

Report on a GIARI Lecture by Dr. **LIM Tai Wei** (Assistant Professor at the Chinese University of Hong Kong): **“A Historiographical Survey and Literature Review of Inter-regional Exchanges between Northeast Asia (Foregrounding China and Japan) and the Middle East and the Very Important Roles of the US and India”**

Date: 11 Jul (Mon), 2011

Time: 13:00-14:30

Venue: Room 309, Building 19, Waseda University

Moderator: Chris Wirth, Research Associate of GIARI, Waseda University

Organized by: GIARI

Author of the report: Takeshi ODAIRA (RA of GIARI)

Summary written by the speaker: In surveying the inter-regional literature between Northeast Asia and the Middle East, several entities appear to be commonly mentioned, studied or researched. They included Japan, China but India and the US were indispensable in such discussions given their important and significant influence, particularly in the US. In conjunction with the focus on inter-regional trade ties, the arguments appear to allude that inter-regional ties appears to increasingly embed bilateral energy trade within non-energy trade. The arguments presented do not put forward the replacement of energy ties with non-energy trade ties, instead both reinforce each other. Although the discussion is centered inter-regionally upon Northeast Asia and the Middle East, the US is particularly important for any regionalism, inter-regionalism or macro-regionalism because it is a hyper power whose influence is crucial to the success of any schemes in regional and inter-regional relations. The US ability to encourage or obstruct any aspects of regional and/or inter-regional initiatives can mean the successes and failures of those initiatives. The US is also the only entity with deep and long-entrenched interests in Northeast Asia, India and the Middle East and the nature of its relationship is comprehensive involving all facets, not solely or predominantly on economic aspects.

Summary written by an auditor:

- [Thesis of the lecture:] The influence of the US and India are crucial in the energy trade and initiatives between the Middle East and Northeast Asia.
- India’s geopolitical position located between the Middle East and Northeast Asia allows it to be a strategically very important actor to determine the optimal flow and viability of energy transportation from the former to the latter.
- Due to the economic development of the Middle East and subsequent rise of the

middle class in the Middle East and Northeast Asia and their investment funds, mutual investment is taking place in a significant manner.

- Due to the multidimensional engagement of the US with both the Middle East and Northeast Asia, open and non-exclusive interregional deals between the Middle East and Northeast Asia (that may include the partnership/support of the US or other international stakeholders) may be conducive for success and effectiveness.
- The many components (such as public, private, non-government, state, societal, intellectual sectors, etc) of the US as a collective entity and its deep engagements with both the Middle East and Northeast Asia is important in initiatives between the two regions to develop their energy/economic relations. However, any unified intention behind the US should not be assumed, and thus the US does not behave as one integrated actor when it is engaged in the inter-regional relations.
- The audience posed questions related to the concept of the region defined by the speaker. As a result of their discussion, it was revealed that the inter-regional relations is defined in a variety of ways in related academic literature and can range from macroregional ties to ties between one region and a dominant entity. It is sometimes difficult in certain cases to clearly delineate the distinction between the inter-regionalism and globalization.