

term of estrangement; from ‘Native’ as a category of disempowerment to ‘Native’ as a condition of belonging. Crucially, it underscores the active and material role that the legal and documentary practices of Arabs themselves played in these processes.

These inter-imperial lives allow for a range of comparative understandings of Muslim family, estate, contract, property and *awqaf* (endowment) law across and between empires, which had lasting effects on the content and practice of Islamic law and carry important implications for its study. They suggest the productivity of rethinking the everyday and enduring balancing act between fluidity and ‘jurisdiction’, *both* by Muslims seeking to find, formalize, negotiate, preserve, challenge and utilize legal resources in text and institutions, *and* by scholars of Islamic law seeking to think about the feedback loops that run between legal text and theory, institutions in particular places and times, and the actors that move through them.

Iza Hussin

The Department of Politics and International Studies, The Alison Richard Building, 7 West Road, Cambridge, CB3 9DP, UK; email: ih298@cam.ac.uk.

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In Camps: Vietnamese Refugees, Asylum Seekers, and Repatriates. By Jana K. Lipman. Oakland: University of California Press, 2020. 320 pp.

The Vietnamese have been among the most documented groups of refugees in the United States, and the complexities about their experiences since 1975 have continued to motivate researchers to learn more about their history. An important example of recent scholarship is Amanda Demmer’s *After Saigon’s Fall: Refugees and US-Vietnamese Relations, 1975–2000* (2021). Another is the very monograph under review from historian Jana Lipman (Tulane

University). It is to date one of the deepest studies about the history of Vietnamese refugees.

In Camps, however, differs significantly from *After Saigon's Fall* and most other academic histories for its emphasis as well as the scope of its research. While most studies of Vietnamese refugees have utilized mostly materials from the United States, this book employs archival materials from half a dozen countries. Most notable are archival and library sources found in Hong Kong, Malaysia and the Philippines. Moreover, Lipman's employment of the records of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is just about the most extensive use of materials from the UNHCR Archives in Switzerland. Combined with archival materials from the United Kingdom and the United States, they make for an impressive range of sources about two main themes. The first is the transnational experiences among the refugees, who were often active in seeking a way out of their situation. Second is the contestation among different governments and international agencies, especially governments in Asia, that altered the trajectories of refugee policies from the late 1970s to the late 1990s.

The first theme is prominent in the first chapter, which tells the story of many Vietnamese refugees in Guam after the fall of Saigon. They sorely missed their families and demanded to be repatriated, only to be arrested and imprisoned upon their return to Vietnam. The tragic story nonetheless underscores the activism among the refugees then and later, and helps to dispel notions about their passivity. This activism comes off most vividly in Chapter 5, which recounts this activism in Hong Kong during the late 1980s. The refugees organized protests and hunger strikes, this time against forced repatriation. They engaged a language of human rights and argued against screening, found to be devaluing to their dignity. Lipman's analysis of Vietnamese articulation of human rights complicates the narratives of gratitude among refugees. Facing an uncertain future from the late 1980s to the mid-1990s, the refugees received support

from many Vietnamese in the diaspora, typically former refugees themselves. Advocacy came from organizations such as Boat People SOS and Project Ngoc in the United States, individuals in the likes of the Catholic nun Sr. Pascale Le Thi Triu in the Philippines and the attorney Trinh Hoi from Australia.

The second theme shifts from refugees and asylum seekers to policymakers. It not only enlarges the cast of characters but also, and most significantly, emphasizes the roles of Asian actors, notably the Malaysian government. As explained in Chapter 2, Malaysia's dealings with the refugees were motivated by a mix of nationalism, Cold War anti-communism and postcolonial critique during the second half of the 1970s. Lipman shows convincingly that Malaysia "ultimately pushed the UNHCR and resettlement countries, including the United States, to change their refugee policies" (p. 53). Most consequential was the Geneva Conference on Indochinese refugees in July 1979, which led to the UNHCR's guarantee of eventual resettlement outside Southeast Asia. At this conference, the government of the Philippines agreed to create the Philippine Refugee Processing Center (PRPC), which ran from 1980 to 1994. Chapter 3 describes the PRPC in detail and complicates the hitherto emphasis on Western humanitarianism by highlighting Filipino commitment to humanitarianism. The remaining three chapters continue to interpret governments in Asia, especially Hong Kong, to be the driving engine behind the shaping and reshaping of refugee policies. It was Hong Kong that initiated the aforementioned repatriation by force and, consequently, caused the UNHCR to adopt new policies. Yet there was no uniformity among Asian countries, as the Philippines not only allowed the refugees to remain in the country but also created a separate Vietnamese area to help them integrate into Filipino society and the economy.

The book is not without lacunae. Largely absent are the roles of Thailand, Indonesia and, to a lesser degree, Singapore. In particular, Thailand was the first important destination for Vietnamese asylum

seekers, and it also hosted tens of thousands of refugees from Cambodia and Laos. Its relative absence does not diminish the substantial achievements of the book. Nonetheless, this reviewer hopes that future researchers will use this monograph as a model to examine closely the roles and determine the influence of Thailand, if not also the Indonesian and Singaporean governments. To be sure, the book provides a strong model for studying this subject. In the introduction, Lipman is careful to note the crucial roles of the United States, the largest donor to the UNHCR, in the course of this narrative. By the end, her multi-archival approach makes it clear that others played important and sometimes outsized roles in the transition and eventual resettlement of Vietnamese refugees.

Tuan Hoang

Division of Humanities & Teacher Education, Pepperdine University, 24255 Pacific Coast Highway, Malibu, California 90263, USA; email: thoang@pepperdine.edu.

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