



Cold War Crucible: The Korean Conflict and the Postwar World

Hajimu Masuda

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What was the Cold War? A simple definition might be: a 20th century international confrontation between the Soviet Union and the United States, which involved, first, Europe, and then Asia, Africa, and Latin America, eventually dividing the world into two camps. The key players in this global conflict are generally identified as a number of high-ranking policymakers, including Harry S. Truman, Winston Churchill, and Joseph Stalin. We know this story. However, the full story is not so simple. It is time to change our ways of thinking about the Cold War.

Masuda Hajimu's *Cold War Crucible* is an inquiry into this peculiar nature of the Cold War. It examines not only centers of policymaking, but seeming aftereffects of Cold War politics during the Korean War: Suppression of counterrevolutionaries in China, the White Terror in Taiwan, the Red Purge in Japan, and McCarthyism in the United States. Such purges were not merely end results of the Cold War, **Masuda** argues, but forces that brought the Cold War into being, as ordinary people throughout the world strove to silence disagreements and restore social order in the chaotic post-WWII era under the mantle of an imagined global confrontation. Revealing social functions and popular participation, *Cold War Crucible* highlights ordinary people's roles in making and maintaining the "reality" of the Cold War, raising the question of what the Cold War really was.

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