

## PANEL 3

### Connecting Asia through Inter-Asian Scholarship

#### 1. A new context of Humanitarian assistance: selective acceptance and localization in Indonesia

**Bo-kyeung Gu**, Research Professor, Korea Institute for ASEAN Studies, Busan University of Foreign Studies

The international humanitarian system has long been criticized for marginalizing groups who are from crisis-affected areas, often referred to as “Local” humanitarian actors. Despite the fact that local humanitarian actors have more knowledge of local context and culture than international actors, there are many historical data on unilateral actions by international actors without cultural understanding of disaster areas.

Indonesia has one of the highest rates of natural disasters in the world. The archipelagic nation is made up of 17,000 islands and lies in the Pacific Ring of Fire, an area in the Pacific Ocean where at least 150 active volcanoes are found, resulting in frequent earthquakes and volcanic eruptions. Additionally, tsunamis, floods, landslides, drought and forest fires is also relatively high compared to other countries and historical disasters have been occur around for centuries. Between 1815 and 2014, there was 13.172 times disaster happened and killed 291.427 people in Indonesia. While the suffering disasters, Indonesians can have had Indigenous knowledge and religious perception of disasters and community-based disaster management from their accumulated experiences. But often international actors have provided humanitarian assistance that ignores their culture and the local system. In particular, when the Aceh tsunami hit in 2004, more than 80% of Indonesia's population was Muslim, ignoring religious doctrines and supporting food they did not eat and items they could not use. Indonesia, which has had many negative experiences of international humanitarian aid, rejected international humanitarian aid then began selective acceptance after the Sulawesi earthquake in 2018.

The international humanitarian actors(system) need cultural understanding of disaster areas and researching on the region for more effective and efficient humanitarian support. To do this, the role of the professional area scholar is important. This study aims to research Indonesia's traditional disaster context and management, then find out an effective humanitarian assistance way and Importance of Regional Studies for locally led humanitarian response. The research based on a survey of 160 indigenous people in Jakarta and Bali and in-depth interview.

**Bo Kyeung Gu** is Research Professor in Korea Institute for ASEAN Studies of Busan University of Foreign Studies. She leads Maritime ASEAN research at the KIAS, especially focusing on ‘BIMP-EAGA(Brunei-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines ASEAN Growth area)’ which is a ASEAN’S Subregional cooperation initiative. She earned a PhD in International area studies and cooperation at the Pusan National University. Her specialities are Maritime ASEAN, Indonesia Regional and culture, Development studies. Recent publication is “A Study on ICT Cooperation between Korea and ASEAN Subregions(2023)”, “Human Resource Development in BIMP-EAGA: Current State and Prospects (2023)”, “Institutionalization Process and Implications of ASEAN Subregions: The case of BIMP-EAGA (2022)” and "Natural disasters and Perception of Natural hazards in Indonesia since the 19th century: Selective Acceptance and Localization of Humanitarian Assistance(2021)”

## **2. Raising “Home” Scholars of Southeast Asian Studies in South Korea**

**Sinae Hyun**, Research Professor, Institute for East Asian Studies, Sogang University

Will the area studies decline in the age of globalization? The presentation will reflect on the discourses around the identity and sustainability of Southeast Asian Studies in the western world since the Second World War and compare them to those of Southeast Asian studies in South Korea. Through the reflection on the anachronistic parallel of the development of Southeast Asian studies in the Western and Asian spheres, this presentation aims at studying the common problems and resolutions for sustaining the area studies, as well as the ways in which each region and country have tried to instill their own identities into the area studies.

The presentation consists of two parts. The first part will briefly survey the debates around "autonomous history", regional identity, and the “Thailand controversy” to better understand in what context the area studies crisis emerged in the 1990s. It will also discuss the rise and role of “indigenous” and “home” scholars in the area studies and how they have responded to the so-called “Asianization of Asian Studies”. The second part will use these historical discourses as a lens to view Korean Southeast Asian studies. Starting with the examination of the beginning of the area studies in Korea and the debates around research methodologies and approaches, it will interrogate the feasibility of taking the “Korean perspectives” in Southeast Asian studies

**Sinae Hyun** is a research professor at the Institute for East Asian Studies at Sogang University, Seoul, specializing in the Cold War, nationalism, and Southeast Asian studies. Her book ‘Indigenizing the Cold War’ (2023) surveys the history of the Thai Border Patrol Police and shows how the Thai ruling elite used the American Cold War foreign policies to their cause. She is currently preparing a book manuscript focusing on the histories of American Protestant missionaries in Southeast Asia and their dealings with overlapping empires of Britain, China, and "Others".

## **3. Historicizing Southeast Asian Oral Literature: An Exploration of Inter-Disciplinary and Comparative Asian Approaches**

**Kisho Tsuchiya**, Assistant Professor, Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University

In the field of Island Southeast Asian history, the dependency to external historical sources has been a dilemma for all historians who aimed to reconstruct the past from the Southeast Asian people’s perspective. Regarding the use of oral literature in the field, historians have made reservations despite the common understanding of its importance in reconstructing the people’s worldviews. One constant problem is the difficulty in determining the historical periods and contexts when those oral traditions were made and remade. In the past few decades, however, we have seen significant advances in Asian Studies in Asia and more generally in social sciences such as archaeology and historical linguistics. Some of their findings provide useful evidence and methods to identify rough historical timings when certain oral traditions developed in particular locations. This presentation explores a methodology of determining

rough historical contexts of oral literature based on recently determined timeline of human and animal migrations, transitions in material culture as well as inter-Asian comparisons (East Timor, the Philippines, Indonesia and Japan). As a whole, the presentation calls for a more horizontal conversations/citation across different academies and disciplines towards new Southeast Asian Studies/history in our age.

**Kisho Tsuchiya** is an assistant professor at the CSEAS, Kyoto University. He is a Singapore-trained historian and Southeast Asian Area specialist working on East Timor and the Philippines. His first book, *Emplacing East Timor: Regime Change and Knowledge Production, 1850s-2010s* will be soon published from the University of Hawaii Press. During 2009-10, he served the United Nations' Electoral Support Team in Timor-Leste.

### **Discussant**

**Caroline S. Hau**, Professor, Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University

**Caroline S. Hau** is Professor at the Center for Southeast Asian Studies at Kyoto University. Her most recent book is *Siting Postcoloniality: Critical Perspectives from the East Asian Sinosphere* (Duke University Press), co-edited with Pheng Cheah.

### **Discussant and Moderator**

**Tatsuki Kataoka**, Professor, Graduate School of Asian and African Area Studies, Kyoto University

**Tatsuki Kataoka** graduated Tsukuba University (Bachelor of Social Sciences) before he obtained Masters Degree from Tsukuba and Kyushu University, and Doctoral Degree from Kyushu University. He has conducted his fieldwork among the Hill Tribes and the Chinese immigrants of Thailand for the study of culture and religion. Currently he is interested in folk beliefs outside institutionalized Buddhism in Thailand and Japan.