

The Resona Foundation for Asia and Oceania,
NIHU-MAPS & JSSEAS Joint Symposium

Resilience of Sea Peoples in Southeast Asia and Oceania:

Comparative Studies and Dialogue with practitioners of
the Tsunami-Affected Sanriku Region in Japan



Keynote Speech

by Prof. James F. Warren

*“In Search of Consilience: Thomas Forrest, the MaKaturing
Eruption circa 1762-65, and the Rise of the Iranun”*



Registration



Program

January 30 (Fri) -31 (Sat), 2026

Venue: 125 Memorial Hall, Hakusan Campus, Toyo University
(<https://www.toyo.ac.jp/about/access/hakusan/>)

Language: English in sessions 1-3. English & Japanese
(simultaneous translation available) in session 4

Free Attendance In-Person and Online (zoom)

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■ This symposium is jointly organized by The Resona Foundation for Asia and Oceania, JSSEAS: Japan Society for Southeast Asian Studies, and NIHU-MAPS: Project “Maritime Asian and Pacific Studies,” National Institutes for the Humanities, with support from Asian Cultures Research Institute, Toyo University.



TOYO UNIVERSITY

**The Resona Foundation for Asia and Oceania
NIHU-MAPS & JSSEAS Joint Symposium**

**Resilience of Sea Peoples in Southeast Asia and Oceania:
Comparative Studies and Dialogue with Practitioners of
the Tsunami-Affected Sanriku Region in Japan**

January 30 and 31/ 125 Memorial Hall, Hakusan Campus, Toyo University

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*The event will also be live-streamed online through Zoom

Registration: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1BX_c5vEhY51VFMk7TIS3zzpPi5Iki6UuDfpKDJpF0EM/

The Insular regions of Maritime Southeast Asia and Oceania, which constitute the western part of the Pacific Ring of Fire, frequently face coastal disasters, most notably tsunamis. In recent years, rising sea levels from global warming have eroded land, especially in Oceania. Politically and economically marginalized sea peoples—peoples with historic intimate ties to the sea, such as former boat dwellers known as “sea nomads”, shore dwellers, and residents of man-made islands—live scattered across these islands and coasts. These groups face harsher natural disasters than the majority of populations living inland. Yet despite suffering such disasters, they continue to live by or on the sea. This is because living by or on the sea allows them to maintain their relatively autonomous and meaningful way of life, thereby securing resilience against natural disasters and political oppressions.

This symposium will begin by focusing on such sea peoples inhabiting areas at or near the sea in Southeast Asia and Oceania. Scholars will engage in comparative discussions on the relationships between these communities and the natural environment, as well as their responses to coastal disasters and political oppressions. The symposium will also address the vernacular meaning of living on the sea. Particular attention will be given to marginalized sea peoples with limited influence in mainstream society. These include the Bajau, Orang Laut, and Moken in insular Southeast Asia, as well as the Lau peoples in the Solomon Islands, Oceania.

Grassroots practitioners of the Sanriku region, which suffered immense damage from the 2011 Tohoku Earthquake and Tsunami, will also share their knowledge and experiences, including those of failures, of the creative recovery struggle. Afterward, scholars will engage in dialogue with these practitioners. Together, they will further explore the vernacular philosophy of “living with the sea,” understood as community-specific knowledge and practices related to coexisting with maritime environments.

The symposium will bring together scholars on Southeast Asia and Oceania, along with grassroots practitioners from Kesennuma, Sanriku, to learn about the art of resilience, together with its limitation, of maritime communities in the respective regions, explore the area-specific characteristics of the philosophy of “living with the sea,” and prospect its universal characteristics beyond regional boundaries.

* The symposium is jointly organized by Project of International Academic Exchange Grants, the Resona Foundation for Asia and Oceania, JSSEAS: Japan Society for Southeast Asian Studies, NIHU-MAPS: Project “Maritime Asian and Pacific Studies,” National Institutes for the Humanities, with support from Asian Cultures Research Institute, Toyo University.

Organizing Committee: Kazufumi Nagatsu (leader), Kaori Otsuru, Makibi Nakako, Naoko Nishihiro, Tsukiko Myojo, Yuki Suzuki, Waka Aoyama

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**Resilience of Sea Peoples in Southeast Asia and Oceania:
Comparative Studies and Dialogue with Practitioners of the Tsunami-Affected Sanriku Region in Japan**
January 30-31 2025 / Project MAPS: Maritime Asian and Pacific Studies, Toyo University

PROGRAM AT A GLANCE		
DATE	TIME	SESSION
Jan. 30 (Fri)	10:30-10:40	Welcome and Introductory Remarks
	10:40-12:00	Session 1 -- Sea Peoples and Nature: Perspectives from the Next Generation
	14:00-14:40	Keynote Speech by Prof. James F. Warren In Search of Consilience: Thomas Forrest, the MaKaturing Eruption circa 1762-65, and the Rise of the Iranun
	14:50-17:00	Session 2 -- Dynamics of Human-Environment Interactions among Sea Peoples
	18:10-20:00	Reception (advance registration required)
Jan. 30 (Fri)	10:30-12:40	Session 3 -- Vernacular Meanings of Living on the Sea
	13:40-16:30	Session 4 -- Dialogue with Practitioners of the Sanriku Region: Resilience of Coastal Communities after the 2011 Tohoku Earthquake and Tsunami and its Implications for Southeast Asia and Oceania
	16:30-16:45	Summary and Wrap-up
	16:45-16:50	Closing Remarks

PROGRAM

Day 1: January 30, Friday

10:30-10:40 Welcome and Introductory Remarks
-- [Kazufumi Nagatsu](#) (Toyo University)

Session 1 -- Sea Peoples and Nature: Perspectives from the Next Generation

Chair and Moderator: [Yuki Suzuki](#) (Kokushikan University)

10:40-11:00 Was it a "Disaster"? The Experience of the Sama-Bajau People in Banggai Islands, Indonesia
-- [Makibi Nakano](#) (Konan Women's University)

11:00-11:20 From Home-seas to Urbanities: The State of the Sama-Bajaus across the Philippines amidst Socio-Ecological Changing Realities
-- [Amiel Jay Lopez](#) (Ateneo de Davao University)

11:20-11:40 Political Ecology of Marginalization: Sea Nomad Resilience Against Coastal and Marine Extraction in Southeast Asia
-- [Wengki Ariando](#) (KITLV: Royal Netherlands Institute of SE Asia and Caribbean Studies)

11:40-12:00 Living with Disasters: A Case Study of Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands
-- [Shin-ichi Fujii](#) (National Museum of Ethnology)

12:00-12:15 --- Break ---

12:15-12:30 Comments -- [James F. Warren](#) (Murdoch University)

12:30-13:00 Discussion

13:00-14:00 --- Lunch ---

14:00-14:40 **Keynote Speech**
In Search of Consilience: Thomas Forrest, the MaKaturing Eruption circa 1762-65, and the Rise of the Iranun
Prof. James F. Warren (Murdoch University)

14:40-14:50 --- Break ---

Session 2 -- Dynamics of Human-Environment Interactions among Sea Peoples

Chair and Moderator: [Fujii Shinichi](#) (National Museum of Ethnology)

14:50-14:55 Introduction -- [Fujii Shinichi](#)

14:55-15:15 On Indigenous Resilience: The Orang Suku Laut
-- [Cynthia Chou](#) (University of Iowa)

15:15-15:35 Boat as a Nexus Linking Maritime Societies and the Environment: A Case Study of the Moken in the Andaman Sea, Thailand
-- [Yuki Suzuki](#) (Kokushikan University)

15:35-15:55 Perception of the Globally Changing Environment among Vezo Fishers of Madagascar
-- [Taku Iida](#) (National Museum of Ethnology)

15:55-16:10 --- Break ---

16:10-17:00 Discussion

17:10-17:50 Business Meeting (MAPS members only)

18:10-20:00 Reception (advance registration required)

Day 2: January 31 (Sat)

Session 3 – Vernacular Meanings of Living on the Sea

Chair and Moderator: [Hisashi Shimojo](#) (Kobe University)

10:30-10:35	Introduction -- Hisashi Shimojo
10:35-10:55	The Bajau's Art of Not Being Subjugated in the Wallacean Sea -- Kazufumi Nagatsu (Toyo University)
10:55-11:15	Bajau Laut of Sabah Made Invisible via Institutionalised Knowledge Production about Social and Environmental Threats -- Fadzilah Majid Cooke (Independent Scholar) and Greg Acciaioli (The University of Western Australia)
11:15-11:35	The Origin of Lau and the Influence of Polynesian Outliers in the Solomon Islands: Reflections from Oral History -- Daisuke Takekawa (The University of Kitakyushu)
11:35-11:50	--- Break ---
11:50-12:40	Discussion
12:40-13:40	--- Lunch ---

Session 4 -- Dialogue with Practitioners of the Sanriku Region: Resilience of Coastal Communities after the 2011 Tohoku Earthquake and Tsunami and its Implications for Southeast Asia and Oceania

Chair and Moderator: [Tsukiko Myojo](#) (JSPS / Toyo University)

13:40-13:45	Introduction -- Kazufumi Nagatsu
13:45-14:10	Seawall and Civic Engagement: A Challenge in Post-Tsunami Beach Recovery on the Oya Coast of Kesennuma -- Tomoyuki Miura (Project Rias, Kesennuma)
14:10-14:35	Community Resilience Beyond Seawalls: Post-Tsunami Recovery, Coastal Protection, and Environmental Conservation in Kesennuma-Moune -- Makoto Hatakeyama (NPO Mori wa Umi no Koibito, Kesennuma)
14:35-14:55	From Recovery to Resilience: Post-tsunami and Post-Covid Lifeways of the Moken in Thailand -- Narumon Arunotai (Chulalongkorn University)
14:55-15:15	Bridging Three Decades of Discourse and Reality: Community-Based Coastal Management in Maluku and Papua, Indonesia -- Dedi Adhuri (National Research and Innovation Agency, Indonesia)
15:15-15:30	--- Break ---
15:30-15:40	Comments 1 -- Takuro Furusawa (Kyoto University)
15:40-15:50	Comments 2 -- Hironao Kawai (Tokyo Metropolitan University)
15:50-16:30	Round Table Dialogue
16:30-16:45	Summary and Wrap-up -- Rintaro Ono (National Museum of Ethnology/ Leader, MAPS)
16:45-16:50	Closing Remarks -- Kazufumi Nagatsu