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The Extension of State Power and Negotiations of the Villagers in Northeast Thailand*

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This article explores the extension of state power through which local people are controlled, and the ways in which local people deal with and face this control. A Phutai (ผู้ไท) ethnic community in Northeast Thailand, which at one time sided with the Communist Party of Thailand and was thus referred to as a “Communist village,” was selected to serve as the study site. Data collection was by the qualitative method through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. The study found that the expansion of state power to seize a locality at two different times met with different types of responses and negotiations from the local people. In the late nineteenth century the Thai state, responding to the presence of Western colonial powers, was able to assert its control over local communities through various administrative changes, for example, through state-appointed village heads and the tax-collection system. In this way, the state was able to integrate most outpost areas under its control and avoid being colonized by Western powers. In the twentieth century state power was again seriously contested, this time by the presence and growing influence of Communism in rural areas. However, the state regained political space after the decline of Communism. This paper argues that within the political space that was under the control of the state, local people were able to find their own ways to deal with state power as they constantly negotiated by using their history of involvement with the Communist Party of Thailand.

Keywords: Phutai, nation-state building, ethnic identity, social space, symbolic capital, minority

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Introduction

During the history of Thai nation-state building, the central state expanded its power both physically and politically to maintain control and supervision over outlying areas. The extension of power was initially an effort to build unity in order to resist the influence of Western colonialism (Thongchai 1994), which had extended its power into Southeast Asia. Western colonialists annexed parts of land that had previously belonged to Thailand, at that time known as Siam. In response, the Thai state staged a series of reforms that allowed it to maintain its sovereignty over the main part of what is today Thailand¹⁾ (Pasuk and Baker 1997; Wyatt 1982) and avoid being formally colonized by Western powers.

The reform, as part of the process of nation building, can be seen as the first modern creation of political space by the state in Thailand, that is, the process of using the power of the state to control outpost areas, which has continued to the present day. Through the reforms, the state introduced a new governing system that allowed the central government in Bangkok to directly control the population. In these reforms a prefecture (*monthon* มณฑล) replaced the provincial governor system (*jao mueang* เจ้าเมือง), outpost lands were systematically surveyed and registered, and all Thai citizens were required to record their names on their house registration documents. The prefecture governors were appointed by the central government in Bangkok, a change that reduced the power of the former governors. The result of the reform was that outpost areas, which previously had been relatively independent, were incorporated into and managed by the central government (Suwit 2002), a process that characterizes internal colonization (Hind 1984).

Because of the extension of central state space, the former governors lost power; and consequently, they opposed the government officers who had been sent from the central state. Moreover, the new tax collection system caused hardships and ignited the people's opposition to the central state. For example, abolishing the opium tax in 1910 led to opposition by concessionaires, Chinese communities went on strike against an increase in the poll tax,²⁾ etc. The addition of new taxes, particularly the poll tax, in which

1) As for Siam itself, it had to give up land on the right bank of the Mekong River, on the opposite side of Luang Prabang and Champasak in Laos, as well as the Khmer provinces of Siem Reap, Sisophon, and Battambang to France. It also had to transfer its right to govern the Malay provinces of Saiburi, Kelantan, Terengganu, and Perlis as well as land in Burma, i.e., Mergui, Tavoy, and Shan State, to Britain.

2) Capitation was a tax that was collected from citizens who resided on the land at the rate of 4 baht per person. In the past, these citizens were called *phrai* (subjects ไพร). They were able-bodied men or persons of working age, i.e., 20–50 years old. Those who could not pay the tax had to engage in labor for the Public Works Ministry, which was responsible for the kingdom's infrastructure development such as road construction and canals as well as the State Post and Telegraph and the State Railway.

the tribute system (people paying tax to the state “in kind” with materials) was replaced by a cash system, caused great difficulty for the people, most of whom were poor. The expansion of state space thus met with resistance not only from local governors but also from the population living in outpost areas. One important resistance movement by the population to the expansion of the state space was the Holy Men’s Rebellion (Kabot Phibun กบฏศิษณุภมฺ) (Ted 2008; Saisakul 2012; Baird 2013). Nevertheless, the Thai state’s modernization, or nation building, was successful; and before World War I all outpost areas were fully and politically integrated.

After World War II the Thai state faced a new threat with the growing influence of Communism. In response to this threat the state extended its space, but this time it did so differently from previous times. The new approach was to focus on using political ideology along with violent suppression of dissidents. Through mass media, such as radio and signboards distributed to villages nationwide, Communism was painted as evil and dangerous. In 1952 the government issued anti-Communist laws that were harshly enforced, particularly during the government of Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat (1959–63) and the Thanom–Prapat regime (1963–73). The expansion of state space, in this case the enforcement of anti-Communist laws, led to conflicts between the state and the people. A great number of people joined the Communist Party of Thailand (CPT), seizing the outpost spaces as their strongholds. Battles between the state and the CPT caused hardships and difficulties for the populace. At the beginning of the 1980s, however, the state adopted a new policy called the “political-led military policy,” which put a halt to violent suppression of dissidents (Lowe 2009; Chao 2010).

This paper explores the expansion of state space into outpost areas and the response of local people to the ending of the conflict between the Thai state and the CPT. Many previous studies have stressed that throughout history the state successfully asserted its control through development projects and so gained supremacy over outpost areas. This paper argues that the expansion of state space does not necessarily mean that the people are entirely submissive to state power. Rather, within the field of forces dominated by the state, people can employ the image painted by the state, such as the image of Communism, to engage and negotiate their relationship. The empirical analysis of this paper is based on phenomenological research on a village that was conceived by the state as a “Communist village.” The state’s creation of space and the people’s negotiations cover the period from the CPT war up to the present.

Theoretical Framework

In sociological circles, there have been explanations from diverse theoretical perspectives on the above-mentioned phenomenon of a state's expansion of power for local control and management. However, the widely accepted mainstream explanation is the modernization perspective. The modernization process was started during the reign of King Rama V, when outpost areas were gradually incorporated into the central government in Bangkok. According to this explanation, the Thai state employed administrative mechanisms that were modernized to advance Bangkok's power into areas that previously had been ruled by local governors. Modernization was conceived as reforms implemented during the reign of King Rama V. In addition, modernization that took the form of the expansion of state mechanisms continued after Thailand adopted the National Economic and Social Development Plan, which began in 1960.

Amid the rise of Communist influence in rural areas, the state created new government agencies, such as the Department of Rural Development and Bureau of Rural Development Acceleration (with significant support from the United States Operations Mission). The National Institute of Development Administration was established in 1966 to promote and support the modernization of state agencies through postgraduate training for development and administration personnel. These state agency modernizations were coupled with "economic modernization," which initially involved infrastructure building and import substitution development strategies. The modernization of agriculture through the green revolution—involving the introduction of various cash crops (Pasuk and Baker 1997; Maniemai 2014)—which came later, in the mid-twentieth century, was also instrumental in the expansion of the state agency into rural areas. However, it is argued that the later modernization of the Thai state focused on economic modernization, while politics was hardly modernized (Chatthip 2010). Political modernization focused on incorporation into the central state as well as increased state control over the population.

It has also been argued that the modernization theories mentioned above give too much weight to external factors as the primary causes of modernization. This view fails to take into account communities' history. It does not appreciate agencies outside of the state mechanism, such as dissidents and non-state representatives. Presently, even though the research takes into account the limitations of mainstream concepts, such concepts still influence economic and political development. For example, under the political turmoil that Thailand has been experiencing for almost a decade, efforts have been made to design constitutional law to increase the power of the state bureaucracy. Therefore, these are all "symptoms"—attesting to the influence of mainstream concepts

and theories.

This paper sees state power as a “field of forces,” and therefore a theoretical perspective concerned with social space will be adopted to guide the investigation and analysis. According to Pierre Bourdieu (1930–2002), a social space contains numerous subfields, and each subfield consists of networks of people who try to win or own powers to create rules and regulations that will be eventually articulated into positions. Those who hold these positions will individually or collectively find ways to safeguard or improve their positions (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). In other words, power is defined by positions contained in the subfield, and the struggle to maintain or improve positions within these subfields structures the control of space (Bourdieu 1989).

The above concepts of space and field of forces inform the analysis of this paper, which first discusses the materials and methods through which empirical data were obtained. This discussion is followed by the presentation of findings and discussions of the incorporation of outposts into the central state, the battle for control of space, the regaining of political space by the state, and the people’s negotiations under state space.

Methodology

The information required to understand the negotiations of villagers is concerned with everyday practice. In order to pursue this aim, the phenomenological research method (Holloway 1997) was adopted and research was conducted in an ethnic minority village, which was given the pseudonym of Ban Phasuk (บ้านผาสุก), literally meaning “the village of happiness.” The researcher spent several weeks building rapport with villagers, and therefore emic views of the villagers could be obtained. In building good relationships, the researcher benefited from having the same ethnicity as the villagers of Ban Phasuk and being a native speaker of the local dialect.

In order to obtain required information, the researcher identified 32 villagers for interviews. The main criterion for selection was that these villagers had the experience of being affiliated with the Communist insurgency and living in the village from 1965 to 1981. In addition, six villagers who joined the Communist movement and later became Thai Nation Development Cooperators were selected for in-depth interviews. The interviews were conducted mainly in Ban Phasuk. Some Thai Nation Development Cooperators were interviewed on Phutai Day (*wan phutai* วันภูไท), organized by Renu Nakhon District, and on the occasion of remembering the First Gunfire Day (organized on August 7 in Ban Phasuk village). In addition, a focus group discussion was organized consisting of leaders—including the village head—members of the Tambon Administrative Organ-

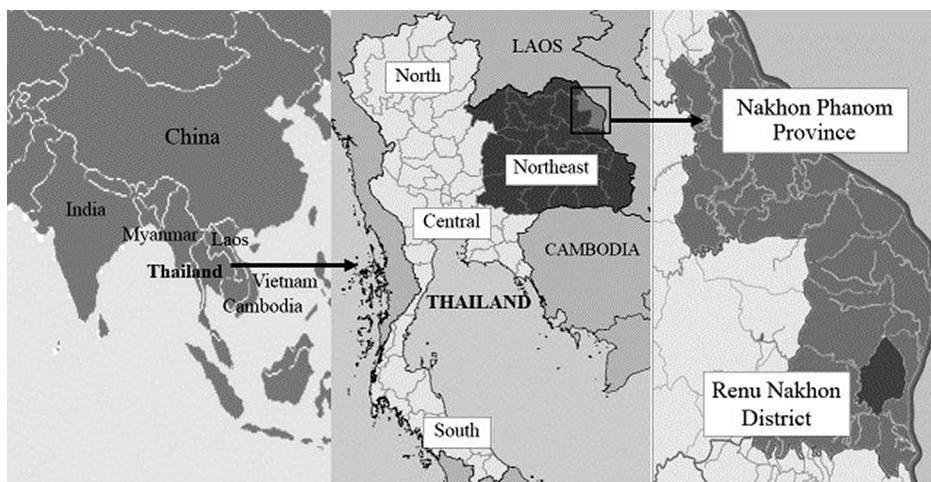


Fig. 1 Map of research site, showing Renu Nakhon District of Nakhon Phanom Province. Ban Phasuk is located in Renu Nakhon District.

Sources: Applied from <https://www.google.co.th/search?q=southeast+asia+map>; [https://th.wikipedia.org/wiki/ภาคอีสาน_\(ประเทศไทย\)](https://th.wikipedia.org/wiki/ภาคอีสาน_(ประเทศไทย)) and <https://th.wikipedia.org/wiki/อำเภอเรณูนคร>, accessed January 12, 2016.

ization, and schoolteachers. The purpose of the discussion was to obtain a picture of state actions at the local level.

Ban Phasuk is a Phutai village in Renu Nakhon District, Nakhon Phanom Province. In terms of socioeconomic conditions, the village is similar to most other rural villages in Northeast Thailand. The people of Ban Phasuk traditionally earned their living from agriculture, but during the past two decades their sources of livelihood have greatly diversified. A significant number of young and working-age people migrate to seek jobs outside and then remit part of their income to support those who remain in the village. The socioeconomic development of Thailand, along with government development programs, has significantly raised the villagers' standard of living, especially during the past three decades.

What is distinctive about Ban Phasuk, when compared to other rural villages, is that its villagers had the experience of joining the CPT in staging an armed fight against the Thai state. One significant event was a gunfight between the villagers and the authorities that broke out on August 7, 1965 and led to the day being declared the First Gunfire Day, symbolizing the armed fight by the CPT to win power. This village's experience reflects the response of local people to the expansion of state power, details of which will be discussed below.

The Incorporation of Outside Space into the Central State

Like many other states in mainland Southeast Asia, the Thai state, previously known as Siam, had limited control over its outposts, although official historical documents claim sovereignty and control over large areas. Reforms, initially staged under King Rama V, served to annex the outposts, which previously were relatively independent, and make them part of the central Thai state. The incorporation of the outposts, although successfully achieved, caused many hardships for the local people, which gradually fomented resistance.

Renu Nakhon is a district in Nakhon Phanom Province. The provincial capital of Nakhon Phanom is located along the Mekong River, opposite the town of Tha Kaek in Laos PDR. Most of the people in Renu Nakhon District are of Phutai ethnicity. Historically this Phutai group consisted of war captives who were forced to move from Laos to Thailand in the early Ratanakosin period. In the beginning Renu Nakhon leaders made attempts for their district to be recognized by Bangkok as a *mueang* (city), in order to have their own administrative system. Bangkok finally granted the status of *mueang* to Renu Nakhon,³⁾ and some important governors are still remembered, including Phra Kaeo Komon (พระแก้วโกมล) and Thao-Sing Kaeomanichai (ท้าวสิงห์ แก้วมณีชัย: 1888–94). It is appropriate to note here that during the early years of Renu Nakhon, the leaders attempted incorporation into Bangkok rather than seeking independence because Bangkok's protection against Vientiane and other powers was most important to them.

However, the Phutai have also attempted to maintain their ethnic identity. Inhabitants of Renu Nakhon usually refer to the town as Mueang Wey (เมืองเว), the name of the town where they lived before they became war captives. The ethnic identity of the Phutai has been accepted by the state and become a valuable resource for the tourism that has been promoted in the past decades, which will be discussed below.

Ban Phasuk was established around 1891, and its founders and inhabitants are Phutai, the same ethnic group as the people of Renu Nakhon. However, the location of the village is around 12 kilometers from Renu Nakhon district town. Road access 40 years ago, especially during the rainy season, was difficult. The reason for founding the village was to limit cultivated lands near Renu Nakhon district town. With population

3) Renu Nakhon was established in 1841, during the reign of King Rama III (1824–51). The governor form of administration was used. The positions consisted of vice-governor (*upahat* อุปฮาด), dynasty (*ratchawong* ราชวงศ์), and royal prince (*ratchabut* ราชบุตร). The governor system ended in 1903, at the time of King Rama V and Phra Kaeo Komon (พระแก้วโกมล) (*Men Kophonrat* เหม็น โกพลรัตน์), who was the fifth and last governor of Renu Nakhon (see details in Thawin Thongsawangrat *ฉวีทองสว่างรัตน์* [1897]).

growth, people extended their cultivated lands farther and farther and finally formed new villages. Although the people of Ban Phasuk and Renu Nakhon District share the same origins, there remain some distinctions. For instance, the Phutai of Renu Nakhon believe in the town shrine spirit called Pu Thala (Grandfather Thala deity ปู่ถลาล), the spirit that loves or craves raw buffalo meat. The Phutai of Ban Phasuk, however, feel that such a belief results in the killing of buffalo, which obviously goes against Buddhist teachings. Moreover, in the researcher's experience, the people of Renu Nakhon and those of Ban Phasuk view each other differently. The former view the latter as Communists, while the latter view the former as *jao nai* (เจ้านาย), or officials.

During the administrative reform period, under King Rama V, Renu Nakhon like other *mueang* underwent changes, i.e., the power of the governor system slowly dissolved. Based on the prefecture or modern administrative system, the status of Renu Nakhon town was lowered to a mere subdistrict (but later, in the 1970s, it was raised again to a district). Originally, Ban Phasuk was referred to as a cluster or *khum ban* (คุ้มบ้าน). Later it became a village, or *ban* (บ้าน), which is the smallest unit of state administration. Moreover, the title of the village leader was changed from *ja ban* (เจ้าบ้าน) to *phuyai ban* (village head ผู้ใหญ่บ้าน). In other words, the appointment of a *ja ban* was originally based on seniority and respectability, but under the modern administrative system the village head was someone who would serve as an intermediary between the village and the central state. The village heads acted as intermediaries bringing policies, announcements, or orders from the center to the villagers for implementation. The head of the village therefore came to be viewed by the villagers of Ban Phasuk as an official. Through these changes, the state incorporated the villagers of Ban Phasuk into the center and expanded and tightened its control over all aspects of their lives. While the expansion of state power benefited the local population in some ways, it also gave rise to a discontent that had the potential to grow and develop into resistance.

With regard to the economic aspect, first, through its promotion of the rice trade the state extended its power. Consequently, the community, which used to have a subsistence economy, became a market-dependent system. To increase the agricultural area in order to grow a greater amount of rice, large areas of forestland were cleared. Moreover, because the villagers had to make payments to the state and because the external market was expanding, they needed more money to buy consumer goods. Rice and forest resources were goods that they could produce or find locally. Production for subsistence was replaced by production for sale. As a result, the rural households' economic course began to depend on external markets. The state from that time on extended itself into the village and held power over the villagers, who had become producers.

Second, the issue of tax collection had a great impact on the villagers of Ban Phasuk.

After the administrative reform begun during the reign of King Rama V, the state sent government officers from Bangkok to collect taxes. Prior to this time tax was collected in the form of corvee labor (*suai* ส่วย) in which all able-bodied men were subject to conscription for public works and wars. However, corvee labor or *suai* could be paid in the form of valuable goods such as silk, gold, etc. The latter form of tax was most common in the case of outpost cities; most Isan cities were far from Bangkok, and transportation was difficult. After the reform, tax was imposed in the form of money, replacing corvee labor. At first, 3.50 baht per able-bodied man was collected. Later, in 1901, the rate was increased to 4 baht per able-bodied man (Suwit 2006). Furthermore, farmers were required to pay a rice cultivation tax. As a result of these collections, from 1892 to 1927 the state's income continuously increased.

The collection of tax in the form of money had a great impact on the living conditions of Ban Phasuk villagers. One villager said the following:

... At that time, when it was time for the government to enroll labor, district officers would come to meet the village head. The village head knew well which able-bodied men in the village would be able to work as laborers or to carry out "public works." If someone had 4 baht to pay as capitation, he did not need to be enrolled as labor. However, very few people had the money to pay. At that time, carrying out public works was like being a slave because one had to do whatever the master ordered. Most of the work was labor. The laborers became fatigued and were worried about their families. Particularly if the public works enrollment period coincided with that of rice cultivation, the laborers would be all the more worried about their families because of the shortage of labor. (Interview, May 10, 2013)

From the statement above, it is apparent that at that time Ban Phasuk was hardly integrated into the Thai monetary economy. After the rice cultivation season, many men had to leave their villages to earn money to pay the new tax. Some became cloth traders, some joined cattle trader caravans, and some crossed the Mekong River to find work in the towns of Khammouane (คำม่วน) and Savannakhet (สະຫວັນນະເຂດ) in Laos. In those days, citizens had a hard time earning income in the form of money to pay government taxes. Consequently, the people viewed the state in a negative way.

In order to fit within the space of the state, Phutai people needed to be molded into the "Thai" pattern. Minority ethnic groups were generally seen by the state as "the other"—different from Thai. As pointed out by Thongchai Winichakul in "The Others Within: Travel and Ethno-Spatial Differentiation of Siamese Subjects 1885–1910" (2000), ethnographic construction was one of colonization's plans for defining and controlling "the others." In order to obtain information, rulers from the central region engaged in journeys, surveys, and ethnographic differentiation. They kept travel records and ethnographic notes in order to classify the rites and beliefs of local people that were strange

and different from those of the central state. An ethnic group was conceived as an “other” that was living within the state space. Previously the Thai state referred to people living in outpost areas as *chao pha* (forest people ชาวป่า). The incorporation of ethnic minorities into central Thailand was done in various ways, with the most important one being through the education system. To a certain extent, however, the sense of otherness of ethnic minorities remains.

As for the villagers, in the beginning, to obtain an education they entered the monkhood. After the state’s extension of education to the provinces, in 1938, Ban Phasuk had its first school. However, because of the state school’s budgetary constraints, villagers used a pavilion in the temple for classes. Most villagers did not continue their studies after completing Primary 4 since the village was far from the secondary school, which was located in the town of Nakhon Phanom. Therefore, male villagers still preferred the traditional method of education, i.e., entering the monkhood for basic education and then crossing the border to Laos (which at one time was part of Siam) to study the Buddhist Dharma as traditionally practiced. However, such knowledge could not be used in the modern Thai bureaucracy—not only because it used the Lao alphabet, but also because it was confined to the principles and teachings of Buddhist ideas of merit and demerit. Consequently, villagers at that time, in the eyes of government officials, were viewed as “others” as the majority had not received education in the government school system. In addition, they had a greater sense of kinship and closeness with people in Laos than with the government officers sent by the central body to administer them.

A Battle for Control of the Space

The incorporation of outposts into the central state and the enforcement of state policies upon local people led to mounting tensions between local people and the authorities. After World War II, a conflict broke out between the Thai state and the CPT in which the state employed its armed forces to suppress the CPT. The violence spread to large parts of the country. The fight between the state and the CPT can be seen as a battle for control of space—not just physical space but also political and social space. Ban Phasuk was involved in this battle, as we will see.

The CPT was formed after World War II, initially by Sino-Thais based in Bangkok. In the beginning, the Party’s underground campaign aimed to win support from workers in Bangkok. Later, in the 1960s, the CPT directed its campaign toward farmers in rural areas of the country. In 1953 the government had issued a law that made the Communist movement illegal; consequently, the CPT became an underground movement. In 1969

the Ministry of Interior declared that large parts of the Northeast, the North, and the South were infiltrated or red areas in which the CPT was active. University students, although an important alliance of CPT, joined only later, in the 1970s, especially after the October 6, 1976 massacre at Thammasat University in Bangkok, when significant numbers fled to join the CPT in the jungle. The change from an urban base to “the countryside surrounding the cities” resulted in the Communist movement creating strongholds in rural areas (Murashima 2012). Around 1959–61, Ban Phasuk was another farming village in which Communist ideology was being spread. A villager described one of the leaders, Mr. Chom Sanmit, as follows:

We also didn't know who he was. We only knew that he was a Khon Kaen man. He was an intellectual because he had knowledge. He was able to do many things. He could speak many languages—English, Chinese, Russian, and Vietnamese. He was eloquent, he had principles, and he was believable. Moreover, he was a doctor—he injected, acupunctured. He cured many villagers but didn't take any medical fee. So we thought that he was a good person, in that he had come to help us while we were in difficulties. Later on, the news spread that there was a doctor who healed free of charge. At that time, he fully won the hearts of the villagers. (Interview, May 12, 2013)

Mr. Phumee, another leader, became an important person because of his proficiency, capability, and assistance to the people during their times of hardship. The number of villagers who became interested and came to listen to his elaboration of Communist ideology kept increasing. A female villager said the following:

The first time I listened to him, I felt very impressed. He said that those who joined the Communist Party would have equality. Those who wanted to study would have a chance to do so. Those who wanted to study to become a doctor would have the opportunity to do so. You could become whatever you wanted. In my mind, I dreamed of studying to become a doctor so that in the future my life could be better and more comfortable. He also said that in the past we were Lao people—the same as people in Laos. We were brothers and sisters. We all ate sticky rice. Therefore, Thai people looked down on us. The government had not cared for or assisted us. Furthermore, it was allied with America. We had to join hands to protect our nation. At that time, after listening to him, we felt motivated—eager to go out to fight for the nation. (Interview, May 10, 2013)

After hearing about Communist ideas, people believed that they had hope for a better life. Consequently, a number of villagers volunteered to join the Party and traveled to Mueang Mahaxay (เมืองมหาชัย), in Laos's Kammouane Province, to attend political and military training. After listening to Marxist-Leninist ideas, villagers felt that cooperation in fighting would bring victory to the people. Later, Communist ideas spread to other villages. Eventually, many groups of villagers volunteered to travel to Mueang Mahaxay

to attend political training. Later, Ban Phasuk's villagers joined in an alliance with the Communist Party that led to violent events in the village. The first deadly armed battle between villagers and police occurred on August 7, 1965. Based on this incident, the CPT announced its armed fight against the government. This was the background of the First Gunfire Day, Wan Siang Puen Taek (วันเสียงปืนแตก) (Somsak 2009; Suthachai 2010). The fighting was used by the Communist Party as a symbol of armed struggle. The villagers were viewed as enemies of the nation, and from then their lives took a turn for the worse. Government officers violently suppressed them. They were also charged with taking part in Communist acts. Villagers were arrested in an excessively harsh manner. Many villagers who had not been involved were unjustly arrested and physically harmed. A villager who had been part of the events said the following:

The masters, or *jao nai* [officers], came to our village and accused us of being Communists. They were not interested in listening to us—even a little bit. They caught and took away villagers, both men and women. (Villagers) were slapped, beaten, pounded, and hurt—as if they were not human beings. That was when some villagers did not even know what Communist meant. However, all of them were arrested. At the time, the number of villagers who had been arrested was very high. The prison became overcrowded. Some of the prisoners were chained and tied to poles under the sun and rain. Ants were allowed to bite them. The masters [officials] could do whatever they liked. At that time, the village was filled with fear. Many villagers, after being released and returning home, died due to internal bruises. (Interview, May 12, 2013)

Regaining National Ideology and Political Space

From the early 1980s the influence of Communism declined significantly, and consequently the state resumed control of most of the outpost areas that had been under the control of the Communist insurgencies. The decline of the CPT was not because of violent suppression by the military. Rather, it was a result of the change in the state's view of Communism, following the policy of the Prime Minister's Office Order 66/2523. This policy enabled the state to regain political space, gradually leading to an end to the fighting between the CPT and the state. However, the CPT's decline was due also to the withdrawal of international support to the Communist movement in Thailand. In 1979, conflict between Vietnam and Cambodia affected Communist activities in the Indochina region, including those of the CPT (Tamthai 2003; Thikarn 2010). Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia intensified the conflict between China and Vietnam. Consequently, Laos stopped allowing the CPT to train in Laos because the Party backed China while Laos sided with Vietnam. Moreover, the CPT itself had faced an internal conflict between its leaders and students. The conflict resulted in some students deciding to leave the

Party (Por 1989).

In order to insert state power into the political space, and following the announcement of the “political-led military policy” (Prime Minister’s Office Order 66/2523), the Thai state took a number of measures. First, it agreed that those who had joined the CPT would no longer be prosecuted if they returned and “cooperated” with the state, even though the anti-Communist activities continued. The Thai government assigned the Internal Security Operations Command (ISOC) to take responsibility for the surrender of previous Communist comrades, who were then relabeled as Thai Nation Development Cooperators (Phu Ruam Phattana Chart Thai ผู้ร่วมพัฒนาชาติไทย). The ISOC then established a training center called Karunya Thep (God of Mercy การุณยเทพ) at military camps in Sakon Nakhon and Nakhon Phanom Provinces, for those surrendering to “correct” their political attitude. As a result, most of the dissident Communists returned and reentered the state’s political space.

Second, the Thai government declared August 7, 1979 as Wan Siang Puen Dab (วันเสียงปืนดับ), literally, the Last Gunfire Day. As mentioned earlier, the CPT announced the event of the gunfight between villagers and authorities that occurred in Ban Phasuk on August 7, 1965 as the First Gunfire Day. The official announcement by the CPT was a signpost of political space, set to expedite the movement to win over the space using an armed fight. The declaration of Wan Siang Puen Dab by the state was thus the anti-signpost, denying and removing the influence of the CPT from the political space (Ninlawadee *et al.* 2014).

With the students’ return to the state’s political space, ideological differences between the state and the local population seemed to have been resolved. Ban Phasuk returned to normalcy. Its inhabitants were comfortable entering into the new political space created by the state. Although there was a lack of necessities and state services in the village, residents had more freedom when it came to earning their livelihoods. Many householders decided to move to Bangkok to seek jobs. The ex-CPT members who chose to continue earning a living in the village, however, were faced with a number of problems. A previous comrade recalled the following:

At that time we were always accused of being Communist. People outside did not understand us. They looked at Phasuk villagers as the bad guys. In the past people used to come to the village to exchange food. When incidents occurred, they were afraid to come. (Interview, May 12, 2013)

Although the accusations and discrimination against villagers based on the stigma of Communism faded, those who returned to earn their living in the village were faced with new problems. As in the case of many other villagers, earning a living from agriculture was barely sufficient. A number of people migrated to seek jobs in Bangkok, while

some went overseas—to Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Brunei, Taiwan, etc. Faced with these problems under the new political space, the villagers of Ban Phasuk were not passively accepting. Instead, they actively engaged and negotiated their relationships.

Negotiation of Relationships within the State Political Space

As discussed above, the state successfully resumed the political space that had been under the influence of the CPT. Villagers who had fled to the jungle returned to the village. Comrades surrendered to the authorities and adopted the status of Thai Nation Co-developers. In the wider context, the growth of democracy opened a new political space for villagers. After the end of the conflict in the mid-1980s, the state became more open to social activism. NGOs were permitted to operate for rural development, and consequently the activities of NGOs, mostly funded by international donors, were galvanized. A number of urban middle-class social activists, students who had previously joined the CPT, changed their roles to become NGO workers (Bello *et al.* 1998). NGO work or civil society movements have become a subfield under state political space. Ban Phasuk villagers were able to establish networks with NGOs or social activists, and these networks became supportive of their actions.

In the local context, villagers employed many platforms to negotiate their relationships, including the following.

(1) As mentioned previously, the gunfight between villagers and authorities on August 7, 1965 was celebrated as the First Gunfire Day by the CPT. After the end of the conflict, in 1979 the government announced August 7 to be Ceasefire Day. A decade later, the villagers revived the history of the First Gunfire Day. In its first years (2002–04), the ceremony was not supported by the government because of its concern over the return of Communism or conflict. However, the ceremony was supported by networks of the participants for Thai national development—they used the First Gunfire Day at Ban Phasuk as a symbolic ceremony. To revitalize the ceremony, Ban Phasuk villagers obtained ideas by attending Memorial Day ceremonies organized by comrades of the previous Southern and Southeast Liberation Regions. The ceremony, once established, enhanced the negotiations of the villagers in a number of aspects. First, the ceremony of the First Gunfire Day provided a platform to create networks for the villagers, and these networks became a kind of capital asset (Putnam 1993) for the villagers, underpinning their actions, including negotiations with the state. Second, the ceremony provided a new image for the villagers: from being seen as Communist insurgents, they came to be seen as people who were dedicated to society. Third, the villagers broadcast their

history, using the ceremony as an event through mass media, so they were known and supported by the public.

(2) The villagers of Ban Phasuk formed the 7th August Volunteer Club for Development in 2003. The club was designed to be a platform for coordinating activities with the state. One important activity was the state-sponsored village contest project; the club proposed a “Diamond in the Village” project and won the contest. The reward earned by Ban Phasuk qualified it to be a model for village development in promoting local tourism.

In this respect, the 7th August Volunteer Club for Development became a tool that villagers used to connect with state agencies, enabling the village to gain more development funding from the state. For instance, the state chose Ban Phasuk to display its village history in an exhibition. At this event, local products such as silk, foods, and clothing displaying Communist symbols were promoted and offered for sale.

(3) Through negotiation with local authorities, Ban Phasuk was proposed to be a historical village and was eventually accepted as such. Becoming a historical village significantly changed the perception of Ban Phasuk from being a Communist village into one where people dedicated their lives to fighting for society. The history that was encompassed in this project was starkly different from the history composed by the state. While the formal written history text is not yet established, the village itself tells its history. During ceremonies, for instance, people come to attend events and villagers narrate their stories to the audience. The history of the village is a living history; the people who experienced the fight in the jungle are still alive and can tell their stories. Stories that have meaning for the villagers of Ban Phasuk inserted in their narratives will be increasingly documented.

In addition, Ban Phasuk history was incorporated into local school curricula, under the subject of local history. Previously, the history syllabus for local schools was decided by the Ministry of Education, so the content was dominated by the history of the ruling class. During the past two decades, however, the Ministry of Education has allowed and instructed local schools to add local history into their curricula, after the political conflict between the state and CPT ended. In the case of Ban Phasuk, a teacher at a local school along with high school pupils conducted research on the history of the village. The villagers enthusiastically cooperated and supported the project. This project is, in effect, knowledge produced by Ban Phasuk villagers who played their part, and the knowledge is being spread through local education. This knowledge will become an important space underpinning the negotiations of the villagers.

Conclusion

The Thai state has been continually creating space and inserting its control over the populations within the space created. After the conflict between the state and the CPT ended in the mid-1980s, the space that the state created was concerned mainly with political space, and control over rural populations was exerted through rural development projects. In the case of Ban Phasuk, the villagers resisted and negotiated over a period of time. During the conflict a number of villagers fled to the jungle, escaping the state space to live and work in “liberated space.” After the end of the conflict, they returned to the village and continued their lives within the state political space. However, they did not simply surrender and submit themselves to the state power.

The discussion above shows that in the new context, villagers used their history of being involved with the CPT and the networks they had to negotiate their relationships with the state. The analysis above is consonant with the concept of space proposed by Bourdieu (1989). Under the state of political space, people engage in the field of forces, some created by the villagers. They constantly insert their own agendas and their own interests in these fields, which enables them to act meaningfully.

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Military, Gender, and Trade: The Story of Auntie Duan of the Northern Thai Borderlands

Wen-Chin Chang*

This paper explores Auntie Duan's life story, a story that mirrors remarkable female Yunnanese Chinese migrants' economic agency in the face of numerous vicissitudes caused by contextual and personal tragedies. Auntie Duan (born in 1938) and her family fled from Yunnan to Burma in 1950 after the Chinese Communists took over China. Being a woman, a refugee, and a widow moving repeatedly among borderlands, she led a life characterized by a multiplicity of peripheral positionings. In order to survive and raise her children, she participated in different economic activities, most saliently as a borderland trader. By focusing on her life story based on her oral narratives, I attempt to illustrate her steps of economic initiation in combating a range of adversities. Furthermore, with a comparison to Anna Tsing's *Meratus* gendered politics, I look into embedded meanings in gender asymmetry among migrant Yunnanese communities.

Keywords: Yunnanese migrants, economic agency, gender asymmetry, military, narrative approach

Individual-Focused Research

After I buried my second husband, I moved from Chiang Khong [Chiang Khong District, Chiang Rai Province] to Ban¹⁾ Sanmakawan [Fang District, Chiang Mai Province, Thailand]. I opened a small grocery store in Ban Sanmakawan. Unfortunately, my house was burgled. . . . I also sold homemade alcohol (*kaojiu mai* 烤酒賣), but I was caught by the Thai authorities and put in jail. I was freed only after payment of bail. I had four children to bring up. A cousin who was an officer of a [Chinese Nationalist (Kuomintang, KMT)] troop stationed in Ban Mae Aw [Muang District, Mae Hongson Province] took pity on me and asked me to come here to make a living. . . . Ban Mae Aw was a border village frequented by mule-driven caravans and accommodating over a hundred mules daily. The caravans from Burma transported jade stones, and those leaving for Burma mainly carried textiles . . . (Auntie Duan, Nov. 12, 2010)

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1) *Ban* means "village" in Thai.

This paper aims to explore Auntie²⁾ Duan's life story, a story that mirrors remarkable female Yunnanese Chinese³⁾ migrants' economic agency in the face of numerous vicissitudes caused by both historical and personal tragedies. Auntie Duan was born into a family of the landlord class in Shuangjiang (雙江) County, Yunnan (雲南) Province, southwestern China, in 1938. She and her family (her parents and other siblings) were compelled to flee to Burma in 1950 due to persecution by Chinese Communists. Three years later, the family had to escape again from the Shan State of Burma to northern Thailand with a group of fellow refugees under the escort of a KMT troop (see later sections for the history of KMT troops in Thailand). The quoted narrative above, given at the very beginning of our meeting, epitomizes Auntie Duan's migratory experiences, constituted of endless hardships, ongoing moving, a series of economic endeavors, and intriguing interactions with a KMT army entrenched along the border of northern Thailand from the 1960s to the 1980s. While most migration studies (be they in journals or books) are group-oriented, this paper takes an individual-based focus, attempting to address the issues of the military, gendered politics, and livelihoods in northern Thai frontiers where the powers of states (Thailand and Burma) and ethnic armed groups were intersecting.

Auntie Duan married at 19 and again at 24, both times to KMT soldiers. Unfortunately, both husbands died young. Being a woman, a refugee, and a widow moving repeatedly among borderlands, Auntie Duan lived a life characterized by a multiplicity of peripheral positionings. In order to survive and raise her children, she participated in many different economic activities, most saliently as a borderland trader, which required courage and organizational skills to engage in mule transportation under unstable circumstances. Her experiences and economic savvy are outstanding, yet not unique among her fellow Yunnanese women migrants who also encountered similar conditions during a chaotic period when most men were away for military duty or long-distance trade.⁴⁾ In practice, a great majority of Yunnanese women migrants were the actual managers of their households who contributed to the maintenance of everyday life in resettled villages in northern Thailand (Chang 2005).

Why, then, have I chosen Auntie Duan to be the protagonist (instead of any other

2) Yunnanese Chinese in Burma and Thailand address each other with affiliated terms based on the kinship principle. Auntie Duan (*duan dama* 段大媽) was how I addressed her. I am greatly indebted to her for sharing her life story with me during my stay.

3) Yunnanese Chinese are composed of Yunnanese Han and Yunnanese Muslims (Hill 1998). Auntie Duan belongs to the Han group. To avoid repetition, I use "Yunnanese" instead of "Yunnanese Chinese" hereafter.

4) The income from long-distance trade was very uncertain due to the risks involved during the journey. A round trip often required half a year. Traders could be robbed or deterred from returning home because of regional conflicts (see Chang 2009).

Yunnanese woman migrant)? What is the value of individual-focused research? To address these questions, I will begin by briefly describing my meeting with Auntie Duan. It was my first field trip to Ban Mae Aw in November 2010.⁵⁾ Before that I had conducted long-term fieldwork in one particular Yunnanese village—Ban Mai Nongbourg (Chaiprakan District, Chiang Mai Province)—and had regularly visited other Yunnanese villages in Chiang Mai and Chiang Rai Provinces since 1994.⁶⁾ Ban Mae Aw started to develop tourism in 2004 on account of its former military history that intertwined with illegal cross-border trade, beautiful scenery, and congenial weather.⁷⁾ Auntie Duan's youngest son, who had just passed away due to illness two months prior to my visit, was the former village head. The family owned a grocery store, a restaurant, and a guesthouse where my driver brought me to stay. When I heard that Auntie Duan was one of the first civilian arrivals in the village, I requested that she tell me her story and the history of the village. So what began as a mere coincidence resulted in three days of recording many hours of her narration while we both peeled garlic. (We finished peeling half a sack.) Her narratives disclose not only her lived experiences but also a complex and understudied social history of Yunnanese migrants in northern Thai borderlands.

With the support of a KMT troop and her own entrepreneurial disposition, Auntie Duan pioneered the running of one of the first grocery stores in Ban Mae Aw (since 1975). Her business was diverse and closely connected with the secret cross-border trade between Thailand and Burma by mule caravan. Complementing my former studies on male Yunnanese migrants' mule caravan trade in the region (Chang 2009; 2014a), Auntie Duan's narration about her economic participation in Ban Mae Aw provides valuable data about women's supporting roles in this engagement.

By focusing on her life story based on her oral narratives, I attempt to concretely illustrate her steps of economic initiation as she dealt with a range of adversities, and look into embedded meanings in gendered politics among migrant Yunnanese communities. This methodology is in line with that of several scholars. Lila Abu-Lughod states: "By focusing closely on particular individuals and their changing relationships, one could . . . subvert the most problematic connotations of 'culture': homogeneity, coherence, and

5) I also went to two other Yunnanese villages in Mae Hongson Province during that trip—Ban Sandichon (Pai District) and Ban Rung Arun (formerly known as Ban Mae Soya, Muang District).

6) In total, I have been to 28 Yunnanese villages in northern Thailand. In addition, I have conducted research on Yunnanese migrants in Burma since 2000.

7) Ban Mae Aw, 45 kilometers from Mae Hongson, was considered by the Thai authorities to be a village dependent on the drug trade. Some villagers had been involved in smuggling amphetamines from Burma since the 1990s. In February 2003 Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra announced an anti-drug campaign. For about a year, Ban Mae Aw was frequently checked and searched by the Thai army. After that, the local authorities encouraged development of ethnic tourism.

timelessness" (1993, 14). Anna Tsing advocates: "Individuals' stories are most exciting in cultural analysis to the extent that they open new conversations about agency and difference" (1993, 231). Alessandro Portelli stresses "to explore [the distance and bond between personal experience and history], to search out the memories in the private, enclosed space of houses and kitchens and . . . to connect them with 'history' and in turn force history to listen to them" (1997, viii). Accordingly, delving into individual stories helps one gain insight into social history, as the approach illuminates the power of individual agency in relation to cultural formation, their dialectical impact upon each other, and the respective constraints and resilience.

In short, using a personal narrative approach, this paper addresses issues of gender, military, and borderland livelihoods. Before looking into Auntie Duan's story I will discuss some fundamental ideas in the development of borderland studies, their contributions and insufficiencies to date, and further explicate my application of a personal narrative approach.

Borderland Studies and the Personal Narrative Approach

Borderland studies is a relatively marginal field in academia, and one that did not gain recognition until the 1980s. This belated engagement is essentially attributed to the domination of the socio-political mainstream of governance based on the institute of the state and the ideology of absolute sovereignty (Grundy-Warr 1993; Donnan and Wilson 1994; 1999; Baud and Van Schendel 1997; Johnson and Michaelsen 1997). Even anthropological theories on culture were predicated on the state. Order, social structure, and shared patterns of beliefs were topics that preoccupied research for many decades (Lugo 1997, 49). However, the emergence of a series of movements since the 1960s, such as the civil rights movement, the New Left, and the feminist movements (see McAdam 1982; Tarrow 1998; Freedman 2003), pushed social scientists to pay more attention to social inequalities on the periphery and among the oppressed. The intensifying illegal flows of people and commodities originating from wars or economic pursuits further stimulated scholars to investigate multiple forms of border crossings and to rethink former political discourses focusing solely on state-centeredness. Consequently, new directions of research started to grow in the 1980s. A burgeoning literature relating to marginal people, culture, migration, environment, and underground trade has especially broadened our understanding of borderland dynamism over the last 20 years (e.g., Walker 1999; Jonsson 2005; Sturgeon 2005; Tagliacozzo 2005; Van Schendel 2005; Giersch 2006; Scott 2009; Chou 2010; Ishikawa 2010; Wellens 2010). While dealing with different issues

in diverse border areas using a range of approaches, these works offer alternative lenses to counter the hegemony of national sovereignty that rules out notions of flexible or negotiable boundaries. Scholars of this trend come to see the frontiers not as isolated regions but as “interfaces” replete with transitional forces in an ongoing process that sutures different threads of cultural, economic, political, and historical factors. They stress exploring complex realities linking multi-ethnicities, multi-polities, and the continuous tension and creation of diverse ways of life in borderlands underlying characteristics of continuity, fragmentation, similarity, and inconsistency (e.g., Anzaldúa 1987; Grundy-Warr 1993; Rosaldo 1993; Donnan and Wilson 1994; Lugo 1997; Michaelsen and Johnson 1997; Sturgeon 2005).

Despite this inspiring research, the issues relating to gender relations and women’s lives in borderlands have remained understudied. Even James Scott’s much-celebrated work *The Art of Not Being Governed* (2009) leaps over these essential matters. Where are the women’s voices? What have they been contributing to borderland livelihoods? How do borderland women perceive themselves in terms of gendered politics? Without probing these questions, borderland studies remain incomplete.

Among the meager number of works that touch upon the gender issue in Southeast Asian borderland studies, Anna Tsing’s *In the Realm of the Diamond Queen* (1993) is a stimulating piece that integrates detailed ethnography and perceptive theoretical analysis. The book examines the marginality of the Meratus Dayak communities of South Kalimantan (Indonesia), a mountain people who practice shifting cultivation and shamanism and who are perceived by the central state as uncivilized and pagan. The book centers on the power relations between state authorities and the Meratus, the Meratus and the Banjar (a neighboring ethnic group), and Meratus men and Meratus women. Each level of interaction and confrontation highlights the Meratus’ adaptive strategies that are tied to their tradition of traveling politics and reinterpretation of conventions. What I would like to particularly point out is Tsing’s feminist critiques on Meratus gendered politics. While the Meratus are situated in a peripheral position vis-à-vis the state authorities or Islamic Banjar, Meratus women are further peripheral in relation to their male counterparts. Drawing on stories of three ordinary women (*ibid.*, chapter 7) and two female shamans (*ibid.*, chapters 8 and 9), Tsing sheds light on their individual agency that strives for personal autonomy and challenges the male authority. In comparison to Meratus men, who are politically active and spatially mobile, Meratus women are assigned to a relatively static “habitus”⁸⁾ and excluded from knowledge, authority, and regional

8) I am using Pierre Bourdieu’s word here. “Habitus” may refer to a system of dispositions in relation to one’s perception and practice; see Bourdieu (1977).

travel. In the case of the three ordinary women quoted by Tsing, by traveling to unfamiliar places and seeking foreign lovers, they broke through gendered confinement and managed to gain unusual experiences that “opened up a critical space of commentary and [self-conscious cross-cultural reflections]” (*ibid.*, 220). For the two self-proclaimed female shamans, their professional engagement, which entailed frequent traveling and attracting followers and audiences, created oppositional contestation to male dominance of ritual performance and leadership. Underscoring resistance in gender asymmetry in borderlands, these examples illustrate Meratus women’s constraints as well as creativity deriving from their marginality.

Many societies observe similar gender asymmetry; however, the subject of gender and space has been understudied. Few researchers have been keen to look into how gender relations affect women’s and men’s movement and how movement reinforces or transforms the traveler’s gendered ideology.⁹⁾ While acknowledging Tsing’s acute analysis of Meratus gender relations, I nevertheless question her use of the three women’s love affairs for interpreting female agency against cultural restrictions on women. Although their journeys and romantic experiences did widen their horizons and grant them a comparative perspective to assess alternative lifestyles, their love affairs still subjected them to male dominance, as these women all had to serve and please their foreign partners. In other words, they only moved from one system of gender asymmetry to another. Therefore, we may question the degree of autonomy these women enjoyed while staying with their alien lovers.

In contrast to these Meratus women, Auntie Duan has been a widow since she was 30. At that time her youngest child was only one year old. Looking back on her life experiences, she explicitly commented that women could not count on men. How did she strive against repeated adversities? What was the role of the KMT army in the course of her migration and resettlement? How do we evaluate her economic engagement in relation to migrant Yunnanese borderland livelihoods? And how does Auntie Duan review her own life, especially in terms of gender relations? To address these questions, I see a personal narrative approach as most forceful.

According to Elinor Ochs and Lisa Capps (1996), narrating life experiences relates one’s interaction with the outside world in a sequence that is meaningful, connecting past, present, and imagined worlds. Likewise, Nigel Rapport and Andrew Dawson observe: “Narrative mediates one’s sense of movement through time,” and “through narrative, human beings, individual men and women with agency, tell the world, and

9) Apart from Tsing, other authors who have elaborated on this subject include Doreen Massey (1994), Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo (1994), Caren Kaplan (1996), Sarah Mahler and Patricia Pessar (2001), Yoko Hayami (2007), and Stefanie Kron (2011).

tell it anew, continuously reorganizing their ‘habitation in reality’” (1998, 28, 29). Resonating with their statements, Roxana Waterson stresses how “history intersects with personal experience” (2007, 7) and points to the emergence of historical consciousness through storytelling (*ibid.*, 12). Through the narrative genre, a speaker’s temporal consciousness is expressed through a subjective truthfulness in the process of recollection. Factual data about specific events is therein enriched by personal memory nuanced by cultural meaning (Marcus and Fischer 1986, 54, 58; Thompson 1988; Riessman 1993, 1; Waterson 2007, 10–12). In short, narrative is a powerful medium that gives a voice to the marginalized and powerless. The following sections based on Auntie Duan’s narratives elucidate her rich life experiences characterized by persistent travel and commercial shrewdness.

Life before Coming to Ban Mae Aw

Traditionally restricted from the public sphere (*buke paotouloumian* 不可拋頭露面), Yunnanese women were for the most part relegated to domestic life. While men dominated the economic world of business, some women—especially those of the lower class—supplemented the family income by weaving and making clothes or working on the farm and raising animals (Fei and Chang 1948; Hsu 1967; Johnson 1975; Topley 1975). However, a series of historical contingences beginning in 1949 have largely upset this gendered confinement. The Chinese Communists took over China in 1949 and subsequently initiated a range of political movements from the 1950s through the 1970s. These political events caused massive numbers of Yunnanese to flee their homeland, and an essential portion of them arrived in Burma, a young independent nation that was troubled by continuous conflicts between the central state controlled by the Burman (the ethnic majority) and many ethnic armed groups. Due to their illegal status and geographical proximity, most of the Yunnanese refugees stayed in rural Shan and Kachin States of Burma. The political instability inside the country, however, compelled them to move from place to place. Auntie Duan related that she had been to Tangyan, Mt. Loijei, Pangyan, and several other places in the borderlands of Shan State.

Among these Yunnanese refugees, there were remnants of the KMT armies who managed to establish guerrilla forces in Shan State in 1950 and received support from the KMT government that had retreated to Taiwan as well as the US government, the leader of the anti-Communist bloc during the Cold War (Chang 2001; 2002). Many male refugees joined the KMT forces as a means to survive and in the hope of fighting their way back to Yunnan. Nevertheless, under pressure from the United Nations, these

foreign troops were disbanded first in 1953–54 and then in 1961. Two armies, the Third and Fifth Armies, totaling about 4,700 troops (Union of Burma, Ministry of Information 1953; Zeng 1964; Young 1970; Qin 2009, 276), survived the disbandment; and a large portion of them entered northern Thailand with the tacit permission of the Thai government, which perceived these anti-Communist forces as useful for the prevention of Communist infiltration from Burma. While these forces were entrenched along the northern Thai border, a small portion of their fellow troops stayed on in Shan State to facilitate the underground trafficking between Thailand and Burma. From the mid-1960s through the 1980s, destitute Burma was suffering from a socialist economy and was in need of consumer goods smuggled from its neighboring countries, especially Thailand (Lintner 1988, 23; Mya Than 1996, 3; Chang 2009). The KMT armies and a range of ethnic armed groups in the Thai-Burmese borderlands offered military escorts to businessmen's caravans and lived on taxes collected from them.¹⁰⁾ Some of these armed groups also engaged in trade. While consumer goods were taken into Burma, opium, jade stones, and natural resources were smuggled out of the country. The KMT armies were the most powerful groups involved in this trade from the 1960s to the 1970s, and they were not disbanded until the late 1980s.

Apart from military and economic undertakings, the KMT armies led a large number of Yunnanese refugees from Burma to Thailand and helped establish many villages for their resettlement in the border areas of Chiang Rai, Chiang Mai, and Mae Hongson Provinces.¹¹⁾ Auntie Duan and her family joined a group of around 1,500 Yunnanese refugees, primarily dependents of KMT guerrillas and traders, to escape to Thailand under the escort of a KMT troop prior to the first evacuation act in 1953. These refugees were among the earliest arrivals in Thailand.¹²⁾ They first settled in Mt. Angkhang in

10) Yunnanese male migrants' engagement in the underground transborder trade between Thailand and Burma was also partly attributed to their lack of legal status in Thailand, which constrained their free movement inside Thailand.

11) According to ex-officers of the KMT armies, during the 1960s and 1970s the troops escorted an estimated 10,000 refugees from Burma to northern Thailand. In the early 1970s there were more than 40 Yunnanese refugee villages in the border areas. Among them, 29 could be classified as KMT villages, which were founded and supervised by the KMT armies. The number of villages continued to increase following repeated inflows of Yunnanese refugees from Burma. According to the Free China Relief Association (FCRA), a semi-official organization in Taiwan that provided aid programs for Yunnanese refugee villages in northern Thailand from 1982 to 2004, there were 77 Yunnanese villages in 1994. According to local estimates, the population of Yunnanese migrants in Thailand today ranges between 100,000 and 150,000, and that of Yunnanese migrants in Burma between half a million and one million.

12) Another group, consisting of 580 people, arrived in Thailand via Mae Sai (a border town in Chiang Rai Province) and was resettled in Ban Tham Santisuk (or Ban Tham, Mae Sai District, 12 kilometers from Mae Sai).

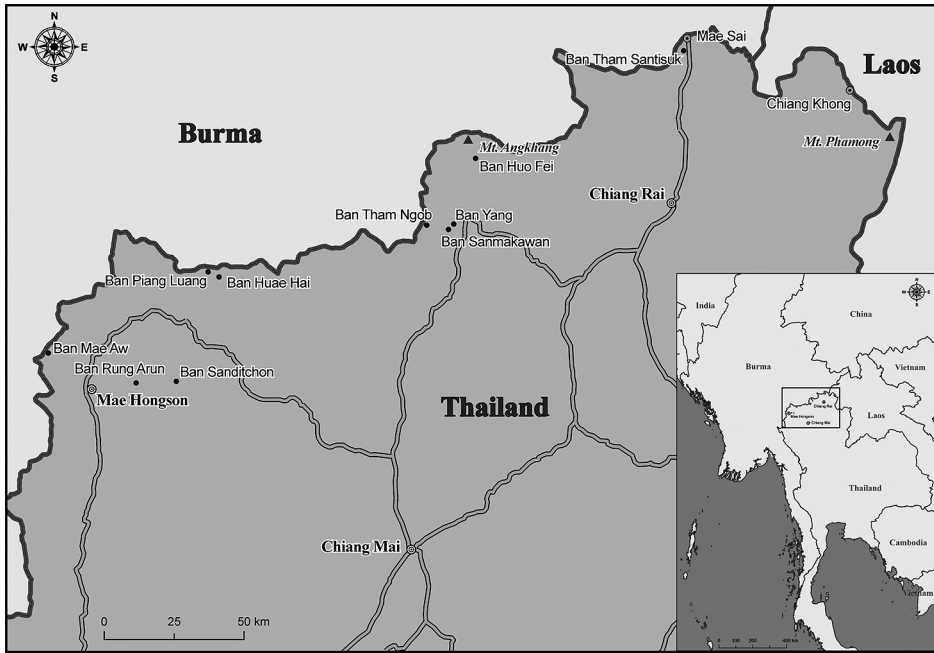


Fig. 1 Map of Thailand

Chiang Mai Province, and a year later (1954) they were relocated to Ban Yang and Ban Huo Fei (both in Fang District, Chiang Mai Province). Auntie Duan and her family went to Ban Yang. She stayed in the village until she married a KMT soldier through her parents' arrangement three years later (1957) and moved to Ban Huae Hai (Wiang Haen District, Chiang Province), where she gave birth to her first child, a girl (1958). When the child was younger than two, Auntie Duan's husband was killed in an accident (1959). Three years later (1962) she married another KMT soldier, again through her parents' arrangement, and gave birth to three boys, also in Ban Huae Hai. After the last child was born, her husband's unit was transferred to a post in Mt. Phamong (Chiang Khong District, Chiang Rai Province), bordering Laos, to fight against the Miao Communists at the Thai government's request. Auntie Duan then moved to Chiang Khong (1973). Unfortunately, her second husband died in battle a year later. The leader of the Third KMT Army, to which her late husband had belonged, helped her relocate to Ban Sanmakawan, a village next to her parents'. She stayed there for one and a half years before making another move to Ban Mae Aw (1975) at her cousin's invitation.

Like other dependents of the KMT armies whose husbands were away for military duties—escorting caravans to Burma, recruiting soldiers, or engaging in fighting—Auntie Duan was separated from her two successive husbands most of the time. The armies

gave only rationed rice to dependents who had to make their own living. Most Yunnanese female refugees conducted petty trade in the marketplace and farmed the land (Chang 2005). Auntie Duan talked about her life during this period:

I have done all kinds of work to make a living except for being a thief (*wo sheme duozuo zhiyou zei meizuoguo* 我什麼都做只有賊沒做過)... After moving to Ban Huaie Hai I sold homemade alcohol, rice noodles, and some miscellaneous goods. I also raised pigs, cattle, and chickens. Huaie Hai was a small, poor village (*hen guabo* 很寡薄), so it was difficult to make a good business. I therefore went to Ban Piang Luang [a neighboring village also in Wiang Haeng District] to open a shop...

[For two winters] I traded to the minorities, a few Lisu and Lahu villages. They grew poppies along the border. After the poppies were sowed [in the ninth month of the lunar calendar], traders gathered in hill-tribe villages to do business, selling rice, food, and other daily necessities to them on credit. The hill people were busy farming and had no time to cook... One baht of goods was sold for two to three baht. After the opium harvest, the minorities paid back the traders with opium... When it was time to harvest the opium, more traders came to the minority villages and held opium fairs (*gan yanhui* 趕煙會). Most sellers carried goods on their shoulders for sale. A neighbor and I transported our goods on mules. I led two workers and set off from Ban Huaie Hai to Chiang Dao to buy commodities first and then transported them to the opium fairs for sale. My children were with me. I carried one up front and the other on the back. After selling opium, the minorities would buy clothes, rice, and other types of goods for use the whole year... Both growing and trading opium is detrimental to society, but there were no job opportunities. If you didn't do it, you would starve...

After moving to Chiang Khong, I entered Laos every day to purchase cheroots and sweaters made from rabbit hair. I sold the cheroots at home and transported the sweaters to Mae Sai for sale. I also sold fried noodles. I got up very early every morning and led two workers to fry two big pots of rice noodles. I sold the noodles wholesale to a few shops nearby... I also raised ducks, four hundred to five hundred Japanese ducks. This kind of duck had to be stockaded on land and could not touch water. I had two other workers to look after them. However, I didn't make a profit from raising the ducks because many of them died of disease...

After my [second] husband died, the leader of the [KMT] Third Army assigned me a piece of land in Ban Sanmakawan. I built a house there [in 1974] and started a grocery business again. I also sold homemade alcohol, but I was caught by the police and jailed for one night. I had to bail myself out with 1,500 baht. The salary for a worker was only six to seven baht a day at that time... With profits from trade I purchased gold; part of it I hid at home, and the rest I lent to businessmen.¹³⁾ One morning when I went to the stream to wash clothes, a thief broke into my house. He broke the front door lock and overturned my bed and every chest. I lost more than 30,000 baht in cash and 24 *ma* (碼) of gold... Four *qian* (錢) make up one *ma*, and one *qian* of gold was worth 600 baht then...¹⁴⁾

Auntie Duan's narratives disclose her unusual resilience in the face of numerous predicaments deriving from both historical events and personal tragedies. These vicis-

13) Merchants used gold bars to purchase opium in Burma at that time.

14) In the narration that I quoted at the beginning of the paper, Auntie Duan said that a thief burgled her house before she was arrested by the police for selling homemade alcohol.

situdes pushed her to travel wide stretches of land and brought her in contact with different people and lifestyles. Consequently, they also exempted her from the conventional restrictions placed on Yunnanese women's movements. We may thus assert that migration to a certain degree reconfigured the gendered geographies among Yunnanese migrants and resulted in granting women more spatial flexibility for economic participation, although this did not alter the existing gendered structure grounded in the principles of patrilineality and patriarchy (see further discussion later).

In a conversation, Auntie Duan acknowledged her parents' influence on her: "I had learned how to make alcohol from my mother and how to trade from my father. After coming to Thailand, my father carried soft drinks and other stuff to a few KMT posts for sale. He also helped transport goods with his mules." Acquiring skill and knowledge from her parents' experiences, Auntie Duan further expanded her opportunities by investing in other types of business while living in various locations. She was not afraid of exploring new possibilities, even though they might entail suffering a financial loss. Raising the Japanese ducks was one example. Her experiences demonstrate her extraordinary entrepreneurial spirit in risk-taking. Moreover, her capacity to hire workers and teach them different tasks distinguished her from most Yunnanese women migrants without employees who only participated in petty trade, farm work, sewing clothes, and raising pigs and chickens. The amount of money she lost in the theft attests to her wealth.

Reviewing her life experiences, Auntie Duan was conscious of her strenuous efforts in fighting hardships. In practice, making a living for herself and her children was her fundamental concern. Discussing gendered geographies of power in another paper (Chang 2005), I have pointed out that Yunnanese women migrants in northern Thailand anchored their life experiences at different stages on the organization of *jia* (家 family): the *jia* before they got married, the *jia* after their marriage, the *jia* during their flights and in resettlement, and the (future) *jia* for their grown-up children. Being mothers, facing their husbands' frequent absences, the women became the real pillar of their families, and it was for the children that the pillar stood. Simply put, children were their hope, whose needs impelled them to cope with numerous challenges. The theme of suffering for the family recurred in their narrations, underlining the cultural value of "sacrificial motherhood" that we find also in many other parts of the world (e.g., Keyes 1984; Lessinger 2001; Tam 2006). Accordingly, it is not surprising that Auntie Duan defended her engagement in trading opium for a brief period while joking about not being a thief.¹⁵⁾

Although Auntie Duan's economic condition was unusual within her group, her case

15) Although both practices may be considered immoral acts, the former engagement was generally accepted among fellow refugees in the face of difficult living conditions, while the latter was condemned.

illustrates the extent to which migrant Yunnanese society was flexible in allowing women to engage in economic pursuits during their husbands' absence. More specifically, apart from small trade, it was possible for women to conduct big business. In terms of methodology, the focus of Auntie Duan's story is in accord with Tsing's stance:

The excitement of an individual's story lies in the story's ability to expand and unbalance dominant ideas of the contours in which familiar subjects are made . . . Subjects understood as "eccentric" in this sense are those whose agency demonstrates the limits of dominant categories, both challenging and reaffirming their power. This is a useful way to think about subject positions within the zone of exclusion and creativity that I have been calling "marginality." (1993, 232)

Therefore, the primary value of individual stories lies not in delineating a representational picture of a community (although it may have such a function) but in exploring the limits of a community's tolerance and its flexibility for change, and also analyzing the frictions arising between the individual and his/her community. While we may assert that the Yunnanese women migrants were able to enjoy a greater degree of freedom in spatial movement than their female predecessors back in Yunnan, they were not given complete autonomy. This is revealed in Auntie's Duan's two marriages, which were arranged by her parents. Moreover, the KMT forces played a critical role in determining the migrants' lives. The latter were dependent upon the armies' institutional power that assisted in their migration and resettlement. While men were enlisted or taxed by the armies, their dependents in the villages were supervised by self-governing committees that were organized by the armies (Chang 2002).¹⁶⁾ In practice, the two KMT armies functioned as two patriarchal entities to the Yunnanese migrant communities in northern Thailand, especially those living in the KMT villages. On the one hand they were protective of their fellow refugees, but on the other hand they also exploited the latter's labor force as well as their wealth. Auntie Duan's life experiences after she moved to Ban Mae Aw further reveal this intriguing interrelationship.

Life after Moving to Ban Mae Aw

After the losses from the burglary, Auntie Duan received an invitation from a cousin in Ban Mae Aw to set up a grocery shop there. While in Ban Mae Aw, I also interviewed a former KMT officer, Commander Yang. He told me that Ban Mae Aw was established by the KMT Third Army in April 1975 to facilitate the growing cross-border trade via the

16) Generally speaking, the KMT Third Army supervised villages in Chiang Mai and Mae Hongson Provinces, and the Fifth Army supervised those in Chiang Rai Province.

area. He himself led 380 soldiers from the headquarters of the KMT Third Army in Ban Tham Ngob (Chaiprakan District, Chiang Mai Province) to Ban Mae Aw via Ban Piang Luang. The troop opened up the frontier, which was mostly covered by forests, and founded the village.¹⁷⁾ The number of soldiers increased when the situation demanded, such as when fighting occurred. The highest number of soldiers was around 600. The KMT troop started to cultivate land and grew rice the second year. The army gave each soldier 30 baht for non-staple food and another 30 baht for pocket money. Each soldier only received the pocket money. The money for non-staple food was given to the troop's leader for the management of his soldiers' meals. The amount of money was small, and most troop leaders had to participate in cross-border trade to make extra money for their units when conditions allowed.

Initially no dependents came with the troop. Auntie Duan arrived in late 1975, and she said there were only two or three households of dependents the first few years.¹⁸⁾ They all had connections with the army's officers and were invited to run grocery shops in the village, which also served as inns for humans and/or animals, supplying the needs of mule caravans. Auntie Duan discussed her life in Ban Mae Aw:

[After deciding to move to Ban Mae Aw,] I collected the two gold bars that I had lent to businessmen. One gold bar was equivalent to 24 *ma*. I sold the gold and used the money to open a grocery store in Ban Mae Aw. The shop was built with bamboo and grass. . . . My workers brought three mules from Ban Sanmakawan to Ban Mae Aw via Ban Tham Ngob. I took an airplane from Chiang Mai to Mae Hongson, and then took a pickup truck from Mae Hongson to Ban Mok Champae. Ban Mok Champae was a Shan village, and it was where the road for cars ended. I rested there for a night and rode on horseback for five or six hours the next day before arriving at Ban Mae Aw. I took only my youngest child with me; I left the others with my parents for schooling in Ban Yang.

I'm a woman and had several workers working for me, five or six. A couple of them were muleteers, and the rest helped with cooking, cleaning, and selling things at the shop. I worked with them. You couldn't be idle and let them work alone. . . . I didn't need to lock the doors at night. Soldiers were stationed along the border; security was good. My former [second] husband had been an officer in the army. The present officers were his friends. The troop respected us and dared not misbehave . . .

After making some profit, I purchased a herd of cattle and some pigs, which I kept in the backyard. Some time later, I purchased four more mules for transportation. I needed to replenish the commodities in Mae Hongson every 10 days or half a month. I left very early in the morning,

17) According to a village report written in 1994, Ban Mae Aw occupied an area of 3,100 *rai*, consisting of 2,100 *rai* of the plain and 1,000 *rai* of hill land. One *rai* is equivalent to about 0.4 acres or 1,600 square meters.

18) According to FCRA data, Ban Mae Aw had 95 civilian households prior to the Third Army's disbandment in 1989. After the disbandment, only 108 soldiers stayed; many of them married local Shan or hill-tribe women. In 1994 there were 110 households, consisting of 71 households of Yunnanese Chinese and 39 of hill tribes. There were 172 households when I visited the village in 2010.

around five o'clock. I took two muleteers with me. After arriving in Ban Mok Champae around 11 o'clock, I left the mules and muleteers and took a pickup truck to Mae Hongson, about half an hour. The muleteers fed the mules feed and grass and cooked their own lunch. In Mae Hongson I purchased goods from a few shops. These goods required two or three pickup trucks to get them back to Ban Mok Champae. After finishing buying, I had a late lunch, often just a bowl of rice noodles, and then returned to Ban Mok Champae with the purchased goods. The muleteers and I then loaded part of the goods onto the mules for transport back to Ban Mae Aw. The rest were stored at a villager's house. When my shop was running out of goods, I would send muleteers to ship them back. . . . From Ban Mok Champae, the muleteers and I would set off by 10 or 11 o'clock at night and arrive in Ban Mae Aw around 4 or 5 o'clock the next morning. The mules could see at night and recognized the route . . .

I had two or three muleteers working for me. Sometimes I let out my mules to caravan traders engaged in long-distance trade back and forth between Thailand and Burma. It took about five to seven days from Ban Mae Aw to Taunggyi (in Burma). The rent for one mule on a trip to Burma was 2,500 kyat. At that time, Burmese kyat had good value: one kyat could be exchanged for two Thai baht. But I had to provide food for my muleteers who took care of the mules on the journey, and of course also feed for the mules. On the way back, the muleteers looked for other traders who needed mules to go to Thailand . . .

The village was animated with mule caravans coming and going every day. Most of the time there were over a hundred mules; at the very least there were 70 to 80. . . . When the caravans arrived in the village, they needed accommodation. I built a long house next to my shop that could accommodate 20 people.¹⁹⁾ Accommodation was free; I earned money from the feed sold for the animals. A barrel of feed for which I paid 50 baht was sold for 100 baht. I also sold vegetables, meat, pickles, tofu, and so on to the muleteers. They cooked for themselves. . . . Every muleteer had a piece of tarpaulin and two woolen blankets with him. He put a piece of tarpaulin on the floor and a blanket upon the tarpaulin to make a bed and covered himself with the other blanket. I also provided extra blankets. Muleteers traveled from place to place and were used to a simple lifestyle. As for the mules, they were kept outside the long house . . .

Gradually, more dependents moved to the village. But fighting among the KMT troop, the other ethnic rebels, and the Burmese army erupted from time to time. . . . A year after I had moved to Ban Mae Aw, the year of the dragon [in 1976], our troop fought the Burmese army along the border. The battle flared up suddenly. I was alone with a few female workers at home. I had just replenished my shop and had had my muleteers transport goods by mule to Burma. I had to run immediately and had no time to take anything from the shop or even lock the doors. It was raining; I didn't even have a piece of tarpaulin with me. My workers ran toward a nearby Miao village. A neighbor and I ran in another direction. She had a carbine with her. Burmese airplanes were flying above us. The noise of shooting and bombing was terrifying—pin-bong-pin-bong. We ran in the rain until we reached Ban Mok Champae. About 20 days later, when the situation had calmed down, I returned to Ban Mae Aw, but alas, my shop had been ransacked. Nothing was left. Who had robbed my shop? It was our own soldiers. They had to eat and took everything. I couldn't ask for a penny back. After this event, I had to start my business all over again. I sold homemade tofu, pickled vegetables, meat, and rice noodles. I replenished my shop on credit, and returned the debt bit by bit. . . . I've tried all kinds of work in my life.

19) A muleteer usually drove two or three mules on a long-distance trip.

Auntie Duan's narratives vividly delineate the texture and nuance of borderland lives, especially how people moved around and made a living tied to the intriguing geopolitics of the past. Specifically, her narratives provide significant data about the inn business in connection with the long-distance mule caravan trade between the northern Thai border and Shan State of Burma from the 1960s to the 1980s. The latter was an exclusively male undertaking dominated by Yunnanese migrants. Its organization was characterized by leadership and hierarchy and required strict observance of discipline, division of labor, and compliance with taboos (Chang 2009; 2013; 2014a). Complementing this masculine, peripatetic activity, Auntie Duan's story reveals a relevant engagement, foregrounding women's participation in the inn business that catered to mule convoys, both humans and animals. Although the business was not run solely by women, women played a leading role as most men were away. Auntie Duan's economic skills include her efficiency in shop management, organizational skill in replenishing stocks, and knowledge of trading routes. Considering the low visibility of women's lives in this frontier area, the concrete details of the narratives make up an important part of social history, enhancing our understanding of a particular livelihood. In effect, we may say, Auntie Duan's narrative composes an alternative history featuring women's everyday practices that interplayed with Yunnanese cultural norms as well as complex geopolitics. It is in contrast to a state-centered historiography that underlines states' policies, political achievements, foreign relations, and warfare.

With regard to the intriguing political contexts, Commander Yang confirmed to me that apart from the KMT unit, there were several other ethnic armed groups that were encamped around the area, including Pa-Os (Taungthu), Shans, and Karens. The KMT Third Army collaborated with the Pa-O and Shan groups but sometimes fought against them to protect its trading routes. Traders passing through territory controlled by the armed groups had to pay taxes to them. Every entity thus tried to defend and even expand its sphere of power. In addition to these ethnic forces, the Burmese army patrolled the frontiers and attacked the ethnic rebels from time to time. The warring situation did not stabilize until the late 1980s (Lintner 1994).

While the KMT armies were protective of their fellow refugees, they were also exploitative. Within the two remnant armies, the power hierarchy was grounded on patriarchal ethics and the symbiosis of a patron-client relationship. The two army leaders were the supreme patriarchs who enjoyed the strongest power, but they also bore the highest responsibility to oversee the well-being of their communities (Chang 2002). The rest of their cadres possessed power and obligations relative to their ranks. The request for any special rights was predicated on one's affiliation with the armies. Auntie Duan's arrival in Ban Mae Aw and the opening of her shop were due to her connections with the

KMT. Her late second husband had been a staff officer (*canmou* 參謀) and had sacrificed his life during the war. Moreover, her father had established trading connections with KMT troops in several posts, and one of her cousins was a chief of the unit stationed in Ban Mae Aw.

Centered on patriarchal relations, Auntie Duan's social networks evolved through her father, husbands, and male kith and kin rather than her own initiative. She had inherited the social capital from these male family members and relatives for migration, resettlement, and economic endeavors. Despite her entrepreneurship and risk-taking nature, her social capital was limited to her connections with the KMT. In contrast, the social world of Yunnanese male traders was constituted of multiple sources ranging from different ethnic armed groups to Burmese and Thai local authorities and high-ranking officers of both nations (Chang 2004; 2009; 2014a). This diverse association was a *sine qua non* that facilitated their peripatetic engagements in a conflictual region. In comparison, there was a sharp difference between Yunnanese men's and women's social capital rooted in an asymmetric gendered structure. This phenomenon reminds us to reflect on the Meratus women's love affairs referenced in Tsing's ethnography. The pursuit of an alternative lifestyle through love affairs with foreign men still subjects these women to male dominance and does not alter the existing gendered structure.

The grocery business in the villages in which mule caravans congregated was a kind of monopoly.²⁰ It earned good profits. Informants in other KMT villages also reported that in the past, without support from the armies, it was difficult for ordinary civilians to run a business. The owners were either KMT troop leaders or civilian traders connected to important KMT officers. The actual operators of the shops were those officers' or traders' wives, as the men were mostly away for military duty or long-distance trade. In effect, these women's economic undertaking was complementary to the men's. Auntie Duan's narrative concretely describes the services her shop provided to the mule convoys. Though her economic engagement did not require as much long-distance travel as that of the men's cross-border trade between Thailand and Burma, it demanded organizational skills and courage in risk-taking, as her story illustrates. Moreover, her previous migration experiences inside Burma and from Burma to Thailand enhanced her geographical knowledge, benefiting her business of leasing mules to caravan traders.

With large numbers of caravans moving through the village, Auntie Duan should

20) Apart from Ban Mae Aw, other KMT villages at which long-distance mule caravans stopped included Ban Tham Santisuk (Mae Sai District, Chiang Rai Province), Ban Mae Salong (Mae Fa Luang District, Chiang Rai Province), Ban Mai Nongbour (Chaiprakan District, Chiang Mai Province), Ban Arunotai (Chiang Dao District, Chiang Mai Province), and Ban Piang Luang. The operation of mule caravans persisted into the 1980s and was gradually replaced by car transportation in the mid-1980s.

have been able to make a lot of money. However, fighting interrupted village life from time to time. Under special circumstances, the stationed KMT troop could even become the predator, as Auntie Duan's story shows. In other KMT villages, I also heard informants complaining that the armies often demanded that traders who owned mules and cars help with transportation and contribute money or food, especially rice. Although Auntie Duan did not refer to this in her story, it is quite possible that she also had to pay such "obligations."

Conclusion: Gendered Politics and Borderland History

Auntie Duan was aware of the toils she had gone through, which she viewed as originating from both her sex and her fate. Although her condition was seemingly beyond her control, it did not entail mere passivity. In contrast, Auntie Duan's capacity to act in spite of persistent vicissitudes demonstrates her unrelenting efforts to make life better for herself and her children. The following narrative reflects her thoughts in this regard:

In all those places I have stayed, not one of them was stable. Life has never been stable for me. I've stayed for a few years in each place and have become aged with continuous moving. . . . Being a woman you have to get married and have children in order to run your own life. If you don't get married and stay with your brothers and in-laws, you may find yourself trapped in a quarrelsome life, as everyone has his or her temperament. . . . In my generation, parents arranged daughters' marriages. We were young and didn't know anything. . . . After my first husband passed away, my parents urged me to marry again. They said that a young widow could easily attract jealousy and rumors from other people and that I needed a man to take care of me, a man to be my foundation (*genji* 根基). Moreover, the child with my first husband is a girl. They worried that I would be alone when I became old. . . . Being a soldier's wife, you were alone most of the time. This happened to other [Yunnanese] women, not just me. Soldiers had their duties. A trip to Burma lasted at least a few months, sometimes over a year. I was used to my [two successive] husbands' absence. . . . A man didn't have to shoulder family responsibilities; he was in the army or away for trade. But being a woman and a mother, you had to bring up your children. I have been a widow since I was 30. Women cannot really count on men. This is my fate. I wish not to be a woman or a mother in my next life.

Auntie Duan's narration illustrates her consciousness of gender asymmetry among Yunnanese migrants in Thailand. While the women were able to conduct trade and travel, these changes did not really challenge men's authority. Women were still perceived as subordinate to men, who were the center of social life. According to Yunnanese social conventions, women needed men to be their foundation, although this was nominal as the men were away most of the time. Auntie Duan was aware that while marriage gave

a woman her social status and living space at home, it also came with heavy responsibilities, especially those of motherhood. She had to run the household and support her children, regardless of whether her husband brought enough money home. During that uncertain period, while men were expected to venture far away, they were in fact spared from a household's daily responsibilities. For Yunnanese women migrants, economic engagement was not for the pursuit of individual autonomy *per se* (although it may have entailed such a result) but to fulfill the responsibilities of motherhood, as analyzed earlier. In her narration, Auntie Duan forcefully said her primary consideration was to avoid starvation. Intriguingly, this asymmetric gender relation constrained women's lives on the one hand, but urged them to be creative on the other. This paradoxical condition conforms to Tsing's statement "marginality is a source of both constraint and creativity" (1993, 18).

Auntie Duan's bravery and devotion to her family illustrate her dynamism as well as frustration and pain in the ongoing process of shaping and reshaping gendered roles. Not being able to change what cannot be changed, she attributed her hard life to another factor—fate, a life attitude that commonly exists among first-generation Yunnanese refugees. Although Auntie Duan gave birth to three sons, two of them have migrated to Taiwan and the other one just passed away. Auntie Duan went to Taiwan and lived with her second son from 1992 to 2006. While there, she took care of her two grandchildren and also helped her son to open a Yunnanese restaurant. But in the end, she decided to return to northern Thailand to grow old. She said the winter in Taiwan was too cold for her and she wanted to be buried with her second husband someday. I am not sure whether she considered a dead wife still needing the company of her dead husband to be her foundation. But her wish to not be born as a woman in her next life mirrors her strong will to be lifted from the restraint of gender asymmetry. This projection with reference to her former and current lived experiences affirms Ochs and Capps' argument (1996) mentioned at the beginning of the paper that a narrative approach helps draw out insights into a narrator's interaction with the outside world in a meaningful sequence that connects the past, present, and imagined worlds. However fanciful, Auntie Duan's craving for an imagined existence underscores her poignant awareness and dissatisfaction with her reality as it links to cultural frictions and socio-political injustice.

Located in Thai borderlands and confronting repeated military actions, Yunnanese migrants were primarily dependent on the KMT armies for their security and well-being. These migrants and the KMT troops were placed in an ambivalent position, lacking legal status and public recognition. Notwithstanding this, their resettlement configured a significant role in the borderland history during the Cold War—forming a buffer zone stemming Communist advancement from Burma and Laos, and enabling a wide range of

underground circulations between Thailand and Burma (including people, goods, capital, and intelligence) (Lintner 1994; Chang 2014b). In contrast to the dominance of a Thai historiography centering on the nation's sovereign power, self-claimed territorial integrity, and imagined cultural coherence, concern for the heterogeneous lives of borderland dwellers, their fluidity, and shifting political allegiances and boundaries have often been suppressed or distorted. Women's existence has been further marginalized. Prior to 1990, only sporadic media and academic attention touched on the KMT, other ethnic armed groups, and drug trafficking, and the lives of Yunnanese women migrants were completely overlooked. Their contribution to the sustenance of everyday life in border villages and support of the illicit flows was obliterated.

Using Auntie Duan's life story, I have attempted to shed light on a formerly invisible world dialectically shaped by individual agency and external sociocultural and political forces. Because of a series of historical contingencies, between the 1950s and 1980s most Yunnanese male migrants either participated in the underground trade back and forth between Thailand and Burma or joined the KMT forces. Their absence from home contributed to Yunnanese women migrants' economic engagements in the frontiers of Thailand and Burma. In comparison, Yunnanese women migrants in Burma enjoyed a greater degree of spatial mobility than did their fellow Yunnanese migrant women in Thailand. As explored elsewhere (Chang 2013; 2014b), many of the former group engaged in long-distance smuggling by car and going to jade or ruby mines for a range of economic possibilities, such as buying gemstones, selling goods, and lending money. However, these women's travels were motivated not by encouragement from the Yunnanese community but rather by a dire politico-economy in Burma during the socialist regime. The nation was relying on the black market economy, driving its people to risk their lives for any means of survival. In practice, Yunnanese women migrants in Burma were allocated to a similar asymmetric gendered structure as that of Yunnanese women migrants in Thailand. In other words, spatial mobility and economic opportunities do not necessarily guarantee women an equal position to men. Nevertheless, the efforts of first-generation women migrants have to a certain degree relaxed the formerly strict divide between the public and domestic spheres.

Many Yunnanese migrants in northern Thailand obtained legal status after the 1980s, which ensured their freedom of movement. Consequently, many of the younger generation, both men and women, have left their villages for Thai cities, especially Bangkok, Chiang Mai, and Phuket, for work. Since Yunnanese women migrants fled Yunnan, their lives have evolved through time and place. The changes they have made might not have been envisioned by their predecessors. This paper, by drawing on the case study of Auntie Duan, has focused only on the time period prior to 1990. Further discussion

on the issue of gender relations among the younger generation and women's economic roles would be beneficial and should be considered.

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English as an Islamic Cosmopolitan Vernacular: English-Language Sufi Devotional Literature in Singapore

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The key question this paper addresses is why Sufi devotional literature has been published and consumed in English, and the implications of this phenomenon. The material examined here focuses on literature that is consumed in Singapore: available in bookstores, in institutional archives, online, distributed at Sufi events, and in the private possession of practicing Sufis. I argue that English is used as both a Singaporean vernacular and a cosmopolitan *lingua franca*, allowing Sufis across the world to communicate with one another. I also argue that the adoption of English is necessarily tied to the rise of digital media and the perception of English as a “modern” marker of prestige and sobriety. This paper is organized in three parts. First, it traces the evolution of a reading public for Sufi devotional literature in Muslim Southeast Asia. Second, it investigates how and why producers of such literature have expressed themselves in English. Third, it analyzes how English operates in conjunction with Arabic in Sufi literature consumed in Singapore. I conclude that Sufi print culture’s adoption of English is a response to both the opportunities and the challenges of the present, constituting a reflection of Sufis’ pedagogical needs as well as an active appropriation of a loaded language.

Keywords: Sufism, Singapore, Southeast Asian Islam, Sufi print culture, English

Introduction

This paper studies the emergence of Sufi devotional literature in English, as consumed and produced in Singapore. In the broader context of South and Southeast Asian Islamic literary networks, this paper traces the historical evolution of the publication and consumption of Sufi devotional literature in various media: in print, audio and video recordings, and digital media. It tracks how Sufi devotional literature has adopted new languages, such as English, while retaining its fundamental relationship with Arabic. This is an understudied phenomenon, even as the broader field of scholarship on Islamic spirituality

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in South and Southeast Asia has undergone significant expansion since the 1990s. This paper will focus on Singapore, both because of the country's traditional role as a hub of print culture for Muslim Southeast Asia since the nineteenth century, and because it is a linguistically heterogeneous country that has embraced English as the *sine qua non* of all public discourse. Because of Singapore's peculiar linguistic makeup, I argue that the country constitutes a particularly rich case study for the dynamics of Sufism's engagement with different media and languages.

Sufi devotional literature can broadly be defined as works in various media that aid the individual seeker (*murid*) in his/her quest for spiritual gnosis, whether they be a learned treatise penned by a shaykh, a guide to performing specific forms of *dhikr* (a ceremony of remembrance of God, often involving repetitive, meditative chanting), the hagiography of a Sufi shaykh, a biweekly newsletter, or a website explicating Sufi concepts. They can be meant for private edification or to be used in ritual settings. Devotional texts play an important role in the construction of Sufi identity and its propagation: "Sufi identity [is] textual and contextual. It is envisioned and articulated within *texts*. At the same time, it is experienced and expressed in ritual *contexts*" (Rozehnal 2007, 14). Such literature is a key part of how Sufism is presented, transmitted, and practiced, functioning as a repository of a *tariqa*'s (pl. *turuq*) traditions and precepts.

Historically, Singapore has acted as a key node in the regional network of transmission of Islamic knowledge (including *tasawwuf*, the mystical/spiritual element of Islam popularly called Sufism), which justifies the attention paid by this paper to relevant developments in the Indonesian Archipelago, the Malay Peninsula, and the Indian Subcontinent (Roff 2009, 99–100). The need to consider developments in Singapore in the context of South and Southeast Asian Sufism is justified primarily by the trans-local nature of Sufi *turuq* (Chih 2007, 26–28). In the context of this study, *tariqa*, while often translated as "brotherhood" or "order," is better understood as a community built around the spiritual lineage, or *silsila*, of a spiritual master, or shaykh. Sufi *turuq* active in Singapore often have counterparts in Indonesia and Malaysia that adherents themselves understand to be part of the same community of *muridin* (seekers, or students), though this identification has more to do with shared practices and spiritual and pedagogical relationships with specific shaykhs than with any notion of belonging to a brotherhood or order in the monastic sense (*ibid.*). Therefore, a *tariqa* that bears the name Qadiriyya would be a *tariqa* that embraces the spiritual tradition and precepts laid out by the Qadiri tradition, and whose leading shaykhs have received their *ijazah* (license to teach) from Qadiri shaykhs that preceded them. These spiritual traditions are dynamic, and not mutually exclusive; a *tariqa* named the Qadiriyya-wa-Naqshbandiyya would be a *tariqa* that embraced the precepts of both the Qadiri and the Naqshbandi traditions, and its shaykhs

would have received *ijazah* from both, reckoning their double-barreled *silsila* accordingly. Moreover, a regional focus is necessary because of the functional unity of the Southeast Asian region as both a producer and consumer of Sufi devotional literature. Numerous works in both English and Malay, interpolated with Arabic and published in Indonesia or Malaysia, can be found in Singapore. Thus, Muslim Southeast Asia can be reasonably theorized as a single publishing and consumer network, one that shares shaykhs, *muridin*, and historical trends in the publication and consumption of Islamic knowledge.

The analytical framework used here is derived from two sources: first, Sheldon Pollock's concept of Sanskrit functioning as a cosmopolitan "code for literary and political expression" within the "Sanskrit Cosmopolis"; and second, Ronit Ricci's subsequent adaptation of it to characterize an "Arabic Cosmopolis" across the Indian Ocean (Pollock 2006, 11; Ricci 2011, 2). Pollock compares the use of Sanskrit in diverse societies in conjunction with the adoption of Indic culture and the forms of legitimacy that the use of Sanskrit conferred. Ricci adapted the concept of a Cosmopolis underwritten by a common language to the Islamic *ummah* (the global community of Muslims), another geographically diverse Cosmopolis underpinned by its use of Arabic as a language of civilizational discourse and a marker of identity. Moreover, she understood this Arabic Cosmopolis to be held together by written as well as spoken Arabic; the *ummah* existed as a trans-regional community partially because manuscripts and printed texts, written in Arabic, were circulated in shared "literary networks" (Ricci 2011, 4). Arabic plays a unique role in Islam as the language of the Qur'an, the irreplaceable original language of scriptural revelation. The emergence of Sufi literature in English has to be understood within the context of Arabic's primacy. Even where Arabic is not the primary medium of transmission, it is often incorporated into the text—partly because it provides an irreplaceable common idiom of expression, partly because it functions as a marker of religious identity, and partly because it carries the weight of sacred authority.

I draw on Pollock's notion of how a Cosmopolis, an *oikouménē*, can be bound by a shared vocabulary of religion and power embedded in a language. Specifically, I relate Pollock's description of a cosmopolitan *lingua franca* interacting with local vernaculars to Sufi devotional literature in Arabic, Malay, Tamil, and English (Pollock 2006, 12). In the same vein, I draw on Ricci's concept of an Arabic Cosmopolis in which Arabic interacts with vernaculars such as English. English serves the cosmopolitan function of connecting a linguistically diverse *ummah* while continuing to operate in close relation to older *lingua franca* such as Arabic, as illustrated by the generous retention of Arabic words and transliterated Romanized Arabic in the primarily English-language texts studied here. Ultimately, I argue that English exists in a diglossic relationship with Arabic; both languages are necessary to facilitate the transmission of Sufi knowledge, but

Arabic has clear precedence over English.

In Singapore English has been appropriated by Muslims, including Sufis, as a medium for the transmission of Islamic knowledge. At one level, the use of English as a language of Islamic discourse in Singapore simply reflects the changing educational profile of Muslims, given Singapore's imposition of English as the primary medium of public discourse and national education. However, English has been appropriated by Muslims also because of the sobriety and professionalism associated with the language in the Singaporean and global context. The expression of Sufi knowledge in English represents not just Sufism reflecting the social context it inhabits, but also the effort Sufis have made to selectively engage with various forms of modernity (Rozehnal 2007, 7). Singapore was—and is—certainly an important node in the publishing and transmission of Islamic print culture in the Indian Ocean, but Singaporean Sufis' use of English should not be thought of as a unique outlier or an Anglophone abnormality in a sea of vernacular-dominant Sufi literary culture. I contend that the case study of Singapore is instructive in a broader sense because it illustrates the latest example of a long-standing process coterminous with the spread of Islam: Islam's interaction with new languages, demographics, and technologies, all the while retaining the centrality of both spoken and written Arabic. In the process, English has become naturalized as one of many Islamic vernaculars while retaining the cosmopolitan function of connecting Singaporean Sufis to the broader Islamic world, a significant proportion of which is now Anglophone.

Modernity, where referenced here, refers not to the objective reality of a “modern” condition but rather a perception of modernity. This perceived modernity is often associated with English and spans various cultural and geographic contexts (Lee 2006; Lim *et al.* 2010; Lanza 2014). English is inextricably tied up in narratives of development and education, is acknowledged as the language of global capitalism, and continues to bear the mantle of prestige bestowed upon it by colonial education systems. In other words, English is widely perceived as a facilitator of social mobility in Southeast Asia, with all its attendant cultural connotations of value and legitimacy. English is an agent, or signifier, of that condition called “modern.” Modernity is a perceived state of being, and inherently subjective; this paper makes no claims regarding its theoretical validity or even its existence, but rather explores how English is invoked and utilized in relation to conceptions of modernity in Sufi devotional literature.

Sources and Methodology

Fieldwork for this study was conducted primarily from 2011 to 2012, with some additional

research conducted in 2017. The focus is on documenting and analyzing textual sources available in bookstores, institutional collections, and mosques and privately owned by Singaporean Sufis. The study focuses also on material hosted on websites or distributed via mailing lists that cater to the devotional needs of Sufi *muridin*. This is supplemented by interviews and personal communications with a limited number of Singaporean Sufis, including *muridin*, shaykhs, and booksellers. I fully acknowledge the anthropological limitations of my approach, in that my arguments are grounded in my analysis of how English-language texts, both printed and digital, function, rather than the result of sustained and structured interviews with Singaporean Sufis themselves. This is an approach that privileges textual analysis: I acknowledge that I surrender valuable insight by forgoing systematic interviews, but I contend that the printed and digital materials I examine are sufficiently rich to warrant specific attention. I believe that this paper makes a contribution to the extant literature on Singaporean Sufism, and the relationship between English and Sufism, by examining a key aspect of how Sufism functions both historically and in the present: its relationship with print culture, whether physical or digital. This paper further serves as an invitation to complementary and deeper anthropological or sociological studies of Singaporean Sufism, which remains an understudied phenomenon.

The sources canvassed here are drawn from Wardah Books, one of Singapore's most prominent Sufi bookstores; the Majlis Ulama Islam Singapura (MUIS) Resource Centre at its headquarters on Braddell Road; the English Bookstore, a subsidiary of Darul Arqam, the Singaporean Muslim Converts Association; the private collection of the Simply Islam offices on Tanjong Katong Road; and finally, the holdings of the Ba'Alawi Mosque on Lewis Road. This paper also draws on the private collections of Sufis who are personal friends, primarily from the Tijani *tariqa*. The final, but substantial, corpus of material examined is digital: I examine Sufi devotional literature, whether audio, video, or text, hosted on websites and distributed via mailing lists. The few personal communications from 2011 to 2012 cited here were based on unstructured face-to-face interactions, and these are supplemented by structured interviews conducted via e-mail in 2017.

Part I Consumers of Sufi Devotional Literature: The Development of a Muslim Reading Public in Southeast Asia

This section will trace the historical development of the Muslim reading public in the Malay Archipelago, an integral part of broader trans-regional literary networks, and explore the ways in which devotional literature was, and continues to be, used by Singaporean Sufis. It is important to begin by establishing the historical importance of texts

for Sufi praxis. Sufi devotional literature was often incorporated into communal rituals such as *hadra*, a Sufi ritual that covers a range of practices such as recitation of the Qur'an, sermons, collective study of a text, and communal *dhikr*, the defining ritual of Sufi praxis. In the 1970s the Ahmadi Shaykh Muhammad Murtada conducted *hadra* and *dars* (regular lessons) in Singapore "based around the reading of a text, as had been the practice of such scholars for centuries" (Sedgewick 2005, 171). The two main texts for *dars* used by the Ahmadiyyah were photocopies of a selected commentary on *hadith*, and a *fiqh* textbook (*ibid.*).¹⁾ Similarly, when the *mawlid* (anniversary celebrations) of various Ahmadi shaykhs were celebrated in Thailand throughout the twentieth century, Malaysian and Egyptian imprints of the Ahmadi *awrad* (distinctive prayers of a *tariqa*) were used for communal *dhikr* (*ibid.*, 175). The provenance of these texts testifies to the trans-regional circulation of texts, which continues to be the case for Sufi devotional materials today: English translations of classical Sufi texts such as Imam al-Ghazali's *The Revival of Religious Sciences* and the Shadhili Shaykh Ibn Ataillah's *The Refinement of Souls* continue to have broad appeal to Singaporean Sufis' various *turuq*.²⁾

Sufism's Relationship with Print Culture

Sufism has had a long and fruitful relationship with print culture, with Muhsin Mahdi going so far as to argue that "Sufis were in fact the main patrons of printing in Muslim countries during the 19th century" (Mahdi 1995, 6–7). The religious economy of Muslim Southeast Asia was drastically influenced by the explosion in print culture from the early nineteenth century onward. Sufi enthusiasm for print is evident in the hagiographies of Qadiri shaykhs that were produced specifically for the Southeast Asian market (Laffan 2011, 102–104). Similarly, *Majum'a* (compendiums) of stories about the seventeenth-century Shattari Shaykh Shah Wajih al-din 'Alawi circulated in the Malay Archipelago (Green 2008, 130, 135). The technology of print and its potential power was appreciated by the literate Muslim elite, many of whom were themselves Sufis: texts found in looted *kraton* (Javanese royal palaces) in the early 1830s indicate that printed Sufi manuals were used by combatants in the Padri War (1821–38) as talismans in battle and as religious guidebooks (Laffan 2011, 93–94).

Sufi *turuq* themselves were popularized through the adoption of print as a means of

1) Here, Ahmadiyyah refers to the *tariqa* claiming spiritual descent from Ahmad ibn Idris al-Fasi (1760–1837), rather than the Ahmadi sect of Mizra Ghulam Ahmad. The Ahmadiyyah *tariqa* originated in North Africa but claimed adherents across the Muslim world. It is sometimes referred to as the *tariqa* Idrisiyya or the *tariqa* Muhammadiyyah (the latter should not be confused with the Modernist Islamic mass movement founded by Ahmad Dahlan in Yogyakarta, Java, in 1912).

2) Ibrahim Tahir, proprietor of Wardah Books, interviewed by Lin Hongxuan, Singapore, April 8, 2017.

disseminating their ideas and practices, particularly from 1850 to 1890 (*ibid.*, 60). Southeast Asian branches of the Naqshbandiyya *tariqa* benefited immensely in this regard. Nevertheless, print never completely superseded older vectors of transmission such as manuscripts; they coexisted and worked in conjunction with one another (Green 2011, 61). The Khalidiyya, a branch of the Naqshbandiyya, were particularly popular in this period, and Khalidi shaykhs successfully inserted themselves into the system of Ottoman suzerainty, partly as a result of the high profile their publications had brought them (*ibid.*, 50–51). Trans-regional debates over the heterodoxy of the Khalidiyya, such as that between the Patani-based Khalidi *murid* Ahmad al-Fatani and the chief imam of the *Shafi'i madhhab* (school of jurisprudence) of the *Masjid al-Haram* in Mecca, Ahmad Khatib al-Minankabawi (1860–1916), were conducted publicly through printed pamphlets and *fatwas*. This revealed the existence of a whole body of Naqshbandi literature that Ahmad Khatib drew upon in order to criticize his opponent and substantiate his arguments (Laffan 2011, 178–180). Evidently the ability to master, translate, and provide commentary on Sufi devotional texts—if only to prove their heterodoxy—was of central importance to Muslim intellectual discourses and evinces the intimate relationship between Sufism and the printed word.

Singapore itself was an important part of the nexus of Sufi print culture. It was the main base of the Qadiriyya-wa-Naqshbandiyya in Southeast Asia (a noted member of this *tariqa*, Ahmad Khatib of Sambas, was based in Singapore) as well as the fulcrum of the “Sumatran-Malay nexus of transmission,” acting as a publishing center for polemics such as Salim bin Sumayr’s refutation of Ismail al-Minankabawi, in print from 1852 to 1853 (*ibid.*, 53–54). This was made possible by the establishment of printing presses in Singapore, as well as the expertise of printers and the commercial means of dissemination (*ibid.*, 55). Singapore also hosted a reading public deeply interested in issues of Sufi praxis, mirroring broader regional concerns; *al-Imam*, a Modernist journal that often debated Sufi orthopraxy (publishing an attack on Sufism in general and the Ahmadiyya in particular in 1908), was printed in Singapore from 1906 to 1908 and had its 2,000 monthly copies distributed throughout the Malay Peninsula, Sumatra, Java, and Borneo (Sedgewick 2005, 130; Laffan 2011, 183). The scene is one of a vibrant and connected Muslim community enthusiastically using print as a medium to air grievances, attempt reform, and issue polemics or apologetics.

Presently, Singaporean Sufis continue to embrace the use of devotional literature as an essential component of their praxis and pedagogy. The owner of a Sufi bookstore in Singapore, himself a Sufi, had this to say about the present importance of printed materials:

Print materials are usually used for instruction and for inspiration. These materials are in English and Malay. The novice might rely on printed material for *awrad*, but after a couple of months they would have memorized it. The advantage of the *awrad* being available in print is the standardization that it brings with it. During *dhikr* we just use our *misbaha* (prayer beads). Yes, shaykhs do use print materials when teaching. They usually teach from books, and these books are also available to the students.³⁾

Moreover, devotional literature can also function as a doorway to Sufi spiritual discipline. Given the educational and social terrain of Singapore (discussed in the following section), English-language devotional literature plays an important role as the first “point of contact” with Sufism for younger Muslims. While long-established networks linking *muridin*, *turuq*, prestigious shaykhs, and famous mosques continue to play an important role in structuring how Singaporean Sufis organize themselves, and consequently how new adherents are drawn into the fold, younger Muslims overwhelmingly educated in English-medium schools are often first drawn to Sufism through devotional literature. The aforementioned bookstore owner also recognized the importance of English-language Sufi devotional literature as a gateway to deeper engagement with the Sufi path:

As an Anglophone, I have to say yes [to the importance and relevance of English-language print material] . . . The printed text, at least for my generation, is usually the first encounter a seeker has of the Sufi path and all its myriad possibilities. Initially the aspirant is hungry for material and consumes a lot of print work; this then usually culminates in finding a shaykh. Then the aspirant reads deeply within his or her own path (books of the particular path). At this point some continue reading and some others slow down their consumption of texts, but not with the initial fervor.

Devotional literature, then, was historically important for Sufis across Southeast Asia but remains important today both as a means of accessing Sufism as well as a means of facilitating its praxis.

Islamic Educational Institutions in the Colonial Period

Historically, Sufi *turuq* were often supra-local, linked by the shared lineages of their shaykhs (*silsila*), and many *turuq* straddled different regions but identified themselves as part of a larger *tariqa* built around a common *silsila* (Howell 2007, 217). In the Netherlands East Indies, Sufi *turuq* in the nineteenth century were often linked to networks of *pesantren*, whose *kyai* (traditional Javanese scholars/teachers) were virtually always Sufis (*ibid.*, 218). *Pesantren* thus acted as platforms for the dissemination of Sufi knowledge and were the sites of mutual reinforcement of different realms of Islamic knowledge: the Islamic sciences as well as *tasawwuf* (Van Bruinessen 2007, 96). Print technology (spe-

3) Ibrahim Tahir, proprietor of Wardah Books, interviewed by Lin Hongxuan, Singapore, April 8, 2017.

cifically, the lithograph press and the later movable-type press) was introduced to South and Southeast Asia around 1820 and was enthusiastically taken up by Muslims by the 1840s (Green 2011, 162). So was English, and surprisingly early: Islamic Modernist organizations such as Anjuman-e Islam set up English-medium schools in the 1880s to “teach young Muslims the forms of knowledge that the Anjuman’s fathers considered essential for the modern age” (Laffan 2011, 37).

Singapore’s status as a point of transit for itinerant scholars from Hadramaut, Patani, Aceh, Palembang, and Java, as well as its networks of *madrasahs*, *pondok*, and *surau*, made it “a publication and distribution center for religious writings” in the late nineteenth century (Roff 2009, 82). Sufi tracts in circulation both in Singapore and around the region included Muhammad Arshad bin Abdallah al-Banjari’s *Sabil al-Muhtadin* (The way of the guided) and Abd al-Samad al-Palembani’s Malay translations of portions of al-Ghazali’s *Ihya Ulum ad-Din* (Revival of the religious sciences) under the titles *Sayr us-Salikin* and *Hikayat us-Salikin*, all of which were intended for use as teaching materials (*ibid.*, 84). Evidence from the nineteenth century, though scant, also suggests that *tasawwuf* was taught in larger *pondok*, which were reliable consumers of Sufi print culture (Van Bruinessen 1990, 226–229). The development of a Southeast Asian Muslim reading public was thus “. . . greatly helped by the publishing facilities which now sprang up in Singapore, and ultimately by the gradual spread of literacy” (Roff 2009, 83).

In the Netherlands East Indies the elimination of courtly centers of patronage, the benign neglect of *pondok* and *pesantren*, and the policy of co-opting allies from amongst the native *ulama* allowed *pesantren* to flourish (they were also often tax exempt), as was the case of the prominent Hadhrami *ulama* Sayyid Uthman’s network of *pesantren* (Laffan 2011, 62). It was apparent by the late 1840s that “*pondok* located near commercial towns had become key nodes of intellectual exchange” (*ibid.*). These developments relate directly to Singapore in that *pesantren* in the Indies were often a stepping stone to further education in Surabaya or Singapore as well as far-flung Mecca, Medina, and Cairo. Noted scholars such as Abd al-Rahman al-Saqqaf and Salim bin Sumayr were based in Singapore, a testament to its centrality in trans-regional educational networks (*ibid.*, 47). By facilitating commerce and urbanization, and promoting the colonial state as a patron of indigenous religions, British and Dutch colonialism allowed *pesantren* to flourish and Islamic learning to proliferate, with a concomitant spread of Sufi teachings if not *turuq* themselves.

The growth of Modernist Islamic educational institutions in Singapore also contributed toward this dynamism, by increasing the numbers of the Muslim reading public. *Madrasahs* such as al-Mashur al-Islamiyyah and al-Haji Taib, both of which taught English as a language alongside religious sciences in Arabic, helped stimulate a market

for Sufi literature by promoting literacy (*ibid.*, 99–101, 122).⁴⁾ Of particular interest is the early appropriation of English; given the economic realities of colonial Singapore, it was clearly recognized that functional fluency in English was a way to access public sector jobs. Modernist Islamic educational institutions responded accordingly, taking the first steps toward mass Muslim literacy in English. This was certainly true of the Madrasah al-Ma'arif in Tajong Katong, Singapore, founded by Shaykh Muhammad Fadhlullah Suhaimi, then head of the Aurad Muhammadiyah *tariqa*, in 1936. This Modernist *madrassah* pioneered English-language instruction alongside Malay and Arabic, as well as the teaching of secular knowledge such as science and mathematics (Ahmad Fauzi 2012, 75–76). Shaykh Fadhlullah's son, Shaykh Muhammad Taha Suahimi, would go on to achieve prominence both as the head of the Aurud Muhammadiyah *tariqa* as well as the first president of the Shari'a Court of Singapore; Shaykh Taha was also the first preacher to recite Friday sermons in English (*ibid.*). The *madrassah* still stands today, retaining its progressive vision (particularly in advocating Islamic education for women), and remains one of the foremost centers of pre-tertiary Islamic religious instruction in Singapore (*ibid.*, 85–86; Aljuneid and Dayang Istiasiyah 2005, 253).

Postcolonial Islamic Educational Institutions

The growth of state-sponsored Islamic educational institutions in independent Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia also helped stimulate the publication of Sufi devotional literature. These institutions combined secular and Islamic subjects to meet the developing economy's demands for skilled labor and helped foster an increasingly literate Muslim public. In some cases, they directly stimulated the articulation and dissemination of Sufi knowledge. The co-optation of existing *madrassahs* in Singapore as part of the national education system through the Administration of Muslim Law Act (1966) formalized English-medium instruction in *madrassah* curricula, thus further cultivating a market for Islamic literature in English (Aljuneid and Dayang Istiasiyah 2005, 250). The aforementioned Madrasah al-Ma'arif in Singapore is a good example of how educational institutions have deepened Sufism's engagement with English. Shaykh Muhammad Taha (d. 1999), son of the *madrassah*'s founder and his heir as the leading shaykh of the Aurad Muhammadiyah *tariqa*, was a prolific writer and speaker, publishing and preaching regularly in both Malay and English (Ahmad Fauzi 2012, 76). While not all students of the *madrassah* become

4) Islamic Modernism refers to a historical movement in the nineteenth century in which reformers such as Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (1838–97), Muhammad Abduh (1849–1905), and Rashid Rida (1865–1935) began the decades-long attempt to reconcile Islamic religious precepts and cultural values with “modern” ideas such as nationalism and “progress,” both technological/economic and socio-cultural.

muridin of the *tariqa*, elements of the *tariqa*'s *awrad* are incorporated into the curriculum, and the *tariqa* itself has experienced significant growth since 2000, with an estimated 18,000 adherents in Singapore alone (*ibid.*, 77). With the national education system having long since adopted English-language instruction, the full incorporation of the Madrasah al-Ma'arif into the education system in the late 1990s further entrenched the use of English as a suitable medium for Islamic discourse (alongside Malay and Arabic) amongst the many students who passed through its doors.

In Malaysia the establishment of government religious schools, *sekolah agama kerajaan*, in the 1920s and 1930s, and tertiary institutions such as Kolej Islam Malaya in 1955, reflects this trend (Roff 2009, 126–127). In Indonesia institutions such as IAIN Syarif Hidayatullah under the noted Indonesian scholar Harun Nasution (1919–98) and his successors actively promoted a holistic understanding of Islamic knowledge, with a curriculum that covered even controversial aspects of *mutazili* theology and ibn Arabi's writings, which equipped students with the conceptual tools and scholastic resources to explore other branches of Islamic learning such as *tasawwuf* (Riddell 2001, 231–233). Moreover, under Nasution's term as rector, IAIN Syarif Hidayatullah saw the systematic incorporation of secular subjects, Western academic disciplines, into the curricula alongside traditional Islamic sciences. The curriculum encouraged accommodation between two fields of knowledge often perceived as distinct—undoing “knee-jerk hostility and suspicion of all things Western” (*ibid.*, 231–232)—which made English an increasingly viable language for transmitting Islamic knowledge.

Of equal importance was the emergence of private Islamic educational foundations and businesses that equipped students with the intellectual tools to pursue *tasawwuf* and think critically about religion in general. These institutions helped disseminate both the desire and means to pursue Islamic knowledge, including *tasawwuf*. The most visible private Islamic educational institution in Southeast Asia was Nurcholish Madjid's (1939–2005) Paramadina Foundation and Paramadina University in Jakarta. Its adoption of university-style classes for adults and consultative, dialectical learning proved popular during the Reformasi era. Similar organizations included Tazkiya Sejati, the Intensive Course and Networking for the Islamic Sciences (ICNIS), the Indonesian Islamic Media Network, and the educational wings of major mosques such as Masjid At-Tin, al-Azhar, and Istiqlal (Howell 2007, 230). Notably, all these institutions integrated *tasawwuf* into their syllabi, and ICNIS even offered (short-lived) courses on *tasawwuf* studies online (*ibid.*, 233). Such curricula helped stimulate a renewed interest in Sufism and opened students' eyes to Sufi ideas and practices circulating outside of the traditional, *pesantren*-based Sufism of the Javanese and Malay world. “By displaying the sophisticated theological and ethical scholarship of the Sufi traditions, the new commercial adult Islamic

educational institutions . . . stimulated many ‘alumni’ to search further, beyond their *tasawwuf* courses” (*ibid.*, 231). Evidently traditional and modern, experiential and academic forms of Sufism mutually reinforced each other, stimulating the consumption of Sufi devotional literature. Tazkiya Sejati even actively encouraged its students to join a *tariqa* and developed links with the major *uruq* of Indonesia: the Qadiriyya wa-Naqshbandiyya, Rida’iyya, Shattariyya, and Tijaniyya (*ibid.*, 235).

The Symbiotic Relationship between Sufism and Islamic Modernism

Another important stimulant to Sufi print culture was the contest to define orthodox Islam, as expressed in the troubled but symbiotic relationship between Islamic Modernism and Sufism. Printed denunciations by Islamic Modernists of what they saw as syncretic, folk Islam provided an impetus to Sufi publishing: they prompted Sufis to reassert, defend, explain, and clarify themselves in print (Laffan 2011, 180). While this dynamic relationship reaches back to the late nineteenth century, a good example of the Sufi response to Modernist criticism remains Haji Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah’s (1908–81, hereafter Hamka) attempt to reconcile Sufism with orthodoxy. Hamka went so far as to suggest in *Tasawwuf Modern* (1939) and *Pelajaran Agama Islam* (1975) that knowledge of *tasawwuf* could be gleaned from texts, relegating the spiritual discipline and ritual praxis of *uruq* to the back seat (Riddell 2001, 216–219). While Hamka was no defender of traditional Sufism, his emphasis on individual agency and the importance of texts as pedagogical tools prefigures Sufism’s later embrace of English and digital media. The impact of Islamic Modernism was not just in stimulating Sufi polemics; the platforms for the propagation of Modernism, educational institutions, and civic organizations were also adopted by Sufis. Muhammad Zuhri’s (b. 1939, a Sufi spiritual teacher unaffiliated with any *uruq*) Pesantren Budaya Barzakh (Barzakh Cultural School) as well as its affiliates, Yayasan Barzakh (Barzakh Foundation) and Keluarga Budaya Barzakh (Barzakh Cultural Family), founded in the 1990s, all emphasized the study of *tasawwuf* in their publications (*ibid.*, 220).

This fraught but symbiotic relationship has continued well into the present: as late as 1986, Sufi apologetics were being published by Ahmadi shaykhs in Singapore, such as Abd al-Rashid’s *Zikir dan Wasilah*, which stresses the legitimacy and necessity of the shaykh-*murid* relationship, *tawassul* (intercession), and *hadra* (Sedgewick 2005, 192). Similarly, the foundation of journals such as the Nahdlatul Ulama-linked *Sufi* in Jakarta in 2000 illustrates the continuing stimulus to Sufi print culture provided by the need to engage with Islamic Modernism. The editor of *Sufi*, Luqman Hakiem, was ideologically close to Madjid as well as to Jaringan Islam Liberal, the Liberal Islam Network (Laffan 2007, 162–163).

The Bureaucratization and Institutionalization of Islam

Returning to Singapore, the postcolonial bureaucratization and institutionalization of Islam stimulated the articulation of Sufi knowledge and precipitated the use of English by reconfiguring religious legitimacy, reorienting legitimacy away from particular shaykhs or imams and locating it instead in state institutions (Sedgewick 2005, 180). Increasingly, it was not the shaykh's pronouncements or the community's traditions that shaped Sufi praxis: state institutions increasingly claimed the right to determine what constituted Sufi praxis. The bureaucratization of Islam through the formation of the Department of Islamic Advancement of Malaysia (Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia, JAKIM) in 1997 and the Islamic Religious Council of Singapore (Majlis Ulama Islam Singapura, MUIS) in 1968 was accompanied by the rise of a Muslim middle class and an increasing aversion to perceptions of heterodoxy as well as a stronger preference for codified forms of *shari'a*. This stimulated the articulation of Sufi knowledge in the national(ized) languages of Southeast Asia, including English in Singapore, as part of an attempt to indigenize, demystify, and thereby regulate Sufism within the boundaries of the nation-state (Maznah 2012, 105–106).

The adoption of English by bureaucratic institutions such as MUIS helped push Sufi engagement with English: even the Ahmadi Shaykh Abd al-Rashid sent his children to English-medium secular schools (Sedgewick 2005, 191). In 2012 MUIS launched English-language outreach programs such as “YouthAlive!” and “TeensAlive!” which suggests that English was presumed to be the logical medium of communication with Muslim youth (MUIS 2012a; 2012b). Maznah Mohamad describes the Islamization of state institutions in Malaysia as a means of seizing and consolidating religious authority; she argues that “high culture reverence for law” is invoked to justify passing purportedly “Islamic” legislation, generating legitimacy for the state (Maznah 2012, 104). Conversely, in Singapore Islam is Anglicized so that it may be rendered local and thus made computable within the bureaucratic logic of the state. Certainly many Muslims speak English, especially Muslim youth; nevertheless, MUIS's use of English in its public messaging to young Muslims reflects the state's desire (refracted through obedient institutions such as MUIS) to assimilate Islam as just another religion within the body politic, a horizontal form of organization that dovetails neatly with the state's vertical and pervasive authority.

Bureaucratization and institutionalization also stimulated the expression of Islamic discourse in new media. This was particularly evident in Malaysia: in 1973 Radio Television Malaysia, the state broadcaster, set up a “religious and *da'wa* unit,” which was by 1976 producing 22 programs a week on TV1 (Roff 2009, 111–112). This normalization of Islamic discourse in new media platforms eventually helped impel Sufi devotional literature to penetrate digital media such as the Internet, or at the very least created

conditions conducive to such an enterprise. This dynamism was characteristic of *turuq* such as the Aurad Muhammadiyah, which was quick to capitalize on the new opportunities for *dakwah* presented by television, radio, and the Internet in the form of supporting self-consciously Islamic musicians of the *nasyid* genre in Malaysia (Ahmad Fauzi 2012, 86).

Demographic Changes in the Ummah

One development that has had a significant impact on the kinds of Sufi texts circulated in Singapore (particularly English) has been the demographic changes to the *ummah*—specifically, Islamic migration to Anglophone societies and the consequent publication of materials that cater to Anglophone Muslims. Advances in communications technology have introduced “new modalities of global inter-connectedness,” while “technological and social innovations” such as the formal organization of voluntary groups “can be used to knit together previously loose networks of Sufis . . . [into a] transnational community” (Howell and van Bruinessen 2007, 11). The phenomena of Muslim immigration to Anglophone societies and conversion to Islam in Anglophone societies are relevant to Sufi devotional literature in Muslim Southeast Asia, because they stimulate the production, consumption, and dissemination of English-language devotional literature across the *ummah*. Given the truly global reach of the *ummah* and the circulation of devotional literature made possible by global publishing networks and the Internet, such materials have had no trouble finding their way to Singapore, where they often find a receptive audience.

Economic and cultural globalization—specifically the import of Western norms and consumer culture alongside business—has created the superficial but pervasive impression of religions under siege: in the case of Islam, it has led to an attempt “to establish a sphere of true ‘Islamicity,’” of which one manifestation is the turn toward Islamic spirituality or Sufism (Roy 2004, 154). This development mirrors the perceived need to establish, promote, and present a nonviolent and authentic articulation of Islam after the September 11 attacks. Through participation in the same literary networks as the global *ummah*, and given the prevalence of English-language education in Singapore, Singaporean *muridin* often end up reading the same materials that are published for the consumption of immigrants or converts in Europe or North America. A good example of one such text is *The Hundred Steps*, by the Darqawi-Shadhili-Qadiri Shaykh Abdalqadir as-Sufi, who publishes mostly in English and is active in the UK, Spain, and South Africa. The conferment of an honorary degree upon him by the Universiti Sains Malaysia and the presence of his books in the MUIS Resource Centre in Singapore indicate a reasonably wide audience for his work in Southeast Asia (Abdalqadir 2004). Other texts consumed in Singapore but transmitted via Europe and North America include devotional

literature published by transnational *turuq* such as the Naqshbandiyya-Haqaniyya, whose shaykhs, most prominently the late Nazim Haqqani and Hisham Kabbani, proactively maintain a global following and have published numerous books such as those under the SufiLive and Sufi Wisdom series (SufiLive 2012).

Part II Producers of Sufi Devotional Literature: The Adoption of English and Digital Media

This section will examine the language and media in which Sufis have articulated themselves, and the historical developments that have influenced their adoption of English. The devotional literature I examined suggests that Sufis have been confident and assertive in expressing themselves in English. In these texts English supplements Arabic, serving as a kind of lubricant for the transmission of authentic Sufi knowledge. As a *lingua franca*, English is spoken fluently by several prominent Sufi authors with international followings while remaining a vernacular for many diasporic Muslims and recent converts. This dual nature of English is reflected in the enthusiasm with which Sufi publications have taken to using it.

Within the Indian Ocean literary network, texts published in South Asia, particularly Calcutta and Bombay, have long found receptive markets in Southeast Asia. Some 50 texts continue to be published by the Chisti Sabiri *tariqa*'s network of publishing houses (Rozeznal 2007, 120). Foremost among these is Mahfil-i Zauqiyya, based in Karachi, which mostly publishes English translations of works of the *tariqa*'s shaykhs (*ibid.*, 122). Works such as *A Guide for Spiritual Aspirants*, published by A. S. Noordeen (a Kuala Lumpur-based publishing house founded by Malaysian Chisti Sabiri *muridin*) and with the rights to it owned by the Chisti Sabiri Association for Spiritual Training (AST), are available at Darul Arqam in Singapore (Hadrat Maulana Shah 2001). Noordeen is well known for the publication of English works of Chisti Sabiri shaykhs, and its publications have been circulated in Singapore since the late 1970s (Rozeznal 2007, 124; AST 2012). The AST was founded by Chisti Shaykh Wahid Bakhsh and also publishes an English-language journal, *The Sufi Path*, representative of a wider canon of such journals read within *turuq* that have successfully penetrated Anglophone societies in the West (Rozeznal 2007, 121). *The Sufi Path* is available at the Darul Arqam bookstore and is particularly interesting in that multiple issues of the journal are bound and sold together (with 10–12 in one package), suggesting that the journal is consumed as a pedagogical tool for the individual aspirant, a series of devotional guides and articles a *murid* can refer to in his/her own long-term study (*The Sufi Path*, Vols. I–XII, 1999–2006). Moreover,

the use of Noordeen's publications has spread amongst various Malaysian and Singaporean *turuq*, with *muridin* using these texts as primers or for reference despite not being part of the Chistiyya *tariqa* themselves (Rozehnal 2007, 124).

Singaporean Sufi publications also evince their willingness to publish in English. Examples include *The Rare Gift and the Key to Opening the Door of Union* (hereafter the *Ratib al-Attas*) and *The Spread of Islam and the Role of the Sufis*. Both books were published by the Ba'Alawi Mosque, the focal point of the Ba'Alawi *tariqa* in Singapore (al-Attas 2007; al-Attas 2011). The foremost Ba'Alawi shaykh in Singapore, Shaykh al-Habib Hasan al-Attas, indicated that the Ba'Alawi Mosque was comfortable publishing in English given the increasing numbers of aspirants who were fluent in English and who attended its weekly recitation of the *Ratib al-Attas*, though it also continued to publish the *Ratib al-Attas* and other devotional materials in Malay.⁵⁾ Notably, an Arabic version of the *Ratib* continues to be appended to the end of each book, an indicator of Arabic's essential role in Islamic discourse and hinting at the diglossic relationship between English and Arabic. *The Spread of Islam*, unlike the *Ratib al-Attas*, is a quick overview of the history of Sufism in Singapore and represents an attempt to engage with young, English-educated Muslims who are potential aspirants, much the same way Robert Rozehnal described the role that Chisti Sabiri Sufis envisioned for books: a gentle invitation to practice (Rozehnal 2007, 12). Another example is *The Grand Saint of Singapore: The Life of Habib Nuh bin Muhammad al-Habshi*, a classic hagiography of a Singaporean Sufi *wali* (loosely translatable as saint), printed in English and juxtaposed against Arabic throughout (Muhammad Ghouse 2008).

English-language devotional literature published in the West is common in both Singaporean bookstores and institutional collections. This includes texts that have been transmitted via Western Muslims and academics, such as *The Mantle Adorned: Imam Busiri's Burda*, which is used for recitation during *dhikr* conducted at the Abdul Aleem Siddique Mosque, affiliated with the Naqshbandiyya-Haqqaniyya in the 1990s but which now welcomes *muridin* of various *turuq* (Hanisah 2010, 44). A British convert to Islam, the Cambridge academic T.J. Winter (Abdal Hakim Murad), translated the piece, and it was published by The Quilliam Press for an audience of Muslim immigrants and converts in the UK (Abdal Hakim Murad 2009). *The Mantle Adorned* has wide circulation in Singapore: besides being used in *dhikr* at Singapore's Abdul Aleem Siddique Mosque, it is available in multiple bookstores as well as in the MUIS Resource Centre.

Finally, in digital media such as websites hosting text, audio, and video recordings/livestreaming, Sufis have demonstrated their willingness to express themselves in

5) Personal communication, May 2011.

English and to engage new media to convey their message. Examples of such resources used in Singapore include SufiLive.com, a public video streaming website via which the Naqshbandi-Haqqani Shaykh Nazim Haqqani delivered weekly lectures until his passing in 2014.⁶⁾ Since 2014 Shaykh Hisham Kabbani has assumed Nazim's leadership role, and he is now the face of the *tariqa*'s digital presence as well. As of July 2017, the SufiLive Facebook page had nearly 36,000 followers while its YouTube channel had nearly 28,000 subscribers from around the world, which suggests a significant appetite for its publications, particularly those published digitally. Other examples include websites catering to a more regional audience in South and Southeast Asia, such as MoonOverMedina.com, the Malaysian Chisti Sabiri online bookstore. All of these resources are available in English, with MoonOverMedina specializing in English-language texts. Local websites such as SacredPath.sg, which grew out of a multi-*turuq* Sufi conference, "The Sacred Path of Love," organized in Singapore since 2010, as well as ancillary sites such as its community page on Facebook, act as organizational resources for the Sufi community in Singapore; their use of English reflects the educational profile of Muslims in Singapore (The Sacred Path of Love 2012a; 2012b). Members of the Facebook community page of The Sacred Path of Love continue to post links to YouTube videos, websites with Sufi resources, and invitations to related events on it, the vast majority of which are in English.

English in Singapore

English plays a special role as a language of national discourse and nation building, being promoted both as the language of modernity and economic development, as well as a means to "achieve politico-operational integration and to develop instrumental attachments to the supra-ethnic national system among the ethnically heterogeneous" (Tham 2008, 26). In the effort to transcend ethnolinguistic boundaries in a multicultural nation, Susan Gal rightly observes that "local languages are abandoned or subordinated to 'world languages' in diglossic relations," with English assuming a place of national prominence above vernacular languages (Gal 1989, 356). The use of English as a language of prestige as well as a social binder is highlighted by Pierre Bourdieu: "linguistic differences are the 'retranslation' of social differences . . . dominant legitimate language is a distinct capital which, in discourse, produces, as its profit, a sense of the speaker's distinction" (Jenkins 2004, 154). Language is theorized by Bourdieu as a form of social currency—specifically, "cultural capital," encompassing "skills and knowledge, acquired through

6) According to the Facebook page of the Naqshbandiyya-Haqqaniyya in Singapore, the *tariqa* has since 2014 renamed itself the Naqshbandiyya-Nazimiyya in honor of Shaykh Nazim. Its weekly *maulid* and *dhikr* sessions at the Simply Islam premises are broadcast live via SufiLive.com every Thursday, 8pm, GMT +8.

education, which can be used to acquire jobs, money and status” (Swartz 1997, 177). In the case of English in Singapore, this holds true; it is a language associated with modernity and the “appropriate” (politically correct or neutral) medium of discourse in a multicultural Singapore hypersensitive to issues of race and ethnicity (Kachru 1995, 291–292). These frameworks for understanding the function of language as social currency help illuminate why English has been appropriated by Sufi authors and publishers in the context of English-medium national education. In doing so, the authors and publishers both adopt English for social capital as well as reflect the pedagogical needs of their audience.

However, English in Singapore carries its own baggage, which inevitably colors the adoption of the language by Sufis. The foundation of numerous *madrassahs* in Singapore from the early twentieth century onward, beginning with the Madrasah al-Iqbal in 1907, reflects the Modernist ethos of education as a force for social dynamism (Aljuneid and Dayang Istiasiyah 2005, 252). Unlike the more traditional *pondok* (boarding school) and *surau* (prayer hall) of Singapore, which emphasized the authority of particular shaykhs and the importance of voluntary discipleship, submission, and rote memorization, these new *madrassahs* usually embraced a systematic approach to teaching traditional Islamic sciences alongside secular subjects such as science, mathematics, and languages other than Arabic (*ibid.*, 253–254). English-medium instruction became part and parcel of Islamic education, and the primacy of English was further entrenched by the postcolonial state’s embrace of English as the primary medium of instruction across the national education system, imposing its regulations on *madrassahs* as well.

It is undeniable that the adoption of English as a medium of instruction came as a response to the pressures of colonial encroachment across the Muslim world. The Modernist *madrassahs* were statements of civilizational integrity; they served as symbols of Islamic intellectual dynamism and relevance even under the yoke of foreign political domination. By their existence they protested the encroachment of colonial discourses such as the infamous “myth of the lazy native” or the tendency in Orientalist scholarship to dismiss South and Southeast Asian Islam as syncretic (Alatas 1977; Laffan 2011, 115, 235). However, their adoption of English-medium education and secular subjects constituted the beginning of an irrevocable change in the educational profile of Singaporean Muslims; this represented the first step in a process of utilizing English that would be further consolidated by the postcolonial state’s imposition of English-medium education. Speaking “good” English has been fetishized by the postcolonial state as a form of civic virtue: communalism is dangerous, and therefore speaking a common language (English, the convenient detritus of colonialism) in all public discourse is the first line of defense against the descent into intra-ethnic conflict (Pakir 2010, 270; Rafael 2016, 100–103). This is inextricably tied up with discourses of Western civilizational superiority, a com-

plex that haunts the Singaporean psyche because of the country's peculiar decolonization experience. The use of English, then, is never truly neutral in Singapore; it is bisected by vocabulary and accent, syntax and grammar, into basilectal and acrolectal tiers that reflect the socioeconomic status of the speaker (Alsagoff 2010, 111). Singaporean Sufis' use of English is likewise loaded, reflecting both the conscious attempt to appropriate a language of power, as well as an acknowledgment of the changing educational profiles and media consumption habits of Singaporean *muridin*.

Another aspect of Sufism's engagement with English is its appropriation of English's attendant knowledge structures, such as the perceived legitimacy embodied by Western academics who study Islam. Facilitated by the use of English, this engagement with Western academia suggests that producers of Sufi literature are able and willing to look beyond their *turuq* and their individual *silsila*, engaging with nontraditional knowledge and forms of legitimacy in order to enhance the legitimacy of Sufism as well as to cater to the diverse pedagogical needs of their trans-regional audiences. Articles published in the Indonesian journal *Sufi* regularly engage with Western academic work, and the journal itself carried advertisements for the *Oxford Encyclopedia of Islam* (Laffan 2011, 169). This enmeshment of Western academic and Sufi knowledge is also evident in Singapore: classic academic tracts such as J. Spencer Trimingham's *The Sufi Orders in Islam* and R. A. Nicholson's *The Mystics of Islam* (both in English) are available in various bookstores as well as the MUIS Resource Centre (Trimingham 1998; Nicholson 2006). Notably, the latter book has had its rights acquired by Malaysian publishers, who print and distribute it under their own imprint, attesting to its readership amongst Sufis in Malaysia and Singapore. Similarly, the 2011 Sacred Path of Love conference retreat saw Professor Zachary Wright of Northwestern University in Qatar invited to give a talk titled "Come Back to Allah: The Power of *Dhikr*" (Wright 2011).

"Rehabilitating" Islam through Sufism

Both in the United States and in Singapore, Naqshbandi-Haqqani shaykhs have positioned themselves as the "great renewers" (in the sense of prominent individuals who have periodically breathed new dynamism into Islamic religious praxis over the course of Islamic history) in an era of powerful new technologies, and have adopted English in the interest of reaching out to the greatest number in the most effective ways (Hanisah 2010, 42). The online pledging of *bay'ah* (allegiance) to a shaykh, lectures delivered on SufiLive.com, and short lectures by Shaykh Zakaria, Shaykh Nazim Haqqani's *khalifa* in Singapore from 1998 to 2009, conducted after *dhikr*, were all performed in English (*ibid.*, 45). Furthermore, Naqshbandi-Haqqani shaykhs have expressed their view that preaching and publishing in English helps to bridge entrenched ethnic divisions within the

Muslim community (the Chistiyya in Singapore, for example, are popularly thought of as a specifically Indian Muslim *tariqa*).

Moreover, post-September 11 Singapore has also presented opportunities for Sufi *turuq*: prominent Singaporean Sufis have defined Sufism in opposition to violent Islamic fundamentalism, manifest at the level of state institutions. The primary state-sanctioned organ for combating violent Islamic extremism has been the Religious Rehabilitation Group (RRG), which prominent Sufis have participated in: “The co-chairpersons of the RRG committee, Ustaz Ali and Ustaz Hasbi, are local leaders of *tariqa* groups. Ustaz Ali is the local leader of the *tariqa* Qadirri wa Naqshbandi who holds their meetings at the Khadijah mosque. Ustaz Hasbi is the local leader of the *tariqa* Ahmadi Iddrisiyyah. A couple of others are also active *tariqa* members such as Ustaz Ibrahim who is the local leader of the *tariqa* Qadirri wa Chistiyya” (*ibid.*, 67). In doing so, they have raised the public profile of their *turuq*, increasing their accessibility and legitimating Sufism via their cooperation with state imperatives. They also, however, have had to use English in their dealings with the state, and I would suggest that this has had a subtle but important impact on Muslims, as Sufism is increasingly brought into the public eye as modern, peaceful, and articulate.

The advent of Islamic scholarly literature being published in English by prominent intellectuals has also created a regional climate conducive for Sufis to adopt English. Muslim intellectuals with an activist bent, such as Nurcholish Madjid and Chandra Muzaffar (a Malaysian academic and activist), have published prolifically in English as part of their efforts to reconcile the Islamic intellectual heritage they champion with mainstream academic discourse, which is dominated by English. Internationally, Sufi authors such as T.J. Winter, who is a *murid* of the Ba’Alawi *tariqa*, and Osman Bakar, a Malaysian academic, have published widely in English (Osman 2007; Winter 2007). They have helped build a climate in which English-language publication of Islamic knowledge is both desirable and accepted.

In Singapore, this process of “normalizing” the expression of Islamic knowledge in English is exemplified by The Reading Group. A private circle of Muslim professionals and scholars, The Reading Group produces a wide range of pedagogical materials in English, published under the *Reading Group Occasional Paper Series* and the *MUIS Occasional Paper Series* (Saeed 2005; Azhar Ibrahim 2008). These materials are used primarily for private study in *tabligh* sessions but are also available in institutional collections such as the MUIS Resource Centre. The Reading Group also maintains a public presence digitally, in the form of the Leftwrite Center Facebook page. The Leftwrite Center, established in 2008, describes itself as “. . . an enterprise that aims to promote critical consciousness and civic social participation and awareness among young intelli-

gentsia on various social and religious issues affecting Singapore society . . . [with a focus] on publishing and consultancy works.” It has approximately 400 followers and regularly posts links to Islamic scholarship on religious plurality, tolerance, and interfaith dialogue, all of which are in English (Leftwrite Center 2017). While the group is effectively bilingual in English and Malay, English-language material remains an integral part of the texts it studies and publishes, given the educational profile of most of its members: having been through an English-medium state education, many of them are comfortable with English.⁷⁾ Intellectuals such as Muzaffar and Madjid, as well as organizations such as The Reading Group in Singapore, both reflect, and helped create, a climate in which the articulation of Islamic knowledge in English is acceptable and even desirable.

Part III Characteristics and Significance of English-Language Sufi Devotional Literature

Why should English be understood as a Cosmopolitan Vernacular in the sense that Pollock characterizes it? Pollock’s study of the relationship between Sanskrit and various South Asian vernaculars is concerned with “. . . not only how the vernacular reconfigures the cosmopolitan, but how the two produce each other in the course of their interaction” (Pollock 1998, 7). This is an accurate description of the manifold interactions between English and Arabic in the texts I analyze in this section. Building on Pollock’s insights, Ricci characterizes Islamic texts as being “written and rewritten in local languages” (in the case of Singapore, English, Malay, and Tamil) that were “profoundly shaped by the influx of Arabic”: in premodern and colonial Southeast Asia, this manifested itself in the numerous Arabic loanwords and syntactical changes to the Malay language in the production of Islamic texts (Ricci 2011, 3, 15). The linguistic composition of the sources examined here reveals that in contemporary Singapore, Arabic is used in conjunction with another *lingua franca*: English. These texts juxtapose English, Arabic, and transliterations of Arabic in the Roman script, evincing the continuity of Arabic’s function as a *lingua franca* that underwrites “a common repository of images, memories, and meanings that in turn fostered a consciousness of belonging to a trans-local community” (*ibid.*, 3). In other words, Arabic functions as a shared language with an accompanying idiom that connects the transnational Muslim *ummah* through its use in a canon of Islamic texts, what Ricci calls a “shared literary network” and Pollock calls “sociotextual communities” (Pollock 1998, 9; Ricci 2011, 6).

7) Personal communication, June 2011.

I would argue that English has come to occupy a similar role as Arabic in the transmission of Sufi knowledge, while functioning in conjunction with Arabic. I would further posit that the relationship between Arabic and English is essentially diglossic: Arabic carries more weight, but both are used to powerful effect (Ricci 2011, 14). This finds expression in the multilingual character of the texts examined here. In them, English functions as a Cosmopolitan Vernacular, though not strictly in the sense that Pollock uses in relation to Sanskrit. English is deployed in juxtaposition to Arabic, to clarify and annotate the sanctity of the Arabic text of the *sunnah*. The Arabic original remains inviolate: the English frames it, providing a skeleton on which it may rest. It helps vernacularize Islamic knowledge, to the extent that it exposit the original Arabic, which many readers may have only an incomplete and partial understanding of. As a Singaporean vernacular, and a first language for many Singaporeans, English supports Arabic in transmitting Sufi knowledge; in doing so, it takes on the cosmopolitan functions of a *lingua franca*.

Devotional Literature Complementing Communal Rituals

Most commonly, Sufi devotional literature functions as a devotional guide in a ritual, communal context, such as *dhikr*, in which one might use a printed *ratib* to follow the recitation. According to my observations of the *dhikr* of various *turuq*, Rozehnal's description of the Chistiyya-Sabiriyya's use of devotional literature is applicable to Singapore. These materials are best understood as the discursive tradition of a *tariqa*, integral to the maintenance of spiritual/ritual discipline, which link *muridin* to a "sacralized Islamic past and [which] sacralizes the living present" (Rozehnal 2007, 129). They are used as sources of clarification and reinforcement in conjunction with a shaykh's teaching and guidance from fellow *muridin*, functioning as "a constant, renewable source of supplementary knowledge and insight" (*ibid.*, 162–166). Reading a text privately can also be an extension of the shaykh-*murid* relationship, an "act of conversation" between *murid* and shaykh in which questions that the *murid* would otherwise have asked his shaykh are answered in the course of reading (*ibid.*, 165). Presently, *muridin* in Singapore fully recognize the importance of English texts, though without denying the continuing importance of Malay and Arabic and the primacy of the shaykh-*murid* relationship. A Tijaniyya *murid* had this to say regarding English devotional literature:

Printed materials are a strong support and while not obligatory are very helpful—you would need to refer occasionally to the Qur'an, compiled hadith, and the writings, poetry, and sermons of your shaykh. Online and print media makes this a lot easier . . . [English] is necessary for outreach and to acknowledge the age and its people—so they can access and approach knowledge of God. But as always, printed material is just content—it must be coupled with an experienced traveler or

- [The Rātib]
- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1. I seek refuge in God, the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing from the accursed Satan. (5:76; 16:98) <i>Repeat 3 times.</i></p> <p>2. I seek refuge in the complete Words of God from the evil of that which He created. <i>Repeat 3 times.</i></p> <p>3. In the Name of God Who causes no harm to come together with His Name from anything whatsoever on earth or in heaven, for He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing. <i>Repeat 3 times.</i></p> <p>4. In the Name of God, Most Merciful, Most Compassionate; there is no Power and no Strength save in God, Most High, Most Great. <i>Repeat 10 times.</i></p> <p>5. In the Name of God, Most Merciful, Most Compassionate. <i>Repeat 3 times.</i></p> <p>6. In the Name of God, in God do we find security; In the Name of God, in God do we trust. <i>Repeat 3 times.</i></p> <p>7. In the Name of God, in God do we have faith; And whoever has faith in God no fear shall come upon him. <i>Repeat 3 times.</i></p> <p>8. Glory be to God, to Him belongs Might; Glory be to God, to Him belongs Majesty. <i>Repeat 3 times.</i></p> <p>9. Glory be to God, and praise be to Him; Glory be to God, the Great. <i>Repeat 3 times.</i></p> <p>10. Glory be to God, Praise be to God, There is no Deity but God, and God is Most Great. <i>Repeat 4 times.</i></p> | <p>11. O One Who is Most Kind to all His creatures, O One who is Omniscient of all His creatures, O One who is Most Informed of all His creatures, Be kind to us, O Most Kind One, O All-Knowing One, O Most Informed One. <i>Repeat 3 times.</i></p> <p>12. O One Who is Most Kind, Who never ceases to be kind, Be kind to us in what befalls us, You are indeed the Most Kind Who never ceases to be kind, Be kind to us and all the Muslims. <i>Repeat 3 times.</i></p> <p>13. There no Deity but God. <i>Repeat 40 times.</i>
Muhammad is the Messenger of God. <i>(Once)</i></p> <p>14. God is sufficient for us, and most excellent Manager of our affairs. <i>Repeat 7 times.</i></p> <p>15. O God! bestow Blessings upon Muhammad, O God! bestow Blessings upon him, and Peace <i>Repeat 11 times.</i></p> <p>16. I seek forgiveness from God. <i>Repeat 11 times.</i>
I am repentant to God. <i>(Thrice)</i></p> <p>17. O God! (grant me to die) by it—
O God! (grant me to die) by it—
O God! (grant me to die) by a goodly ending. <i>Repeat 3 times.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">[End of the Rātib]
*****</p> |
|--|---|
- 1213

Fig. 1 Sayyid Muhammad Naqib al-Attas. 2007. *The Rare Gift and the Key to Opening the Door of Union*, pp. 12–13. Singapore: Ba'Alawi Mosque.

guide on the spiritual path who can give context to the seeker, how all this material applies in their daily life and struggles, whether in English, Malay, Arabic, Mandarin, or Zulu.⁸⁾

The supporting role that English text plays is evident in the *Ratib al-Attas*, a slim volume distributed by the Ba'Alawi *tariqa* for its weekly *ratib* recitations and available in both English and Malay versions, which clearly stipulates that the text be recited in transliterated Arabic (in Roman characters), with clear emphasis on sequentiality and oral enunciation (see Fig. 1). Notably, an English translation is provided throughout. Another way devotional literature is used is as a reference for personal *dhikr*. One such example would be *The Evening Wird* (pl. *awrad*), a text used by a small *tariqa* known as the Nur Ashki Jerrahi community in Singapore, which juxtaposes an interlinear Roman transliteration of Arabic and English translation of Arabic against the Arabic text itself (without the text broken up for easy recitation, as is evident in the *Ratib al-Attas*), while including instructions on sequentiality and repetition in English (Nur Ashki Jerrahi Community

8) Zhafri Nasser, Tijaniyyah *murid*, interviewed by Lin Hongxuan, Singapore, July 10, 2017.



THE WIRD AL-SHARIF AL-SAGHIR

[Repeat 10 times:]

A'udhu bil-Llahi mina-sh-shaytani-r-rajim

I take refuge in Boundless Loving Reality revealing Itself
in the core of my heart as Allah, and I turn absolutely away from
the principle of arrogance and separation.

[9 times:]

Bismi-Llahi-r-Rahmani-r-Rahim

In the all-embracing name of Allah, Infinitely Compassionate
and Merciful.

[100 times:]

Astaghfiru-Llah

O Allah! Open my heart to receive Your forgiveness.

*Astaghfiru-Llah, Astaghfiru-Llah, Astaghfiru-Llah,**Astaghfiru-Llah al-'Azim alladhi La ilaha illa Hu**Al-Hayyu-l-Qayyum wa atubu Ilayh*

I seek forgiveness for myself and for humanity from Allah
the Magnificent and Sole Reality, Living and Self-Manifesting.
I turn my whole being to Allah

Wa as'alahun-t-taubata wa-l-maghfirata wa-l-hidayata

and beg for complete acceptance, forgiveness, and guidance,
Innahu Huwa-t-Tawwabu-r-Rahim

for Allah is infinitely Merciful and accepts all repentance
and spiritual longing.

[3 times:]

Wa'fu 'anna Ya Karim

O Source of all Generosity, erase from our hearts all traces of
error and transgression.

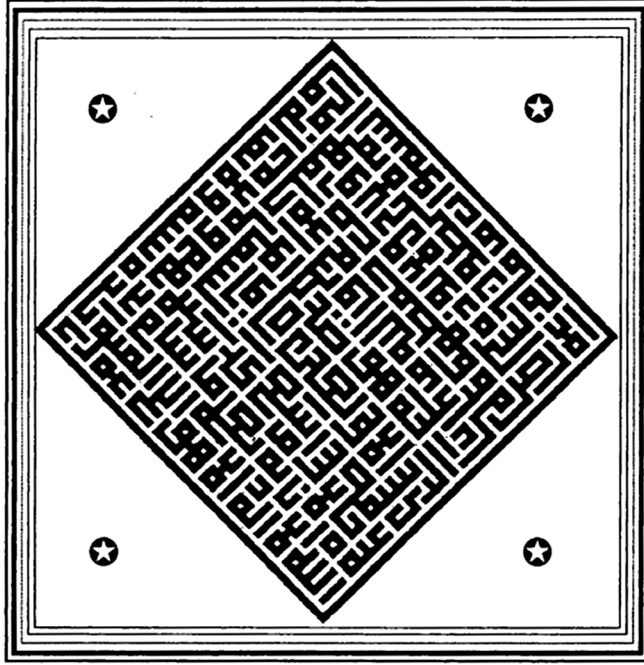
Fig. 2 Nur Ashki Jerrahi Community (anonymous author). 2008. *The Evening Wird of the Illuminated Saint Pir Nureddin al-Jerrahi*, pp. 4–5. New York: Deragh al-Farah.

2008) (see Fig. 2).

Another devotional text used in communal rituals that is circulated in Singapore is *Hizbu-l-Barr: Orison of the Earth*, a formulaic prayer authored by the founding shaykh of the Shadhili *tariqa*, Ali Abu-l-Hasan ash-Shadhdhuli, published by the Virginia-based An-Noor Educational Foundation (affiliated with the Shadhili *tariqa*) and sold in Singapore by Wardah Books (ash-Shadhdhuli 1997). It opens with a geometric pictorial representation of the *Ayatu-l-Kursi* (*ayat* referring to a verse of the Qur'an) in highly stylized Arabic, with a short description of the *ayat* as a gateway to the hidden knowledge of the immanent, divine world and its puissance in fulfilling prayers when recited (see Fig. 3). Once again, Arabic is invoked in its role as the vehicle for the transmission of scripture, and the visual representation of the language itself is associated with the spiritual blessings that come from the message it carries, though the description of the *ayat* is in English and clearly meant for an English-speaking audience in the United States. Arabic is likewise integral to the text of the prayer itself; the text is split into boxed-up phrases (which indicates that it is used as a guide to recitation in a communal, ritual setting) in three



ʾĀyātu-l-Kursī
(2:255)
(see pp 16-17)



Abi Amāma ؓ narrated that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said, "The most magnificent Name of Allāh is sealed within the Verse of the Throne. Whoever calls by it—his prayers will surely be answered." (Abū Dawūd ؒ)

"These two [*al-kursī wa-l-ʿarsh*] are two of the greatest doors (*bābān*) to the Invisible World (*al-ghayb*). They are themselves invisible, and intimately connected in the Invisible; the Kursī is the Hidden Door (*al-bābu-l-bāṭin*) that contains the Knowledge of How, of Existence, of Quantity, of Limit, of Where, of Volition and of the Attribute of Will; it also contains the Knowledge of Words, of Movements and of Immobility, as well as the Knowledge of the Return and of the Origin."

ʾImām Jaʿfar aṣ-Ṣādiq ؑ quoted by Ibn Bābuye, *Kitāb at-Tawḥīd*, Ch. 50

Zamakḥshārī says, "The kursī is no more than an image that expresses the greatness of Allāh ﷻ. In reality (*ḥaqīqah*) there is neither a kursī nor an act of sitting nor any body sitting on it." (Zamakḥshārī, I, p.385)

Fig. 3 ash-Shadhdhuli. 1997. *Hizbu-l-Barr: Orison of the Earth*, edited by A. N. Durkee, p.34. Charlottesville: An-Noor Educational Foundation.

versions: first Arabic, next a transliteration of Arabic, and finally an English translation of the Arabic phrase. Footnotes are included in English where necessary, to explain specific words that are transliterated even in the English translation to ensure fidelity to the complex concept being expressed. The handbook ends with a detailed guide to read-

ing and pronouncing Arabic, which uses the Middle East Studies Association of North America system modified according to Hart's Rules. Evidently the book draws upon Western modes of knowledge in conjunction with English to empower an audience of English-speaking Muslims to recite the prayer in Arabic. This constitutes an excellent example of how English and Arabic interact as *lingua franca*, each empowering the other, and testifies to the trans-regional nature of Islamic literary networks that see such texts being used in Singapore.

Writings of Regional Sufi Shaykhs

Devotional literature used by Singaporean Sufis also includes English-language materials published in South and Southeast Asia and meant specifically for regional consumption by "diasporic" Sufi communities. A good example of Sufi shaykhs' work in circulation in Singapore is *al-Munjiyath*, published by Shaykh Thaika Shuaib Alim of the Aroosiyatul Qadiriyya, a *tariqa* based in Tamil Nadu that has a significant regional presence in Thailand, Malaysia, and Hong Kong (Thaika Shuaib 2008). It was distributed in Singapore during the Sacred Path of Love conference, an annual Sufi conference that brings together regional *muridin* and shaykhs from various *turuq*, held at Masjid Sultan in 2011. Interestingly, the book opens with a brief English biography of the author on its cover, and the title page has the author's name and credentials as follows: "Afdalul Ulama Asshaikh [ulama and Shaykh] Dr. Thaika Shuaib Alim, B. A. (Hons), M. A., Ph.D."

The choice of language, the transliterations used, and the text's invocation of Western academic credentials indicate that the engagement of Sufis with Western constructions of scholarly legitimacy as well as languages is operative in Sufi literature consumed in Singapore, even while Arabic is invoked to describe Islamic religious credentials such as *ulama* and shaykh. The text of the book itself, however, including the title page, is presented in three languages: English, Arabic, and Tamil, both interlinear and in sections organized according to language. The contents page, for example, is provided first in Tamil then in English, but not in Arabic. This is telling, in that while Arabic clearly remains important (legitimizing and familiarizing the text by invoking the language of scripture), the audience at which this book is targeted is more conversant in vernacular languages such as Tamil and English. Nevertheless, important sections of the book, such as the *tariqa*'s *awrad* and guide to *du'a* (invocation; part of the act of worship), are provided in Arabic as well as in Tamil and English (in separate sections). This illustrates the multilingual character of Sufi texts, a consequence of the changing educational profile of Muslims as well as the willingness of Sufi shaykhs to engage with English as a language of modernity and utility. The *tariqa*'s website for Singaporean *muridin*, Taqwa.sg (Taqwa being a contraction of the *tariqa*'s full name, Tariqatu-l Arusiyyatu-l Qadiriyyah), is also

in English, with Arabic translations appended to most posts, especially on the many occasions when Sufi texts are quoted (Taqwa 2012). It also functions as an online bookstore, distributing physical copies of texts such as *al-Munjiyath*. Clearly, this transnational *tariqa* is comfortable in various languages and media, using them to mutually reinforce each other.

The contents of the book show that it is meant to be used in the context of personal devotion, as well as a guide to mundane issues and problems: the merits of the recitation of various Qur'anic verses are outlined in the first third; the second third is concerned with the elaboration of the *tariqa*'s precepts (such as "Recitals for the Mureeds of Aroosiyatul Quadiriyyah"); and the final third lays out various formulations of *du'a* that, when recited a certain number of times in a particular sequence, address problems such as "[How] To Subdue Anger" (Thaika Shuaib 2008, 12–18). An important qualifier on how this book is used is found in the section titled "A Very Important Note," which reminds readers that "it is not proper to assume that these recitals alone are sufficient to get your intentions fulfilled," attributing agency instead to the grace of God and the guidance of one's shaykh (*ibid.*, 29). Evidently, while such texts function as a permanent link between the *murid* and the accumulated precepts of his/her *tariqa*, they remain in a supporting role to the shaykh-*murid* relationship. English, and in this case Tamil as well, serve as qualifiers of the Arabic text; they ease understanding, but always in deference to the primacy of the original Arabic.

Another example of a regionally circulated text authored by a Sufi shaykh is *Tarbiatul Ushaq* (the training of divine lovers), a collection of the speeches (*malfuzat*) given by Chisti Sabiri Shaykh Muhammad Zauqi Shah, compiled, edited, and translated into English where necessary by his disciples Shaykh Shahidullah Faridi and Shaykh Wahid Baksh Sial (Muhammad Zauqi Shah 2004). This text, like many other Chisti Sabiri texts, has substantial circulation in Southeast Asia, and it is written virtually entirely in English, with Arabic/Urdu words transliterated in Roman characters at selected points. While footnotes and citations are not used, a comprehensive index is included, and advertisements for other English-language A. S. Noordeen publications are appended. Clearly, in the Chistiyya-Sabiriyya the use of English is fully embraced as a necessity, and Western literary techniques of organization as well as business models are adopted in promoting the dissemination of Sufi devotional literature.

Materials Transmitted via Europe and North America

Two other examples of the writings of Sufi shaykhs, this time transmitted via Europe and North America, available at Wardah Books and the Darul Arqam bookstore, are *The Book of Assistance* and *Counsels of Religion*. Both were authored by the prominent

eighteenth-century Yemeni Ba'Alawi Shaykh Abdallah Ibn'Alawi al-Haddad (hereafter Imam al-Haddad) and have been published in the United States by Fons Vitae, a subsidiary of the aforementioned Quilliam Press (al-Haddad 2003; 2010b). Both these texts are almost entirely in English and are obviously targeted at an English-speaking Sufi audience. Several features of these books, however, distinguish them from mere translations and illustrate the supporting role English plays in relation to Arabic.

Both books retain chosen words in transliterated Arabic, such as *hulul*, or incarnation, and *ittihad*, or union (al-Haddad 2010b, 27). *The Book of Assistance* italicizes and provides citations in Roman numerals where Imam al-Haddad quotes from the Qur'an, an example being "Do you think that We created you in vain, and that to Us you will not be returned? [XXIII:115]" (*ibid.*, 32). This suggests that publishers of Sufi literature have appropriated Western literary conventions of organization for expediency as well as to familiarize their products for an English-speaking audience. At the same time, Arabic retains a central position as the original and irreplaceable language of Islamic knowledge transmission and continues to function alongside English and Western literary norms. This is supported by the retention of transliterated Arabic for ritual phrases, clearly meant to be spoken, that are embedded in the book: for example, "when you feel near to your orgasm recite within yourself, without moving your tongue: '*Wa huwa'lladhi khalaqa mina'l-ma'i basharan*' [He it is Who created man out of water] [XXV:54]" (*ibid.*, 57). At the same time, Western conventions that aid the English-speaking reader, such as detailed translator's notes and a glossary, are provided at the end of the book. In *Counsels of Religion*, detailed footnotes and a bibliography are provided for the texts that Imam al-Haddad cites in the course of his writing. These two books are widely circulated among Singaporean Sufis; both books are bestsellers at Wardah Books, and the Ba'Alawi *tariqa* is arguably the most numerous and established in Singapore (Abaza 1997, 62).

Perhaps no other example illustrates the relevance to Singapore of the Sufi appropriation of Western conventions of scholarly legitimacy and languages better than *The Doctrine of the Sufis* by Arthur John Arberry, a translation of the tenth-century Sufi writer Abu Bakr al-Kalabadhi's *Kitab al-Ta'arruf li-madhab ahl al-tasawwuf* (al-Kalabadhi 1994). It was published by an Indian publisher, Kitab Bhavan, and, like R. A. Nicholson's *The Mystics of Islam* and J. Spencer Trimingham's *The Sufi Orders in Islam* discussed earlier, is an example of Sufis appropriating classic studies on Sufism to better represent Sufism to aspirants and *muridin* alike. The reprints of these classic studies are meant to enhance accessibility or familiarity—Arberry's English-language translation of the text is certainly more accessible than the Arabic original for Singaporean readers—as well as a means of invoking the prestige associated with an English-language scholarly work on Sufism. Furthermore, the fact that a classic study of Sufism, with detailed footnotes and

all the other conventions of academic works, was published in New Delhi and distributed in Singapore attests to the transnational literary network of Sufi literature that Singapore participates in as well as the prestige of English as a pedagogical medium for Singaporean Sufis.

A related example is *The Mantle Adorned*, a translation of Imam Busiri's *Burda* (a poetic ode of praise for the Prophet), which juxtaposes each Arabic line of the poem against an English translation but also provides an accompanying English quote to each line—these quotes vary greatly in provenance, ranging from classical Sufi shaykhs such as Rumi to French *littérateurs* such as Victor Hugo (Abdal Hakim Murad 2009) (see Fig. 4). This is a text clearly directed at a Western audience, sometimes appropriating Western sources for both familiarity and prestige, printed to aesthetically resemble an illuminated manuscript, yet using English in conjunction with Arabic. The structuring of this text to suit Western sensibilities and increase its marketability evinces the appropriation of Western business and literary norms; at the same time, however, the Cosmopolitan Vernacular of English, in its role as a *lingua franca* connecting a global *ummah*, is clearly at work in conjunction with Arabic.

Materials Produced in Singapore

Sufi devotional literature produced in Singapore and targeted at a local audience also evinces the use of English as a Cosmopolitan Vernacular. *Taqwa and Knowledge*, a translation of the first two sections of Imam al-Haddad's *al-Nasaih al-Diniyyah*, was produced by The Islamic Texts for the Blind (Kitaba), a charitable Muslim organization from Britain that sold *Taqwa and Knowledge* as a fund-raiser. *Taqwa and Knowledge* contains a foreword by the prominent Ba'Alawi Shaykh al-Habib Hasan al-Attas, and the book was sold as a fund-raiser in Singapore. *Taqwa and Knowledge* is largely in English, but on the many occasions where Imam al-Haddad cites Qur'anic *ayat* in which the passive voice of God is invoked, the Arabic text is provided with an English translation below it. By contrast, *ayat* that are attributed to other characters, such as those of Jacob in *surat Yusuf* [Qur'an 12: 101], are provided without the accompanying Arabic (al-Haddad 2010a, 10). Clearly, Arabic remains closely associated not just with the Qur'an as a text but with divine revelation; it is subtly invoked as the language of God. English is used in this text in a diglossic relationship with Arabic; both are necessary to convey the message, but one has clear precedence over the other, even though English is the primary medium of transmission here.

Another locally produced text, the aforementioned *The Grand Saint of Singapore*, is a hagiography of the nineteenth-century Singaporean Sufi Shaykh Habib Nuh bin Mohammad al-Habshi, published by a local mosque and clearly targeting a local audience

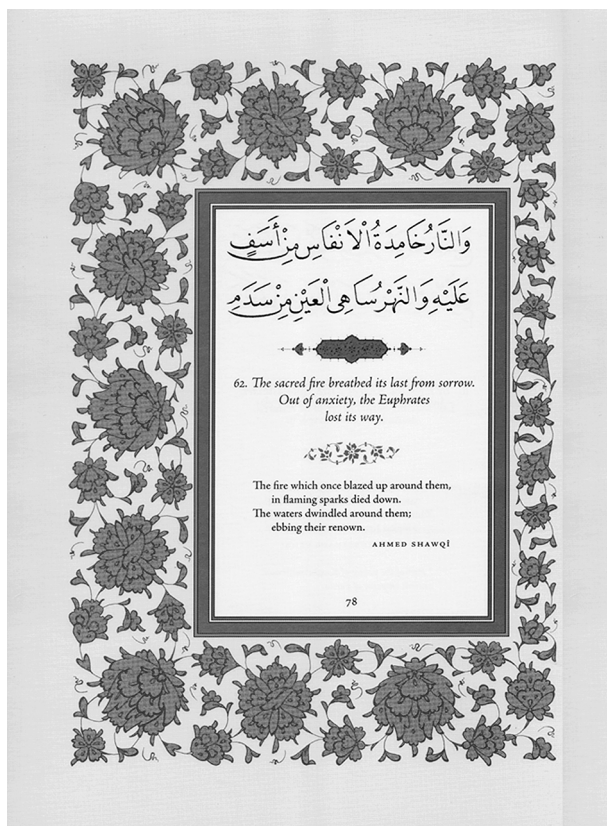


Fig. 4 Abdal Hakim Murad. 2009. *The Mantle Adorned: Imam Busiri's Burda*, p. 78. London: The Quilliam Press.

(Muhammad Ghouse 2008). In its many prefaces and forewords, it juxtaposes the original Arabic of the *ayat* against an English translation; the actual hagiography, however, apart from an Arabic *ayat* left untranslated at the end of each chapter, is entirely in English. The particular usage of Arabic and English in this text suggests that Arabic is invoked as a seal of legitimacy (the relevant analogue here is perhaps the practice of citation in academic writing) while the main message of the text is conveyed, according to the needs of the audience, in English. The use of Arabic *ayat* at the close of each chapter parallels the use of the stylized *Ayatul-Kursi* in the preface to *Hizbu-l-Barr*; it invokes the power of the Qur'an as the repository of God's instructions to man, something intimately connected with the language, Arabic, used to convey those instructions. While acknowledging the pedagogical needs of a diverse *ummah*, these texts never lose sight of the importance of Arabic, and use it comfortably in conjunction with English.

Digital Media

Finally, Sufis' appropriation of the Internet's capacities for disseminating text, audio, and video resources, as well as the organizational capacities it affords them, highlights the importance of English as a vehicle for connecting disparate components of the *ummah* in powerful new ways. Online, English is the undisputed *lingua franca*, and the adoption of English goes hand in hand with digital media. Sufi websites, Facebook groups, mailing lists, and YouTube channels—overwhelmingly in English—collectively amount to a novel form of social attachment for Sufis, which supplements rather than undermines traditional forms of Sufi organization. The Naqshbandiyya-Haqqaniyya are an exemplar of Sufi willingness to use digital media in their service; websites such as SufiLive.com allowed users to stream a video or audio recording of a weekly lecture by the *tariqa*'s senior shaykh, Nazim Haqqani, until his passing in 2014, with past lectures still hosted on the website (SufiLive 2012). The *tariqa*, through its publishing organs, the Islamic Supreme Council of America and the Institute for Spiritual and Cultural Advancement, also publishes transcriptions of these English lectures in print—the SufiLive series (*ibid.*).⁹ These texts are distributed in Singapore by Simply Islam, an affiliate that sells them through its online bookstore, as well as at public events such as the public lecture given by Shaykh Hisham Kabbani in Singapore in 2011 (Simply Islam 2012). Evidently, diverse formats of knowledge transmission are being employed, with online video/audio, printed books, and live lectures mutually reinforcing each other to better convey the Naqshbandi-Haqqani message to the greatest possible number.

The organizational opportunities provided by the platform of the Internet have been enthusiastically taken up by Sufis in general, including the Naqshbandiyya-Haqqaniyya. SufiLive.com itself acts as a community organization resource, by allowing users to donate to the site to pay for its upkeep, and maintaining a regularly updated touring schedule of its major shaykhs. Similarly, Shadhili-Darqawi *muridin* in Singapore participate in transnational conversations with their fellow *muridin* via portals such as the South Africa-based Shaykh Zawia Ebrahim's community page on Facebook (Zawia Ebrahim Community Page 2012). Other *turuq* use the Internet as a platform to host pedagogical text: the Shadhili-Darqawi-Qadiri Shaykh Abdalqadir as-Sufi, whose book *The Hundred Steps* is widely available in Singapore, has made some of his work available in full on third-party websites (Bewley 2012). Simply Islam has also offered explanatory courses on Imam al-Haddad's and Imam al-Ghazali's works (specifically, *Counsels of Religion* and *The Books of Assistance*), which were advertised on the Simply Islam website (Simply

9) An example of a book in this series is Shaykh Muhammad Nazim Adil al-Haqqani, *The Sufilive Series: Spiritual Discourses of a Sufi Master* Vol. 1, ed. Shaykh Muhammad Hisham Kabbani (Fenton: Institute for Spiritual and Cultural Advancement, 2010).

Islam Advertisement 2012a; 2012b; 2012c). These courses are an excellent example of how Sufi texts, media, and praxis are mutually constitutive: a taught course explicating a printed book that was organized and advertised on the Internet, all of which was done in English. English then serves to connect trans-regional communities of Sufis, from Egypt to South Africa to Singapore, from the twelfth century to the present, both online and in person, in a single discursive field. This cosmopolitan function is what drives the publication of English-language Sufi literature, but given the demographic, educational profile, and interconnectedness of Sufis around the world, English has attained the status of a vernacular language both within and outside Singapore.

Other Sufi organizations, such as Sout Ilaahi (Soutilaahi.com), established in 2010, have matured as platforms for the digital propagation of Sufi knowledge and engagement with younger Muslims.¹⁰ The website is entirely in English and hosts various articles, including expositions on Sufi knowledge as well as exhortations encouraging Sufi praxis. It also serves the important function of facilitating and publicizing public events, usually noted scholars or shaykhs conducting workshops or public lectures. A recent example is that of a public lecture held at Masjid Sultan titled “When Adam Met Hawa: The Purpose of Creation” (Sout Ilaahi 2017a), given by Shaykh Mohammed Aslam, an imam from the British city of Birmingham. Sout Ilaahi not only publicizes talks by Anglophone Sufi speakers but also sells tickets to them; powered by Eventbrite, tickets for such lectures may be purchased on Soutilaahi.com, which accepts a range of credit cards. It also includes a “Sponsor the Needy” option, which allows buyers to purchase tickets for those who would like to attend but cannot afford the entrance fee; a key part of Sufi praxis is compassion and almsgiving, which Sout Ilaahi facilitates. Here, Sufi engagement with English and digital media has served as a kind of force multiplier, enabling Sufi networks to project themselves to new audiences while maintaining their traditional sanctity and authority alongside a crisp, professional image.

Sout Ilaahi’s digital platform also serves as a means of structuring a disciplined and committed body of *muridin* across different *туруq*: since early 2017, Sout Ilaahi has disseminated an English-language biweekly digital newsletter via e-mail, titled *Sanctity Within*. This newsletter is disseminated in addition to topical e-mails advertising specific events or celebrating special occasions such as Ramadan. *Sanctity Within* represents unprecedented organizing capacity; where traditional Sufi networks of shaykhs and *muridin* would have been built around specific mosques, family lineages, and personal connections, Sout Ilaahi is able to maintain a recurring psychical presence in the minds

10) Sout Ilaahi grew out of the Sacred Path of Love Facebook community page, which facilitated the eponymous annual conferences in Singapore.

of *muridin* outside of *dhikr* and *hadra*, a direct line of communication to *muridin* that complements traditional forms of Sufi organization. The mailing list keeps up a steady flow of links to articles such as “Volunteerism and the Sacred Path of Love,” an eloquent exposition of the spirit of sacrifice and service to others that is central to Sufi praxis, while soliciting volunteers to help organize the Sacred Path of Love conference (Abu Sofian 2017). Through the mailing list, subscribers may also access resources such as the transcript of a question-and-answer session at the end of a public lecture in 2016 held by a visiting shaykh, Shaykh Adeyinka Mendes of Atlanta, Georgia (Sout Ilaahi 2017b). Through the Sout Ilaahi website and mailing list, aspiring *muridin* may access what amounts to an incomplete but impressive archive of Sufi discourse in Singapore, a digital repository that allows them to benefit from past events that they missed or wish to refresh their memories of. The May 8, 2017 issue of *Sanctity Within* included a link to a transcript of a talk titled “Emptying the Heart: The Power of *Dhikr*” by Professor Zachary Wright, which he delivered in English at the Sacred Path of Love conference retreat in 2011 (Wright 2011). The mailing list also makes possible amplification of Sufi events, as in the following:

Good news everyone! We are going live on Facebook tomorrow with a lecture by Ustaz Amin! InshaAllah Ustaz will be speaking on why Sha’ban matters for our Ramadan. He will also be taking questions from the audience. Do tune in and text your questions to 9140 4532.

Living with the Prophet: Why Sha’ban Matters for our Ramadan
Tuesday, 9 May 2017, 8pm

Watch it at our Facebook page. See you there! (Sout Ilaahi, *Sanctity Within* newsletter, May 8, 2017)

Publicizing Sufi events online is a well-established practice, but the facilitation of the transmission of Sufi knowledge down to the “last mile,” conveyed directly to the individual *murid* digitally in the comfort of his/her home, is a choice example of how Singaporean Sufis have embraced the opportunities afforded by digital media, which is partially predicated on the use of English. Clearly, the organizational opportunities and new modes of knowledge transmission the Internet offers have been enthusiastically appropriated by Singaporean Sufis, who use them in conjunction with more established vectors of knowledge transmission such as printed texts, as well as in new languages that reflect the pedagogical needs of their target audience.

Conclusion

This paper has demonstrated how, for a constellation of reasons, English has become an accepted medium of Islamic discourse, functioning in conjunction with Arabic in a diglossic relationship. By adapting Pollock's framework, English can also be reasonably conceptualized as a Cosmopolitan Vernacular, a framework that helps illumine how English operates in transmitting Sufi knowledge alongside Arabic within a long-standing Arabic cosmopolis. English allows both shaykhs and *turuq* greater reach, facilitates access for *muridin*, and supports the pedagogical shaykh-*murid* relationship across linguistic, ethnic, and geographical boundaries. In Singapore, where actual literacy in Arabic—beyond the ability to recite the Qur'an in it—is rare even within the Muslim community, and many Muslims are comfortable reading English, these texts and resources constitute key elements in both autodidactic and pedagogical processes, reinforcing the relationship between shaykh and *murid* even if both parties are not in physical contact with one another. Moreover, this paper has highlighted Sufi print culture's relationship with English and its adoption of new forms of digital media, examples of how Sufism has perpetuated its relevance in a rapidly changing world. By studying the genesis, characteristics, and functions of English-language Sufi devotional literature circulating in Singapore, this paper makes a small contribution to how Sufism in Singapore is understood in all its spiritual and textual richness. More broadly, this paper sheds light on some of the ways in which Sufism has negotiated the challenges and opportunities presented by new technologies, new languages, new media, and demographic changes within the *ummah*.

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The Is and the Ought of Knowing: Ontological Observations on Shadow Education Research in Cambodia

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This article focuses on the limitations of terms and definitions regarding shadow education research in Cambodia. Although shadow education in Cambodia is typically defined as private tutoring taught by mainstream schoolteachers to their own students, other manifestations of it have been missed by most studies on the subject, including my own. By tracing the terms used and the definitions of shadow education in various research studies, I argue that the assumptions made over terms and definitions (i.e., what *ought* to be the case) limited researchers' understanding of shadow education in its ontological evolution and complexity (i.e., what *is* the case). Methodologically, the unintentional recycling of the same definition across time resulted in the epistemic fallacy and concept reification. These outcomes have profound consequences for how the phenomenon may be theorized not only in Cambodia but across the Southeast Asian region. In conclusion, I propose an alternative approach to study shadow education based on critical realism.

Keywords: shadow education, private tutoring, Cambodia, critical realism, methodology

Introduction

There is a long-standing Western philosophical problem in using descriptive statements (what *is*) to make prescriptive claims (what *ought* to be). But do claims of “what ought to be” limit “what is”? This can happen when erroneous assumptions proliferate. Since all research begins with assumptions, it is vital not to be mistaken.

Some of the most common assumptions in research relate to terminology and definitions. The terms and definitions used by researchers help to manage concepts that are difficult to comprehend. To manage a concept so that it can be studied, the terms and definitions employed in research studies necessarily exclude alternative meanings. As

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such, assigning terms and settling on one definition over another for a given concept is never a neutral process. This struggle over meaning is a central feature of academic debate.

Research on “shadow education” is a case in point.¹⁾ Shadow education can be broadly defined as a collection of educational services that are fee based but not public, mainstream schooling.²⁾ The formation and organization of the phenomenon differ across the globe. Within Southeast Asia, the differences are pronounced. At one extreme are Cambodia, Brunei Darussalam, and Laos, where tutoring is commonly initiated by school-teachers to top up (sometimes substantially) low salaries. In these cases, it is difficult to know when mainstream schooling ends and private tutoring begins. At the other extreme are Singapore, Thailand, and the Philippines, where tutoring has developed into a legitimate and recognized business sector. Students in these countries typically take extra lessons in centers that are organized as for-profit companies, outside the control of education ministries but connected to school curricula and examinations. In Singapore, for instance, 8 out of 10 primary school children attend tutoring (Straits Times-Nexus Link Tuition Survey 2015), and the amount households pay on tutoring increased from S\$650 in 2004 to S\$1.1 billion in 2014 (Tan 2014).

Across the globe people have their own, evolving terms to describe the activities researchers commonly refer to as shadow education. In Japan the dominant form is termed *juku*, in England it is called tuition, and in Cambodia it is labeled *riən kuə*.³⁾ Yet each of these terms misses the complexity of the phenomenon as it is currently understood. There are *juku* for examination preparation and *juku* for remedial study (Roesgaard 2006; Watanabe 2013). There are tuition classes in cyberspace and in everyday life (Ventura and Jang 2010). Both public and private school teachers can teach *riən kuə* classes. As educational spaces evolve and morph into new realities, and as researchers’ understandings deepen, researchers try to refine and add complexity to their terms and definitions.

Yet decisions over the definition of a phenomenon like shadow education often have unintended consequences. One possible consequence of choosing one meaning over

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- 1) I recognize that the term “shadow education” is itself problematic and debated. Nevertheless, I will use it throughout this chapter to describe the body of research that looks at the phenomenon named as such. Although I put the term in quotes at the outset, I will refrain from making similar notations in later uses.
 - 2) The term “private” is also debated between conceptualizations that see it as either a primarily fee-based service or any educational service outside public schooling. I will not address these debates here.
 - 3) The Latin-script rendering of the Khmer script is based on the International Phonetic Alphabet. English translations are my own.

another is the assumption that it accurately captures the phenomenon's existence, its ontology. Another consequence is that operationalized terms and definitions can be normalized and therefore legitimized by future research studies, thus missing possible changes to the phenomenon itself. In these situations, what was excluded from or simply not captured by the definition and term lead to significant gaps in understanding.

This article focuses on the limitations of terms and definitions regarding shadow education research in Cambodia. Although shadow education in Cambodia is typically defined as private tutoring taught by mainstream schoolteachers to their own students (captured by the term *riən kuə*), my experience suggests that many types of *riən kuə* comprising the activities of shadow education have been missed by most studies on the subject, including my own.

The missing terms and definitions in the research literature raise a methodological question: Do terms and definitions used in research studies capture, intentionally or not, only part of the multifaceted phenomenon? By tracing the terms used and the definitions of shadow education in various research studies, I argue that the assumptions made over terms and definitions (i.e., what *ought* to be the case) limited researchers' understanding of shadow education in its ontological evolution and complexity (i.e., what *is* the case). This has profound consequences for how the phenomenon may be theorized. I advocate a critical realist approach to the study of shadow education not only in Cambodia but across Southeast Asia to acknowledge the existence of its reality, whether or not researchers can adequately see, name, or define it.

Changing Terms, Static Definitions

In Cambodia people use the term *riən kuə* to describe what researchers would call shadow education. Like the term *juku* in Japan, however, *riən kuə* can embrace multiple types, which are likely evolving and thus should not be taken as static (see Table 1).

The most common type of *riən kuə* is "regular private tutoring," which is fee-based tutoring in classes taught by mainstream schoolteachers. It is considered "regular" (*thoəmməda:*) because it focuses on the mainstream curriculum and resembles mainstream classes (i.e., class sizes and layouts are like those in mainstream schooling). A less common form of *riən kuə* is "special private tutoring," which covers individual or small group classes taught by a tutor who may or may not be a student's mainstream schoolteacher. These classes cost much more than regular private tutoring classes. Some students have the option of attending and paying for "private tutoring during holidays." These are classes conducted in school or at a teacher's home, and are held

Table 1 Types of Tutoring

Type of Tutoring	Latin-script Rendering	English Translation
រៀន គួរ ធម្មតា	<i>riən kuə tʰoəmməda:</i>	Regular private tutoring
រៀនគួរពិសេស	<i>riən kuə piseh</i>	Special private tutoring
រៀនគួរពេលវិស្សមកាល	<i>riən kuə pe:l vihsa?ma?ka:l</i>	Private tutoring during holidays
រៀនគួរនៅសាលាឯកជន	<i>riən kue niu sa:la: aekəcœn</i>	Private tutoring at private school

by a student's current or future teacher when mainstream schooling is not in session. The last type of *riən kuə*, which appears to be a growing phenomenon especially in city centers, is "private tutoring at private school." This type of *riən kuə* covers tutoring classes of various sorts, held by non-mainstream schoolteachers outside public school buildings, and for some cost. The word "school" in this type of tutoring takes on a broad meaning, from registered tutoring centers as businesses to makeshift classrooms inside university students' homes or apartments. Each type of *riən kuə* has different causal origins, and future evolutions will likely make this artificial categorization obsolete.⁴⁾ Nevertheless, this brief orientation of contemporary *riən kuə* will be useful to the reader going forward.

The transliterated terms I provide above have rarely been used in the English-language research literature. Instead, terms such as private tuition, private coaching, or private tutoring have been used. Quite apart from the loss of meaning when one of these terms is translated into Khmer, it is the evolution of English terminology that interests me here. In this section I trace both the terminology and the definition of the phenomenon referred to broadly as *riən kuə*. I show that the English terminology has changed within and across research studies reported in the English language, while the definition has stayed roughly the same.

One of the first mentions in Cambodia of "private tuition" was in a 1994 *Education Sector Review* (Cambodia 1994). The *Review*'s executive summary stated, "recent surveys suggest that parents pay around R120,000 per annum per primary student for uniforms, *private tuition* and books" (*ibid.*, Vol. 1, 14; emphasis added).⁵⁾ This indicates that the researchers who conducted the cited surveys included "private tuition" as a category of possible household expenses.

4) Indeed, in my fieldwork (Brehm 2015), which occurred after developing the labels for the different types of tutoring presented here, I came across the term *sahlah kuə*. This term means, roughly, the "institution of extra class." This phrase implies a level of institutionalization that the term *riən kuə* does not.

5) The Cambodian currency is the riel. At that time, US\$1 was worth approximately 2,600 riels.

Table 75						
FAMILY (PRIVATE) COSTS OF EDUCATION PER PUPIL PER YEAR (MAIN URBAN CENTERS OF SELECTED PROVINCES), 1993 (IN THOUSAND RIELS)						
	Text- books & Materials	Uni- forms	Contribu- tions to School*	Trans- port	Private Coaching	Total
Primary Schools						
Battambang	20	50	..	..	100	170
Banteay Meanchey	50	50	20	..	..	120
Phnom Penh	50	100	1	..	40	191
Kampot	30	100	..	..	35	165
Kratie	7	36	3	30	..	76
Siem Reap	30	30	2	60	100	222
AVERAGE	31	61	7	45	69	157
Secondary Schools						
Phnom Penh	80	195	7	250	120	652
Svay Rieng	140	135	2	25	..	302
Siem Reap	40	50	3	..	300	393
AVERAGE	87	127	4	138	210	449
Note: .. Nil or negligible.						
Source: Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (1994).						

Fig. 1 Table 75 of 1994 *Education Sector Review*, Vol. 2B

Closer inspection of the data within the *Review* reveals that different terms were used to describe the phenomenon in the two surveys to which the *Review* referred, namely, “private tuition,” “private coaching,” and “private tutoring.” However, both surveys defined the concept in similar ways. In one table, family costs of education per pupil were reported in the main urban centers in six provinces for primary schools and three provinces for secondary schools. The costs were categorized into textbooks and materials, uniforms, contributions to school, transport, and private coaching (*ibid.*, Vol. 2B, Table 75; see Fig. 1). In another table, household expenditures per student were reported from a sample of 126 students and were broken down into different categories: tuition and other charges, books and stationery, private tuition, uniforms, transport, and others (*ibid.*, Vol. 2B, Table 76; see Fig. 2).

Although data reported in the two tables came from different sources, which is likely why there was a slight difference in terminology,⁶⁾ the terms refer to the same phenomenon. A definition of the interchangeable terms can be ascertained in the main body of

6) It is also possible that the vocabulary employed in the *Review* (Cambodia 1994) derived from vocabularies in the authors' home countries.

Table 76							
HOUSEHOLD EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION PER STUDENT, 1994 (RIELS IN THOUSANDS)							
	Tuition and Other Charges	Books and Station- ery	Private Tuition	Uni- forms	Trans- port	Others	Total
Pre-Primary (2)	5.8	1.5	0.0	2.5	0.0	37.5	47.3
Primary (82)	50.4	9.9	18.6	31.0	6.1	7.4	123.4
Lower Secondary (23)	102.5	25.3	46.0	58.9	6.7	8.3	247.7
Upper Secondary (11)	213.9	28.8	82.1	63.3	35.6	0.1	423.8
Higher (8)	112.5	214.3	82.9	230.8	48.8	0.0	689.3
All (126)	77.4	27.2	32.9	51.1	11.4	6.9	207.0
Note: Figures in () refer to number of students in each category.							
Source: Based on a Household Survey conducted by the mission.							

Fig. 2 Table 76 of 1994 *Education Sector Review*, Vol. 2B

the *Review* (*ibid.*, Vol. 2A, 109). In this description, “private tutoring is not, as one might assume, an opportunity for individual students to get special help on material they might not have understood in class. Instead, it constitutes an extension of the regular curriculum offered by the same teacher in the same large group setting—this time with a user fee attached.” Moreover, the report labeled private tutoring as “part [of] the shadow private system” of education (*ibid.*). This description was recycled almost verbatim by subsequent *Reviews* (e.g., Cambodia 1996) as well as in later studies by Mark Bray (e.g., Bray 1996a; 1999), the scholar who has propelled research on shadow education worldwide and who was my PhD adviser. As I will show below, this description has remained the central definition of the phenomenon in the Cambodian context.⁷

Reproducing a case study from the *Review*, Bray (1996a, 16) used the term “private tutoring” to discuss the phenomenon in Cambodia.⁸ He (1999) also used the terms

7) The progression of the static description but changing terminology begins with the 1994 *Review* (Cambodia 1994). It then moves to Bray’s 1996 comparative study of parental and community financing for education in nine East Asian countries, which included Cambodia. In this report, one of Bray’s (1996a) conclusions was that Cambodian households pay a disproportionate amount of money toward education compared to the government in relation to the other countries. This finding prompted Bray (1999) to explore the Cambodian case of private and community financing of education in more detail.

8) Bray (1996a, 32) did, however, use the terms “private supplementary tutoring” and “supplementary out-of-school tutoring” to describe tutoring in countries other than Cambodia.

“supplementary tutoring” (57), “private tutoring” (22), and “private supplementary tutoring” (90) to describe the “shadowy system considered beyond the control and responsibility of government” (90) in Cambodia. Bray (*ibid.*) pointed out that in the Cambodian context, “much of the tutoring is in the students’ own schools and is given by their own teachers” (21).⁹ Although Bray (*ibid.*, 57) acknowledged some “pupils made private arrangements for additional tutoring outside the schools,” tutoring was categorized as an in-school expense. The English terms used by Bray and the authors of the *Review* in Cambodia include “private tuition,” “private tutoring,” “private coaching,” and “private supplementary tutoring.”

Although different combinations of terminology were used from 1994 to 1999, the description of the phenomenon remained relatively constant. Bray (1999) reproduced the description of “supplementary tutoring” in Cambodia in a highlighted box titled “private enterprise in a public system” (22). In this box, which came from the 1996 *Education Sector Review* (Cambodia 1996, 107), “private tutoring” was described as “an extension of the regular curriculum offered by the same teacher in the same large group setting—this time with a user fee attached.” This is identical language to the 1994 *Review* cited by Bray (1996a, 16): private tutoring “constitutes an extension of the regular curriculum offered by the same teacher in the same large group setting.” Despite the variable terminology in all the reports mentioned thus far, the descriptions of the actual concept remained nearly identical. The terminology and description used in the *Review* (Cambodia 1994) were not only reproduced by Bray’s (1996a; 1999) two studies but also were repeated and reused by various authors over the next 15 years.

Before looking at some of these studies, it is important to situate the evolution of terms in their historical context. The historical beginnings of the various terms can be traced, in part, to a separate study by Bray (1996b) for UNESCO’s International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century in which he discussed “a general shift in the centre of gravity towards greater private ownership, financing and control of schools” (i).¹⁰ Although this report was not about Cambodia per se, it did show Bray’s own process of coming to understand the concept of shadow education and the various terms (and metaphors) that could be used to label it. It also suggests that the concept of shadow education was implicated in the school privatization processes that became pop-

9) This contrasts with the typical way Bray (1999) categorized tutoring as an out-of-school expense for families in other countries.

10) The evolution of these ideas in Bray’s work can be traced to various locations, including his reports on Cambodia (1995a), Lao PDR (1995b), and Bhutan (1995c), and an earlier paper on the challenges to fee-free education in poor countries (Bray 1987). These ideas were also undoubtedly influenced by the nascent literature on shadow education in other contexts being published at the time (e.g., Marimuthu *et al.* 1991; George 1992; and Stevenson and Baker 1992).

ularized within various development organizations and international financial institutions during the 1990s.¹¹⁾

Bray continued his Cambodian research with another study a few years later. Bray and Bunly (2005) built on Bray's (1999) study to focus on household costs at the primary and lower secondary levels. The latter grades were unexplored in the earlier study. In the 2005 iteration, supplementary tutoring was described as in earlier studies, and the terminology was again multiple. Bray and Bunly (2005) used "supplementary tutoring" (11), "private tutoring" (75), and the "shadow system" which operates "alongside the mainstream" (40). The description of these various terms remained nearly identical to those in 1994, 1996, and 1999: "in Cambodia, much of the tutoring is in the students' own schools and is given by their own teachers" (*ibid.*, 11).

The relative stability in the description of "private tuition," "private tutoring," "private coaching," and "private supplementary tutoring" from the 1994 *Review* to Bray and Bunly's (2005) study, which may be an outcome of the relatively short time frame and similar authors across the studies, was normalized and legitimized by later studies. In its 2007 report on informal fees to education, the NGO Education Partnership (NEP) wrote of "private tutoring" with the occasional use of "extra tutoring" (NEP 2007, 17, 26). Similar but not identical to Bray and Bunly's (2005) formulation, the NEP classified tutoring into two types: teachers who "conduct private classes" do so either (1) "on the school premises" and therefore for their own students; or (2) "in private classrooms set up in the community" and therefore open to all students (16). The report went on to state that private tutoring was "often a continuation of the public curriculum rather than supplementary" (*ibid.*, 16), thus disputing—but not elaborating on—one of the key terms used in previous studies. There may have been small revisions and challenges to the terminology used to describe the phenomenon, but the description of "private tutoring" in the NEP report was similar—if not identical—to the 1994 *Education Sector Review*.

Walter Dawson (2009) was the first to problematize explicitly the terminology used in shadow education research in Cambodia. The data collected by Dawson in 2008 set out to "re-examine the findings" of earlier studies on shadow education in Cambodia (*ibid.*, 55). He preferred to use the terms "private tutoring" and "shadow education,"

11) Bray's (1996b, 4) study included a matrix that separated the nature of curriculum into either mainstream or alternative, and the nature of schools into elite, standard, second-chance, or supplementary. In the discussion of supplementary private schools Bray included "tuition" or "private tutoring." Bray wrote that some supplementary private schools "shadow the public system and provide tuition in the same subjects as mainstream schools" (*ibid.*, 20). Moreover, "the scale of private tutoring causes official embarrassment in so far as it reflects shortcomings in the public system and can be a heavy burden on household incomes" (*ibid.*). In this report therefore, the terms "supplementary" and "shadow" already appeared alongside "private tutoring."

and critiqued some of the other terms used in earlier studies. When citing data from a government report from 2005, Dawson noted (*ibid.*, 57) its problematic use of “remedial tutoring” as a category of unofficial fees. He went on to explain how tutoring in Cambodia is neither supplementary (because much of it completes the national curriculum), echoing the NEP (2007) study, nor remedial (because high-achieving students attend just as often as low-achieving students).

Despite his critique of the different terms used to describe shadow education in Cambodia, Dawson nevertheless employed the same description as the 1994 *Education Sector Review*: “This form of shadow education wherein state teachers conduct private tutoring for their own students is well documented by Bray and not unusual to find in many developing countries . . .” (Dawson 2009, 51).

The description used by Dawson (2009) included the phrase “This form of” without exploring alternative forms. In a later article comparing shadow education in Japan, Korea, and Cambodia, Dawson (2010) again suggested that there were multiple forms of tutoring. In the section on Cambodia (*ibid.*, 20), he qualified the term “private tutoring” with the phrase “this brand of,” like the phrase “much of” used by Bray (1999, 21) and Bray and Bunly (2005, 40). Since Dawson did not explain other “brands of” tutoring within the Cambodian context, I read this phrase as drawing a comparison to the tutoring practices in the other two countries. What he did not do, in other words, was suggest there were different “brands of private tutoring” *within* Cambodia. This is particularly surprising given that Dawson (2010) discussed the many types of *juku* in the section on Japan (16).

A 2011 study by William Brehm, Iveta Silova, and Mono Tuot (2012; also, Brehm and Silova 2014) continued the trend of challenging terminology while describing the phenomenon as teachers who tutor their own students. Brehm and Silova (2014) described private tutoring thus: “Before or after attending the required four or five hours of public school each day, many students receive, and pay for, extra instruction [by their own teacher]” (95). Brehm *et al.* (2012) offered the term “hybrid education” in their discussion on “shadow education” and “supplementary tutoring” (14–16). This concept was defined simply as public, mainstream education plus “complementary tutoring,” which was defined as the type of tutoring where teachers tutor their own students. Although they preferred the term “complementary tutoring” to “supplementary tutoring” because, echoing Dawson’s work, the former includes “lessons that are essential [and not extra] to the national curriculum” (*ibid.*, 15), they continued to use the common description of tutoring since 1994 that focused on teachers who “conduct private tutoring lessons with their own students after school hours either in school buildings or in their home” (*ibid.*, 16). Moreover, the authors argued that the hybrid system “casts a shadow

of its own" (*ibid.*, 15), meaning other forms of tutoring (e.g., "remedial and/or enrichment education opportunities" [*ibid.*]) existed because of this hybrid system. They highlighted the different types of tutoring in a table (*ibid.*, 16). The private tutoring commonly referred to in past studies was labeled "extra study" (with an incorrect Latin-script rendering of the Khmer script as *rien kuo*). They then offered other types of tutoring (and their English translations), such as "extra study during holidays," "extra special study" (i.e., individualized tutoring), "private (tutoring) school," and "English/French extra study." Each was a different type of tutoring conceptualized into two broad categories: "hybrid education" and "shadow education."

Despite the expansion in their description of hybrid education and its shadow, Brehm *et al.* (2012) limited their study to "the differences and similarities between private tutoring (*Rien Kuo*) and government school classes" (17). In other words, they continued to study *rien kuə* exactly as it had been historically described in the Cambodian context, neglecting its other forms despite recognizing their existence. Although they questioned the terminology used in shadow education research in Cambodia just as the NEP (2007) and Dawson (2009) had, Brehm and colleagues focused on one type of the phenomenon when collecting data.

This historical look at past research studies of *rian kuə* in Cambodia shows two things. First, the terminology used to describe the phenomenon has changed greatly over the years. The terms private coaching, private tutoring, private tuition, supplementary tutoring, shadow education, extra study, etc., have all been used. Second, the description of these various terms has stayed relatively similar over time. That description is of tutoring given by schoolteachers to their own mainstream school students. Although the different authors recognize other forms of tutoring, rarely are they elaborated. Because of the similar descriptions of the phenomenon, all the research studies have used a similar core definition when collecting data, limiting what is *rian kuə* to what it ought to be.

The Epistemic Fallacy and Concept Reification

Despite the changing terms, the similar descriptions of *rian kuə* employed in the various research studies reduced descriptive claims of what is to prescriptive claims of what ought to be. The alternative realities were, in other words, reduced to the definitions employed in data collection methods. Methodologically, the unintentional recycling of the same definition across time resulted in the epistemic fallacy and concept reification.

The epistemic fallacy (Bhaskar 1975) is the confusion over how researchers know

things with whether those things exist. The quintessential epistemic fallacy is perhaps best captured by Descartes' (1637/1960) famous saying, "I think; therefore, I am." In this example, it is implied that the ability of a subject to think about itself constitutes the self in reality. In effect, Descartes' existence depends on his ability to think, thus "reduc[ing] reality to [his] knowledge of it" (Dean *et al.* 2005, 8). This is a fallacy because Descartes' physical self exists whether or not he can actually think about it. In terms of Western philosophy, which underpinned all the studies discussed in the previous section, research that commits the epistemic fallacy assumes that epistemology comes before ontology. This is analogous to believing that *riən kuə* exists only in the form that has been empirically captured by researchers.

The second problem of concept reification is the process of taking an abstract concept and turning it into a concrete reality. Shadow education is an abstract concept because the manifestations of its material reality—*juku* in Japan, tuition in England, or *riən kuə* in Cambodia—are different depending on space, place, and time. Moreover, the material realities of *juku*, tuition, or *riən kuə* are ever changing and therefore require constant revision to terms, descriptions, and definitions. Yet, through the research process where concepts are clearly defined and then operationalized in data collection instruments, the concept of shadow education necessarily goes from being an abstract concept to being a real thing that can be measured and described. The main problems with concept reification are that reified concepts may incorrectly or only partially capture material reality, and the reuse of the same reified concept in later studies decontextualizes the phenomenon from its material reality in specific spaces, places, and times.

To show these two problems in the research, it is necessary to look closely at the methods employed in the various studies on shadow education in Cambodia. What becomes clear across the studies is that the preferred method of data collection has been the survey, often supplemented with interviews and focus groups. It is within the surveys that the constant definition of *riən kuə* is used and reused. It is precisely here where concept reification and the epistemic fallacy emerge.

Survey research is the quintessential data collection method that reifies concepts. Surveys must operationalize terms—that is, the process of measuring a concept that is not directly measurable—for data to be collected. In survey research, questions are asked to obtain empirical, measurable data that are said to define (often by proxy) an abstract concept. For example, measuring the amount of money students pay teachers for tutoring classes can operationalize the concept of private tutoring. Another possibility for operationalizing private tutoring is to measure the attendance of students in tutoring classes. Still a third way is to simply ask students, parents, or teachers whether private tutoring exists. In these cases, operationalizing essentially takes a concept and reifies

it; it assumes one definition and therefore not another, and subsequently operationalizes the assumed definition by asking one set of questions and not another.

Operationalizing terms, however, is a necessary part of survey research. Bray and Bunly (2005, 28) rightly point this out: "Surveys need to set clear definitions and then to communicate those definitions to all relevant people." A necessary consequence of setting clear definitions is the exclusion of other possible definitions. For example, defining private tutoring as fee-based classes taught by mainstream schoolteachers and then asking students about that may provide descriptive information on this topic, but it certainly will not provide descriptive information on the classes for which students pay (or not) that are taught by teachers other than their own mainstream schoolteachers. As such, to assume *riən kuə* is captured completely by a set of survey questions reduces the reality of its existence to the knowledge produced by the survey, thus committing the epistemic fallacy.

The 1994 *Education Sector Review* reported data on private tutoring and private coaching from two different surveys (Cambodia 1994). The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and the development mission in charge of writing the *Review* conducted the two surveys. In effect, the surveys captured what the people constructing the surveys knew at one moment in time. From the two tables where private tuition/coaching are reported, it can be inferred that the surveys operationalized household expenditures into various categories. Private tuition/coaching was one such category. When the survey was carried out, respondents could respond to questions about money spent on private tuition/coaching. As such, private tutoring was operationalized by the amount of money respondents reportedly spent on private tuition/coaching.

The 1994 *Review*'s definition of private tutoring/coaching was used and reused in later studies. Although it is possible that surveys used in other studies asked questions about different types of tutoring, all the studies reported data on one (or possibly two in the case of Bray and Bunly 2005) type(s) of tutoring. In effect, the phenomenon was reduced—or flattened—to one understanding. The 1994 description of private tutoring, which captured one moment in time, became trans-historical as it was applied in and reported by subsequent studies. Consequently, what existed was what was seen, thus committing the epistemic fallacy. Alternative definitions of private tutoring were excluded even if other types of tutoring were alluded to.

Some of the studies used mixed methodologies to collect data. These studies can mainly be categorized as sequential explanatory design mixed methods (Creswell *et al.* 2003). In these types of studies, quantitative data are typically collected before qualitative data:

The rationale for this approach is that the quantitative data and their subsequent analysis provide a general understanding of the research problem. The qualitative data and their analysis refine and explain those statistical results by exploring participants' views in more depth. (Ivankova *et al.* 2006, 5)

Sequential explanatory design mixed method empirical studies collect data through a survey and then explore that data in greater depth vis-à-vis public opinion interviews or focus groups. The latter provide qualitative details to the former descriptive statistics, and not vice versa.

Sequential explanatory mixed method studies have been the favored approach in shadow education research in Cambodia. Data in Bray's (1999) study, conducted in two iterative phases in 1997 and 1998, "were collected through questionnaires and follow-up discussion with personnel from nine schools in each location," which were based on a previous study in Bhutan (37). Discussion workshops were also organized with parents after questionnaires were administered. The notes from the workshop discussions, which were translated into English, were used "to supplement the data contained in the questionnaires" (*ibid.*, 37). In phase two of the study, the questionnaire was revised based on the first phase of data collection and administered in the same manner. In addition, four case studies were conducted in the second phase. Bray and Bunly (2005) used a similar method to Bray (1999): school surveys followed by focus group discussions, followed by "in depth interviews with pupils for information validation" (Bray and Bunly 2005, 32). Similarly, the NEP's (2007) study used a structured questionnaire followed by focus group discussions. The latter "provided more qualitative information about informal payments and explored in more depth public opinion and perception" (*ibid.*, 9). In Dawson's (2009) study, a sample of "primary school teachers . . . completed a written questionnaire after which they participated in a 60–90 minute focus group interview" (57). In each case, quantitative data collection preceded qualitative data collection. The one exception is the study by Brehm and colleagues (Brehm *et al.* 2012; Brehm and Silova 2014) where qualitative data (focus groups and observations) were conducted concurrently with quantitative data collection (grade tracking), while no survey was carried out. Nevertheless, problems remain in Brehm and colleagues' work where the definition of private tutoring was assumed without question. In effect, the authors were only looking for one type of tutoring without realizing that other types might have existed.

In all the studies, alternative definitions to *riən kuə* were excluded through the very research methods employed. The sequential explanatory design mixed methods used by most of the studies limited the definition of shadow education to one or two types, which were operationalized by questions in the surveys. When data were reported, the research studies privileged one definition of private tutoring to the exclusion of possible

alternatives, even if the researchers themselves knew other types of tutoring existed. The abstract concept of private tutoring was therefore reified in the research literature to one specific type, with only slight variations over time.

Qualitative research in combination with survey research has the potential to overcome some of the inherent problems of survey research, namely, the impossibility of managing context (Burawoy 1998). That the definition of shadow education employed in data collection methods stayed relatively consistent over two decades of research suggests, however, that the qualitative side to the various studies never truly informed the surveys, at least in terms of the definition of the central concept under investigation. It is this methodological shortcoming that has reduced the many meanings of private tutoring to one definition, thus blinkering researchers from employing alternative definitions to capture other facets of the phenomenon within the Cambodian context. In this way, all the research studies committed the epistemic fallacy because they assumed reality was what could be seen and measured through surveys.

This is not to suggest that surveys should not be used in research. Surveys have real value due to their ability to describe certain concepts at one moment in time. However, without historical understandings of the sociocultural structures informing the construction of surveys, researchers are prone to commit the epistemic fallacy and reify concepts that may be fleeting, elusive, and evolving. An alternative starting point assumes reality is more than researchers can empirically observe. It is to this alternative that I now turn in the conclusion.

Conclusion

Whatever terms and definitions are settled upon dictate how researchers *see* and *know* the world, knowingly or not. Words and their meanings are the building blocks for theory, or what Western philosophers call epistemology. Moreover—and perhaps harder to grasp—the assumptions made over terms and definitions presuppose a general account of the world, or what Western philosophers call ontology. Terms and definitions not only help social scientists *see* the world by giving meaning but also help *construct* the world.

The history of shadow education studies in Cambodia highlights the dangers of assuming and operationalizing definitions. By limiting the definition of shadow education reported in various studies, researchers likely missed myriad experiences students had with tutoring. This was evident in Brehm *et al.*'s (2012) table of the different types of tutoring, most of which were different from the common definition of tutoring dating from the *Review*'s 1994 definition (Cambodia 1994). Although there were changes in terminol-

ogy used to describe shadow education, such as the experiences in Japan and England, the surveys conducted across the studies in Cambodia did not allow for alternative realities to exist. As I attempted to show, it was not only survey research that limited the definitions but also more qualitative-oriented studies (e.g., Brehm and Silova 2014). By operationalizing one (or two) definition(s) of private tutoring into the various surveys, reality was flattened to only what was seen at one moment in time.

There is an alternative research paradigm that conceptualizes reality as stratified. Critical realism begins with the assumption that reality is more than what can be empirically seen. Reality is not limited to experiences but also includes sociocultural structures that do not have a material reality but nevertheless affect human agency through emergent properties. From this critical realist perspective, reality is stratified and not flat. As such, critical realism differentiates reality into three ontological levels.

The first level is the empirical. This is what researchers observe in daily life. It is precisely at this ontological level where the surveys employed in shadow education research in Cambodia exist. The various surveys could capture an empirical reality of a sample of individuals within a specific moment in time. For example, the surveys captured descriptive statistics such as the percentage of students attending one type of private tutoring, the typical cost of one hour of tutoring, the subjects commonly taught during private tutoring, and parental and teacher perspectives on why the classes were held. Critical realists argue this level of reality is true, but that there are likely other empirical realities from other people at the same moment (or different moments) in time that are also true but simply not captured by the research study. This is where the second ontological level exists.

The second level is the actual. This is the “sum total of events that can be said to have taken place” (Graeber 2001, 52). Although all experiences within the actual may not have been observed by a single actor, it is conceivable to accept the premise that experiences other than one’s own could in fact have occurred and could have been observed given different spatiotemporal configurations. For example, students may have attended private tutoring classes taught by teachers other than their own prior to 2005 when Bray and Bunly (2005) first reported data on this type of tutoring. Bray (1999) implied this in his use of the phrase “much of.” This implies that the ways in which researchers know are relative and socially produced: each person experiences different empirical realities, which then change how he or she knows something to be “true.” The level of the actual suggests that ontology exists whether researchers understand reality or not. As such, critical realists argue epistemology does not precede ontology but rather succeeds it.

The third ontological level is the real. This is the level of powers, mechanisms, and

potentialities of what may or may not happen and which are irreducible to (patterns of) events. Whereas the levels of the empirical and actual are concerned with “events, states of affairs, experiences, impressions, and discourses,” the real is concerned with “underlying structures, power, and tendencies that exist, whether or not detected or known through experience and/or discourse” (Patomaki and Wight 2000, 223). It is in the level of the real where “a sense of reaching for deeper” explanations of the world appear through “the latent or invisible . . . forces that manifest themselves in everyday life” (Coole 2005, 124). It is at this level that a different conception of causation emerges. Causation is not a correlation between two or more empirical occurrences, but rather an understanding of the historical mechanisms and structures that make what exists possible. This requires more than empirical data that can describe the empirical and actual levels of reality. At the level of the real, social scientists “attempt to identify the relatively enduring structures, powers, and tendencies, and to understand their characteristic ways of acting” (Patomaki and Wight 2000, 223). These sociocultural structures are context specific and based on history.¹²⁾

To understand shadow education in Cambodia from a critical realist perspective therefore requires researchers to see it as a system with its own emergent properties and potentials that are irreducible to its constituent parts. Shadow education from this perspective is a social reality created through the interactions of people (students, teachers, parents, government officials, etc.) that embrace or transform (through reflexivity) certain vested interests, opportunity costs, and situational logics that are embedded in social structures and cultural systems (see Archer 2003).

A stratified ontology offers an alternative set of assumptions that can be usefully employed in shadow education research in Cambodia. First, a critical realist approach suggests survey research can inform understandings of empirical reality at certain moments in time, but its explanatory power of the phenomenon is limited. What causes shadow education, therefore, cannot be explained through survey research alone. In addition, placing surveys within the first ontological level of the empirical prevents trans-historicizing data and definitions. Researchers who take a critical realist approach should question definitions used and operationalized in previous empirical studies because the space, place, and time of definitions and terms must be recognized.

Second, qualitative research takes on a different purpose than studies that use sequential explanatory design mixed methods. Whereas the sequential explanatory

12) A critical realist approach has its limitations, too—namely, as one of the reviewers correctly pointed out, the level of the real assumes a transcendent pattern that underpins reality, an assumption challenged by philosophers such as Heidegger and Nishitani. This, moreover, says nothing of philosophical systems developed entirely outside of the West (Connell 2007).

design mixed methods approach places qualitative data collection after or in iteration with quantitative data to provide more depth to the statistical data, a critical realist approach would use qualitative data not only to inform the collection of empirical data through surveys but also to understand the ontological levels of the actual and the real. Regarding the latter, qualitative research keeps open the possibility of multiple empirical realities (i.e., the actual) without artificially limiting reality to one meaning as is necessary in survey research. Thus, during unstructured interviews, for example, an infinite number of definitions of shadow education could theoretically emerge from participants because they are not limited by a clearly communicated definition made prior to data collection by the researchers. This likely occurred in all of the research studies when the researchers first learned about the phenomenon, not through published articles but through interactions with their colleagues on the ground.

Third, a critical realist approach to shadow education research would incorporate theory differently than has previously been the case. Whereas theory has often been used to help make sense of empirical data collected, a critical realist approach uses theory to understand the ontological level of the real while acknowledging the social construction of theory itself. This is because understanding the real, which is where the causal mechanisms of shadow education are assumed to reside, requires an engagement with various types of theory. Since “widely different theories can interpret the same, unchanging world in radically differently ways,” it is necessary for critical realist researchers to recognize that “knowledge is not totally arbitrary and some claims about the nature of this reality may provide better accounts than others” (Patomaki and Wight 2000, 224). As such, research studies from a critical realist perspective begin with an engagement with the ontological level of the real and work “up” to the ontological level of the empirical. Understanding the real can help researchers operationalize definitions and terms in meaningful ways that can then capture empirical reality in specific places, spaces, and times.

Shadow education is a growing topic of scholarly research across Southeast Asia. Two decades of empirical research makes the case of Cambodia an important location where lessons can be found. The case of Cambodia shows that it is important to recognize the limits of meaning inherent in survey research studies that have dominated the literature on shadow education in Cambodia. Moreover, the research on Cambodia shows the importance of researchers broadening their approaches by conducting research with different sets of assumptions than previous research studies have made. One alternative advocated here is to see reality as stratified and not flat. With a stratified ontology, new meanings of reality open new possibilities for shadow education research not only in Cambodia but also across Southeast Asia and beyond. The reality of shadow education

will subsequently overcome what it ought to be.

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Feeding a Crowd: Hybridity and the Social Infrastructure behind Street Food Creation in Bandung, Indonesia

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Based on ethnographic research on street vendors' activities in Bandung city, this article attempts to uncover the production process of street food. Drawing on Simone's (2004) idea of people as infrastructure, the research focuses on street vending activities as a conjunction of heterogeneous activities and modes of production that becomes a platform to support the vendors' livelihood: for example, the ways in which vendors achieve efficiency in street food production. We need to consider, however, the roles of various actors surrounding the street vending activities that directly or indirectly contribute to the production process of street food, as well as the large network that is created as social infrastructure. This network is an outcome of the ability of vendors, for example, to engage in convivial interactions with customers, to create an intimate relationship with food suppliers, and to engage in "a form of labor exchange" with their neighbors. This article argues that such hybrid contributions on the part of street vendors are their efforts to stabilize the network in a fluid and adaptable way that makes a social infrastructure possible.

Keywords: street food, hybridity, infrastructure, social network,
pedagang kaki lima

Introduction

It was a rainy day in the middle of 2015 when I met Mr. Rahmat, whom I have known since I was a student at university in the northern part of Bandung city. While having a tasty bowl of soto ayam Madura,¹⁾ I interviewed him for my ethnographical research about street food vending activities. He has been catering soto ayam Madura for over 10 years. His *pelanggan* (customers) around his vending spot range from university students to employees, most of whom are familiar with his food. As is common among street vendors,

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1) *Soto ayam* is generally translated as chicken and soup full of spices accompanied by white rice. It is cooked in various ways depending on where it originated. For this study, I interviewed a vendor who cooked soto ayam originating in Madura city, East Java Province.

Mr. Rahmat decided to start selling street food after doing many odd jobs in Jakarta. Having only a high school graduation certificate, he got a job as a laborer at a garment factory and subsequently became an *ojek* driver (a motorcycle taxi driver) before joining a group of street hoodlums at a seaport in northern Jakarta. Although he earned enough to support his daily life, he was not able to save enough money for his future. Realizing his previous lifestyle was filled with sin, he finally repented to the Almighty and set about making a pushcart as a means of vending street food.

He was grateful for the strong network of support he had when he started the business. Since he was unable to acquire start-up money or get a loan from the bank to begin his business, his neighbors, acquaintances, and relatives as well as other vendors supported him both financially and practically—for example, his uncle advised him on how to run a soto ayam business. Even now that the business is established, I observed Mr. Rahmat's neighbors voluntarily helping him prepare food at his home. This occupation would be impossible without the street food industry, due to the tight hygiene regulations for established restaurants in fixed premises.

Another interviewee was a sate klatak (skewered grilled beef) vendor whom I knew from university. With a master's degree from design school, currently Mr. Radis works at both a design studio and at the university from which he graduated as a lecturing assistant. Along with two friends, who also graduated from design school and culinary school in the United States, he started a street food business. Inspired by the taste and the unique way of cooking sate klatak by skewering the meat using bicycle spokes, the three decided to emulate the concept in Bandung city. Considering the tight regulations and lengthy time needed to open a formal restaurant, they finally opened a small-scale business that was easy to start without amassing a huge amount of capital. They deliberately chose a street food style using common street vendors' equipment, such as a pushcart, a handwritten banner, and wooden stools to create a modest, cheap, and humble environment. Mr. Radis explained that the differences between street vendors and formal restaurants were in the scale of production and the eating space, and that the main obstacle to starting business in the formal form was the amount of capital required, which was quite unaffordable for him and his partners.²⁾

These two examples of vendors seemingly have a similarity, as they are both among almost 20,000 street vendors in Bandung city. In some ways, however, there are subtle differences among vendors, especially in their background and objective. For instance, in the street vending community in Bangkok, some university students sell street food in order to fund their education, assisted by networks of family and acquaintances

2) Mr. Radis, interview with author, December 11, 2015, Bandung.

(Narumol 2006, 43–44). Interestingly, there has been a growing movement of new entrepreneurs with various purposes and visions starting street food businesses. Narumol Nirathron (*ibid.*, 17) stated that the economic and social contributions of street food vendors were underestimated due to the occupation's image of poverty and marginality; however, the case of street vendors in Bandung contradicts this.

Recognizing the thriving number of street vendors in Bandung with various business plans and intentions, this paper investigates four vendors from diverse backgrounds by focusing on the social networks behind the production process of the food.

Street vendors in Indonesia are mostly categorized in the informal economy sector, at least in the place where this research was undertaken. Consequently, their marginal character might be linked to an image of “informal” businesses, which are unregulated, illegal, outside the scope of the state, or the domain of the poor to survive (Roy 2009, 826). The informality, however, is much more than economic; it can be a mode of space production, with different values attached to the formal and informal spheres (*ibid.*).

To understand activities in the informal sector, for example, the notion of “piracy” might be useful to explain the practices of African urban residents operating resourcefully in under-resourced cities (Simone 2006, 357). This idea can be a starting point to understand the activities of street vending and food creation linked to the idea of “built infrastructures.” Indeed, the idea of infrastructure has commonly been associated with the physical forms shaping the nature of networks, or with the reticulated systems of highways, pipes, wires, or cables facilitating the movement of things in an effective way (Simone 2004, 407; Larkin 2013, 328). However, Simone advocates the idea of “people as infrastructure” to extend the concept of infrastructure directly the people's activity to see the intersection of residents that depended on the ability of people to engage in combinations of practice, person, spaces, and objects (Simone 2004, 408).

In the context of street food creation, the engagement of various people and practices during the process leads to the construction of networks consisting of heterogeneous actors that need to be established and stabilized in order to successfully operate. Because various kinds of people are engaged in vending activities, it is necessary to have a translation of ideas among them to allow the heterogeneity to become building blocks in the daily work of vending.

In order to understand the details of the infrastructure creation process, we need to acknowledge the various ways in which vendors engage with people in the city. We also need to see the multiple ways in which vendors make use of resources and combinations of people with different skills, perspectives, identities, and aspirations (Simone 2006, 357). In this regard, this research draws on the notion of hybridity to consider the process of creation of street food as a vital factor to achieve “people as infrastructure.” Indeed,

the notion of hybridity is nothing new, but it is important to understand that hybridities of ideas and meetings of cultures are an instance of valorization, where it is possible to occur under the construction of adaptability and flexibility as an ability to meet new demands, and to combine experiences and elements of knowledge in new ways (Leach 2007, 109).

Looking for a ceaseless movement by vendors to find new methods of food production, we might consider the term “whirlwind model,” which explains that goods and services have a social life, passing from hand to hand and continually changing during the process (Callon 2004, 9). Each actor involved reconfigures and reshapes them depending on their needs and conceptions. Madeleine Akrich and colleagues postulate that innovation comes from everywhere and progressively transforms through a series of trials and experiments, dealing with theoretical knowledge and know-how (Akrich *et al.* 2002, 212). In other words, the whirlwind model represents innovation as a process of compromise with the capacity of adaptation (*ibid.*, 212–214).

Based on the aforementioned ideas of infrastructure and hybrid communities, in the context of street vendors’ activity studied here I reconsider infrastructure to be not merely physical but also applying to people themselves (Simone 2004, 407). Therefore, focusing on the “conjunction” (*ibid.*, 410) created by the people is important as a platform for social transactions and livelihood. The specific way of how the conjunction operates is constantly negotiated depending on the particular history, needs, and works of the people involved; hence, this conjunction becomes a coherent platform for social livelihood, which attempts to achieve the maximum outcome with minimum effort.

To confirm this idea, I analyze how the collective activities in creating street food, which has various contributors—such as food suppliers who provide affordable goods, neighbors who help with food preparation, and customers who request vendors to modify the food—could stabilize the networks among the people and be utilized as a platform or built infrastructure. Finally, this research emphasizes the informal environment that contributes to the creation of multiple conjunctions. These conjunctions, indeed, become an important factor in achieving an infrastructure through the hybridity of ideas in the street vending activities carried out by heterogonous actors.

Street Food in Indonesia: Past and Present

In 1905 Augusta de Wit, a Dutch anthropologist, wrote in her journal about the daily activities of locals in Batavia:

After the bath, the Javanese proceeds to take his morning meal; and this, again is a public performance. The noon repast—the only solid one in the day—is prepared and eaten at home. But, for the morning and evening meals, the open air and the cuisine of the *warong* are preferred. The *warong* is the native restaurant. There are many kinds and varieties of it; from its most simple and compendious shape—two wooden cases, the one containing food, prepared and raw, the other, a chafing-dish full of live coals, and a supply of crockery—to its fully-developed form, the covered hut. (De Wit 1905, 117)

Over a hundred years ago De Wit wrote a journal about the eating habits of local people in Batavia, which included buying food from street vendors. Street food is still commonly consumed at lunchtime, or even as a quick take-out dinner. It is quickly and easily prepared and served by vendors, and it has become a realistic choice for customers who want to eat out but not in formal restaurants. In this regard, the concept of fast food is not new for Indonesians—it has existed for decades (Forshee 2006, 133).

One of the typical varieties of Indonesian street vendors is the *pedagang kaki lima* (PKL), or “five-legged seller.” The five legs are believed to refer to the three wheels of the cart along with the seller’s two legs (Barker *et al.* 2009, 58). Another explanation of PKL appeared during the Dutch colonial era, when this type of business was commonly found on the sidewalk. At the time the width of the pavement was 5 feet, which in Indonesian is literally translated as *lima kaki* (Hendaru 2013).

Despite the two different definitions behind the label, the term PKL is now used for categorizing all types of vendors selling on the street. Recently it has become common to see signs prohibiting vending activities by the depiction of a pushcart. Even official documents issued by the government use the term PKL to describe every vendor in public spaces.

Historically, during the Dutch colonial era in Indonesia the hierarchical system placed local people, mostly *pribumi* (natives), at the lowest class-rank; consequently, they were able to work only as manual laborers or serfs for a daily wage. In contrast, having the independence to earn and manage their income without the shadow of a patron and having access to Dutch houses and government offices to sell goods, street vendors possessed a higher position than the other natives. People who decided to start a street vending business were regarded with more respect than people who were under the tyranny of the enslavement system (Seruni 2004). Street vendors displayed entrepreneurial values, spreading the spirit of independence among local people.

The situation of street vendors changed dramatically over the years. At one time they were regarded as an eyesore from the point of view of city development, especially during the Suharto period with its policy of Gerakan Disiplin Nasional (National Discipline Movement). During this period there were officers called *penertiban umum*, abbreviated

as TIBUM (public order), who wore uniforms that looked like police officers' and aimed to discipline street vendors by clearing them from particular streets (Barker 1999, 103).

During the financial crisis that gripped Indonesia in 1997, several formal enterprises collapsed, resulting in the termination of an enormous number of workers. Unemployment increased, forcing many people to find alternative sources of income (Bhowmik 2005; Resmi and Untung 2009). The informal economic sector became the choice for many people, because it does not require huge amounts of capital or high levels of education (McGee and Yeung 1977, 101).

Although there are uncountable street vendors spread around the globe, this form of business is still regarded as a vulnerable source of income due to its limited access to social protection, unclear labor rights, and lack of an organization system. Moreover, some countries deny the existence of workers by neglecting them as independent businesses, and the workers often remain unrecognized or unprotected under national law or regulatory systems (International Labour Office 2013, 1).

A few years ago the local government of Bandung city enacted regulations in order to regulate street vendors' mobility and growth in the city. The Peraturan Daerah No. 4 (Municipal act number 4) divides the vending area into three zones: the red zone (which prohibits vending activities at all times), the yellow zone (which allows vending activities during particular times), and the green zone (which allows street vending activities at all times). The Peraturan Daerah No. 4 and Peraturan Walikota No. 571 (Mayoral decree number 571)³⁾ were passed in 2011 and 2014 respectively (Dinas Koperasi UKM dan Perindustrian Perdagangan Kota Bandung 2014). However, information about the regulations did not spread to vendors and customers. At the same time, bribery and corruption on the part of dishonest government officials who gave illegal permits became an obstacle to achieving the objectives of the regulations (Barker *et al.* 2009, 59).

There are rising numbers of *preman* (street hoodlums)⁴⁾ who informally organize street vendors to protect them from eviction by the local authorities. Mr. Juniarso, a staff member in the Department of Cooperative, SME, Industry, and Trade of Bandung City, explained, "When we tried to do an eviction, the conflict never occurred between the vendors and us—a group of *preman* was always standing in front of the vendors, creating a barrier against the relocation."⁵⁾

Although the municipality has issued a decree to regulate the PKLs' presence in the city and try to elevate them to the level of a formal economy, the policy is not well

3) Formerly, the decree that regulated street vendors' activities was Peraturan Walikota Bandung Number 888, 2012. In 2014 the new mayor established another decree that modified the previous one.

4) For a detailed explanation of *preman*, see Ryter (1998).

5) Mr. Juniarso, interview with author, August 22, 2015, Bandung.

implemented. Again, Mr. Juniarto stated, “If we legalize their presence, I suppose many migrants will come and start vending on the street. We always attempt to avoid an outbreak of vendors. And the only way to stop their growth is to increase the number of jobs in the formal sectors.”⁶⁾

The street vendors’ existence is real in the midst of the city’s development, and their income is rather high in comparison with other formal occupations. For instance, in Yogyakarta, Joshua Barker and colleagues (*ibid.*, 58–60) found several street vendors emerging to oppose the enactment of regulations by the local government, including a new type of vendors who were capital owners masquerading as PKL or positioning themselves as *rakyat kecil* (little people), taking advantage by claiming to be poor, less powerful, or humble persons.⁷⁾

In this regard, we cannot underestimate the contribution of street vendors to the economic sector. Although the street vending industry seemingly holds promise, particularly with regard to economic prospects, it is still considered by some as a marginalized business type that flourishes sporadically and continues to disperse around the city.

From House Pantry to Street Cookery

I was fascinated at how the street food business could attract more than 20,000 street vendors in Bandung city alone (Dinas Koperasi UKM dan Perindustrian Perdagangan Kota Bandung 2014).

Some might look down on street vending as a petty trading model, but it can be a viable alternative for those who are excluded from the formal economy. We can understand how the activities of street vendors reflect the needs of those around them, and therefore such vendors should be regarded as part of the dynamic development of the city.

I focus my research on tracking the flow of street food production, which is divided into two main phases: (1) raw to half-cooked, and (2) half-cooked to cooked. This research attempts to describe the social network that vendors are constantly attempting to build, stabilize, and rely on. I found out how vendors undertake various efforts to stabilize their networks, such as providing pleasant hospitality to customers through convivial conversation, building a close relationship with suppliers, or being helpful and reliable to others

6) Mr. Juniarto, interview with author, August 22, 2015, Bandung.

7) Gibbins also explained this in her research on the local government’s plan to relocate street vendors in 2007. Some of the capital-owning vendors tried to hide behind the representation of the old PKL, posing as *rakyat kecil* in order to avoid being viewed negatively by other vendors. In other words, being imposters of the “poor” was what was expected of them (Barker *et al.* 2009, 58–60).

in their neighborhood as they often require assistance from their neighbors. This reveals the complexity of street food creation, which involves the engagement of various people within a social network.

In July 2015 I began three months of field research by interviewing 15 vendors, nine customers, several municipal staff, and researchers generally connected to street vendors. I focused on four vendors with whom I could carry out participant observation (helping them to prepare the food, serving guests, etc.) to understand their workflow. While admittedly this is a very limited sample relative to the immense number of vendors in Bandung, there were subtle cultural barriers, such as vendors' reluctance to be interviewed and a general suspicion of my presence as a prospective informant to officials, and this prevented a free flow of information. Being a native Indonesian who could speak the local language did not guarantee that I could easily approach the vendors, especially since they were selected randomly.

In this section I provide a general background of the informants, with a focus on the four traders, including before, during, and after the vending activities. The next section—titled “Street Food Cooking: By Self or Masses?”—examines the networks of traders. The subsections below provide detailed profiles of the four street vendors I studied, whom I divide into two main categories: full-time and part-time.

Full-Time Vendor (1): Mr. Rahmat, Soto Ayam Madura Vendor

After many years doing odd jobs in Jakarta, Mr. Rahmat decided to move to Bandung city in 2002 and started vending sate ayam Madura⁸⁾ every night. After reconsidering his health situation, since sate ayam is usually consumed at night, he switched to offering soto ayam, which is consumed during the day.

As is typical among new street vendors, he began selling soto ayam from a cart that he pushed from his house in the city center. When he started his business he could only serve a maximum of 40 bowls of soto ayam daily. “In the past, I was always struggling to compete with other vendors who catered food for lunch,” Mr. Rahmat recalled.⁹⁾ This unseen competition forced him to seek another selling point, such as improving customer service. Besides maintaining the food quality, he believed another important factor was to welcome customers with the greatest hospitality. When describing his business principles he said, “No matter how tasty or cheap your food is, if we are not striving to provide a pleasant welcome, they will never remember us.” Through casual conversation and providing special services such as giving unlimited rice along with extra sliced chicken,

8) Skewered grilled chicken with peanut sauce.

9) Mr. Rahmat, interview with author, September 20, 2015, Bandung.



Fig. 1 Mr. Rahmat, a Soto Ayam Seller

Source: Author

shrimp, and chips, Mr. Rahmat is able to maintain a customer base that gradually increases through word of mouth.

Today he does not need to walk from one place to another to cater lunch for customers, because he has found a permanent vending spot near a university in the northern part of the city.¹⁰ He starts vending at 9 a.m. and ends at 3 p.m., or sometimes even earlier if unpredictably large numbers of customers come to have his soto ayam.

Full-Time Vendor (2): Nasi Goreng Mas Ruris; Incorporating Customers' Ideas and Opinions

When asked by his friend, a nasi goreng vendor, to be a cook's assistant, Mr. Ruris decided to accept the position with the aim of starting his own business after learning the know-how of the trade. He gradually gained an understanding of how to manage the production of street food, learning from base level up, i.e., washing dishes, serving customers, cleaning each ingredient, and finally frying the rice that was the most important part of cooking nasi goreng. While street vendors do not have a formal pace of career progression, there are unseen paths to be walked, as Mr. Ruris explained: "There were

10) Mr. Rahmat became acquainted with the head of the neighborhood association in this area (who, he claimed, was his regular customer). It can be said that he is one of the fortunate vendors, because he does not need to pay a "security fee" to gangsters or street hoodlums; instead, he only pays regular cleaning fees to the neighborhood association.

several milestones I had to pass, although it was not documented like in a human resource manual; the master always determined who deserved to be promoted to the next level.”¹¹⁾

After 12 years of being an apprentice, he decided to open his own cart at Jalan Jawa (Jawa Street). Interestingly, his previous employer prayed for his success and advised him on how to survive. Following the example of his previous employer, Mr. Ruris welcomes anyone who wishes to acquire knowledge of street food cooking. He is not afraid of his secret spice combinations being copied, since, he explained, “Everybody was born with uniqueness. Even though the spices or the ingredients may be similar to mine, I believe that every person has a particular skill, ability, and knowledge in developing the taste. I always support anyone who is willing to start vending.”¹²⁾

Mr. Ruris is very friendly toward his customers. He allows them to customize their dish or add additional ingredients if they wish. He is also talkative with customers and makes an effort to memorize their names, their occupations, and personal stories about them. As a result of his convivial interactions as well as his kindness toward every person that he meets, many people regard him as a close friend.

Part-Time Vendor (1): Sate Klatak Mas Tanto by Mr. Radis and Friends; Secondary Business

Mr. Radis, Mr. Pepeng, and Mr. Aso knew each other before they decided to start a Web-based food journal in early 2015. They attempt to promote local culinary wisdom through unique presentations and well-designed media. Mr. Radis and Mr. Aso studied together at the oldest art school in Bandung, while Mr. Pepeng got his degree from a prominent culinary academy in San Francisco afterwards. At his day job, Mr. Pepeng has been working to create new culinary menus for several restaurants in Bandung and Jakarta since he returned to Indonesia after completing his studies abroad. Mr. Radis works at a design studio and also teaches at the university from which he graduated. Mr. Aso works as a freelance designer after resigning from his previous job as a designer of local brand watches.

After featuring sate klatak—skewered grilled beef from Yogyakarta—for the news-feed, the three became fascinated with the dish and decided to open a small shop called Sate Klatak Mas Tanto in Bandung. Due to the high start-up costs, they chose not to open a conventional restaurant; instead, they adopted the *warong* (tavern) style that is usually found on the sidewalk. By intentionally using handwritten banners, a simple pushcart, and a set of wooden stools and table, they adopted the image of humble, modest,

11) Mr. Ruris, interview with author, August 30, 2015, Bandung.

12) Mr. Ruris, interview with author, August 30, 2015, Bandung.

and cheap *warong* that are usually associated with street vendors, even though the food itself might be pricier.¹³⁾

Mr. Radis explained that these days the main difference between a *warong* and a formal restaurant is in their production size and eating area; when it comes to taste and promotion of itself, the *warong* is able to compete with the big restaurant. In addition, he explained to me, “The informal situation of street vendors allows us to have more opportunities in exploring production methods, methods of promotion, and we can feel the impact immediately. Today we advertise something, and the following day the crowds will be coming abundantly.”¹⁴⁾

Part-Time Vendor (2): Angkringan Mas Jos; Between Being an Entrepreneur and an Employee

In 2007 Mr. Jos and his former co-worker started a street food business, selling food in the *angkringan* style¹⁵⁾ adopted from Yogyakarta. After more than two years collaborating with his former partner, Mr. Jos restarted the business from scratch on his own. The venture gradually grew, and currently he owns four pushcarts. Mr. Jos realizes that his customers are mainly young people, and he therefore strives to invent new dishes, such as by modifying existing ones. Utilizing a social network system for promotion, he immerses himself in his customers’ world through the usage of language commonly used by young people, and provides extra services for diners.

To expand the scale of his business, he has engaged a nasi goreng vendor to sell food under his management. As the nasi goreng vendor has brought many customers, Mr. Jos obtains more benefits than he did before. “It is kind of like merging two gigantic powers: he and I [the nasi goreng vendor] gained benefits by sharing our regular customers,” he explained.¹⁶⁾

He attempts to provide customers with the best service not only by increasing portions but also by maintaining intimate communication. He is also mindful of using “youthful” language to increase his business. As he explained, “Many young people use Facebook and Twitter. Therefore, every day I post photos of my customers to keep maintaining the interaction with them.”¹⁷⁾

Although his business is quite successful, he continues to work as a driver for a

13) Mr. Radis, interview with author, December 11, 2015, Bandung.

14) Mr. Radis, interview with author, December 11, 2015, Bandung.

15) *Angkringan* are typical street vendors in Yogyakarta who sell comfort foods such as small pieces of paper-wrapped rice, and other side dishes such as skewered grilled chicken, fried tempe, and chicken eggs relatively cheap compared to other street foods.

16) Mr. Jos, interview with author, September 28, 2015, Bandung.

17) Mr. Jos, interview with author, September 28, 2015, Bandung.

company from morning until afternoon. He earns more from his business than from his regular salary. He once attempted to resign from the company, but his boss encouraged him to stay. He feels indebted to his boss for having supported him in various ways after he moved to Bandung city.

Street Food Cooking: By Self or Masses?

In this section I reveal the cooking process by examining the connections of each street vendor and their impact on the creation process as well as the nature of street food. The paper looks at some of the important activities undertaken by street vendors as they travel from the market and their neighborhood to the vending spot, where various actors actively assist in the production process of street food. This process is at the center of this paper, which attempts to uncover the hybridity of contributions in stabilizing the infrastructure of the people. In the following subsections, I distinguish the two main processes in street food making: turning food from raw to half-cooked and from half-cooked to cooked.

Raw to Half-Cooked

Given the limited time and space available for serving street food, most vendors prepare the ingredients prior to starting vending. They cannot cook from scratch at the time of vending; therefore, the main ingredients, such as chicken meat, beef, rice, and spices, are usually processed earlier in their homes.¹⁸⁾

The high cost of manpower is a common obstacle for vendors, which forces them to find efficient methods to deal with the problem. Mr. Rahmat and Mr. Ruris explained that living around the market is one of the ways to reduce production cost. It helps them to cut down on gasoline cost, and it is also a faster way to acquire fresh ingredients.

Since 2004 Mr. Rahmat has been renting a tiny house in the slum area around the city center, even though he owns a house in the southern part of Bandung city that he bought a couple of years ago. Ciroyom Market—one of the biggest traditional markets in Bandung—is located only 300 meters away from the rented house. Mr. Rahmat is acquainted with many suppliers in the market, as they are now his neighbors. The rented house is located near the vending spot, in the northern part of Bandung, and Mr. Rahmat requires only one liter of gasoline per week to commute. “I rent out my house in southern Bandung city for 6 million rupiah per year, while I rent this house for only 2 million

18) Mr. Rahmat and Mr. Ruris, separate interviews with author, August–September 2015, Bandung.

rupiah per year,” he said. “Therefore, I still have a margin of 4 million rupiah to be saved. Moreover, this rented house has a strategic location from where I can go to the market and vending spot without spending too much time.”¹⁹⁾

Easy access to the market as well as the vending spot seems to be a strong positive for street vendors in operating their businesses. In another example, Mr. Ruris, the nasi goreng vendor, explained that his current house was located just behind Kosambi Market, one of the traditional markets in Bandung.²⁰⁾ Reducing transportation cost is a priority, but another important issue is that he needs to arrive at the market as early as possible in the morning to buy fresh ingredients, as there is strong competition among vendors for getting the best ingredients. Similarly, Mr. Jos lives with his family in a house provided by his office; however, he also rents a small house for his staff and to store ingredients, which is located only 400 meters away from his vending spot and the traditional market.²¹⁾

To produce soto ayam, Mr. Rahmat usually does daily as well as weekly shopping. He procures the four main ingredients—chicken meat, rice, cabbage, and rice noodles—every single day at Ciroyom Market. As mentioned earlier, many suppliers are his acquaintances—for example, the owner of a chicken abattoir was his neighbor in his hometown of Madura Island. He always provides chicken meat for Mr. Rahmat, even when there is a shortage in the market. A greengrocer from whom Mr. Rahmat regularly buys his vegetables gives him a discount of 50 percent since he has become a regular customer. During the transaction process, the two often make small talk and discuss various matters ranging from trivial topics such as celebrity gossip to personal matters such as recent profit or family news. Maintaining close friendships with suppliers means Mr. Rahmat does not need to go early to the market and compete with other vendors to obtain fresh ingredients.

After collecting all the daily ingredients in the evening, Mr. Rahmat immediately cleans the chicken meat and vegetables to prevent them rotting. In his neighborhood there is a shared kitchen equipped with a well in which the people of the community usually wash dishes or clean ingredients. When Mr. Rahmat visits the well he often engages in casual conversation with his neighbors, and sometimes he borrows from them kitchen equipment such as stools, knives, or buckets. When I asked why they let Mr. Rahmat use their things, one of the people said, “Sudah biasa pinjam-pinjam barang disini [It is common to lend and borrow stuff here].”²²⁾

19) Mr. Rahmat, interview with author, September 12, 2015, Bandung.

20) Mr. Ruris, interview with author, August 30, 2015, Bandung.

21) Mr. Jos, interview with author, September 28, 2015, Bandung.

22) Mrs. Nuri (Mr. Rahmat’s neighbor), interview with author, September 12, 2015, Bandung.

After visiting the well, Mr. Rahmat boils the chicken meat for the next few hours while he prepares the spices. He usually wakes up around 3 a.m. to cook the rice and prepare other ingredients before setting off to the vending spot at around 9 a.m.

As for his weekly shopping, Mr. Rahmat usually buys four of the 14 necessary spices for the chicken broth at the biggest market in Bandung city, Caringin Market. At this market, Mr. Rahmat needs to purchase a minimum of 5 kilograms of each item; therefore, the rest of the spices are usually obtained in another market. Due to the fluctuating prices of shallots, garlic, ginger, and turmeric, he attempts to compare the prices offered by each supplier. Doing this means he cannot get any special discounts, as he does not maintain intimate communications with any supplier.

Discussing the arduous part of preparing soto ayam, he explained that processing the spices for the broth is the most tiring work, which he does only once a week. All the ingredients need to be cleaned, after which some need to be peeled, sliced, and washed. Some ingredients have to be pounded or ground to make a paste. All these steps have to be completed before the soto ayam can be cooked. Therefore, sometimes Mr. Rahmat's wife assists him in processing the ingredients, and sometimes he asks a favor from his neighbors. During my observation at his house, Mrs. Yayah, whose husband also works as a street vendor, was helping Mr. Rahmat clean the spices. Several children also came to peel the spices, although some of them were just playing with the ingredients. Fascinated with this situation, I questioned Mrs. Yayah about her willingness to help Mr. Rahmat, since she did this work voluntarily. She explained, "I came across Mr. Rahmat's house by chance, and he asked me to help him cook. Because I do not have any set schedule, why not lend him a hand?"²³⁾ In return, Mr. Rahmat assists other neighbors with cooking preparation or other activities. For example, at the time of this study he was voluntarily organizing a sightseeing trip for neighbors the following month. Helping others in the community almost becomes a habitual activity, an obligation for every resident to keep good relationships.²⁴⁾ Mr. Rahmat's wife plays an important role in ensuring good communication amongst the women in the neighborhood. During the food

23) Mrs. Yayah, interview with author, September 12, 2015, Bandung.

24) The act of give-and-take performed by Mr. Rahmat and his neighbors might be related to the issue of "gift" that is widely discussed by scholars. The classical writing by Marcel Mauss (2002, 6–7) explains that what is exchanged is not solely property and wealth but also acts of politeness, rituals, dances, etc., in which the economic transaction is only one element. This gift exchange system is possible when there is mutual benefit, for example when the gift provider attempts to make himself or herself appear to be more valuable than the recipient—in other words, this exchange of goods appears to be an instrument to build mutual friendships among groups (Bell 1991, 164). Indeed, the activity undertaken by Mr. Rahmat instantiates the notion of give-and-take; however, I will not delve deeper into the issue here.

preparation process, she had a conversation with Mrs. Yayah discussing the plan for an *arisan* (social gathering among the women in the neighborhood), while Mr. Rahmat treated Mrs. Yayah's son by giving him a new toy.

Despite the wives of vendors rarely joining them during the vending period, their presence is important for preparing the ingredients at home. One reason the wives do not participate in the selling activity is because they are mostly housewives, spending time taking care of their children and also being involved in neighborhood activities such as *arisan* or other gatherings.²⁵⁾

Another example is Mr. Ruris. His wife supports him in preparing the ingredients for nasi goreng at home, though she has never appeared during the vending activities. She also plays a role in selecting the best-quality ingredients, as Mr. Ruris admits his wife has a natural ability to find them. On the other hand, the angkringan vendor Mr. Jos entrusts his wife to control the ingredient stock and cash flow, as he is not available all the time to manage this side of the business. Realizing his capacity is limited when it comes to managing the various aspects of his vending activities, his wife handles the stock control and financial aspects, and they run the business together.

Mr. Radis, the sate klatak vendor, usually asks his staff to get spices from Kosambi Market, located near the area in which he sells. He does not have regular suppliers to provide the spices he needs; he or his staff just buy them wherever they find them. When it comes to other materials, regular suppliers routinely deliver rice, mineral water, and gas cylinders to his place. For instance, a butcher from Sadang Serang District brings meat to the kitchen hours before the start of vending activities around 5 p.m.²⁶⁾

Although they produce slightly different types of food, Mr. Jos is similar to Mr. Radis when it comes to obtaining ingredients. He relies heavily on each supplier delivering materials to his kitchen. As he works regularly during the day, he does not have time to spare and getting all the ingredients directly from the market is impossible. Although this might affect the production budget by raising the delivery cost, Mr. Jos trusts the suppliers to deliver ingredients rather than letting his employees obtain them directly from the market. Because of this purchasing system and his wife handling all the production flow in the house, he can continue his job in a conventional company without exerting too much effort in collecting and processing the ingredients.

The above activities are the attempts of vendors to stabilize the network between

25) Other gatherings include *pengajian ibu-ibu* (Qur'an reading groups among mothers) that are regularly held in this neighborhood.

26) Processing the meat is one of the more time-consuming jobs. Sometimes the vendors skewer the meat in front of customers. I do not go into detail about this process as this work is done by only one or two persons.

people to achieve the notion of “hybrid communities.” In this regard, the complex negotiations, ownership, and financial responsibilities are shared among the people and carried out to facilitate a sense of community or local solidarity (Simone 2004, 419). However, what about the network of the vendors with the customers? Being separated between the vending spot and the production place, are the vendors able to maintain a strong network with other actors? If so, what is the role of customers in shaping the network of vendors? The next subsection attempts to answer these questions.

Half-Cooked to Cooked

After finishing the exhausting process of preparing the basic ingredients into a half-cooked, pre-prepared state, street vendors are ready to start vending activities without requiring a lot of time from taking the order to serving. For example, Mr. Rahmat brings the half-cooked ingredients in his pushcart, and after receiving an order he arranges the cooked rice, sliced chicken, rice noodles, and vegetables and pours in chicken broth; the process takes only about three minutes in total for each bowl. Similarly, when Mr. Ruris prepares nasi goreng, after adding some oil, mixed vegetables, and spices, he fries together all the half-cooked ingredients such as rice, sliced chicken, and eggs.

After placing their order, customers sit on a wooden bench facing the vendor while he prepares their food. They are able to ask the vendor to modify the spices or add extra ingredients, if they wish. This style of eating and ordering is different from that of conventional restaurants, where customers seldom see directly what the chef cooks in the kitchen.

During my fieldwork, I observed that customers talked freely to the vendors about recent issues on television, political rumors, and their personal problems. They also often asked the vendors to add some chili, spices, broth, or even rice to their dish. Through the customization of dishes, street vendors can gauge common tastes among customers. Some vendors told me that they devised special dishes after observing what people often requested. Mr. Rahmat explained, “After seeing many people adding koya²⁷⁾ to thicken the soup, I decided to put more of it in every bowl of soto; and surprisingly, my customers welcomed it.”²⁸⁾ He also replaced the fried shrimp chips that usually accompany a bowl of soto ayam Madura with another type of chip called kerupuk aci (plain cassava starch chips), after some customers asked him to do so. By listening carefully to customers’ opinions and slowly adjusting the food composition to their needs, he was able to come up with his own distinctive way of cooking soto ayam Madura that was dif-

27) One of the important ingredients of soto ayam Madura, koya is made of ground shrimp chips and thickens the broth.

28) Mr. Rahmat, interview with author, September 20, 2015, Bandung.

ferentiated from other vendors’.

Mr. Ruris also acknowledges the customers’ contributions in giving their opinions of his food. His current special menu item is telur kecap (fried eggs with soy sauce); Mr. Ruris came up with it after some customers customized another menu item called ayam kecap (soy sauce spiced chicken). Unintentionally, this special item became popular among customers before Mr. Ruris established telur kecap on his menu. Describing his customers’ behavior, Mr. Ruris said, “My customers often ask me to alter the food composition. Although this takes extra time, it allows me to maintain the relationship and gives me new ideas.”²⁹⁾ The vendors are able to be creative by obtaining inspiration from every activity, such as customizing the food.

Mr. Radis also often discusses the taste of the food with his customers. During my observation, there was a change in the composition of sate klatak. In the beginning Mr. Radis provided two grilled-beef skewers accompanied by rice, but later on the dish had one extra skewer along with a price increase, from 17,000 rupiah to 25,000 rupiah, as a result of listening to customers’ opinions. The vending environment provides many opportunities for inspiration. Its open setting encourages interaction amongst vendors and customers, which generates many ideas for creating new varieties of foods. We can see the active role of suppliers and neighbors during the cooking process of street food, but customers also play an important role in shaping the form of the food through their requests, opinions, and ideas. Obviously, these activities are involved in the discussion of hybrid community, allowing various actors to be involved in the production process as openly as possible (Callon 2004, 3).

Tracing the Web: When *Pedagang Kaki Lima* Construct and Utilize the Networks

In this section I uncover the social networks connecting those involved in street food vending activities. This section also shows their contribution in creating street food through communication, supported by an informal environment, which affects the production and its innovative process. Fig. 2 shows the relationship of Mr. Rahmat, the soto ayam vendor, with other actors such as suppliers, the district chief, neighbors, and customers. Sarah Turner argues that street vendors rely strongly on their social web during the production process, and their development and innovation process is possible by maintaining the power of this network (Turner 2003, 150–151). Narumol postulates that

29) Mr. Ruris, interview with author, August 30, 2015, Bandung.

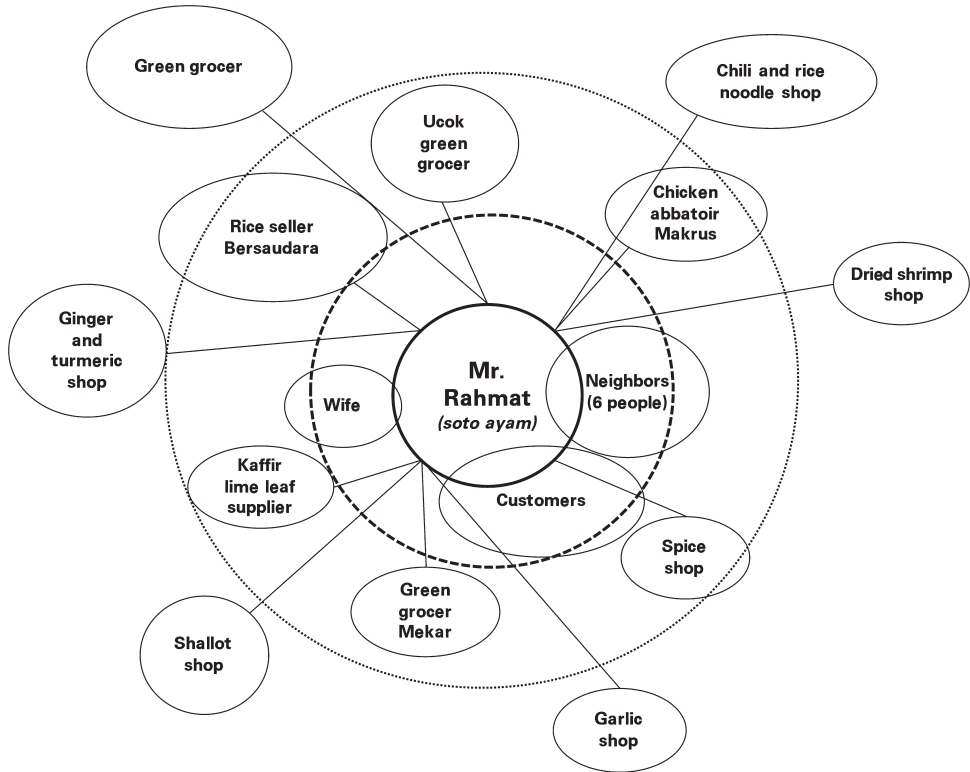


Fig. 2 Mr. Rahmat's Network

Source: Author

street vendors can succeed in business at a more advanced level through the contributions of their family and acquaintances (Narumol 2006, 54). Street vendors are always in a state of wariness due to their vulnerability as well as the uncertainty associated with their circumstances. Therefore, the activities of street vendors demonstrate the way in which they constantly maintain a strong network so as to reap benefits. For example, the full-time vendor Mr. Rahmat does not need to budget extra to pay a helper or assistant cook as he can get help from neighbors, and he does not need to spend extra on food delivery as he purchases ingredients directly at the market. This is somewhat different from the system of part-time vendors, such as Mr. Jos, who need to budget funds to pay staff to prepare the food, and also use a delivery service instead of letting the staff go to the market for ingredients.

As previously mentioned, the chicken supplier who was Mr. Rahmat's neighbor on Madura Island regularly offers him a discounted price or, on occasion, gives him extra meat. In return, Mr. Rahmat tries to be equally generous with the supplier, for example

by inviting him to join gatherings in his neighborhood. Having lived in the same hometown and sharing a similar cultural background, it is possible for them to maintain a strong relationship and strive to treat each other well. The rice seller Bersaudara is another person with whom Mr. Rahmat has maintained a close relationship. He receives many benefits from the seller, such as getting extra kilos of rice, and in return Mr. Rahmat invites him to neighborhood events.

Leaning on their network of family and neighbors is a way for vendors to accrue daily income and overcome the scarcity of manpower. This situation may be related to a form of labor exchange that is based on reciprocity among people, showing the value of cooperative labor. Labor exchange is a basis for social safety and good neighborliness (Shiraishi 2006, 39). This mode of reciprocity also contributes to strengthening the social capital that is the aggregate of actual and potential resources linked to the possession of a durable network formed of mutual acquaintances and recognition (Bourdieu 1986, 247). The example of Mrs. Yayah voluntarily helping Mr. Rahmat shows how they perform the important activity of exchanging labor in order to maintain their network and close proximity.

Mr. Rahmat seeks opportunities to become familiar with material costs, technology developments, and social interaction by meeting with almost 30 people every day during his production activities. Likewise, being a participant in the production process from beginning to end, including serving food to customers, enables Mr. Ruris to understand how to operate the business. Strong connections with other people support the vendors by helping them save on expenditure and time.

In contrast to the two previous vendors, Mr. Jos (angkringan vendor) and Mr. Radis (sate klatak vendor) hire staff to carry out the preparation to serving stages of food production,³⁰⁾ since they are engaged in formal occupations during the daytime. In order to reduce transportation cost, they neither ask the staff to buy ingredients at the market nor visit the market themselves every day, as in the case of Mr. Rahmat. Instead, they utilize the “delivery service” provided by their suppliers to bring materials directly into their kitchen. As a result, Mr. Jos and Mr. Radis may not directly encounter suppliers in the way that they would at a market, due to the suppliers’ and vendors’ use of hired staff to deliver and receive goods. Therefore, the networks would be weaker than those of Mr. Rahmat and Mr. Ruris.

To maintain their customer base, Mr. Radis and Mr. Jos use traditional and modern methods of communication both online and offline. Considering the recent trend of social

30) This is slightly different from the methods of Mr. Rahmat and Mr. Ruris, in the sense of relying on the network for help. Part-time vendors need to depend on hired staff because some of them are not real cooks.

media usage, Mr. Jos uses applications such as Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter; Mr. Radis posts pictures on Instagram, tagging customers. Recently, social media use has been on the increase among street vendors to help amplify their activities while at the same time helping to cement their position within the social web (Isaacs 2014, 208). Recording and converting activities from real space into cyberspace are ways for the vendors to accurately portray and advertise their activities, showing customers aspects such as food visuals, spatial ambience, and settings. As most social media platforms are free of charge, the vendors can explore new promotion methods to attract a huge number of customers.

Fig. 2 reveals the tremendous number of participants involved in processing the food, starting from ingredient collection and going on to preparation and cooking—from raw to half-cooked, and then half-cooked to cooked. Every participant plays an important role as they reconstruct and reshape the networks, no matter how great or small their contribution.

To sum up, the vendors need to maintain close relationships with other actors (ingredient suppliers, district chiefs, family, and neighbors); this is an essential part of the street vendors' activities in order for them to obtain special benefits, such as affordable materials, and to get help from neighbors when dealing with heavy production. In return, there is a social obligation to support each other if some people need assistance. For example, Mr. Rahmat voluntarily organized an event for his neighbors as he felt indebted to them for all their help with his business.³¹⁾

At the same time, the vendors provide the finest hospitality to customers, give them extra ingredients when requested, and keep in close communication with them. This is a way for them to gain new ideas and an opportunity to modify and adjust the taste of their food. Another factor supporting the smooth interaction among vendors and customers is the informal environment and the open spatial setting of street vendors. For example, customers are able to clearly see what the vendors are cooking and what kinds of utensils are used, and be fully involved in ingredient modification and customization in cooking.

After assessing and understanding various factors experienced by the vendors in maintaining a social web to operate their business flow, the next question will be, how can the power of the network impact on the production process of street food?

31) In this regard, Mr. Rahmat explained, "Saya harus bikin acara ini, karena saya merasa hutang budi ke para tetangga. Disini semuanya selalu saling bantu [I have to arrange this event, because I feel indebted to the neighbors. All the people here are always helping each other]."

Hybridity and Fluidity behind the Production Process of Street Food

We have already seen how the production process amongst street vendors reflects the strong ties between the participants in supporting each other. Turner concludes that the business activities of small entrepreneurs, including street vendors, are very flexible and have a crucial influence on the production, creation, and innovation process (Turner 2003, 130). Therefore, flexibility in the production process of street vending activities should be perceived as a means to assemble multiple participants to strengthen and stabilize their social network. Obviously, the ability to assemble contributes to the construction of many conjunctions, which becomes an essential platform for sustaining social transactions and livelihoods (Simone 2004, 410). Mr. Rahmat stated, “If I feel the preparation is going to be exhausting, I ask my neighbor to help. Otherwise, only my wife and I deal with the ingredients.”³²⁾ This kind of flexibility in the production process is rarely found in formal restaurants, due to strict regulations and procedures. Having a close relationship, Mr. Rahmat and his neighbors and acquaintances often talk to each other, discussing everyday trivial topics whilst sharing new information regarding the cost of ingredients and new cooking techniques. In line with this, Mr. Ruris has established a special menu because his generosity in welcoming customers enables customers to converse freely with the vendor. This kind of informal social interaction plays an important role in improving the street vendor’s business, as we see in Mr. Ruris’s case.

As a result of customers’ freedom and flexibility in giving critical suggestions, Mr. Radis acknowledges the significant role of customers’ opinions in adjusting the ingredients of his dish, *sate klatak*. He explained, “I adjusted the recipe because many customers said the amount of food was too small, and on the other hand the ingredients’ prices have increased recently. So I could not avoid modifying the food portion.”³³⁾ Even though there was a dramatic change in the food’s composition and appearance, Mr. Radis and his friends maintain the authenticity of the food by retaining the original mixture of spices.

The part-time vendors, Mr. Radis and Mr. Jos, have adopted certain foods from outside Bandung city and its culture. Therefore, their food is different from the original food, as a result of their attempts to adapt their food to the needs and palates of local customers. They stated that the crucial points for business success are to understand local customs, treat customers well, and have a humble yet generous demeanor.

Basically, learning from others is one of the core methods of coming up with new creations in the street food vending business. Although Mr. Ruris and Mr. Rahmat, who

32) Mr. Rahmat, interview with author, September 12, 2015, Bandung.

33) Mr. Radis, interview with author, December 11, 2015, Bandung.

are full-time vendors, have never attended formal educational institutions or received chef training specializing in street food, they have gained knowledge through informal apprenticeships with street food vendors, such as Mr. Rahmat's uncle teaching him recipes and advising him on how to run the business in the beginning.

Looking at the process of street food production, we see that it is an activity that combines the interests and competencies of different actors (Callon 2004, 4). As the creation process can be regarded as hybrid, the form can emerge as a consequence of the meeting of various cultures (Leach 2007, 109). Furthermore, by drawing on the whirlwind model idea we can understand how the hybrid process strains and harnesses contributions from humans and objects in shaping the form of the creation. In this regard, the production of street food is an example of a large event of hybridity of contributions from various actors; it emerges to reach a conjunction, where negotiation, adaptation, and flexibility take place. On the one hand, it shows how the heterogeneous actors have built a network as an infrastructure promoting a circulation of resources, which can bring about change and impact on progress (Larkin 2013). On the other hand, street food vending also reflects a large effort on the part of vendors to stabilize their social networks through intense interaction by taking advantage of the various interests and needs of people in the periphery of this activity.

Vending activities exemplify a way in which people consciously make connections and build networks. By observing street food production, we can understand that the products do not emerge from a single creator in a rigid and formal space; instead, production occurs in an informal environment as a collective effort.

Conclusion

We have seen the process of producing street food, from ingredient collection to cooking, which shows a huge web interwoven by many participants behind a plate of street food. This research examines the role of the social network in the daily activities of street vendors in Indonesia, particularly Bandung city.

A critical point can be made here regarding the production and the creation process of street food. A starting point to understand vending activities is to recognize the ability of street vendors to build a network for dealing with shortages and finding a way to achieve efficiency to enable their business to succeed. It indicates the active role of other participants, such as customers, through casual requests to modify foods to their taste; neighbors, who voluntarily support the preparation and cooking process; as well as suppliers, who are willing to provide ingredients. These factors are inextricably intertwined

behind street food, contributing hybridity and fluidity based on collective practice.

Nobody can create something without gaining inspiration from external influences. There is abundant inspiration streaming into each street vendor's mind through the medium of the people surrounding them. Viewing the creation process as the hub of incessant negotiation by various actors (Akrich *et al.* 2002; Callon 2004; Leach 2007), it is clear that there are various contributions behind every work, including street vending activity. The accumulation of various contributions by street vendors is, indeed, the vendors' attempts to stabilize their networks and establish an infrastructure to distribute and achieve their needs (Simone 2004; Larkin 2013) by drawing heterogenous actors in a flexible and adaptable mode. By establishing a conceptual framework for the street vendors' working scheme, we might show the way in which vendors build their infrastructure to satisfy their daily needs. It appears as one cultural process in an informal situation where street vendors, customers, neighbors, suppliers, and other participants are actively involved in creation.

Nowadays, street food vending activities flourish around the entire globe. Even though this research presents examples from the city of Bandung, the portraits may be extrapolated to the rest of Indonesia as well as other parts of the world. Understanding the street vendors' operations makes us reflect on the important matters of openness, honesty, and humbleness, which are valuable factors in supporting their daily life. Furthermore, it gives us a clear picture of this type of business as a mode of exchanging capital to maintain a durable network based on the large event of work. This is possible by drawing multiple thoughts and actions under flexible yet informal circumstances.

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***G30S dan Asia: Dalam bayang-bayang Perang Dingin* [The September 30, 1965 coup and Asia, under the shadows of the Cold War]**

KURASAWA AIKO and MATSUMURA TOSHIO, eds.

Jakarta: Penerbit Buku Kompas, 2016, xxvi+308pp.

Similar to Thailand's October 6, 1976 massacre, Indonesia's September 30, 1965 coup (and the subsequent massacre) is still a difficult and sensitive issue to discuss in public. Those who were involved in the event are not pleased with the ongoing campaign for an official apology from the Indonesian government, and the issue of reconciliation is still controversial and has not been well received by all parties. Meanwhile, scholarly studies have progressed since 1998 as a number of victims/survivors have written memoirs and testimonies (see Hearman 2009; Sukanta 2011; 2013). They form a narrative that was absent (or muted) during the New Order regime (1967–98) and thus have offered different perspectives on what happened. Related to this, two documentary films on the subject of the 1965–66 massacre directed by Joshua Oppenheimer, *Jagal* (The act of killing, in 2012) and *Senyap* (The look of silence, in 2014), have garnered international attention.

Using a different approach, some scholars have tried to bring public attention to the international context of the 1965 coup and the political situation of the Cold War period (see, for example, Schaefer and Wardaya 2013). They argue that the 1965 coup was not a separate event but closely related to world politics, with Indonesia (under Soekarno) being a major player on the regional scene and among the newly independent countries in Asia and Africa. *G30S dan Asia: Dalam bayang-bayang Perang Dingin* (hereinafter, *G30S dan Asia*) is an important contribution to this literature. More important, it has been published in Indonesian, primarily targeting an Indonesian readership.

G30S dan Asia consists of nine chapters and one personal story. The chapters are grouped into two parts. Part 1 consists of four chapters, each discussing the 1965 coup in relation to the political situation of different Asian countries: the People's Republic of China (PRC), Taiwan, Japan, and Malaysia (in particular, the Sarawak independence movement). Taomo Zhou contributes an interesting chapter on the PRC's view of the 1965 coup, based on her archival research of the PRC's Ministry of Foreign Affairs' documents. It is an important study that questions the long-held myth

about the involvement of the PRC in the 1965 coup. Baba Kimihiko discusses the political situation of the time and the complexity of the PRC's and Taiwan's attitudes toward Indonesian Chinese. Kurasawa Aiko discusses Japan's changing position toward Soekarno (and Indonesia in general) after the 1965 coup. Interestingly, in the conclusion, she notes that Japan (through its diplomatic mission in Jakarta) might have known about the 1965–66 massacre (especially in Kediri and Bali) but opted to stay silent (*"menutup mulut"*) (p.137). Matsumura Toshio discusses the Sarawak independence movement, as part of the anti-British colonial movement in Borneo, in the aftermath of the 1965 coup. For Indonesian readers, his study helps clarify the issue of the "Communist" guerrilla movement in Borneo.

Part 2 consists of five chapters, each discussing the 1965 coup from the newspaper reports of individual countries in the region: the Philippines, Korea, Vietnam, the PRC, and Japan. Hayase Shinzo analyzes the reports of the *Manila Times* (The Philippines) on the 1965 coup. Tanaka Yuichiro and Kwon Sohyun examine the *Rodong Shinmun* (North Korea), *Choson Sinbo* (the newspaper of the North Korean association in Japan), and *Chosun Ilbo* (South Korea) on their reports about Indonesia and the 1965 coup in particular. Fujikura Tetsuro examines the *Nhan Dan*, the newspaper organ of the Communist Party of Vietnam, from September 1, 1965 to March 31, 1966. Baba looks at the *Renmin Ribao* (人民日报), an organ of the Chinese Communist Party, and the *Beijing Zhoubao* (北京周报), a weekly news magazine. Finally, Kurasawa reads three Japanese newspapers: *Asahi Shimbun* (朝日新聞), *Yomiuri Shimbun* (読売新聞), and *Mainichi Shimbun* (毎日新聞), and one popular weekly magazine, the *Shukan Gendai* (週刊現代). Although each chapter of this part is stand-alone and can be read individually, as a whole the chapters show how the general public in the region was informed about the 1965 coup. There are different degrees of quality (and detailed information) of the reportage in each country's newspapers, which depended on the access members of the press had. Kurasawa notes that the *Asahi Shimbun* and *Akahata* (赤旗), the daily organ of the Japanese Communist Party, had an office in Jakarta, and the *Yomiuri Shimbun* and *Mainichi Shimbun* were able to send their correspondents to enter Jakarta (p.275). This gave them direct access and enabled them to record what they saw, heard, and collected during the time and thus made their reportage more detailed and up-to-date.

The last eight pages of *G30S dan Asia* (pp.292–299) present the personal recollections of Gatot Wilotikto, who was in Pyongyang (North Korea) as a student when the 1965 coup took place. He was the only Indonesian student in North Korea after 1970 as others had migrated to the PRC and USSR (Russia).

With the exception of Zhou, who is currently a fellow at the Nanyang Technological University in Singapore, all contributors are Japan-based scholars. It should be noted that there is a growing collaboration among Japan-based scholars of Southeast Asian studies (and Indonesian studies, in particular), in various research projects under the Japanese Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research (*kaken-hi*), to better research and understand the region. Southeast Asian studies is still growing

in Japan (in contrast to other places that are currently facing limited institutional support due to budget cuts), and young scholars are encouraged to contribute their research and expertise in many different fields and in national/local/vernacular languages in the region, not solely in English. As such, this book illustrates how (foreign) scholars can help initiate, facilitate, and foster fruitful dialogues, including on topics that are still controversial, as part of their common interest to develop an active network of communities of learners in the region.

G30S dan Asia is an interesting volume that opens up a new field of study on the 1965 coup in the context of international politics in the region, under the Cold War situation. It is a must-read volume for every young Indonesian to look into and understand his/her nation's troubled history beyond the official narrative.

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Siam's New Detectives: Visualizing Crime and Conspiracy in Modern Thailand

SAMSON LIM

Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2016, viii+213pp.

Bearing the hallmarks of a fine PhD thesis, Samson Lim's *Siam's New Detectives: Visualizing Crime and Conspiracy in Modern Thailand* contributes fresh perspectives, information, and analysis on the still under-studied police force in Thailand. The police play an important role in Thailand, not just in managing crime but as political actors. From the police force's early days as a Bangkok-based constabulary, established in 1860, Lim tells of a reorganization, the founding of a provincial gendarmerie, and expansion and modernization (pp. 24–33). His book takes us through an account of the police and its investigative techniques as it became the CIA's preferred agency and armed to the teeth in the early 1950s, while also discussing some aspects of the police up to the early twenty-

first century. His attention is largely on the investigative methods learned and adopted by the police and how they “visualized” crime and, in some cases, manufactured crimes, suspects, and confessions. The book is organized into five chapters, together with an introduction and conclusion.

In the introduction Lim begins with the story of Sherry Ann Duncan, a Thai-American teenager abducted and murdered in 1986. Four men were arrested, pressed to “reenact” their “crime,” and convicted in 1990, on the evidence of a witness. Sentenced to death, the four were eventually released in 1993 by a Supreme Court that ruled on the lack of corroborating evidence. While in prison one defendant died, another was crippled, and a third contracted a disease that would eventually kill him. Then, in 1996, a court convicted another three men of Duncan’s murder. They, too, were made to reenact the crime based on the evidence of the very same witness used by the police in the first trial. This time, the witness gave details about a completely different crime scene. Before each trial this witness was tutored by the police, who decided what his statement should say (pp. 1–2). As Lim notes, this is not a particularly unusual case (p. 2). Indeed, while I was reading Lim’s book, there were similar cases reported in the Bangkok media. For example, in March 2017 it was widely reported that a man had been sentenced to 21 years in jail for a robbery where the police “witnesses” were 7- and 11-year-old boys. More than a decade after the crime, fellow prison inmates confessed to being the real robbers. Clearly, the police had manufactured this unfortunate man’s conviction.

The book concentrates on explaining how the police are trained to investigate crimes and is focused on the various investigative methods used, concentrating on visual representations, including fingerprints, maps, and sketches to photographs and reenactments (p. 3). Lim engages in a postmodern assessment of this, replete with questions of how “facts” are created—he argues that they gain their “facticity [*sic*] from aesthetic rules . . .” (p. 3)—and how these visual representations become a means for generating “new information” as the police contemplate these representations (p. 4). Lim argues that by “acknowledging the productive nature of images, in addition to their symbolic functions, one can see that policing is fundamentally an interactive, creative endeavor as much as a disciplinary one” (pp. 8–9). This interaction and its manipulation mean the “deployment of state violence is seen as justified, desirable, and necessary” in society (p. 9).

Chapter 1 discusses the historical development of policing. The author argues that the inauguration and growth of the police force was in response to elite concerns about crime in a rapidly developing Bangkok that was a “ramshackle, transient place” (p. 12) where crime was identified as a “problem” (pp. 16–24). He shows that the police and bureaucracy were ill prepared to deal with rising crime, and this resulted in bureaucratic reform and increased training for the police. As the force developed, the public got to know it, and the police and public developed “a set of routines to help them make sense of the noise of daily life, to come to grips with the violence and crime that plague Thai society” (p. 33).

Yet, as the author observes, although force was outlawed in 1895, it was not unusual for police

officers and civilian officials to use force in extracting confessions. Lim says that beating confessions from suspects “was still employed well into the 1920s and 1930s (and some would say is still today)” (p. 29). The parenthetical comment is unnecessary ambivalent; numerous authoritative reports have shown that the police and military regularly use beatings and torture against detainees and suspects.

Chapter 2 is an account of how the police force began to modernize and develop its “sets of routines” for investigating crimes, mainly examining the early part of the twentieth century. This is a story of the development of an “ostensibly scientific” approach to investigation (p. 35), involving statistics, photography, fingerprints, crime and crime scene reports, and other scientific investigation techniques. All these techniques needed to be taught to police and trainees, and Lim carefully details the ways in which this was handled, relying mainly on the manuals developed for the purpose. This chapter is insightful and carefully developed. My lingering question relates to the relationship between the police and the broader justice system, including the judiciary and the prison system, which is not addressed by the author.

In Chapter 3 Lim turns to “mapping,” relating the ways in which the police were trained not just to delineate space but how to constantly monitor and surveil it. While Lim introduces the chapter with a promise to indicate how preemptive violence by the state is justified, he does not fully deliver, being sidetracked into a discussion of cosmology.

Chapter 4 sees the author returning to the reenactment of crimes, first mentioned in the discussion of the Duncan murder. While these probably began in the 1920s (p. 89), Lim focuses on the relationship that developed between the police and the press, mediated by these performances. Lim dates the relationship to the early 1950s, involving photographs and later film and video coverage of crime reenactments. Given that these usually take place after a suspect’s confession has been obtained, both the police and public tend to view reenactments as accurate and perhaps even cathartic. In this relationship, the police can also manipulate perceptions. The current military regime in Bangkok has been especially manipulative. It is no surprise to see police parade the regime’s political opponents, dressing them up and telling them how to behave, pointing weapons, and so on (see *Bangkok Post*, September 14, 2014). The confession and reenactment are mutually reinforcing “evidence” when suspects are taken to trial. A “freely given” confession more or less guarantees a conviction (p. 93). So important is the confession that courts provide an incentive to suspects, tending to halve jail time for those who confess. For the police, the way to demonstrate to the court that a confession was not coerced is to have the suspect reenact the crime (p. 95). That the press likes a good crime story means that reenactments are mutually beneficial for media and police (p. 105).

This attention to the public naming and shaming of those who have confessed accords with other efforts to maintain the impunity enjoyed by the authorities when they are involved in extrajudicial killings. It is not uncommon for such murders to be waved away as a “bad person” getting

their “proper” punishment (p. 103). In recent years, southern Malay Muslims and alleged drug users and traffickers have met this fate, with the authorities smearing the disappeared and those who die in custody as “violent separatists” or “drug traffickers” (see Wassana 2017).

Lim begins Chapter 5 with the observation that “conspiracy theory” has become a “governing rubric or narrative architecture” that “endures to shape the way in which Thais interpret current events” (p. 114). In this chapter Lim argues that this “unfortunate situation,” an “entrenched cynicism and general air of suspicion,” is directly linked to the Cold War and the “brutal deployment of physical force by competing agents of the Thai state” (p. 114). He details the aid to police provided by the United States and has data on the huge expansion of numbers and weaponry this permitted as the police developed paramilitary capabilities. Lim details several events that he considers conspiracies, from the shooting death of King Ananda in 1946, on the wrong end of a US-supplied weapon, to recent “visualizations” of alleged anti-monarchy conspiracies. Lim concludes that the conspiracies were neither spontaneous nor natural. Rather, he says, they resulted from a “deliberate program of misrepresentation . . .” (p. 133) designed for political purposes and a “strategy of elites against their enemies, real and perceived” (p. 134).

In his conclusion, the author returns to his theoretical concerns and his emphasis on images, noting that visual representations can take many forms and can have multiple functions and readings. In essence, images and their uses are socially and politically constructed. Images and words may help people to make sense of the world, but they may also be used to concoct a reality for readers and viewers. Lim makes these points succinctly, and aside from some lapses into post-modern language manufacture, his summing up is well written. At the same time, this reader felt somewhat disappointed when some of the cases mentioned in the text, including the Sherry Ann Duncan and King Ananda cases, were left as mysteries. But then, much that the Thai police do lacks transparency and is as illegal as the crimes investigated. How such a huge force is so remarkably opaque, inept, and corrupt remains a mystery.

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Mapping Chinese Rangoon: Place and Nation among the Sino-Burmese

JAYDE LIN ROBERTS

Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2016, xvii+200pp.

Chinese immigration into Myanmar from Yunnan existed before the colonization of Myanmar in the eighteenth century. However, the trickle of Chinese traders from southern China via Malaya and Singapore grew in number after the British takeover. Thus, there developed in Yangon—or Rangoon, the former Romanization—a small but economically and politically significant Chinatown in the western reaches of the new city the British built on the site of a small Burmese fishing village. Prior to then, Yangon, meaning “end of strife,” contained its own China wharf at the foot of the main road up to the fabled Shwe Dagon Pagoda. The author of *Mapping Chinese Rangoon*, Dr. Jayde Lin Roberts, who describes herself as an “interdisciplinary scholar of the built environment,” provides a contemporary impression of how descendants of those immigrants have coped in what was to their ancestors a new home but one by now in which they are an integral, if sometimes distinctive, part.

As with many younger scholars these days, the author of *Mapping Chinese Rangoon* tends to lean in the direction of the autobiographical. Similarly, she takes a dim view of efforts by governments to manage their affairs in an orderly and rational fashion, seeing these as “strong constraints” to be “maneuvered around.” For example, she sees the grid layout of downtown Yangon, the western part of which is Chinatown, as an effort to control the population rather than an effort to raise capital for the city’s hygienic development and a failed attempt to construct a self-cleaning drainage system based on the tides of the Yangon River. Similarly, she tends to accept uncritically commonly heard criticisms of more recent Myanmar governments, such as the accusation that a singular Myanmar national identity is promoted even though in public cultural performances and the country’s citizenship legislation, the multiethnic nature of the indigenous Myanmar society is celebrated and made real. Nor does she note the irony that it was an army-owned television station that the Chinese community chose to publicize its New Year celebrations.

Roberts rightly draws attention to the internal divisions within Yangon’s Chinatown, the northern part being largely Cantonese and the southern Hokkien, each with its respective temples, clan houses, and associations. The book gives rather more attention to the Hokkien community than to the Cantonese, and the author makes little reference to the Yunnanese Chinese population that has entered Myanmar over many years and is centered on Mandalay and other northern cities. Unlike Dr. Li Yi in her *Chinese in Colonial Burma: A Migrant Community in a Multiethnic State* (2017) and *Yunnanese Chinese in Myanmar: Past and Present* (2015), *Mapping Chinese Rangoon* emphasizes what divides the different Chinese linguistic communities rather than noting the logic of the state in censuses and forms, commerce and trade, and popular stereotypes that ignore the different origins of people who identify themselves as Chinese in the country.

Missing from *Mapping Chinese Rangoon* is any serious discussion of the political role of the Chinese community in the country's politics. Given that many of them were long-term residents in what was the nation's capital until 2006, with strong interests in Chinese as well as Burmese politics, and key roles in business, this oversight is a serious weakness in the author's account. Roberts, for example, states that certain claims are unsubstantiated, such as that it was a member of the Myanmar Chinese community that assisted Thakin Aung San on his journey to Amoy to seek support in 1940 from the Chinese Communist Party or that a Chinese society provided financial support for the anti-Japanese resistance in 1944. A little research on her part would have easily verified the claims. Many anti-Japanese and pro-Communist Chinese saw themselves as both Chinese patriots and Myanmar nationalists and acted accordingly, while others had no compunction in financially supporting Myanmar politicians into positions where favors could be reciprocated.

Also missing from *Mapping Chinese Rangoon* is a complete account of the economic role of the Chinese community. While perhaps the author is correct in her claim that the majority of Chinese in the capital were primarily traders, often serving as middlemen between Indian and British suppliers and the ubiquitous Chinese shopkeepers found in every village and town in the Ayeyarwady Delta, some attention might have been given to the many Chinese who worked as dock laborers or carpenters; or, at the other end of the social scale, the extremely wealthy Chinese who were once stalwarts of the Oriental Club and the Turf Club and mixed and mingled both before and after independence with the upper reaches of Yangon's multiracial high society. While the author does mention Chin Tsong Palace and its prominent and extremely wealthy builder, Lim Chin Tsong, several times, the irony that it became under General Ne Win's military government the Myanmar minister of culture's office passes her by.

Other voids in the volume would seem apparent. There is no discussion of the presence or absence of the Chinese community in crime despite the long-term stereotyping of Rangoon's Chinatown as being a center of vice, including opium dens and illegal gambling parlors and drinking venues. Nor is there any account of the importance that Chinese restaurants had—and continue to have—on the city's eating habits. Before 1988, if you wanted to eat out in the evening in the city, almost the only restaurants available were Chinese; there, black marketers would gather with bottles of brandy and whiskey to while away the evening. Some of these restaurants, several miles from Chinatown—demonstrating that the Chinese community was not as geographically concentrated as *Mapping Chinese Rangoon* implies—are now gone, but their memories live on. Others persist, such as the famous Fushan Si, which was renovated while Roberts was conducting her research.

Mapping Chinese Rangoon is rich in ethnographic vignettes, and that is one of its strengths. However, the research is far from exhaustive; and much of what is important to understanding the place of Chinese and of Chinese descendants now intermarried with Burmese and others in the

polyglot city of Yangon is missing from the book. It has its virtues, however, as it is nicely illustrated from the author's collection of personal photographs. Her description of the multiethnic nature of contemporary dragon dance competitions during Chinese New Year is fascinating. While the author rightly draws attention to the travails faced by Chinese in Yangon as descendants of the greater China in a country inherently suspicious of China, it is obvious from her account that actually life for many, if not most, of Yangon's Chinese and Chinese-descended residents has its moments of joy and contentment, perhaps more than she recognizes. The volume is an introduction, almost a guide, to parts of the life of Chinese in Yangon in the very recent past, but we await a more detailed and analytical definitive statement.

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Feeding Manila in Peace and War, 1850–1945

DANIEL F. DOEPPERS

Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2016, xvii+443pp.

How does one feed a primary colonial city in a span of a century, given its complex social, political, ecological, demographic, and cultural dimensions? Daniel F. Doeppers's most recent book, *Feeding Manila in Peace and War, 1850–1945*, is able to successfully weave a narrative to the multilayered history of provisioning the colonial city of Manila. The book covers a century of the urban history of Manila as the city experienced a series of colonial transitions between its three major colonizers. It discusses the urban experience of Manila during periods of peace, revolutionary war, anticolonial resistance, epidemic and epizootic outbreaks, and demographic change.

Doeppers divides the history of provisioning Manila through the complex web of trade and social networks related to the subject matter. The first part deals with rice as a major staple in the diet of the majority of inhabitants in the city. The second deals with the many different forms of *ulam* (viands) that are usually eaten with rice. The third part deals with the conditions related to water and other drinks, as well as the introduction of different food and drink "novelty" items. Lastly, the book discusses the disruption of the established provisioning system that occurred

during the Japanese occupation. During the Second World War trade and production patterns were interrupted, which changed most of the existing provisioning system in the city. The war also had a negative impact on the local population, especially the resultant mass starvation that characterized the period.

Because of the complexity of the topic covered by the book, Doeppers employs the methodological tools of different disciplines to create his narrative. Provisioning a city should include a narrative of population movements, of international and local (temporary or permanent) migration patterns, of the impact of food on the epidemiological transition of the urban center, as well as mortality and morbidity figures. Through his appreciation of the demographic impact of provisioning the city, Doeppers discusses the role of ethnic Chinese traders not only from China but also from among the Chinese who eventually settled in the Philippines to participate in the network of trade and commerce that provisioning entailed. He also discusses the role of Spanish, American, Japanese, and other European and Southeast Asian peoples in defining the contours of food and trade in Manila. Most important, the author is able to highlight the role of the local population of Manila and other parts of the archipelago as they form part of the core population that not only consumed the food being brought to the city but also took part in its multifaceted system of exchange.

The narrative is also one of social relations and urban class structure in colonial Manila. The author discusses the formation of local and national elites as they engaged in activities related to provisioning the city's growing population. He narrates the experiences of investors, traders, landowners, storehouse managers, and other emerging elites who were engaged in food production, exchange, and distribution. The discussion of the growth and decline of oligarchic families, shifts and splits in the entrepreneurial history of a number of Philippine-based firms, and the history of emerging corporations is one of the most interesting portions of the book.

Doeppers also discusses details regarding the history of everyday life of ordinary *tenderas/os* (vendors), peasant farmers, salt producers, carabao hustlers and *tulisanes* (bandits), urban and rural poor, women workers, and, during periods of famine, starvation, wars, and revolution, the history of the experiences of local internal refugees, of those who were suffering from mass starvation resulting from human-made and natural calamities in history. He employs various historiographical tools, such as oral history interviews (some collected from as far back as 40 years ago), memoirs, recollections from other scholars and colleagues, and published family histories and biographies that were cleverly used to provide the story of personal experiences of individual participants that form part of the historical narrative.

While Doeppers's history is focused primarily on the human experience in relation to food, the geographer in the author is able to successfully integrate the ecological dimensions of food provisioning. In this regard, Doeppers discusses not only the urban geography of Manila but also the maritime and riverine networks, the mountain ranges, the agricultural plains, and the different

islands that supported the enterprise of provisioning the city. Even non-human elements that affected the provisioning of the city—such as the impact of the rinderpest epidemic on meat and milk consumption; the cholera epidemic and the unsuccessful attempts at introducing prohibitions on vegetable and water consumption; the cyclical blight that affected the production of certain cash crops like coffee; and the influenza pandemic's impact on betel nut chewing—are all combined to provide a unified picture of the city in the throes of epidemics, epizootics, and plant disease outbreaks. Moreover, the changing ecology of Manila and its environs is cleverly discussed by the author in relation to shifts in transportation systems, food technology, food preservation and distribution networks, and the use of emerging technologies with new products that altered the course of provisioning the city within a century.

Another important feature of the book is its clever use of maps, charts, graphs, and tables that not only assist the reader with a visual break in the long, detailed, and very interesting historical narrative of Manila's social history but also provide the necessary tools for readers to appreciate the conditions of the different periods covered by the book.

Although Manila was originally a Tagalog community, the nineteenth century evidently made the city more cosmopolitan and indeed the center of trade for the archipelago. Hence, the history of provisioning the city is naturally appreciated through the support network provided by the other Philippine provinces and international commerce. The importance of rice coming from Central and Northern Luzon, as well as Vietnam and Burma; of fish and fish products from Manila Bay, Laguna de Bay, and the Luzon and Visayas coasts; of coffee from Batangas and Indonesia; of vegetables from the Cordillera and China; and the histories of the many different products that fed the city become an integral part of the narrative. It is therefore not only a book about the urban history of Manila but also a history of the different localities as they responded to, and were affected by, the demands of the growing city for its provisions. This also provides the opportunity for the author to discuss the dynamic transformation of the diet of the population—as they became not only consumers of products coming from different places, but also recipients of complex and dynamic culinary traditions from different localities that affected their taste buds and cuisine.

Doeppers is correct in identifying the primacy and centrality of rice in the history of feeding Manila. The first and most extensive elaboration of a food product found in the book is devoted to rice. It is to be noted that even in linguistic terms, rice occupied a central, complex web of expression that can be further elaborated. As a matter of fact, the word for cooked rice (*kanin*) is the same term that Tagalogs use to refer to the very act of eating. Hence, *Kanin mo ito* may mean both “This is your cooked rice” and “Eat this.” Moreover, the need to utilize different terms for the different stages of rice production and preparation signifies the importance of the staple in the culinary vocabulary of rice in Tagalog. Hence, the need to distinguish *palay* (unhusked rice), *bigas* (husked, but uncooked rice), *kanin* (newly cooked rice), *saing/sinaing* (steamed rice), *tutong* (burnt rice at the bottom of the *palayok*); *malata* (cooked rice, but with more rice water in it); *malagat*/

maligat (cooked rice, but with less rice water in it); *malagkit* (sticky rice); *bahaw* (rice cooked hours or the day before, best for *sinangag*); *sinangag* (fried rice, usually using *bahaw* but not *kanin*); and the many other varieties of food using rice, generically called *kakanin* (dessert, but also derived from *kanin*) either in pounded or sticky form (*bibingka*, *biko*, *sapin sapin*, *puto*, *putobumbong*, *kalamay*, etc.). The impact of foreign influences on rice consumption led to the development of new forms of rice preparation, with *lugao* (porridge) and *chamorado* (chocolate rice porridge) becoming popular and, as Doeppers mentions, localized in Manila and Philippine cuisine.

While the notion of *ulam* may be appreciated in the Philippines as the generic term for anything that is eaten with rice, as the author correctly notes, it should be pointed out that for most of the Tagalog communities, everyday *ulam* is always fish or fish based. As a matter of fact, other Philippine languages are more explicit in this regard, as the terms for *ulam* and fish are identical and interchangeable, an indication that fish and fish product consumption is always done to complement *kanin* and therefore is always the everyday *ulam*. The terms for *ulam* and fish are the same for Ilocano (*sida*), Bicol (*sira*), Kapampangan (*asan*), and Pangasinan (*sira*). Meat and meat product consumption, therefore, is often appreciated as feast food; vegetables and fruit are usually cooked with fish for everyday consumption, or with meat for feast days.

Toponymic renderings of historical interpretations also provide some clues that Doeppers uses to describe the conditions of supplying and provisioning food for the city. Thus, Bauan is correctly identified as historically a good source of garlic, and Pangasinan is well known for salt production. Other possibilities to expand this interpretation of the importance of place names to provisioning can further add to Doeppers's narrative of provisioning Manila. Fish pens were naturally found in Manila Bay, with Baclaran as one of its major locations (*baklad*, fish pens). Other traditional place names also reveal similar information; thus, plant names, wood products, and tree species such as Indang (*Artocarpus cumingianus* Trec. Moraceae); Cauayan (*Bambusa blumeana* J. A. & J. A. Schult); Dao (*Dracontomelon dao* [Blco.] Merr & Rolfe); Talisay (*Terminalia catappa* L.); Sampalok (*Tamarindus indica* L.), to name a few, were also place names in the Philippines.

Theoretically grounded, methodologically sophisticated, and written in outstanding scholarly narrative, the book is able to integrate different elements of the history of Manila, the archipelago, and the region in a thought-provoking, remarkable account that spans the history of an entire century. The book is a solid contribution to historical scholarship and paves the way for other scholars of Southeast Asian studies, urban history, Philippine studies, and social history to follow the academic rigor that the author clearly manifests in this outstanding work.

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The Other Kuala Lumpur: Living in the Shadows of a Globalising Southeast Asian City

YEOH SENG GUAN, ed.

London and New York: Routledge, 2014, xiii+220pp.

The rapid growth of Asian cities in recent decades, fueled by neoliberal policies, the accelerating production of real estate, and the global circulation of unprecedented amounts of capital, has received a great deal of scholarly attention over the past two decades. Scholarship has focused particularly on the political elites and their urban policies, the command and control centers of global capital, and the movers and shakers who circulate ideas. As a counter to the study of top-down urban processes and urban spectacles, there have been growing calls for empirical studies that examine how “regular” or marginalized urban residents are affected by these sudden urban changes, how they negotiate fragmentary spaces, and the survival strategies they develop in an environment that is hostile to their presence. *The Other Kuala Lumpur: Living in the Shadows of a Globalising Southeast Asian City* is a valuable contribution to this literature. Edited by Yeoh Seng Guan, the collection seeks to illuminate the Kuala Lumpur beyond its ambitious development agenda and “world-class” aspirations. Eight essays document the lives of residents—both citizens and non-citizens—who live in the “other Kuala Lumpur,” on the fringes and in the shadows of a city undergoing massive urban change.

The Other Kuala Lumpur takes a similar approach to Yasser Elsheshtawy’s insightful work on the United Arab Emirates, particularly in *Dubai: Behind an Urban Spectacle* (2010), a book that also seeks to illuminate the lives of subaltern residents in a city that aspires to be a world-class global city. A key difference between the contexts of Dubai and Kuala Lumpur lies in the composition of residents who are marginalized from developmentalist growth agendas. Residents of Dubai who hold Emirati citizenship are overwhelmingly Arab Muslims, while multireligious and multiethnic non-citizens are socially and spatially segregated from the Emirati population, with no path to citizenship.

In contrast, Kuala Lumpur is a far messier and more complex social milieu than Dubai. Malaysia is a highly diverse country consisting of people with a variety of ancestral origins (China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia), varied claims to the land, different legal statuses, and multiple religions (Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Christian, Confucian, Sikh). The highly uneven distribution of resources and opportunities introduced during the colonial era has been maintained and reproduced decades after independence, a dynamic that has been challenged through controversial preferential affirma-

tive action (Bumiputra) policies intended to redistribute power and wealth to Malays and away from ethnic Chinese. Against the backdrop of massive urban and economic changes and brewing racial, religious, and socioeconomic tension, *The Other Kuala Lumpur* provides excellent insight into the lives of those left behind by a state hungry to gain recognition as a developed nation. The collection explores the multiple competing forces that serve to marginalize and exclude particular residents of Kuala Lumpur and provides insight into the creative and unexpected ways in which minority communities find ways to work around or resist dominant forces.

Yeoh provides a strong introduction that ties the investigation of marginalized residents to broader scholarly work on capital cities in Southeast Asia, rapid urban development in Asia, and “multiple modernities” beyond the Euro-American framework. Eight empirical chapters each examine a different marginalized group (including street vendors, refugees, and religious, ethnic, and sexual minorities) and illuminate their alterity, while highlighting the disjuncture between state-driven aspirations and residents’ lived realities as Kuala Lumpur tries to “keep up with the moving target of modernity and the ‘developed world’” (p. 2).

Chapter 2 examines street vending in two of Kuala Lumpur’s most important historic districts for tourism: Chinatown and Masjid India (India Mosque). In the context of “upgrading” in the districts to invigorate tourism, more regulations have been imposed on vendors. Josh Lepawsky and Rodney C. Jubilado provide an excellent analysis of how City Hall has marketed each place to accentuate a legible and largely invented mono-ethnic character of each district through iconic architecture, thus materializing notions of “tradition” and “authenticity.” At the same time, City Hall has sought to regulate street vendors’ behavior in a way that conforms to official understandings of heritage identity and is recognizable to tourists. Through an examination of street vendors, the chapter argues that globalization is not solely an external force imposed from the outside. While globalization is a driving force shaping “heritage” districts, street vendors have subaltern agency and also function as globalizers with connections to other countries through their transnational entrepreneurial activities.

Chapters 3 and 7 focus on vulnerable residents of Kuala Lumpur whose status is precarious or illegal. Richard Baxstrom investigates Brickfields, a historic working-class district generally identified (inaccurately) to be dominated by South Asians. As a consequence of the large-scale redevelopment of a rail hub and monorail located in and adjacent to Brickfields, many residents have been forced to move out or to live in uncertainty about their futures. The chapter traces the complex relationships between city planning and development, the state, the law, and everyday experiences of Brickfields residents in order to reveal the gap between the promise of the law as a set of regulations and the experience of the law by local subjects. As a vulnerable population of mainly renters and unregistered occupants of their land, residents could make no formal claims on the state to resist its development plans for their neighborhood. While most residents supported the techno-rational logic of the state’s modernization projects, they are frustrated that as non-

owners they were never informed about when or how their land would be taken, a situation that, while legal, violates their sense of justice and due process.

In Chapter 7 Alice Nah investigates how asylum seekers, refugees, and stateless people live, adapt, and cope in a securitized urban landscape designed for their exclusion. She explores the various strategies that refugees take to reduce their vulnerability, including seeking to obtain identity documents, attempting to “blend in” with the cityscape, and forming self-help groups and community organizations. Nah demonstrates how they creatively and resourcefully negotiate their precarious and unsettled position and how they become entwined in various power relations.

Chapter 4 turns to examine the Petronas Towers, the iconic twin skyscrapers that were the tallest in the world and are an integral part of Kuala Lumpur’s skyline and the national imaginary. Julian Lee argues that the spectacle of the world’s tallest towers and their Muslim designs carry an important ideological message about the country’s global aspirations and economic achievement, while excluding non-Muslim/Malay Malaysians from a powerful symbol of national progress. Despite the power of the state to project its vision onto the urban landscape, the author argues that Malaysian citizens have not passively accepted this vision. While the state attempts to smother all forms of dissent, the author documents how Malaysians have contested the state’s vision in a variety of ways, particularly through graffiti and street demonstrations.

Chapters 5 and 6 explore the varied interpretations of religion by Muslims and Hindus and illustrate the ways in which this variation is reflected in the practice of worshipers. In Chapter 5 Johan Fischer examines how Muslims interpret their religious beliefs and obligations, and how this is embedded in consumption patterns among Muslims in Malaysia. Fischer suggests that Islam in Malaysia has increasingly become a “discursive tradition” with the “capability to construct, maintain and identify ‘proper Islamic’ practices” (p. 94). For some Muslims, consuming halal food becomes an important way to enact patriotic nationalism, foster a sense of authenticity, and engage in public performances of religious beliefs. In Chapter 6 Vineeta Sinha provides a fascinating look into how Hindus have responded to the recent destruction of urban temples in a variety of ways: the construction of informal, non-registered “jungle temples,” the creation of temples in private apartments and homes, temples that exist only in cyberspace, and through formal legal attempts to negotiate and resist destruction. Both chapters illustrate the wide variety of practices and beliefs among religious communities and highlight the futility of making generalizations about them.

Chapter 8, by Julian Lee, analyzes a now-canceled annual event for sexual minorities called *Seksualiti Merdeka* (Sexuality independence) within the context of Malaysia’s increasingly heteronormative laws, policies, and cultural norms. Lee provides a useful historical background on the culture of sexual diversity in the region that underscores Malaysia’s recent troubling steps toward intolerance and fundamentalism. The chapter documents how *Seksualiti Merdeka* engaged in advocacy and community strengthening, and promoted survival tactics for sexual minorities and explained the circumstances that led to its ban, while contextualizing the event within the broader

socio-political climate and wider activities of the civil society movement.

In the final chapter, S. Nagarajan and Andrew Willford examine residents of Bukit Jalil, the last plantation in Kuala Lumpur, which was destroyed around the turn of the millennium. The authors document the struggle of the rubber tappers to save their homes, Tamil primary school, and century-old Hindu temple and suggest that this struggle is representative of many silenced claims upon a contested landscape that are largely ignored in the state's narrative of national development. The residents' struggles are compounded by the perception that Indonesian migrants squatting nearby and in a similarly precarious living situation receive preferential treatment based on their racial identification with Malays and will eventually be considered Bumiputra, while Tamil Malaysians feel trapped without rights or recourse at the bottom of the socioeconomic hierarchy solely because of their race.

A common thread that connects the chapters is the focus on the variety of creative ways in which marginalized, vulnerable, or minority communities adapt and cope. At the same time, the collection does not glamorize their struggles as "weapons of the weak" or overstate their agency in the context of deeply unequal power relations. One minor quibble I have with the collection is with the dichotomy constructed between those living "in the shadows" in the "other Kuala Lumpur" versus those living "in the light," who ostensibly enjoy power, stability, and safety. Given the intersectionality of all social identities, one does not necessarily need to be poor, a refugee, or a religious or sexual minority to experience vulnerability. Even those living mainstream lives can be marginalized in particular aspects of their lives (e.g., spousal/elder/child abuse, addiction, gender discrimination, and so on).

The Other Kuala Lumpur is a valuable reminder of the unique power of edited collections to engage in sustained exploration of a topic through multiple points of view and disciplinary perspectives, and in a variety of empirical contexts. The collection's cohesive theme and nuanced and rigorous empirical contributions make *The Other Kuala Lumpur* an excellent and highly readable addition to the scholarship on those negatively affected by urban renewal, ethno-religious nationalism, and state aspirations of globalization and modernization in Malaysia and Southeast Asia more broadly.

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Asian Tigers, African Lions: Comparing the Development Performance of Southeast Asia and Africa

BERNARD BERENDSEN, TON DIETZ, HENK SCHULTE NORDHOLT, and ROEL VAN DER VEEN, eds.

Leiden: Brill, 2013, xiv+524pp.

The title “Asian Tigers, African Lions” is exactly the issue addressed by this monograph. The tiger and the lion are viewed as the kings of beasts in Asia and Africa respectively; even people who are not interested in fauna find this to be a metaphor they can relate to. However, the two creatures have a vital difference: the lion, with his admirable mane, waits for the lioness to bring back the prey without doing anything himself; by contrast, the tiger is solitary and both males and females go hunting alone.

The Netherlands played a significant part in the reduction of poverty in Indonesia for 50 years (1949–99). From this successful experience, the Netherlands developed a poverty reduction project in Africa. It looked into agricultural development for 50 years in both Asia and Africa to identify the main reasons why Asian countries became richer while African countries remain poor.

Asian Tigers, African Lions: Comparing the Development Performance of Southeast Asia and Africa is the outcome of a research project financed by the Netherlands Minister for Development Cooperation in 2006. Eight countries were selected from Southeast Asia (Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam, and Cambodia) and Sub-Saharan Africa (Nigeria, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda). The project set-up was innovative, with both African and Asian researchers being included to conduct research that was strictly comparative.

The monograph starts with an introduction to the project. The main part of the monograph consists of comparisons between four Southeast Asian and four African countries in diverse stages of development. The eight countries are divided into four pairs and compared. Each pair was selected such that the two countries have some similarities.

In Part 1, Chapter 1, “Tracking Development,” Bernard Berendsen and Roel van der Veen note that Sub-Saharan African countries have not become richer after independence while countries in Southeast Asia have. Why are there Asian tigers but no African lions? This monograph focuses on the bifurcation point between Southeast Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa in their development trajectories. With both regions still substantially under European rule in the middle of the twentieth century, they have some historical similarities. However, Africa was strongly affected by the slave trade; and the economy and proprietary industries did not develop as a result of their losing labor (Fukui *et al.* 1999). The authors point out that the most remarkable difference between the two regions was the strong emphasis on agriculture in Southeast Asia.

In Chapter 2 David Henley and Jan Kees van Donge analyze the diverging paths of the two regions’ development. Southeast Asia and Africa have some historical and geographical similarities:

since the 1960s both regions have been characterized by corruption and a lack of “good governance.” However, their development has followed different paths. This chapter analyzes development issues in Southeast Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. Governments in Southeast Asia are growing faster, and the economies have sustained macroeconomic stability. African regimes have been far less effective in macroeconomic oversight.

In his study of cross-regional development comparisons, Peter Lewis considers a historical approach, structural approach, policy choice, institutional approach, and political context. On the African continent, national borders were created by colonial countries without consideration of geography, demography, social groups, and composition of the economy. Even after the colonial era ended, many of the large enterprises in Africa were under foreign control. Foreign investment, while crucial, can also have unwelcome effects. In many circumstances, transnational companies create few linkages within host economies and crowd out local entrepreneurship. Geographically, since many African countries have no access to the sea they have limited channels for trade. That limitation can be mitigated through the government’s provision of public goods: transportation infrastructure, health programs, agricultural research, extension services, and irrigation.

Policy choices and institutional development depend on the preferences of political leaders. For example, most African governments fixed their exchange rates and encouraged protectionist trade and investment regimes. Because of this, African economies were severely buffeted by external shocks, especially during the oil spikes and international recession of the 1970s. This chapter concludes that leadership, consensus, coordination problems, and coalition building are integral to the politics of development. Southeast Asia is more successful in its political development, while Africa continues to face political challenges.

Ton Dietz notes that differences in the performance of the agricultural sector help to explain “Southeast Asia’s economic miracle” and “Africa’s economic stagnation.” He compares the performance of agriculture and livestock against population growth in the eight countries between 1961 and 2009, as well as the speed of demographic and agricultural change in the eight countries. Dietz’s chapter compares yields of cereal, root, and tubers as well as the number of livestock within the eight countries. The top three countries in overall rank among the eight are in South Asia. There are a few reasons why Africa has lagged in agricultural development. Africa is the only place where livestock rearing has overtaken agricultural development. Due to the dryness of the land there, the continent has a history of pastoralism rather than agriculture (Kitagawa and Takahashi 2004, Ch. 1). Compared to Asian countries, Africa may have an environment in which agriculture is difficult to develop.

Parts 2 to 5 of this monograph are comparative studies, with countries formed into pairs based on certain similarities between them. The first pair is Nigeria and Indonesia. They have both experienced long periods of military rule, are similarly ranked in the Corruption Perceptions Index, and are large and densely populated. They are also rich in natural resources, such as oil. The

second pair is Kenya and Malaysia, both of which have gone down the capitalist road, relying on private ownership. The next pair is Tanzania and Vietnam, which rely on state ownership and direct government intervention. The last pair is Uganda and Cambodia, two cases of post-conflict reconstruction.

In the case of Nigeria and Indonesia, there is a discussion on the impact of corruption on economic development. From the studies, it is clear that corruption is harmful to development. The majority of poor countries face high levels of corruption in politics. Capital, influential politicians, and local entrepreneurs are inseparable especially in countries with low GDP.

The country pair of Kenya and Malaysia is discussed with respect to foreign direct investment. Both countries have a long history of reliance on FDI in economic development. However, two questions are significant: First, what are the determinants of FDI? Second, what is the economic impact of FDI on economic growth? FDI was an important trigger for the development of the Malaysian economy; by contrast, in Kenya it did not have a significant effect. J. B. Ang (2008) finds a positive and significant impact of FDI on infrastructure in Malaysia in the long term. On the other hand, Kenya neglected its infrastructure over the years, and this has been a concern to many foreign investors. This problem is not unique to Kenya but is found in Sub-Saharan Africa generally. Most of the Asian success models are not applicable to Africa. Kitagawa Katsuhiko and Takahashi Motoki (2004) remark that the African continent keeps evolving its own history.

Vietnam and Tanzania both put a great effort into cashew marketing as well as their textile industry. Cashew cultivation is an important source of income and employment in both Vietnam and Tanzania. Unlike the many literature reviews in this monograph, the chapter on these two countries is based on fieldwork. Blandina Kilama explains that cashew production is responsible for the economic disparity between the two countries. Vietnam has a higher yield per hectare than Tanzania because its density of cashew trees is much higher.

In the case of Cambodia and Uganda, Kheang Un discusses their road networks, especially in rural areas. He says that road development is directly linked to poverty reduction. With most Southeast countries having coastal access, development of the road network from the sea is an important factor in economic development due to trade. However, since many African countries do not have direct access to the sea, they are at a disadvantage in terms of distribution (Obayashi 2003). Kheang Un points out that the condition of the rural road network is better in Cambodia than in Uganda. Cambodia appears to have placed a much higher priority on investing in its rural road network. In addition, the road development patterns in Uganda and Cambodia are different because Cambodia is ethnically homogenous while Uganda is ethnically diverse; Uganda's diversity makes for more difficult financial planning and decision making.

This monograph considers and discusses the economic development of Southeast Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa over 50 years. The contributors describe the situation in these two regions from the point of view of historical leaders, law enforcement, agriculture policies, primary educa-

tion, and infrastructure development against an economic paradigm. Abundant case studies and details are summarized well. It is regrettable that I was left with the strong impression that Southeast Asia is a developmental success while Africa is not. Why have many African countries been unable to utilize foreign aid successfully for their own development? Probably the potential of Africa is beyond the range of our understanding.

Even though the colonial era ended a few decades ago, the idea persists—often unintentionally—among those who try to impose something upon the continent that African people are still underdeveloped or inferior (Shigeta 2001). I wonder whether such thoughts interfere with the development of African countries. With the advent of new leaders, and well-formed governance and policies, once African countries find their own way they have the potential to develop dramatically.

Although they belong to different species, Asian tigers and African lions are classified in the same family and genus, as well as being at the vertex of the food chain in their respective region. But their habitat, behavior, and ecological history are different. It is not impossible for African countries to be African lions. African lions have their own life history that is different from that of Asian tigers.

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The Dance That Makes You Vanish: Cultural Reconstruction in Post-Genocide Indonesia

RACHMI DIYAH LARASATI

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In the decades following the violent mass annihilation of suspected Communist sympathizers and members of the Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI, Partai Komunis Indonesia) during Suharto's coup d'état (1965–66) and subsequent New Order regime (1965–98), there was a systematic suppression of information concerning the events and killings surrounding this period. Rachmi Diyah Larasati's *The Dance That Makes You Vanish: Cultural Reconstruction in Post-Genocide Indonesia* is one of the several recent accounts of these events surfacing after decades of silence. Larasati provides an intensely personal testimony of the indoctrination and erasure that defined Suharto's regime, one that violently stamped out "unclean" bodies that were seen as conflicting with the New Order while propping up dogmatic actors in the state's nationalist agenda. The author's positionality provides a unique account of these events and the role that Indonesian traditional dance and wider arts culture played in the process. Larasati's own family is full of artists who disappeared during the New Order, many of whom were killed for their vague connections to leftist ideology, especially those affiliated with the feminist organization known as Gerwani. The value of the insight provided by Larasati's firsthand experience as a member of this artistic family, as a dancer, and as a state-sponsored cultural ambassador herself cannot be overstated.

During the New Order years, state-sponsored censorship was employed to closely monitor the arts, with government officials hired to oversee and mandate guidelines on approved performance characteristics that would erase any association of Communism. Many of these performance guidelines reflected a Javanese hegemony, patriarchy, and exoticized promotion of a unified Indonesia, especially with regard to the image of the female dancing body. The government routinely spread propaganda stories of non-government-approved female dancers performing for the pleasure of male Communist organizers, thus claiming that many of the female dancers were morally depraved. According to Larasati, female dancers became convenient scapegoats, sensationalized as part of a justification for the perpetuation of violence against supposed left-aligned individuals.

Throughout the book, Larasati presents the state-sanctioned female dancing body as a paradox, one that replicates a culturally reconstructed version of the ideal Indonesian citizen while simultaneously providing a potential platform for subversion, as the dancers become cultural ambassadors of Indonesia on the international stage. She considers those who occupy this post-national space as having a "third body," where "women in alliance with the state are more likely to be granted access to negotiate their mobility, in some sense because of their 'usefulness' within the system that co-opts them" (p. 133). As these individuals transcend the national context, they "embrace the global stage" and in turn gain a new position to resist the co-optative force that

elevated them to such a status (p. 133). Larasati herself enjoys such a platform that allows her to transcend New Order politics as an academic working in the United States in the post-Suharto years. While she acknowledges her own position as trading one hegemonic force for another, her appointment in Western academia continues to provide her with the ability to raise awareness concerning not only the atrocities in Indonesia, but of the United States' support for the Indonesian government during the Cold War—and thus its complicity in the violence that killed a “minimum of hundreds of thousands of citizens” (p. 163).

This book is presented with a fast-paced and condensed urgency, leaving the reader wanting more from the captivating ethnographic data. However, many of Larasati's research participants were wary to discuss the events in question for fear of retaliation even many years after the fall of the New Order regime. As she notes, during interviews, some participants “simply refused to respond or react in any way at all” (p. xx). Furthermore, each chapter has the potential for significant expansion, but presenting the analysis in such a concise manner provides an emergent account that is accessible and ripe to inspire further work on the subject.

The introductory chapter frames the state's patronage of court dances such as *bedhaya* as a perpetuation of an Indonesian patriarchy, as most of the dancers were female and the choreographers male, as well as fulfilling the “West's desire for Indonesian exoticism” during international performances. The author also argues that folk dances, such as *gandrung*, *tayub*, and *jathilan*, were silenced in favor of elevated forms of court dance that unified Indonesia under an imagined Javanese hegemonic identity situated in ancient court traditions. The author frames her work around the idea that these reconstructed versions of dance traditions silenced important village traditions, many practitioners of which were killed during the anti-Communist purge. This chapter's subtitle is “Dancing on the Mass Grave,” referring to state-sponsored performers dancing on the graves of those traditions silenced and individuals killed.

In Chapter 1, “To Remember Differently: Paradoxical Statehood and Preserved Value,” Larasati describes the state's use of the female body to present a peaceful, exoticized image of Indonesia to the world. She notes that “[m]any of those affected by the New Order's massive societal recategorization were artists, a large percentage of whom were female” (p. 5). Many of these women were identified with Gerwani and the artists' guild known as Lekra (the People's Cultural Institution) and were thus considered Communist enemies of the state. These groups were considered leftist because of their feminist and socialist leanings. Artists deemed acceptable by the New Order were recruited to perform state-sanctioned versions of dances. Strikingly, through a vague familial connection to the air force, Larasati herself was able to gain “clean” status as a state dancer despite her wider familial connections to leftist organizations.

Larasati begins Chapter 2 with a sensationalized military report of sexual misconduct by dancers and male patrons during a Communist meeting, revealing the degree to which the government was willing to exploit female dancers in order to promote its agenda. This chapter, “What Is

Left: The Fabricated and the Illicit,” discusses ways that the Suharto government propagated anti-Communist attitudes among citizens by turning “unruly” bodies, such as the female dancing body, into scapegoats (p. 32). The author argues that these bodies were “made into convenient, corporeal symbols of the ongoing ‘evil’ against which the New Order claimed its legitimacy as protector and representative of the idealized nation” (p. 32). She recalls propaganda films shown to her as a school-age child, those intended to fabricate a cultural memory to justify the actions by the government and to cover up the extent of the mass atrocities perpetuated by the Suharto regime. This cultural reconstruction was intended to exert a dominance over cultural identity formation, a reforming of cultural memory that included the performance of specific kinds of dance traditions. The author reveals how the female dancing body was used as a way to demonstrate the difference between an ideal Indonesian citizen and an unruly one.

In Chapter 3, “Historicizing Violence: Memory and the Transmission of the Aesthetic,” Larasati describes ways that dancers circumvented the state’s ideological gerrymandering through state-sponsored dance, not by overt political protest but through small-scale, village, and family-oriented transmission that “implanted fragments of unrestrained ‘memory’ in the minds and movements of many young dancers” (p. 61). These practices are especially important given the significant risk of violence that taking such a stance could elicit. In this chapter I was left wanting more details concerning Larasati’s family members who risked their lives to transmit important cultural expression. With this book as an important beginning, perhaps more ethnographic details of these courageous individuals will surface as the years since the New Order progress and such testimonies become safer to expose.

The next chapter, “Staging Alliances: Cambodia as Cultural Mirror,” switches geographic locations from Java to Cambodia, where the author compares the “relationship of aesthetic projects to the construction of the nation-state identity” between Indonesia and Cambodia (p. 105). Since both countries contain histories of politically motivated violence toward their citizens, the comparison of national cultural expression such as official state-sponsored dance performances appears apt for critical analysis. Larasati argues that because the violence in Cambodia’s political history is well acknowledged by the current government, the public, and the international community, the replication of traditional dances helps to commemorate the violence and its victims while asserting socio-psychological control over the unfortunate history by dictating the national narrative that acknowledges Cambodia’s complex, albeit exoticized, history. By contrast, the replication of national dances in Indonesia today serves as a platform to subtly react to the oppression and silent narratives of historical violence while simultaneously reinforcing a historical silence regarding these atrocities.

Within the book’s final chapter, the author turns more directly to her own positionality. In Chapter 5, “Violence and Mobility: Autoethnography of Coming and Going,” Larasati grapples with one of the paradoxes with which she begins the book: the dissonant realization that through

research she simultaneously pursues a “critical, politicized line of discourse and thought while continuing to reap the benefits of civil service to an authoritarian state (and those of scholarship and performance within the often-rigid Western academic and arts establishments)” (p. 130). Reading this last chapter reminds me of a recent work by Jacqueline Siapno, *Gender, Islam, Nationalism and the State in Aceh*, which “provides an analysis of the different ways in which women have created spaces beyond the conventional and institutionalized practices of doing politics” (2016, x). Larasati contributes to this kind of discourse by directly engaging with institutionalized practices, but those that are fluid and expressive, i.e., state-sponsored dance. She examines dance as one of these “spaces beyond” while also demonstrating that dance performances are themselves simultaneously conventionalized and institutionalized. Larasati reveals that working from within these institutions through the expressive capacities of dance is a productive way to subvert hegemonic forces from within.

The book concludes with the author expressing her frustration that the UN convention of 1948 still does not recognize mass violence against a political group, however loosely defined, as “genocide.” She ends by advocating for the position that the events of 1965–66 should indeed be considered genocide, a conclusion well argued throughout the book. *The Dance That Makes You Vanish* is an effective—and affective—introduction to a subject not sufficiently addressed in the past several decades of studies in Southeast Asia and world politics. Paired with other recent accounts, such as the 2012 documentary film *The Act of Killing*, this book is ideal for introducing discussions of genocide and political violence in undergraduate coursework. Furthermore, this book will be of interest to graduate students and scholars in many fields, including ethnomusicology, anthropology, and history, functioning well in advanced-level courses when paired with lengthier works on the subject of genocide and its historical ramifications and definitions throughout Southeast Asia and the world.

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Motherless Tongues: The Insurgency of Language amid Wars of Translation

VICENTE L. RAFAEL

Durham: Duke University Press; Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2016, xii + 255pp.

Vicente L. Rafael's *Motherless Tongues: The Insurgency of Language amid Wars of Translation* examines the ways in which translation—its processes, politics, contradictions, and possibilities—works in various social, historical, and cultural contexts. *Motherless Tongues* is preoccupied with “a set of questions held together by recurring obsessions about the politics of language and the ethics and pragmatics of translation” (p. 9). As such, *Motherless Tongues* both extends and departs from Rafael's *Contracting Colonialism* (1993), *White Love* (2000), and *The Promise of the Foreign* (2005): translation serves as a pivot around which all these books move, but in *Motherless Tongues* a number of the topics are new terrain for Rafael. The questions in *Motherless Tongues* are explored with respect to examples that range from late nineteenth-century Philippines to the war on terror in the United States as well as the country's subsequent occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq, and narratives of the development of various academic fields. The three parts of the book indicate the areas in which translation is at play: the first part—“Vernacularizing the Political”—considers the importance of translation in historical junctures such as the transition of the Philippines from American colonial to postcolonial status. The second part—“Weaponizing Babel”—examines the role of translation in the attempts of the United States to turn its occupying soldiers—through training, technology, and protocols—into language-enabled forces. The third part—“Translating Lives”—looks at the ways in which translation figures in the development of academic fields such as area studies, Philippine anthropology, and Philippine history, with emphasis on the intellectual trajectories of Benedict Anderson, Arjun Appadurai, Renato Rosaldo, Reynaldo Iileto, and Rafael himself.

In his introduction, Rafael presents an overview of the personal circumstances, as well as the theoretical and methodological armature of *Motherless Tongues*. He offers “a condensed inventory of [his] linguistic legacy” (p. 5): in a household where Rafael's father spoke Ilonggo and his mother spoke Kapampangan, “English [became] their lingua franca” (p. 2). Growing up, Rafael would read *Hiligaynon*, the Ilonggo-language magazine, and hung out with the children of Chinese neighbors who spoke Tagalog and English with Hokkien cuss words occasionally mixed in. Rafael's father spoke to the household in Ilonggo. Rafael's maternal grandfather was fluent in Spanish—the language of Philippine law until 1941—and spoke to Rafael in Tagalog and English; with Rafael's mother and aunts, Rafael's grandfather would speak in Kapampangan, Tagalog, and English. Code switching was also prevalent in private schools: “conyo-speak, collegiala talk, Arneo accents.” Gay lingo also emerged during the 1960s, mixing vernaculars, bending English and Spanish grammars, and time and again using “bastardized words from French and German” (p. 4). In high school Rafael

was introduced, by way of left-wing activism, to Marxist-Leninist-Maoist literature in English translation; moreover, Tagalog was used by activists in ways that were “lively, innovative, and full of trenchant humor critical of authority” (p. 4). This plural linguistic environment engenders the condition of having “no mother tongue” or, conversely, having “many mother tongues.” A multilingual context (for Rafael and other Filipinos inside and outside the Philippines) implies the need for “inter- and intralinguistic translation”: the ability to translate “across different languages” and “within the same language” when used in various ways in various situations (p. 5). This linguistic mash-up—suggestive of the confluences and conflicts of political ideologies, subcultures, and regions in the Philippines—becomes the starting point for Rafael’s reflections on the politics and practices in contemporary translation.

For Rafael, communication is made possible when there is a “reciprocal, translatable relationship between *I* and *you*” (p. 4). But, as his personal narrative and individual chapters show, these relationships between *I* and *you* are constituted within multiple languages, engendering what Rafael calls, following Roman Jakobson, “metalinguistic operations”: participants in situations that call for translations recognize that translations are unable to offer “the exact equivalence of the substance and style of one language in another” (p. 8). The resulting condition is “aporetic”—a linguistic impasse—and it is precisely these situations of aporia that Rafael considers in *Motherless Tongues*. For Rafael, the impasse, put generatively, is a zone of insurgency and play; he recognizes the “capacity [of language] to resist reduction and conversion into definitive meanings and authoritative intentions” (p. 14).

The first part—“Vernacularizing the Political”—looks at three instances in colonial and post-colonial Philippines and examines how the plurality of languages, as conditioned by discrepant social formations, helped constitute (and, at times, tear asunder) an emerging Philippine nation. Chapter 1, “Welcoming What Comes: Translating Sovereignty in the Revolutionary Philippines,” examines three competing notions of sovereignty. The first is Spanish imperial sovereignty, which, although typified by “absolute power . . . free of any obligation and conditions” (p. 22), nevertheless had to be manifested through “mediating institutions” such as bureaucracy, law, armies, collection of tribute, among others (p. 23). Second, for Apolinario Mabini, fighting for national sovereignty was “the most compelling evidence of the people’s enlightenment” (p. 30), and yet, as seen in the Philippine Proclamation of Independence, “the Revolution restor[ed] the people’s lost sovereignty” while at the same time reinstituted a social hierarchy that placed *ilustrados* above the Filipino masses who comprised the “overwhelming majority” of the emerging nation (p. 28). The third notion of sovereignty is seen in the Tagalog term *kalayaan*—a “vernacular experience of freedom” (p. 35). Rafael closely reads accounts of the Philippine Revolution by Santiago Alvarez and Emilio Aguinaldo and proposes that *kalayaan* is “contingent on everyday acts of *damayan*,” which is “an ethic of compassion” that “generates the radical identification of one with the other, implicating each in the other’s deeds and sentiments” (p. 39).

Chapter 2, "Wars of Translation: American English, Colonial Schooling, and Tagalog Slang," looks at educational policies and practices during the American colonial period in the Philippines, which Rafael characterizes as "fraught with contradiction" (p. 44). Filipinos were "incorporated" into the "emergent colonial regime" and yet were "[kept] at a distance from the metropolitan center" (p. 44). Moreover, the use of English magnified already existing social and economic inequalities. English produced a "linguistic hierarchy that roughly corresponded to a social hierarchy" (p. 45). Rafael then describes the nationalist response to this situation: for Renato Constantino, the moribund national situation was a consequence of miseducation, and English was its main instrument; Filipinos subscribed to American notions of modernity and aspired to become Americans themselves. For Constantino, remaining a vassal to the United States was one of the reasons why the Philippines stayed "economically underdeveloped, socially divided, politically corrupt, and culturally bankrupt" (p. 46). Hence, Constantino, in Rafael's estimation, considers English as having "fatal consequences" for the nation: its history was fraught with amnesia, and its discourse—with respect to both foreigners and fellow Filipinos alike—was typified by inarticulacies and infelicities (p. 49). For Rafael, contra Constantino, Nick Joaquin does not oppose debasement (expressed in slang, the language of the streets) but rather considers it as a possible basis of a national language. This, to be sure, is qualified by Rafael: "[slang] cannot be seen to form the firm bedrock on which the national language is built; rather it is a shifting and protean node linking various languages as in a network" (p. 64). In this light, slang is both an expression of the playful possibilities of language as well as a glimpse of the past as "fractured, inconclusive moments [rendered by] a series of linguistic associations" (p. 65).

Chapter 3, "The Cell Phone and the Crowd," considers both cell phone and crowd as forms of media. The cell phone—with its capacity to send and receive text messages and calls—"was invested with the power to overcome the crowded conditions and congested surroundings brought about by the state's inability to order everyday life" (p. 73). Moreover, for Rafael, the crowd also functions like a medium, "a way of gathering and transforming elements, objects, people, and things mixing them up and converting them into other than what they were" (p. 85). In this sense the crowd can be viewed as a "site for the articulation of fantasies and the circulation of messages," "a kind of technology itself" (p. 85). But as Rafael points out, in a hierarchical Philippine society even crowds have class distinctions: the predominantly middle-class crowd of EDSA II, which overthrew Joseph Estrada in January 2001, had for its obverse the predominantly urban poor crowd, which in April 2001 called for Estrada's reinstatement (p. 93).

The next part—comprising Chapters 4 and 5—looks at American empire critique from the vantage point of translation history and practice in the United States. Chapter 4, "Translation, American English, and the National Insecurities of Empire," demonstrates that the makings of the American empire—a process that began when Americans gained independence from the British—was grounded on a nationalist idea of language: that to be American, one must be monolingual.

Rafael describes the ways in which monolingualism was attained by the United States, pointing out its relation to democracy and national identity: “we sense how the work of translation was geared to go only in one direction: toward the transformation of the foreign into an aspect of the domestic, and thus the plurality of native tongues into the imperious singularity of a national tongue” (p. 110). However, becoming monolingual was at the expense of other languages, which were repressed; Rafael cites examples such as the process of compiling Webster’s dictionary as well as government policies as instrumental in repressing linguistic multiplicity. Finally, the complications of language are brought to bear on America’s involvement in Iraq: in particular, the ways in which the figure of the translator occupies an ambivalent position. Translators were “stranded between languages and societies [and] were also exiled from both,” eliciting respect and suspicion among US military personnel, and derision from their fellow Iraqis who considered them as mercenaries (p. 117).

Chapter 5, “Targeting Translation: Counterinsurgency and the Weaponization of Language,” outlines the various attempts of the US military to weaponize language. For instance, the US military attempted to train soldiers to become “language-enabled” (p. 124) and thus be capable of tasks such as regulating traffic through checkpoints, eavesdropping during patrols, interacting with children, and being “ideal substitutes for native interpreters” (p. 125). The military also developed translation systems; devices such as the Phraselator and the Speechalator used automatic speech recognition technology. Finally, protocols codified the ways in which native interpreters related with civilians and the US military. Since the position of the translator was ambivalent—“weaponized, [the translator] can target but also be targeted, fire as well as backfire” (p. 133)—protocols ensured that the translator would stay unobtrusive: to become a “visible invisibility . . . an active collaborator in the task [of counterinsurgency]” (p. 134). However, these attempts at weaponizing language have limitations. For example, the automatic translation systems remain crude and unable to discern social and cultural contexts in which translation practices are done.

The third part considers the ways in which disciplinary directions can be seen alongside personal trajectories, and how translation plays a part in the formation of each. Accidental encounters—contingencies, unexpected situations, among others—occasion the transformation of a person, disciplinary field, research area, into something else. This transformation—a passage into something other—is for Rafael a form of translation: a process, however uneven and unfinished, in which the self engages with the foreign and hence becomes converted into something else.

In Chapter 6, “The Accidents of Area Studies,” Rafael considers the accidents that serve as entry points to academic disciplines. For Rafael, to have an accident means to “come in contact with the radically foreign, a kind of otherness that resists assimilation” (p. 153). The encounter with the foreign leads the emergent scholar to an area whose significance has yet to be discovered, revealing itself only after long immersion in the field. The area studies scholar is seen as a Janus-faced figure: on the one hand, the scholar “comes home and writes about alien places”; on the other hand, the scholar is also a foreigner to these places, “provoking curiosity, irritation, and suspicion

at times, and commanding authority at other times from those he or she encounters" (p. 156). Rafael explores these motifs using two examples: Benedict Anderson and Arjun Appadurai. In the case of Anderson, Rafael observes the fortuities that shaped his career, from going to Cornell University and meeting his mentors, to moving from Indonesia to Thailand on account of the volatile situation in the former country, and having the good fortune of meeting like-minded intellectuals in the latter. Rafael moreover notes that it was Appadurai's early encounters with Western commodities that piqued his abiding interest in globalization and culture: "he becomes an agent of desire whose satisfaction is forever strung out into a potentially endless series of objects: books, movies, blue jeans, deodorants, American social science" (p. 159).

Chapter 7, "Contracting Nostalgia," considers the career of the anthropologist Renato Rosaldo, whose main work was on Ilongot headhunting. Rafael examines the various inflections of nostalgia, as manifested in Rosaldo's work. For example, Rafael mentions that Rosaldo tried to expunge imperialist nostalgia: Rosaldo knew that "nostalgia in the service of imperialism memorializes the death of the other's culture while sanctifying the perpetrators of the latter's demise" (p. 163). Imperialist nostalgia was also connected to ethnographic nostalgia—a condition wherein post-colonial ethnographers "signal[ed] their unavoidable complicity" (p. 165) to the emergence and dominance of empire, while keeping an ironic distance from its effects. Rafael also considers Rosaldo's notion that for the Ilongots—Rosaldo's abiding informants and friends—nostalgia "is . . . a recent development": while undergoing significant, often irreversible, social and cultural change, the Ilongots "found themselves infected with nostalgia, or at least 'something like it'" (p. 168).

Chapter 8, "Language, History, and Autobiography," examines the "discrepant effects" of translation in the work of Reynaldo Ileto. Rafael observes that in Ileto's *Pasyon and Revolution* (1979) while linguistic hierarchy between English and Tagalog is "leveled," class inequality becomes more pronounced: the book addresses modern, middle- to upper-class Filipino readers who are in a position to understand the masses' traditional ways of thinking. These tendencies, which are "at once contradictory and productive of certain possibilities" (p. 176), typify, for Rafael, Ileto's autobiographical writings.

Chapter 9 features Rafael's interview with *Translation: A Transdisciplinary Journal*, conducted in 2013 at the Nida School of Translation Studies (Italy). Rafael's conversation with Siri Nergaard, editor of *Translation*, offers a compact articulation of the key concepts in *Motherless Tongues*: the war of and on translation, the weaponization of translation, counterinsurgent elements in language, and translation as play. Moreover, Rafael elaborates on his abiding interest in the mutually constitutive areas of history and translation, in view more particularly of his long-standing work in Philippine studies and emerging work in American empire critique.

Motherless Tongues demonstrates Rafael's sharp, substantive, and capacious understanding of the possibilities and limits of translation. With translation as his main optic, Rafael offers timely and cogent interventions in Philippine studies, American empire critique, area studies, literary

studies, media studies, and history. With respect to his approach, Rafael's methods are rigorous and sound. He is able to historicize concisely and substantively the various issues. Moreover, Rafael analyzes textual evidence, cultural phenomena, and translation practices with clarity and intelligence; his style uses a range of registers: aphoristic, descriptive, wryly ironic, and philosophical. Rafael is also keenly aware of the contentious and historically charged politics of the events he considers, and the ambivalences they generate.

Rafael's materials include US military manuals; concepts from Jacques Derrida, Roman Jakobson, and Emile Benveniste; songs and accounts from the Philippine Revolution; documents from the Spanish and American colonial periods; narratives from his fellow scholars; and eyewitness reports from events such as EDSA II. The plurality of these materials demonstrates Rafael's extensive grasp of various archives, as well as his capability to read his sources against and alongside each other. There are rare occasions, though, when Rafael could have added some more substance: in Chapter 3, for example, his reading of middle-class politics in EDSA II ("the utopian side of bourgeois nationalist wishfulness: the abolition of social hierarchy" [p. 86]) is buttressed by just one account of a participant. My sense is that the account Rafael closely reads, although compelling and visceral, may need other complementary sources: one story does not make it into a metonym for the middle class.

All told, Rafael's *Motherless Tongues* is a valuable contribution to translation studies, especially in relation to Philippine history and culture, American empire critique, and area studies. The flow of the chapters is well considered: the book attends to the Philippines, then focuses its attention on the United States, and concludes with accounts of various individuals whose lives are embedded in—and critique—these mutually enfolded contexts. Rafael's gifts as an essayist are on full display: his prose is typified by equal parts charge and clarity; the gravity of colonization and empire is counterpointed by the lucidity and brio of his prose.

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Language, Migration, and Identity: Neighborhood Talk in Indonesia

ZANE GOEBEL

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, xvii+221pp.

Zane Goebel's monograph detailing the face-to-face encounters between residents in the ethnically and linguistically diverse town of Semarang (Central Java) provides an excellent case study of the way linguistic ethnographic methods illuminate larger questions of urban transformation, social incorporation and exclusion, and patterns of migration in Southeast Asia. In fact, with the exception

of a few dated studies done in Java (Errington 1988) and on the island of Sumba (Kuipers 1990; 1998; Keane 1997), very few linguistic ethnographic-oriented monographs have been written about Indonesia, and even fewer about other parts of Southeast Asia. Goebel's book, therefore, which takes care to explain and highlight some of the more technical concepts used in the field, serves as an introduction to the field while also advancing social theory.

The title of the book, *Language, Migration, and Identity*, is rather straightforward but also somewhat deceptive. In fact, the book takes care to complicate each of these terms in ways that can only be accomplished through detailed analysis of face-to-face interaction and a familiarity with semiotic theory. Rather than going through a chapter-by-chapter analysis, I will touch on each of these aspects in turn, noting how Goebel complicates them in order to provide a more nuanced picture of daily life in Semarang.

First I touch on what should be the main focus of linguistic ethnography, which is the concept of "language." Goebel begins the book by outlining what is a supposed binary between "Indonesian" and what he calls LOTI, or "languages other than Indonesian." In official discourse, Indonesian—as the national language—is supposed to represent national and interethnic unity, truth, objectivity, and also the ethnic "Other," the opposite of place-based LOTI, such as Javanese, Balinese, Sundanese, etc. Thus, within this ideology, codes such as Indonesian and Javanese form what Goebel calls "semiotic registers," communicative assemblages in which language is associated with personality traits and types of personhood.

However, while these semiotic registers permeate official state institutions, they are not hegemonic within the local ward meetings of Semarang town, where Indonesian and, in this case, Javanese (which itself has multiple registers, such as the more familiar *ngoko* register and the more formal *krama*) are creatively deployed by participants to accomplish different ends. In fact, Goebel shows how in multilingual settings, language use cannot be neatly mapped onto social function (as is often done in naïve discussions of "code-switching"). Therefore, instead of the word "language," Goebel opts for "medium," demonstrating how particular linguistic tokens mediate social relations. For instance, in the excellent discussion in Chapter 5 of the conversations of female residents in Ward 8, who more frequently attended ward meetings than their male counterparts, he shows how many non-Javanese speakers, many of whom had low overall competence in Javanese, would sprinkle their talk with *ngoko* Javanese words or particles, creating a sense of both familiarity and belonging in the ward. This kind of practice is the same for non-ethnically Javanese male residents of the working-class Ward 5 (Chapter 9). Even though these residents may not have been fluent in Javanese, their use of the *ngoko* register, together with their perceived familiarity and ease of interaction, created an impression to Javanese-speaking counterparts *as if* they were competent in Javanese (this is called, in linguistic ethnographic terminology, "adequation"). This differed from the non-Javanese male residents in Ward 8, who rarely used Javanese tokens at all, while the male Javanese used *krama* forms to each other (Chapter 7). Thus, the difference in linguistic code

(Indonesian vs. Javanese) or ethnic identity (Javanese vs. non-Javanese) did not structure interaction as much as distinctions between familiarity and unfamiliarity.

This leads to the second concept of “identity.” Analyses of face-to-face interaction usually tend to avoid talking about identity in “attributive” terms, in which a person’s social position (i.e., ethnic or religious affiliation, class, gender, etc.) leads to certain social behavior. Instead, Goebel, like many linguistic ethnographers, prefers the term “processes of social identification” (p. 82), which focuses more closely on the means by which participants classify people and what categories are relevant at any given instance of interaction. For instance, in most of the ward meetings, which determined the finances of the ward and where dues were collected, the category of “payer” vs. “non-payer” was more important than ethnic or class identity. Those who then were classified as non-payer became stigmatized as socially deviant, or irresponsible, and talk about these categories of persons often occurred in the Indonesian language, even among Javanese (Chapter 5). While ethnic identity was not the primary factor, in some cases, such as among male participants in Ward 8, the association of non-payer and deviant was mediated through New Order discourses that targeted Chinese-descent Indonesians, and thus some Chinese-origin residents in Ward 8 were considered “deviant” (Chapter 8). Notice, however, how ethnic identity forms part of a larger semiotic register of exclusion that includes participation in ward activities, language use, and national-level discourses of discrimination.

Finally there is the issue of migration. This concept is not explicitly discussed much in the book, though it is implied, since residents are made up of both locals and those from the outside, and there is quite a lot of movement of people in and out of the wards. However, the book offers some analytic tools that help with the study of how migrants may be incorporated into or excluded from the neighborhoods where they live—for instance, the important point that “learning Javanese” (or what is called Javanese) does not depend on where one comes from or how long one has lived in the ward, but rather on one’s level of activity and involvement in ward meetings. Each person therefore has a “trajectory of socialization” (p. 41) into the community, and this trajectory is affected by language use, participation, individual biography, and, in some cases, ethnic or religious affiliation. Examining these trajectories is important to understand the actual social processes by which migrants are incorporated into or excluded from the community.

The book, as Goebel mentions in the preface, is challenging. However, it is to be lauded that the analysis does not shy away from the important, though rather technical, theories and concepts of linguistic ethnography so that we can better understand the complexities of social life in diverse, transient, and multilingual settings. Despite his use of technical terms, Goebel attempts to make these concepts as clear as possible for the non-expert (by defining and bold-facing the terms, for instance). Hopefully, in doing so, books such as this will make linguistic ethnography more accessible and inspire more scholars of Southeast Asia to take up its tools in order to further complicate issues of language, identity, or migration.

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Indonesian Notebook: A Sourcebook on Richard Wright and the Bandung Conference

BRIAN RUSSELL ROBERTS and KEITH FOULCHER, eds.

Durham: Duke University Press, 2016, xxiv+262pp.

The Color Curtain, The Colored Glasses

In Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's 2013 novel *Americanah*, the protagonist, a strong-willed young woman named Ifemelu, leaves military-ruled Nigeria for the United States, where she is forced to grapple with what it means to be black for the first time. "I came from a country where race was not an issue," Ifemelu reflects. "I did not think of myself as black and I only became black when I came to America." She later achieves academic success and is recognized for her thought-provoking blog about race in America. In this space she announces: "Dear Non-American Black, when you make the choice to come to America, you become black. Stop arguing. Stop saying I'm Jamaican or I'm Ghanaian. America doesn't care."

This fictional figure's observation in the digital world of the 2000s echoes a number of Indonesian cultural elites' reaction to an encounter with the renowned African American writer Richard Wright in 1955. Author of the critically acclaimed novels *Black Boy* and *Native Son*, Wright traveled to Indonesia to attend the Afro-Asian Conference held in Bandung as a freelance reporter. During his three-week stay in Indonesia he exchanged ideas with a small group of the archipelago's leading intellectuals, the majority of whom were liberal minded with a cosmopolitan outlook. An important part of this cross-cultural dialogue took place at a mountain retreat north of Jakarta, where Wright and his Indonesian hosts had in-depth discussions over a weekend stay. Yet instead of being drawn to Wright by a shared sense of embitterment caused by white domination of people of color, the Indonesian literati felt bitterly misunderstood. They felt that instead of opening his

eyes to the vibrant social landscape of the newborn republic of Indonesia, Wright held a vision that was confined to an overseas projection of America's internal racial politics. Lubis Mochtar, a journalist and novelist who was the leader of the group, expressed his disapproval: "It is wrong that this 'racial business' has become a way of life in Asia. Color or racial problems are just not our problems" (p. 10).

Another significant figure in the circle, the Dutch-Indonesian writer Beb Vuyk, recalled the furious protests by the poet, essayist, and novelist Sitor Situmorang: "I do not feel inferior to whites. I was born a 'native,' and I've lived with racial discrimination. But we are free now. I'm no longer a 'native' but an Indonesian" (p. 199). In 1956 Wright published his Indonesian travelogue, *The Color Curtain: A Report on the Bandung Conference*, which became a prominent firsthand account of the Afro-Asian Conference. But the modern Indonesian writers and intellectuals Wright interacted with were gravely disappointed. Mochtar lamented:

I am afraid while [Wright] was here in Indonesia he had been looking through 'colored glasses' and had sought behind every attitude he met color and racial feelings. The majority of the people with whom Mr. Wright had come into contact in Indonesia belong to the new generation in Indonesia, and are the best racial and color conscious of the various groups in Indonesia. They are all amazed to read Mr. Wright's notebook in which Mr. Wright quotes them saying things which they never had said, or to which they did not put meaning as accepted by Mr. Wright. (p. 146)

The disagreements between Wright and his Indonesian interlocutors as well as the discrepancies between their recollections lie at the center of *Indonesian Notebook: A Sourcebook on Richard Wright and the Bandung Conference*. The book is the fruit of transnational and interdisciplinary collaboration between Brian Russell Roberts, a scholar of African-American literature based at Brigham Young University, and Keith Foulcher, an expert in modern Indonesian literature and culture at the University of Sydney. While in the English-language world Wright's own account had been the sole source surrounding his visit to Indonesia, the two editors excavate, organize, translate, and contextualize records in Bahasa Indonesia and Dutch, aiming not to reconstruct a monolithic narrative but to instead offer their readers a "rich polyvocality of narratives regarding Wright's interactions with modern Indonesia and the Bandung Conference" (p. 26). The introduction and conclusion of the book reveal the origins of their collaboration and situate it among several interrelated fields: comparative literature, postcolonial studies, global history, African-American studies, Southeast Asian studies, and Cold War history. The main body of the book is divided into three parts that respectively discuss the background, experience, and aftereffects of Wright's visit to Indonesia. Each part contains five to seven primary sources that were assiduously collected, carefully selected, and meticulously translated by the two editors. Accompanying every primary source are extensive and insightful essay-length analyses.

As 2015 marked the 60th anniversary of the first large-scale political congregation among the newly independent countries, there has been increasing scholarly attention on the broader impact

of Bandung on the global South. The scholarly approach varies from that of diplomatic history represented by Tan See Seng and Amitav Acharya's edited volume *Bandung Revisited* (2008), to cultural history epitomized by Shimazu Naoko's theorization of "Diplomacy as Theatre" (2011); from Vijay Prashad's globalized narratives in *The Darker Nations* (2007), to region-specific research on local political and social dynamics in the volume edited by Christopher J. Lee, *Making a World after Empire* (2010). The transnational turn and the coming of the digital age in the humanities have facilitated ongoing collaborative research projects such as the theoretically grounded "Bandung Humanisms" workshops co-organized by Columbia University, UCLA, and Nanyang Technological University in Singapore, as well as the visually vibrant online publication *Afro-Asian Visions* (<https://medium.com/afro-asian-visions/about>). The book under review is an important and unique contribution to this growing body of scholarship. It is important because it challenges the romanticization of Bandung by showing complex connections within the global South. Through highlighting the gaps and contradictions in a constellation of written records, the editors examine the heterogeneities of the Afro-Asian world and investigate the fragility endemic to a cultural project and geopolitical movement that was multilingual and multifaceted.

Roberts and Foulcher have made a somewhat unusual decision, at least from my disciplinary perspective as a historian, to deliver their findings in the form of a sourcebook. The reprinting and translation of original documents serve the editors' goal of presenting "multiple and sometimes conflicting and competing perspectives" (p. 26). The masterfully compiled primary sources and the well-crafted secondary sources open up a space for dialogue between the editors and their readers. This particular approach reflects the editors' sense of moral responsibility as scholars in the age of "alternative facts" to "acknowledge multiple perspectives and narratives while still evincing a dedication to drawing circumspectly from the available historical evidence" (Roberts and Foulcher 2017, 107). Technically, this format increases the utility of the book within academic circles—it lays a foundation for future research and can be used for undergraduate-level teaching. However, this approach inevitably makes the book fragmented. As a historian who probably has a biased preference for smooth narratives, notwithstanding my appreciation for the editors' deliberate choices and elaborate interpretations of the primary sources, I cannot help but imagine the materials the editors spent years collecting being used in another way. The editors could have consolidated their findings into one coherent monograph on the immensely interesting and intriguing story of Wright's sojourn in Indonesia. As many historic works have shown, streamlined storytelling is well equipped to demonstrate simultaneous and conflicting perspectives. This alternative would appeal to an educated general readership beyond academia. While the editors' attention to detail is marvelous, a reader may begin to experience fatigue or become inundated by too many particulars. Moreover, for a non-specialist reader, more contextualization of the political and cultural milieu of mid-twentieth-century Indonesia would be helpful.

The editors successfully destabilize previous knowledge about Wright's interactions with

modern Indonesia and, more broadly, the idealized conceptualization of Afro-Asian commonality throughout the book. But their analyses of the larger Cold War environment and US cultural diplomacy in Southeast Asia, which are critical to our understanding of the discord between Wright and his Indonesian interlocutors, seem to be less thorough. The editors make observations on potential CIA involvement in orchestrating Wright's visit to foster pro-Western sentiment among the educated elites in Indonesia. Many among the Indonesian intellectual circle that welcomed Wright were universal humanists, whose openness to Western influence increasingly antagonized LEKRA (Lembaga Kebudayaan Rakyat, or Institute for the People's Culture), a literary and social movement associated with the Indonesian Communist Party, and attracted the participation of the foremost prominent Indonesian writer Pramoedya Ananta Toer. The divergence between the two literary groups against the broader background of Indonesia's wavering between the US-led capitalist bloc and Soviet-led socialist bloc helps explain Pramoedya's bewildering silence when Wright—whom Pramoedya greatly admired—visited. On the other hand, despite their supposedly shared non-white identities, Wright and the universal humanists failed to forge a mutual understanding. Vuyk confessed her distrust of Wright, as she felt he was American first and Negro second. Despite Wright's self-imposed exile from his home country, Vuyk found his ties to the Afro-Asian world frail compared to his American cultural upbringing (pp. 147–148). The universal humanists perceived Wright's application of color labels to Indonesians as an imposition of American definitions onto the Afro-Asian world. Moreover, while Wright evidently delivered a lecture to the universal humanists that was later published in *White Man, Listen!* he does not mention Indonesia at all in this book (p. 111), though "the tragic, Westernized elites" in the dedication appear to reference his earlier Indonesian audience. When put together, all these moments before, during, and after Wright's visit constitute a story about the irony of US cultural intervention in a newly independent country and raise interesting questions about intellectuals' agency during the Cold War. However, Roberts and Foulcher's decision to present these moments by intermixing primary and secondary sources makes it difficult to connect their brilliant observations.

That being said, the book is rigorously researched and beautifully composed. Through vivid retelling of the "little histories" of brief encounters within a small elite circle in the span of three weeks, Roberts and Foulcher successfully construct a framework of "planetary history" by complicating the cultural traffic in the global South. Any future work on Wright's *The Color Curtain* can hardly go without reference to the "colored glasses" through which he viewed Indonesia, as recovered and reexamined by the two editors.

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