



## Young Researchers' Workshop on Politics, Culture, and Migration in Southeast Asia

A joint activity of the Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University  
“Toward Sustainable Humanosphere in Southeast Asia” Research Program  
and the Asian Core Program of the Japan Society for the Promotion of  
Science and the Graduate Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, National Chi  
Nan University

8 November 2013

Tonan Tei (rm. 201), Inamori Foundation Building

Center for Southeast Asian Studies

Kyoto University

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This international workshop aims to train PhD-level students, particularly those who are working on their dissertations, to make public presentations in English and prepare their papers for publication in English-language journals. The workshop is organized by the Kyoto University Center for Southeast Asian Studies' “Toward Sustainable Humanosphere in Southeast Asia” Research Program and the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science's

Asian Core Program, in collaboration with the National Chi Nan University's Graduate Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.

## PROGRAM

9:00-9:05 Welcome Remarks by Prof. Shimizu Hiromu, Director, CSEAS

9:05-9:10 Opening Speech by Prof. Yen Chih-hung, Director, GISEAS

### **SESSION 1 (9:15-11:15): Politics**

**Chair: Hiromu Shimizu**

Ho, Ann Hung-Hsin, "Thailand under Thaksin: The Rise of 'Non-Bangkok' Power in Thai Politics"

Discussant: Khoo Boo Teik (Institute of Developing Economies-Japan External Trade Organization)

Chen Hung-Yu, "The Analyses of Military Power Organization in Myanmar"

Discussant: Pavin Chachavalpongpun (CSEAS)

Boon Kia Meng, "Malaysia, After GE-13 – Communalism, Capitalism or Caesarism?"

Discussant: Chen Pei-hsiu (GISEAS)

Kayane Yuka, "The Political Rise of the Constitutional Court in Indonesia: A Case of the Oil and Gas Policy"

Discussant: Lee Mei-hsien (GISEAS)

**11:15-11:25 BREAK**

**SESSION 2 (11:25-12:45): Discursive and Social Constructions**

**Chair: Masaaki Okamoto**

Tri Nuke Pudjiastuti, “The Construction of Indonesian Traditional Fishing's Involvement in the Activities of Migrants' Smuggling to Australia as a Form of Structural Victimization”

Discussant: Lee Ying-hui (GISEAS)

Shen Hao-Ting, “Cultural Resistance of Chinese Drama in Singapore: A Case Study of Performance Art School (1965-1976)”

Discussant: Caroline Hau (CSEAS)

Lin Yu-Sheng, “Chinese Religion' with Non-Chinese Believers: Narratives of I-Kuan Tao Believers in Thailand”

Discussant: Lim Kay-thiong (GISEAS)

**12:45-14:00 LUNCH BREAK**

**SESSION 3 (14:00-16:00): Mobility and Migration**

**Chair: Yen Chih-hung**

Young Da-Kai, “A Study of Taiwanese Attitude toward Immigrants—the Case of Foreign Affairs Policemen”

Discussant: Yoko Hayami (CSEAS)

Liu Jung-Hsiu, “Upward or Downward?—The Social Mobility of Migrant Workers and Taiwanese Aborigines”

Discussant: Noboru Ishikawa (CSEAS)

Jan Isaac V. Nolasco, “From Remittance to Revolution: The Filipino Diaspora and Political and Economic Change in Philippine Society”

Discussant: Kung I-chun (GISEAS)

**Session 5 (16:00-17:30): Getting Published in Asian Studies**

**Chair: Caroline Hau**

**Speaker: Paul Kratoska (National University of Singapore)**

## **ABSTRACTS**

### **Malaysia, After GE-13 – Communalism, Capitalism or Caesarism?**

Boon Kia Meng<sup>1</sup>

kiameng\_dan@yahoo.com

The recently concluded 13<sup>th</sup> General Elections (GE13) in Malaysia has raised a number of interesting developments for the country, in terms of its political and socio-economic direction. Short-term diagnoses of the results have sought to explain them in two general ways: (1) according to the traditional, ethnic or communal lines, where the Prime Minister, Muhammad Najib Razak (along with certain official media) has characterized the results as a consequence of a ‘Chinese tsunami’; and (2) according to certain pollsters & academics, the results show the effects of a rural and urban divide, where the opposition coalition, Pakatan Rakyat (PR), won a large majority of urban parliamentary seats, while the ruling coalition, Barisan Nasional (BN), did

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<sup>1</sup> Boon Kia Meng is a political analyst, educator & activist-filmmaker. His film ‘M-C-M’: Utopia Milik Siapa?, a winner at the Freedom Film Festival 2012, documenting the issue of escalating house prices and debt in Malaysia, can be viewed here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hv9bWjgEXtc>

exceptionally well in rural and semi-rural constituencies (particularly in Sabah & Sarawak).

Without discounting these two popular accounts of GE13, I would like to put forward a normative argument that our understanding of present developments in Malaysian politics can be deepened by framing the results in the light of a Gramscian analysis, interpreting the Malaysian state as undergoing a fundamental crisis of the state. As a result of the breakdown of the BN's political hegemony, the ruling classes is struggling to find a viable form of political organization to stabilize their rule, while at the same time deal with the strong electoral challenge by the Pakatan Rakyat. The paper will conclude by raising a number of possibilities faced by the Malaysian state, even as certain social forces eg. political Islam, may seek realignment, even as the deepening of neoliberal economic policies would have significant consequences for present political economic regime, inaugurated post-1969, under the aegis of the New Economic Policy, since the 1970s.

### **The Analyses of Military Power Organization in Myanmar**

Chen, Hung-Yu<sup>2</sup>  
National Chi-Nan University,  
Graduate Institute of Southeast Asia Studies  
[hungyu0918@gmail.com](mailto:hungyu0918@gmail.com)

Myanmar held the election in November, 2010. President Thein Sein was sworn in on March 30, 2011 with his Cabinet. The highest authority of Myanmar, State Peace and Development Council, SPDC, handed the power

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<sup>2</sup>Hung-Yu Chen is a PhD. student at the National Chi Nan University. His research interest focuses on the movement of the Myanmar and the cultural, political activities in Myanmar. He participated in the Conference on East Asian regional structure changes and the future development of Taiwan, 2004, with an article – “Overseas corporate strategic alliances and the case of Taiwanese enterprises in Thailand.”

to the new government officially. It is symbolized that Myanmar had done the process through the military government to the democratic government.

President Thein Sein of Myanmar held the meeting with Aung San Suu Kyi who is the leader of National league for Democracy of Burma in Capital, Naypyidaw on August 19, 2011. After the National League for Democracy of Burma won the Congressional election on April, 1, 2011, the United States of America, and the United Kingdom and other countries expressed to lift the economic sanction one after another. The continuing cooperation relationship with China, Japan, and Southeast Asia countries also enhanced the investment strength.

Up to 50 years military dictatorship, even Myanmar has gone through “8888 Uprising” in 1988 and “Saffron Revolution” in 2007 that the position of military government could not be shaken. Instead, the Military through a variety of measures consolidated their power. However, beginning from 2011, for what reasons Thein Sein government promotes the politics and economic reformation? The reformation speed is too fast to image that if this reformation can be carried on steady and lasted? Also, if the Military can allow the transformation of powers, or stand in the way of reformation in the end? All of these are related to the military power organization. Hence, the article is tried to discuss the military power organization by three parts, including the party system, the military and politics, religion and politics.

**Thailand under Thaksin:  
The Rise of ‘Non-Bangkok’ Power in Thai Politics**

Ho, Ann Hung-Hsin<sup>3\*</sup>  
Graduate Institute of Southeast Asian Studies,  
National Chi Nan University, Taiwan  
[hohunghsin@yahoo.com.tw](mailto:hohunghsin@yahoo.com.tw)

Thaksin Shinawatra, twice elected prime minister of Thailand, was the most controversial figure in modern Thai politics. He won an unprecedented absolute majority of parliament, thus fulfilling a 'New Political Era' in Thailand based on electoral politics. Thai scholars named the Thaksin phenomenon: new political thinking, efficient governance and his legitimacy of the most electorate never before in the first decade of 21st century as 'Thaksinization.' Following, he was ousted by the 2006 coup d'état, and opposed by the palace, conservatives and a coalition of opponents, but supported by a broad rural people, the prolonged political crisis in Thailand is thus sustained. There is nothing new about the political disputes in Thai society, but it is crucial to explore the political maneuver of Thaksin which could get a wild mass support.

Related literatures are argued that Thaksin's popularity was seen to result from its authentic party operation, CEO-style rule and populist policies directly beneficial to the people. The people in 'Non-Bangkok Thailand,' however, most from rural area of the north, north-east, and among rural migrants in the capital, had been politically enlightened by Thaksin, they countered back the 'new conservative alliance' organized by the rich and urban middleclass in Bangkok, led to severely class struggle. Nevertheless, the civil society discourse dominated by intellectuals and elites traditionally has turned to the local people that could compete to the power of voice.

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<sup>3</sup>Hung-Hsin Ho is a Ph.D. Candidate at the National Chi Nan University. Her research interest mainly focuses on Thai politics, especially the rising of local power during Thaksin government. She has participated in the 11<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Thai Studies with an article—“Good Governance or Populist: The local governance of Thaksin regime in Thailand (2001-2006).”

In this vein, the article aims to examine the process of decentralizing and localizing of Thai political structure is among Thaksin's regime based on political economy perspective to find out the essence of 'Non-Bangkok' politics. This paper offers important observations on the rise of 'Non-Bangkok' political power is the legacy of Thaksin regime dramatically reshape the political territory of modern Thailand.

## **The Political Rise of the Constitutional Court in Indonesia**

### **- A Case of the Oil and Gas Policy -**

Yuka Kayane<sup>4</sup>

Graduate School of Asian and African Area Studies

Kyoto University

yuka.kayane@gmail.com

Indonesia has been through drastic reform since the fall of Suharto in 1998. The reform brought a new system of *trias politica* with the empowerment of the national parliament and the establishment of the constitutional court in 2003. Since then, political influence of judicature has significantly increased. Although many academic works have examined the political role of judicial institutions in newly democratic countries, little attention has been given to

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<sup>4</sup> Yuka Kayane is a PhD. student in the Graduate School of Asian and African Studies, Kyoto university, currently undertaking field research in Jakarta focusing on economic policy, constitutional court and democracy in Indonesia.



those in Indonesia. This research sheds light on the constitutional court's political role in democratic Indonesia, focusing on the oil and gas policy.

While the executive government recognizes the indispensability of foreign investments in the oil and gas industry, the constitutional court sometimes dares to go against the foreign-dependent government policies. The executive arm has had difficulties to pursue those policies to keep attracting investments because of this nationalistic and xenophobic “political intervention” by the constitutional court. The legislative arm on the whole generally supports the executive; however, each politician's stance lacks consistency. Now the political contestation in democratic Indonesia has become far more complex than ever before. This research aims to show the changing dynamics of the political process by examining the decision-making process in the oil and gas policy and several controversial rulings.

**“Chinese Religion” with Non-Chinese Believers:  
Narratives of I-Kuan Tao Believers in Thailand**

**Lin Yu-Sheng<sup>5</sup>**

**Graduate School of Asian and African Area Studies**

**Kyoto University**

lin.sheng.86x@st.kyoto-u.ac.jp

In Southeast Asia, most of Chinese religious sects are connected with Chinese migrants. However, the development of I-Kuan Tao in Thailand is different from that. Besides Chinese believers, it is also popular for many Thai in the past 30 years. No matter in urban city or rural area, the Buddha

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<sup>5</sup> Yu-Sheng LIN is now a PhD student in the Graduate School of Asian and African Area Studies, Kyoto University. His research interest is on the anthropology of transnationalism, religion, and gender. His research area is Thailand, especially northeastern Thailand. His master thesis is about northeastern Thai migrant workers who have been working in Taiwan. Now he is studying a religious group called I-Kuan Tao in Thailand, which is mainly disseminated from Taiwan.

Hall (佛堂 *sathanthaam* สถานธรรม) of I-Kuan Tao could be found in some corner of almost every provinces in Thailand. It might be argued that, the tolerance of Thai Buddhism is the reason why I-Kuan Tao, as a “Chinese religion”, could exist in Thailand. However, comparing to other Chinese religious sects in Thailand, tolerance could not totally explain why I-Kuan Tao attracts many Thai, but not only Sino-Thai believers.

In this study, comparing to other reformist Buddhist movement in Thailand, I argue that the development of I-Kuan Tao in Thailand should be understood in the context of religious reformation and its social background in (post-)modern Thailand. Focusing on narratives of I-Kuan Tao believers in gatherings (法會 *prachum tham* ประชุมธรรม), we could see believers use modified Thai Buddhist concepts as teachings of I-Kuan Tao to explain changes of family life in (post-)modern Thailand. Therefore, I-Kuan Tao becomes solutions for some believers to face their difficulties, but sometimes it also faces some conflicts with Thai socio-cultural life.

**Upward or Downward? –  
The Social Mobility of Migrant Workers and Taiwanese Aborigines**

Liu, Jung-Hsiu<sup>6</sup>  
Graduate Institute of Southeast Asian Studies,  
National Chi Nan University, Taiwan  
[weirdtw@yahoo.com.tw](mailto:weirdtw@yahoo.com.tw)

The progress of science and technology accelerates people to the globalized

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<sup>6</sup> Jung-Hsiu Liu is a Ph.D. Student at the National Chi Nan University. Her research interests are Intercultural Communication, International Migration, Social Mobility, Underclass and others. Since her current research field is in Northeastern Thailand, she also pays attention to Thailand’s social and cultural issues. She has presented papers in some conferences, e.g., The 2012 Annual conference of Southeast Asian Area Studies in Taiwan with an article— “*How do They Survive in Taiwan? — Discussing Intercultural Communication Strategies on Southeast Asian Migrant Workers in Taiwan.*”

world. To borrow the book title from Thomas Friedman (2005), the “flattened world” can be seen not only in the logistics and the cash flow, but also the migration of people. Based on the data from the Ministry of Interior, at the end of 2012 (October, 2012) the number of migrant workers in Taiwan was 443,809, which was about 1.9 percent of Taiwan population; whereas the number of Taiwanese aborigines was 526,148, which was about 2.2 percent of Taiwan population. Both the percentages of these two groups are nearly close.

Throughout history, the Taiwanese aborigines are always be seen a minority ethnic in Taiwan. Aboriginal Taiwanese had imbalance distribution in reality. The high drop-out rate and the low educational level caused these indigenous people to be limited in the underclass. On the other hand, migrant workers stayed in the underclass because they were deprived of their civil rights and labor rights.

Both of these two groups are stayed in the underclass in Taiwan, are they getting along? According to the discourse from the Taiwanese aborigines’ channel, they thought the coming of these migrant workers would deprive their working rights.

This paper attempts to explore the social mobility of migrant workers and Taiwanese aborigines. Participant observation and semi-structured interviews were used to understand if it is an upward social mobility of Taiwanese aborigines or a downward social mobility of Taiwanese aborigines. In addition, some questions occurred during the observation phase were clarified through these interviews.

Result of this research showed that the coming of these migrant workers did not threaten the aboriginal Taiwanese’s working rights. Moreover, these migrant workers were generated a new class in Taiwan’s society—beneath the original underclass. Based on Erikson & Goldthorpe’s (1992) “The Class Scheme”, we can say the Taiwanese aborigines having the upward social

mobility since their class is from the non-skilled workers class up to the skilled workers class.

## **From Remittance to Revolution: The Filipino Diaspora and Political and Economic Change in Philippine Society**

Janus Isaac V. Nolasco<sup>7</sup>

University of the Philippines Asian Center

[darth.janus77@gmail.com](mailto:darth.janus77@gmail.com)

This paper will explore whether, to what extent, and how the Filipino Diaspora can contribute to deep-seated political and economic transformation of Philippine society. Using theories, concepts, and case studies of why and how political and economic change succeeds, and how these intersect with transnational-diaspora politics, the critique will

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<sup>7</sup> Janus Isaac V. Nolasco is the Publications Officer of the Asian Center, University of the Philippines Diliman. He is also the Managing Editor of *Asian Studies*, a journal published by the Asian Center since 1963. Mr. Nolasco has an MA in Asian Studies, major in West Asia, and a BA in Comparative Literature (cum laude), major in Asian-Third World Literature. Both are from the University of the Philippines Diliman. Mr. Nolasco's interests include the history, law, theology, politics, literature, and philosophy in the Middle East, especially during the premodern era. He wants to conduct research on the Persianization of the Middle East, Central Asia and/or South Asia; the political economy of literary production in medieval Islamic societies; the social and/or political history of Islamic law and philosophy; and the politics of contemporary Asian historiography. In the meantime, he has taken to exploring the potential role of the Filipino diaspora in the political and economic transformation of Philippine society. Mr. Nolasco is also a copywriting consultant for DuPont Sustainable Solutions, Training Solutions.

examine several examples of the Filipino diaspora's involvements in Philippine politics and economy. The analysis aims to identify whether and to what extent these involvements hew to theories, concepts, and lessons on why and how political and economic transformation happens. By citing overlaps and/or differences, the study intimates a space where new strategies and discourses of political change can be effected in the Philippines.

### **Cultural Resistance of Chinese Drama in Singapore: A Case Study of Performance Art School (1965-1976)**

Shen, Hao-ting<sup>8</sup>  
Graduate Institute of Southeast Asian Studies,  
National Chi Nan University, Taiwan  
[Tim.shen220@gmail.com](mailto:Tim.shen220@gmail.com)

Chinese drama in Singapore has shown considerable concerns and critiques about political and social reality for a long time. It was especially true from 1950's to 1960's because of consolidations with labor and student movements and claims for anti-colonialism and independence. In the past, practitioners of labor unions, student councils and theatrical groups who actually took the responsibilities of Chinese education were constantly viewed as communists or rebels in official documents. However, the situation has changed since the

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<sup>8</sup> Hao-ting Shen is a Ph.D. student at the National Chi Nan University. His research interests include modern Chinese theatre and Left-wing movement in Singapore. He has been accepted for presentation at Kuo Pao Kun International Conference on 14-15 September 2012 in Singapore. The Conference is jointly organized by Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore, National Museum of Singapore, The Tangent and The Theatre Practice. The title of his paper is 'The dilemma of social transformation and cultural disconnection in Singapore: A viewpoint from Kuo Pao Kun's works'.

book “Comet in our sky: Lim Chin Siong in history” was published in 2001. A trend to redefine the history abruptly emerged in Singapore and Malaysia. Researchers intended to reevaluate communities who were ignored by official documents and depict their oppressed stances, for example, class antagonism caused by economic policies and diminishing racial culture resulted from language policies, in order to justify the rationality and legitimacy of their resistances.

Arguments of precedent research mainly focus on either communist identities or resistant discourses of these struggling communities from a perspective of social class and racial culture. But the implication of cultural decolonization was totally neglected. In fact, the PAP government’s administration has followed the ruling disciplines of British colonists since the independence was gained in 1965 and that was what the struggling communities, especially Chinese theatrical groups, fought against. Accordingly, the goal of this study is to explore the cultural resistances and critiques for state capitalism embedded in theatrical practices from 1965 to 1976, the period that Singapore gained independence and the concept of nation state developed, and how these theatrical practitioners thought about and responded to the social reality. This study takes the most representative case, namely, Performance Art School, as example and cites concepts of post colonialism, like “voyage in”, “mimicry” and “the third space”, as theoretical framework to investigate the resistant discourses presented by theatrical practitioners and the process of confronting internal colonization after the independence of Singapore.

# **The Construction of Indonesian Traditional Fishing's Involvement in the Activities of Migrants' Smuggling to Australia as a Form of Structural Victimization**

**Tri Nuke Pudjiastuti<sup>9</sup>**

Graduate School of Criminology

University of Indonesia

t\_nukep@yahoo.com

Indonesia is one of the stepping stone countries for many refugees and asylum seekers, which fall into migrant smuggling to Australia. The process of its activities actually facilitate by the Indonesian traditional fishing, which are culturally used to with transporting to Christmas Island or Ashmore Reef. Even though, Indonesia or Australia Governments are seriously combating this process through criminalization the smugglers – traditional fishing, this activities are still running. This paper analyzes the cultural and economic complexity of traditional Indonesian fishing are used by external parties to undergo structural and multiple victimization. It is then encouraging them entered inside trap as a giver of transportation services to the smuggling migrants, which is one of choices in diversification of struggling from their poverty.

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<sup>9</sup> Tri Nuke Pudjiastuti is a PhD Candidate in the Graduate School of Criminology, Faculty of Political Sciences and Social Sciences, University of Indonesia in Jakarta. She is also a researcher of Research Center for Politics, the Indonesian Institute of Sciences. Her research interests mainly focus on international migration. In the process of researching irregular international immigration, such as smuggling and trafficking, in Indonesia, she has also investigated the issue of mobility on a regional basis, at the level of ASEAN. In LIPI, she is part of the ASEAN research team.

## **A Study of Taiwanese Attitude toward Immigrants--the Case of Foreign Affairs Policemen**

Da-Kai Young<sup>10</sup>  
Graduate Institute of Southeast Asian Studies,  
National Chi-Nan University, Taiwan  
621168@yahoo.com.tw

The purpose of this study aims to describe how Taiwan community treats the immigrants. As we know, although our community was established by immigrants, a lot of local people do not accept the situation nowadays that lots of immigrants move to Taiwan, especially those who were from the South-East Asian countries. Many studies had indicated that the local community treats immigrants in an unequal way. For example, immigration political policies are contained with “Nationalism”, or the mass media set up an ugly image for the South-East Asian women. The media assumes that they got married here for money.

In Taiwan community, the Foreigner Affairs Policemen (F.A.P) have a much closer relationship with immigrants than local people. When immigrants come to Taiwan, they have to apply for alien residential certification (A.R.C) . If immigrants want to stay in Taiwan over 1 year, they have to apply for it. Under the Department of Foreigner Affairs, every police bureau sets up a service center. The F.A.P are playing a role of receiver in our community. So I take the F.A.P as a sample in my study to

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<sup>10</sup>Da-Kai Young is a Ph.D. student at the National Chi Nan University. His research interest mainly focused on Thai politics, especially the local power and the patron-client relations. He has participated in the “Asia: Toward Creation of Wisdom and Networking.” Summer Seminar 2006 in Waseda University.



describe what is in their mind and what their attitude is when they get contact with immigrants.

My study contains three parts. First, nationalism has been rooted in the immigration policing policy for a long time. Second, this study tries to unveil what the F.A.P think when they face immigrants. And the last part is to see how the F.A.P treat immigrants in the service center.

Our community has discrimination against immigrants. That is responded to my study. My study is aimed to reveal and describe how the F.A.P treat immigrants in an unequally way. And you can find the difference between European, American and South-East Asian immigrants in the contact occasion and the mind of the F.A.P.