

*the City in Twentieth-Century Britain and Japan* (2019). In terms of both method and content, then, *After the Shock City* represents a welcome contribution to the thriving field of British urban history.

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REBECCA KENNEISON. *The Special Operations Executive in Malaya: World War II and the Path to Independence*. International Library of War Studies. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019. Pp. 264. \$115.00 (cloth).  
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The past few years have seen a growing number of scholarly works on British operations in Southeast Asia and their relationships with local resistance in World War II. Particularly intriguing is the mysterious last-minute deal struck between the British in Malaya and the Chinese-dominated Malayan Communist Party, or MCP, before the Japanese takeover. The British helped to train hundreds of the party's guerrillas and provided them with much-needed arms, ammunition, and food throughout the Japanese occupation. With British support, the party-led Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army launched frequent assaults against the enemy, and it soon grew into the single most significant resistance force in Malaya during the war. The existence of this unlikely British-MCP alliance has become relatively well known through existing scholarship on the party's history, including Cheah Boon Kheng's *Red Star over Malaya: Resistance and Social Conflict during and after the Japanese Occupation, 1941–1946* (1983); T. N. Harper's *The End of Empire and the Making of Malaya* (1998); and MCP leader Chin Peng's memoir, *My Side of History* (2003). However, many details—especially those concerning the nature of the hastily signed agreement and its postwar ramifications—remain unexplored.

Central to the issue of the British-MCP alliance is the role of the Special Operations Executive, a secret agency responsible for sabotage and subversion behind the enemy lines. For a long time, historians studying the Special Operations Executive have paid primary attention to the agency's wartime operations and postwar impacts in Europe, especially France and the Balkans. In 2017, Richard Duckett published a well-researched piece on the agency's Burma missions, in which he demonstrates that the agency was instrumental in helping the Allies to retake the former British colony. Rebecca Kenneison's *The Special Operations Executive in Malaya: World War II and the Path to Independence* is a timely and vital addition to the existing literature on the agency's activities in the region. Unlike Burma, the British government never prioritized Malaya in its wartime strategic planning, and many even considered that the agency's Malayan missions did not prove its worth. As Kenneison shows, however, the Special Operations Executive played an integral role in establishing a working relationship with the MCP and maintained close contacts with its guerrilla army throughout the Japanese occupation. More importantly, she illustrates that the agency's alliance with the MCP created enduring yet unintended postwar consequences, resulting in the MCP's violent power struggles, relentless British repressions, and protracted guerrilla warfare, which fundamentally reshaped Malaya's political landscape.

Based on her meticulous archival research, Kenneison presents a nuanced understanding of the Special Operations Executive's operations and the intricate relationships among the local

resistance forces that the agency supported. With her clear writing style and well-structured analysis, Kenneison is effective in developing her three focal points: (1) the long-term impacts of the British assistance to the MCP, which increased not only the guerrilla army's military capacities but also their expectations for the postwar political rearrangement; (2) the conflicting objectives of the British and MCP during and after the occupation; and (3) problems with the British intelligence services, especially with regards to their inept reactions towards communist activities in the aftermath of the war.

Kenneison's well-organized narrative mainly follows chronological order. The book starts with two chapters introducing the contexts in which the Special Operations Executive's Malayan missions were formed before and after the fall of Singapore, highlighting the political and military significance of the agency in establishing contacts with local guerrilla forces. The bulk of the book includes three paralleled chapters on the Special Operations Executive's troubled relationships with Malaya's three competing anti-Japanese groups, namely the MCP-led Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army, the often-ignored resistance by the ethnic Malays, and the Guomindang-influenced Overseas Chinese Anti-Japanese Army. Although the Special Operations Executive intended to assist all three forces, the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army stood out as the one posing the most substantial challenges to the Japanese during the occupation. The final two chapters discuss the MCP's intense power struggles following Japan's sudden surrender in 1945 and British intelligence incompetence in the lead-up to the Malayan Emergency in 1948: while the British authorities collected no small amount of information concerning ongoing communist activities, they failed to utilize former officers from the Special Operations Executive to tap into the MCP network and catalyze available information into useful intelligence.

Kenneison has made crucial contributions in clearing up three major confusions concerning the Malayan history in World War II and its aftermath. First, the book confirms that the Special Operations Executive and MCP entered into an explicit agreement, by which the British promised to offer the communist-led guerrilla army various military supports. Although the agency made no concrete political concessions to the MCP, the build-up of the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army increased both its capacities and perceived postwar leverage to negotiate and challenge the colonial state. Such a working relationship indirectly contributed to the MCP's dominance in the resistance movement, making the party's long-term political ambitions possible.

Additionally, Kenneison shows that the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army was by no means the only guerrilla force fighting the Japanese. Instead, both the Guomindang and Malay population organized their resistance with aid from the Special Operations Executive. While it was to the interests of the agency to let these groups function as a counterweight to the increasingly powerful communists, the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army managed to discredit their Malay and Guomindang counterparts while presenting itself as the only legitimate guerrilla force under the occupation. Moreover, the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army fought a war within the war against the Guomindang-led Overseas Chinese Anti-Japanese Army, through which the communists secured its firm control over the Chinese resistance. Consequently, the MCP dominance among the guerrilla forces also paved the road to its post-war power struggles against the British.

Furthermore, Kenneison argues convincingly that the British government did not act decisively against the growing communist threat between 1945 and 1948 due to a series of intelligence failures. Contrary to the prewar period, the reestablished administration lacked a proper understanding of the local situation, failed to utilize local contacts as sources of information, and repeatedly ignored warnings of former officers in the Special Operations Executive. With the British administration unwilling and unable to accommodate the political demands of their wartime ally, the MCP became increasingly violent in challenging the British rule. As a result, the British declared the State of Emergency in 1948, taking wholesale anti-communist measures which effectually drove the MCP-led guerrilla army back into the jungles—a phantom that would keep haunting Malaysia until the end of the 1980s.

Overall, this is a well-written book with solid archival research, accessible language, and fascinating details, although readers may be occasionally overwhelmed by the sea of information concerning agency's numerous local operations. Kenneison's book is undoubtedly a useful source of reference for anyone interested in the British involvement in Asia during World War II, Malaysia's troubled decolonization, and implications of the early Cold War in former British colonies

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DAVID B. MACDONALD. *The Sleeping Giant Awakens: Genocide, Indian Residential Schools, and the Challenge of Conciliation*. UTP Insights. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2019. pp. 256. \$24.95 (paper). doi: 10.1017/jbr.2019.287

On 2 June 2015, the commissioners of the Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission unveiled the summary of its final report. The first page of the report made it clear that, for over a century, the Canadian settler state had sought the elimination of Aboriginal peoples through methods that amounted to cultural genocide.

MacDonald's book is a response to this finding, and while it ranges across a number of key issues related to Indigenous justice, it is the question of genocide that sits at the heart of the project. MacDonald makes a forensic case that the targeting and forcible transfer of Indigenous children into the Indian Residential School system amounts to genocide (and not just of the cultural variant) as defined in the United Nations Genocide Convention. That the lives of many of these children were subsequently tormented by physical and sexual abuse and that an unknown number died as a result of these abuses lends weight to this claim. And yet, as MacDonald also acknowledges, the conclusion that Indigenous peoples in Canada were subjected to genocide remains unpopular. What this means for the "reconciliation" in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's mandate and the possibility of any future (re)conciliation between Indigenous peoples and the Canadian settler state is hard to determine. As MacDonald argues, many settlers struggle not only to recognize policies such as the Indian Residential School system as genocidal, but to acknowledge that genocide has been intrinsic to the settler colonial project.

The first half of MacDonald's book engages directly with debates about whether or not the IRS system and the Sixties Scoop can be considered a genocide. Approximately 150,000 Indigenous children were subjected to forcible transfer into the system, which operated as a partnership between the federal government and Christian churches as part of the larger colonial project of elimination through dispossession, starvation, and brute violence. MacDonald outlines the factors common to child removal policies in British colonies—language repression, banning of cultural dress, name changing, and of course physical and sexual abuse. He makes a persuasive case that describing the role of the Indian Residential School system in this colonial project as genocidal is "neither hyperbole nor an unwarranted accusation" (22) but is instead intended to challenge legalist understandings that view genocide only through the "Holocaust paradigm" (25). These understandings, for MacDonald, are too narrow given that Indigenous genocides in settler colonial states "do not always fit this standard view of what 'real' genocide should look like" (26). At least one explicit aim of the book,