Grassroots Regionalisation and the Frontiers of the Humanities in East Asia: Korea as a hub

Monday 9 March 2015, 1:30pm - 5:30pm
Tuesday 10 March 2015, 9:00am - 5:30pm

Seminar Room, Australian Centre on China in the World (Building 188)
The Australian National University

Presented by
ANU Korea Institute
ANU College of Asia & the Pacific

Sponsored by
Academy of Korean Studies
ANU Korea Institute
About the Conference

This international conference, ‘Grassroots Regionalisation and the Frontiers of the Humanities in East Asia: Korea as a hub’ will examine the role of civil society (including non-governmental organisations, social movements, networks of scholars and media networks) in promoting interaction and understanding between the countries of East Asia.

The focus is on the region spanning South Korea, North Korea, China, Japan, Taiwan and Mongolia, and a special interest of our discussions will be the role that Korean civil society groups and the Korean diaspora play in regional networking.

Discussions will explore the potential for civil society networks to cross the boundaries, not just between nations, but also between academia, media and social action. How can scholars from the humanities and related areas become engage most effectively in public discourse and cross-border networking, and how can citizens’ groups and media engage more closely with the world of humanities research?

Important Information

Venue

The ‘Grassroots Regionalisation and the Frontiers of the Humanities in East Asia: Korea as a hub’ Conference will take place in the Australian Centre on China in the World (Building 188, Fellows Lane, The Australian National University, Canberra ACT 0200 Australia).

The Conference will take place in the Seminar Room. All meals (morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea) will be held in the Tea Room and are available free of charge to all participants.

Internet

You can access wireless internet for the duration of the Conference through ‘ANU-Secure.’ The login is ‘KOREAINST’ and the password is ‘korea2015.’ Please note that both the login and password are case sensitive.
Program: Monday 9 March 2015

13:30 - 14:10 Welcome & Opening Round Table Discussion

Professor Tessa Morris-Suzuki, Australian National University
Professor Hyaeweol Choi, Australian National University

14:10 - 15:00 Presentation 1

Chair: Dr Eun Jeong Soh, Australian National University

When will the ‘arduous journey’ end?: Onward Migration of North Korean refugees to Australia
Dr Bronwen Dalton, University of Technology, Sydney

15:00 - 15:40 Conversation

Transnational activism in East Asia: Anti-base networks between Jeju and Okinawa
Ms Lina Koleilat, Australian National University
Mr Shinnosuke Takahashi, Australian National University

15:40 - 16:00 Afternoon Tea

16:00 - 17:30 Film

Gureombi (The Wind Is Blowing)

Program: Tuesday 10 March 2015

9:10 - 10:00 Presentation 2

Chair: Professor Tessa Morris-Suzuki, Australian National University

Prospects of Achieving Ahn Jung-Geun’s Vision of Peace and Stability in East Asia
Professor Soo im Lee, Ryukoku University

10:00 - 10:50 Presentation 3

Chair: Dr Roald Maliangkay, Australian National University

Social innovation in Asia: Seven characteristics of the Asian social innovation trends
Dr Eun Kyung Lee, The Hope Institute, Seoul

10:50 - 11:10 Morning Tea
11:10 - 12:00  Presentation 4

Chair: **Associate Professor Fiona Yap, Australian National University**

North Korean refugees as penetrant transnational migrants
Professor Byung-Ho Chung, Hanyang University

12:00 - 12:50  Presentation 5

Chair: **Professor Hyaeweol Choi, Australian National University**

Multi-layered identities of Returnees in their 'Historical Homeland': Returnees from Sakhalin
Associate Professor Mooam Hyun, University of Hokkaido

12:50-13:50  Lunch

13:50 - 14:50  Presentations 6 and 7

Chair: **Professor Hyaeweol Choi, Australian National University**

Haja Story: Youth, Learning, and Survival Politics in East Asia
Professor Emeritus Haejoang Cho (Han), Yonsei University / Haja Center
Ms Hee-ok Kim, Haja Center

14:50 - 15:40  Film and Discussion

Sasa no Bohyō (Beneath the Bamboo Grass Tombs)
Professor Byung-Ho Chung, Hanyang University

15:40 - 16:00  Afternoon Tea

16:00 - 16:50  Presentation 8

Chair: **Dr Adam Broinowski, Australian National University**

Translocal Sentiment and Japanese Environmental Activism in East Asia
Associate Professor Simon Avenell, Australian National University

16:50 - 17:30  Roundtable

Chair: **Professor Tessa Morris-Suzuki, Australian National University**


Abstracts

Presentation 1

When will the ‘arduous journey’ end? Onward Migration of North Korean refugees to Australia

Dr Bronwen Dalton, University of Technology, Sydney

Adversity for North Koreans does not necessarily end after fleeing North Korea. In China, they are treated as illegal migrants and live under constant fear of repatriation and arrest. In South Korea, they are among the most socially disadvantaged, often unemployed and subject to discrimination and prejudice. As a result, some 2000 to 3000 North Koreans have allegedly settled in the UK, Canada, the US, Australia and EU countries since the mid-2000s, with Australia serving as a key destination since 2006. Yet, the experiences of North Korean refugees in new countries other than South Korea remain insufficiently researched. Drawing from interviews with North Korean refugees in Australia, the presentation offers an overview of the onward migration process and the underlying factors that drive individual North Koreans to move to Australia. We suggest that policies relating to North Korean refugees require further international harmonisation and that further nation-specific settlement programs of increased practical use to North Korean refugees are needed. Wider dissemination of these changes is also necessary to facilitate informed choices by North Koreans during what has become an ongoing journey to build a better life.
Conversation

Transnational activism in East Asia: Anti-base networks between Jeju and Okinawa

Ms Lina Koleilat, Australian National University

Mr Shinnosuke Takahashi, Australian National University

In this session, two PhD scholars will analyse the transnational anti-base solidarity networks between Gangjeong village on Jeju Island and Naha in Okinawa. Based on archival and ethnographic research similarities and differences between the two anti-base movements will be discussed, along with difficulties and challenges the movements have been facing in developing grassroots social activism beyond their localities. Historically, Okinawa has been known for its long-term struggle against the US military bases since 1945. The anti-base movement in Okinawa was formulated with non-violent direct action, which became a remarkable characteristic of the local political culture. Since the late 1980s, Okinawa's anti-base movement started seeking transnational solidarity networks. Although the local effort had not been successful for nearly a decade, it prepared a way in which the Okinawan activism created solidarity network with anti-base activists in South Korea since 1997. Gangjeong is a small coastal village located on the south eastern part of Jeju Island. Since 2007 Gangjeong’s villagers along with religious groups, civil society and independent activists have been resisting the construction of a military naval base, arguably being built for the use of the US military forces. The Gangjeong village anti-base movement has been seeking and maintaining diverse transnational solidarity networks, the strongest being with the anti-base movement in Okinawa. From the locality of these two dynamic social movements, we seek to shed the light on transnational activism within East Asia.
Presentation 2

Prospects of Achieving Ahn Jung-Geun’s Vision of Peace and Stability in East Asia

Professor Soo im Lee, Ryukoku University

I will discuss the purpose and significance of establishing the Ahn Jung-geun East Asia Peace Research Centre in Japan, what it means for achieving reconciliation in East Asia and some of the obstacles we face in accomplishing our mission. Even before Japanese colonization in Korea started in 1910, Jōdo Shinshū Buddhist monks were actively engaged in their missionary work and one of their jobs was to offer faith to prisoners as prison chaplains. On October, 26, 1909, Ahn Jung-geun assassinated Ito Hirofumi, Prime Minister of Japan and former (the first) Resident-General of Korea. Ahn was a devoted Catholic Christian and also a noble-minded patriot. The Japanese captors in the prison immediately realized Ahn was a respectable man and many of them began to treat him with dignity and respect. Tsuda Kaijyun was one of those people. Tsuda was appointed as the prison chaplain for Ahn Jung-geun in Ryujun prison, which was located in Liao, Manchuria. Before Ahn was executed, Tsuda received three pieces of calligraphic works from Ahn as a symbol of friendship. His calligraphic works were beautifully drawn with his left hand which was missing the last joint of the ring finger because he had cut it off with his comrades in 1909 as a pledge to kill Ito Hirofumi. Tsuda secretly kept the calligraphic work at his temple, and after he died, his family left the care of the Ahn’s calligraphic works to Ryukoku University wishing that Ahn’s work would be utilized as an educational resource.
Presentation 3

Social innovation in Asia: Seven characteristics of the Asian social innovation trends

Dr Eun Kyung Lee, The Hope Institute, Seoul

While there has been growing attention in social innovation that started from Western societies (particularly Europe and North America), few studies have explored how non-Western societies (such as Asia) have adopted, adapted, and diffused social innovation to solve their own problems. The Hope Institute research team, by the support of Rockefeller Foundation, has investigated the ways in which social innovation is adopted in Asian countries and how it reshapes Asian societies.

The goals of this study are: (1) to comprehend social innovation context in Asia; and (2) to identify major characteristics of social innovation practices in Asia. The study employed a variety of research methods, including extensive literature review, case study, interview, field visit, and expert advisory conference, along with the surveys through ANIS (Asia NGO Innovation Summit) in 2012, 2013. Five countries – South Korea, India, China, Thailand, and Japan – were selected as samples of Asian social innovation fields.

Drawing on the findings of social innovation landscape of five Asian countries, this study synthesized key themes and reconstructed main categories of social innovation. As a result, the study presents seven characteristics that commonly appeared in the cases and trends in Asian social innovations: (1) people-centred development, (2) community empowerment, (3) ICT-based civic engagement, (4) public sector leadership and local governance, (5) social entrepreneurship, (6) intermediary organizations, and (7) cross-sectoral partnership.

Many Asian countries still suffer from a low level of government transparency and accountability, which may be key barriers for citizen participation and effective governance. Most Asian countries are struggling with poverty, public health, a wide economic gap, oppressed civil rights, and dictatorship. Compressed development and industrialization by a top-down way of government-driven strategies caused many existing problems. Distinct from the West, Asian countries should cope with crucial social needs to improve their daily lives and promote democratization and civil liberty. However, it does not mean that Asian societies are not ready for social innovation. Rather, because of the multi-layered problems, social innovation projects are crucial in Asian societies.
North Koreans in South Korea have been seen as defectors, refugees, or migrants, and have also been the object of wariness and pity, as either heroes or victims. The government provides them with citizenship and special resettlement funds, but their adaptation to South Korean society is not easy. For fear of discrimination, most of them try to pass as South Koreans and live in largely invisible communities. Some North Korean migrants subsequently re-migrate to other countries in the West as refugees. A few even decide to return to North Korea. This paper investigates how North Korean migrants use transnational strategies to support their transnational families and to move up the social ladder as active subjects, not as passive victims. Due to their unique political characteristics, North Korean migrants actively engage in shadow transnational movements of people, goods, and information across borders. These acts of border crossing are interpreted in this study as "penetrant transnational strategies," actions that penetrate not only the political barriers of two Koreas but also the international borders beyond South Korea, but will also eventually induce socio-political changes in both sides of the migration. In so doing, they are challenging and transforming the division system of Korea.
Presentation 5

Multi-layered Identities of Returnees in their ‘Historical Homeland’: Returnees from Sakhalin

Associate Professor Mooam Hyun, University of Hokkaido

The Japanese women lived on Sakhalin after 1945 when Sakhalin reverted to Russia, but many of them were members of the Korean community, so they were a multilayered minority. Through marriage with Koreans and adoption of children by Koreans, Japanese learned the Korean language and culture, and received Korean names. Moreover, their multicultural characteristics are based more on their gender than on their nationality. Therefore, we cannot consider the Japanese women only as a category of ‘the Japanese’. It is particularly necessary to study the multinational family relationships within Korean families, focusing on the relationships between nationality, gender, and class.

However, the current repatriation which carried out within the framework of the nation-state divides people on the Japanese-Korean-Russian border, does not match the actual living conditions of returnees and their multilayered identities. In accordance with each program, families had to choose to live either in Korea or in Japan. Specifically, we saw how they lived in postwar Sakhalin, and how they created multicultural and multilingual lives during the postcolonial condition of repatriation. Japanese women left on Sakhalin and their descendants are transnational returnees living in the tri-culture space between Russia, Korea, and Japan.

In order to clarify these issues, we performed a comparative analysis of returnees to South Korea and to Japan using interviews with Korean-Japanese families. At the same time, we analyzed the role of civic groups to support them in each country.
Presentations 6 and 7

Haja Story: Youth, Learning, and Survival Politics in East Asia

Professor Emeritus Haejoang Cho (Han), Yonsei University / Haja Center

Ms Hee-ok Kim, Haja Center

This public lecture will focus on the precarious youth at the Haja Center (the Seoul Youth Factory for Alternative Culture) and their survival politics based on Professor Haejoang Cho’s pedagogical and socio-political experiments. In the rapidly globalizing East Asian context, the project has evolved in response to several national and global crises: the 1997 Asian financial crisis, the 2008-2009 global financial crises, and the 2011 Fukushima disaster. Interested in a pedagogy that fundamentally connects life and learning, Professor Cho has endeavoured to create platforms that enable new types of learning in various forms including a youth centre, an alternative school, an after-school community, and a transition town. This talk will explain the launching of these platforms and the discussion of anticipated new projects.
This paper examines the development and significance of transnational connections among environmental groups in Japan and other East Asian countries over the past five decades. In the face of devastating industrial pollution and environmental degradation, from the 1970s Japanese activists began to forge ties with counterpart movements throughout Asia. These connections had numerous outcomes: empowering local environmental struggles throughout East Asia, pressuring domestic political and economic institutions, awakening Japanese activists to the region and their place in it, and cautioning other Asian activists about the dangers of unbridled economic growth. The paper conceptualizes these grassroots connections through the notion of “translocal sentiment” which refers to, first, the mutual empathy which united activists on the basis of their own rooted experiences and struggles and, second, the physical and ideational contact zones actors forged in their border-crossing encounters. Rather than encouraging parochialism, the paper argues that local experience, knowledge, and struggle provided Japanese activists with the raw material necessary to reach out to people resisting similar forms of pollution and environmental destruction in other countries of East Asia.