

2026 CKS Colloquium

THE OTHER LEGACY OF THE KOREAN WAR: OKINAWA AND THE FEAR OF WORLD WAR THREE



March 3 (Tuesday) 3:30 - 4:50PM



Zoom - [Register Here!](#)



ABOUT THE TALK

During the Korean War (25 June 1950–27 July 1953), Okinawa Prefecture underwent profound political and social transformations. In the aftermath of Japan's defeat in World War II, Okinawa shifted from an "occupied enemy territory" to a territory placed under exclusive and indefinite U.S. military administration, as formalized in the 1951 San Francisco Peace Treaty. This talk explores how, in the early years of the Korean War, Okinawa became an emotional community shaped by pervasive anxiety and uncertainty. Many residents feared that a third world war might erupt and that the small archipelago—strategically vital to U.S. military operations—would become an early target of Communist attack. By examining local experiences, political structures, and everyday life during this period, the talk highlights how global conflict reshaped Okinawa's society, identity, and relationship to both the United States and Japan.

GUEST SPEAKER

Dr. Pedro Iacobelli

Universidad de los Andes, Chile

Pedro Iacobelli (Ph.D., Australian National University, 2015) teaches nineteenth- and twentieth-century history, postcolonial studies, and global history. His research focuses on transregional historical connections across the Asia-Pacific world. He is an Associate Professor and Chair of the History Department at Universidad de los Andes, Chile. He is the author of *Postwar Emigration to South America from Japan and the Ryukyu Islands* (2017), and co-editor of several volumes, including *Transnational Japan as History: Empire, Migration, and Social Movements* (2015), *Rethinking Postwar Okinawa: Beyond American Occupation* (2017), and *The Japanese Empire and Latin America* (2023).

