

**Institute of Chinese Studies**



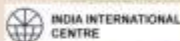
**Centre for Policy Research**



**Indian Council of Social  
Science Research**



**India International Centre**



**International Conference**

# **India, China and the Emergence of Post-War Post-Colonial Asia, 1945-50**

10:00 AM, 17-18 MARCH 2017

**India International Centre,  
Conference Room II,  
New Delhi**

---

**International Conference**

**“India, China and the Emergence  
of Post-War Post-Colonial Asia,  
1945-50”**

Organised by



**THE INSTITUTE OF CHINESE STUDIES (ICS)**

in collaboration with the



**CENTRE FOR POLICY RESEARCH (CPR)**



**INDIAN COUNCIL OF SOCIAL SCIENCE  
RESEARCH (ICSSR)**



INDIA INTERNATIONAL  
CENTRE

& the **INDIA INTERNATIONAL CENTRE (IIC)**

**Venue: IIC, New Delhi, Conference Room II,**

# ABSTRACTS



## **Post-colonial Visions and State Strategies: Soft Power or the Imperialism of Nation-states?**

**Prasenjit Duara**  
Duke University

**C**hina and India emerged in the post-WWII era guided by the ideal of historical justice opposed to the previous era of imperialism. Yet neither nation lacked a sense that it had a historical destiny drawn from its ‘glorious past’ to dominate the new cultural order in Asia. Second, and perhaps even more importantly, the imperatives of state power in a competitive system of nation-states frequently exercised a powerful shaping influence on how cultural power/influence would be extended. Indeed, decolonizing nation-states are an excellent test-case to explore the relations between emancipatory rhetoric (anti-imperialist in this case) and the felt imperatives of state power.

I will undertake to unravel the tense relationship between these two variables in India and China from the 1940s until the late 1950. It is not useful to see rhetoric merely as a cloak for expanding state power; rather we need to understand how this classic tension is folded into new visions of inter-state relations (exemplified by the doctrine of *Panchashila*) and new forms of cultural power (exemplified retrospectively by the notion of ‘soft power’) in the era of nation-states and the Cold War.



## **Pan-Asianism in Times of Nation States: India, China, and the Failure of the Asian Relations Conference**

**Tansen Sen**  
Baruch College  
The City University of New York

**T**he Asian Relations Conference held in 1947 emerged from the discourse of pan-Asianism that became popular in the early twentieth century. Despite the fact that Japanese imperialism in the 1920s and 1930s had rendered the notion of "one Asia" unrealistic, Jawaharlal Nehru, then the head of the interim Indian government, attempted to connect the decolonized/decolonizing states of Asia (and Africa) through, what he perceived as, common cultural heritage. The dispute between the interim government of India and the Nationalist government in China over the status of Tibet at the Conference revealed that the ideals of pan-Asianism bonding had little relevance to the territorial and nationalist concerns of Asian polities. Especially during the early stages of decolonization what seemed paramount to these emerging Asian nation states was not the historical cultural affinities but the process of territorial reclamation and integration. This paper will contend that the dispute over the status Tibet at the Asian Relations Conference not only rendered the meeting a failure, but also marked the beginning of mutual distrust and suspicion over territorial claims and expansion between India and China. It will also argue that the Conference resulted in the mistrust of Jawaharlal Nehru among the Nationalist and Communist leaders of China and shaped the subsequent six decades of India-China relations.



## **Afro-Asian transformations: Cold War afterlives of the 1947 Asian Relations Conference**

**Carolien Stolte**  
Leiden University, Netherlands

**W**riters and observers have long considered the 1947 Asian Relations Conference (ARC) a predecessor to the 1955 intergovernmental Conference of Asian-African Countries at Bandung. But eleven short days prior to ‘Bandung’, a Conference of Asian Countries was convened in New Delhi that resembled the ARC much more closely. In sharp contrast to Bandung, the 1955 Delhi conference was nongovernmental, included public sessions, and was attended by thousands of people. Over the next five years, the Delhi gathering’s success in terms of attendance, coverage, and interest from writers, poets and artists, gave rise to a set of additional conferences across Africa and Asia. It was also instrumental in the formation of the Afro-Asian People’s Solidarity Organization (AAPSO), of which several founders had also attended Delhi. In contrast to Bandung, this movement sought bottom-up, mass-based support for decolonization through popular manifestations of international solidarity. This paper is therefore an attempt to rethink the afterlives of the Asian Relations Conference by focusing not on interstate diplomacy but on more popular and self-organized expressions of the much-famed ‘Bandung Spirit’.



## **Collaboration: Aftermath of Wartime Support for the INA among Indians in China**

**Ms. Nirmola Sharma**  
Doctoral Candidate  
University of Delhi

**T**he Indian National Army (INA) was established in Singapore with the help of Japan in 1942 after which branches of the INA were also formed in several Chinese cities which had an immigrant Indian population. During the war period the INA had a considerable following among Indians in China and was largely instrumental in the radicalization of the diasporic Indian community.

This paper seeks to investigate the fate of the INA in China in the aftermath of the war since the INA in China existed under the patronage of Japanese occupation authorities. What happened to the leading members of the INA in China after the war? What impact did this have on the relations between India and China and on the attitude of Chinese towards Indians in a crucial phase of Sino-Indian relations in the period just before India's independence and the Chinese Revolution of 1949?



## **The Tussle over Consulates in Kashgar & Kalimpong: Emerging Fault-lines in India-China Relations, 1947-1949**

**Narayani Basu**  
Independent Researcher

**T**his paper aims to date the origins of the bilateral divergences between India and China to 1947-1949. It traces the development of a complex four-way equation between India, China, Great Britain and Pakistan, in the wake of the geopolitical realities that unfolded during the course of the Second World War. The differences that developed

were given momentum and shape by the decline of the British Raj in India, as well as the twin catalysts of the transfer of power and the subsequent Partition of India and the birth of Pakistan. This paper studies the impact of Independence and Partition on bilateral ties between India and China --- reflected in a diplomatic wrangle over the question of consulates in Kalimpong and Kashgar between 1947 and 1949.



## **From Geopolitics to Cold War and Beyond**

**Madhavan K. Palat**

Editor, *Selected works of Jawaharlal Nehru*

**G**eopolitics was the discourse on the competition for the dominion of the world from a single centre of power. Elaborated in Germany, Great Britain, and the USA from the 1870s to the 1940s, its doctrinal core consisted in: 1) the unity of world politics leading to the competition for domination, and 2) the principal agent of the competition being the global power bloc or the Grossraum. As such it mutated into Cold War theory after 1945; after 1991 only the concept of a power bloc survives, as American hegemony has eliminated competition. Throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century and beyond, the global power bloc was imagined as: 1) the geographical, Atlantic vs Eurasian; 2) the historical, capitalism vs socialism; 3) the cultural entity civilization; and 4) the biologically defined racial, and more specifically, Aryan empire. Curiously, the term geopolitics has now dwindled into meaning little more than regional rivalries and coercion.



## **India-China Post-War Cultural Engagement and Diplomacy: Towards a Framework for Future?**

**Sabaree Mitra**

Professor

Jawaharlal Nehru University

**T**he period between the end of World War II in 1945, and the establishment of diplomatic relations between Republic of India and the People's Republic of China in 1950, is often dismissed as unrealistic and untenable in the geo-political framework of contemporary world. Yet this is an extremely important period as it has been widely regarded to signify a culmination of the anti-imperialist solidarity discourse based on shared historical experiences. In India-China cultural relations, on one hand, the period witnessed a rich exchange of scholars, and on the other, there were exchange of cultural delegations between both sides that were milestones in carrying forward the people-to-people exchange. Taking the approach of “connected histories”, this paper will try to locate the encounters and linkages that have been facilitated by these exchanges and see if these exchanges were able to lay down a framework for mutual cultural enrichment in the decades to come.



## **The Science in Asian Relations: Xu Ren 徐仁 and China-India scientific contact before and after the Asian Relations Conference of 1947**

**Arunabh Ghosh**

Harvard University

**I**n this paper I explore Chinese paleobotanist Xu Ren's (徐仁, 1910-1992) long and varied association with scientific activity in India.



Widely regarded as the founder (奠基人) of the study of paleobotany in China, Xu arrived in Lucknow in late 1943 to work with the renowned Indian paleobotanist Birbal Sahni (1891-1949). He subsequently received a PhD in 1946 from Lucknow University and from 1948 to 1952 served as a professor at the then recently established Birbal Sahni Institute of Paleobotany. Xu eventually returned to the People's Republic of China in 1952, where he carved out a distinguished career at the Chinese Academy of Sciences. A study of Xu's time in India, which spans both the end of the Second World War as well as the Asian Relations Conference in 1947, can help us unpack not just the wartime exigencies of scientific activity in Asia, but also points to the new kinds of possibilities for inter-Asian scientific cooperation that emerged as the continent began to experience rapid decolonization and restructuring after 1945.



## **Postwar Games in Xinjiang- The Hunt for Keys to China's Backdoor**

**Atul Bhardwaj**

Adjunct Fellow, Institute of Chinese Studies (ICS),  
Delhi

**T**his paper examines the postwar involvement of great powers in Xinjiang, and its impact on India. The compulsions of war in Stalingrad led to Soviet withdrawal from Xinjiang in 1943. For the first time since the Soviet intervention in 1934, the Xinjiang affairs returned under complete Chinese control. However, the Chinese could not contain rebellion in Xinjiang and had to sign a pact of friendship and amity with Soviet Union in the same month (August 1945) in which the Japanese collapsed. The weakening of Soviet hold over Xinjiang was an opportunity that the British could not fully exploit. However, they gave lessons on the strategic importance of Xinjiang in controlling the Central Asian trade to both the Indians and the Americans, who operated a military base in India during the war.

Prior to the complete fall of Chiang-Kai-sheik, the nationalists once again knocked at the Soviet doors for a trade agreement in January 1949.

Notwithstanding, its impact on Chinese communists, the Soviets signed the treaty. The Americans however saw the westernmost Chinese province as a strategic tool that could be used divide a wedge between the Chinese and Soviet communists. The paper looks at archival files and media reports of the period to examine the play of great power strategy in the region.



## **Tibet on the Chessboard of Imperialism of the Nation State**

**Tsering Shakya**

Institute of Asian Research, University of British  
Columbia

**T**he anti-colonial voices in the first half of the 20th century did not go unnoticed in Tibet. In the 1940s, a Tibetan official asked the then British representative in Lhasa, as the British were leaving India, whether it meant the new government of India would return Tibetan territories annexed by the British. Similarly, the Tibetans wrote to the Communist government of China for the return of territories annexed by the previous Chinese regimes. The presence of Tibet at the Asian Relations conference showed the competing Asian nationalistic thoughts that govern inter-Asian relations to the present. My paper will explore the Tibetan participation at the Asian Relations Conference, and what the Tibetans had envisaged as the way to assert Tibet's international personality as an independent nation. Despite the anti-imperialist and colonial rhetoric of the emerging Asian nations, the new Asian nations sought to protect and define their territory and nation largely drawn by Western colonial rule.



## **Issues in India-Tibet-China Relations, 1945-50: a View from the National Archives of India**

**Madhavi Thampi**

Honorary Fellow

Institute of Chinese Studies, New Delhi

**T**ibet was a central concern in the evolving relationship between India and China in the immediate post-war years. Among the files related to China in the National Archives of India in this period, a very large proportion are on the subject of Tibet, its status, its relations with China, India, Britain and the United States, and on the complicated politics within Tibet. Efforts by the Tibetan authorities to define their status in the post-war period were immensely complicated by major developments outside, including the end of British rule in India and the decline of British power more generally, the civil war in China leading to the victory of the communists, and the growing American presence in this part of the world. This paper will take a preliminary look at some of the materials in the National Archives of India related to Tibet in this period which throw light on these and related phenomena.



## ICS PUBLICATIONS

ICS *Monograph*

ICS *Working Paper*

ICS *Occasional papers*

ICS *Analysis*



8/17 Sri Ram Road, Delhi-110054, INDIA  
Tel: +91-11-23938202, Fax: +91-11-23992166  
E-mail: [info@icsin.org](mailto:info@icsin.org), Site [www.icsin.org](http://www.icsin.org)