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## <Book Review>

**Sakuma Kyoko**

**Marie-Sybille de Vienne. *Brunei: From the Age of Commerce to the 21st Century*. Singapore: NUS Press in association with Institute De Recherche Sur L'Asie Du Sud-Est Contemporaine (Research Institute of Contemporary Southeast Asia), 2015, xviii+345pp.**

*Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol. 6, No. 1, April 2017, pp. 196-198.

**How to Cite:** Sakuma, Kyoko. Review of *Brunei: From the Age of Commerce to the 21st Century* by Marie-Sybille de Vienne. *Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol. 6, No. 1, April 2017, pp. 196-198.

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Duflo, Esther. 2004. The Medium Run Effects of Educational Expansion: Evidence from a Large School Construction Program in Indonesia. *Journal of Development Economics* 7(1): 163–197

***Brunei: From the Age of Commerce to the 21st Century***

MARIE-SYBILLE DE VIENNE

Singapore: NUS Press in association with Institute De Recherche Sur L'Asie Du Sud-Est Contemporaine (Research Institute of Contemporary Southeast Asia), 2015, xviii + 345pp.

*Brunei: From the Age of Commerce to the 21st Century* is a translation of Marie-Sybille de Vienne's book that was originally published in French, titled *Brunei: De la Thalassocratie à la Rente* (Paris: CNRS, 2012, index, 303pp., translated by Emilia Lanier). This fascinating work examines how Brunei, a tiny sultanate of 5,765 square kilometers in the South China Sea, became today's extraordinarily rich state. Through the lens of economic history, de Vienne explores this transformation in terms of monarchy, Islam, and trade. Interestingly, although de Vienne deals primarily with the society and economy of modern Brunei (1984–2014 in this volume), the early history of Brunei is briefly explored in Chapters 1 and 2 (pp. 1–60). This is key, as the political, economic, historical, and religious aspects of Brunei cannot be explained without an understanding of the maritime "Age of Commerce" (Reid 1988/93) in Southeast Asia.

The most significant contribution of this book is that it provides the first published overview of the long-term history of Brunei. As an anthropologist and specialist in indigenous communities of the Baram Basin, Northern Sarawak, Malaysian Borneo, I have a keen interest in records of Brunei that describe the historical situation of Sarawak under the Sultan of Brunei. As de Vienne notes, "Brunei is thus the heart of a network in which all points on a north/south axis (from Canton at the top, down to Flores) correspond in pairs to the focal points of trade of the South China Sea" (p. 9).

Sarawak is well known as a major producer of jungle or forest products. By the early 1880s it was clearly outstripping its Bornean neighbors in its volume of such products, thus constituting a major proportion of the trade profile of all four countries: Brunei, Labuan, North Borneo, and Sarawak (Cleary 1996, 313), with Brunei being the most powerful polity. Carl Lumholtz writes that Antonio Pigafetta arrived in Brunei from the Moluccas in 1521, along with the survivors of Portuguese explorer Ferdinand Magellan's expedition, and was the first to give an account of it to the Western world. Pigafetta called it "Bornei," which later, with a slight change, became the name of the whole island (Lumholtz 1920, 19).

Given the importance of Brunei in the history of the Southeast Asian Archipelago, the lack of good English references on the country is surprising. To the best of my knowledge, this is the only academic publication that examines the long-term economic history of this sultanate from the

Age of Commerce to the twenty-first century. Although historians have always been interested in Brunei in and around the Age of Commerce, the attention drops off afterward, with the exception of the national history written by D. S. Ranjit Singh, a historian of Brunei (Singh 1984). Singh's book provides an overview of Brunei's economic and political history up until the modern age.

The chapters are in chronological order, and all kinds of historical events are included in each. Chapters 1 ("Prologue: Brunei versus Borneo," pp. 1–11) and 2 ("From Thalassocracy to Rentier State," pp. 13–128) are in concert with the "rhythm" of the archipelago of Oliver Wolters (1982). These chapters describe how Brunei gained and developed a significant geopolitical advantage in the Southeast Asian Archipelago and how it reached its golden age through expansion and contraction of the Sultan's territory. The references cited in the footnotes and bibliography provide useful historical references.

This translation is undoubtedly the best reference on the history of Brunei. It would be a useful title for anyone interested in Brunei and/or Borneo or anyone who seeks to understand the historical and current situation of the maritime trade of Southeast Asia and the South China Sea. This book does not take the high road of a historian's work as it depends heavily on secondary sources. The author cites a large number of references, and the chronological historical descriptions tend to be lengthy. After Chapter 3, it becomes like any other impersonal history book. There is, of course, a major contrast between the past and present in a volume that is written in linear order with a single time line.

I have heard a wide variety of life stories from people in the Baram Basin of Sarawak who moved frequently and married across the border in Central Borneo. This is not the policymaker-centered history of nation-states like Brunei, but a history of how ordinary people, merchants, and immigrants have created their communities and built social networks in real life and in cyberspace. The political and economic position of the Chinese and Dayaks in Brunei, for example, is unclear. Although the history of Brunei has been reported to star the Malays and Western powers, the Chinese in the Southeast Asian Archipelago played a very important role. How have the Dayaks who emigrated from the Malaysian side of Borneo not been incorporated into the Islamic kingdom? Understanding Brunei in the twenty-first century requires examinations of such questions, and this book provides an excellent stepping-stone.

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***Sustainable Land Use and Rural Development in Southeast Asia:  
Innovations and Policies for Mountainous Areas***

HOLGER L. FRÖHLICH, PEPIJN SCHREINEMACHERS, KARL STAHR, and GERHARD CLEMENS, eds.

Berlin and Heidelberg: Springer, 2013, x+490pp.

There is no promising way of sustainably farming sloping land in a market-oriented economy. Farmers are usually required to offer competitive prices and quality of agricultural products in order to survive in the market. That forces them to increase agricultural production, which in turn leaves them no choice apart from sedentary agriculture and land use intensification. Changes in farming system and land use usually entail degradation of sloping land, because in arable land the outflows of soil, its nutritional content, and water exceed their inflows. Preventing or mitigating land degradation, along with keeping products competitive, is the central problem in agricultural development. Although the issue seems to be straightforward, several factors—from a range of ecological to cultural settings—are intricately tangled. This is likely to be one of the reasons why many agricultural development projects have not been as successful as expected. This volume is a result of the Uplands Program, which is an agricultural development project in northern Thailand and northern Vietnam to help solve the problem.

The objectives of this volume as outlined in Chapter 1 are as follows: first, to investigate drivers, consequences, and challenges of change mainly in land use and agricultural intensification; second, to describe how technology-based innovation processes can address the challenges; and third, to describe how knowledge creation can support changes in policies and institutions. The volume is divided into four parts, an introduction followed by one part for each of the objectives: Part 1, “Overview and Synthesis”; Part 2, “Environmental and Social Challenges”; Part 3, “Technology-Based Innovation Processes”; and Part 4, “Policies and Institutional Innovations.”

This project assumes that four drivers of change from traditional swidden cultivation to permanent field cultivation, mainly cash crops, are: economic development, policy change, introduction of new technologies, and population growth. As a result, as discussed in Part 2, mainly due to annual cash crop cultivation, soil erosion increases and pesticide-contaminated water runs off to