



Asia as Method: Toward Deimperialization

Kuan-Hsing Chen

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Centering his analysis in the dynamic forces of modern East Asian history, Kuan-Hsing Chen recasts cultural studies as a politically urgent global endeavor. He argues that the intellectual and subjective work of decolonization begun across East Asia after the Second World War was stalled by the cold war. At the same time, the work of deimperialization became impossible to imagine in imperial centers such as Japan and the United States. Chen contends that it is now necessary to resume those tasks, and that decolonization, deimperialization, and an intellectual undoing of the cold war must proceed simultaneously. Combining postcolonial studies, globalization studies, and the emerging field of “Asian studies in Asia,” he insists that those on both sides of the imperial divide must assess the conduct, motives, and consequences of imperial histories.

Chen is one of the most important intellectuals working in East Asia today; his writing has been influential in Taiwan, South Korea, Hong Kong, Japan, Singapore, and mainland China for the past fifteen years. As a founding member of the Inter-Asia Cultural Studies Society and its journal, he has helped to initiate change in the dynamics and intellectual orientation of the region, building a network that has facilitated inter-Asian connections. *Asia as Method* encapsulates Chen’s vision and activities within the increasingly “inter-referencing” East Asian intellectual community and charts necessary new directions for cultural studies.

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