

Racism Under Pax Americana: Okinawa, Hawai'i, Postcolonial Koreans in Japan



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In recent years, many commentators have bemoaned the dissolution of the liberal capitalist world order that has been called “Pax Americana.” In this logic, the occupations of Germany and Japan have been declared triumphs that inaugurated a rules-based global order that lasted for more than seventy years. The United States has been figured as the “global good cop” that insured peace, security, and prosperity throughout the planet, so that its recent decline on the world stage and a supposed isolationist mood is now being countered by new visions calling forth another world order dependent upon the massive militarization of minor and major powers throughout the world. This panel begins with the acknowledgement that the period of Pax Americana was far from peaceful and non-violent for most of the formerly colonized, indigenous, and racialized peoples of the world. Despite national and state/provincial celebrations of inclusion, multiculturalism, and reconciliation, our three panelists with expertise across the Asia-Pacific—including on Okinawa, Hawai'i, and postcolonial Koreans in Japan—reflect on the limits of this discourse on Pax Americana.