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WAR CRIMES TRIALS IN THE  
WAKE OF DECOLONIZATION  
AND COLD WAR IN ASIA,  
1945-1956

Justice in Time of Turmoil

Edited by  
Kerstin von Lingen



## Palgrave Macmillan

1st  
edition

Softcover reprint of the  
original 1st ed. 2016, XIII,  
290 p. 13 illus.

### Printed book

Softcover

### Printed book

Softcover

ISBN 978-3-319-82710-0

£ 22,99 | CHF 29,50 | 24,99 € |

27,49 € (A) | 26,74 € (D)

Available

### Discount group

Palgrave Standard (P5)

### Product category

Contributed volume

### Series

World Histories of Crime, Culture and  
Violence

## History : Asian History

von Lingen, Kerstin (Ed.), Heidelberg University, Heidelberg, Germany

# War Crimes Trials in the Wake of Decolonization and Cold War in Asia, 1945-1956

## Justice in Time of Turmoil

- Explores the contradictory intentions embodied in bringing perpetrators to justice
- Offers a fresh perspective on justice in Asia
- Draws attention to the Asian dimension in the history in international humanitarian law

This book investigates the political context and intentions behind the trialling of Japanese war criminals in the wake of World War Two. After the Second World War in Asia, the victorious Allies placed around 5,700 Japanese on trial for war crimes. Ostensibly crafted to bring perpetrators to justice, the trials intersected in complex ways with the great issues of the day. They were meant to finish off the business of World War Two and to consolidate United States hegemony over Japan in the Pacific, but they lost impetus as Japan morphed into an ally of the West in the Cold War. Embattled colonial powers used the trials to bolster their authority against nationalist revolutionaries, but they found the principles of international humanitarian law were sharply at odds with the inequalities embodied in colonialism. Within nationalist movements, local enmities often overshadowed the reckoning with Japan. And hovering over the trials was the critical question: just what was justice for the Japanese in a world where all sides had committed atrocities?

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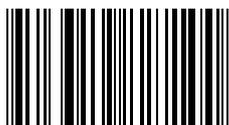
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ISBN 978-3-319-82710-0 / BIC: HBJF / SPRINGER NATURE: SC715000

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