As a scholar of Southeast Asia, Eric Tagliacozzo is well positioned to understand how segments of maritime trade, often studied on their own, such as the Indian Ocean trade or shipping in the South China Sea, were fully tied together in a broad sweeping movement of goods, people, and ideas, since these routes intersected in Southeast Asia. *In Asian Waters* is an ambitious transnational maritime history tackling the past four hundred years of interconnection across Asia, from the perspective of sea routes spanning Asian waters from the Persian Gulf up to the seas around Japan, especially intended to show the importance of the maritime history of Asia in shaping many aspects of modern life around the world.

While there is increasingly rich work focusing on individual oceans or seas bordering Asia, few scholars have taken on the larger task of thinking about integration across the different ocean basins that bracket the whole southern and eastern sides of the Asian continent. This is perhaps unsurprising, because such a broad sweep of both time and geography, not to mention languages and cultures, is difficult to manage without being too shallow to be valuable or too detailed to fit into a single volume. Tagliacozzo deals with this problem by writing his chapters as "topical windows" that highlight interconnections from different thematic perspectives (p. 14). The book is organized into chapters paired within six thematic parts, with a brief preface discussing the theme followed by one chapter of the pair focused on a narrower view of the topic and the other providing a broader view within each theme. These are bracketed by an introductory first chapter and fourteenth concluding chapter. While Tagliacozzo claims that his transnational history is integrated with historical perspectives, "such as environmental history, science and technology studies, subalternity, and the critical history of empire," this does not mean all of these perspectives are fully integrated within all chapters (p. 5). Instead, maritime trade is the
overarching framework for a transnational history where individual thematic parts or chapters are informed by one of these other historical perspectives.

Part 1, "Maritime Connections," broadly looks at linguistic and genetic evidence for connections between China and East Africa in chapter 2. Chapter 3 then narrows focus to Vietnam, showing how even though Vietnam was not a major maritime trading state, Asia's maritime trade still shaped Vietnamese history. Part 2, "Bodies of Water," focuses on interconnections within, first, the South China Sea and, then, the Indian Ocean as "two of the largest and most important maritime spaces in Asia," with transnational case studies of smuggling in the South China Sea in chapter 4 and the creation of a British sphere of influence in the Indian Ocean in chapter 5 (p. 75).

Part 3, "Religion on the Tides," considers the movement of religious ideas and structures in a broad perspective across the Bay of Bengal from India to Southeast Asia in chapter 6 and a more focused view of conflicts between Christianity and Islam in Mindanao in the Philippines in chapter 7. The fourth part, "Cities and the Sea," looks, first, at the development of port cities in Southeast Asia in chapter 8 and, then, more broadly at imperialism throughout maritime Asia through the framework of colonial circuits in chapter 9. These colonial circuits demonstrate interactions between rather than within nineteenth-century empires via colonial cities interconnected across different European imperial powers and different regions of Asia.

Part 5, "The Bounty of the Oceans," purports to be the section of the book most informed by environmental history. Despite the preface to this section claiming to discuss "the environmental history of Asian seas," environmental historians may be disappointed to find that his "ecological wealth of Asia" is discussed solely by tracing trade in maritime products, without consideration of the ecological impacts of their harvest or other environmental questions (p. 251). Chapter 10 focuses on the marine products trade between China and Southeast Asia, and chapter 11 traces the influence of the spice trade on India's southern coasts. The references for these two chapters are composed almost entirely of scholarship focused on economics and trade, not specifically environmental history works, with the possible exception of a single footnote citing literature on the circulation of individual commodities, such as sugar, coffee, and cotton. There are a few hints at what environment could add to his analysis in chapter 11, including a comment about how the coastal geography and monsoons shaped trade on the Coromandel coast of India, but they are not central to the overall argument. Other environmental details are relegated to footnotes rather than informing the main text.

The sixth part, "Technologies of the Sea," better integrates an environmental perspective, starting with a discussion in the preface of the intersections between knowledge of the ocean and specific technologies of seafaring. Chapter 12 considers the social and political impacts of the process of setting up lighthouses in colonial Southeast Asia as one form of control over sea routes. This includes a conclusion noting that lighthouse designs were informed by geography and wind and sea conditions and talking about why particular light systems were necessary in the tropical conditions of Southeast Asia. Chapter 13 focuses on the ways that hydrographical knowledge and maritime chart making were tools of imperial coercion and control in the oceans of Southeast Asia. His concluding argument in this chapter is that colonial regimes "used science and its machines to gain power over the environment, and over local peoples living in this environment at the same time"—a far more explicitly environmental history argument than what appears in part 5 (p. 366).

In writing In Asian Waters, Tagliacozzo relied heavily on fieldwork and interviews he has con-
ducted over the past thirty years in various parts of maritime Asia. While the interviews provide valuable information, he does not follow the standard anthropological practice of pseudonymity when for some reason the person’s name cannot or should not be provided. This leads to an awkward section in chapter 7 where he presents what he explicitly calls an important perspective, including a direct quote, from someone who is identified as just a Muslim woman. At the same time, she is not completely anonymous, since he includes such identifying details as the fact that she is one of the wives of Moro National Liberation Front leader Nur Misuari. Full anonymity would not provide that kind of identifying detail, and since other people he talked to in Zamboanga are named, not giving her even a pseudonymous name makes her appear to be less of an individual person than those who are referred to by their names. Her generic anonymity also makes it unclear whether she is the same person whose quote begins the chapter, attributed to “Muslim woman, Zamboanga, Mindanao” (p. 167). The way he presents her is in unfortunate contrast to his references to another important informant in Zamboanga who is not simply a “Jesuit man” but instead Father William Kreutz. These identity issues are not solely a problem with how he deals with female informants, as some of his male informants are also introduced generically. For example, figure 4.4 is a photograph of “Burmese smugglers” standing on a dock facing the camera, apparently just provided for flavor in the section of chapter 4 on Southeast Asian smuggling (p. 98). The only place where he specifically discusses his choices about anonymity of informants is in reference to a direct quote provided in the final chapter, which leaves the possibly incorrect impression that no thought was given to the systematic identification or anonymization of sources earlier in the book.

In conclusion, this book is a wide-ranging maritime transnational history that Tagliacozzo situates clearly as offering new perspectives within the increasing amount of research in oceanic and maritime history. It contains an interesting mixture of archival and interview-based research but would have been improved by integration of those interviews into his scholarly argument using established conventions for ethnography. For environmental historians, part 6 offers some fascinating work on technological adaptations within the Southeast Asian environment. Although the intent of the book is to get readers thinking broadly about Asia and how we write its histories, my takeaway as an environmental historian is that more work like Tagliacozzo’s final section on the particular, smaller spaces within maritime Asia is still needed to provide enough information for a larger coherent synthesis. However, that more focused work should consider the strong and extensive interconnections of trade around the Asian continent explored in this book, as I think Tagliacozzo’s wide view of Asia helps enrich his argument about Southeast Asia in part 6.
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