

Korean immigrant community, exacerbated by fierce competition from co-ethnic entrepreneurs within the same narrow economic niche.

Chapter 5 focuses on Korean entrepreneurship following the 2001 fiscal crisis and subsequent economic recovery in Argentina. Kim finds that, increasingly, the importance of class resources outweighs ethnic resources among Korean entrepreneurs. She points out that Argentina's "boom" and "bust" cycles also provide opportunity for those "who have enough leverage to overcome difficult economic periods" (p. 133)—that is, those with the financial assets to take advantage of lower rents and decreased costs during crisis episodes. Kim also addresses perceptions that Korean sweatshops rely on illegal business practices and the exploitation of other immigrants, particularly those from Bolivia. In contrast with such stereotypes, Kim cites interview evidence that Bolivian workers prefer to work with Korean owners and vice versa. Kim points out that tax evasion and informal hiring practices are endemic across the entire Argentine garment industry rather than being an ethnospecific feature of Korean business norms. This chapter also cites Korean interviewees who describe Bolivians as submissive, diligent, and hard-working. Such culturalist discourses are reported without much comment. A deeper cultural analysis might show whether this is a perception that is unique to Korean entrepreneurs or whether these stereotypes, like Korean business practices, are shared more broadly in the Argentine garment industry.

Chapter 6 analyzes how Korean Argentines' generational entrenchment in the garment industry leads to both economic mobility and social marginalization. The literature on Korean immigrant entrepreneurship, which has developed in the context of Global North countries such as the United States, suggests that the children of immigrants rarely stay in ethnic niches, experiencing generational mobility as they select other careers and assimilate into mainstream society. In contrast, 1.5- and second-generation Korean Argentines do not follow this pattern, choosing to continue in the apparel industry. This decision is explained by higher incomes generated by the family business in comparison with the limited opportunities afforded by professional careers in Argentina. However, "their concentration in a specific sector clearly restricted their integration into mainstream society" (p. 162)—that is, Kim's interviewees described ongoing social marginalization of Koreans in Argentina.

As *From Sweatshop to Fashion Shop* demonstrates, the processes and outcomes of Korean immigrant entrepreneurship are highly dependent on the national social, political, and economic contexts in which migrants operate. Kim's interview data, which features the voices and perspectives of Korean immigrants themselves, speaks to the complexity of immigrant entrepreneurship in Argentina, a country whose recent history has been characterized by economic and political turmoil. Including more ethnographic anecdotes, such as the one featured in the introduction's opening pages, might have provided a richer perspective on this complexity. Still, *From Sweatshop to Fashion Shop* should be relevant to scholars of Korean diasporas and Asia–Latin America connections as well as those studying ethnic niches, immigrant integration, and migrant labor.

doi:10.1017/S0021911822000791

## Healing Labor: Japanese Sex Work in the Gendered Economy

By Gabriele Koch. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2020. 248 pp.  
ISBN: 9781503610576 (cloth; also available in paper and as e-book).

Anne Allison

Duke University  
[anne.allison@duke.edu](mailto:anne.allison@duke.edu)

Entering into the gray terrain of the sex industry in Japan today, Gabriele Koch has written a beautifully rich account of the contradictory nature of both the work for the women involved and the place

this work assumes in the larger politico-economy of Japan. Based on sustained ethnographic research conducted between 2008 and 2013, mainly with sex workers but also at their places of work, with related personnel in the legal and political terrain, and with an anti-human-trafficking organization, Koch offers a deft analysis of the way sex work both skirts the law and is implanted in the very heart of Japan's postindustrial socio-economy. While prostitution is illegal, the selling of transactional sex is thriving nonetheless, assuming an ambiguous status that excludes sex workers from the protection of labor laws and stigmatizes their work. For this reason, many who enter the field do so claiming that they are only "amateurs." What they perform in the way of "amateur sex" is a service seen, by themselves and by the customers they serve, as akin to "healing" (*iyashi*). In its gentleness of empathy and recognition, building up a man "to be a man," healing has a productive value in an era of socio-economic decline, decreasing job and marital security, and—for this and other reasons—imperiled masculinity. As Koch argues, this makes Japanese sex work today a form of feminized affective labor "deeply implicated in regimes of male precarity in postindustrial capitalism" (p. 120).

What I appreciate most in this fine book is Koch's attentiveness to the voices and lives of Japanese (female) sex workers. This is not a homogenous bunch, and the diversity of backgrounds, reasons for entering, and trajectories within sex work are handled with deftness and sensitivity. So is the point that Koch reiterates of the "ordinariness" (versus exceptionalism) by which women view their job choice motivated by the paucity of viable job options elsewhere in the workforce for Japanese women. Given that Japan still ranks near the bottom of Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development countries in terms of gender parity in employment, choosing sex work is often motivated by the sheer pragmatics of the flexibility, autonomy, and pay the job accords despite the moral stigma and risks that *deriheru* (delivery sex work, the prevalent form today) entails.

Kathleen Millar makes a similar argument about *catadores* who, when embarking upon the risk-laden, morally stigmatized job of garbage picking in Brazil, do so for the better pay and flexibility the work affords them.<sup>1</sup> With lives already precarious, it is less the job (of garbage picking) that is precarious than a life made somewhat less so by the job. So, too, are sex workers savvy about the limitations they face as women in the wider political economy of Japan. And, for those whom Koch features in the book, their path into and through sex work is done with considerable agency, sometimes aspiration, and often pride—in the "healing" work they are doing for the needy men they serve. This is also why, as Koch so carefully discussed in the two final chapters of the book (chapter 5, "Victims All" and chapter 6, "Risk and Rights"), few of the sex workers she spoke with aligned with anti-trafficking campaigns, not seeing themselves as victims of exploitation. This meant, as well, that virtually none favored criminalization of sex work. These women do not seek to be saved, unless that would mean de-gendering the entire workforce in Japan so that they could be amply compensated and employed somewhere besides in a job entailing sex.

*Healing Labor* is an analytically crisp book, based in relevant scholarship and energized by ethnographic storytelling that is beautifully done. It is very readerly and would work well in any number of classes, both undergraduate and graduate, on gender, sexuality, sex work, labor, affective labor, Japan, and/or global Asia. In offering one criticism, though, there is something that remains missing or problematic in Koch's overarching thesis: of sex work that is "productive" for the economy (and for sex workers' own sense of legitimacy and self-respect) in the "healing" it performs for men wounded by the precaritization of life/labor in Japan today.

Does not the very sense of unease, and "imperiled masculinity" that is served by the affective labor of female sex workers, indicate that something is coming undone? And do the sex workers, so savvy about their second-class status in the larger political economy, really believe in the narrative of the social good their work does to "heal" men (as the reality they face is to engage in sex increasingly unprotected by condoms or labor laws)? Certainly, the gendering of the economy skews toward men and continues to disadvantage women: what, according to Koch's analysis, is the primary motivation for sex workers to enter what they perceive as just a temporary, ordinary, job to make better

<sup>1</sup>Kathleen M. Millar, *Reclaiming the Discarded: Life and Labor on Rio's Garbage Dump* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2018).

money? But, on both ends, things would seem to be messier and more complex—and I am left with the desire to see all of this pushed a bit further. The spunkiness of the sex workers whom Koch has so beautifully brought to the page begs for one more step here.

doi:10.1017/S0021911822000808

## The United States and the Japanese Student Movement, 1948–1973: Managing a Free World

By Naoko Koda. Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books, 2020. xiii, 259 pp. ISBN: 9781498583411 (cloth; also available in paper and as e-book).

Simon Avenell

Australian National University  
simon.avenell@anu.edu.au

In this fascinating study spanning the critical years of the postwar Japanese student movement from the late 1940s to the early 1970s, Naoko Koda provides a vivid and compelling account of the ways that student activists helped shape Japan's budding postwar democracy, along the way influencing US elites' approaches to their East Asian Cold War protégé as well as public attitudes toward peace and social protest within Japan. An innovative aspect of the book is the dual-track approach that Koda adopts. On the one hand, the narrative succinctly traces the development of student activism from its emergence in the early years after the war to its explosive conclusion in the violence of the early 1970s, while on the other hand, it provides an innovative insight into the ways American political elites became concerned about Japanese student radicalism and subsequently took action to bring it under control. The narrative of the postwar student movement will certainly be familiar to many readers; however, Koda does a terrific job of utilizing fascinating new source materials that will be of great interest even to experts in this area. The other focus on American approaches to the Japanese student movement is new and quite eye-opening, inasmuch as we get a clear sense of elites' genuine concerns about the "dangerous" possibilities of Japanese student activism in terms of American policies for the country.

Koda sets all of this against the backdrop of the wider American Cold War strategy that Japan was a key part of and, indeed, played a role in shaping. As Koda puts it, the book "hopes to deepen our understanding of US power within a specific local context and the complex social and political processes in Japan which were shaped by America's Cold War" (p. 6). In terms of social movements, the book also attempts to situate the Japanese student movement in the "global 1960s" by showing how "radical movements in the West and elsewhere transformed the Japanese student radicals into global players in combatting the structures of oppression which they saw as resulting from capitalist imperialism" (p. 232).

Koda's book offers a very welcome comprehensive narrative of the student movement, beginning with the early postwar formation on university campuses of self-governing associations aimed at democratic revolution (ultimately leading to the creation of Zengakuren), and thereafter movements to defend democratic education and expunge fascism in the late 1940s, protests against the expansion of a US military facility in the small town of Sunagawa in the mid-1950s, mobilizations against the renewal of the US-Japan Security Treaty in 1960 and the Vietnam War from 1965, and large-scale student radicalism from the late 1960s until the early 1970s. Presenting the full historical arc of the student movement in a single narrative is very useful indeed because we not only see the ebb and flow of this activism more clearly, but also get a very clear picture of how it fits into the wider postwar history of Japan, Japan-US relations, and the Cold War.

Although student activists—like many others on the left—began with the intention to cooperate with the US drive for democracy in the country, with the onset of the Cold War and the resulting