

TOYO UNIVERSITY INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP
A Preliminary Study on Transnational Communities in Asian Peripheries:
Perspectives from Comparative Area Studies

November 23, 2007, Asian Cultural Research Institute,
Toyo University, Japan

Organized by:

Asian Cultural Research Institute (ACRI), Toyo University, Japan

The workshop aims at discussing socio-historical dynamics of transnational communities in East and Southeast Asian peripheries, with the expectation that the workshop will provide the participants with a preliminary forum to search for comparative perspectives on the study of transnationalism and their historical contexts within which the transnational communities have been formed or reorganized in both areas.

In the most recent decades of the post-Cold War era, the flow of people, commodities, capitals, and information across national boundaries have become significant all throughout the world. The global trends have visualized transnational aspects not merely within business sectors of capital cities, but also within local communities including religious circles and ethnic associations in the geographical as well as political periphery. In East and Southeast Asia, rapid economic growth, inter-regional economic inequality, and political instability have stimulated trans-border movements since the 1970s, while capitalism-driven globalization has directly or indirectly led to the exponential increase of population flows across frameworks of nation-state more drastically than ever since the 1990s. Thus transnational situations have spread even into the political and economic margins. Today, it is no longer a rare case that even a local religious community in a geo-politically peripheral village in both areas is composed of members whose nationalities are varied or who come from overseas.

The purpose of the workshop is to discuss and compare the historical process in which the transnational communities have been formed or reorganized, and the dynamics of economic, social and cultural lives, as well as ethnic or national identity reconstructions among the

transnational communities at the peripheries in East Asia (Japan, Korea and Taiwan) and Southeast Asia (the Philippines, Malaysia, and Indonesia). It is also anticipated that the discussions will outline the difference and/or similarity of the institutional systems of the nation-states in both areas which are devised to cope with the transnational situations at periphery. The workshop is organized with a fund granted by Toyo University.

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