Denise Y. Ho. *Curating the Revolution: Politics on Display in Mao's China*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018. Pp. xvi, 308. Cloth $109.99, paper $30.99.

Jie Li. *Utopian Ruins: A Memorial Museum of the Mao Era*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2020. Pp. xv, 367. Cloth $114.95, paper $31.95.

Denise Y. Ho's *Curating Revolution* and Jie Li's *Utopian Ruins* provide a complementary pair of studies taking the reader through museums and exhibitionary culture in the Mao years (Ho) and of those years in the post-Mao era (Li). Individually, they are each a fine study—focused, richly documented, and explicitly engaged with earlier Chinese studies and a rich array of comparative studies, particularly of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Together they highlight the contributions of a younger generation of modern China scholars working in North America, reflecting the "grassroots" turn in recent historiography. Both bring to life the living materiality of museums, exhibitions, and objects—objects from workers or capitalists in the Mao period and documentary film exhibits of archival and personal records and physical ruins exhibited since 2000. Scholars of museum culture will find these studies engaging and comparable. For China historians, these studies offer a challenge to the totalitarian image of China.

Ho explores exhibitionary culture in the Mao years (1949–1976) through six chapter-length studies of sites around Shanghai in which Maoist politics were put on display: the First Party Congress site, the Fangua Lane socialist workers village, a 1950s exhibition on superstition versus science for Young Pioneers, a class education exhibition from the Cultural Revolution, an exhibition of Red Guard Achievements displaying the ill-gotten goods of the bourgeoise, and the ups and downs of the Shanghai Museum through changing political campaigns. Ho's point is that museums and exhibitions served two distinct and sometimes conflicting goals in Mao's time: state legitimation—a proper state conserves and shows its heritage—and mobilization—displays to mobilize the masses to revolutionary action (13). Like print, radio, and film propaganda, museums and displays were intended not only to motivate but also to give the masses the language, the goals, and the repertoire to carry on the revolution. Each chapter is clearly argued and richly documented with an ideal mix of archival materials, publications from the Mao period, and interviews made in the past ten years. Ho engages and builds on previous scholarship usefully, reminding readers of earlier insights and issues and building nicely on these foundations.

In all, Ho shows that museums, displays, and exhibitions in the Mao period did indeed "stage the revolution," making it manifest in the objects presented and described. But it was the revolution as Chinese people lived it, replete with its contractions and internal tensions and not the idealized form in official propaganda—or in some New Left imaginings today. The core activity that Ho analyses is "curating," which she defines as "all stages of putting on an exhibition, from assembling a collection of objects, to their display and narration, to the rituals of the exhibition hall" (249). This is rich grassroots history grounded in both the operation and documents of the party and the voices and experiences of ordinary people. The historians and curators of the First Party Congress site first had to find it. The actual address had long since been forgotten. Then they had to collect their materials, including interviews. Displaying the building and objects they wanted to include ran up against central party policy. The curators and their docents had to follow the "red line" of Mao Zedong's role in everything, even when the documents showed otherwise. Finally, Ho describes the various ways the Congress rooms serve as a ritual site, with changing emphases from national pride to Maoist enthusiasm to red tourism today. The other chapters likewise take the reader into the lives of individuals, cultural bureaucrats, and visitors alike. What is key throughout these examples is that Maoist exhibitionary culture was participatory. It was intended to activate people's feelings—concrete examples, she notes, of what Elizabeth Perry has identified as the party's "emotion work." The stories of the Shanghai Museum curators are particularly striking, from the experts left over from the "pre-Liberation" years to the newly trained specialists from the working class. Each strove to preserve *wenwu* (China's cultural objects) but for varying reasons—all through the tumultuous years of the Cultural Revolution itself. Meanwhile, locals wrote their own histories as inspired by the Fangua Lane exhibition to use the revolution's categories of *yiku sitian* (recalling the bitterness of the old society and contemplating the sweetness of the new). Mao's revolution was not totalistic. Curators saved "inconvenient" sources for use in the future, but it was ubiquitous—locals tried to apply the models they learned at the exhibitions.

While Ho presents museums as political acts led by the party in the Mao era, Jie Li depicts mediations of memory in the post-Mao era as personal acts apart from party direction. Jie Li offers her six chapters as both a guide to exhibitions on the Mao era in China today and as an outline for future curators—the topic of the book's epilogue. She offers three pairs of memorial exhibits. The first two draw from archives, albeit made available through the internet and an independent documentary filmmaker, to remember individuals who "fell." First, is the martyrdom of the idealistic Lin Zhao, who embraced Mao's revolution but refused to back down from her criticisms of its faults. Purged, imprisoned, and finally executed for refusing to

recant, her story was first written in her own blood in prison. The post-Mao release of some of the documents from this carceral state—to relatives—allowed the documentary filmmaker, Hu Jie, to bring her case to the public. Next, a contrasting case: Nie Gannu, a famous essayist and poet, outed as a snitch after several decades. The raucous Chinese internet went after him, but Li gives a nuanced account that resists post hoc moralism and recreates the tormented intellectual world of state socialism during the Cultural Revolution. Li is not after judgment, but understanding. She uses the dossier material on Nie from the secret police archives to explore the relationship between archive, memory, and power and does so in explicit engagement with critical theory from Jacques Derrida to Achielle Mbembe. She adopts the New Historicist approach "to use literary interpretive strategies to probe the ideas and power relations, fantasies, and anxieties of an era through the vast textual archive it has bequeathed" (78).

Li turns next to photographs and films, making just such a nuanced reading of propaganda photos from the Great Leap Forward. While these all date from the Mao period, Li's approach is to curate them in the present—to offer ways of reading visual images that open up understandings of them beyond mere state propaganda. Chapter 4, "Foreign Lenses," uses the films of Joris Ivens, a longtime supporter, and Michelangelo Antonioni, an independent left-wing director, made in the early 1970s. She does this because Chinese-made films of grassroots life are not to be had. The final two chapters consider physical spaces and material relics, from Wang Bing's documentary of factory rubble in the Tiexi District of Shenyang to the Jianchun Museum cluster in Sichuan to a "Cultural Revolution Museum" in Shantou's Pagoda Park. All are examples of individual memory work, but intriguingly the Shantou museum was started by Peng Qi'an, a retired deputy mayor—hardly an alienated dissident. Li's purpose in her accounts of memorial making in China today is to capture this juxtaposing of utopia and ruins "to testify to the revolution's inspiring and destructive powers" (229).

Even this longer review cannot do justice to the range of detail and interpretive points raised by these two articulate scholars. Ho writes more in the descriptive style of her mentor, Philip Kuhn, in which rich detail and blessedly clear language bely a rigorous theoretical contribution. In Ho's case, she offers a compelling case of the workings of an "affective regime," or what I have come to see as the ideological governance of the party, all through careful, plain language analysis and documentation. Jie Li shows that a lively engagement with critical theory need not be either obfuscating or abstract. She hones in on the productive questions of knowledge production, meaning making, and power, drawing from notable theorists and previous studies to illuminate and make comparable her conclusions. She does have the penchant for paradoxes and contrasting but connected pairs, captured in *Utopian Ruins*, but these serve a thoughtful reading of propaganda "as the fantasies and anxieties of an era" as well as other insights. One may find Ho's approach undertheorized or Li's as overtheorized, but both are worth our time and attention.

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Kelly A. Hammond. *China's Muslims and Japan's Empire: Centering Islam in World War II*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2020. Pp. 314. Cloth $95.00, paper $29.95.

Over the last few years, scholars have shown a rapidly growing interest in the global history of the Second World War. Going beyond traditional military histories of the "Desert War," the "Pacific War," or the "Jungle War" in Southeast Asia, they have begun to look at the impact of the conflict on the civilians in these war zones, the military deployment of millions of colonial soldiers, and the role of anti-imperial movements. At the same time, they have paid greater attention to South-South relations during the war years.

An important part of this body of literature form studies of Japan's conquest and occupation of East and Southeast Asia. These studies have exposed the brutality of Japanese rule as well as Tokyo's efforts to win over populations across the continent, from Manchuria in the north to the Dutch East Indies in the south, using pan-Asian, anti-imperialist, and anti-Soviet propaganda. Works on the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere—most notably, perhaps, those of Willard Elsbree, Eri Hotta, and Jeremy Yellen—have shown that Japan's efforts to forge a new order were based on both violent exploitation and promises of liberation.

Kelly A. Hammond's *China's Muslims and Japan's Empire* makes a crucial contribution to this field, exploring the neglected history of Japan's engagement with Sino-Muslims (Chinese-speaking Muslims, also known as *Hui*). Arguing that Sino-Muslims were central to Tokyo's war in occupied North China (*Huabei*), her book demonstrates that Japanese officials skillfully exploited Islam to develop local loyalties in order to control the region.

The study draws on an impressive body of primary sources in Chinese, Japanese, English, French, and Italian unearthed in archives in as far apart as Beijing, Dalian, Chengde, Taipei, Tokyo, London, Maryland, and Washington, DC. The author's excellent linguistic ability makes her the ideal person to carry out this research.

Hammond begins with a look at the intellectual roots of Tokyo's policies toward Islam, tracing Japanese