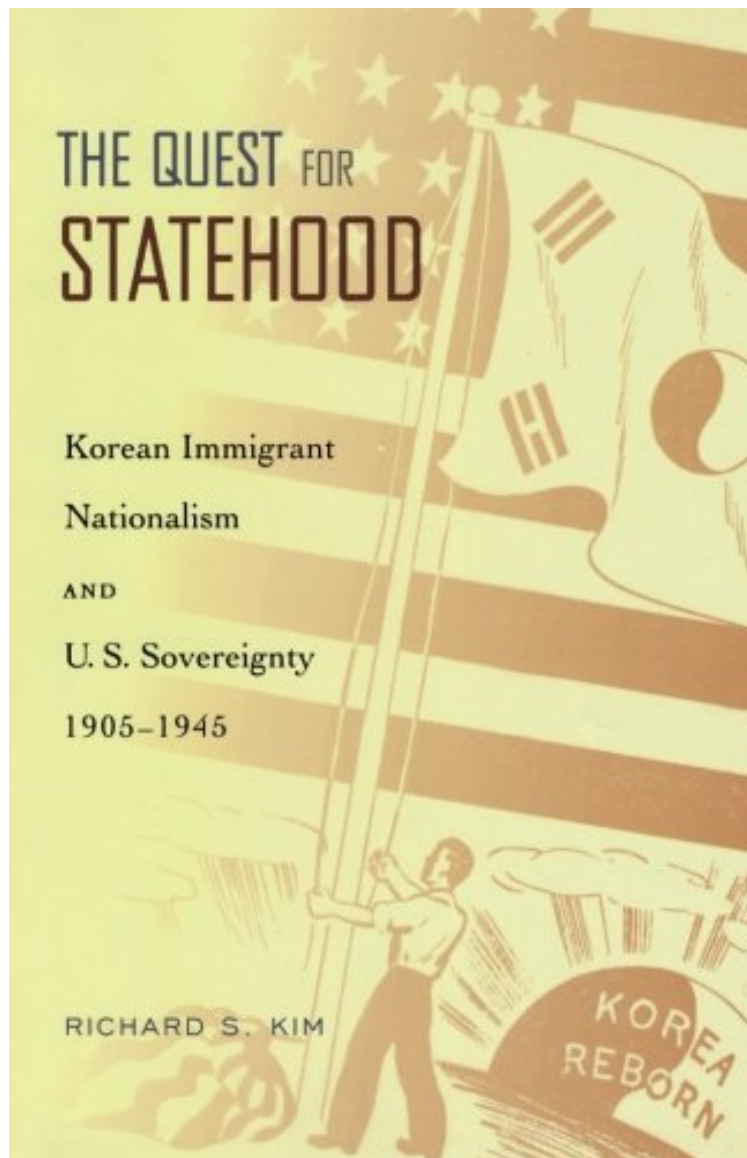


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## The Quest for Statehood: Korean Immigrant Nationalism and U.S. Sovereignty, 1905-1945

*Richard S. Kim*

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**Richard S. Kim : The Quest for Statehood: Korean Immigrant Nationalism and U.S. Sovereignty, 1905-1945** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Quest for Statehood: Korean Immigrant Nationalism and U.S. Sovereignty, 1905-1945:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Essential reading about the roots of Korea - U.S. relations  
By Emily Zimmerman  
This engaging narrative about Koreans who organized overseas against Japanese colonialism provides crucial insights into U.S.-Korea relations and little-known causes of the Korean War. Considering that Korea is currently the most militarized spot on earth, with U.S. military forces stationed there continuously for almost seven decades, it is critical that Americans gain a better grasp of the facts of Korea's 20th-century history, so we can understand our role and responsibility as taxpaying citizens of a global superpower. Written as a series of episodes focused on the key players among Korean nationalist ex-pats, "Quest for Statehood" also supplies a vital and indispensable missing piece of history about Koreans in America. Without understanding events between 1905-1945, we cannot make sense of Korean-American history, which, when focused primarily on post-1965 immigrant experience, exists suspended in dissociated narratives about "model minority" entrepreneurial success stories, victimization in the Los Angeles riots, Christian ethnic enclaves, and strange oppressive silence about geopolitics. I can't praise "Quest for Statehood" highly enough for filling key gaps in our understanding.

Honorable Mention, Book Award in History of the Association for Asian American Studies.  
In this book, Richard S. Kim examines the central role played by immigrants in the independence movement that sought to liberate Korea from Japanese colonization. Regarding Japanese rule as illegitimate, Koreans in and out of the Korean peninsula viewed themselves as a stateless people. Their independence activities had to be carried out from abroad, creating conditions for the emergence of a diasporic nationalism. Using English and Korean language sources, Kim traces how Koreans in the United States articulated visions of national sovereignty, drawing particularly on American political rhetoric and symbolism, and increasingly relied on U.S. state power to mobilize international support for their cause. Their efforts to establish an independent homeland necessitated their participation in civic and political activities in the United States, engaging in organizational activity that led to the development of an ethnic consciousness and paradoxically established them as an American ethnic group. Ultimately, Kim argues, homeland nationalism was central to the assimilation of Korean immigrants as American ethnics, even as they were denied U.S. citizenship.

"Richard Kim's excellent book adds to a small but growing number of works to take a diasporic approach to the study of Asian communities in the United States...In taking on this important subject, Kim joins such historians as Madeline Y. Hsu, Adam McKeown, and Eiichiro Azuma in bridging Asian and American Studies, ultimately enriching both fields."--Journal of American-East Asian Relations  
"This monography makes two significant contributions. First, it connects Korean immigrants' strategies for securing independence for their native land after 1905--and especially between 1919 and 1945 -to their lack of access to citizenship in the United States. Richard S. Kim skillfully draws on the extensive literature covering U.S. immigrants and their varying conceptions of citizenship to demonstrate that a small group of Korean Americans found themselves in a unique position between 1905 and the end of World War II."--Journal of American History  
"A truly transnational history of early Korean immigrants, *The Quest for Statehood* is an important, path-breaking study. Richard Kim's research rescues Korean immigrants and their politics from the dual clutches of Korean national history and of domestic narratives of Korean American history, bridging Korean studies and Korean American studies. At last, we have a more nuanced, complex understanding of early Korean immigrants beyond the simple image of Korean nationalist heroes or of an oppressed American minority. This book is a major milestone in transnational Asian American history."--Eiichiro Azuma, University of Pennsylvania  
"The Quest for Statehood makes the complex issue of nation-building absolutely central to transnational analysis of American immigration and ethnicity. By bringing the state back into diaspora studies, Kim offers a fascinating explanation for the disproportionately large role played by state-less Koreans living in the United States and sheds new light on political developments in far-off East Asia. Here is a powerful illustration of how (and why) immigrants engage vigorously in international relations even as they adapt to life in America."--Donna R. Gabaccia, Immigration History Research Center, University of Minnesota  
About the Author  
Richard S. Kim is Assistant Professor of Asian American Studies at the University of California, Davis.