

**A NEW JOURNAL:  
*ASIA PACIFIC PEACE STUDIES***

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On behalf of the editorial board, it is a pleasure to introduce the inaugural issue of *Asia Pacific Peace Studies*, a journal intended to promote greater understanding and the pursuit of positive peace while also serving as an important bridge between two academic fields—Asian/Pacific studies and peace studies.<sup>1</sup> *APPS* is an interdisciplinary journal with a broad thematic range and multi-layered geographic perspective encompassing global, regional, and local issues. *APPS* must be interdisciplinary and global since peace studies brings together scholars from a variety of fields to explore complex problems impacting security, social justice, and ecological sustainability (*e.g.*, military basing, human trafficking, water pollution and depletion) that are often transnational in scope and affect all parts of the world. Its emphasis on case studies from the Pacific Rim provides the journal a regional perspective, which is also connected to the local level in at least two respects. First, the editors welcome papers on local experiences that offer detailed analysis of communities affected by and themselves acting upon global and regional processes. Second, the editorial office is based in northern California, as are most of the founding members of the editorial team. California and the western United States figure prominently in our view of the “Asia Pacific” or “Pacific Rim,” and we are especially interested in research (and other creative works) related to the Oakland-San Francisco Bay Area and its linkages to locales/regions throughout the Pacific.<sup>2</sup>

*Asia Pacific Peace Studies* has been several years in the making. It is the product of a partnership between the Japan Policy Research Institute (JPRI) and the Asia Pacific Peace Studies Institute (APPSI). JPRI was founded in 1994 by the renowned scholar and public intellectual Dr. Chalmers Johnson, together with anthropologist Dr. Sheila K. Johnson and journalist Steven C. Clemons (now editor-at-large for *The Atlantic*). Since 2013, when the APPSI was established at Holy Names University in Oakland, California, it has hosted JPRI, and the two sister institutes have collaborated in numerous ways. In fact, the inaugural issue of *Asia Pacific Peace Studies* features projects jointly sponsored by the two organizations during the past three years, as well as updated versions of working papers originally posted on the JPRI website over the same time period. Moreover, the journal’s editorial team comprises of members of another APPSI-JPRI initiative: a consortium of scholars linking liberal arts colleges in the Bay Area—*i.e.*, Holy Names, Dominican University, Mills College, and Saint Mary’s College of California.<sup>3</sup>

So what exactly is contained in this inaugural issue? The first article, “Eternal Harvest: The Legacy of American Bombs in Laos,” by veteran investigative journalists Karen J. Coates and Jerry Redfern, confronts the scourge of cluster munitions, focusing on the ongoing tragedy in this relatively unknown, landlocked country in Southeast Asia surrounded by Cambodia, China, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam. As Coates and Redfern explain, “between 1964 and 1973, in an offshoot of the Vietnam War, the U.S. military dropped 4 billion pounds of explosives on Laos.” Many of those explosives, especially smaller cluster munitions, did not detonate and “remain in the soil today as UXO (unexploded ordnance) contaminating... the surface area of the country. Tens of thousands of civilians have been killed and injured in UXO accidents since the war officially ended.” Through arresting personal stories and photographs, this article offers powerful testimony about a historical—indeed, an ongoing— injustice and inspires readers to push for redress.<sup>4</sup>

The next article, “Not War/Not Peace: the Korean Armistice Under a Nuclear Shadow,” by University of Chicago historian Bruce Cumings, provides a corrective to the mainstream media narrative of North Korea as a singularly dangerous and irrational nuclear state.

North Korea, before its first nuclear test in 2006, was the only non-nuclear country in the world to have been consistently threatened and blackmailed by the United States with nuclear weapons. This began during the war in 1951 and has continued down to the present. Discussion of this phenomenon in the American media is so rare as to be virtually nonexistent. The vast majority of Americans and even most well informed people know nothing about it. Yet North Korean leaders have lived for sixty-five years with a recurrent specter of instant nuclear annihilation by the United States.

“The armistice,” Professor Cumings argues, “was forged in the context of American nuclear threats, and sustained ever since by the same methods.” This article makes for compelling reading at a time of renewed tensions on the peninsula, with North Korea resuming nuclear tests and the United States vowing to deploy the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) missile system in South Korea.<sup>5</sup>

The third article, “Strait Talk: Youth-led Civil Society Dialogues Across the Taiwan Strait,” by conflict transformation scholar-practitioner Tatsushi Arai, analyzes patterns of inter-group dynamics among young Taiwanese and Mainland Chinese participants in semiannual “Strait Talk” peace dialogues facilitated by the author between 2005 and 2012. Through this intriguing case study, Professor Arai explores how Taiwanese and Mainland Chinese young adults understand the history of the conflict across the Taiwan Strait, “the multi-faceted ways [they]

perceive Chinese group identities and sovereignty pertaining to cross-Strait relations,” and “their capacity for empathizing with counter-parts from the other side of the Strait, even to the extent of crossing boundaries of political correctness within their own society.” The chapter ultimately presents this youth-led initiative as “a promising model of civil society exchange that builds on ongoing trends in political, economic, and cultural interactions across the Taiwan Strait.”<sup>6</sup>

These three articles are followed by a “Special Section on Water” that addresses security, justice, and sustainability issues. The section opens with “Water, Peace, and War: Confronting the Global Water Crisis,” by Brahma Chellaney, professor of strategic studies at the Center for Policy Research in New Delhi. Adapted from his most recent book, Professor Chellaney’s article persuasively argues that the “battles of tomorrow are likely to be over the most precious of all natural resources: water.” It therefore calls for building robust international water norms and rules as well as more effective multilateral institutions in order to alleviate emerging water conflicts. The second article is “Bringing Clean Water to Ellandoppu, India,” by Peter J. Coughlan, executive director of Water-Bridge Outreach and lecturer in environmental ethics at University of London. Professor Coughlan reports on the successful outcome of a water project that demonstrates how even small nonprofit organizations—“project by grassroots project working alongside others with local knowledge”—can assist residents of economically-challenged villages develop their own communities. An op-ed “Go Green Monday to Ditch the Draught,” by Katie Cantrell, executive director of the Factory Farming Awareness Coalition and U.S. program director for the Hong Kong-based Green Monday initiative, caps off the special section. Pointing out the limited impact of the usual measures residents in water-stressed California are exhorted to follow to reduce water consumption (*i.e.*, water lawns less frequently, take shorter showers, turn off the tap while brushing one’s teeth), Cantrell suggests another path. “By far the most effective way for consumers to decrease our water usage,” she explains, “is to eat less meat and dairy.”<sup>7</sup>

The inaugural issue of *Asia Pacific Peace Studies* concludes with a selection of reviews and policy commentaries. Though these pieces are much shorter than the aforementioned articles, they are packed with big ideas on an array of topical issues, including the critical role of public intellectuals for deliberative democracy; scientists and the obligation to embrace the moral imagination; intercultural perspectives on terrorism; the implication of the “Vatican’s new foreign policy” (that steers a course between Russia and the United States); and the hope that President Obama’s Hiroshima visit might serve as an opportunity to inspire a real debate in the United States about nuclear weapons. There is much food for thought here. I urge our readers not to miss this last section.

In closing, I would like to express my gratitude to mentors who have inspired and influenced *Asia Pacific Peace Studies*. First and foremost, I thank Dr. Barbara Bundy, former president of Dominican University and founding executive director of the Center for the Pacific Rim (CPR) at University of San Francisco. During my time as Kiriya Research Fellow at CPR, I imbibed Dr. Bundy's ambitious, expansive vision for studying and bridging the Pacific Rim—a vision that has profoundly influenced the character of the Asia Pacific Peace Studies Institute and its journal. I am likewise grateful to Dr. Sheila K. Johnson, Dr. Patrick Lloyd Hatcher, and the late Dr. Chalmers Johnson. They, together with Dr. Bundy, entrusted me with the responsibility for directing JPRI, an organization whose rich publications archive and wide affiliates network have served as essential foundations for building APPSI. I must also thank Dr. Gi-Wook Shin, director of the Walter H. Shorenstein Asia-Pacific Research Center at Stanford University, who appointed me associate and managing editor of the *Journal of Korean Studies* in 2004. Apprenticing in that capacity for several years provided the necessary experience to launch a new journal. Moreover, APPSI could not have been established at Holy Names University without encouragement and approval from its former president Dr. William J. Hynes, and other members of his cabinet—in particular, Dr. Lizbeth Martin, vice president for academic affairs. There are many other debts to acknowledge, but format limitations unfortunately preclude me from doing so here. I look forward to thanking more of our friends and supporters in upcoming issues of *Asia Pacific Peace Studies*.

## NOTES

1. Johan Galtung, a pioneer in the field of peace and conflict studies, posed a distinction between “negative peace” and “positive peace.” Whereas the former means the absence of war, the latter signifies the presence of important values such as favoring cooperation over confrontation and a commitment to justice, equality, and pluralism/diversity.
2. There are multiple definitions for the “Asia Pacific.” Some define the region as encompassing Northeast Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia, and Oceania. Others understand the term even more broadly—by including Russia, North America, Central America, and South America. For example, an organization that uses the latter definition is APEC, as indicated by a list of its member economies: Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, Chile, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Russia, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, United States, and Vietnam. The Asia Pacific in this broader sense is roughly equivalent to the scope of the “Pacific Rim.” *APPS* adopts this broad vision and furthermore will occasionally publish papers on places outside the Asia Pacific/Pacific Rim.

3. The network mentioned above is called the Bay Area AsiaPacific Studies Innovation Consortium—or simply, “BAASIC.” A multi-disciplinary group, current members include specialists in anthropology, environmental studies, film and media studies, history, performing arts, philosophy, political science, and religious studies.
4. Karen J. Coates and Jerry Redfern, “Eternal Harvest: The Legacy of American Bombs in Laos,” *Asia Pacific Peace Studies* 1, no. 1 (Summer 2016), 7-25.
5. Bruce Cumings, “Not War/Not Peace: the Korean Armistice Under a Nuclear Shadow,” *Asia Pacific Peace Studies* 1, no. 1 (Summer 2016), 27-43. Quoted passage on page 28.
6. Tatsushi Arai, “Strait Talk: Youth-led Civil Society Dialogues Across the Taiwan Strait,” *Asia Pacific Peace Studies* 1, no. 1 (Summer 2016), 45-68. Quoted passages on pages 47 and 48.
7. “Special Section on Water: Security, Justice, Sustainability,” *Asia Pacific Peace Studies* 1, no. 1 (Summer 2016), 69-92. Quoted passages on pages 71, 90, and 91.