East Asia in Transition

East Asia in Transition:

Democracy, Diaspora, and the New Culture War

Edited by

Ingyu Oh

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PREFACE

Einstein's ingenuity was in fact very simple: he updated Newton's gravity theory for a globe that was not flat. If our Earth were a perfect flat mass, Newton's theory would have held permanently true. However, planets are orbs, making the shortest distance between two points on a planet warped, not linear. Therefore, lights or rays that seek the shortest path between two points in space are also curved. The theory of relativity did not destroy Newtonian physics entirely; instead, the former modified the latter in order to explain a planet that was not flat. It nonetheless had one groundbreaking implication: time on earth is slower than that in a perfect flat space.

The theory of relativity gives an important nudge to those of us who study the world not physically but semantically – we need to update our theory of relations among nation-states on an Earth that is not flat. What seems true and logical in one semantic space may not necessarily be so in others because the world is warped. In a similar vein, what one semantic space believes to be historically universal may not be so in other spaces. For example, the idea that only feudalism would engender capitalism or that only rich countries could advance democracy would constitute a Newtonian understanding of the history of this world. An Einsteinian world view would put it differently: the reason that China and Japan progressed for many millennia without developing European style feudalism may be due to their circular, not linear, route to being the world's second and third largest economies in the 21st c.

When Einstein presented his absolute theory of relativity, almost everyone in the physics and science communities of the West thought it was a crazy "Jewish" theory; they did not realize that their worldviews had operated in the semantic space of the flat world. An inability to see the orbital shape of the world begets all kinds of scientific errors, including racism, sexism, and ethnic animosities. Realizing this disparity between what our eyes see and the way the real world is shaped is the first step of advancing truth in all types of science. Therefore, what this book suggests throughout its eight chapters is not a crazy "Asian" theory. Einstein's lesson is not a binary wisdom about cultural relativity vis-à-vis cultural imperialism. Both the West and the East must escape from their flat world boxes in order to discover a new circular world.

We started this journey in November 2020, when I began talking with the contributors of each chapter for a possible Zoom conference on the topic of the rapidly changing world in the 21st c. Five authors agreed to make contributions from their own research agendas, ranging from the issue of political democracy in Hong Kong to racial clashes in the U.S. After the Zoom conference, we all realized that the relations among nation-states in the world are heavily influenced by the dissimilar understandings of our world held by each group in local, regional, and global contentions. This dissimilarity in time and space on a global sphere is culture. Culture changes all the time in order to produce the most efficient way of achieving social cohesion among members of society. However, the way it evolves through time and the destination at which it aims to arrive are always different from one semantic structure to another. These differences in semantic structures cause a battle among cultures, resulting in confusion between what is and what should be.

Culture Wars, like Star Wars, will continue even though we might someday be able to defy light speed and travel times. What this book suggests is that we should upgrade our understanding of War and Peace as science progresses, particularly given that most social scientists remain blinded by the vision of the flat world, with only one linear semantic structure trying to dominate it.

I have been indebted to many in the editing of this book. The Zoom conference was generously funded by Wonho Jang, the co-editor of *Culture and Empathy: International Journal of Sociology, Psychology, and Cultural Studies*. John Lie, another co-editor of the journal, helped persuade some of the authors to join our conversation for the project. I thank the discussants of the conference: Changhwan Kim (U. of Kansas) and Sang Joon Kim (Yonsei U.). Thanks are also extended to the sociology graduate students at the University of Seoul, who helped organize the conference. Finally, my sincere gratitude to Dee Cooke for helping with the manuscript.

Ingyu Oh, Osaka, Japan

CONTRIBUTORS

Ingyu Oh is Professor of International Business and Korean/Japanese Cultural Industries at Kansai Gaidai University, Osaka, Japan. Before coming to Japan in 2018, he held professorial and other positions at Korea University, Bristol Business School, UC Berkeley, Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University, University of Waikato, and University of Oregon. His main interest of research and teaching includes organizational studies, innovation studies, international business, political economy, political sociology, business history, and cultural studies. He was the ex-president of the World Association for Hallyu Studies and co-editor of *Culture and Empathy: An International Journal of Sociology, Psychology, and Cultural Studies*. He is Associate Editor for *Asia Pacific Business Review*. He has written numerous books, monographs, and journal articles during the last 20+ years.

Tai-lok Lui is Chair Professor of Hong Kong Studies and Vice President (Research and Development) of The Education University of Hong Kong. He is the co-editor of *Routledge Handbook of Contemporary Hong Kong* and *Hong Kong: 20 Years after the Handover*. He also co-authored *Hong Kong: Becoming a Chinese Global City* and *Hong Kong, China: Learning to Belong to a Nation*. He is the author of award-winning Chinese titles: *The Story of Hong Kong in the 1970s Re-told* and *The Hong Kong Model*. He is also a columnist in newspapers and magazines in Hong Kong and China.

Kazuhiko Togo (Ph.D. 2009, Leiden University) is Visiting Professor at Shizuoka University, and Advisor for External Relations for the Shizuoka Prefecture. He worked in the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) from 1968 until 2002. Half of his career was devoted to Russia and his last posting was Ambassador to the Netherlands. After retirement from MOFA, he taught at universities abroad, including Leiden, Princeton, and Seoul National University before joining Kyoto Sangyo University, where he assumed the post of Professor and Director, Institute for World Affairs, from 2010 until March 2020. His recent publications in English include "East Asia's Haunted Present: Historical Memories and the Resurgence of Nationalism" (2008); "Japan and Reconciliation in Post-war Asia: The Murayama Statement and its Implications" (2013); and "Building Confidence

in East Asia: Maritime Conflicts, Interdependence and Asian Identity Thinking" (2015).

Anthony B. L. Cheung is Research Chair Professor of Public Administration at the Education University of Hong Kong. A former President of the University (2008-12), he served as Secretary for Transport and Housing in the Hong Kong SAR Government during 2012-17. He was a civil servant for 12 years before joining academia in 1986, specializing in research on governance, public administration, administrative and civil service reforms and public policy. Active in public affairs, he was a former legislator, member of the Executive Council and a founder of the Hong Kong Democratic Party. His latest book Can Hong Kong Exceptionalism Last? Dilemmas of Governance and Public Administration over Five Decades, 1970s-2020, published by City University of Hong Kong Press, is forthcoming in 2021.

Pyong Gap Min received two Ph.Ds., one in Educational Philosophy and the other in Sociology, both from Georgia State University. He received a bachelor's and master's degrees majoring in history, respectively from Seoul National University and Georgia State University. He started his career at Queens College in 1987 and is Distinguished Professor of Sociology at Queens College and Graduate Center of the City University of New York. He founded the Research Center for Korean Community at Queens College in 2009 and has served as Director. He specializes in Immigration and Ethnicity, Gender, Women, the Family, and Immigrant and Ethnic Entrepreneurship. He has published six books, including *Caught in the Middle: Korean Communities in New York and Los Angeles* (1996) and *Preserving Ethnicity through Religion in America: Korean Protestants and Indian Hindus across Generations* (2010), both of which have received multiple awards. Approximately 3,000 copies of each of *Caught in the Middle* and *Changes and Conflicts: Korean Immigrant Families in New York City* (1998) have been sold. He published 14 edited and co-edited books. They include *Encyclopedia of Racism in the United States* (3 volumes), which was selected as one of the 23 best books in the reference category published in 2005 by Booklist Editors. He received the Career Distinguished Award from the International Migration Section (in 2012) and the Contribution to the Field Award from the Section on Asia and Asian America (in 2019) of the American Sociological Association.

Youngmi Lim (Ph.D. in Sociology, City University of New York Graduate Center) is an associate professor of Sociology, Sociology Department, Musashi University, Tokyo, Japan. Her publications on Zainichi Koreans include: "Reinventing Korean Roots and Zainichi Routes: The Invisible Diaspora among Naturalized Japanese of Korean Descent," in *Diaspora Without Homeland: Being Koreans in Japan* edited by Sonia Ryang and John Lie (University of California Press); "Korean Fan Dance for Fun: Performing Alterity in Contemporary Japan," *Ethnos: Journal of Anthropology* 80 (2): 192-222; "Responding to Hate in Contemporary Japan: Fragmenting Factors Obstructing Effective Ethnic Advocacy," *Social Science Japan Journal* 21(2): 213-233.

CHAPTER 1

CONCEPTUALIZING EAST ASIA IN THE 21ST CENTURY

INGYU OH

> "The greatest cruelties of our century have been the impersonal cruelties of remote decision, of system and routine, especially when they could be justified as regrettable operational necessity" (Hobsbawm 1996, 50).

The Cold War framework

The above famous quotation by Hobsbawm applies to our Anglo-American centered understanding of international relations in East Asia since 1945 (see also Acharya 2014). By the time of the advancement of the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and other socialist or communist regimes around the then popular third world, the modern confrontation between the West and the rest of the world since the great geographic discoveries of 1492 had been easily and regrettably replaced by the new lingo of the "Cold War" by the Anglo-American core nations all too remotely and routinely. In a similar vein to the far-fetched notion of another Western conception of "class struggle" and the liberation of the working poor by a proletariat revolution, the postwar big picture of the world stifled its real problem of the world – the confrontation between culture and the political on the one hand (Burke 1958 [1759]; Gibbons 2003) and culture and the economic on the other (Smith 1981[1759]; Butler 1997; Ashraf et al. 2005). All things considered, the world has never really been united either under the banner of class struggle against all evil capitalists or under the torch of "holy" capitalist democracies against evil Soviets. Underneath the rift of this bogus unity of the world, anchored in economic or political essentialism, including the 21st c. buzz word of globalization, lies the unequivocal clout of race, ethnicity, gender, religion, culture, and identities (Wallerstein 1990; Balibar et al. 1991).

This does not mean that socialism as we know it has never existed in East Asia or will never do so. Nor does it mean that capitalist democracy will never prosper in East Asia and other parts of the third world. It means that wars have been fought regularly in East Asia and in the third world all in the name of the Cold War, when in fact the root of the struggle was not purely class based (economic) or democracy-based (political). The rhizome of the matter was ethnic, racial, and/or cultural to begin with.

Reflecting the confusion over the end of the Cold War, a plethora of studies seem to be flourishing in the face of new developments in East Asia in the 21st century:

- Why are Russia, China, and North Korea not metamorphosing into Western Europe, Japan, or South Korea, respectively, despite the fall of communism and the end of the Cold War? (Rowen and Lilley 1998; Gilley 2004; Chen and Lee 2007)
- Why are Hong Kong and Taiwan reluctant to join the PRC even though they are "officially" considered Chinese with one ethnicity, language, and culture? (Niou 2004; Lin 2019)
- Why can North and South Korea not unite even though the former is virtually bankrupt economically and tens of thousands of its people are fleeing the nation in search of freedom? (Byman and Lind 2010; Cha 2012)
- Why is South Korea critical of the North Korean defectors who are waging a propaganda war against North Korea? (Chun 2020; Yi 2020)
- Why are Japan and South Korea at loggerheads, not becoming like France and Germany or Germany and Britain, despite their similar culture, standard of living, geographic proximity, and political democracy? (Lee 2013; Glosserman and Snyder 2015)
- Why is Taiwan taking sides with Japan against South Korea even though they were former colonies of Japan and former allies against the PRC? (Peng-Er 2004; Sun 2007)
- Why is South Korea reluctant to help Taiwan or Hong Kong achieve independence from the PRC, even though the country is divided into the socialist North and the democratic South? (Kim 1996; Matsumura 2018)
- Why is South Korea vacillating about joining the Quad (a military alliance among the U.S., Japan, India, and Australia against the PRC), even though the PRC invaded South Korea and consolidated the division of the peninsular into the North and the South during the Korean War? (Jash 2021)

- Why is Hallyu (or the Korean Pop Culture Wave) domineering in Japan, China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong, especially among female citizens in these countries, to the extent that it seems to override the obstinate political and economic confrontations among all these states in the region? (Oh 2011; Oh and Lee 2014; Jun 2017; Hahm and Song 2021)

Each of these new developments in East Asia and elsewhere is so contradictory to the others or inconsistent with our Anglo-American centered understanding of the world that one or two books cannot adequately deal with them in a logically coherent way. Nor does this edited book intend to deal with all these questions. What we are trying to establish in this exiguous volume is to introduce a new way of envisaging East Asia outside of the Anglo-American conceptual and theoretical box. As Fig. 1 clearly shows, the Cold War view of the world is overly imbued with the pretense that the U.S. and its allies would automatically restore its monopolistic hegemony if the bipolar system were dismantled by the political and economic victory of capitalist democracy over the Soviet style political economy (Wohlforth 1994; Desai 2013). Under this rubric, East Asian countries, except Japan, merely fulfilled the role of peripheral economic contributors to the core nations in the global capitalist system, while they were instantaneously proxies of regional *hot* wars fought between themselves under the guidance of the two superpowers.

However, the real world after the Cold War did not confirm any of its original predictions. What is surprising is the rise of China, contrary to the forgone prediction that Japan would dominate the region as an everlasting ally of the West. The 21st c. world has encountered a new East Asia that casts two contradictory images: First, China in particular, or East Asia in general, has replaced the U.S.S.R. as a countervailing and contentious power to the U.S. in particular or the West in general. However, second, China has failed to act as a regional hegemon with a unifying Chinese-style political and economic influence all over East Asia, as the U.S.S.R. did towards its satellite countries. East Asia as a regional bloc is by far disorganized, divided, and truculent due to regional rivalries. It is no overstatement therefore that no member of East Asia intends to unite the whole region under the hegemonic leadership of China. The division is economic, political, ethnic, cultural, and simply historical, making it difficult for China and North Korea to maneuver their course of action to fend off the encroachment of the West and secure their hegemonic sovereignty. Nonetheless, the rise of China and the entire region as an economic, military, and political power of the world is indubitable.

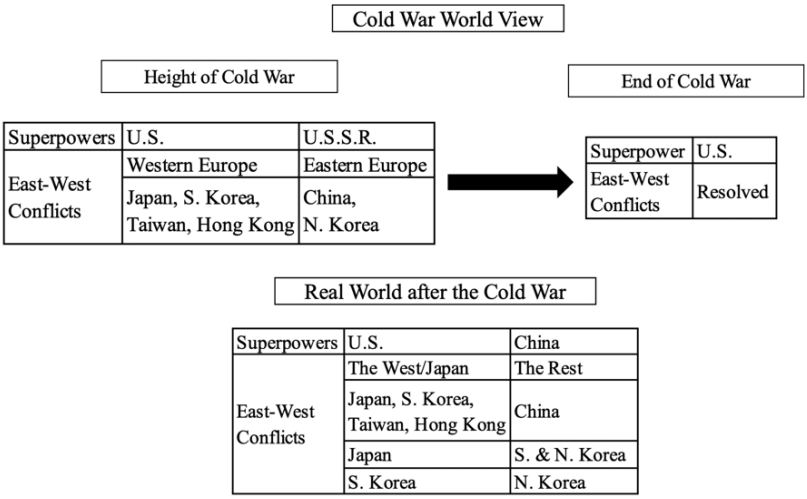

Figure 1 Cold War View of the World Order vs. Reality

Learning and creating a new East Asia

The enthusiasm and energy that have transformed East Asia, except Japan, from a second or a third world region into a dynamic and affluent hotspot in the global political economy have come from its universally reputable learning capabilities and the educational motivations among its peoples, firms, and macro institutions (Hobday 1995; Haggard 2004). In contrast to the specious view that East Asian learning is a mere mimicry or blind cramming of Western culture, science, and languages, causing cultural amnesia (i.e., forgetting their own cultures) among its peoples, East Asians have proved to be excellent learning pioneers who have preserved their own culture, developed their unique macro and micro institutions, and expanded firms with an unmatched track record of growth and innovation, all while fully embracing Western culture, knowledge, and institutions. It should also be noted that Chinese and North Korean socialism was of Western origin.

We are not arguing that the East Asian path to economic and political developments was without problems. In fact, too many problems exist to list up and explain in this short chapter, ranging from human rights violation to sexism, state violence, environmental degradation, class polarization, nuclear proliferation, and so on (Chang 2006). East Asian development, despite all these problems, is nevertheless a formidable threat and a countervailing force to Western domination in the 21st century. The rise of East Asia is

certainly making the world capitalist system more unstable than before. Therefore, capitalist development in East Asia, unlike what the Anglo-American Cold War theory predicted, may well be fermenting a deadly prognosis against our humanity.

Relevant to this book's focal theme is the fact that the success of East Asian learning and ingenuity did not destroy the bias against each other's ethnicity. Worse, it fanned and fueled interethnic competition and rivalry in areas of education, international trade, and research and development. Charges of industrial espionage, intellectual property piracy, and stealing human capital from each other have been on the rise in the 21st century (Friedberg 1993; Kimura 2014). Japan, for example, is very angry at Korean electronic and automobile firms that it thinks have stolen its vital intellectual property, whereas Korea fulminates against China with the same piracy charges (Hardt and Kim 1990). Although East Asia has a new status in the international community, it is fraught with divisions, antagonism, and hatred of each other, to which I now turn.

The road to cultural war

Cultural war, unlike traditional war, is based on the hatred of another culture without necessarily resulting in physical warfare or having connectedness with previous political, economic, or historical conflicts. In the Cold War context, the U.S. had also waged a cultural war against the U.S.S.R., not to defend its democracy or capitalism against socialism, but to manufacture, forge a consensus over, justify, and disseminate an *official* version of American culture, using mass media and other devices (Chomsky and Herman 1994; Appy 2000; Fousek 2000; Appy 2015). Even though the U.S.S.R. was clearly losing its economic and ideological power in the early 1980s vis-à-vis the West, the U.S. cultural war against the Soviets, waged by Reaganites and Thatcherites, had continued.

Cultural war therefore has its unique origins and purposes in international relations. For example, if the Chinese hate the Japanese for eating raw fish, the former's hatred of the latter has no political, economic, or historical basis, at least on the surface. In this sense, cultural war is based on the collective unconscious, whereas political or economic clashes are consciousness based (Weinberg 2007). Hatred as an unconscious psychological motivation thus forms the basis of this type of war, which is hard to be resolved unless the enemy's culture precipitously becomes attractive. An example of resolving cultural war in the past is American's love affair with Japanese culture after the Second World War, and vice versa. Another is Hallyu, the Korean pop culture wave, which caused women from China and

Japan, two traditional enemies of Korean culture, to become besotted with Korea (Oh 2011).

To reiterate, the cause of cultural war is multidimensional without necessarily being correlated with economic, political, and historical factors (Griffith 2001). The East Asian hatred of African Americans and their culture, for example, has no direct connection with political, economic, or historical factors. However, we find in this book that the cultural dimensions of the conflict in East Asia, which have been rampant since the end of the Cold War, are also closely related to political, economic, or historical factors, making the whole situation more convoluted than pure cultural war. When cultural war is insnared with previous clashes of political, military, and/or economic conflicts, it can become a lethal trigger for a possible total war, as much as it was the case during the Cold War.

Wallerstein's new effort to incorporate culture, race, and gender in his world system theory is similar to our own endeavor, which regards the concept of cultural war as more essential than Cold War politics in understanding East Asian international relations (Wallerstein 1990; Balibar et al. 1991; Wolf et al. 1994). However, Wallerstein and his associates still consider culture as acquiescent to the cause of capitalism, which ruthlessly *flattens* the world destroying cultural and institutional variances in each nation-state. According to them, culture is a means of justifying the contradiction and callousness of global capitalism, not a people's counteracting force against assimilations between groups and nations in the world under the banner of capitalism. Wallerstein (1990) acknowledges the disruptive force of culture, although he nonetheless tries ineptly to justify his hypothesis that global capitalism and its world system will eventually flatten the globe.

Unlike the World System view of culture in international relations, our definition of the term highlights its new role as a defining force that kept the Germans separate from the French or the Irish from the English amid colonialism and globalization (for this, see Eagleton 2016). Therefore, what we are emphasizing as a fecund value of culture in this volume is its commercial or non-commercial realization in the form of everyday lifestyles in each country under global capitalism and its defensive mechanism of securing people's national, ethnic, and gender identities within a new global cultural framework, where such local pop cultures as Hallyu and Bollywood can prosper neck and neck with Hollywood. Culture in East Asian international relations is not a unifying force; it is a divisive and destructive menace.

Table 1 Factors of Division in East Asia

New Factors	Rivals	Issues	Old Factors	Rivals	Issues
Ethnicity	Japan vs. S. Korea Japan vs. N. Korea E. Asians vs. the U.S.	Koreans in Japan; Hate speech; Hatred against Asians	**Territories**	China vs. Japan Japan vs. S. Korea Japan vs. Taiwan	Senkaku/Diaoyudao Dokdo/Takeshima
New Ethnic ID	China vs. Taiwan China vs. Hong Kong	Taiwan/HK independence	**Politics & Military**	China vs. Taiwan China vs. Japan China vs S Korea Japan vs. N. Korea S. Korea vs. N. Korea	Cold War division & war
Gender	Japan vs. S. Korea China vs. Japan	Wartime sex slaves	**Economy & Trade**	N. Korea vs. All China vs. Taiwan Japan vs. S Korea	Trade embargoes & frictions
Culture	China vs. Hong Kong China vs. Taiwan S. Korea vs. N. Korea	Capitalist vs. socialist lifestyles & institutions	**History**	China vs. S. Korea Japan vs. S. Korea	Textbook & other historical memories
Hallyu	China vs. S. Korea Japan vs. S. Korea S. Korea vs. N. Korea	Banning or restricting Hallyu			

From 1945 to 2021, East Asia has witnessed an explosion of cultural issues and the ensuing conflicts not only inside each country but with other

neighboring nation-states as well. The regional economic growth and democratic reforms in South Korea and Taiwan failed to transmogrify East Asia into another Western Europe, and certainly failed to create an East Asian version of the European Union. As Table 1 shows, the source of the regional conflicts has been diversified since the end of the Cold War, while the old Cold War factors have never been properly resolved. New cultural dimensions of international conflict in East Asia include ethnicity (including ethnic discriminations), new ethnic identification (including unification and secession), gender (e.g., mass violence against women by foreign armies), culture (especially, everyday lifestyles, symbols, values, and religions), and Hallyu (i.e., the Korean pop culture wave, including the domination of K-pop and K-drama in East Asia). It is noteworthy here that race and racism do not exist as a debilitative force in East Asian international relations, although many resonate with it as a newly rising disruptor in domestic politics. These newfangled cultural dimensions of international conflict in the region are only more copious than the dimensions of old Cold War factors: 1) territorial disputes; 2) political or military hostilities; 3) economic or trade frictions; and 4) historical *ressentiment* or antipathy.

Based on this cultural view of East Asian international relations, China, Japan, and South Korea stand out in the frequency of their appearances on each conflict dimension, whereas Taiwan, North Korea, and Hong Kong can spawn potentially lethal consequences, including the possibility of igniting another full-scale regional war, if not a world war. However, the impending danger from Taiwan, North Korea, and Hong Kong is unfeasible unless it subsequently spreads to China, Japan, or South Korea. In this sense, the core of the problem in all conflicts that are based on new cultural factors derives from the three new regional powers of China, Japan, and South Korea. If South Korea unites with the North or forms an alliance with China and the North, the regional power balance will drastically shift in favor of China vis-à-vis Japan and its allies such as the U.S. In other words, for the first time in postwar history, the Korean peninsula finds itself possessing a veto power that can sway the power balance of the entire region, which has long been dominated by the Chinese and the Japanese empires.

Five dimensions of cultural war

This edited volume derives from a web-based seminar on the topic of "East Asia in Transition: Democracy, Diaspora, Racism, and the New Cold War," held in November 2020. Scholars and audience members from the U.S., Europe, Japan, South Korea, and Hong Kong participated in this daylong session to discuss the meaning of cultural war in East Asia in the 21st century.

This book presents the result of the workshop dealing with the following selected issues:

- Democracy in Hong Kong: Lui (Ch. 2), Cheung (Ch. 3)
- South Korea – Japan Relations: Togo (Ch. 4)
- Korean – Black Conflicts in the U.S.: Min (Ch. 5)
- The *Zainichi* (Korean Japanese) Problem in Japan: Lim (Ch. 6)
- Hallyu: Oh (Ch. 7)

The inability to cover all the five dimensions of cultural war in the region is mitigated by the fact that this book tries its best not to miss any of the three major players in the game – China, Korea, and Japan. Furthermore, this volume adds the Korean – Black conflicts in the New York metropolitan area along with a chapter on Hallyu to shed new light on how the East Asian diaspora in the post-Cold War era and new Korean pop culture are changing the horizons of international relations in the region against the backdrop of post-Cold War politics.

Hong Kong definitely receives a major spotlight in this book for two obvious reasons. First, along with Taiwan and Macao, Hong Kong's fate depends largely on the PRC's intention not to use military forces in recuperating its old territories that were forcibly taken by imperial forces as booties of colonial war. A peaceful return of these former colonies to China is therefore a prerequisite to the unification of the world's second largest economy, given that the current Chinese government is very much able and willing to use military forces when the unification is not realized as peacefully as it planned. Second, over a long period of colonization and semi-independence during the Cold War era, both Hong Kong and Taiwan have acquired new cultural identities in the form of different lifestyles (i.e., capitalist vs. socialist; Western democratic vs. Chinese socialistic), ethnic or peoplehood identity (i.e., Taiwanese and Hong Kong people as a separate peoplehood from the mainland Chinese), gender identity (i.e., refusing to accept Chinese style sexism, patriarchy, gender roles, gender relations, and sexual orientations), and Hallyu identity (i.e., making personal and independent choices to favor and *prosume*, or proactively consume such new cultural genres as Hallyu, which is banned in China).

In Chapter 2, "Hong Kong's Socioeconomic and Political Challenges: The Future of One Country, Two Systems," Tai-lok Lui untangles what seems to be the most entwined political issue of the turn of the century – the return of Hong Kong to and its integration with China. Locating the source of complexity in the dichotomous confrontation between two rival forces of Cold War history, namely, capitalism vs. socialism and authoritarian

Beijing vs. liberal Hong Kong, Lui, unlike his contemporary commentators on Hong Kong, emphasizes the One Country, Two Systems (OCTS) as a "political compromise." Like all vague political compromises amid both economic and cultural confrontations, OCTS has always been a balancing force in the post-Cold War politics of Hong Kong, even as it has provided room for further negotiations regarding those nebulous terms found within it. This balance had worked smoothly up until the recent political uprising in 2019-2020 among young Hong Kong citizens who demanded the political and cultural autonomy which they believed had been granted to them by the PRC in 1997. The appreciation on the part of OCTS about Hong Kong, which presumed an inheritance of an "unpoliticized" Western economic city, has curtly been shattered. The politicization of Hong Kong, however, is not copiously class-based, as the PRC would insist, because, if it were, many of these angry Hong Kong students would be keen to find new economic opportunities in mainland China, where more opportunities for upward mobility are awaiting them than in Hong Kong. What these youths want is more than the economic, as they demand a clear-cut resolution regarding political freedom, cultural independence, and the flexibility of one's identities. Since the return of Hong Kong to China in 1997 did not imply the end of history for Hong Kong but instead a continuing game of making compromises between the two concerned parties, Lui argues that China is still willing to resume the game as long as Hong Kong is still unique and valuable to the PRC. While it is difficult to predict a future that is not yet written, the author carefully concludes that the political side of the negotiation is fraught with difficulties, whereas its economic side is filled with the silver lining emanating from the mighty financial sector of the city. Therefore, Hong Kong's culture is deemed by both parties as closely linked to capitalism, which is also a bargaining chip with which Hong Kong can defend itself and its culture against the PRC. If this game continues, therefore, Hong Kong's immediate future lies in another round of settlement that imitates the Singaporean style of polity, which guarantees capitalist culture amid continuing political restraints.

In Chapter 3, Anthony Cheung's "Hong Kong in an Existential Crisis: Is 'One Country, Two Systems' into a Retreat?" locates two culturally antagonistic groups of young people in Hong Kong and the PRC: "a new post-transition generation […] in Hong Kong who are more assertive in their local identity vis-à-vis the similar rise of a new generation on the mainland who are prouder of China's national achievements and more confident of the mainland system of governance." The latter sees Hong Kong as another Shanghai or Shenzhen, whereas the former wants to preserve Hong Kong's stark cultural differences from its motherland by emphasizing the

superficial similarities between Hong Kong and those in mainland China. Although young Chinese people believe that the PRC has learned and copied sufficiently to claim that no cultural or institutional disparity exists between Hong Kong and China, the youths in Hong Kong think otherwise. Therefore, capitalism itself cannot unify these two capitalist cultures, even though they speak the same language and share the same Chinese ethnic identity. Like Lui, Cheung proposes a less pessimistic solution to the current political turmoil and division in Hong Kong than the widespread doomsday view. The key to the survival of OCTS lies in the importance of the culture, not capitalism or democracy, of Hong Kong, because OCTS's *raison d'être* is the uniqueness of Hong Kong in terms of its cultural and institutional differences from the rest of China. In addition, Hong Kong should keep itself innovative in nurturing and developing its traditional role as a "window" to the West, while experimenting with new institutional ideas that will not anger the PRC but will satisfy the youths' wish to preserve its unique Hong Kong-specific culture.

Whether Hong Kong keeps making compromises or keeps nurturing its international capabilities in dealing with the West, its future is far from rosy and even augurs complications. So it is with the current nature of Japan-Korea relations. In Chapter 4, "Japan-Korea Relations: The Stalemate and the Future," Kazuhiko Togo reconstructs a descriptive history of Japan-Korea relations since the end of the Pacific War in 1945. The core of the problem, unlike Hong Kong-U.K. relations, lies in the fact that "Japan-Korea relations are *haunted* by Japan's annexation of Korea from 1910 to 1945" (italics added by the editor). Being "haunted" denotes that the conflict's nature is cultural, not economic or political. Due to this cultural war between Japan and South Korea, Japan's ex-colony will not easily want to make a compromise with Japan, even though South Korea not only became fully independent from it but also achieved one of the most phenomenal economic developments during the postwar years. When South Korea was fully developed and democratized by the early 1990s, many Western observers expected the two countries would be so similar to the U.K.-France pairing in Western Europe that they would be excellent allies of the U.S. in the Asia Pacific region. This prognostication turned out to be downright wrong. For example, a dramatic incident occurred in 2018 when the Korean government annulled the basic settlement of the Normalization Treaty of 1965 by ordering two Japanese corporations to pay reparations to their former Korean slave workers during the Pacific War. The decades of compromise and learning between the Koreans and the Japanese were all but vaporized into the thin air by this Supreme Court decision. Although this formidable incident seems to have derived from the historical issues that

await future resolutions, it may well in fact also be culturally based as well. Young Koreans have changed over the years to the extent that they would refuse to embrace the past compromise between the two nations without proper justice and redress done to the victims of imperial aggressions of all kinds. Simultaneously, Japanese politicians and voters have become culturally more conservative than before, and so they steadfastly refuse to offer justice and reparation to the war victims in Korea. To resolve this problem between the two countries, Togo suggests another compromise involving: the setting up of a new fund to redress the conscripted workers; a genuine agreement between the surviving comfort women and the Japanese government; and making friendly and constructive relations between the two countries that are in the national interests of each.

While neither the Koreans nor the Japanese acknowledge the value of each ethnic group to the other, which is a key basis of making compromises amid cultural incongruence, Korean Americans, along with other Asian Americans, have gained significant value in the eyes of white and black populations in the U.S., especially since the end of the Cold War. In Chapter 5, "Korean-Black Relationships in Greater New York," Pyong Gap Min provides a fresh outlook on the recent black-Korean relations in the metropolitan areas of America. It is a well-known fact that Korean Americans in LA were caught up in the race riots after the murder of Rodney King, Jr. by white policemen in 1992. This means that the black-Korean conflict has a long history in the U.S. urban scene. Indeed, the Korean migration into the urban center of major U.S. cities, including LA and NYC, started in the 1970s without any awareness that they would get involved in racial conflicts with African Americans. In a relatively short period, Koreans and other East Asians quickly achieved a new social status within American structural racism, what is known as the "model minority" status. The Koreans and the Japanese also had a peculiar experience of learning to discriminate against black people throughout their interactions with the U.S. soldiers who were stationed in East Asia during and after the Cold War. Combined with this sense of cultural superiority as model immigrants from Asia and their racist attitude toward African Americans, Korean Americans easily found themselves in a hostile relationship with the black minority in the U.S. However, Min argues that the core of the black-Korean conflict derives not from American structural racism *per se* but from the Korean role as a "middleman" merchant who distributes goods and services to low-income African American neighborhoods. As few Koreans have worked as middleman merchants in the same neighborhoods since the 1990s, black-Korean racial skirmishes have scarcely been reported. To resolve racial proxy wars between Korean immigrants and African Americans within the larger

institution of racism in the world system, Min suggests that cultural exchanges between the two racial subgroups could be a solution, such as Korean language education for black kids, while Koreans should concomitantly accept the value of the affirmative action for other disadvantaged minority groups. Asian Americans' experience with racism in the U.S., however, has not yet bolstered alliances between Chinese, Korean, and Japanese Americans in the country of salad bowls and internal colonies. The PRC, meanwhile, is using this as an excuse to hate, criticize, and prepare for an upcoming war with the U.S.

In Chapter 6, "The Ethnic is Still Political: Collective Action in the Age of the Diminishing Zainichi Korean Population in Contemporary Japan," Youngmi Lim delivers her insider's interpretation of the racial and political situation that *zainichi* Koreans are facing in the 21st c. amid the rapid decline of their population in Japan. Unlike the visible presence of Korean Americans in the U.S., the *zainichi* Koreans are largely invisible in Japan, making it difficult to define the physical and cultural boundaries of their communities or their ethnic identity. Simultaneously, just as the institution of global racism that has moved closer toward racial equality than in previous decades, Japanese racism against the *zainichi* Koreans has also waned greatly on the surface. Given this gloomy situation where visible racism is on the wane, while informal racism is still alive and well, how can the *zainichi* Koreans pronounce their Korean identity? According to Lim, the *zainichi* are now divided into anti-racism and pro-assimilation groups, a new development that the author tries to analyze using the perspective of collective action theory. The visible contenders who are members of the *zainichi* subethnic group, or the anti-racism group, who still adamantly and outspokenly oppose racism now rely on the conscientious elements of Japanese society that care more about the universal concept of racism in the form of hate speech than a particularistic ethnic strife between the *zainichi* and the Japanese. Therefore, it is totally imaginable that Chinese, Taiwanese, Hong Kong, and Korean minorities in Japan would unite against Japanese racism and/or ethnic discrimination. On the contrary, Taiwanese and Hong Kong minorities are resilient supporters of Japanese culture, politics, and institutions, denying any allegations of racism in Japan. In other words, these Taiwanese and Hong Kong minorities are model immigrants in Japan, whereas the *zainichi* will be unwanted foreigners for as long as they keep rallying against racial inequality in Japan. However, the whole race/ethnicity issue for the *zainichi* fails to be fully political in Japan, unlike in the U.S., where Korean Americans can openly organize mass demonstrations against "Asian Hate" and run for offices in the local and federal elections. The political for the *zainichi* in Japan therefore remains personal, small group,

local, and cultural at best, although it is grossly exaggerated in South Korea in order to heighten anti-Japanese sentiments there.

Finally, in Chapter 7, "Vanquishing Nationalism: Learning from Anti-Japanese and Anti-Chinese Content in Hallyu TV Dramas by Japanese and Chinese Fans," I discuss how the Japanese and Chinese Hallyu fans learn to suppress their nationalistic anger toward Koreans by watching the Hallyu TV dramas that treat the Japanese and the Chinese as inimical and malevolent. The purpose of this chapter is to see if the new pop culture genre of Hallyu could help East Asians, especially the Japanese and the Chinese, transcend their nationalist hatred against Koreans. At the same time, it also aims to ascertain whether Hallyu initiates backlashes among East Asian fans, causing them to hate South Korea more than ever. As the chapter corroborates, Hallyu has indeed created both these consequences in East Asia, even though the ardent fans are mostly women, and the adversaries are predominantly males. The chapter explains the rise of Hallyu among East Asian female fans as an upshot of female universalism (i.e., gender), instead of ethnicity, common East Asian culture (e.g., Confucianism, Japanese pop culture, Chinese pop culture, etc.), or new ethnic identities (e.g., Westernized, democratic, anti-Chinese, capitalist mentality). Female universalism refers to a common cultural value among all East Asian women who share the pain of gendered melancholia, which roughly translates into unconscious anxiety that is permeated by experiences of sexism, sexual violence, and other forms of discriminations against women. Women in developing economies and postcolonial societies experience reinforced melancholia due to sexism and racism/ethnic discriminations. Given that unconscious anxiety is more painful than the violation of the ersatz ideology of nationalism, women find it easier to vanquish nationalism than men, as the latter do not have such melancholia to begin with. However, the chapter also finds that the overall political economic condition in a country affects and divides the pattern of cultural learning among these women into forward learning (i.e., where the goal is to catch up) and retrospective learning (i.e., where the goal is to fulfill nostalgia). It is found that retrospective learning has a stronger power to overcome nationalism than forward learning.

Given that the 21st c. post-Cold War drama of East Asian international relations has gotten far more intense than its counterpart during the previous century, the future prognosis of the entire scope and intensity of the conflict is undeniably pessimistic. It does not mean however that the world is rapidly approaching an apocalypse. The key is to focus on the cultural dimensions of the entire conflict without hampering or downsizing the economic and

political freedom that East Asia has proudly espoused throughout the postwar era.

Future prognosis

All these eight chapters compiled in this volume speak to the truth: the Cold War view of international relations in East Asia elides a more cogent understanding of it that includes the various cultural factors of ethnicity, gender, identity, culture, and Hallyu. By reading each chapter in the volume, students and scholars can familiarize themselves with the most up-to-date information and analysis on East Asian international relations. The chapters in this volume do not necessarily suggest concrete solutions to the problems, because they are not simple or easy to be resolved to begin with. As I set out from the beginning, the 21st c. East Asian international relations are more perplexing than ever because these cultural factors have crept into the conventional analysis, which relies on political, economic, and social variables.

What the authors in this book want the readers to understand in unison is the unforgiving fact that we all need to broaden our perspective about East Asian international relations instead of superfluously forging a parochial outlook that relies on Anglo-American centered or regionally dominant views. When the world evolves further down the road without a clear navigational indicator, what is required as a driver is not to stick maladroitly with the pre-recorded and thus outdated route maps but instead to explore the future ahead with our very own eyes and feet. In this sense, this book is an arduous but a rare achievement in taking a first step toward the future. East Asia, like any other regions in the world, is facing cultural war, which may not seem imminent but is at least palpable in every corner of the region. These problems require novel means by which to tackle the unknown.

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