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Introduction by Yafeng Xia, Long Island University and  
Chaowu Dai, East China Normal University

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Introduction by Yafeng Xia, Long Island University and Chaowu Dai, East China Normal University

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This volume is a collection of papers from the international conference, “The Cold War in Asia: Beyond Geopolitics and Diplomacy,” which was held in Guangzhou on 1 and 2 November 2007. It is primarily a study of the People’s Republic of China (PRC)’s Cold War era public diplomacy and cultural exchanges. It is an important addition to the study of the Cold War in Asia.<sup>1</sup>

The editors state in their introduction that the purpose of the book is to study “the role of culture, public diplomacy and ideas in the making of the Cold War.” (p. 4) They expect that the book as a whole undermines earlier understanding of “the Cold War as a basically bipolar conflict”, “as a conflict waged primarily in the field of diplomacy and international relations between nation-states,” and “as discrete from and unrelated to the larger global processes of the twentieth century” such as decolonization, nation-building and economic globalization. (p. 4) Part I comprises two essays on World System and Asian Order; Part II consists of five essays under the theme of “The Propaganda War”; and Part III comprises of two case studies on the theme of the export and globalization of Maoism.

All reviewers welcome the book as a useful addition to the literature of the Cold War studies. **Matthew Johnson** speaks highly of the book, stating “This volume represents a significant and timely contribution to the growing fields of international history and of ‘new’ Cold War Studies.” **Richard Mason** praises the volume for “emphasizing that the Cold War was much more complex than merely being a Soviet-American bi-polar confrontation or that the Cold War merely involved politics, diplomacy and military interactions among the big powers.” **Ang Cheng Guan** states, “there is a strong case to be made for focusing on Asia and also for broadening the approaches to understanding the Cold War.” **Steven Levine**, who has the most reservations, writes “Solid and informative chapters ... make the valuable point that local actors in all of these places pursued their own agendas, adapted to Cold War exigencies when necessary, and tried with considerable success either to neutralize the impact of external Cold War actors or to turn Cold War struggles to their own advantages.”

The reviewers raise some questions regarding the volume’s methodology and specific interpretations. **Steven Levine** complains that the editors fail “to provide a compelling intellectual framework into which the individual chapters fit.” He argues that Immanuel Wallerstein’s essay on world system is not well presented. **Ang Cheng Guan** feels that Wallerstein should give more treatment to the counter-narrative which “denied the basic premise of the Cold War narrative, namely that there were only two sides, and that every country was either on one side or the other”. (pp. 17-18) **Matthew Johnson** writes,

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<sup>1</sup> For recent works adopting the socio-cultural approaches in studying the Cold War in Asia, see Simei Qing, *From Allies to Enemies, Visions of Modernity, Identity, and U.S.-China Diplomacy, 1945-1960* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007); and Michael Szonyi, *Cold War Island: Quemoy on the Front Line* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008).

“Despite the volume’s avowed ‘socio-cultural’ focus ... this is primarily a volume about PRC Cold War era diplomacy.” **Richard Mason** notes, “The main title ‘The Cold War in Asia’ seems to promise more than the contents actually deliver.” The editors’ response “focuses on some of the broader themes raised in the reviews.

All of the reviewers and the editors agree that China features prominently in the book and it is important to study China’s interaction with other Asian states during the Cold War. In 2008, when reviewing the field, Yafeng Xia observed that Chinese scholars had primarily studied and published in three areas, namely Sino-American relations, Sino-Soviet relations, and the Korean War.<sup>2</sup> The historian Xiaoyuan Liu concurred and elaborated it more aptly, “the issues studied by Chinese scholars so far are hardly new. They continue to trace the trajectory of the Chinese Communist Party’s (CCP) foreign policy orientations in the Cold War, the main concerns of which, with few exceptions, can be summed up as two antis (anti-American imperialism and anti-Soviet revisionism), two wars (in Korea and Vietnam), and a perilous strait (Taiwan).” Liu called on scholars in China “to identify new issues, ask new questions, seek new paradigms, and, more importantly, venture into” new dimensions.<sup>3</sup>

What are Chinese scholars’ recent contributions to the study of the Cold War in Asia and China’s interaction with other Asian states during the Cold War? A brief survey of the field (from 2005 to 2010) shows that Chinese scholars continue to publish on the origins and foundations of the Sino-Soviet alliance<sup>4</sup> and the Korean War<sup>5</sup>. Nonetheless, several Chinese scholars have ventured into new areas and published important works. Two of these are worth special mention. The first concerns the economic Cold War in Asia: making use of Japanese, British, and U.S. archival sources, Ji Zong’an and Cui Pi studied the origins, process and effect of “Inter Governmental Group on Indonesia,” which held 34 meetings from 1967 to 1991. The article contributes to the understanding of some major themes in studying the Cold War in Asia, such as “Cold War and revolution,” and “decolonization and economic development.”<sup>6</sup> Other scholars have published articles on Sino-Japanese trade

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<sup>2</sup> Yafeng Xia, “The Study of Cold War International History in China: A Review of the Last Twenty Years,” *Journal of Cold War Studies*, vol. 10, no 1 (2008), p. 99.

<sup>3</sup> H-Diplo Article Roundtable Review, [www.h-net.org/~diplo/roundtables](http://www.h-net.org/~diplo/roundtables), Volume IX, No. 11 (2008), 31 May 2008, p. 8.

<sup>4</sup> E.G., Shen Zhihua, “The Most Welcome Meeting: Probing and Contacts between the CCP and the CPSU Leaders,” *Huadong shifan daxue xuebao* [Journal of East China Normal University], no. 1 (2009); idem., “From Xibeipo to Moscow: Mao Zedong Declared ‘Leaning-to-One-Side’,” *Zhonggong dangshi yanjiu* [Studies of the CCP History], no. 2 (2009).

<sup>5</sup> E.G., Zuo Fengrong, “A Study of Why Stalin finally Consented to Launch the Korean War,” *Eluoshi yanjiu* [Russia Study], no. 4 (2010); Shen Zhihua, “Stalin, Mao Zedong and the Korean War Revisited,” *Shixue jikan* [Collection of History Papers], no. 5 (2007); Chen Shiwei, “A Study of Three International Political Mobilizations regarding Germ Warfare during the Korean War,” *Lishi yanjiu* [Historical Studies], no. 6 (2006).

<sup>6</sup> Ji Zong’an and Cui Pi, “Origins and Effect of Inter Governmental Group on Indonesia,” *Zhongguo shehui kexue* [Social Science China], no. 6 (2010).

relations;<sup>7</sup> and on educational and cultural exchanges during the Cold War. Gu Ning argues that Sino-American educational exchanges between 1949 and 1990 were largely affected by the Cold War. It became the barometer of U.S.-China bilateral relations.<sup>8</sup> Some scholars have also studied psychological warfare in Asia.<sup>9</sup>

Looking ahead, we feel that the lion's share of attention will still be devoted to topics closely related to China's strategic decisions during the Cold War, such as the Sino-Soviet alliance, the Korean War, and China's relations with its neighbors. Although political, diplomatic and military topics are high on research agendas, Chinese scholars will venture into new "dimensions", such as economic and trade relations, psychological warfare, and socio-cultural aspects of the Cold War in Asia. We are confident that Chinese scholars will be able to make major contributions to the study of China-related topics during the Cold War if they attempt to become more familiar with international scholarship, make good use of newly available Chinese sources and collaborate more closely with scholars outside of China. In this sense, this volume is exemplary and inspiring.

### Participants:

**Zheng Yangwen** received her Ph.D from the University of Cambridge. She is a Lecturer in Modern Chinese History and Research Director of Centre for Chinese Studies, University of Manchester. Her major publications include *The Social Life of Opium in China* (2005) and "Swan Lake to *Red Girl's Regiment*: the Sinicisation of Ballet in China" in *The Cambridge Companion in Ballet* (2006), and co-edited three other works.

**Hong Liu** is Professor, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Nanyang Technological University. Liu has published six books and more than seventy articles. His most recent publications are *Shuttling between Market, Society and the State: Chinese Merchants in Port Cities and the Making of Business Networks in East Asia* (co-editor in Chinese) and *China and the Shaping of Indonesia, 1949-1965* (National University of Singapore Press, forthcoming).

**Michael Szonyi** is Professor of Chinese History, Harvard University. Besides the social history of the Cold War, his main research interests include the local history of southeastern China from Ming to the present, the history of Chinese popular religion, and

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<sup>7</sup> Deng Feng and Du Yurong, "U.S. Cold War Strategies and Sino-Japanese Trade Relations," *Dongbei shifan daxue xuebao* [Journal of Northeast China Normal University], no. 5 (2007); Wang Huiyu, "Japan's Trade Relations with Northeast China in the Shadow of U.S. Economic Recovery Plan toward Japan," *Riben yanjiu* [Japan Study], no. 2 (2009).

<sup>8</sup> Gu Ning, "Reviewing the Cultural Legacy of the Cold War: U.S.-China Educational Exchanges, 1949-1990," *Shixue yuekan* [History Monthly], no. 5 (2007).

<sup>9</sup> E.G., Yu Qun, "A Preliminary Study of U.S. Psychological Warfare Plan toward Japan, 1951 to 1960," *Dongbei shifan daxue xuebao*, no. 5 (2005).

Overseas Chinese history. His most recent book is *Cold War History: Quemoy on the Front Line* (2008).

**Chaowu Dai** is a Professor of history at East China Normal University and a senior fellow at ECNU's Center for Cold War International History Studies in Shanghai. Prior to coming to ECNU in 2007, he taught at PLA International Studies University (1988-2003) and Nanjing University (2003-2007). He is the author of *Meiguo waijiao sixiangshi* [American Diplomatic Thoughts in History] (Beijing, 2007), *Didui yu weiji de niandai, 1954-1958* [Confrontation and Era of Crisis: Taiwan Strait Crises and China-United States Relations] (Beijing, 2003) and many articles. He is currently working on a book project, tentatively titled, *Mao Zedong, Nehru, and the Sino-Indian Border War of 1962*.

**Yafeng Xia** is an associate professor of East Asian and Diplomatic history at Long Island University, Brooklyn, and a guest professor at the Center for Cold War Studies, East China Normal University, Shanghai. He is the author of *Negotiating with the Enemy: U.S.-China Talks during the Cold War, 1949-72* (2006). He has also published numerous articles in such publications as *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, *Diplomatic History*, *Cold War History*, *Journal of Cold War Studies*, *The Chinese Historical Review*, *Journal of American-East Asian Relations*, *The International History Review*, among others. He is currently at work on a monograph on the early history of the PRC's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, tentatively titled *Revolutionary Diplomacy and Institution Building: New China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1949-1958*.

**Ang Cheng Guan** is Associate Professor and Head, Humanities and Social Studies Education Academic Group of the National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. He is the author of *Vietnamese Communist Relations with China and the Second Indo-China Conflict, 1956-1962* (Jefferson : MacFarland, 1997); *The Vietnam War from the Other Side: The Vietnamese Communists' Perspective* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002); and the sequel, *Ending the Vietnam War: The Vietnamese Communists' Perspective* (London: Routledge Curzon, 2004). His most recent work is *Southeast Asia and the Vietnam War* (London: Routledge, 2010). He is currently working on three research projects: The International History of the Vietnam War: The Denouement 1967-1975; Singapore/ASEAN and the Third Indochina War (1978-1991) and Lee Kuan Yew's Strategic Thought.

**Matthew D. Johnson** (PhD, University of California, San Diego) is an assistant professor in the History Department, Grinnell College, and an affiliated researcher with the China's War with Japan Programme, University of Oxford. He has written articles, chapters, reviews, and encyclopedia entries on the history of film and propaganda, and is completing a dissertation-based monograph titled *The Most Important Art: Propaganda, Party, and Policing in China's Socialist Cinema*, based on interviews and archival visits conducted while he was a U.S. Fulbright student fellow in 2004-2005. Other current scholarly projects include a forthcoming co-edited volume on local history and state-society relations in the PRC during the Mao years, an article on the Office of War Information in 1940s China (appearing in *Modern Asian Studies*), and a history of engagement between the CCP and American public figures during the Cold War.

**Steven I. Levine**, a student of Chinese politics and East Asian International Relations, is Senior Research Associate at the Maureen & Mike Mansfield Center at the University of Montana. He received a Ph.D. in Government and Far Eastern Languages from Harvard University in 1972. He is the author of *Anvil of Victory: The Communist Revolution in Manchuria, 1945-1948* and has published scores of book chapters, journal articles, and review essays. Most recently he co-authored with Michael H. Hunt *The Arc of Empire: America's War in Eastern Asia, 1899-1973* (forthcoming in 2012), co-edited and translated from Chinese (with Liu Guoli) Ye Zicheng, *Inside China's Grand Strategy* (University Press of Kentucky, 2011). His edited translation of Alexander Pantsov's authoritative Russian-language biography of Mao Zedong is being prepared for publication.

**Richard Mason** is a Research Fellow at the Institute of Occidental Studies, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. His research interests are in American foreign relations in Asia during the Cold War era. His current research project is on the theme of the Cold War, Containment and the Challenge of Non-Alignment, with particular reference to US-Indonesian relations during the Sukarno era. He has co-edited with Abu Talib Ahmad, *Reflections on Southeast Asian History Since 1945* (Penang: Penerbit Universiti Sains Malaysia, 2006) and, "1948 Insurgencies and the Cold War in Southeast Asia," Special Issue, *Kajian Malaysia [Journal of Malaysia Studies]*, XXVII, nos. 1 & 2 (2010).

This edited volume sets out to do two things: One, to redress the imbalance in the historiography of the Cold War which has focussed predominantly on the rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union in Europe. The editors and contributors of this book want to show that Asia was not “a peripheral theatre of the Cold War” or “a sideshow to the main events” (p.1). Indeed, Asia was “central to the Cold War itself” (p.1). Thus, the title of the book, *The Cold War in Asia*, essentially shifts Asia to centre-stage. Two, the title is further accompanied by a subtitle – *The Battle for Hearts and Minds* – which tells readers that this is not the traditional diplomatic and political history of the Cold War in Asia but one which pays special attention to the “social and cultural phenomena” of the Cold War (p.1), which has become a rather fashionable approach in Cold War studies. In the last two decades or more, much has been written of how the cultural dimensions impacted Cold War politics and diplomacy in the West, but not much attention has been paid to Asia. Thus I think there is a strong case to be made for focussing on Asia and also for the broadening the approaches to understanding the Cold War.

The two opening chapters which constitute **Part One**, the first by **Immanuel Wallerstein** and the second jointly by **Takashi Shiraishi** and **Caroline Sy Hau** complement each other and both make a reasonably convincing case for focussing on Asia. In his thoughtful but too brief essay, **Wallerstein** sketches the standard/dominant/familiar narrative of the Cold War from 1945 to 1991 - the Second World War, the meeting at Yalta, Winston Churchill’s Iron Curtain speech (1946), George Kennan and “containment”, 1989 and finally the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. The one underlying assumption of this narrative, as Wallerstein puts it, was that “anything that happened in those years was initiated either by the US or by the Soviet Union” (p.17). He describes this narrative as “largely a fantasy” and suggests a counter-narrative which “denied the basic premise of the Cold War narrative, namely that there were only two sides, and that every country was either on one side or the other” (pp.17-18). This “alternative” narrative – although it is not clear from the essay whether it actually comprised three sub-narratives - brings in India in the early years of its independence when it proclaimed itself neutral in the Cold War, the Bandung Conference, the Non-aligned movement, the revolutions of 1968 and the Chinese assertion that the world was divided between the two superpowers – the U.S. and the Soviet Union (in collusion) and the rest of the world. While the standard narrative is much better summarized and more coherent, I found the counter-narrative somewhat lacking in comparison, which is a pity because this is the narrative which should frame this book. Because this narrative as Wallerstein writes is less “widespread” (p.17) and therefore supposedly less well-known, I feel that it would have been helpful if he had described it fuller for the benefit of readers fed on the dominant account. For example, he could have explained in greater detail what he meant by the “world revolution” of which 1968 was a symbolic year and its implications, be more precise about the Chinese perception of how the world was divided and what that meant for the Cold War in Asia. Wallerstein could

have said more about the effectiveness of the Bandung Conference<sup>1</sup> and the Non-aligned movement in the context of the Cold War. He could also have further elaborated on his contention that the narrative of a North-South division<sup>2</sup> was “a better intellectual framework” to understand the Cold War years than the dominant version and showed how all these fit together, if at all. Wallerstein highlights two more points which differentiate Europe and Asia. They are that the Cold War was “cold” in Europe but was rather “hot” in Asia and that while the Cold War might have ended in Europe in 1991, it was not the case in Asia.

The chapter by **Takashi Shiraishi** and **Caroline Sy Hau** picks up from where Wallerstein ends. The essay is focussed on the end of the Cold War in Asia - specifically East Asia (China and Japan). The authors argue that the collapse of the Soviet Union is an essential but not a sufficient explanation for the transformation of the global political structure from bipolarity to unipolarity and then to multipolarity as there are “a congeries of events, some of which were partly related to, but many of which were autonomous from, the Soviet collapse” (p.26). The “triumph of global capitalism” narrative is also too simplistic as “states matter, societies matter, and in any case, global capitalism develops unevenly” (p.28). Thus, the global post-Cold War transformation in general and in East Asia in particular cannot be adequately explained through “Americanist or Europeanist perspectives” of how the Cold War ended. The authors describe how Chinese and Japanese economic developments beginning from the 1980s were different from Europe. Like Wallerstein, this chapter also makes a strong case that there is an Asian perspective or multiple Asian perspectives which needs to be told.

**Part Two** of the book comprises five essays under the theme “The Propaganda War” which I take it to mean the competition to influence the attitude of a group or community toward some cause, position or viewpoint. **Michael Charney** provides an interesting account of how a much-publicised Burmese-language play, *Ludu Aung Than (The People Win Thought)* written by U Nu, the first Prime Minister of Burma (1948-1962) was used as a propaganda tool by both the U Nu government as well as the United States for their respective interests. The original intent of the play was to promote Democracy and to admonish those who attempted to seize power by force. But Nu also wanted the play “to warn the Burmese not to allow themselves to be fooled by self-interested foreign countries” (p.47), specifically the Soviet Union and the United States. According to Charney, this became the central theme of the play. Nu deliberately omitted the PRC in his imagined Cold War for a complex set of reasons. Most importantly, he wanted as much as possible to prevent communist Chinese

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<sup>1</sup> See for examples, See Seng Tan and Amitav Acharya (ed.), *Bandung Revisited: The Legacy of the 1955 Asian-African Conference for International Order* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2008); Jason Parker, “Cold War II: The Eisenhower Administration, the Bandung Conference, and the Reperiodization of the Postwar Era” in *Diplomatic History*, Volume 30, Number 5, November 2006, pp. 867-892; James Mackie, *Bandung 1955: Non-Alignment and Afro-Asian Solidarity* (Singapore: Editions Didier Millet, 2005).

<sup>2</sup> See Jason Parker, “Cold War II: The Eisenhower Administration, the Bandung Conference, and the Reperiodization of the Postwar Era” in *Diplomatic History*, Volume 30, Number 5, November 2006, pp. 867-892

intervention into Burma under any pretext. But when the play was subsequently republished with a new and lengthy introduction for an American audience, Nu, who saw himself as a neutralist in the Cold War, in the new Introduction by Edward Hunter (a former propaganda expert in the Office of Strategic Service or OSS), was transformed into “a defender of democracy on the frontlines of international communist aggression” (p.56). This was not exactly complete misinformation because the original Burmese and English Introductions by U Thant written for two different audiences differed in their description of the aggression faced by Burma. Certain quarters within Nu’s government had apparently also encouraged it. As Charney puts it, Nu “found that by creating an imagined Cold War he also presented an opportunity for Western propaganda to engage on the same ground and reconstruct the imagined space for its own purposes” (p.58).

**Meridith Oyen’s** essay focuses on the policies of the United States, Republic of China (ROC) and the People’s Republic of China (PRC) toward the economically important Chinese diaspora in Southeast Asia – the “overseas Chinese” which made up six percent of the population of Southeast Asia and “controlled a disproportionately large segment of the local national economies” (p.59). Oyen describes how in the early years of the Cold War, all three countries adopted propaganda strategies to win the support of the overseas Chinese based on the assumption that for ethnic, cultural, linguistic, familial and/or financial reasons, the Chinese abroad naturally “cared enough about China to act in a way that would support whatever was best for the country” (p.61). In the case of the United States, it was to prevent the overseas Chinese from becoming a fifth column of communist China. However, all three countries gradually realised that the issue was more complex and that their overseas Chinese policies impinged on their relationships with the Southeast Asian governments. With the realisation that it was not “the elaborate propaganda campaigns that won over the loyalties of the population” but “the attitude of the host government and how it treated the overseas Chinese” that mattered (p.88), Beijing and Washington began to adjust their policies in their own ways to minimally keep the loyalties of the overseas Chinese but to focus more importantly on their long-term relationships with the Southeast Asian countries. The ROC, because of its exceptional circumstance, found it much more difficult to adjust. Oyen notes that it was “in this reluctance to give up the overseas Chinese as citizens that the greatest divergence in ROC and US overseas Chinese policy is found” (p.91).

The third essay is on the leftist media in Hong Kong during the Cold War and post-Cold War. **Lu Yan** shows that while the mass media is often a useful tool to serve political ends, in the case of Hong Kong, the scope for propaganda was limited as “political goals were not a priority for either the powerful or powerless” and both Britain and the PRC – the two powers which had direct influence over the territory “preferred appeasement to confrontation” (p.96). Yan begins with a useful summary of both Britain and the PRC’s interests in Hong Kong and their policies, particularly on the media. For the Cold War period, he focuses on the two daily newspapers which represented “the voice” of the PRC (p.103) - *Wen Wei Po* and *Ta Kung Po*. Using the *Ta Kung Po* trial of May 1952 as an illustration, she showed “the potency of the combined force of the Cold War ideology and local social discontent” (p.109). The two leftist newspapers had enthusiastically taken up the unhappiness of the local people regarding the colonial authorities’ neglect of the

welfare of the poor which they claimed had resulted in the Tung Tau Fire (November 1951) and the subsequent March First Incident of 1952. The newspapers had, without solid evidence, supported the view that the fire which destroyed three thousand huts and caused more than twenty-five thousand homeless was a “government-planned arson” and depicted the clash at a mass rally on 1 March to welcome the Guangdong Relief Mission that was to arrive at the Tsim Sha Tsui station as a clash “between the right and the left, all framed in ideological terms” (pp.107-108). But equally significant is London and Beijing’s decision not to escalate the conflict, to steer the issue “back to a course of moderation” and “let local problems remain local” (p.109). The trial also led local communist leaders to reflect that they would fail in their mission to exploit Hong Kong for their purpose should the papers be shut down by the government. They therefore set out to adopt a less ideological and confrontational approach and move towards increasing their market-share and the pursuit of profit. Thus the “leftist media in Hong Kong fine-tuned their operations to suit local conditions and developed along the paths of localisation and commercialisation” (p.112), a pattern which was followed in the 1990s by the mainland-linked Phoenix Satellite Television.

**Zheng Yangwen’s** contribution to the volume is an essay on women’s liberation in China during the Cold War – how women’s liberation was articulated, publicised and delivered. Through the close examination of selected propagandistic artworks, she tries to show the interconnection of the Cold War and the struggle for women’s liberation. According to Zheng, what we should focus on in the pictures is the “female body and body language” (p.133). While Cold War politics fought over ideologies, women’s liberation in China battled over the female body. The threat of war and the need for national security provided the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) with the rationale to turn everyone, especially women, into “soldiers and patriots” – the militarisation and masculinisation of the female body to contrast with the feudal/traditional image/idea of the Chinese woman (p.133). The propaganda artists thus used the female body to articulate and advance women’s liberation.

The fifth and last essay in Part Two is on the PRC and the Cultural Politics in Indonesia between 1945 and 1965. In this essay, **Hong Liu** shows that during the Sukarno period (1945-1965), in the young sovereign nation’s search for a national and cultural identity, Sukarno and like-minded politicians as well as certain intellectuals, particularly though not exclusively in the literary circle, found inspiration in the Chinese model. This was despite the PRC being a communist state. As Hong Liu explains, many Indonesians believed that both Indonesia and China shared “similarities in their historical development and natural endowments” and regarded China “primarily as an Asian nation belonging in the Oriental tradition” (p.153). Liu focuses on the “Crisis in Literature” discourse in Indonesia because “literature came to be closely associated with nation-building and the creation of a new identity”. The Chinese experience of fusing culture and politics was attractive to the Indonesian intellectuals. This school of thought was further encouraged by the improvement in Sino-Indonesian diplomatic relations after 1955 and Chinese skilful efforts at Cultural Diplomacy which Liu also describes in some detail. Not everyone was attracted to the Chinese model. Those who opposed it were critical of “Indonesia’s left-leaning inclinations” and viewed art in China as “pure propaganda” (p.177). The debate became

more or more politicised in the later Sukarno years. Just as it was getting even more interesting, the essay ended somewhat abruptly. I feel that in his concluding remarks, it would have been more helpful if Liu had brought his narrative up to 1965 with the ouster of Sukarno rather than leap into the contemporary period.

**Part Three** of the book is on the theme of export and globalisation of Maoism. It comprises two case studies – one on the Mexican experience and the other on the Swedish experience, and Chinese communist’s relations with their Maoist counterparts in Mexico and Sweden. I learned much from both essays. Informative and well-researched as they may be, I am not persuaded that they fit into this edited volume which is on the Cold War in Asia. The editors however justified their inclusion as examples of the “global circulation and adaptation of Maoism” (p.9).

In conclusion, this book attempts to decenter the study of the Cold War from the Soviet-U.S. perspective. Just as Arne Westad, in his *The Global Cold War*<sup>3</sup>, shifted the focus from the standard narrative (as described by Wallerstein) to the politics of the developing world, this book focuses on the cultural/ideological perspective. Part Two in particular shows that there are many and rich stories, experiences and perspectives of the Cold War in Asia and more waiting to be told. All involved China. I enjoyed reading and learned a lot from this book but I cannot help but feel that the counter or alternative narrative, if there is one, remained vague and disconnected.

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<sup>3</sup> Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005)

This volume represents a significant and timely contribution to the growing fields of international history and of “new” Cold War studies. Significant because of its Asian focus; while China has received the majority of attention from scholars interested in the Cold War-era politics of countries beyond NATO and the Warsaw Pact, the amount of research focusing on Third World developing and decolonizing countries remains comparatively slim. Timely, because the goal of the editors and many of the contributors is to examine and challenge the usefulness of the Cold War as a paradigmatic concept for explaining change in Asian countries during the second half of the twentieth century. In this sense, it also represents a challenge to the emerging consensus that study of the Cold War, much of which presumes the causal importance of rivalry between the United States and Soviet Union to changes throughout the post-1940s world system, has produced a meaningful paradigm through which to understand Asian states.

### CONTESTING THE COLD WAR

Methodologically, the approach taken by the essays collected in this volume is grounded in several approaches to Asian politics: 1) use of sources collected primarily in Asian archives or published in Asian languages, 2) focus on propaganda-related activities – the “battle for hearts and minds” invoked in the title – rather than the pursuit of policy through formal negotiation or military means, 3) use of comparative studies of Cold War culture to highlight the transnational significance of the Asian experience, and 4) analysis of these findings which stresses their departure from earlier Cold War historiography.

All of this is stated explicitly in the editors’ introduction, “New Approaches to the Study of the Cold War in East Asia,” written by **Michael Szonyi** and **Hong Liu**. In it, they mount a series of provocative arguments which, while noting that the Cold War (as rivalry between the US, USSR, and their respective allies) *can* be productively related to the history of Asia during the second half of the twentieth century, emphasize the importance of “social and cultural phenomena” ( p. 1) which better illuminate the dynamics of the region, both Cold War-related and otherwise. As implied by this stated socio-cultural focus, their chief contention is that the “more traditional approaches of diplomatic and international history” ( p. 2), as well as the “existing English-language historiography of the Cold War,” all betray the same common weaknesses in their treatment of Asia:

In none of these narratives does Asia, or the rest of the Third World for that matter, figure with much significance. The Cold War was fought between the US and the Soviet Union, and it was fought primarily in Europe. Each narrative explains the “coldness” of the Cold War with reference to nuclear weapons. Since nuclear weapons made direct military conflict between the principals undesirable, even unthinkable, the conflict had to be played out chiefly in the diplomatic realm. Whether they interpret it as a clash of ideologies or a clash of national interest, or both, all three narratives [of English-language Cold War historiography, orthodox, revisionist, and post-revisionist] see the Cold War as bearing little

connection to other global processes such as decolonization, nation-building, and economic globalization (p. 3).

As they demonstrate, principally through reference to recent archive-based scholarship on the People's Republic of China, a focus on Asia promises to not only reveal underappreciated aspects of Cold War-era history, such as the persistent ubiquity of "hot" wars and non-European nationalist movements, but also undermines several basic tenets of mainstream Cold War historiography: 1) that the Cold War was a bipolar conflict, 2) that this conflict was primarily one of diplomacy and "international relations between nation-states" ( p. 4), and 3) that it was "discrete from and unrelated to the larger global processes of the twentieth century."

The assertion that Asians acted in their own interests, and not solely according to the preferences of the superpowers, is both refreshing and unsurprising from the perspective of scholars interested in international relations and who take seriously the importance of anti-imperialist politics in Third World countries. In terms of the English-language literature, publications by cited scholars Chen Jian, Odd Arne Westad, Zhai Qiang, Shuguang Zhang, and Yafeng Xia have already made this point while expanding it beyond the historical experience of the PRC, as seen from the perspective of Westad's sweeping *The Global Cold War*. Nor would many deny that the Cold War was transnational, if by that term we mean that factors other than the nation-state, such as local contexts and globally circulating ideologies, can also be linked to "socio-political change" within the territories claimed by Cold War-era Asian states ( p. 6).

Perhaps more controversial, however, will be the essays advanced in the section of the book titled "World System and Asian Order," which together serve as a kind of conceptual extension and articulation of the editors' arguments that attention to the previously peripheral region of Asia "necessarily leads to a re-assessment of the dominant narrative of the high politics of the period" ( p. 11), culture mattered, and global processes, not only the forces of bipolarity and the nation-state, shaped outcomes. In "Only Yesterday: China, Japan, and the Transformation of East Asia," **Takashi Shiraishi** and **Caroline Sy Hau** suggest that the emergence of "urban and middle-class societies," rich-poor and urban-rural divides, and regionalization in East Asia after the Cold War can be ascribed primarily to four factors: U.S. revival of post-war Japan as a regional economic engine; incomplete democratization and the persistence of socialism; Japanese economic cooperation, and U.S. geopolitical alliance, with the PRC, and; a "politics of productivity" linking middle-class aspirations to state legitimacy. Much of this argument will be familiar from previous volumes<sup>1</sup>, which have already demonstrated the significance of Japan and the U.S. to region-making in East Asia. A new wrinkle for Cold War scholars, however, lies in both the introduction of this regionalist literature to the debate over bipolarity, and in the implication that the PRC's post-Mao revival owed as much to economic ties to Japan as to the normalization of US-PRC relations. From this perspective the US-brokered

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<sup>1</sup> Takashi Shiraishi and Peter J. Katzenstein, eds., *Network Power: Japan and Asia, 1997 and Beyond Japan: The Dynamics of East Asian Regionalism*, 2006).

reintegration of Japan into East and Southeast Asia was crucial to Cold War and post-Cold War experience in the region as a whole. Nonetheless, for all its explanatory significance, Japan's role since 1945 been largely overshadowed by PRC-centric scholarship associated, whether consciously or unconsciously, with a relentless teleology of contemporary "rise." Thus, as Shiraishi and Hau conclude: "While country-specific arguments may have some validity in explaining the Cold War era, when applied to the present [East Asian] situation they are misplaced and untenable" (p. 38).

More unsettling, particularly to the volume's own terminology and agenda, is **Immanuel Wallerstein's** contention in "What Cold War in Asia? An Interpretive Essay," that as a narrative, the Cold War is "largely a fantasy" (p. 17) and "fails as an explanation of reality" (ibid, p. 24). In the context of this essay Asia serves not only to undermine dominant narratives, but to demolish them entirely. The Cold War, for Wallerstein, was "cold" insofar as the U.S. and USSR never engaged in direct military combat, and because both sides agreed to leave Europe divided according to the principles laid out in Yalta in February 1945 (pp. 19-21). Where conflict was "hot" in Asia, as in Korea, this was due to the initiative taken by Asian leaders such as Kim Il Sung; nor, from Wallerstein's perspective, did superpower involvement in such conflicts lead to any significant or lasting gains. Aid was limited, nuclear conflict avoided. The Cold War, then was a "deal" (p. 24) between the U.S. and USSR to maintain the post-1945 status quo – one based in U.S. hegemony – while restraining other national leaders from upsetting that state of affairs.

Where Wallerstein does support what emerges as the volume's most ambitious claim – that decolonization, nation-building, and economic globalization (as well as regionalization) were as important to Asians as was the negotiation of bipolar rivalry – is in his discussion of "alternative or counter-narratives" which privilege rejections of bipolarity. Such narratives, he argues, may be formed from evidence such as post-independence India's neutrality; the 1955 Bandung Conference (whose organizers refused Soviet entreaties to include the Central Asian republics); non-alignment rhetoric and policies in Yugoslavia, India, and Egypt; tricontinental relations between Latin American, African, and Asian states; non-governmental structures created by Third World countries, and; protests (a "world revolution") reflecting opposition to the bipolar division of the world, and occurring between 1966 and 1970.

#### THE COLD WAR AS CULTURAL CONFLICT

Was there, then, a "Cold War in Asia"? Based on the foregoing discussion, it would appear that answering such a question would require: 1) establishing the relevance, or lack thereof, of bipolarity to political outcomes within Asian states, 2) assessing the degree to which Asian states were "prime movers" (borrowing a phrase from Immanuel Wallerstein) in creating independent regional alliances and initiating supposedly "Cold War" conflicts such as the Korean and Vietnam wars, 3) asking whether comparative and transnational links can be productively established between Asian states and NATO or Warsaw Pact members, and 4) asking what cognitive categories were most important to cultural production, social organization, and everyday experience. These are difficult questions to answer, not least because the volume's empirical core consists of seven essays that, with

two exceptions, are primarily devoted to cultural relations between China (the PRC and Government of the Republic of China, Taiwan) and other populations or political actors. For this reason, assessing the findings of the volume in light of its topical coverage requires instead posing the question as follows: to what degree do Cold War frameworks assist or impede us in understanding China's overseas propaganda, or "public diplomacy" ( p. 11)?

Indeed, five of the seven empirical studies provide rich insights into Chinese efforts to win "hearts and minds" abroad during the 1950s and 1960s, and it is to this subject that the volume, in partial fulfillment of its title, is largely addressed. **Meredith Oyen's** "Communism, Containment, and the Chinese Overseas" provides a groundbreaking, multi-archival study of competing PRC, ROC, and U.S. efforts to gain control over the loyalty of diasporic Chinese populations, primarily those in Southeast Asia and the U.S. itself. **Lu Yan**, in "Limits to Propaganda: Hong Kong's Leftist Media in the Cold War and Beyond," demonstrates that early post-1949 CCP Guangdong provincial party committee and PRC Foreign Affairs Office attempts at promoting social unrest on the island were later attenuated by more "local" concerns and an increasingly pragmatic British-PRC relationship. "The Historicity of China's Soft Power: The PRC and the Cultural Politics of Indonesia, 1945-1965," by **Hong Liu**, also provides a detailed, archivally-grounded perspective on PRC efforts to influence Indonesia's domestic politics during the Sukarno years, using cultural diplomacy and literary ties between the two countries as a focus. Two final chapters provide powerful new perspectives on PRC propaganda activities beyond Asia. In "TransPacific Solidarities: A Mexican Case Study of The Diffusion of Maoism in Latin America," **Matthew Rothwell** addresses the impact of CCP models of revolution, and state-building, on Mexican intellectuals and post-1960s guerilla movements in Peru, Mexico, Colombia, Brazil, and Bolivia. **Perry Johansson's** "Mao and the Swedish United Front Against [the] USA" approaches this topic from a "Western" perspective, arguing convincingly that pro-PRC third front organizations in Stockholm played a brief, but catalytic, role in the formation of an overtly anti-US protest movement within the broader context of popular opposition to the Vietnam War.

Each of these chapters contributes significantly to our understanding of the institutions and individuals involved in the dissemination of Chinese (mainly PRC) propaganda abroad during the 1950s-1960s period. In general, the dominant pattern seems to have been one of cooperation between the CCP Central Committee International Liaison Department (expertly discussed by **Johansson**) and PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs – along with various media and mass organizations, such as the New China (*Xinhua*) News Agency and Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries – and newspapers, literary circles, educational institutions, and political groups or parties in foreign countries. **Oyen's** contribution, which also examines the United States Information Service and Taipei-based Overseas Chinese Affairs Committee, not only provides evidence that such arrangements were directed by other Asian and non-Asian countries (i.e. the ROC and US), but also suggests that structural similarities between these competitors emerged as a consequence of the competition itself. Additional support for this portrayal of the U.S. Department of State as an active propagandist in Asian settings appears in **Michael Charney's** "U Nu, China, and the 'Burmese' Cold War: Propaganda in Burma in the 1950s," which shows how Voice of America and an informal network of American anti-communist

cultural entrepreneurs subverted the official culture of the Nu regime to reflect more distinctly U.S. concerns with containing “communist penetration” ( p. 58). Nor, as **Zheng Yangwen** reminds us, were PRC propaganda efforts focused solely on target populations overseas. In her “Women’s Liberation in China during the Cold War,” close readings of Cultural Revolution-era propaganda posters and photographs are used to weave a broader narrative suggesting that for female PRC citizens, the “battle for hearts and minds” promoted new models of Maoist militancy on the home front as well.

Returning, finally, to the question of whether this evidence confirms or denies the plausibility of an Asian Cold War, these chapters offer several conclusions.

1) Bipolarity and political outcomes: the U.S. undermined Burmese attempts to “imagine” a specifically Nu-ist Cold War landscape, while the post-Nu Revolutionary Council of Ne Win turned to Soviet support (Charney); the U.S. experimented with an overseas Chinese policy, later replaced by more formal state-to-state relations with Southeast Asian states (**Oyen**); Cold War geopolitics and challenges pushed the PRC toward a redefinition of policies vis-à-vis female citizens (**Zheng**); the Soviet-PRC split led to further fragmentation of socialist politics in Mexico (**Rothwell**) and Sweden (**Johansson**); Mao Zedong and the CCP attempted to mechanically reproduce the Soviet experience (**Rothwell**).

2) Asian states as prime movers: Burma was politically and territorially divided by interventions from the PRC and Shan state-based KMT armies (**Charney**); the PRC and ROC competed for overseas Chinese loyalties, eliciting frustration from Southeast Asian leaders (**Oyen**); PRC pragmatism vis-à-vis Britain, and local Hong Kong concerns, led to the creation of a distinctive, “de-ideologized” leftist news media (**Lu**); the CCP liberated Chinese women (**Zheng**); the PRC created a non-Westernized model of modernization for Indonesian intellectuals and political leaders (**Liu**), inspired new forms of political activism and guerilla-waged revolution in Latin America (**Rothwell**), and pushed Sweden toward an antagonistic relationship with the U.S. over the issue of the Vietnam War (**Johansson**).

3) Comparative and transnational links between Asia, NATO, and Warsaw Pact countries: PRC public diplomacy was similar to psychological warfare waged by the U.S. and USSR in Eastern Europe (**Oyen**), and to U.S. soft power initiatives abroad (**Liu**); anti-communist press policies in Hong Kong, and PRC propaganda apparatus expansion, were comparable to similar measures taken in Cold War-era Western democracies (**Lu**); PRC attempts to promote Maoism abroad created transnational linkages between Southeast Asia, Latin America, and Europe (**Oyen, Liu, Rothwell, Johansson**).

4) Socio-cultural categories: domestic Nu-ist culture “concealed the PRC threat from the Burmese people and isolated the government’s domestic enemies from the global Cold War context (**Charney**, p. 41); overseas Chinese were caught between propaganda efforts planned by the PRC, ROC, and U.S. (**Oyen**); Hong Kong’s leftist media, and its audience, “diminished” the power of non-local ideologies (**Lu**, p. 118); women’s culture in the PRC reflected Maoist militancy (**Zheng**); Indonesians and Latin Americans felt the “influence” of PRC cultural polemics and propaganda (**Liu, Rothwell**); Swedish opposition to the U.S. and USSR was fed by PRC political education and financial support.

From this reviewer's perspective, based on the evidence alone we are led to an affirmative conclusion – that it is possible to speak of a Cold War in Asia – albeit with conditions. The USSR does not seem to have played a particularly prominent role in Southeast Asia or even the PRC itself, if measured in terms of Soviet influence on cultural production and public diplomacy. Where the USSR does appear is it often as a foil for PRC-generated Asianist/Oriental (**Liu**) and Maoist (**Rothwell, Johansson**) visions of revolution and development, although **Rothwell's** chapter (citing John Lewis Gaddis' concept of "asynchronous revolution") briefly restores the USSR to its more conventionally accepted status as a model and mentor to PRC leaders between 1949 and 1957. On almost every level the U.S. is portrayed as the more influential superpower in Asia. Measured in terms of the expansion of its propaganda apparatus, the PRC does appear to have shared important structural similarities with acknowledged Cold War actors, although the origin of these structural similarities remains difficult to ascertain. Likewise, PRC overseas propaganda and public diplomacy networks created important linkages between Asia, Latin America, Europe, and even the U.S., although it is also suggested that such ties (as a subset of Wallerstein's neutralist, non-aligned, or anti-hegemonic institutional structures) were strongest in the Third World, i.e. those areas presumably least integrated into competing systems directed by Moscow and Washington. Finally, this volume presents evidence which, though suggesting that geopolitical conflict was in many ways the motivating factor *behind* the creation of what might be termed, borrowing from the early work of Peter Kenez, a PRC "propaganda state," the culture created by this state remained hermetically Maoist or PRC-centered; or, in the case of the Nu-ist state, Burma-centered, while Hong Kong-centered or "local" in the case of the British Colonial Office-governed press.

To judge solely on the basis of its impressive documentation, the most well-supported conclusion to emerge from this evidence is that the Cold War in Asia was defined by a competition between the U.S. and its post-Yalta allies (particularly the ROC) and communism as represented not by the USSR, but by the PRC. From the mid-1950s onward, Beijing then further globalized this struggle by attempting to build support among non-Chinese populations in Southeast Asia, Latin America, and Europe. Asians, however, would have known little of this conflict, the emergence of stronger state-to-state ties in the region having insured their governments against further cultural infiltration. Paradoxically, then, the most obvious consequences of U.S. containment policies were the resurgence and revitalization of the PRC's party-state foreign policy bureaucracy, the strengthening of Southeast Asian state sovereignty, and Mao's increasing willingness to take the diplomatic fight to Latin America and Europe.

#### ASIA'S COLD WAR RECONTEXTUALIZED

To summarize the impressions given thus far, an obvious feature of the volume as a whole is its elevation of the PRC to the position of regional power-broker, rivaled only by the U.S.-ROC alliance. Yet even without engaging the delicate question of whether geopolitical rivalry between Beijing and Washington may be productively considered *a* cold war (post-Korea) or part of *the Cold War* in other words, an outcome of a bipolar world order divided

between the U.S. and USSR – it may be worth asking whether this picture of a Soviet-less Asia is, in fact, justifiable even when solely considering the socio-cultural record.

Here the evidence is less convincing. To cite just one early monograph on the subject, Frederick C. Barghoorn's *The Soviet Cultural Offensive: The Role of Cultural Diplomacy in Soviet Foreign Policy* (Princeton University Press, 1960), we find that Soviet cultural strategy in Asia (and Africa, and Latin America) was restored under Nikita Khrushchev from 1954 onward. That same year, Indonesian women were brought to Muslim seminaries in Central Asia (Barghoorn, p. 192); cultural diplomacy toward India appeared even earlier, beginning in 1948 and steadily expanding beyond communist circles thereafter. Following Sukarno's own 1956 visit to the USSR, "first-class motion-picture and television films" made to commemorate the event were shown widely in India and Indonesia (ibid, p. 200). Bilateral exchange agreements with Asian countries followed, with Sukarno later given a gift of Soviet jet aircraft. Soviet artists toured Japan from 1955 onward; by 1959, Soviet-built hospitals were reported in Cambodia. Following a 1960 visit to Indonesia, Khrushchev announced the establishment of a "University of Friendship of the Peoples" devoted to training technicians, teachers, and scientists from Asian, African, and Latin American states (ibid, p. 225).

Even focusing on those Southeast Asian states covered by the volume's empirical chapters – the Indonesia, and Burma – evidence for levels of Soviet involvement exceeding or rivaling PRC levels abound. Moving beyond the cultural sphere, between 1958 and 1965 Indonesia was the recipient of "the USSR's largest military assistance program to a Third World country involved in conflict," placing at Sukarno's disposal more than \$1 billion of arms (many of which went unused, but which were nonetheless intended to signal the strength of Soviet commitment)<sup>2</sup>. By contrast, in 1959 Indonesia and the PRC were enmeshed in an acrimonious dispute over treatment of Chinese nationals.<sup>3</sup> Even allowing for the fact that PRC influence and aid to the PKI was dominant after 1963, within two years both the party and Sukarno would fall in military coup led by General Suharno<sup>4</sup> In Burma, competition between the PRC and USSR for influence over the Burma Workers and Peasants Party (BWPP, or "Red Socialists") became overt after 1954, with both sides achieving "limited success"<sup>5</sup>. Within the PRC itself, Soviet experience and images of socialist modernity were imported into, and then disseminated by, the cultural bureaucracy (a point attested to in recent research by Julian Chang and Tina Mai Chen). Yet

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<sup>2</sup> Bruce D. Porter, *The USSR in Third World Conflicts: Soviet Arms and Diplomacy in Local Wars, 1945-1980* (Cambridge University Press, 1984), p. 19.

<sup>3</sup> Charles Neuhauser, *Third World Politics: China and the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization, 1957-1967* (Harvard University Press, 1970), p. 19.

<sup>4</sup> Guy G. Pauker, "The Rise and Fall of the Communist Party of Indonesia," in *The Communist Revolution in Asia: Tactics, Goals, and Achievements* (2nd ed.), Robert A. Scalapino (ed.) (Prentice-Hall, 1969), pp. 274-308.

<sup>5</sup> John H. Badgley, "The Communist Parties of Burma," in *The Communist Revolution in Asia*, p. 324.

while contributors to this volume never explicitly deny the Soviet presence, lack of any direct reference to the policies and public diplomacy of the USSR makes it difficult to ascertain whether bipolarity was indeed an important factor on which political outcomes, and even propaganda, depended. The result, as noted above, is a “Cold War in Asia” from which the USSR is strangely absent, and in which the PRC takes on a preponderant role as developmental standard-bearer for other Asian states.

The case for the “centrality of China” (**Szonyi and Liu**, p. 9) is clearly one of the more challenging issues raised by this volume, and it will remain to be seen whether forthcoming research on Third World competition between the PRC, U.S., and USSR does indeed create a convincing case for “Mao’s China” as a regional or even global superpower. During the 1950s and 1960s, PRC foreign policy in Asia was largely pragmatic and domestically focused, even isolationist<sup>6</sup>. Indeed, contributors **Takashi Shiraishi** and **Caroline Sy Hau** suggest that Japan may have proven the more significant model from the perspective of other developing countries, particularly those in Southeast Asia (and later for the PRC itself). While there is no denying that the chapters in this volume all represent important empirical contributions to our understanding of PRC propaganda and diplomacy overseas, a more open-ended argument concerns what these findings say about the PRC’s role as an international and transnational actor, central or otherwise. Assuming the importance of the PRC as revolutionary model, in several chapters, leads to a kind of disregard for the internal politics and perspectives of countries which replicates the Eurocentrism of previous Cold War scholarship. For example, Indonesia’s 1959 anti-Chinese movement and subsequent restrictions on “alien” residence and trade (e.g. Presidential Regulation 10, requiring the relocation and closure of foreign businesses) are not discussed as indicative of Indonesian attitudes toward the PRC. Similarly, readers familiar with Mexican history would be surprised to find that the account given of late 1960s radicalism, and guerilla experiments thereafter, makes no mention of the 1968 student movement or Tlatelolco massacre, both of which figure heavily in standard accounts of the Cold War-era Mexican left.

Other methodological questions or inconsistencies remain. Despite the volume’s avowed “socio-cultural” focus, which is contrasted with previous scholarship on political and diplomatic aspects of the Cold War, this is primarily a volume about PRC Cold War-era diplomacy – the “profession of persuasion”<sup>7</sup> Which, in turn, raises the extremely thorny methodological question of whether researchers are justified in reading propaganda materials, internal reports, or photographs and poster art as accurate reflections of what views of the Cold War conflict were, in fact, “accepted by other participants” (**Szonyi and Liu**, p. 5). At a minimum we must examine, rather than assume, the ubiquity of mass culture within Cold War-era national societies, particularly those in the developing world

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<sup>6</sup> See Robert Ross, “Introduction,” *Re-Examining the Cold War: US-China Diplomacy, 1954-1973*, Robert S. Ross and Jiang Changbin (eds.), Harvard University Asia Center, 2001.

<sup>7</sup> See Chas. W. Freeman Jr., *Arts of Power: Statecraft and Diplomacy* (United States Institute of Peace Press, 1997), p. 4.

(as a minor quibble, the lack of dates accompanying several key pieces of visual evidence makes periodization and authentication of these sources difficult at best). Finally, while numerous chapters refer to the absence of Asia from conventional Cold War accounts, these deficient works are never cited except through references to recent review articles. Most standard works on global conflict since World War One refer to events such as the 1931-1933 Manchurian “crisis”, the Korean War, and First and Second Indochina Wars as a matter of course.<sup>8</sup> Nor are national histories and political studies of Asian states written since the 1960s (e.g. the “Studies in Chinese Government and Politics” series published by University of Washington Press from 1969 onward) without reference to the impact of propaganda on popular mentalities. In short, it is difficult to argue that the Asian region has not been taken seriously in the past, or even that its politics have been fundamentally misunderstood without specific reference to instances of misunderstanding. While it is undeniably true that Asian perspectives on the Cold War have largely been missing from earlier accounts, this shortcoming is being swiftly remedied thanks to the declassification of archival materials, the expansion of graduate history training to include Asian languages, and other salutary developments. This volume is a positive reflection of all of these trends – but does it “undermine each of the central points of earlier [Cold War] historiography” (Szonyi and Liu, p. 4)?

## CONCLUSIONS

To answer this question, we must first ask what the “Cold War” designates – a time period, or a specific conflict? If the reference is to a *time period*, then it would appear that this volume does undermine conventional approaches to the Cold War by a simple process of addition. If, in other words, the Cold War is simply a kind of temporal container whose nature is defined by its contents, then adding new contents – Asia, new PRC sources, undiscovered propaganda materials, and so on – will mean that those who knew only the earlier Cold War are indeed missing something, and in that sense their fundamental assumptions about the nature of this Cold War have been undermined.

By contrast, if by “Cold War” we are referring to a series of diplomatically negotiated or proxy military conflicts between the U.S. and USSR, planned and directed by national or would-be national elites, which may have been motivated by visions of global hegemony, then it is difficult to see how the addition of Asia changes this picture. Instead, what the chapters included in this volume seem to suggest is that Mao Zedong and high-ranking CCP cadres may have consciously patterned their foreign policy conduct in emulation of superpower cultural diplomacy and “peace offensives.”

Where the volume’s greatest potential contribution lies, then, is in its claim that Asian pursuit of decolonization, state-building, and economic modernization may have affected political outcomes, and shaped popular experience, *more* than did the foreign policies of the U.S. and USSR. Though such processes are difficult to disentangle, the overarching

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<sup>8</sup> See Christopher Thorne, *The Limits of Foreign Policy: The West, the League, and the Far Eastern Crisis of 1931-1933* (Hamish Hamilton, 1972).

argument may well be correct. And perhaps it is also the case that by fault of omission, previous scholars of the Cold War have failed to give adequate attention to the importance of other twentieth-century global processes in the region (even if Cold War-era work by Chalmers Johnson on peasant nationalism, and its importance for China's Communist Party-led revolution, suggests otherwise). What counts as Cold War history is a question or, rather, a series of questions demanding an answer – does this category include only works with “Cold War” in the title or articles published in mainstream Cold War journals? Perhaps by taking a restrictive approach the case for significant lacunae in the scholarly record becomes clearer, but in this reviewer's opinion it would be a loss for the Cold War studies field as a whole if decades of national histories and political analysis were to disappear from the bibliographies of a rising generation of scholars. Equally damaging would be to dismiss the nation-state in favor of transnational approaches, when integration (both coerced and voluntary) into nationalizing structures was perhaps *the* most common experience among Asians of diverse ethnicities and socioeconomic positions during the Cold War period.

To be sure, nearly every empirical chapter represents a substantial contribution to contemporary understandings of how the PRC propaganda apparatus functioned abroad. Moreover, contributions by **Michael Szonyi** and **Hong Liu**, **Immanuel Wallerstein**, and **Takashi Shiraishi** and **Caroline Sy Hau** map out important new directions for future research, offering a powerful collective argument for the importance of global processes, and regional systems, to Asian history during second half of the twentieth century. One may ask, echoing the title of Gerald Segal's provocative 1999 *Foreign Affairs* article, how much – and where - the People's Republic of China truly “mattered” to the earlier part of this story. If recently declassified Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Central Intelligence Agency materials are any indication, PRC foreign policy was most successful when paired with Soviet agendas, least successful when it pressured targets to support a Beijing-directed global revolution (as indicated by, for example lackluster Asian support for the PRC's international propaganda campaign during the early years of the Vietnam War). Yet few would argue now that Beijing's policies do not matter to the rest of the world. To the extent that propaganda shapes experience and action – an assumption which lies at this volume's heart – readers may well find suggestive the image of an Asia in which the PRC's foreign affairs bureaucracy played a dominant role as articulator of alternatives to “the West” and its models.

**T**he responsibility of ensuring intellectual coherence and conceptual clarity to the set of disparate papers that comprise the typical conference volume necessarily weighs heavily on its editors. By this standard, the volume under review, although it contains several excellent chapters, falls short of the mark. The sense of anticipation with which one begins any new book is soon dashed in this case by the failure of the editors to provide a compelling intellectual framework into which the individual chapters fit. Yet, the focus on Asia is welcome as is the contributors' primary emphasis on the ideological dimensions of a conflict that is often viewed in military and strategic terms. Nevertheless, the editors' claim that Asia and the realm of ideas have been slighted in Cold War historiography is unsupportable. In reality, over the past several decades numerous scholars have explored the impact of the Cold War on every subregion of Asia and studied how the war of ideas influenced politics and society in Asia. This is not to say that additional studies are unwelcome. Far from it. There are always new topics to explore and old ones to revisit from fresh perspectives.

The nine substantive chapters that comprise the book are divided into three parts: World System and Asian Order (2 chapters), The Propaganda War (5 chapters), and The Export and Globalisation of Maoism (2 chapters). It is unfortunate that the best known contributor, **Immanuel Wallerstein**, gets things off to a dismal start with what is intended to be a controversial essay denying the very existence of a Cold War in Asia. In challenging the conventional narrative of the Cold War, Wallerstein succeeds only in revealing his disdain for the facts, particularly with respect to the Chinese civil war and the Korean War which he attempts to squeeze into the framework of the Yalta Agreement on the Far East. Neither fits. It is perhaps worth noting, too, that contrary to Wallerstein's cavalier assertion, the Korean War did not end "just where it began. The boundary line was kept exactly where it had been before the war." (p. 22) This is incorrect, as any map of the conflict will reveal.

The **second chapter** titled "Only Yesterday: China, Japan, and the Transformation of East Asia" provides a dubious reassurance that the geopolitical Cold War construct of an Asia dominated by the United States has been replaced by a horizontally integrated region in which the quest for hegemony has been transcended by economic cooperation. Narrow-minded nationalism has supposedly given way to a rising transnational middle class with shared values rooted in a consumerist worldview. Such a thesis overlooks the reality, inter alia, of ongoing maritime disputes among China, Japan, Vietnam, and other Southeast Asian states and the increasingly truculent behavior and ultra-nationalist rhetoric that China exhibits toward its neighbors, whether from an excess of self-confidence or as a shield for the anxiety of its hardline authoritarian leaders is hard to say.

The **remaining seven chapters** lead one to question what exactly do the editors mean by the "Cold War in Asia"? Was the Cold War a global conflict between competing powers and ideologies with an understudied Asian dimension that this book purportedly corrects? Or was it simply a bounded time period, an environment in which everything that happened

can somehow be related to the Cold War? If it is the latter, what were the temporal boundaries of the Cold War in Asia? Several of the chapters, particularly **Zheng Yangwen's** study "Women's Liberation in China during the Cold War," belong at best tenuously to the family of Cold War historiography, something like a distant cousin.

Solid and informative chapters by **Michael Charney** on Burma, **Meredith Oyen** on the Overseas Chinese, **Lu Yan** on Hong Kong's leftist media, and **Hong Liu** on China's soft power vis-à-vis Indonesia, 1945-1963, all make the valuable point that local actors in all of these places pursued their own agendas, adapted to Cold War exigencies when necessary, and tried with considerable success either to neutralize the impact of external Cold War actors or to turn Cold War struggles to their own advantage. Exposing the complexity, not to say messiness, of Cold War realities in a variety of Asian settings is a useful contribution to scholarship.

The aforementioned chapters as well as the final two—**Matthew Rothwell** on Maoism in Mexico and **Perry Johansson** on the Swedish united front against the United States—highlight the role of Chinese diplomacy and ideology in projecting the Cold War in Asia onto the screen of global politics. Ever since the founding of the People's Republic of China and continuing to this day, official Chinese "barbarian handlers" have skillfully employed people-to-people diplomacy to cultivate impressionable foreigners with the aim of turning them into enthusiastic missionaries who will deliver the "Good News" of the Chinese revolution to audiences back home. In his chapter on Chinese soft power during the Sukarno era in Indonesia (1945-1965), **Hong Liu** analyzes the writers and other intellectuals whose pilgrimages to China reinforced the sense of Third World solidarity that Beijing was striving for as it pursued a foreign policy line independent of, and increasingly in competition with, that of the Soviet Union. He notes that a minority of Indonesian writers were critical of Chinese literature which they deemed pure propaganda. Unfortunately, he eschews examining the question of to what extent the generally rosy views of the Indonesian intellectuals accorded with Chinese realities. I would argue that the Chinese practiced what might be called "snooker diplomacy" or "pull-the-wool-over-the-eyes diplomacy" whose objective at best was to conceal more than to reveal, and at worst to turn their visitors into merchants of mendacity. Edgar Snow, Mao's American dupe, who visited China in 1961 and denied the existence of the famine that was raging, is the classic example.

Maoism, or what the Chinese referred to as Mao Zedong Thought, was China's official ideology during the Cold War. Like Stalinism before it, utopian Maoism attracted an astonishing array of would-be revolutionaries, visionaries, malcontents, and crackpots who believed that China's revolutionary experience could be replicated virtually anywhere on earth if the proper Maoist formulas and incantations were employed. So deep was their faith in Maoist millenarianism that the brutalities, idiocies, and colossal failures of Mao's China were either invisible to them or of slight consequence when weighed in the scales of history. The attempts to universalize the experience of the Chinese Revolution in places such as Mexico and India ran aground, in part because the Chinese Communists falsified their own revolutionary history which, therefore, served poorly as a textbook for others. Revolutionary fairy tales may entertain, but they seldom edify. Another cause of failure was

that the dogmatists who flocked to the red banner of Maoism proved incapable of correctly analyzing the realities of state power they encountered and adapting their strategy and tactics to circumstances that differed radically from China's. Many of them paid with their lives for their naiveté.

One astonishing omission in a volume dedicated to the Cold War in Asia is any consideration of Vietnam. The country whose apparently unequal struggle against the United States inspired more sympathy and international solidarity than even China appears only in the final chapter on Maoism in Sweden. There Jan Myrdal, the Swedish Maoist who wrote the fanciful *Report from a Chinese Village*, was skillfully played by the Chinese authorities, who must have seen him as another “useful idiot” to advance their foreign policy agenda.

In sum, although this book does not live up to its billing, it is still worth reading, first for what it says about the variegated impact of the Cold War in Asia and second for its omissions that have the unintended but useful consequence of provoking readers to engage in their own further reflections on the subject.

The term 'Cold War' was first coined by Bernard Baruch, a veteran American diplomat, in 1947 and subsequently popularized by journalist Walter Lippmann, to describe the state of the relations between the United States and the Soviet Union after the end of World War II. Unable to agree over a host of postwar issues, the Grand Alliance consisting of the United States, Britain and the Soviet Union which had defeated Germany and Japan in the Second World War, broke down irreparably and gave way to the 'Cold War.' This was a contest for world power, the main adversaries being the United States and the Soviet Union, which competed intensely for spheres of influence, and economic and strategic advantage, couching their struggles in their respective ideological rhetoric of anti-communism by the America-led Western bloc and anti-capitalism by the Soviets and their allies. The two superpower antagonists never sent their troops directly into battles against each other; instead they engaged in war-by-proxy: arming their respective client-states or rival factions in civil wars, sponsored exclusionist foreign economic policy programs and built rival alliance systems. Each side blamed the other for starting the Cold War.

This Soviet-American rivalry dominated international relations for some fifty years after the end of the Second World War. It initially focused on Europe but promptly spread to engulf the entire globe. By early 1950's the conflict in Europe had stabilized but in Third World areas, especially in Asia, it degenerated into hot wars, of which the Korean War and the Vietnam War are two notorious examples. Despite the intensity of these wars and the significance these events may have implied for the geopolitical shift in the international system, these and other momentous Asian developments, according to traditional accounts, were but peripheral sideshows in the Cold War. Traditional scholarship sees the Cold War as a conflict between the two superpowers which was fought primarily in the European theatre; and developments in the periphery were but reverberations of developments in the center.

Over the past decade however, scholars have increasingly come to appreciate that the Cold War was fought in multiple theatres, and that developments in the Third World were often central to the Cold War itself, and not merely sideshows of European developments. This theme is especially emphasized in the "new Cold War histories," which were facilitated by the partial opening of the archives in Eastern Europe and China. The resultant new scholarship by Chinese scholars thus gave much more attention to Asia, in fact foregrounding the region, China in particular, in their narratives. However, despite adding freshness to the historiography of the Cold War, these studies continue to focus upon the diplomatic relations between the big powers and their military interactions with each other.

*The Cold War in Asia: The Battle for Hearts and Minds* is a collection of essays which attempt new approaches to the study of the Cold War in Asia. It emphasizes that the Cold War was far from bi-polar and neither was it merely limited to the realm of diplomacy and military

interactions between the belligerent powers. The study focuses on China and its impact on other states in Asia and beyond during the height of the Cold War. And instead of focusing on diplomacy and high politics among the big powers, the essays in this volume look at the roles of culture, public diplomacy, propaganda and ideas in the making of the Cold War in Asia. As the editors of the volume emphatically argue in the **introductory essay**, “to speak of the battle for hearts and minds as part of the Cold War in Asia” is to suggest that the Cold War “should be explored not just in its political and diplomatic aspects but also as social and cultural phenomena” (p.1). The essays in the volume suggest that the impact of the Cold War ran much more deeply and much more pervasively than merely affecting the diplomatic and political orientation of a country, indeed touching on many aspects of its culture and society.

The book is organized into three parts. Two essays in the first part consider the Asian order within the larger Cold War order in the international system. In the first essay, **Immanuel Wallerstein** reviews the Cold War narrative to ask if we can usefully speak of the Cold war in Asia. He concludes that one cannot because developments in Asia did not quite fit the narratives. The Cold War was a European phenomenon. The Cold War was ‘cold’ in Europe but it was quite ‘hot’ in Asia. “The Cold War was cold in Europe because the US and the Soviet Union had an agreement that it would be a cold war, that neither side would do anything to change boundaries” (p.20) agreed to at Yalta in February 1945. The Yalta Agreement was essentially a status quo agreement but applied only to Europe. Soviet American relations in Asia were quite different from their relations and policies in Europe. Accordingly, it is not very useful to speak of the Cold War in Asia. Wallerstein suggests that perhaps a better intellectual framework to understand what went on between 1945 and 1991 is the North-South divide narrative, that is, the division between the U.S. and the Soviet Union on the one side and the rest of the world on the other side. Wallerstein, however, would be correct in suggesting that Asian development do not fit the Cold War narrative if the Cold War is defined only as a Soviet-American confrontation.

**Takashi Shiraishi** and **Carol Hau** look at the end of the Cold War in Asia and suggest why the Cold War ended differently in Europe and in Asia. In Europe, the end of the Cold War was marked by the disintegration of the Soviet bloc and the collapse of the socialist states but no socialist state in Asia collapsed. Instead, China and Vietnam transformed themselves from socialist states into socialist market economy state. Moreover, the end of the Cold War in Asia has been characterized by rapid region-wide economic development that has led to the emergence of increasingly urbanized and middle-class societies. Americanist and Europeanist perspectives on the end of the Cold War are inadequate in providing satisfactory explanations. Instead of looking at the superpowers and Europe, Shiraishi and Hau suggest looking at how the East Asian regional system, built under American hegemony in the early years of the Cold War year, evolved and underwent transformation over the past two decades. In short, the authors suggest de-centering the superpowers and foregrounding the periphery in the enquiry.

Part II contains five essays focusing on propaganda warfare in the “battle for hearts and minds.” The first essay, by **Michael Charney**, focuses on Burma rather than China. The essay details how Burma, a “neutralist” state in the Cold War, attempted to use the play,

*Ludu Aung Than* [The People Win Through] to educate the Burmese public of the dangers involved in taking power by force and warning the Burmese not to be fooled by self-interested foreign powers, particularly the United States and the Soviet Union; and how the play was subsequently 'shanghaied' and manipulated by the Americans, who during the course of making the play into a movie, turned it into anti-communist propaganda. The upshot of the manipulation was that U Nu was transformed from a neutralist leader attempting to keep his country out of the Cold war into a Cold War warrior fighting against communist penetration into Burma, directed by the PRC. Nu was outmaneuvered in his own game by Hollywood.

**Meredith Oyen** analyses the "psychological warfare" between the United States, the Republic of China and the Peoples' Republic of China vis-à-vis the "overseas Chinese," particularly those in Southeast Asia. Ethnic Chinese in Southeast Asia constituted a significant minority who controlled a disproportionately large segment of the local national economy. Oyen explains that believing that these overseas Chinese held the "key" to the future of Southeast Asia, the US, ROC and the PRC competed intensely for the hearts and minds of these overseas Chinese during the 1950s. The premise for the propaganda warfare was the fundamental idea that the Chinese diaspora, for whatever reasons, "cared enough about China to act in a way that would support whatever was best for the country" (p.61). But as Oyen argues, the United States and the PRC eventually realized that the overseas Chinese was not "a unified diaspora with shared interests and goals or easily manipulated" (p.61) into either the interests of the ROC or the PRC. Both the U.S. and the PRC eased off on their propaganda campaign when they realized that their policy toward the Southeast Asian resident Chinese was damaging their respective relations with the Southeast Asian governments. An ironic twist, when the Southeast Asian governments undertook to assimilate the resident Chinese in their territories, the United States and the PRC found their goals far more compatible than those between the United States and the ROC.

The next two essays in this section deal with ideological warfare. **Lu Yan** looks at the operation of Leftist media in Hong Kong during the Cold War and after. During the Cold War, Hong Kong was a "grey zone, where certain communist activities were tolerated but rigidly confined by the colonial legal frame" (p.95). Cold War ideology certainly influenced but did not dictate the operations of the mass media. Lu Yan explains that a few factors were at work to limit the scope for propaganda and muted the potential for sharp ideological conflict. First, both China and Britain, the two global powers with direct influence over Hong Kong, pragmatically pursued accommodation to guard their respective interests. Beijing's decision to keep Hong Kong its "window to the world" also worked to de-ideologize the operation of leftist media there. But in the final analysis, the pursuit of profit in the Hong Kong media market made de-ideologization imperative. Lu Yan suggests that therein lay the success of the leftist media in Hong Kong during the Cold War and beyond.

Still on the issue of ideological propaganda, **Zheng Yangwen** analyses propagandistic Chinese art work as instruments of ideological warfare, with particular reference to the women's liberation movement in China during the Maoist era. The women's liberation movement in China began with the Nationalist Revolution in 1912 but reached new heights

only after the CCP came to power. Cognizant of the power of women in labour movements, the CCP experimented with women's liberation in the 1930s and 1940s in the hope of garnering support for the communist revolution. After the establishment of the PRC, the platform of the CCP regarding women became more systematic. Literature, artworks, posters, films, operas and radio programs and various other media were used to disseminate the idea of women's liberation. The emergence of the Cold War, the outbreak of "hot war" in Korea and the heightening of tension in East Asia also served to strengthen the CCP's grip on the Chinese women. The threat to the national security gave it a justification to turn everyone, especially women, into soldiers and patriots. Indeed, the Cold War had not only hastened women's liberation but also contributed much into the making of militant feminism in Maoist China. Zheng suggests that the close connection between women's liberation and the masculinization and militarization of the female body during the Maoist period to some extent explain the dramatic decline of women's liberation in China in the post-Mao era.

The last essay in this section shifts track. **Hong Liu** discusses the historicity of China's soft power and its impact upon Indonesia's cultural politics during the Sukarno period. During the 1960s, the PRC offered itself as an alternative model of development for newly independent countries, particularly countries in Southeast Asia, to emulate. The strategy of promoting China as an alternative model was carried out primarily within the framework of public diplomacy and cultural exchange. Southeast Asian politicians and public intellectuals were invited to witness first hand China's accomplishments. Sukarno's Indonesia, unable to make Western democracy work since that territory gained independence in 1950 and in search for an alternative workable model, increasingly turned toward Mao's China for what Sukarno termed "Guided Democracy." This brought about Sino-American confrontation over Indonesia. For Indonesia, this ultimately led to the bloody clash between the Partai Komunis Indonesia (PKI) and the Indonesian military in 1965, resulting in destruction of the PKI, the ouster of Sukarno, and twenty years of military rule in Indonesia under General Suharto. For Sino-Indonesian relations, the 1965 military coup in Indonesia resulted in some twenty years of estrangement between the two countries. To this reviewer, this essay would fit better in part III, which focuses on the export and internationalization of Maoism.

The two chapters in Part III explore the reach of Maoism beyond Asia. In an essay on transpacific solidarities, **Mathew Rothwell** discusses the diffusion of Maoism in Mexico, where the influence of Maoist ideas were manifested in the formation of explicitly Maoist groups that operated within the larger social movements. The most important of these was the Mexico-China Friendship Society. In addition, there were other organizations and movements that took up particular Maoist ideas without committing themselves to the whole of Maoist ideology. These were essentially peaceful reformist movements organizing among the poor. In terms of revolutionary armed struggle, orthodox Maoism in Mexico found expression in the guerilla struggles led by Florencio Medrano in Morelos and Oaxaca in the 1970s. Rothwell points out that in today's Mexico, the impact of Maoist ideas is no longer recognizable but during the height of its influence during the 1960s and 1970s, Maoist ideals served as an important reminder that Cold War involved more than just the United States and the Soviet Union; that the PRC offered a Maoist third path.

In Sweden, as **Perry Johansson** discuss in his essay, the mechanics of the internationalization of Maoism was remarkably similar to that in Mexico. As with the Mexicans, promising Swedish individuals were invited to China where they were indoctrinated to support the PRC in its conflict with the United States and the Soviet Union. Upon returning home the Swedes, like the Mexicans, would set up associations that could educate and inform on the Chinese perspectives of the Cold War. Quite unlike its interest in Mexico, the PRC's interest in Sweden had little to do with communist revolution; rather the PRC had been more interested in creating "a third front of European and other countries inside the non-communist-bloc that could be allied with China" (p.217). In the first instance, Mao had wanted to supplant the leadership of the Soviet-oriented Swedish communist and socialist parties with PRC-oriented leadership; and during the Vietnam War, the PRC aimed to co-opt Sweden in criticism of the United States. The PRC succeeded on both counts. Johansson tells us that Sweden emerged as the "most anti-American, pro-socialist nation in the West" (p.217) although the details did not pan out quite the way the PRC planned. In a defensive reaction, the Social Democratic Party which had ruled Sweden since the thirties, 'stole' the leadership of the anti-war, anti-American protests in Sweden from the Maoist political organizations. In the process, the SAP became radicalized and Sweden leaned progressively further toward the socialist camp as it became more deeply involved in aid to Vietnam and other Third World socialist countries. Although the Swedish Maoist parties lost out, Mao had gained a West European ally on his side against the United States.

*The Cold War in Asia* is an important book. It is correct in emphasizing that the Cold War was much more complex than merely being a Soviet-American bi-polar confrontation or that the Cold War merely involved politics, diplomacy and military interactions among the big powers. The essays in the volume suggest the Chinese perspectives of the Cold War and also inform that the impact of the Cold War phenomena was indeed far-reaching and pervasive.

By and large, the essays in the volume do justify the subtitle "The Battle for Hearts and Minds." The main title, however, "The Cold War in Asia" seems to promise more than the contents actually deliver. The essays are actually about China in the Cold War rather than about the Cold War in Asia; the scope of the later would be much more complex and much broader than just China of course. The essence of the discussions in this would have been captured better had it included "China" (or the PRC) specifically in the title, say for example, "China's Cold War in Asia."

This is a readable and informing book. Students of Cold War history who wish to revisit the impact of the Cold War on the region they are investigating could read this book with benefit.

Response from the Editors: Zheng Yangwen, University of Manchester; Hong Liu Nanyang Technological University; Michael Szonyi, Harvard University

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We are grateful to Ang Cheng Guan, Matthew Johnson, Steven Levine, and Richard Mason for their careful and thoughtful comments. Rather than try to speak for the individual contributors to the volume, our response focuses on some of the broader themes raised in the reviews.

Several point out that the book shares the most common weakness of its genre. We cannot dispute that *The Cold War in Asia* might have been more intellectually coherent. Like many conference volumes, and certainly most that result from conferences that were not organized specifically with the intention of producing a published volume, the outcome is in part dependent on decisions about invitations and acceptances made long in advance by many people. The purpose of this volume was not to offer a single perspective but rather to suggest some of the rich possibilities for research on the topic and to identify themes of particular historical interest or importance (On the other hand, we appreciate **Matthew Johnson's** comments on the methodological as opposed to intellectual coherence of the volume)

The two major themes that we settled on are the role of ideology and public diplomacy, and the importance of China. More than we realized at the time, the collective impact of the essays is to stress the need and the possibilities to bring China in, to incorporate China more fully into global, and especially Asian, histories of the Cold War. **Richard Mason's** suggestion of a title that better reflected the focus on China is a sensible one. So is **Johnson's** observation that five of the seven empirical studies actually bring these two themes together, converging on the question of the degree to which Cold War frameworks help us understand China's public diplomacy.

**Johnson** frames the issues clearly with his summary of how one might go about formulating an answer to the question of whether there was a Cold War in Asia, identifying how the more humble aims of the volume would fit into such a formulation, and then returning to the larger formulation. We agree that this careful approach produces the answer that there was indeed a Cold War in Asia. As **several reviewers** note, we might have offered a more fleshed-out definition of the Cold War. Does it refer simply to a bounded time period, or to a global conflict not all the dimensions of which are fully understood? There is a third alternative, which as **Ang Cheng Guan** and **Johnson** point out, is exemplified by the work of Odd Arne Westad. In this approach, the Cold War is a kind of short-hand for the way enduring tension between the U.S. and the USSR structured the international system. The logics of this tension drove various forms of interventionism, and this interventionism profoundly shaped the contexts in which local actors operated. Third World elites framed their own agendas in relation to the Cold War's main ideological choices; they sought to limit or neutralize some intervention while turning other interventionism to their own advantage. In this sense the Cold War clearly emerges as a significant element in explaining the history of Asia as a region and of its constituent states

- not the only such element and not wholly determinative, but surely significant. Together the chapters show that the influence cannot be understood simply as a series of bilateral relationships between these individual states and one or the other of the superpowers, but also involved interaction among Asian states, notably China. Of course the understanding, reception and appropriation of China's own interventionist efforts is an important topic of study, as is the interaction of the larger structuring framework with other historical processes.

Our definition of the Cold War is tied to the question of coverage. The comments about gaps in the coverage of the volume are of course correct. But with one exception the significance of these gaps actually turns on how we interpret the Cold War, something on which there is no evident consensus among the reviewers or, for that matter, the contributors. If the Cold War is understood as a bounded time frame, *and* our goal is a comprehensive history of the region in that time frame, then the coverage should naturally be determined by the relative significance of the countries of the region. On the other hand, if the Cold War is understood as a global conflict with unstudied dimensions, then the question becomes where we can shed new light on these unstudied dimensions of that global conflict. But if we adopt this third definition of the Cold War, as an important element of the global structure which influenced the domestic and regional framework within which actors operated, the goal of a volume such as this ought to be to articulate this influence, the forms that it took, and their consequences. What then constitutes appropriate coverage looks rather different. The one exception is the Soviet Union, raised by **Johnson**, which probably ought to be included regardless of how one understands the meaning of the term Cold War. We had not noticed this gap when we compiled the book. Asking our contributors to reflect on the role of the Soviet Union would likely have yielded interesting results.

Two of **Steven Levine**'s criticisms are difficult for us to accept. First, he writes that our argument that Asia is not adequately represented in Cold War historiography is "unsupportable". It would be petty and unproductive to argue over the precise definition of "adequate". But given the heavy preponderance of literature on the superpowers and Europe and the "comparatively slim" (**Johnson**) amount on Asia, and despite the positive trends mentioned by Johnson at the end of his review, this comment seems misplaced. As **Ang Cheng Guan** rightly observes, our goal in this regard was simply to draw attention to the need to "redress the imbalance." Second, **Levine** writes that the book's "omissions... have the unintended but useful consequence of provoking readers to engage in their own further reflections on the subject." Quite right. This is why we wrote, rather more prosaically, that "Some ... lacunae of this volume also suggest areas for further research." While wishing he had given a closer reading of our text, we share his hopefulness on this score.

In closing, we again thank the contributors to the roundtable and the H-Diplo editors for their engagement with the book.

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