



THE RISE OF ASIA
IN GLOBAL HISTORY AND PERSPECTIVE
LA MONTEE DE L'ASIE
EN HISTOIRE ET PERSPECTIVE GLOBALES

COVID-19
from Asia to the world:
what assessment and
what perspective for
a common future?

INTERNATIONAL AND
INTERDISCIPLINARY
CONFERENCE
Paris and Le Havre
February 9-11, 2022



In collaboration with
Master's Degree in Management and International Trade – Exchanges with Asia
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Université Le Havre Normandie

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COVID-19 FROM ASIA TO THE WORLD: WHAT ASSESSMENT AND WHAT PERSPECTIVE FOR A COMMON FUTURE?

INTERNATIONAL AND INTERDISCIPLINARY CONFERENCE

Paris, February 9, 2022

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<https://bandungspirit.org/>

CALL FOR PAPERS AND FOR PARTICIPATION

The conference is open to individual and group paper presentations. Those willing to present their papers are invited to submit their proposals until September 30, 2021. The selected proposals will be communicated to their authors from October to November 2021.

See the GUIDELINES FOR PRESENTER CANDIDATES inside.

POSSIBILITY OF WEB CONFERENCING

In case of impossibility to organise physically the conference in February 2022, due to the covid-19 pandemic or other reasons, it is possible to switch the physical conference to a web conferencing. In case of cancellation of the February 2022 conference, it is possible for those who wish to transfer their abstracts to the BANDUNG-BELGRADE-HAVANA conference that will take place in Indonesia on October 24-29, 2022. The switch or cancellation of the conference will be announced towards the end of December 2021.

INTRODUCTION

"WE DO NOT WANT A COME BACK TO THEIR NORMALITY since the neoliberal and productivist normality is the problem"

(ATTAC France, *Coronavirus : une révolution écologique et sociale pour construire le monde d'après*, le lundi 23 mars 2020).

THE GREATEST LESSON from the Covid challenge of the past year and more is that the lifestyle that has been promoted worldwide during the colonial epoch and continued in the post-colonial years and accentuated during the neo-liberal era since the 1990s has made the entire humankind vulnerable to much suffering, poorer sections more so, not only in normal times, but also in times of health crises.

[...]

This lifestyle has three specific characteristics: Firstly, humans are seen basically as consumers constantly increasing their personal needs, rather than producers who use their labour in harmony with nature for the benefit of all. Secondly, using energy generated from all kinds of sources -fossil fuel to nuclear- humans have been pushed to inculcate a notion of comfortable life that has been associated with the history of automation and urbanisation. Thirdly, society's progress has been defined by transformation of agricultural economy to industrial economy, within that from manufacture to services, from there moving on to knowledge society with higher and higher silicon technology and artificial intelligence. Accordingly labour was graded, manual labour degraded, regarded as less valuable than mental and high-tech labour. Agriculture and many traditional and indigenous occupations were regarded as signs of backwardness.

[...]

The Covid moment has brought to the fore the dimensions of the civilizational crisis that humanity faces today. Rather than recognise this, the rulers of all countries are seeking, even claiming 'triumph in the war against Covid-19' and are anxious to restore their favourite economic paths through the usual monopolies and the market. Bandung community must, on the other hand, insist on a perspective of humility of the human race in the face of nature, use the available scientific and traditional knowledge by the widest global consultation with respect for all sources from all over the world and build democratic solidarities empowering local communities to creatively transform the existing conditions towards greater equality, freedom and mutual happiness for one and all.

(Manoranjan Mohanty, THOUGHTS ON BANDUNG DAY 2021: The Covid Moment and the Civilisational Crisis, <https://bandungspirit.org>)

PANDEMICS AND THE CLIMATE have taken place on centre stage. This is not the first time they entered into history. In an excellent book, Kyle Harper discusses their role in the fall of the Western Roman Empire and shows how they revealed Rome's loss of resilience. This example allows us to have a free imagination in this time of uncertainty, which leads us to reflect on the loss of resilience and the fall of the American Empire as well as the displacement of the centre of the world and the rise of Asia. And also to consider that we are currently living in a crisis of civilisation, which will be long. It places on the horizon the overtaking of capitalism, while the mode of production that will succeed is not determined and could also be unequal. This crisis leads us to look back at the understanding on transitions between civilisations and to re-situate the collapse, which is not the end of history, as a passage towards the emergence of new civilisations

(Gustave Massiah, *Le rôle des pandémies et du climat dans la crise de civilisation. À partir du livre de Kyle Harper : l'empire romain s'est effondré*, ATTAC Newsletter, June 26, 2020).

HISTORY HAS turned a corner. The era of Western domination is ending. The resurgence of Asia in world affairs and the global economy, which was happening before the emergence of covid-19, will be cemented in a new world order after the crisis. The deference to Western societies, which was the norm in the 19th and 20th centuries, will be replaced by a growing respect and admiration for East Asian ones. The pandemic could thus mark the start of the Asian century.

The crisis highlights the contrast between the competent responses of East Asian governments (notably China, South Korea and Singapore) and the incompetent responses of Western governments (such as Italy, Spain, France, Britain and America). The far lower death rates suffered by East Asian countries is a lesson to all. They reflect not just medical capabilities, but also the quality of governance and the cultural confidence of their societies.

[...]

But that may just be a start. The world after the crisis may see a hobbled West and a bolder China. We can expect that China will use its power. Paradoxically, a China-led order could turn out to be a more “democratic” order. China doesn’t want to export its model. It can live with a diverse multi-polar world. The coming Asian century need not be uncomfortable for the West or the rest of the world.

(Kishore Mahbubani, The West’s incompetent response to the pandemic will hasten the power-shift to the east, The Economist, Apr 20th 2020)

WHATEVER THE SCENARIOS, peaceful growth or full of turmoil, the rise of Asia, if it continues on the way it grows as it is now, will lead the world to a planetary catastrophe. Because all the rising Asian countries follow exactly the same model of growth of Western Galaxy based on economism, productivism, consumerism, materialism. This model puts on the top of priorities material productivity and profit, transforms nature into commercial commodities, pushes people to be greedy consumers. Rural exodus and urbanisation will continue. People live more and more in urban than rural areas. Cities become centres of concentration of people, buildings, motorised vehicles, goods, gadgets... but also rubbish, garbage, trash, waste, pollution. The urban growth of Beijing, Shanghai, Calcutta, Bombay, Jakarta, Bangkok, Manila... show similar trend: more people, more buildings, more cars, more commercial centres... Consequently, this model threatens the survival of the planet, because it would need natural resources of several planets if the whole world follows the model.

So, what type of society and what model of growth for a global future? Will it be post-capitalist, post-productivist, post-consumerist global society?

It is another story to invent. And the Covid-19-generated global crisis may help us to do it. The pandemic has given us a lesson: it is possible to stop the capitalist-productivist-consumerist machinery. We have a cease-fire now and we have to use it intelligently!

(Darwis Khudori, “The rise of Asia and the polarisation of Global Forces: Western galaxy and Bandung constellation - A sketch of ideas for a global future”, Defend Democracy Press, 15/05/2020).

The quotations above suggest the following points:

- 1) We are living in a crisis of civilisation provoked or accelerated by the pandemic and the climate change, crisis that may be seen as a transition from capitalist mode of production-based towards another; the new one is however unknown in advance.
- 2) Asia plays an important if not leading role towards a new global civilisation;
- 3) There is a risk that the rise of Asia leads to a planetary catastrophe since it is based on a model of growth created and developed by the West based on economism, productivism, consumerism, materialism, patriarchy, model denounced as the root problem.

So, how does this “crisis of civilisation” manifest in different fields and different localities? In what way the pandemic affects peoples, societies, nations, states? How do they manage the pandemic? Do Asian countries perform better than others? Does the pandemic constitute a point of “bifurcation” (Immanuel Wallerstein), a moment of “delinking” (Samir Amin), towards a “global rebalancing” or a “global restructuring” (Manoranjan Mohanty)? What “status quo” and what “transformation” following the pandemic? Are there signs of changes towards a new global post-capitalist, post-productivist, post-consumerist, post-materialist, post-patriarcal civilisation?

As a matter of indication, major changes in the following fields may help us to answer those questions:

- 1) Gender and women’s issues (feminist movements, ecofeminism, gender justice, “depatriarcalisation”, LGBT, MeToo...)
- 2) Ecology (climate change, pandemic, green cities, green capitalism, eco-renewable energy, plastic, waste, pollutions, eco-socialism, vegetarianism, veganism...)

- 3) Digital universe (information, communication, media, GAFAM, Ali Baba, cryptocurrency, fake news, artificial intelligence, cyber-economy, cyber-crimes, cyber-war...)
- 4) Biotechnology (medical-agricultural-industrial-environmental-biotechnology, genetic engineering, cloning, GMO, vaccines...)
- 5) Demography (national-regional-international uneven growth, aging societies, over population, ethnic-religious-conflicts, urbanisation, migration...)
- 6) New phase of decolonisation (counter hegemony, decolonisation of mind, Black lives matter, Palestine lives matter, anti-racism, anti-occupation, anti-apartheid, anti-war...)

It is to assess the state of the world under Covid-19 pandemic and to catch the perspective of a common future that the 6th edition of the Rise of Asia Conference Series is organised. It encourages the participation of scholars from a wide range of scientific disciplines (area studies, cultural studies, ecology, economics, geography, history, humanities, languages, management, political and social sciences...) and practitioners from diverse professional fields (business, civil society, education, enterprise, government, management, parliament, public policy, social and solidarity movements...) as well as artists and writers, based in diverse geographical areas (Africa, North, Central and South America, Australia, Asia, the Caribbean, Europe, Oceania, Pacific...).

GUIDELINES FOR PRESENTER CANDIDATES

The selection of presenters is based on the abstract and the basic personal data of the presenter candidates in respect to the following dates:

1. Deadline of abstract submission: September 30, 2021
2. Announce of the selected presenters: October-November 2021
3. Deadline of full paper submission for publication project will be decided following the conference.

The abstract is limited to approximately 300 words (figures, tables, and references should not be included in the abstract) accompanied by basic personal data of the author(s) including:

- Full name and surname
- Gender (male/female/other)
- University title (if any)
- Specialism (if any)
- Professional category (lecturer/researcher or activist/practitioner or both)
- Institution/organisation/company
- Function in institution/organisation/company
- Full address (physical/postal address, phone and fax numbers, email)

The abstract with basic personal data is to be submitted online at:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeOHfabdK0QrXJo86I85S6i85cfmydy1egoIeIFzgyHjM2ixA/viewform?vc=0&c=0&w=1&flr=0&usp=mail_form_link

FINANCING

In case of physical conference, the organising committee does not provide travel grant to any participant. The presenters as well as simple participants of the conference are supposed to find the necessary fund for their own participation (visa, international and national transport, accommodation).