Fragmentation of the International Humanitarian Order? Understanding "Cultures of Humanitarianism" in East Asia

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There is an ever-growing demand in the world for humanitarian action in response to the suffering caused by complex emergencies and natural disasters. Part of the power and appeal of humanitarianism is its universality, that is, the idea that humanitarianism is premised on cross-cultural moral truths and principles and a concern for the alleviation of suffering of humankind, regardless of differences. This idea of universality, however, is being called into question as expressions of humanitarianism and humanitarian actors become increasingly diverse. While Western states and organizations have long dominated the international humanitarian order (IHO), this is no longer the case today, with non-Western governments and societies becoming increasingly important and visible contributors to international humanitarian assistance. At the same time, these new IHO players are contributing to a broader range of perceptions of what constitutes legitimate humanitarianism; and while the concern for the

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suffering of others may be universal, it is clear that the response to suffering may differ across cultures.[1]

What are the implications of this emerging diversity in humanitarianism? There is a concern among some traditional donors and agencies that these "new" actors have failed to internalize existing principles of the IHO and are poorly integrated into its institutions and structures. As Eleanor Davey has argued, there is "interest in their origins and attitudes; suspicion of their motives; and concern at a lack of professionalism and coordination."[2] Non-Western actors, for their part, argue that the existing IHO is not "truly universal," but is actually part of a Western hegemonic discourse. Tensions between actors, stemming from perceived cultural dissonance in humanitarianism, might bring about a "clash of cultures" discourse that could weaken trust and cooperation across the sector, and contribute to fragmentation of the IHO. Fragmentation could undermine the most fundamental objective of humanitarianism: providing assistance to those in need in the most effective ways possible.

Given this new IHO environment, the need for enhanced cooperation and dialogue across cultures, and between Western and non-Western actors, is not simply desirable but essential. Organizations such as the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation have sought to initiate such dialogue.[3] The establishment of the Humanitarian Forum in 2004 also signaled efforts to establish mechanisms for dialogue and cooperation among Muslim humanitarian organizations and their Western and multilateral counterparts. But while the need for cross-cultural dialogue is increasingly recognized across the humanitarian sector, there is less clarity about how this might be structured. One potential pitfall is that discussions of non-Western approaches to humanitarianism can easily default into debating the degree to which non-Western actors conform or deviate from the already established principles and practices of the IHO. Such an approach leaves little space for considering alternative conceptions of humanitarianism on their own terms. To do that, we argue, we must approach this dialogue by asking what constitutes legitimate humanitarianism in the eyes of different societies.

In this essay we propose a framework that provides a mechanism through which such a dialogue can be pursued. It is premised on four core questions: (1) Who is perceived as a legitimate humanitarian actor? (2) Why do they act? (3) Who do they help? and (4) How and when do they act? Such a framework

can facilitate the development of a more inclusive conceptualization of the IHO, and provide a mechanism for identifying synergies and variations across different cultures without necessarily privileging established definitions of what constitutes legitimate humanitarianism. It also provides a platform for critical dialogue among philosophers, practitioners, and beneficiaries. In so doing it does not seek to dismiss existing principles or practices, but neither does it assume that they are uniformly viewed as the necessary criteria for legitimacy. This framework, we argue, provides a mechanism for a better understanding of diverse cultural interpretations of humanitarianism.

This essay first examines the existing IHO, and outlines the challenges that the diversity of humanitarian actions presents to that order. Second, it develops the aforementioned four-part framework for examining conceptions of legitimate humanitarian agency and actions. Third, it illustrates how this framework can elucidate important features of humanitarianism in East Asia, which suggest variations in conceptions of legitimate humanitarianism across cultures.

We focus on East Asia because it is an example of a dynamic region that has deep experience of humanitarian crisis, and is also home to some of the prominent "new" humanitarian actors. We pay special attention to China, Japan, and Indonesia because—while these states provide only a small sample of the diversity in the region—they illustrate the variation in engagement with humanitarianism and the IHO in East Asia. China is an emerging donor, but still very much a developing country, while Japan is a long-established Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) nation with a history of donating in the aid sector. In contrast, Indonesia, the world's most populous Muslim nation, remains very much a developing country, yet is increasingly engaged in emerging regional humanitarian structures.

Diversity and Its Challenges: The Emergence of New Humanitarian Actors

Humanitarianism is a complex, contentious, and ambiguous concept. It "concerns the protection of those in immediate peril and the prevention of unnecessary suffering."[4] Such concern is traditionally regarded as cosmopolitan and solidarist in its nature, based on shared values of human dignity and the sanctity of human life, which impel collective action to alleviate undue suffering. Principles and practices of compassion can be found across time and space. Since the nineteenth century

in particular, we have seen the evolution of an international humanitarian order—an increasingly complex international (read: Western) network of actors, institutions, and practices dedicated to addressing humanitarian needs and concerns, which relate specifically to the goal of protecting life.

The most recent trend in the evolution of the IHO is the significant increase of assistance provided by non-Western donors, rising from $34.7 million in 2000 to $622.5 million in 2010.[5] East Asia is a particularly important player in this evolution. Japan has been one of the leading humanitarian donors in the world; and other major powers in the region, such as China and India, have increased their financial and material contributions to humanitarian crises over the last decade. China's humanitarian assistance, while still relatively small, increased from approximately $0.2 million in 2002 to $50 million per annum for the period 2010–2012.[6] India's position has shifted from one of being an aid recipient to being a minor aid provider,[7] at $3 million in 2012.[8] Even very small states, such as the relatively new nation of Timor-Leste, itself a major recipient of international aid, dispatched to Japan a team of one hundred persons to remove debris in the aftermath of the 2011 earthquake.[9] In the same year it offered financial assistance in the wake of various natural disasters in Japan ($1 million), Brazil ($0.5 million), and Sri Lanka ($0.5 million).[10] Although such statistics do not place these actors high on the global scale of giving, emerging donors are increasing the amount of their assistance as their economies grow. Furthermore, they have broadened their assistance beyond their immediate region and are now offering aid to the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America, which suggests that these emerging donors will soon have a global impact.

Emerging donors bring cultural diversity to the IHO, but such diversity, in turn, has important implications for the cohesion of that order. While a commitment to a humanitarian imperative can be found across societies and cultures, conceptions of *how* such a commitment should be pursued can vary widely. This diversity could signal the emergence of a healthy cultural pluralism within the IHO, but it could also presage fragmentation of that order if diverse approaches generate tensions over what constitutes "legitimate" humanitarianism.

What do these emerging donors mean for the four core principles of humanitarianism: humanity, impartiality, neutrality, and independence? Cultural diversity in the IHO could mean that these core principles may no longer be regarded as what constitutes legitimate humanitarianism. It may well be the case that the core principles *are* in fact viewed equally as definitive across different cultures,

but we cannot assume this to be the case. In addition, fragmentation could fuel suspicion and mistrust among actors, thus undermining cooperation.

Concern with fragmentation has generated efforts to identify frameworks of unity—that is, principles, values, or structures that have the potential to draw together humanitarian concepts and practices across societies. Michael Barnett et al. identify three potential sites of unity: the humanitarian ethic, human rights, and technical knowledge. As they acknowledge, however, these are also themselves sites of tension and, potentially, of fragmentation. While the humanitarian ethic is widely shared, interpretations of that ethic are culturally conditioned, reflecting "particular configurations of moral, ethical, and religious understandings of humanitarianism."[11] There is also a dispute between those who see humanitarianism as associated with a rights-based discourse and those who see it as one premised on charity or philanthropy. Proponents of the former argue that a rights-based approach is more respectful and egalitarian, and therefore more legitimate than the conception of humanitarianism based on charity, which is paternalistic and reinforces relationships of inequality. However, in many traditions charity is viewed as a legitimate and necessary activity. It does not necessarily connote a relationship of inequality, but rather is an essential obligation that knits the fabric of community together. Furthermore, some claim that the rights discourse is profoundly political and promotes a particular liberal, Western vision of society.

The third potential site of unity—technical knowledge and the professionalization of the humanitarian sector—is also a site of divergence. Techniques for managing humanitarian responses, common standards, codes of conduct, and tools for evaluation have been developed and disseminated in order to enhance accountability and transparency and to provide structures of coordination across cultures and societies. The Good Humanitarian Donorship initiative, for instance, was established to enhance accountability and share best practices among donor states. The Development Assistance Committee of the OECD plays a significant role in "outlining those forms of assistance that qualify as humanitarian aid" and "determining the conditions that demarcate humanitarian aid from the broader field of official development assistance."[12] Such codes and institutions also play a powerful role in defining, framing, categorizing, and prescribing (or proscribing) perceptions of what constitutes "legitimate" humanitarian agency.

However, the reality is that non-Western actors are not yet a part of these institutions. The only non-Western members of the Good Humanitarian Donorship group are Japan, South Korea, and Brazil.[13] And of the 492 nongovernmental

organizations (NGOs) that are signatories to the International Committee of the Red Cross Code of Conduct, only 42 (9 percent) are from East Asia.[14] The cultivation of a cohesive yet pluralist IHO requires the development of mechanisms of cooperation and coordination that provide common premises for action while allowing for and respecting a diversity of approaches. Andrea Binder and Claudia Meier suggest that one way to do this is to "start small" and "build trust over time" by learning through working together in the field.[15] While this empirical approach is essential, it should not preclude developing more systematic and holistic frameworks through which to analyze conceptions of humanitarianism.

Uncovering Perceptions of Legitimate Humanitarianism: Continuity and Variation in the Contemporary IHO

Asking how the IHO is constituted today entails asking important questions about how "legitimate" humanitarianism is conceived of. To simply define the scope of humanitarianism by the degree to which actors conform or deviate from the principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality, and independence may provide us with too narrow an understanding of the complexity and dynamism of the IHO. This is not to dismiss the importance of these principles, but to seek to commence the discussion of humanitarianism from a more open position. A less value-laden understanding of the IHO can be obtained by taking a step back and framing the issues through an alternative set of questions. These include:

- Who is perceived as a legitimate humanitarian actor?
- Why do they act?
- Who do they help?
- How and when do they act?

These questions are not simply descriptive. They shift the focus from assessing conformity or deviation from existing standards to an exploration of different conceptions of the location of moral responsibility, and of the source and breadth of moral obligation. Framing our analysis in terms of the non-West's conformity with or deviance from the principles and structures of the IHO can be viewed as privileging value, principles, and practices that have their roots in Western societies. Our questions thus provide a more open-ended framework through which to understand the conception of what constitutes legitimate humanitarianism on its own terms.

At the same time, we should not treat the humanitarian perceptions and practices of different societies as static, entombed within an ossified conception of culture and tradition. Conceptions of who should act, why they act, and how and when they act may change as the political and social culture of societies evolves. These conceptions are influenced by interaction between both domestic and international actors and forces, and are shaped by experience, learning, shifting awareness, and by the broader political environment. Furthermore, we should not treat conceptions of legitimate humanitarianism as uncontested *within* particular cultures and societies. Such contestation can itself be an important source of change.

Who Is Perceived as a Legitimate Humanitarian Actor?

In any humanitarian crisis a wide range of actors and agencies are involved in the provision of humanitarian assistance. These include state and nonstate actors, transnational actors, the military, and the local community. But the level of involvement of different actors, the nature of their roles, and the relationships between them vary greatly. A key issue governing the framework of humanitarian assistance in any society is: Who is seen as having *primary* responsibility to respond to humanitarian need?

One of the most vigorous debates surrounding this issue concerns the role of the state. Opinions differ on whether states should be seen as legitimate humanitarian actors or simply humanitarian enablers. In the West, nonstate actors such as the ICRC and NGOs are often perceived as more legitimate humanitarian actors than states, primarily because these actors are seen as impartial and apolitical. States, on the other hand, may be prone to instrumentalize humanitarianism to meet their broader political interests rather than prioritizing the interests of beneficiaries.

In contrast, in a number of East Asian societies the state is perceived as holding primary responsibility for humanitarian assistance. While such expectations resonate with the idea of the welfare state found in the West, in East Asian societies traditionally there has been a certain degree of "benevolence" or "sacredness" associated with the state. This extends to humanitarian crises, during which providing welfare and assistance becomes a legitimate popular expectation of the state. This tradition persists to the current day;[16] and, indeed, the capacity to provide effective aid may become a marker of a state's legitimacy. In China, for instance, for over 2,000 years the state has been regarded as the moral agent that leads humanitarian action. Confucian philosophy emphasizes the unity

between state and society. It is the state rather than the individual that is the locus of moral agency and the subject of moral duty. Such expectations of the state as holding the primary responsibility for the provision of welfare and assistance persist in the political culture of modern China, though they are now premised on communist ideology.[17] The state continues to hold a predominant position in the provision of humanitarian assistance, not only in relation to domestic humanitarian crises but also in responding to international crises. In contrast, NGOs play a subsidiary role both in the domestic and international context, a role that is further regulated by the state.

In Japan, expectations of the state as holding primary responsibility for humanitarian action are also deeply embedded in tradition, but reiterated in Japan's modern political culture. In contemporary Japan the *kan* (central and regional government and related agencies) are perceived as the primary humanitarian actors in responding to international as well as domestic crises, such as the Kobe and Great East Japan earthquakes. This perception is embedded in the tradition of *okami*, in which the top state authorities, such as the shogun, emperor, or government, hold principal responsibility for the provision of social services in the broader community.[18] As in China, this is reflected in strong government involvement in the provision of financial and technical assistance overseas.

Many in East Asia also assign the military a significant role in humanitarian actions in both external and internal crises. This role, however, is typically largely confined to natural disasters and not complex emergencies or conflict situations. In China, for example, the People's Liberation Army takes on a central role of engaging in international and domestic post-disaster relief work. China's 2010 Defense White Paper reads: "China's armed forces consider it an obligation to take part in international disaster relief operations organized by the government, and to fulfill international humanitarian obligations."[19] In Japan there was significant antipathy toward the use of the military in emergency relief until the 1990s, but today the importance of the role of the Self-Defense Force in international and domestic disaster assistance has wide support among Japanese citizens. Developing mechanisms for effective cooperation—including military cooperation—in humanitarian responses has become increasingly significant to diplomacy within the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). It has, for example, become a key agenda item in meetings such as the ASEAN Regional Forum and the ASEAN Defense Ministers Meetings.

The more pronounced role of the state and the military in humanitarian assistance in the region is closely linked to the nature of the relationship between the state and civil society. In some East Asian states, civil society structures have been traditionally more symbiotic with the state rather than independent from it. Yukio Nishikawa, for instance, notes that there has not been a strong tradition of NGOs in Japanese society. It is only in the wake of the Indochinese refugee crisis of 1979 that humanitarian and development-orientated NGOs began to emerge. The growth of Japan's NGO sector in recent decades has been boosted by enhanced subsidies and grants from the government, as well as by the establishment of the Japan Platform, a consortium that NGOs, the business community, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs founded to respond to humanitarian emergencies.[20]

However, in recent decades the nature of the symbiotic relationship between the state and civil society in East Asia has changed, with NGOs becoming an increasingly important element of humanitarian action and organization in the region. For example, in Indonesia there has been a proliferation of NGOs involved in providing humanitarian assistance, a number of which are Islamic or other faith-based organizations. While the majority of these focus their activities on domestic relief, others, such as the Medical Emergency Rescue Committee (Mer-C) and Aksi Cepat Tanggap, also operate at an international level. This development points to a more autonomous civil society in Indonesia. Hilman Latief suggests that this is linked to the expansion of political activism in the post–new order environment blending with the growth of Islamic social activism.[21]

While the state continues to be perceived to hold primary responsibility for humanitarian action in East Asia, one should not underestimate the importance of rising volunteerism and informal, local, and grassroots actors, which are "often the first, and sometimes the only, line of protection for the vulnerable."[22] This was illustrated in responses to the 2004 tsunami in Banda Aceh, Indonesia, where local communities provided the fastest and most immediate relief.[23] However, the role of local communities is often unobserved, partly because their activities are not necessarily included in international mechanisms such as OCHA's Financial Tracking Service. Indeed, these actors may not even perceive themselves as "humanitarian," given that this label is typically associated with external forms of assistance.[24] This can mean that a significant realm of indigenous humanitarian assistance can be invisible to our reading of the local humanitarian order, undermining our understanding of the breadth and composition of humanitarian action in this region. This problem is not unique to East Asia, but the

underestimated role of local and grassroots actors there further strengthens the perception that the state is the primary actor in humanitarian assistance.

Why Do They Act?

Asking why actors provide humanitarian assistance points to the deeper question of what the ethical roots of humanitarian obligation are in different societies. In Indonesia, understandings of humanitarianism are embodied in both tradition and the *Pancasila* (five principles), which provides the philosophical foundation of the state. For example, the principle of *Kemanusiaan yang Adil dan Beradab* (just and civilized humanity) requires all human beings to be treated with due regard given their dignity as God's creatures.[25] While the sentiment of "humanity" expressed here is drawn from Islamic traditions and thought, it traverses the different religions and cultures of Indonesia. Similarly, in Japan conceptions of humanitarianism are informed by multiple traditions, including such Buddhist concepts as *jihi* (mercy) and *awaremi* (compassion), but also by the spirit of *Bushido*, the code of the samurai.[26]

As noted earlier, while the contemporary discourse of humanitarianism is ebbing toward a rights-based discourse, in many cultures charity remains a legitimate and necessary activity. A classic example of this is the Islamic tradition of *zakat*, which is the obligation to give a portion of one's wealth to those in need. Indonesia's governmental agency *Badan Amil Zakat Nasional* is mandated to collect and distribute *zakat* and *sadaqah*, and includes within its activities a disaster-relief program mandate. The concept of *rahmatan lil alamin* (grace to the entire universe) is also invoked by a number of NGOs, such as Mer-C. Such traditions and concepts thus provide a significant ethical foundation for the humanitarian action of Muslim communities within the region.

However, the motives behind humanitarian assistance in all societies are always complex. For instance, analysts discussing why China and Japan have been broadening their international humanitarian engagement often conclude that it is driven by national interests rather than by a sense of global ethical obligation.[27] But the spirit of solidarity also plays a significant role in the discourse of humanitarianism within the region. This spirit emanates not only from a shared vulnerability to natural disasters but also from a shared commitment to equality, sovereign integrity, and noninterference, which is a crucial element of the worldview of many developing and non-Western societies.[28]

Who Do They Help?

Non-Western states are often critiqued for focusing their assistance on states and communities with whom they may share a religious or political affinity, or with whom they have strategic interests.[29] Such criticisms raise important questions about religious and political impartiality in East Asian approaches to humanitarianism. For instance, many Muslim humanitarian organizations have focused their assistance on the needs of Muslim communities. Undoubtedly, a series of crises and disasters in the Muslim world prompted what Marie Juul Petersen describes as "a wave of solidarity among Muslims," which played an important role in the development of organizations providing humanitarian assistance.[30] These included the famines in the Horn of Africa in the 1980s and the wars in Bosnia and Afghanistan in the 1990s and 2000s.

Much of Indonesia's international assistance, especially that coming from NGOs, is directed toward countries where Muslim groups are particularly vulnerable, such as in Somalia, Palestine, and Myanmar. This focus on the needs of fellow Muslims could be treated as an expression of religious solidarity that is at odds with humanitarianism's universality. On the other hand, as Masood Hyder has noted, Muslim societies disproportionately suffer from the impact of natural disasters and conflict.[31] One might therefore argue that there is a strong need-based case for Muslim humanitarianism to be directed toward such communities. In addition, there is a debate within Islam about the breadth of obligation and about how the Koran's injunction to help those in need should be interpreted.[32] Increasingly, prominent Muslim NGOs, such as Islamic Relief Worldwide and Muslim Aid and their affiliates, strongly emphasize that their assistance is global and to be given to communities on an impartial basis, dependent on need, not faith.[33]

Political impartiality, or an apparent lack thereof, is another issue in East Asian humanitarianism. As noted above, non-Western states have been accused of favoring their neighbors in their assistance.[34] In Japanese and Chinese societies, a communitarian ethic of obligation—which sees one's ethical obligations as expanding in concentric circles—has long been the predominant mode of thinking on humanitarianism. China, in particular, continues to harbor this attitude in its policymaking, in which its responsibility is conceived to be first and foremost to its own people and second to its neighbors in the Asia-Pacific region.[35] However, China's attitude toward its contributions to international humanitarian crises is gradually shifting, as signified by its increasing engagement with regions beyond Asia-Pacific,

such as in the Middle East and Africa.[36] In recent years some of the top recipients of China's humanitarian assistance have been Ethiopia and Kenya (2011), Zimbabwe (2012), and Syria (2013 and 2014).[37] A similar change can be observed in Japan, where from 2011 to 2014 humanitarian action has focused primarily on Afghanistan (2011–2014), Sudan/South Sudan (2011–2013), Somalia (2011–2012), and Syria (2013–2014).[38]

How and When Do They Act?

In East Asia two distinctive features emerge from the various responses to crises. The first feature relates to *when* humanitarian assistance is provided: East Asian societies are more forthcoming in responses to natural disasters than to complex emergencies.[39] For instance, ASEAN played a leading role in coordinating responses to Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar in 2008, but was far less active in responding to the humanitarian problems generated by the 2012 intracommunal conflict in Myanmar's Rakhine state between Rakhine Buddhists and Rohingya Muslims.[40] Similarly, China's 2010 and 2013 Defense White Papers and its 2011 Foreign Aid White Paper all articulate its commitment to provide emergency humanitarian aid, but solely in the wake of natural disasters or epidemics.[41]

While Japan and China do sometimes provide assistance in complex emergencies, it is given on a case-by-case basis and determined by particular political calculations and commitments. For example, Chinese President Xi Jinping announced at the China-Arab States Cooperation Forum in June 2014 that China would provide $16 million to Syrian refugees in Turkey. The announcement suggests that China considers humanitarian assistance in this case to have significant political implications for China-Arab relations—with particular regard to mending fences with many Arab states following its veto of the UN Security Council draft resolution in May 2014 to refer the situation in Syria to the International Criminal Court.[42]

There are largely two reasons why East Asia is more forthcoming when it comes to natural disasters rather than complex emergencies. First, East Asia is one of the regions most prone to natural disasters. This generates empathy toward victims of natural disasters elsewhere. Second, the historical memories of imperialism and colonial subjugation, which continue to affect local political cultures, make states particularly reluctant to undertake any humanitarian actions that might be regarded as interference in the domestic affairs of other states. Responses to natural disasters tend to be less "politicized" or less politically controversial than those to

complex emergencies, and thus governments are more willing to extend assistance.

It is important to note, however, that while many East Asian states may privilege emergency assistance to natural disasters, this does not preclude the funding of longer-term reconstruction and development projects following complex emergencies. China and Japan, for instance, support major infrastructure development as part of their humanitarian aid programs in Southeast Asia and Africa. A consequence of this strategy is the muddying of the distinction between budgets for humanitarian and other forms of assistance. China in particular is often criticized for not always clearly differentiating its budget for humanitarian assistance from other forms of assistance, such as development assistance.

Another issue is *how* humanitarian assistance is provided. Assistance is often provided on a state-to-state basis, with priority being afforded to the consent and role of the affected state in coordinating assistance. Here again respect for sovereignty can cause reluctance to engage in activities that might seem to interfere with the political processes of the recipient state. Thus, critics are quick to attribute the privileging of state-to-state relations to instrumentalism. To fail to acknowledge the instrumentalization of humanitarianism for national interests would be naïve. But, again, the privileging of sovereignty and host-state consent may be linked to the political cultures and historical experiences of different societies.

Conclusion

The growing cultural diversity of humanitarian actors is a critical feature of the current IHO. Awareness of this diversity has led to concerns that new actors may "deviate" in their practices from the core principles of humanitarianism. This, combined with their weak integration in the IHO, fuels the perception that the IHO is increasingly fragmented. However, assessing emerging non-Western actors according to the criteria of whether they conform or deviate from established principles and institutions runs the risk of privileging particular interpretations of what constitutes legitimate humanitarianism and a legitimate humanitarian order. Such a method of assessment can reinforce perceptions among the emerging non-Western actors that the IHO is dominated by a Western hegemonic discourse that neither comprehends nor respects non-Western approaches, and can feed antipathy and mistrust rather than foster cooperation and cohesion.

Perceptions of what constitutes legitimate humanitarianism are also varied and contested within and across Western societies. For instance, the principles of independence and neutrality are challenged by the integration of humanitarianism into political and developmental agendas. Western states are certainly not immune from accusations of partiality in their assistance policies, and many Western agencies involved in humanitarian assistance also have their roots in religious faiths and beliefs. Our four-part framework also provides a way of exploring such contestation. If we wish to nurture a healthy pluralism rather than risk fragmentation within the IHO, we need to explore inclusive frameworks for enhancing humanitarian practices and coordination—in East Asia and beyond.

NOTES

[1] The definition of culture we use in this essay is drawn from the work of Bhikhu Parekh, who defines culture as "a historically created system of meaning and significance or, what comes to the same thing, a system of beliefs and practices in terms of which human beings understand, regulate and structure their individual and collective lives." Bhikhu Parekh, *Rethinking Multiculturalism: Cultural Diversity and Political Theory* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2000), p. 143. We do not seek to privilege the state as the necessary locus of culture, nor do we assume that cultures and cultural perspectives are homogeneous or necessarily bounded by state frontiers. Rather, we use states as sites at which to sample perspectives and practices within the region, including those relating to conceptions of moral obligations and the locus of moral responsibility.

[2] Eleanor Davey, *New Players through Old Lessons: Why History Matters in Engaging Southern Actors*, HPG Policy Brief 48 (London: Overseas Development Institute, 2012).

[3] See, for instance, OCHA's moves to strengthen dialogue with member states and regional organizations and its support for the Dialogue on Humanitarian Partnership, an initiative led by Sweden and Brazil. OCHA, *OCHA Annual Report 2011* (Geneva: Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2012), pp. 6, 28; Jean-François Berger, "Iran: Dialogue on Islam and International Humanitarian Law in Qom," ICRC Resource Centre, December 1, 2006, www.icrc.org/eng/resources/documents/event/ihl-islam-event-011206.htm; interviews with ICRC officials, Geneva, June 2012; UNHCR High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection Challenges, 2012: Faith and Protection, Geneva, December 12–13, 2012, accessed October 05, 2014, www.unhcr.org/pages/501a39ce6.html.

[4] Michael Barnett, *The International Humanitarian Order* (New York & Abingdon: Routledge, 2010), p. 1.

[5] Alex Whiting, "New Donors Chip Away at Aid Industry Status Quo," *Thomson Reuters Foundation*, January 26, 2012, www.trust.org/alertnet/news/new-donors-chip-away-at-aid-industry-status-quo.

[6] OCHA, "Financial Tracking Service: Tracking Global Humanitarian Aid Flows," 2012, accessed April 17, 2014, www.fts.unocha.org.

[7] Andrea Binder, Claudia Meier, and Julia Steets, "Humanitarian Assistance: Truly Universal?," GPPi Research Paper No. 12, August 2010, p. 14. See also Meier and C.S.R. Murthy, "India's Growing Involvement in Humanitarian Assistance," GPPi Research Paper No. 13, March 2011.

[8] Oliver Buston and Kerry Smith, "Global Humanitarian Assistance Report 2013," Bristol: Development Initiatives, p. 22, www.globalhumanitarianassistance.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/GHA-Report-2013.pdf.

[9] Government of Timor-Leste, IV Constitutional Government, Secretariat of State of the Council of Ministers, "Council of Ministers Extraordinary Meeting of March 12, 2011—Dispatch of a Support Team to Japan," Press Release, March 12, 2011, timor-leste.gov.tl/?p = 4705&lang = en.

[10] Hiroko Inoue, "'In an Act of Solidarity and Fraternity': Timor-Leste's Reciprocal Humanitarianism," paper contributed to the "Cultures of Humanitarianism: Perspectives from the Asia-Pacific" project, April 2013, The Australian National University and the Institute of Asia and Pacific Studies at the University of Nottingham, p.1, www.nottingham.ac.uk/iaps/documents/project/inoue.pdf.

[11] Barnett et al., "Religion and Humanitarianism: Floating Boundaries in a Globalizing World," Conference Report: Religion, Secularism, and Humanitarianism: Exploring Differences, Boundaries,

and Connections, October 10–11, 2009, Graduate Institute of International Studies, Geneva, Switzerland, p. 11. See also Hilman Latief, "Islam and Humanitarian Affairs: The Middle Class and New Patterns of Social Action," in Kees van Djik and Jajat Burhanuuddin, eds., *Islam in Indonesia: Contrasting Images and Interpretations* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University, 2012), pp. 173–194, p. 188.

[12] Sarah Teitt, "Atrocity or Calamity?," paper contributed to the "Cultures of Humanitarianism: Perspectives from the Asia-Pacific" project, April 2012, The Australian National University and the Institute of Asia and Pacific Studies at the University of Nottingham, www.nottingham.ac.uk/iaps/documents/project/teitt.pdf.

[13] Non-Western donors have, however, had significant involvement in regional forums and cooperative mechanisms, such as the 2010 ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response, and the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management. Other illustrations include "The Dialogue on Humanitarian Partnership," which was launched by Sweden and Brazil in 2011, and the "Hope For" initiative, launched by Qatar, Turkey, and the Dominican Republic in 2011 to discuss the enhancement of coordination of military and civilian-defense resources in natural disasters.

[14] Yukie Osa, "The Growing Role of NGOs in Disaster Relief and Humanitarian Assistance in East Asia," in Rizal Sukma and James Gannon, eds., *A Growing Force: Civil Society's Role in Asian Regional Security* (Tokyo: Japan Center for International Exchange, 2013), pp. 66–89, p. 73.

[15] Andrea Binder and Claudia Meier, "Opportunity Knocks: Why Non-Western Donors Enter Humanitarianism and How to Make the Best of It," *International Review of the Red Cross* 93, no. 884 (2011), pp. 1135–49, p. 1147.

[16] Yukie Osa, "Seeking Japanese Conceptions of Humanitarianism," paper contributed to the "Cultures of Humanitarianism: Perspectives from the Asia-Pacific" project, October 2012, The Australian National University and the Institute of Asia and Pacific Studies at the University of Nottingham, www.nottingham.ac.uk/iaps/documents/project/osa.pdf.

[17] Hirono, "Three Legacies of Humanitarianism in China"; Teitt, "Atrocity or Calamity?"; Miwa Hirono, "China's Conception of Assistance in Disaster Areas," in Miwa Hirono and Jacinta O'Hagan, eds., *Cultures of Humanitarianism: Perspectives from the Asia-Pacific*, Keynotes 11 (Canberra: Department of International Relations, Australian National University, 2012), p. 25. See also Pichamon Yeophantong, *Understanding Humanitarian Action in East and Southeast Asia: A Historical Perspective*, HPG Working Paper (London: Overseas Development Institute, 2014).

[18] Yukie Osa notes that in the post–Second World War period, the scope of the *kan* has been extended to include the United Nations and the Japanese Red Cross Society (JRCS). This is reflected in the strong support provided to UN agencies and the JRCS by the Japanese public. Osa, "Seeking Japanese Conceptions of Humanitarianism," p. 4.

[19] Cited in Teitt, "Atrocity or Calamity?," p. 7. As Teitt further notes, the PLA's status as a "people's army" serves to blur the line between military and citizen action, helping to legitimize the role of the army in humanitarian relief. Teitt, "Atrocity or Calamity?," p. 5.

[20] Yukiko Nishikawa, *Japan's Changing Role in Humanitarian Crises* (New York: Routledge, 2005); Osa, "Disaster Relief and Humanitarian Assistance."

[21] Latief, "Islam and Humanitarian Affairs," p. 191.

[22] Donini et al., *Humanitarian Agenda 2015: Principles, Power, and Perceptions* (Medford, Mass.: Tufts University, Feinstein International Center, 2006), p. 17.

[23] Sisira Jayasuriya and Peter McCawley, *The Asian Tsunami: Aid and Reconstruction After a Disaster* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2010); Tsunami Evaluation Coalition (TEC), *Joint Evaluation of the International Response to the Indian Ocean Tsunami: Synthesis Report* (London: TEC supported by ALNAP, 2006), p. 91; Bevaola Kusumasari, "Network Organization in Supporting Post-Disaster Management in Indonesia," *International Journal of Emergency Services* 1, no. 1 (2012), pp. 71–85.

[24] Inoue, "In an Act of Solidarity and Fraternity"; Paul Harvey et al., *The State of the Humanitarian System: Assessing Performance and Progress* (London: ALNAP, Overseas Development Institute, 2010).

[25] Sigit Riyanto, "Challenges and Hopes for Humanitarian Operations in Indonesia," in Hirono and O'Hagan, eds., *Cultures of Humanitarianism*, p. 33.

[26] Osa, "Seeking Japanese Conceptions of Humanitarianism," p. 2.

[27] Stephanie Kleine-Ahlbrandt and Andrew Small, "China's New Dictatorship Diplomacy: Is Beijing Parting with Pariahs?," *Foreign Affairs* 87, no. 1 (2008), pp. 38–56; A Japanese expert in ODA also noted in a Japanese government meeting that "Japan should be fully aware of the fact that it has a special foreign policy card that none of the other countries have, which is Overseas Development Assistance," in which humanitarian assistance is included. Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "A Discussion Session with Experts on Revision of the General Framework of ODA [ODA taiko minaoshi

ni kansuru yushikisha kondankai]," p. 7, accessed September 16, 2014, www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/about/ kaikaku/taikou_minaoshi/files/ko2_gijiyoushi.pdf.

[28] See Osa, "Seeking Japanese Conceptions of Humanitarianism"; Teitt, "Atrocity or Calamity?"; Hirono, "Three Legacies of Humanitarianism in China"; Inoue, "In an Act of Solidarity and Fraternity." Also see Latief, "Islam and Humanitarian Affairs" on solidarism and social activism as an aspect of Islamic humanitarianism in Indonesia.

[29] Adele Harmer and Lin Cotterrell, *Diversity in Donorship*, HPG Research Report 20 (London: Overseas Development Institute, 2005); Masood Hyder, "Humanitarianism and the Muslim World," *Journal of Humanitarian Assistance*, August 22, 2007.

[30] Marie Juul Petersen, "Islamizing Aid: Transnational Muslim NGOs after 9.11," *Voluntas*, vol. 23 (2012), pp.126-155, p. 133.

[31] Masood Hyder, in "Humanitarianism and the Muslim World," further notes that 50 percent of World Food Programme aid goes to beneficiaries in Muslim countries.

[32] For instance, the case for a more encompassing conception of *zakat* and *sadaqah* was made by Teten Kustiawan, director of operations for the state-mandated Badan Amil Zakat Nasional (National Amil Agency). He argued that while the victims of disaster do not strictly fall within the categories of recipients, *zakat* and *sadaqah* can be legitimately distributed in disaster relief to prevent victims of disaster falling into poverty. "BAZNAS Ringankan Korban Bencana [BAZNAS Helps Disaster Victims]," *Republika*, January 20, 2014, www.republika.co.id/berita/koran/news-update/14/01/19/mznoyf-baznas-ringankan-korban-bencana.

[33] Ismail Yaylaci, "Communitarian Humanitarianism: The Politics of Islamic Humanitarian Organizations," paper presented at the workshop "Religion and Humanitarianism," American University in Cairo, June 3–5, 2008; Atin Prabandari, "Islamic Humanitarianism and the International Humanitarian Order," unpublished master's thesis, Graduate Studies in International Affairs, Australian National University, 2010; Marie Juul Petersen, "Islamizing Aid: Transnational Muslim NGOs after 9.11," p. 147.

[34] Harmer and Cotterrell, "Diversity in Donorship"; Binder and Meier, "Opportunity Knocks."

[35] Yeophantong, *Understanding Humanitarian Action in East and Southeast Asia*, p. 7.

[36] Miwa Hirono and Marc Lanteigne, "Introduction: China and UN Peacekeeping," *International Peacekeeping* 18, no. 3 (2011), pp. 243–56.

[37] More specifically, Ethiopia received $23 million, and Kenya $20 million (respectively, 26.8% and 23.2% of China's entire humanitarian assistance of 2011); Zimbabwe $14 million (51.5% of 2012); Syria $3 million (67% in 2013); and Syria $3.9 million (41.4% in 2014). "Financial Tracking Service: Tracking Global Humanitarian Aid Flows," 2014, accessed September 16, 2014, fts.unocha.org.

[38] More specifically, Afghanistan received $145.8 million, Sudan $41.5 million, and Somalia $39.7 million (respectively, 23.9%, 6.8%, and 6.5% of Japan's entire humanitarian assistance of 2011); Afghanistan $108.1 million, Sudan $53.6 million, and Somalia $43.7 million (respectively, 16.4%, 8.1%, and 6.6% of 2012); Syria $144.3 million, Afghanistan $77.1 million, and South Sudan $57.5 million (respectively, 14.9%, 8%, and 5.9% of 2013); and Syria $141.4 million, the Philippines $63.3 million, and Afghanistan $45.8 million (respectively, 17.2%, 7.7%, and 5.6% of 2014). "Financial Tracking Service: Tracking Global Humanitarian Aid Flows," 2014, accessed October 1, 2014, fts.unocha.org.

[39] A complex emergency is defined by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee as "a humanitarian crisis in a country, region, or society where there is total or considerable breakdown of authority resulting from internal or external conflict and which requires an international response that goes beyond the mandate or capacity of any single agency and/or the ongoing United Nations country programme." Relief Web, "Glossary of Humanitarian Terms," draft version, August 2008, p. 18, www.who.int/hac/about/reliefweb-aug2008.pdf?ua=1.

[40] Similarly, China's assistance to conflict-riven Aceh in the wake of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami focused *solely* on post-tsunami assistance and did not extend to post-conflict reconstruction. For its part, the Indonesian government was more willing to accept assistance in the wake of international disaster than in the context of conflict. Miwa Hirono, "Another 'Complementarity' in Sino-Australian Security Cooperation," *Contemporary International Relations* 21, no. 3 (2011), pp. 103–36.

[41] Teitt, "Atrocity or Calamity," p. 7; Information Office of the State Council, The People's Republic of China, "The Diversified Employment of China's Armed Forces," April 2013, accessed May 8, 2014, eng.mod.gov.cn/Database/WhitePapers/.

[42] United Nations Security Council, document S/2014/348, accessed September 16, 2014, www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2014/348.