

Rapporteur's Report on Day 2 (December 3, 2019)
International Conference on Resources and Human Mobility

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Registration started at 9 am

Live streaming with Chiba University

Hikari Ishido, Professor, Graduate School of Social Sciences, Chiba University welcomed the participants.

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The first panel of the day began at 9.30am with the theme 'Conflicts over Resources' chaired by Ayame Suzuki from Doshisha University.

Speaker 1: Francisco J. Lara Jr (University of the Philippines/international Alert U.K) on the topic "Persistent struggles over land and Other resources in the conflict-to-Peace Transition: Evidence from Mindanao, Southern Philippines" focusing on land related, water related as well as identity related conflicts in Mindanao. The paper identifies worrying trends that predicts that resource conflicts are bound to intensify in the future and also points to the barriers and the consistent dampening of collective action and management practices in the control and management of resources that reinforces cycles of violence and their broader regional implications.

Speaker 2: Vivian (Viv) L. Forbes, University of West Australia on the topic "The R.S.T (Resources, Sovereignty and Territoriality) of the South China Sea". This paper focuses on the interlinking themes of marine biotic and mineral resources, the sovereignty and territoriality issues and problems and the utilization of the maritime space within the South China Sea. This paper offers an explanation of the issues and highlight some possible solutions to the dispute.

Speaker 3: Kensuke Yamamoto, Japan Society for the Promotion OF Science/Kyushu university on the topic "Another Form of Conflict over 'Resources: Controversy over Making Jerusalem into Islamic Tourist Attraction" that deals with the trends that seeks to convert Jerusalem's sacred places into Islamic tourism resources and highlights the controversy regarding this issue. This paper attempts to offer an opportunity to reconsider the conflict over resources, which often draws attention in terms of its allocation.

During the Q&A session, there were questions regarding the avenues for co-operation and dispute resolution in South China Sea, the position of religious vs non-religious people regarding the conflict of Jerusalem as a tourist attraction, the mixing of political position and religious etc.

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The theme of the panel was ‘Visualize the Symbolic Representation of Refugees’ chaired by Kota Suechika from Ritsumeikan University.

There was an introduction by Dr. Oul Han before the session on the background on European Refugee crisis.

Speaker 1: Kohei Watanabe, University of Innsbruck on the topic “Longitudinal Analysis of News Coverage of Refugees by the British Newspapers”, a quantitative text analysis of British newspapers in 2006-2018. In the longitudinal analysis of the newspaper articles, latent semantic scaling(LSS) is employed to capture the media framing of immigration.

Speaker 2: Oul Han, University of Koblenz and Landau on the topic “Contagion OF hope and Failure in the German Migration Crisis” where text analysis is done on German newspapers regarding the migration crisis.

Speaker 3: Dai Yamao, Kyushu University on the topic “The refuge Crisis in the Middle East: A Quantitative Text Analysis of Major Arabic Newspapers” that aims to analyze how the tone of reporting on the refugee changed in the Pan-Arab newspapers in the Middle East.

The three papers in this session have used the same methodology of Latent Semantic Scaling (LSS). In the Q&A session, there were questions regarding the difficulty in the differentiation of refugees and migrants, the circulation of the newspapers used in the analysis as well as the readership of these newspapers. There were also questions on how there were many policies that have been implemented by the governments in the West that worked against social, political and cultural aspirations and also whether media actually represents ordinary people.

PANEL 7

The theme of the panel was “Human Trafficking and Migration: Situations in Asia” chaired by Hikari Ishido, Chiba University

Speaker 1: Chulathida Chomchai, Dean of Mahidol University International College on the topic “Migrant workers and Refugees in Thailand: A Public Health Perspective”, which is medically oriented but has a social impact dealing with migrant workers and refugees from

Myanmar, Laos PDR and Vietnam and their inability to access sexual and reproductive health services in Thailand and also the health concerns that afflict children in refugee camps.

Speaker 2: Reiko Ogawa, Chiba University on the “Use and Abuse of Trafficking Discourse in Japan” that examines the interpretation and appropriation of the Japanese government’s policy on human trafficking, which was developed primarily by focusing on sexual exploitation and securitization of border control.

Special session by Keane Shum, Senior Policy Officer at the Regional Bureau for Asia and Pacific, UNHCR on the role of UNHCR globally and with Myanmar refugees in particular, including those in Thailand as well as displaced and stateless Rohingya.

The Q&A session discussed the motivation of South East Asian countries to accept refugees, concern for Myanmar women workers and how UNHCR is constantly advocating to hold the detention process of refugees using diplomatic connections. There were also questions about the reasons as to why there was a drop in entertainer visa to Japan and how there is a shift from entertainers to care workers. The session has covered diverse issues.

PANEL 8

The theme of the panel was “Muslim Communities in the South East Asia and their Networks with Middle East” chaired by Keiko Sakai, Chiba University.

Speaker 1: Ryoko Nishii, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies on the topic “Convert’s Body as an Arena of Entangled Muslim-Buddhist Relationships in a southern Thai village”. This paper examines how relationships demonstrated in daily life motivate decisions connected with death. A corpse may necessitate disentangled relationships of daily life. This approach helps clarify the actual dynamics inherent in Muslim-Buddhist co-existence in a Thai village.

Speaker 2: Suchart Setthamalinee, Payap University on the topic “The Development of Multiple identities of Chinese Muslim in northern Thailand”. This paper attempts to illustrate the history and development of Chinese Muslims as well as the multiple identities of Chinese Muslims in Thailand that are flexible and adaptable to the changing context while the underlying roots of the Sinophone world are still influential and used to resist the increasing of Puritan discourse and transnational of Islam in today’s world.

Speaker 3: Hiroko Kinoshita, Kyushu University on the topic “Social Division promoted by Commercial Media – A Quantitative text analysis of LGBT in contemporary Indonesia (New Title), which tries to clarify how LGBT issue is perceived in contemporary Indonesian society by using a quantitative text analysis of the news about LGBT issue among four major online news medium in Indonesia.

In the Q&A session there were discussions on the conflict in Southern Thailand, the issues related to multiple identities and the importance of choice of identities.

Day 2 ended with Closing Remarks by Keiko Sakai, Dean, Center for Relational Studies of Global Crisis, Chiba University. In the closing remarks, Dean Keiko Sakai pointed out two focal points in the conference. One is on the conflict over resources, which is caused by economic factor (resources can be the materials for agricultural, industrial as well as infrastructural developments in the cases of Mekong region, Southeast China sea, and Nile Basin, etc.), or by the political factors (territories can be a target of regional power struggle as being seen in the Southeast China sea and Nile Basin). Often the conflicts develop into those over the identity, considering that the land represents not as economic resources only but also as a symbol for nation or as a religious sanctuary (cases of the Philippines). Another point is the mobility of labour. Multidirectional mobility (in- and out-migration) of the labour forces are widely witnessed among the South-east Asia, and more countries face necessity to accept migrant workers to solve the labour shortage (including Myanmar). While attention is paid to accommodate the labour migrants and integrate them in the host society (in the case of Thailand), various methods are introduced to regulate the illegal migration. Two-days intensive conference cannot cover all the necessary subjects and what the conference missed most was more in-depth argument on exclusive aspect of the host society against refugees and migrants. Another missing point was the role of the social factors to explain the inclusion/ exclusion of the refugees and migrants in the host society. Religious and ethnic factors can be either a help for migrants to accommodate themselves in the new circumstance (the case of the Filipinos in Thailand) or a source of discrimination and peripheralisation (the case of Rohingya refugees). We need to explore more the possibility of overcoming the social and communal hatred based on the notion of us/the other, by establishing an institutional socio-economic-political system which can contribute to promote a sense of mutual dependency.