

too young to recall what was happening then.

But that, in fact, then spurred me to think about those who were actually born in 1989, an even younger generation. That's because recently in Singapore, there was a panel discussion that was part of the larger *89Plus* research platform initiated by Simon Castets and Hans Ulrich Obrist. The panel organizer was Ho Rui An, who invited a number of young scholars and thinkers who were born in 1989 or later. And what's interesting to me is that this is a generation that is, by and large, a generation of digital-natives; most of them would probably not remember living in a time when the internet was non-existent. For me, in fact, what was interesting about their thinking process is that they're a bit of a flâneur in the way that they bring information together; it's very improvised and they seem to come together as a bricolage, in a very playful recycling of historical material. I think it's a reflection of an internet culture; an approach of seeing the world through the habit of drifting through the internet. Not unlike the Situationists and their encounter with the city, except in this instance, it is a natural attitude to knowledge, not an acquired one.

To me that encapsulates, on some level, the spirit of experimentation that we have perhaps touched upon with our case studies; perhaps more chronologically, nation-bound, and maybe the little tedious case studies and expositions that we've been thinking about. I don't know if what they've been doing is perhaps instructive in helping us think of a method or a form in resisting against this sort of historical amnesia. I think about that because, as Patrick mentioned yesterday, this idea of "Asia" is perhaps quite geographically restrictive and it's in tension with this idea of the Third World. I'm afraid I'm not familiar with texts from the 1950s and '60s. So if you think of earlier texts from the early 20th century, such as Okakura Tenshin's *The Ideals of the East*, Tanizaki Junichirō's *In Praise of Shadows* or even Kuki Shūzō's *The Structure of Iki*, we see that those are very essentialist. Maybe Takamura Kōtarō's text, *Green Sun*, is a bit more playful. But, we talked a lot about the Third World yesterday, and the Third World brings, to my mind, a geography outside of Asia as well. It sort of broadens my sympathy to maybe Brazilian modernism, where you have a poet such as Oswald de Andrade talking about the *Manifesto Antropófago* (*Cannibal Manifesto*). That kind of cannibalism, that idea that we are able to consume cultures from all over the world, regurgitate it, and spew out something quite different and unique is, I find, quite productive in thinking about a more playful methodology or process that we might want to think through this exhibition.

Also to bring the example closer to home, a few years ago I attended a conference that Patrick participated in Sydney called "All at Sea: Piracy and the Trade Routes of Art History," organized by the Sterling and Francine Clark Institute. One of the central themes of the symposium of art from the Indian Ocean was about this notion of piracy; about us as historians begging, borrowing, and stealing from different methodologies and recycling all these sort of different quirks in art history and trying to bring it into our little cannibal soup pot and see what comes out of that. Something we could ponder over tea.

—
Hayashi Michio

It's quite interesting to think about bricolage, cannibalism, and piracy in this context so thanks for that very interesting remark.

So now that we have shared the "1989" experience, let's take a break and then resume the session with more of the particular set of issues that we have.

—
The Exhibition: Periodization and Genre of Works

—
Hayashi Michio

Suzuki-san, I hadn't asked you about the Japanese 1989 context, and also the periodization problem which came up yesterday. I'm curious what your thoughts are hearing other people's presentations and thoughts.

—
Suzuki Katsuo

In 1989, I was a college student and, to be frank, I was completely inattentive all the way through. That was the time when Japan enjoyed the bubble economy prosperity and I also rode on its many affluences. So I'm actually very surprised that I'm even talking about rebellion now.

I unfortunately am not as familiar with the situation of art after 1989, but I still would like to say a few things about how I imagined this exhibition to be, because I was the one who proposed the

title, "Cultural Rebellion in Asia 1960–1989."

Firstly, the Tiananmen Square incident came to my mind when I decided the end period of this project, in 1989, because I thought that incident symbolized the end of the pro-democracy movement of the 1980s, which spread over many countries in Asia, not only East Asia but also Southeast Asia. The event which was especially significant was the Gwangju crisis in Korea in 1980, which Ms. Park and Ms. Choi explained to us was the beginning of the Minjung art movement. So in my mind, it was during this decade, the 1980s, that many Asian countries experienced those kinds of pro-democracy movements, which were closely related to their art practices and productions.

I'm not sure if the events or art practices during the 1970s are related to those movements of the 1980s. Recollecting the presentations from yesterday, it seemed many of you focused on the art practices during the 1960s and '70s, I think. However, in the discussion this morning, many of you talked about what happened during the 1980s. So I want to emphasize my position: that it is possible to see a continuity between the experimental art practices of the 1970s and those which were at the height of the pro-democracy movement of the 1980s.

I also thought of another idea, another direction for us to think about this project, which is to focus mainly on the 1970s. I don't know if it is the best way, so I just want to throw it out there. Do you think including the 1980s would be much more productive? Or, as one of you suggested, would including the 1950s be more productive for us to think about this era of revolutionary change? I'd like to hear some of your opinions.

—
Pi Li

May I just say that I've very much enjoyed these two days of discussions, and I think this is a very important topic to touch upon now. There are a few ways: if we call "cultural rebellion" as a political structure or understanding, then I think we want to have 1989 as the ending year. That is one way. But I'd also like to remind you all that after 1989 is really a new period for Asian art: the "China's New Art, Post-1989" show in 1993 in Hong Kong, the Chinese artists exhibited in the Venice Biennale in 1993; and the Japan Foundation also start to work on exhibitions on Southeast Asian art later on.

If we have 1989 as the critical time, like the pre-globalized time, and also as the new wave for the Asian art, that also could be a good reason for having 1989 as the end point. So that it is not only from the political perspective, but also from the perspective of how art and information circulated. For me, that is more important than the political dimension of 1989.

Secondly, although I don't know much about what is happening in other fields, but in my field of specialty, in Chinese art, there has been a strong tendency, especially after 2009 or 2010, to re-exam what happened before 1989. 1989 is already acting like a filter; so many things occurred before 1989, but there are still events and facts that are hidden and others that have become popular knowledge.

So, this show also could be an opportunity for us to re-exam individual practices and experiments that were active before the so-called globalized period.

—
Hayashi Michio

I think that was the initial reason for Suzuki-san to come up with this idea, maybe. It's true; we know so much about post-1989 because everything is globalized, the "Magiciens de la Terre" exhibition and so on.

—
Patrick Flores

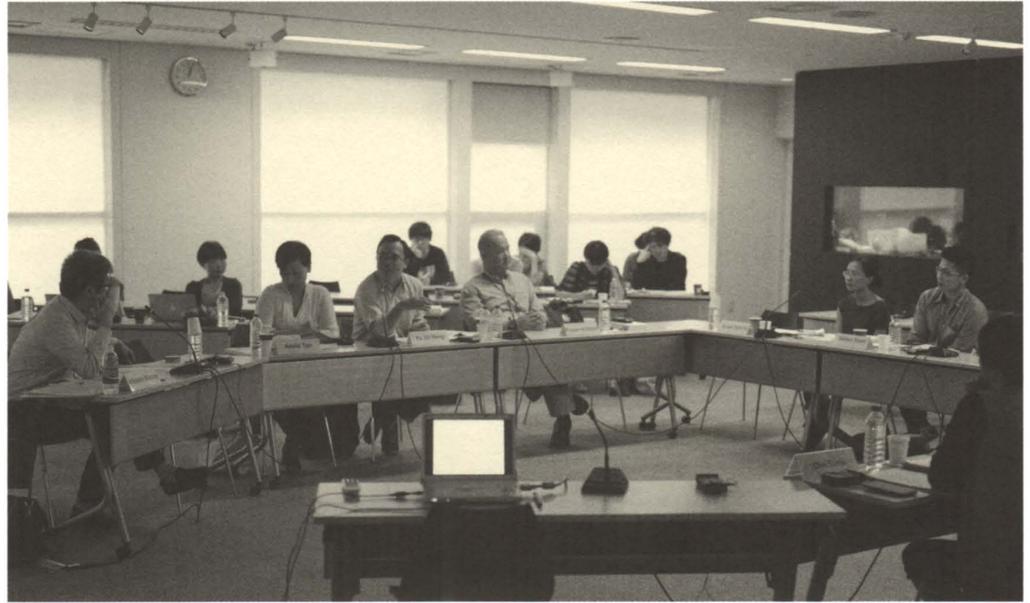
This period is, I think, fine; from 1960 to 1989. Except, maybe we can select a sharper point of origin. Why 1960? Why not 1964 or 1965 or even earlier? There should be something significant in the point of origin too, rather than just the beginning of the decade.

—
Suzuki Katsuo

Well, the reason why I picked up 1960 is because of the situation in Japan. There were many strong reactions against the U.S.–Japan Security Treaty, and the Neo Dada movement responding to that situation. So 1960 is a very important year in Japan when thinking about rebellious movements in art.

—
Yu Jin Seng

May I suggest perhaps, then, we might want to look at 1955 and the start from the Bandung Conference. That might be an interesting point to start in which China, Japan, and the Third World came together in Bandung, Indonesia. I think that may set a good starting point.



—
[Hayashi Michio](#)

I agree, that is actually a very good suggestion, because for Japan too, 1955 is the year in which all the political parties were reorganized into the two-party system between the Liberal Democratic Party and Socialist Party, so the Cold War system really started in that year.

—
[Patrick Flores](#)

There is an initiative by the Haus der Kunst and Tate Modern to also curate the last century through three exhibitions: the post-war, postcolonial, and the post-socialist. I think the postcolonial is about the apartheid, I think, in South Africa. So if we take Yu Jin's suggestion, then we will also cover a significant part of the postwar, which, I think, would demand a different methodology altogether. The 1950s is a different period conceptually, I think. It broadens it very significantly and that might be curatorially too broad.

—
[Hayashi Michio](#)

Pragmatically it's very difficult to conceive.

—
[Patrick Flores](#)

We also have to think about the audience too; how much they can take in one exhibition. So if we had nearly a half-decade, from 1955 to 1989, I think it would be quite too much.

—
[Hayashi Michio](#)

Yes, it would be very ambitious, maybe a little too ambitious. Suzuki-san, your 1950s section of the "Art Will Thrill You!: The Essence of Modern Japanese Art" exhibition was already a little too much.

—
[Suzuki Katsuo](#)

Yes, you would have had to stay, maybe, four to five hours to see all of the materials on display because we included many film works too.

—
[Hayashi Michio](#)

I realized also, after hearing everyone's presentation, that there are so many activities going on in theater, film, and documentary practices. So that also would require a different way of conceiving the exhibition space: whether it is only in the museum site or we add a series of off-site events connected to that, websites etc. But I realized that theater really played a very important role in many places. So how are we going to deal with this problem of representing theaters in this kind of historical exhibition? I think this is also something that we have to really think about.

In terms of the practicality of the exhibition, I'm curious what you think about including archival

materials in the show? Do you think that's a necessary part of the exhibition?

In relation to that, Pi Li, you showed photographs from the 1970s in your presentation, but I didn't see many photographs in the other presentations. We saw documentary photographs, but did photography still play an important role in these rebellious practices? I feel like there is still much to discover in that field.

—
Pi Li

Yes, in China, photography was the only private way to make art at that time. With the conservatives, you have to create paintings and you have to show it to the people, but photography is quite easy; you just take the shot and print it. So the first modern photograph movement, even earlier than the Stars Group, was called the April Film Group who were the first to have their show in 1979. So that's also quite important.

Regarding to your question, though, of whether to show archival materials or not, will be a very important issue for this exhibition because there are three different things in the artwork's documentation and how you exhibit the archive. Do you want to: |1... show the archive as the documentation, |2... show the archive as the artwork, |3... restage something, like the "When Attitudes Become Form" exhibition done by the Prada Foundation last year. I think this should be carefully thought through: in what way do you want to present the archive; in what way do you want to restage a certain theater etc.?

—
Hayashi Michio

Literature, too. Yu Jin brought up contextual literature in the Indonesian scene, and Thi also talked about the importance of poetry in the Vietnamese context. I think there are inter-media connections, and I think literature plays a very important role in how to deal with them in the exhibition context.

—
Suzuki Katsuo

There were also a number of symbolic poets during the 1960s and '70s, such as Kim Chiha. Kim Chiha's name was familiar in other nations, I believe, such as Thailand or the Philippines too maybe. So this kind of intellectual circulation was very important. We have to trace those kinds of circulation in the exhibition.

So in that way, I would like to include some poets in the exhibition, such as Rendra who, in Indonesia, was also a very important figure when thinking about rebellious movements in Southeast Asia from the 1970s to '80s. So, possibly I'd like to include parts of their works and translate them into Korean, English, and Japanese to introduce those poets' practices.

—
How to Define "Rebellion"

—
Hayashi Michio

In addition to this question of how to conceive "rebellion" for this exhibition, I'd like to ask you, Prof. Lai, about Punto. You introduced this group and said it consisted of Italian, Japanese, and Taiwanese artists. I believe you also said they were based in Italy, but could we consider those kinds of international alliances of artists in this rebellious context or not?



Discussion

[Lai Ying-ying](#)

I keep repeating myself, but the reason why I try to include that slide is because I believe art frees individuals when they really try to move around either for educational purposes or when they find better opportunities for their artistic careers. At the beginning, they may stay in a group, in their comfort zone. But they also create many forms of collaborations. Even for the first artist I introduced, I think he was very good friends with the artist from the Philippines. So I think somehow this education or art groups will be an interesting point; how they communicate or exchange and shared ideas.

[Hayashi Michio](#)

But at the same time, to go back to Suzuki-san's diagram from his keynote speech, when we talk about rebellious practices, are we including practices that are rebellious only in terms of structural or formal experimentation? Or are we focusing on artist movements that directly deal with political issues? I think that is a key issue to go back to. Moreover, if we extend the definition of "rebellion" to all the experimental practices, we need four or maybe more museums for that.

[Suzuki Katsuo](#)

Well, obviously I drew those diagrams before hearing your presentations, so as a starting point I tried to open the space for the discussion to go into all kinds of directions. I don't want to focus on one particular style or experimental movement because that would exclude the very key issues we need to think about in trying to understand what happened during the period in question.

Despite this, however, practically speaking, we have to focus on *some* topics. Personally I would like to insist that what was happening in the sphere I called "Documentary as Method" would be a very critical element in thinking about this period. Of course, we could simply select political works for this exhibition, but I think it really depends on each piece. We choose works because we discover significant elements in it; it speaks to us. So even if the piece is categorized as propaganda or government-sponsored art, I believe that artists negotiated with the conditions they were put in and created something which are sometimes unexpected. Going back to the diagram, it may seem that I have omitted the elements which these kinds of artists occasionally challenged, such as (political) authority or state-run activities on art, but that's not my intention. We can definitely include propaganda film or propaganda paintings if it is necessary in our reconsideration of the history.

So I think we have to choose a certain point. For example, Adele showed a documentary, semi-fictional, film that dealt with the tragedy in Thailand from the sudden change from 1973 to 1976, I think. And Simon also showed us photography that dealt with the 1969 collision between Chinese descent and Malay residents. So it's possible for us to focus on those kinds of hidden memories or those incidents that not many countries in Asia remember. Either way, I think we have to select several points of focus.

[Hayashi Michio](#)

I think it's very important that you brought up the relationship between the socio-political content and formal experimentation. I think we need both dimensions, really.

[Suzuki Katsuo](#)

Absolutely, because in the discourse of the art history, it is still prevalent to conceive periods in binaries: Social Realism versus experimental art movement, for instance. So what I want to try is to deconstruct that kind of binary, and to construct a new way of understanding the inter-relatedness of elements.

[Hayashi Michio](#)

It's also a good chance to show different angles on what exactly constitutes "rebellious" practices. In the Chinese context, for example, we had abstract paintings or simple landscape paintings by the No Name Group, which functioned as rebellious practices in that context. So we could also show how the different historical contexts determine "rebellious" practices.

[Suzuki Katsuo](#)

I would like to hear from everybody about context-specificity: can context-specific movements and practices be translated into other contexts and countries? I personally think it could, but how about everyone else?

Hayashi Michio

To expand the issue a little bit to a more theoretical register, one question that I had in mind, listening to a couple of the presentations, is on the references to metaphysics. In Simon's presentation, there is the new integration of Islamic, religious ideas into practices; Ms. Park, you also mentioned the Korean artists' interests in Nishida Kitarō; and Yu Jin, you mentioned "mystical" realism. How do you think these metaphysical ideas fit into the category of cultural rebellion? I'm sure that the answers differ according to the context but I ask this because in Japan, for example, what I see after the 1970s and '80s was a gradual disappearance of politically rebellious practices from the surface of art practices. On the other hand, there is also a sense of being entirely consumed into the capitalist system, allowing no room for escape. So the only way out, then, was to turn to metaphysics or terrorism. In other words, there was a kind of extremist idea, a sentiment, of seeking a way to break free from this existing system of capitalism to which the answer was either metaphysics or violence. I'm oversimplifying the history here, of course, but metaphysics can just as easily be a tool for cultural rebellion, but at the same time it can be seen as escapist; escapist in the sense of completely severing the tie with society and just going into your own metaphysical realm.

Although it may not be of much relevance in our discussion, I'm still curious what your thoughts are on this point.

—
Yu Jin Seng

For the "Towards a Mystical Reality" exhibition, Sulaiman Esa and Redza Piyadasa were turning towards Taoism and Zen. There is also a connection, actually, to America, because it was from D. T. Suzuki (Suzuki Daisetsu) that they brought many of these ideas of Zen and Taoism. For them, I think, the battleground is in the mind.

So they wanted to resist against the kind of scientific perceptualism that was underpinning practices that they saw across Asia and wanted to turn to the metaphysical, as you said, as a way of decolonizing the mind. For them, the mind was really *the* thing. The hegemony of the West was really something that they were fighting, resisting, and rebelling against, and for them, turning towards what we've called multiple frames of reference or different references or alternatives, including Zen, Buddhism or other things, *was* a way out. You could call it escapism but I think they probably saw it as a kind of resistance, a kind of postcolonial moment in the process of decolonization.

—
Simon Soon

If I may also add as a quick rejoinder: what is interesting to me about "Towards a Mystical Reality" is the kind of tension that was sustained in the exhibition itself, because what was being shown, if it wasn't clear from the photographs, were burned out mosquito coil or a bird cage; they were *objet trouvé*, "found objects." It becomes, I think, a very concrete litany of the locale, even though in the performative arena, which was the manifesto, it had a very metaphysical bend. The form itself was mystical and real at the same time, so I think the tension there is quite interesting.

—
Hayashi Michio

How do you define that in relation to the "Magiciens de la Terre" exhibition? That is the combination of magic and earth, and so, oftentimes, the "Magiciens de la Terre" was a revelation, but it was also criticized by the postcolonial discourse at the same time because it was just another way of essentializing Asia through the image of magic and earth. So how do you define "mystical realism" in relation to that?

—
Simon Soon

I think that was the criticism that was leveled against the show by having this poet actually urinating on the manifesto during the opening of the exhibition itself because he found it a bit too wacky. Essentializing, really, and drawing on the very D.T. Suzuki-esque model of what Zen is.

—
Adele Tan

A very Western model too which was also filtered through John Cage; not directly Suzuki.

—
Yu Jin Seng

I think, though, that they actually also tried to reconceive time and space. I think that was quite important for the "Towards a Mystical Reality" exhibition; a kind of resistance against the tyranny of linear time which was very much imposed from a Western-centric viewpoint. So, as Simon

mentioned, many of the works are very time-based, ephemeral, and they try to think not in terms of material space but mental space, which comes back to the metaphysical.

So they had a lot of criticism, and I totally agree with Simon. There was this critic, called Zainon, who critiqued it very much to-the-point about essentialization. But I still think it was an important moment in which they challenged this.

—
[Hayashi Michio](#)

I think it's very important to think about the different structure of time for this exhibition. The Chinese artists revisited Dada and Duchamp in the 1980s, for instance, so there's this kind of productive anachronism here, which I think we should really integrate into the key concepts of the exhibition.

Going back to this "mystical realism," another question I wanted to ask is on the notions of "hybridity" and "mimicry" by Homi Bhabha et al. "Hybridity" was a key term in the 1980s to the '90s, I think, and it was really a catchphrase for many discussions. The same goes for "mimicry," too. Do you still see the validity in these concepts or do you see them as *passé*? Do we need to invent new concepts to talk about these kinds of practices?

—
 The Validity of Hybridity and Mimicry for the Asian Arts

—
[Prapon Kumjijim](#)

For my doctoral studies, I spent years trying to think of a term that would best describe my position based on my own experiences, and also this notion of cultural research as a field of study that didn't really apply to me as much as perhaps some other countries or cultures. Eventually, I came up with the term "cultural itinerancy" to articulate my own trajectory in terms of harnessing or mixing a number of variables for my own experiences.

I'm not sure if it's a reasonable way ahead, but I think in terms of what I was trying to do in my practical investigation, it suited me well. But I trust that, with these kinds of terms, it's quite important to come up with some of our own variables according to our contextual parameters.

—
[Hayashi Michio](#)

Could you elaborate a little more on your notion of "cultural itinerancy" in relation to "hybridity" or "magpie modernity," and also the eclecticism that you brought up in your presentation?

—
[Prapon Kumjijim](#)

I think in reference to what Simon said just before the break, I very much identify myself as a product of a generation of shuttling around. I think quite a few important or at least a large number of Thai artists now pretty much generate their creativity or livelihood from that idea of hoping to make a living overseas. Because I think there isn't a serious living to be made in Thailand. I think, as Ying-ying mentioned, artists do have to survive and wherever opportunities lie, that's where they would go.

Also, if I may take this opportunity, one of the observers mentioned to me yesterday that he had hoped that I would be talking about artist groups who were political activists. The problem that I had—I'm not sure if anybody else had this problem—were to do with the fact of "now-and-then;" people change, people have to survive. And it's this idea of what they did or what was recorded at that time which has very much changed over the years: some artists who were very leftist at that time, in the early or mid-1970s, became ministers who took all the money in the last government. My friend and respected artist Vasan Sittthiket was very much about the people in the late 1970s, but now (there're rumors that) he owns a resort and it's quite a different story. So that's why I didn't choose artist groups who represented any kind of ideology, because it risked that tripping over the cruel reality of survival.

—
[Simon Soon](#)

I was wondering if you could seek out artists whose practices and sympathies were aligned to their political convictions in the past. Because that was what I did in Thailand, actually; hunting and looking for all these artists. Santi Isrowuthakul, for instance, and also people like Sinsawat Yodbangtoey. There were so many of these artists who are still committed to a lot of these political causes that they were invested in, I thought.



Prapon Kumjijm

[Prapon Kumjijm](#)

But there's also that notion of rewriting and redefining aspects of history. I do try to widen my source of information. Perhaps in Thailand there's a strange tradition in terms of how information is recorded and passed on.

—

[Simon Soon](#)

Could you elaborate a bit on that? How is information recorded and passed on? What is so different from other regions?

—

[Prapon Kumjijm](#)

I think with this idea of going to the horse's mouth, of going directly to the artist or their immediate colleagues and asking what they did and asking for the whole rationale, one would get one-sided information. So from my experience, I tend to try to double-check and cross-check, so it's not entirely about going straight to the horse's mouth, so to speak.

—

[Simon Soon](#)

I understand where you're coming from. That's what I'm trying to do as well, and there are information in archives that we could go to. So, what I'm trying to figure out is what is so exceptional? What is so exceptional about the Thai context that makes normal historical research impossible?

—

[Prapon Kumjijm](#)

I'm not reaching for the far extreme, that information in Thailand is completely untrustworthy. But I'm just coming from the point of view of when I received the title for this particular topic, I chose to respond through the lens of my own interpretation. That's merely what I'm trying to say. Because I'm not a historian. So it's not really my interest, to be honest, to delve through the entire historical archive and present it within the historical scope.

—

Addressing Other Factors: Medium, South Asia, Terminologies, and Class

—

[Hayashi Michio](#)

To diverge a little, a while ago, one of the observers raised a question on the absence of South Asia in this seminar, and also on the anti-Asian spread of Lu Xun's woodcut print movement to Singapore and Japan. Would anyone like to respond to that?

—

[Suzuki Katsuo](#)

I understand how crucial South Asia is, especially for this kind of discussion. So, I confess, excluding South Asia was basically for practical reasons. We could have broadened the region, but this time, I wanted to create a bridge between Southeast and East Asia and for that, I felt, it was necessary and would be more productive to focus on the issues of communism and the Cold War, which is what I was particularly interested in. But since I'm not an Asian art specialist, I would like to hear the other speakers' opinions. Can we still discuss "cultural rebellion" focusing on Southeast and East Asia? Or would it be meaningless without South Asia in our frame?

Also, regarding the woodcut print movement, I included "woodcut" in the category of "Art as Activism" in my diagram. So I am aware that the woodcut movement prevailed all over Asia, and I, too, found some examples in Singapore and took up these works in the small exhibition, "Experimental Ground 1950s." The Minjung art movement also made use of the woodcut style, so I understand woodcut played a large role in these kinds of movements. Maybe, it could be one of the topics in the exhibitions.

So I'd like for everyone to understand that it was merely coincidental that none of the presentations dealt with woodcut. I'm sure we all know that it was a very important movement during the 1950s and '60s, and the 1980s in Korea in particular.

—

[Hayashi Michio](#)

I think South Asia is a very important point. We didn't decide to exclude and ignore South Asia, but as Suzuki-san asked, I'm also curious what the others think. I think one of the determining contexts for this selection of Southeast and East Asia has to do with Japanese colonization.



Simon Soon



Suzuki Katsuo

That issue didn't really come up, but, in the 1970s for example, I think there are lots of anti-Japanese movements in Southeast Asia. So what kind of attitudes or sentiments were expressed through artistic practices against the Japanese economic expansion in the 1970s?

As for Lu Xun's woodcut movement network, I also encountered many of those examples from the 1940s and '50s while I was working on the "Cubism in Asia" exhibition research in Singapore and Malaysia. I think it is something that we can keep in mind. But, if we cut the time-frame from 1960 to 1989, we also have to consider how much and what kind of role Lu Xun's woodcut movement played in cultural rebellious practices.

—
[Simon Soon](#)

I remember reading that by 1966, I think, there was a big woodcut exhibition held in Singapore. By then, it was already a form that was perhaps co-opted and exhibited at the National Library on a large scale to depict tropical sceneries and things like that. So by the 1960s, I think it had lost its political edge that was more prevalent in the 1940s to '50s at least. So within our timeframe, unless we consider that as a cultural rebellion against its political origin—twisting the thing around—then I wonder if it's that relevant to bring woodcut into our discussion. Probably that's why we have left out woodcut in Southeast Asia at least, from the papers that we've presented on.

—
[Pi Li](#)



[Pi Li](#)

In China, the woodcut totally developed in the opposite way. Lu Xun introduced this kind of German Expressionist woodcut in China in the 1930s as a part of leftist activity in Shanghai. Then, during the Japanese War or end of the 1930s or early '40s, most of the leftist students or woodcut artists moved to Yan'an, and they began with this creation. But this kind of modernist style was widely criticized because the workers and farmers could not accept this kind of style, especially the very clear-cut, black-and-white contrast. Traditional woodcut was very flat and based on the line.

We have another woodcut movement in China after 1942 by Li Hua which is called the Yan'an woodblock. So this Yan'an woodblock scene moved to Shanghai, Beijing, and to the Central Academy and became the mainstream of Chinese woodcuts after 1949. Basically, they combined modern life with the very traditional language of Chinese woodcut.

The Lu Xun-esque left-wing produced these kinds of woodcuts as the resources, only having been picked up in 1976 and later in 1977–78 by the Stars Group as a way of re-chasing the earlier instances of modernism. I showed several slides in my presentation of the Stars Group to show their strength in picking up that kind of the style. Not to mention that that is the only influence of modernism that has remained due to Lu Xun.

—
[Yu Jin Seng](#)

To follow-up on Simon and a quick comment about India and South Asia. I agree with Simon that the so-called "Six Men Show" which was held at the National Library in Singapore in 1966, back then, marked a shift towards woodcut being, in some sense, institutionalized and co-opted because it showed a lot of scenes of Singapore's progress, which was really the main, dominant narrative in Singapore at that time. All the while, if you compare it to, for instance, the woodcuts in Singapore of the 1950s, they're very much anti-authoritarian; there are lots of questions about resistance against the bourgeois, against capitalism etc. So that was a shift back then.

Also, a quick comment about South Asia, which I also think is very, very important. If you were to look at, for example, the movement of artists in Southeast Asia and India centered in Santiniketan, we have artists from Thailand such as Fua Haripitak; from Myanmar or Burma we had Bagyi Aung Soe; from Indonesia, we had Affandi and Rusli. And they started in Santiniketan in India under Rabindranath Tagore where there was this whole idea of pan-Asianism with Okakura Tenshin that Simon mentioned earlier as well. So there were some imaginations of Asia.

The main thing that came back from that, if you look at the works of Bagyi Aung Soe and Fua Haripitak and if I were to kind of oversimplify and distill it, were two things; first, tradition. Tradition became an important part of an idea of multiple modernity. Fua Haripitak, for example, shifted to rubbings of temples in Thailand. So that also was a kind of return to tradition—kind of traditional motifs—as a way of reinventing a different modernity. It was the same for Bagyi Aung Soe, who used a lot of Sanskrit and also turned to Buddhism as a way of reinventing modernism. And the second thing is copying, actually, as a way for a different modernity; as a resistance against the authentic. Fua Haripitak was, in fact, investigating the process of copying through his rubbings. So copying itself, was a way in which one could have access into a different concept or idea of modernity.

I believe that was what he took from Santiniketan; from what was taught there.

—
Hayashi Michio

Was the copying manual or mechanical?

—
Adele Tan

It was mechanical frottage.

—
Park Hyesung

Can I also confess: I only wanted to focus on the 1960s and '70s because in the narrative of Korean art history, Minjung art is now situated as one of the grand art history; these 1960s and '70s activities were simply overlooked. So I wanted to reread these activities as precursors, roots or seeds of the 1980s Minjung art, because in the early 1980s we already had some genre-deconstructive artists besides Minjung art that were symptoms of postmodern art.

So frankly speaking, mainly in 1989, many theories and "-isms" were imported from the West: postmodernism, post-structuralism etc. At that time, Minjung art was reread within that frame of Western theory; so it read Minjung art, not just as a political, critical attitude to society but also as a return of reality told by the West—a little like Neo-Expressionism in Europe. There were many readings of Minjung art but postmodern theorists or scholars still felt it was a rich arena for investigation. In this context, I would argue that young artists of the 1980s, who are in fact distanced from Minjung art, are kind of the children of the 1960s or '70s phenomena. So I think this movement, these young artists of the 1980s, is just as important as Minjung art. All kinds of movements are parallel in this area; it is not only Minjung art or monochrome art. So I wanted to talk about this situation; the multiple phenomena and diversities co-existing simultaneously.

Another question I want to share is about "mimicry" which you mentioned earlier. Yesterday, Ms. Choi and I visited the "Lee Mingwei and His Relations" exhibition at the Mori Art Museum. There, I think he talked about the relationship between time and space, family and the self. But in the exhibition there was also a work by John Cage who is among those who studied Zen and D.T. Suzuki. There are also others like him such as Lee Ufan, On Kawara, and Yves Klein. To be frank, I was a little surprised, and it also made me wonder, "what *is* mimicry?" You [Prof. Hayashi] showed Shinohara Ushio's work in which he mimicked Robert Rauschenberg's. How about Yves Klein? He mimicked the concept of Suzuki. And John Cage? What is the difference? If we reverse the situation, maybe some curators or art theorists will be interested in Korean Informel or 1960s and '70s Korean movement. At a first glance, they may be surprised and rush to the conclusion that their styles are influenced by Gutai or Japanese Informel; their influence *is* great. Unfortunately, I didn't see the "Gutai: Splendid Playground" exhibition held at the Guggenheim Museum; it must have been great. But at the same time, I want to suggest discussing about the 1960s and '70s without subordinating them to the Japanese activities. I understand that mimicry is a very important issue, even now. But I want to look at past situations and conditions prior to the importation of postcolonial theories. I believe that there were many critical attitudes and practices before Homi Bhabha and Edward Said; there were *many* practices. That is what I wanted to investigate.

—
Hayashi Michio

I think that's really an important point. One thing we have to discard is the linear, progressive historical model that we have inherited through modernist ideology. So, "productive anachronism," if I may bring that phrase up again, is, I think, the temporal model that we should have.

To shift the question to "hybridity" and also the sheer diversity of rebellious practices, one thing I wanted to raise is the point that these rebellious practices were usually done in the name of the people; people who were against authority or the political system. I raise this because during the 1950s to '60s in Japan, there were so many different coexisting terms that referred to "people." For example, there is *taishū* (大衆) which usually means "urban mass," *minshū* (民衆) is in fact connected to *minjung*. *Minshū*, I think, is a broader term that could include farmers, for example, living in the village etc. There are others such as *shomin* (庶民) which embodies the connotation of the vernacular, and there is also *jōmin* (常民) which literally means the "usual" or "ordinary" people. These different terms coexisted in order to refer to "people" in the 1950s and '60s discourse in Japan. Which term to use, I think, slightly reflects the thinker's political stance or imagination, and since there are so many different terms used in Japan, it can create confusion. So I wonder if that kind of discussion about "people" and the different references to "people" existed in other cultural contexts or not. When you talk about "people," are you referring to the urban mass, middle class

people, people in the rural and suburban areas, the lower class etc.?

—
Park Hyesung

What about women?

—
Hayashi Michio

Well, those terms are gender-free.

—
Park Hyesung

In the era of Minjung art, some female artists said that they were excluded from Minjung art, so there are many layers of subjects and subjectivities which need to be discussed. Minjung art was declining when I started college, but even then, I saw some flags hung on the walls of the university. I felt it looked very exotic. For whom and to who were they addressed? I respect Minjung art and its artists' first intentions; their practices were very brave, unique, and dangerous. It was very effective and moving. But it also lacked the question of "for whom," as you said. I think that farmers or *shomin*, or the working class didn't really participate in the making of this. It was primarily some of the intellectuals who led this movement.

—
Hayashi Michio

What about other contexts? Ms. Park just mentioned the female artists were frustrated by being excluded from this Minjung movement, but are there similar divides in other rebellious movements where some minorities felt excluded from the practices and expressed frustration? Or were there identity politics issues?

—
Park Hyesung

To add, this was the time of nationalism; Korea participated in the Vietnam War as a good friend where so many youths entered the army and died. At that time, there may have been some sentiments of wanting to protest against participating in the Vietnam War, but many people felt pressured not to and it was prohibited because of the financial benefits of helping out in the war. It is only afterwards that artists, especially novelist, dealt with the Vietnam War from a psychological perspective. Nowadays we have many Asian workers in Korea, but at the time there were not so many foreign workers. I think that Minjung art focused on a single subject, or a single mass of people. There is not much on the other types of mass who have been overlooked. So for me, I think it is meaningful to deal with Minjung art at this juncture from a different view and from different reference points.

—
Adele Tan

If I may go back. This is really to do with the earlier question about the absence of India which made me think about the Indian artists outside of India in the diaspora. Then, I started thinking about the Indian artists in London. Earlier, we were talking about the terms of reference for "people" and it reminded me that they, the Indian artists in London, decided to call themselves "black artists." The silly thing about the British categorization is that "Asian" actually means you're from the sub-continent, and "Chinese" would be separately categorized. So I was thinking whether we could segue out from thinking about "Asia" defined geographically and instead look at the movements of all these artists outside of it and use the terms *they* used to refer to themselves. I say this because I was personally quite interested why the Indian artists in London would suddenly have allegiances with the term "black artist."

—
Praon Kumjim

I was categorized as "oriental" as a schoolboy in England.

—
Park Hyesung

How about the term *dongyang* (東洋) or East Asia? This is another different problem we face, *dongyang* and "Asia." For "Asia," in Korean we use the term *dongyang*, actually.

—
Hayashi Michio

Do you use that term in an English context?

—

[Park Hyesung](#)

No, we use it only in everyday conversation. For example, we have a game called "Asian Game," but in conversations we usually call it *dongyang* (ie. East Asia). In Japanese, I think it's *tōyō* (東洋), meaning "East Pacific." I think it was a concept made in the middle of the 1930s or '40s?

[Hayashi Michio](#)

It's much earlier. In Japan, *tōyō* began to be used already before the modern period.

[Park Hyesung](#)

So, I do feel sorry that we excluded India or other Asian countries this time, but for me it is very meaningful to call this Asia, not *dongyang*.

[Choi Eunju](#)

Did we deal with Indian modern art for the "Cubism in Asia" show?

[Hayashi Michio](#)

Yes, we did. Sri Lanka, too. That's obviously a big question that we should keep asking. I think it's still not too late to include India, I think.

[Pi Li](#)

I was just suddenly reminded of something from Ms. Park's mentioning of these terms and Minjung art. When we talk about cultural rebellion before 1989, I think we can see from the two-day discussion that this kind of the rebellion is more urban-elite based. It's not the kind of social engagement of labor we are now talking about in factories, for example. So you can see that what has happened in Japan is very different from what's happened in China or Southeast Asia because of the booming of the economy in the 1970s; the whole Japanese production industry turned to China and now to Southeast Asia. So the cultural rebellions of each country really face a different schedule. That's something I think is a very important dimension when we're talking about cultural rebellion. We should keep in mind the recycling aspects of globalization and economy. That's quite an interesting part because artists from movements during the 1980s in China were mostly from families who were officials of the communist government. For instance, Ai Weiwei. His family is really from a high-class family so they have access and the means to study abroad, just like in Taiwan as Ying-ying explained. That's very different from these kind of social resistance after 1989.

[Hayashi Michio](#)

That issue of class is actually part of the reason I was interested in photography, theater, and films of each context. Because photography, for example, is the most democratic medium; you don't need professional training to take pictures. So I think there must be these kinds of photographic practices that still need to be discovered from different regions.

[Pi Li](#)

In Chinese modern photography, the members of that group were all from the high class. They at least had cameras.

[Prapon Kumjijim](#)

From my perspective, Chavalit Soemprungsuk, one of the artists who I presented on, owned a Rolleiflex (professional medium format camera) as a student. He was also from a very wealthy family. So he was the one photographing Silpa Bhirasri but he took and was given no credit at that time. He did quite a lot of his own photography at that time.

[Adele Tan](#)

I just want to return to the idea of the masses or the question of "for whom" which Hyesung mentioned. I think one of the things that is troubling me, or maybe could help us sharpen our thinking is the question, "for whom is this exhibition?" Who is the audience? What are we trying to address in this exhibition? Are we trying to change something in the social psyche of the people who come, especially in relation to the discussion about capitalism and its ever-reaching hand? What do you want visitors to get out of this exhibition?

Suzuki Katsuo

My basic aim of this project is to seek an exchange of historical referential points with other Asian nations. So this exhibition itself, if it is realized, may play different roles in each country and venue—in Japan, Korea, and Singapore. And naturally, each venue has different audiences. So I don't want to suggest or insist on making one, single exhibition that is the same throughout the venues. I think the intentions and conceptualizations of each curator will also differ, so I think it would be best if we can structure it so that it can reflect the histories and visitors of each local area.

Plainly put, *my* ultimate goal is to show a history of Asia during the 1960s and '70s that is still unfamiliar or unknown to Japanese audiences while triggering the notion of multiple frames of references for each visitor; to raise the self-awareness of Japan's colonization and imperialism on Southeast and East Asia. Japan, and by extension the Japanese subjects, played a constitutive role in the history of Asia, I think. So I'm hoping that this exhibition will generate multiple subjectivities for visitors in rethinking a more complex history of Asia. I also think it is a good opportunity to relativize the history of Japan too. I think it is important especially in the present situation in Japan where historical revisionists have an authority. So I myself want to resist, or rebel, against this atmosphere of forgetting or negating the important elements and histories of Asia.

Hayashi Michio

Especially given the political tension mounting in East Asia at the moment between China-Japan, Korea-Japan, and China and Southeast Asia. In that context, I agree with Suzuki-san that to have this kind of exhibition is a meaningful endeavor. And I think professionals like yourselves are really the important blockade against those nationalistic tides that sweep over Asia.

I also think, though, it's important to realize that in the 1960s and '70s, in the Cold War context, the presence of the nation-state had very powerful regulations against cultural practices, both for and against, maybe. So in the 1980s and '90s, you see globalization and the infiltration of capitalism into every corner of our daily lives leading to transnational connections. We believed that this movement will actually continue and lead to a more peaceful coexistence of nation-states, but it seems like the opposite is happening in the 2000s, especially in the last five or six years; the nation-state is again becoming a much more powerful element in people's political imaginations.

In that sense, I think it is very meaningful to look back at the 1960s and '70s where the nation-state was a very much regulatory element in the people's imagination and to examine how people reacted to this situation.

Also, I'd like to point out that exhibition-projects do not consist only of the exhibition itself. It is also the catalogue, symposia, and many other related-events; and these are the elements that will remain as important landmines for people's imaginations in the future.

In the "Cubism in Asia" show, for instance, one of the great positive repercussions that happened is that later "Cubism in Asia" was recognized, really, by international audiences and also generated many new connections between curators across Asia. And these repercussions continued in a very positive way, I think; so I'm hoping for similar effects from this project.

Ushiroshōji Masahiro

If I may very quickly add. "1989" in Japan was the year the Shōwa Emperor, Emperor Hirohito, passed away. And since periodization in Japan is determined by the Emperor's reign, it meant that the period of "Shōwa," the years of war and invasion, had ended. Obviously, the emperor as a political authority had already died in 1945, but the fact that the Shōwa period ended in 1989, in the year that marked a pivotal year in terms of world history too, I think, is very symbolic for Asian countries that experienced immense impact from the war that was in the name of the Emperor.

Suzuki Katsuo

Thank you very much indeed. I'd forgotten about that completely.

Lai Ying-ying

I think the personal is political. We have been trying very hard to explore the historical, political, and cultural background of each country. However, since this project is eventually going to be realized in the form of an exhibition, I think it would be much easier to talk about history from the perspective of each individual, and their art as a reaction to their times. How they suffered or witnessed the time. So I think the personal can be very political; through their artworks we can try to tell a big story, the larger history. So to develop a good mapping of the large history and the artists living in reality, I think, is vital.

Hayashi Michio

Obviously it becomes a very difficult and challenging job to find the fine line or interface between these individual trajectories of the artists and also the cultural-historical determinations. But, I agree, I think we have to be really mindful of that.

Choi Eunju

Suzuki-san proposed the diagram to stimulate our thinking about the concept of rebellious practices, which I think is very useful. After the seminar and we return to our countries, I think it will serve as a good springboard for our own brainstorming in creating a more detailed and precise diagram which we could all combine at a later date.

Hayashi Michio

I also think that we need to expand our discussions and investigations from the national historical context to the regional and global historical context: how these different levels of histories interact with each other. I think that is the crucial point for this kind of project.

Choi Eunju

In the case of the "Cubism in Asia" project, the terminology "Cubism" came from the West. However, "rebellion" is universal. So I think we can definitely expand the concept for this project.

Che Kyongfa

If I may add a comment. I was thinking about the Cambodian context. In the Vietnam War, Cambodia suffered the dual structure of being in between both Vietnam and China. Furthermore, under the Khmer Rouge regime they practically lost the majority of their culture. Now in the present, however, there are attempts to try to regain what was lost in those periods whereby documentary films and photographs are gradually being discovered. In those times, the voices of the artists were completely suppressed and were treated as though they did not exist, though. So I'm very interested in how we should or can deal with this phenomenon; what possibilities can we pursue in handling these historical and tragic factors is something that I'm very much interested in.

Suzuki Katsuo

That's exactly why we have invited Thi, an artist, to join us today. We, as art historians, can of course approach the 1960s and '70s using documentations and resources that remain from then. However, there are histories where documents have been lost; you just precisely mentioned Cambodia, but in addition to Cambodia, I'm sure there are other areas where the historical memories have been erased. So, precisely in order to raise the awareness of those lost memories, I think the sensibilities and imaginations of currently-active artists will be a necessary component in this exhibition. That is why we wanted to have Thi with us for this seminar.

Hayashi Michio

Unfortunately, it is time to wrap up this seminar. I would like to thank all of you for the lively discussions. This seminar presented and exposed a multitude of issues which I think were all very important and necessary points in thinking about and structuring the exhibition. Obviously, there is still much work to be done in preparation for the project, but I think it has provided us with a very productive basis for our brainstorming from now on. Thank you again for your participation.

Organizer

Thank you to all of the panelists and observers, for your ardent attention over the past three days. I believe we've been fortunate to have people who'd been working in Asian regions in the past and also people who are planning to organize projects in and on Asia here today. Thank you very much.

Che Kyongfa
Curator,
Museum of Contemporary Art,
Tokyo

Reflecting on the Seminar

I think it could be said that, through this seminar, the assembled researchers were able to share with each other the significance of using comparative research to investigate the channels of transnational cultures behind the history of avant-garde activities in Asia in the period 1960 to '89 — a period which laid the foundation for the global rise of Asian art since the 1990s. I would like to use this space to express my gratitude to all the participants, who each brought a constructive consideration to the seminar while generously displaying their stimulating knowledge.

Needless to say, the complex histories experienced by each country and region during the period in question — which could be called an age of tumult in Asia — each possess a specificity that does not allow facile comparisons. Even so, we were able to establish a number of political, social, and cultural commonalities particular to the Asian nations that pushed forward its modernization under Cold War conditions. Extending to a reexamination of the concepts themselves, it is hard to say whether we were successful in putting forward, as the primary themes of the seminar, the concepts of “cultural rebellion” and “Third World solidarity,” which are inscribed into the unique historicity of the 1970s. However, given that each presentation focused on practices that critically questioned “modernity” and modernism in art, although the points of discussion were broad and diverse in scope, we did not lose site of our objective.

More than anything, the discovery of numerous, concrete topics that can provide the seeds of future comparative research was the greatest achievement of the seminar. The emergence of the “theater” as a site for talents from diverse fields to gather, the reception of Brecht and Beckett, and also the connections

between pedagogical theater and democracy movements seem to be phenomena that spread synchronously throughout the region. The problematics surrounding diaspora and gender, both of which intimately relate to the identity of the creative subject, also have potential for opening up transnational perspectives. Or there is the connection between the intentionality informing graphic practices — including printmaking, illustration, and photography — that relativized an artistic outlook inclined toward the tableau, and the proposition of an “art for the people.” And there are also the contact-points between experimental art movements like conceptual and video art, and leftist and Eastern thought.

The next task is the thorough research required for delving deeper into these topics. I believe that by working to collect as many case studies as possible, and through the analysis of distinct expressive forms and the accumulation of socio-historical, ideological-historical observations, we can convincingly outline the dynamism of cultural creation that transcends national borders. At the same time, in touching upon visual culture in its entirety, which cannot be objectified by conventional art history, this project will naturally provide an opportunity for rethinking the concept of “fine art” in Asia.

It is my hope that this seminar will become a springboard for international, collaborative research into the art of Asia during the Cold War period.

Suzuki Katsuo

Curator, National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo

Translated by Andrew Maerkle

The Japan Foundation Asia Center Art Studies 01について

国際交流基金は、アジア域内の「交流(Communicate)」、「共有(Connect and Share)」、「協働(Collaborate)」、「創造(Create)」の4つの「C」をコンセプトに、2014年4月、新たに「アジアセンター」を創設しました。美術の分野においては、1990年アセアン文化センター設立以来今日に至るまで、展覧会、シンポジウム、人的交流等の活動を通じて、アジア地域の美術交流事業を企画・実施してきました。新しいアジアセンターではさらに、グローバルな時代のアジアが直面する新たな課題をテーマに、展覧会をはじめ様々な事業を展開し、美術分野の調査・研究の交流・蓄積・発信にも取り組んでいきます。このたびその一環として、「The Japan Foundation Asia Center: Art Studies」を発行します。

第1号である本誌では、2014年9月30日—10月2日に実施した国際セミナー2014「Cultural Rebellion in Asia 1960-1989」の発表論文と議論の記録をまとめ、皆さまにお届けします。このセミナーは、国際交流基金アジアセンターが東京国立近代美術館、韓国国立現代美術館、シンガポール国立美術館と共に、アジアの60年代から80年代の芸術動向をテーマに、数年後に開催する予定の展覧会の準備の第一歩として実施したものです。

アジアの美術は、過去20年以上にわたって現代美術を中心に、アジア域内のみならず世界各地で国別、地域別、テーマ別グループ展として、また個展として紹介されてきました。近年ではさらに、グローバル・ヒストリーの思潮を背景に、アジアの20世紀美術の動向全般への関心が高まりつつあります。特に戦後美術についてはアジア各国が植民地支配を脱し国民国家の形成過程で、どのように芸術活動が当時の政治や社会動向と関わりながら展開してきたか、その見直し作業が盛んになってきています。アジアセンターではそれを地域全体の課題としてとらえ、開催3館のキュレーターとアジア各国の研究者との共同研究により展覧会として実現しようとするものです。準備段階のセミナーの内容を記録し、情報を読者と共有し、より発展的に地域の美術研究の議論に寄与することができればと考えます。ご参加いただいた研究者の方々には論文執筆、校正等にご協力賜り、改めてお礼申し上げます。

最後になりますが、新しいアジアセンターの今後の美術活動に対して、引き続きご支援・ご鞭撻のほど宜しくお願い申し上げます。

2015年3月

国際交流基金アジアセンター

凡例

国際交流基金アジアセンター主催の本セミナーは、2014年9月30日[火]—10月2日[木]の3日間、国際交流基金において、日本語・英語の同時通訳で行われました。

本セミナーの同時通訳は、横田佳世子、廣井初美、小林晶子氏にご協力いただきました。

本報告書は、セミナーの内容を再現したもので、編集の責任につきましては、国際交流基金アジアセンターにあります。

本報告書におけるスピーカーの発表は、セミナー後にスピーカー自身により改訂されたものを最終原稿として掲載しました。

パネリストの所属・役職は、2014年10月現在のものです。

人名の日本語・英語表記については、定訳がある場合はそれを用い、ない場合は基金において統一しました。

中国、台湾、韓国、日本については、姓+名の順にしています。

Cultural Rebellion in Asia

1960—1989

国際セミナー 2014 | Cultural Rebellion in Asia 1960–1989

Day 1 | 2014年9月30日[火] | 18:00–19:30

Day 2 | 2014年10月1日[水] | 10:00–18:30

Day 3 | 2014年10月2日[木] | 10:00–13:00

会場 | 国際交流基金JFIC ホール [さくら]

主催 | 国際交流基金アジアセンター