

Introduction

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Military conflicts have long been a central focus of history; however, contemporary military historians are increasingly seeking new directions beyond conventional discussions of war and diplomacy. The articles in this special issue shed some new light on military history. Spanning from the Mongol invasions of Korea to the Imjin War and the Second World War, these three articles cover a prolonged history and examine the environmental, strategic, and medical interactions with military ambitions in East Asia and the Pacific.

Each case study adopts a transnational perspective, crossing state boundaries to illuminate broader regional and global interactions. In the opening essay, Baihui Duan provides an environmental analysis of pests and epidemics during the Mongol invasions of Korea, revealing their connections to wider East Asian patterns of disease and warfare. Through the lens of a neighboring country's perspective, Kizaki Braddick elaborates on Toyotomi Hideyoshi's grand strategy for Korea, providing new insights into the Imjin War's strategic underpinnings. Drawing upon less-discussed sources, Hohee Cho explores the construction of the United States Naval Medical Research Unit No. 2 laboratory on the wartime frontline of the Second World War—Guam Island.

The broad coverage of space and time allows this special issue to explore both continuities and transformations in military history across

centuries. Unchanged are the persistent military ambitions—whether the Mongols, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, or the United States—and the environmental challenges inherent in waging war in a foreign country. However, notable shifts emerged in grand military strategies, advancements in the medical care of soldiers on the frontline, and consciousness of environmental factors such as tropical diseases, which spurred the development of tropical medicine.

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