 1877–1947*, is a self-fulfilling study that bridges the void in literature offering subaltern

voices in the history of birth control in colonial India. Following Sarah Hodges's recent work (*Reproductive Health in India: History, Politics, Controversies* [New Delhi: Orient Longman, 2006]; see also Anshu Malhotra, "Of Dais and Midwives: 'Middle-class' Interventions in the Management of Women's Reproductive Health, *Indian Journal of Gender Studies* 10, no. 2 [2003]: 229–59), this is a very welcome addition to the expanding literature not only on issues of gender but also on aspects of sexuality in colonial India. With an emphasis on cultural imperatives as providing a paradigm within which the history of birth control is to be understood, Ahluwalia provides a new perspective on the role of class in determining the discourses on sexuality and reproduction. Viewed thus, social and cultural paradigms offer a framework within which the attitudes of the Indian elite to population and birth control are to be understood.

One of the major strengths of Ahluwalia's work is the reconstruction of oral narratives, the subaltern voices reflecting on imperial and elite "strategies" and policies on public health and medical services at a time when power, hegemony, and the struggle for monopoly in the medical profession were predominant paradigms justifying imperial rule. The period of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries thus becomes crucial when the emerging middle class called for "a strict surveillance of reproductive functions, particularly of those represented as undesirable national citizens—the working class, lower castes, and, in some instances, Muslims" (p. 35). National prosperity was viewed by male upper-caste Hindu proponents as "resting on the womb" and curtailing the "irresponsible procreation" by the subaltern groups (p. 39). The national movement and the turbulent sociopolitical climate strengthened this move. If India was used as a site where new reproductive technologies could be "tried" and "tested," as Ahluwalia claims, then the role of Marie Stopes, Margaret Sanger, Edith How-Marty, and Eileen Palmer in advocating birth control with underlying feminist and altruistic undertones ("albeit of the imperial variety," p. 55) should be viewed in the optic of colonial imperatives of being able to "rule" a "controlled" population more effectively; this was quest for power and monopoly at its best.

Nationalism and the struggle for freedom set off several social and political changes and reforms in colonial India. The participation of Indian women in nationalist politics and feminist politics was an outcome of this movement. With the predominance of anticolonial sentiments, however, feminist politics continued to represent a "confused" blend of "national sentiments, feminine representations and modernity," with middle-class politics of building a nation-state and issues of class, gender, and colonialism still reigning supreme. Ahluwalia succinctly discusses the debates between Indian feminists and Western advocates on the use of contraceptives, with a sensitive twist of Gandhi's idealization of femininity, and hence his opposition to advocacy of birth control.

While the upper-caste Hindus generally continued to promote the use of contraceptives, the Rajputs defied the Female Infanticide Act of 1870. In the absence of a plausible explanation for this ambiguity in this study, one is compelled to relate it to British caution against indigenous and popular uprisings, especially in the aftermath of the mutiny. Also, by the late nineteenth century,

the pluralistic nature of the medical profession, coupled with competition for monopoly, complicated matters for Western medicine. Perhaps it was this new direction toward medical pluralism that gave more strength to successfully oppose British intervention in matters of reproduction. In this respect, one would have wished for a detailed background on the indigenous and popular reaction to middle- and elite-class advocacy of birth control.

Despite a split in the ways in which the issue of population was viewed by the colonial administrators, there was consensus on accepting it as “problematic.” To this effect, policies on controlling the population were established. And because the provision of public health services for the civilian population remained an unresolved concern, the size of the population was seen as equally alarming during epidemics and major health hazards, for they would have eventually affected the British population.

The transfer of matters of public health to elected Indian ministers following the introduction of dual government (*Dyarchy*) in the early part of the twentieth century is a significant landmark in the history of public health in colonial India, for it formalized Indian intervention in matters of health. The debates, discussions, policies, and popular participation around health issues were probably a product of this formalization. The work, although very promising, falls short of allusion to this aspect. Nevertheless, this is a significant contribution that merits recognition in the way it presents intellectual arguments on the amalgamation of British, American, and Indian systems debates in identifying issues of gender and sexuality, shaped by nationalism and imperial imperatives in colonial India. It is sure to command attention amongst historians, sociologists, and health and social science disciplines.

POONAM BALA  
*University of Delhi*

*Rites Hindous: Transferts et transformations.* Edited by GÉRARD COLAS and GILLES TARABOUT. Paris: Éditions de l'École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, 2006. 504 pp. \$45.00 (paper).

doi:10.1017/S0021911808001551

Rituals tend to be conceived, both by the people who perform them and by those who analyze them, as immemorial and repetitive structures that are resistant to time. This volume contributes to the field of ritual studies by focusing on the evolution, circulation, and transformation of rituals rather than on much-debated questions of meaning, function, or efficacy. By bringing together nine anthropologists and five Sanskrit scholars, the book aims to analyze not only how rituals change over time but also how different social groups integrate, legitimate, or react to these changes. The collection explores a vast range of Hindu rituals, including initiation and purification ceremonies, vegetarian and blood offerings, urban festivals, temple rituals, and image