



WHERE DO INDIGENOUS PEOPLES COME FROM? **A HISTORIAN'S VIEW**

Wednesday • April 10, 2019 • 6:30–8pm

HUB Room 214



PAUL D. BARCLAY is Professor and Head of history at Lafayette College. His interests include Taiwan, Japan, China, indigenous studies, and comparative colonialism. His most recent book *Outcasts of Empire: Japan's Rule on Taiwan's "Savage Border," 1874-1945* (University of California Press 2017) examines the causes and consequences of capitalism's failure to "batter down all Chinese walls" in modern Taiwan and the creation of an Indigenous Territory, which exists to this day as a legacy of Japanese imperialism, local initiatives, and the global commodification of culture. Barclay's research has received support from the National Endowment from the Humanities, the Social Science Research Council, the Japanese Council for the Promotion of Science, and the Taiwan Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Why do "undiscovered tribes" and "dying cultures" remain staples of reporting in the National Geographic and serious works of non-fiction? While activists and scholars have been debunking stereotypical views of indigenous isolation and cultural fragility for decades, popular fascination with unblemished and pristine peoples--the folks that "time left behind"--remain vibrant. Social scientists have countered these stereotypes by showing that indigenous peoples have dynamic pasts connected to global networks of exchange, production, and meaning-making. Some critics have gone so far as to suggest that indigenous peoples are recent arrivals

upon the historical stage. This lecture proposes a middle path between primordialist and constructivist models of indigenous history. Based on my book-length study of Taiwan Indigenous peoples under Japanese colonial rule from 1874 to 1945, I suggest that local conceptions of continuity and persistence are corroborated by the historical record. At the same time, I argue that today's legally and culturally operative notions of indigeneity emerged in the twentieth-century, as historical concomitants of the rise of nation-states as dominant political formations.