distinguishing cultural characteristics” in North and South Korean political behavior (p. 16), I would like reassurance that the set is exhaustive. I’m not sure he really proves that “What has made the two Korean regimes both efficient and effective in the policy performance and management of the economy is the dynamics of inter-Korean competitive pressure” (p. 158). It is perhaps an oversimplification to say (p. 88) that “it was the alliance of 6 million Christians and student activists waging violent street demonstrations in 1979 that . . . led to Park’s eventual downfall,” since a majority of Christians, in Korea as elsewhere, were politically inactive, whatever their private sympathies. And is it necessary to describe South Korea’s 1982 external debt of $36.2 billion as “staggering,” given the country’s continuing credit-worthiness? I believe, also, that Kihl may overstate the South Korean voters’ susceptibility to “mobilization” or manipulation: the voters, after all, elected an opposition Vice President in 1956, and trends toward opposition support in elections such as 1958 and 1971 were clear signals of popular dissatisfaction. That the result was administration clampdowns, rather than more democratic political adjustments, was the leaders’ responsibility, not the people’s.

No two analysts of Korean politics are likely to agree completely on either facts or approach, but any analyst can have respect and admiration for another’s scholarship and insight, and for the value of his work. Such respect and admiration are due to Drs. Kihl and Koh for their important contributions to the understanding of Korea.

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Works focusing on European colonial elites have not been fashionable in the postwar decades dominated by African and Asian area specialists. In fact, much of the research done on colonial areas in this period has served to dispel the myth of the Europeans as the “Lords of Humankind”. It has demonstrated their dependence upon African and Asian subordinates and indigenous power brokers, their usual ignorance of local conditions and cultures, and the formidable obstacles that countered European efforts to exercise firm control over subject populations, whether to enact reforms or increase taxes. Jean Taylor’s study of The Social World of Batavia is a welcome departure from the tendency to neglect the European side of the colonial equation, while at the same time reinforcing the view of European dependency on Asian peoples in their colonizing efforts and, less directly, the limits of their enterprises in relation to the societies that they went out to rule. Taylor provides the fullest account in English to date of the social history of the Dutch at Batavia from the early decades of the seventeenth century through the end of the nineteenth century, as well as the best analysis in English or Dutch of the colonizers’ interaction with Asian and Eurasian women and the distinctive Indo-Dutch, Mestizo culture that resulted.

Taylor’s reconstruction of the rise and slow decline of Batavia’s Mestizo culture is arguably the most important contribution of the volume. Much of what she has to say about Dutch migrants from the Netherlands, their life styles and material culture, has been dealt with in earlier works, particularly those by Dutch historians like De Graaf, Wertheim and Nieuwenhuys. Her multifaceted account of the interaction between these migrants, mostly males until well into the nineteenth century, and Indonesian...
and Eurasian women forms the core of the study and supplies the themes which give it overall coherence. She has, for example, painstakingly reconstructed the genealogies of a number of prominent Batavian families at different time periods. On the basis of these, she shows the importance of familial links, especially between the early seventeenth and late eighteenth centuries, in determining the allocation of political power and social prominence in Batavia, which was the center of Holland’s Asian maritime empire throughout this era. Taylor argues that these networks were held together over time, not by Dutch men from the Netherlands, but by their Eurasian or Asian wives and mistresses whose children provided continuity between generations and numerous candidates for VOC posts in Batavia and elsewhere in Asia. These status-conscious and often strong-willed women also dominated the social life of Batavia, particularly in the eighteenth century when, Taylor points out, only one governor-general’s wife was born in Holland. Taylor also reveals the links between Mestizo families in Batavia and those in other Dutch settlements from Cape Town to Deshima—hence the volume’s subtitle.

The most interesting and readable portions of the study are those devoted to these women and the pomp-filled, status-ridden culture that their liaisons with VOC officials and functionaries made possible. Until the late eighteenth century, Batavia’s isolation, its small numbers of Europeans, and the pervasive influence of Eurasian and Asian consorts gave a highly “Indische” tone to Batavian high society that was expressed in a variety of ways from popular entertainments and the extensive retinues attached to VOC officials and their ladies, to styles of dress, food patterns and the popularity of betel chewing. Taylor shows that from the very first decades of Dutch residence at Batavia, there were Dutch officials who were hostile to this Asian-oriented Mestizo culture. She devotes a good deal of the study to discussions of the succession of assaults on “VOC society” that centered on fostering stronger ties to Holland, the concentration of political power, and later social influence, in the hands of migrants born and educated in Europe, the use of the Dutch language (rather than Portuguese or Malay) both at work and in the home, and—increasingly from the late eighteenth century onwards—the encouragement of female migration from Holland to Batavia and the substitution of European dances, amusements, manners and dress for the Indonesian that had once prevailed. By the last years of the eighteenth century, the political power of the Mestizo families had been broken. In the nineteenth century, their social position was lost as well, though, as Taylor demonstrates, Dutch-Indonesian intermarriage continued and Indonesian foods, dress and status symbols, such as umbrellas decorated in accordance with rank, retained a far more prominent place in Dutch elite circles on Java than recent studies for other Asian areas have shown to have been the case in British India or French Indochina.

The context in which these fascinating struggles were carried out is less fully developed than the contests themselves. Though Taylor provides a social profile of Batavian society as a whole in the opening chapters, many groups—especially lower class ones, whether Dutch, Asian or Eurasian—are scarcely mentioned in the remainder of the volume. Aside from brief references to building styles and particular landmarks, Taylor does little to establish a sense of the urban center in which her elite factions vie for control. Despite its promising title, this is not a volume for serious historians of urban development. Treatment of both events and trends in Holland that affected Batavia’s fortunes and the Malayo-Javanese cultures that so strongly influenced Mestizo society is also patchy and insufficient. In addition, despite the inclusion of works by Percival Spear, Charles Boxer and others in her bibliography, Taylor