

**International Conference on “Hopes and Fears in a Divided World:
East and Southeast Asia during the Cold War”**

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Paper abstracts

Panel 1

Black Site: The Cold War and the Shaping of Thailand’s Politics

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The Cold War alliance between the United States and Thailand is well-known and relatively well-documented. Rather than recount the details of the alliance, this paper examines some important legacies for Thailand associated with the Cold War, focusing on a period from the mid-1940s to the late 1950s. It recounts efforts by the US State Department and the CIA to establish an anti-communist alliance that had far-reaching impacts on the nature of Thailand’s political institutions. Reflective of divisions and political battles in the United States and in Thailand, the paper examines three inter-related aspects of the relationship that, in the name of anti-communism, amounted to the destruction of nascent parliamentary democracy and the embedding of military authoritarianism, focusing on the abandoning of wartime ally Pridi Phanomyong, the elimination of his political allies and the promotion of the military as a political force. Arguably, the impacts of these efforts remain salient for politics in contemporary Thailand.

**To Build the World Anew:
Decolonization and Cold War in Indonesia**

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This article aims to look at the connection between the process of decolonization in Indonesia and the Cold War. It argues that the nation-building process had led Indonesia to see itself as a leader of the newly independent countries against the “Old Established Forces” of the two blocs. This self-perception came from the fierce competition between ideological groups in Indonesia—secular nationalists, Islamic nationalists, and communists— in the process that started since the rise of nationalist movements in the Dutch East Indies and continued after the independence in 1945. Despite the differences, they successfully reached out a compromise, the Pancasila. To keep the fragile compromise as the basis for the postcolonial nation-building process which involves diverse ideological groups in the context of Cold War, in which the two blocs sought to influence political groups in Indonesia, Indonesian leaders saw the importance of

keeping Indonesia independent from outside influence. Rather than joining one of the two competing blocs, Indonesian leaders saw the leaders of both blocs, US and Soviet, as Old Established Forces (OLDEFO) that threaten the independence of the Newly Emerging Forces (NEFO), consisted of newly independent Asian and African countries. This perception led to the creation of the “bebas-aktif” doctrine and Indonesia’s active role in both Asian African solidarity and later the Non-Aligned Movement.

Nevertheless, attempts to protect the nation-building process from the impacts of the Cold War was never wholly successful. Great Powers from Eastern and Western blocs continued to influence political groups in Indonesia. This Cold War dynamics led to several incidents of separatism, rebellions, and coup attempts, which culminated in the exclusion of communist groups from the national compromise.

Indigenizing the Cold War in Malaysia and Singapore: Interethnic Decolonization, Developmental Syntheses and the Quest for Sovereignty

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While local Marxist and neo-Marxist parties attempted to synchronize their revolutionary struggles with the centres of world communism during the period 1945-91, political currents on the ground in Malaysia and Singapore were striving for the establishment of postcolonial authority, social peace and economic prosperity. The Cold War between ‘communism’ and ‘democratic capitalism’ was highly refracted, even distorted, on the ground in these two Southeast Asian countries. This refraction was largely manifested in the struggles by nationalists of all ideological stripes to achieve a multiracial society through interethnic decolonization. Secondly, the biographies of contending political figures of the time suggests that they were less inclined to define their developmental thinking along Cold War ideological orthodoxy than to *defy* the latter to ‘make things work’ for prosperity. Finally, the successor elites who took the place of the colonial powers were consistently obsessed with burnishing sovereignty in spite of the international Cold War. This can be seen in their slippery practice of non-alignment in foreign policy. The Malaysian and Singaporean cases strongly present the thesis of indigenization of the Cold War for local purposes.

Panel 2

The Im/possibility of Decolonization: Imperial Power and the Postcolonial Desire in the Relations between Japan and South Korea

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This study uses a postcolonial approach to focus on the relations between the dominator/colonizer and the subordinated/colonized and reveals how the imperial legacy continues to exert an effect on current relations between Japan and The Republic of Korea (ROK). Mainstream discourses on Japan-ROK relations remain in a Cold-War redux. International law was unevenly applied under colonialism and is embodied in the United States-Japan-ROK relations led by the anti-communist globalism of the United States. A picture of a precarious East Asia looms large in this postcolonial desire, which is a form of collaborative colonialism.

Subaltern ROK's Drive of Non-Western, Anti-Communist Cooperation in Asia in the early Cold War: An 'IR from (a bit) Below' Interpretation

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Korea had been a colony of Japan for 35 years (1910-1945), and it gained the liberation due to Japan's defeat in WWII in 1945. It is in this context that Korea's liberation was not achieved by Koreans but given to them. Instantly after its liberation in 1945, Korea became under the control of the USA and the Soviet Union in the name of trusteeship (1945-1948), which was a starting point of national division on the Korean peninsula. In 1948 South Korea (The Republic of Korea) and North Korea (The Democratic People's Republic of Korea) were respectively built along the 38th parallel with the patronage of their respective great power sponsors, the USA and the Soviet Union. Two years later, in 1950 the Korean War (1950-1953) broke out. The Korean War is seen as a civil war between the two Koreas as well as a first international war under the budding global Cold War structure. In the 1950s, war-torn South Korea was the poorest, least promising country in the world who was impossible to survive without the supports of the USA. South Korea looked a rag relying on the free-world bloc. In other words, South Korea was a client state of the USA, whose geographical location was standing at a Cold War frontline between the free-world and communist blocs. It would seem that South Korea was a representative subaltern state in Asia who was unable to speak for itself under the Cold War structure.

Against this backdrop, this paper aims to examine the ways in which subaltern South Korea (re)appropriated and (re)formulated the Cold War discourse such as anti-communism in Asia, in reference to its nation-building and national security in the mid-1950s. Toward this end, the paper will do a case study; it will look at subaltern South Korea's regional drive of forming a civic association called Asian Peoples' Anti-Communist League (APACL) along with other East Asian members, such as The

Republic of China (Taiwan), The Philippines, Vietnam, Thailand, Hong Kong, Macau, and Okinawa. This paper's argument is three-fold. First, the postcolonial in a South Korean context can be interpreted as 1) joining a new, nuanced ideological hierarchical structure – the Cold War – for national security (in terms of state) and 2) entering a new era of national division rather than nation-building (in terms of nation) after Japanese colonialism. Second, in spite of being appeared unable to speak for itself internationally, subaltern South Korea attempted to project its proactive agency in the formation of APACL, using an anti-communist Cold War discourse. It was thus not a mere norm follower. Third, in opposing Japan's accession to the APACL, subaltern South Korea's intransigent use of anti-communism became a burden to the USA who also sought the anti-communist policy toward East Asia. Related to this, in the face of stronger communist North Korea and its communist allies, subaltern South Korea searched for its own anti-communist way out of tune with a critical architect of the Cold War – the USA.

**Teaching Development and Change:
A Peculiar Reflection on the Cold War, Conceptual Privileging &
Pedagogical Negotiations, and Korean Historical Drama**

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This essay is a modest attempt to enrich the conversation of development within an interdisciplinary area studies context in cognizance of the historical legacies of the Cold War in development perspectives. I argue that development and change, as a thematic subject in area studies can be enriched, and, in turn, this makes a case for the utility of interdisciplinary perspectives. I demonstrate this utility by using Korean historical drama as an illustration of a pedagogical negotiation where conceptual privileging is rife. The research outline is simple. In the first two sections, I explore the influence of the Cold War in Philippine education and development thinking. In the next two sections, I then explore the Korean historical drama (*sageuk*) in considering a counter hegemonic direction of cultural flows. I proceed to analyze how the complex content in *sageuk* can be used in teaching development and change, which involve a discursive analysis of various dimensions that include but are not limited to economics, politics, social structures, and ethos.

Panel 3

A World Order Created through Rituals – The Tributary System of East Asia from an Anthropological Point of View

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In studies of the East Asian tributary system, most historians take a culturalist stance that tends to stress the importance of Confucianism in forming and sustaining the tributary system throughout the long history of East Asia. However, there are still several questions (especially those of a theoretical nature) that these historians have yet to answer: Why and how could Confucianism have contributed to the formation and sustenance of this tributary system? Why could this Confucian-based tributary system be recognized and employed in relations with non-Confucian frontier tribes? Why could this system have worked with both the nomadic tribes on the northern frontier and the South-East Asian countries that were neither Confucian nor nomadic? Aside from the reason of trade, security is generally one of the most important reasons for both China and all its tributary counterparts. Nonetheless, all these questions remain insufficiently answered. Drawing on the results of ritual studies in anthropology, this author seeks a more universal methodology that can be used to conceptualize the long-lasting tributary system and its hegemonic structure which forms the foundation of the main part of the East Asian world order. He employs an anthropological approach rather than the existing Confucian-centric approach. This author emphasizes that tribute is in fact a type of ritual and that, more importantly, it must be realized through the creation of ritual.

Divining the Future during the Cold War: Divinatory Methods as a Tactic of Dealing with Insecurities in East Asia

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The Cold War era was a time of great unease and instability. The difficult political climate led to doubts and insecurities across the globe. Humans have found different ways of dealing with such uncertainties about the course of future developments. One way of dispelling these doubts is the invention and application of divinatory methods. This paper explores how divinatory methods were used as a way to cope with insecurities during the Cold War era in the geographical regions of Communist Mainland China and the Republic of China in Taiwan. The Chinese have created a broad repertoire of methods to predict the future; divination has played an important role in Chinese society from early on and its importance continues until today. Throughout Chinese imperial history, people from all walks of life trusted in these methods: emperors, statesmen, and commoners used them, in order to resolve doubts and fears regarding future developments. Connected to the attempt to differentiate the sphere of religion from the sphere of political power, the Guomindang as early as the 1920s and 1930s launched campaigns against so-called “superstition” (*mixin* 迷信), targeting

popular religion, including divinatory practices. During this time, temples were destroyed or assigned as state property and it was made illegal to practice “superstitious” jobs. Bans on superstition and superstitious activities have continued with the rise of the People’s Republic of China in 1949 as have its efforts to demolish practices framed as “backwards” and “feudal”. Contrary to these official attempts, popular religious practices have continued during these periods. The paper compares the ways in which people in Mainland China and Taiwan used divinatory practices as a tool to deal with insecurities during the Cold War era. Ultimately, independent of the geographical background and political circumstances, approaches towards divination were similar in both areas. The paper thus proves that especially in times of great unrest, people in Mainland China and Taiwan rely on divinatory methods in order to resolve doubts about decisions in their everyday life.

Chinese Nationalism and China’s East Asian International Relations

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This paper discusses two ways to consider China’s role in the contemporary postcolonial relations in East Asia, focused on the regional international relations that has been shadowed by China’s Belt-and-Road Initiative (BRI) in recent years. For the postcolonial nations in Vietnam, Malaysia, South Korea, Indonesia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Hong Kong, China has been pictured as an alternative, temptingly or bitterly, to their existing dominant foreign forces — being the former metropolitan state, the United States, or the Soviet Union — when they struggled in managing almost all issues in their own respective societies during and after the Cold War. The hegemonic division during the Cold War facilitated the international power framework in East Asia after the end of the Cold War.

Such role of China used to be rather passive in the sense that peripheral nations would consider China relatively as a buffer strategy when things were not going well with the hegemon; this seems to, however, have changed due to China’s formidable rise in economic, military and in turn foreign policy terms, particularly with its proactive moves under the BRI. On the other hand, a proactive Chinese role can bring conflict of nationalisms to the peripheral nations with China, exemplified by the Sino-Philippine island disputes and the Malaysian rejections of two BRI projects in 2018. Such conflict can be also traced back to the Cold War legacy — the Chinese nationalism driven by de-humiliation and the peripheral nationalism driven by de-domination were both fortified by the all-encompassing hegemonic presence of the Cold War in the region. For China, the communist regime had used nationalist discourse extensively during its diplomatic isolation from the 1960s to the 1970s, and nationalist pride in the sense of overcoming the humiliation has more than often accompanied the official rhetoric about the country’s achievement in economic development. Today, with the BRI projects increasingly criticized as potential debt traps, we are reminded that these confrontations are the remains and repercussions of the Cold War experiences.

Panel 4

The Dawn of Chinese Political Science: Rediscovering Politics in the 1980s

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When the Reform and Opening-up was initiated to change China's economic course and recalibrate its foreign relations in the late Cold War, political science was officially recognized again. "Practice is the sole criterion for testing truth" became the ethos in the 1980s. In such a context, Chinese political scientists, immersed in openness and self-expectation, not only endeavoured to rediscover politics but also wanted to contribute to China's socialist modernization. The CASS Journal of Political Science—the first professional journal—was their platform for contesting discourses. They contemplated what politics was and used statistic surveys to probe China's political reality. As the state-society relations deteriorated, the CASS journal became a flashpoint. It was unfortunately suspended by the end of this decade. This article, by discussing the history of the CASS journal before its suspension, would like to offer an epistemological and political retrospective to look at how political science in China was shaped, homogenized, and indigenized in the 1980s.

Building a Healthy Body for a Strong and Healthy Nation – Health Practices in the PRC during the Cold War Era

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Over the course of the 20th century China has undergone many changes in the political, ideological and cultural realm. From being an empire reigned by a single, heavenly divined ruler to becoming a Republic and later a People's Republic via revolution, the Chinese population has experienced quite thoroughly the contact with the rest of the world, modernity and the introduction of new ideas, new allies and new enemies. This especially holds true for the time of the Cold War and the Sino-Soviet relations in the middle of the 20th century.

The view of the body, the smallest entity in society, has experienced the same changes and it is this body in Maoist China that will be the focus of this presentation. The idea and designation of the 'Sick Man of Asia' has haunted China in the first half of the 20th century leading to state-led programmes that were supposed to counteract the idea of the weak and sickly Chinese body. By introducing physical education programmes in schools and at work places the Chinese authorities of the Republican period and the Maoist period endeavoured to improve on the population's health and in its wake the nation's physical quality. Of use to this process was the integration of foreign knowledge, i.e. in the Republican period of American and European medical knowledge and training methods for the army and for students, and in the Maoist period

(especially in the 1950s) the translation and adaptation of prevalently Soviet knowledge.

This presentation will show how the body was supposed to be strengthened in Maoist China by employing theories of Pavlov and other soviet experts in the fight against Capitalism and Western impact. It will detail the practices propagated and how they were incorporated into Maoist ideology and supposedly the individual everyday life, as opposed to the much more visible efforts in international sports as already discussed at length by Amanda Shuman and Susan Brownell. During the Cold War international competitions with other communist nations were considered a way to improve on China's image, but this was not enough to improve the physical quality of the Chinese nation, thus physical education gained new importance in society and on the political agenda.

By making use of contemporary handbooks, journals and directives this presentation will give insight into what was supposed to very directly strengthen the body of the Chinese nation and what was considered a threat to this healthy state. It will show the negotiation of the CCP between status quo and the ultimate goal of a strong, healthy and vigorous body that would help stabilise and invigorate the young People's Republic of China in an era when the world was divided between two ideological camps.

Bridging 'New China' and Postcolonial India: The 1951 Indian Goodwill Mission

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This paper examines the basis of Asianist sympathy for 'New China', as the People's Republic was often styled, in the early 1950s by examining the writings of Indian diplomats, journalists and academics. These elite Indians either visited China as part of a 1951 delegations, making them witnesses to the ongoing New Democracy experiment. Since their experiences of China were definitely not comprehensive and hinged on the Chinese state's goodwill, the interesting question to ask is not whether these first-hand accounts of 'New China' were accurate but in what ways the Chinese revolution was comprehensible in light of the Indian elite's own priorities as nation builders and social activists. This paper reconstructs major tropes of the Chinese revolution that appealed to Indian observers – self-sufficiency, empowerment of workers and peasants, a palpable sense of social vitality – and underscored their enthusiasm for Beijing. Most significantly, communism was subsumed in favourable accounts of 'New China' under nation and society-building. The Chinese revolution, the nature of which was still in flux, was absorbed into and understood through India and Asia's long struggle against Euro-American domination. In addition, the Chinese revolution was deployed as an example with which Indian observers assessed contemporary developments in their own country. The enthusiastic reception of 'New China' in India suggests that the subsequent rapport between the Chinese and Indian states was a result of not only high-level diplomatic manoeuvres but also pan-Asian epistemological bridging between socialist revolution and decolonization.

Panel 5

From “Asia’s East” to “East Asia”: Aborted Decolonization of Taiwan in the Cold-War Discourse

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The disappearing of reference to Yadong (Asia’s or Asiatic East), as opposed to East Asia, in Taiwan’s post-WWII political history is a harbinger for the unavailing of decolonization in Taiwan. The Cold War, pertaining especially to the American intellectual intervention in the conceptualization of the world through the fault line of Containment, contributed greatly to the substitution of East Asia for Yadong. I argue that Yadong is a geocultural lens while East Asia connotes strategic purposes of various kinds. The latter echoed the discourse of Great East Asian Sphere that colonial Japan relied on before and during WWII to justify colonialism as well as expansion. The familiar discourse of decolonization embedded in strategical essentialism reproduces the colonizing/colonized binary. I re-theorize decolonization as a relational project. Empirically the intellectual demise of Yadong as a relational discourse came along with the proceeding of the Cold War. This indirectly testifies to the fate of decolonization in Taiwan.

Exchange between Hong Kong and Taiwan during the Cold War

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The Hong Kong–Taiwan relations were underestimated compared with the importance of Hong Kong–Mainland relations. The 1956 Kowloon and Tsuen Wan riots were caused by the escalating conflicts between pro-Nationalist and pro-Communist groups in the 1950s. After the riots, Taiwan kept a low profile. In spite of government relations, Taiwan played an important role in academic and cultural exchanges. However, the exchanges with the Mainland were restricted in Hong Kong to escape the influence and keep the stability of Hong Kong.

Secondary school graduates went to Taiwan for university education as overseas Chinese students (僑生). Students who originated from Hong Kong published journals through their ability of writing in the Chinese language. After the birth of PRC, immigrant scholars of New Asia College received financial support from the Taiwan government. Scholars who originated from Taiwan made contributions to the development of China studies in Hong Kong in the 1970s. They acquired their PhD in the US. Their abilities and adequate education enabled teaching China-related subjects through English as the medium of instruction.

Panel 6

Inscribing the Cultural Revolution in the Hong Kong Everyday: Lü Da and Hong Kong's *Wen Wei Po*

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This article focuses on the influence of the Cultural Revolution on Hong Kong literature in the British colonial days. In particular, I examine the role played by a forgotten Hong Kong writer Lü Da, Li Yang's *nom de plume*. Lü was one of the authors of Hong Kong *Wen Wei Po*'s "Trio Opusculum" (*Sanren xiaopin*) column, which, among other things, disseminated and repurposed Cultural Revolution literary and cultural products in Hong Kong between 1966 and 1967. Through scrutinizing Lü Da's writings in this column and the intertextual relationship between the column with other pages of the newspaper, my article argues that Lü Da's skilful techniques in propagating national literary and cultural products into the everyday local situations are shown in three styles: retelling, re-appropriation and re-contextualization. Furthermore, the Cultural Revolution's influence on Lü Da's column writing raises questions about the historiography of Hong Kong literary history, specifically in relation to the repressed voice of the left-wing during the 1960s and 1970s.

The Myth of "Laissez Faire Economy": Re-examining Hong Kong Industrialization (1958-1969)

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Hong Kong industrialization between 1958 and 1969 is explained as a miracle of "laissez-faire" policy by Colonial Narrative and Neo-Liberalism. Hong Kong industrialization is used as a proof of the success of the market economy in the competition between "the market economy" and "the planned economy" in the Cold War period. Different from current studies, the purpose of this research is to reexamine Hong Kong industrialization by John Lewis Gaddis's "New Cold War History." This research argues that Hong Kong industrialization was not only a local transformation of the economic pattern but also a part of American Cold War strategy of constructing anti-communist Indo-Pacific community "Great Arc of Free Asia" and promoting Japanese planned model of industrialization as the Asian Model. This research contributes a lot to understand Hong Kong's two different global systems, Hong Kong's strategic values in the Sino-American confrontation and the complexity of economic competence in the Asian Cold War.

Before China Studies: Private Foundations, Cold War Politics, and the U.S. Government in Colonial Hong Kong

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The founding of the University Service Centre in Hong Kong in 1963 was a significant event in the development of China studies. Thanks to the city's adjacency to mainland China and the Carnegie Corporation's funding support, the Centre since its very beginning has become the "go-to" place for aspiring researchers to obtain first-hand information to study contemporary China. Half a century later, prestigious China scholars such as Ezra Vogel and Jerome Cohn fondly remember its founding era and passionately praise its contribution to the field of China studies. Yet few have looked into an incident that took place in the early years of the Centre, during which the U.S. Consulate General in Hong Kong intervened and facilitated the negotiations between the Foundation and its discontented field officer in 1964. Despite the disputes, all the parties involved in this event, strangely enough, agreed to avoid public attention. Why did the U.S. government get involved in this, and what were they trying to cover? Connecting the declassified Department of State records with a wide range of historical sources, the paper attempts to analyze the collaboration between the U.S. government and private foundations in the promotion of contemporary China studies during the Cold War period. In doing so, scholars today will come to a better understanding of the fluid boundaries between academics and politics in the early stage of area studies.

The Making of Cold War Memorial Landscape: Song Emperor's Terrace and Chinese University of Hong Kong

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Based on new sources and new perspectives, recent studies have revealed the enormous scope and far-reaching impact of the Cold War (1947-1991). Rather than purely an ideological and military confrontation between USA and USSR, we now know that the Cold War was a global balance of power that involved large numbers of players around the world. While creating a nuclear arm race that threatened to destroy the world, we now know that the Cold War was also an impetus for new life styles, new identities, new scientific research, and a new approach to higher education.

As part of the study of Cold War Hong Kong, this paper examines two *places of memory*—the reconstruction of *Sung Wong Toi* (Song Emperor's Terrace) in 1958 and the founding of the Chinese University of Hong Kong in 1963. The goal of this paper is to deepen our understanding of Hong Kong being the "Berlin of the East" at the height of the Cold War. A term coined in 1949 by British diplomats at the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty in Washington D. C., and made popular to the American public in 1954 by Sir Alexander Grantham during his six-week lecture tour to the United States, "Berlin of the East" captured the strategic ambiguity of Hong Kong as being geographically located at the doorstep of Communist China and ideologically

part of the Western Bloc.

Through the two case studies—the recreation of a historical site and the creation of a new university—this paper traces the complex process by which the Hong Kong government transformed the colony into a “Cultural China.” By emphasizing the colony’s roots in traditional China, the two sites helped to separate Hong Kong from Red China and realign her to the “Free World.” More importantly, they helped to address three interlocking problems that perplexed the Hong Kong government: Britain’s imperial decline, the Communist threat and the Nationalist counteraction, and the US’s Cold War agenda in East Asia.