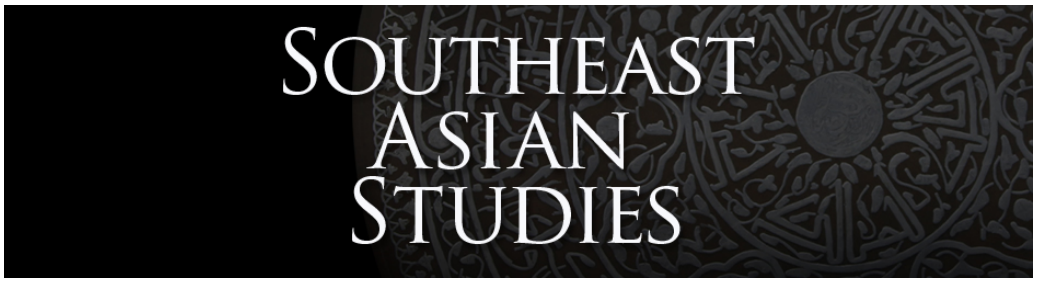

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SOUTHEAST ASIAN STUDIES

Vol. 14, No. 1 April 2025

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Fieldwork in a Time of Change: Papers in Honor of Mizuno Kosuke

Guest Editors: Agung Wicaksono and Jafar Suryomenggolo

Fieldwork in a Time of Change: Papers in Honor of Mizuno Kosuke

Introduction

Agung Wicaksono* and Jafar Suryomenggolo**

This special issue is a collection of eight articles presented to Professor Mizuno Kosuke, former director of the Center for Southeast Asian Studies (CSEAS), Kyoto University (2006–10). These articles form a unique Festschrift that has been realized with the contributions and cooperation of a number of colleagues, scholars, and former doctoral students based in various academic and research institutions in Japan, Korea, and Southeast Asia.

In this special issue, we would like to highlight the importance of conducting long-term fieldwork—as Mizuno has done and continues to do—for both quantitative and qualitative research, along with the use of written sources and oral history, as an important data collection method. Data can be collected systematically and scientifically, but for area study researchers fieldwork consists of more than data accumulation (Faubion and Marcus 2009). A researcher may organize their fieldwork thoroughly, but it is fieldwork that would define the researcher as part of their personal and reflexive experiences (Jammes and King 2021). And this is especially pertinent in Southeast Asia, a region that is undergoing significant changes. For the last forty years, Southeast Asia has been enjoying peace; there have been some geopolitical skirmishes between neighbors from time to time but never a major war. Although this peace is under the regional hegemony of the US hub-and-spoke alliance system, countries in the region have been actively pursuing their paths to modernization. The region's political stability has also allowed it to escape from the stagnation that once characterized the "Asian Drama" (Myrdal 1968) and to achieve exceptional economic growth, which has brought prosperity and social and

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Southeast Asian Studies, Vol. 14, No. 1, April 2025, pp. 3–16 DOI: 10.20495/seas.14.1_3

economic welfare to the general population in the region. Fieldwork today is gratifying for researchers, as it was in the past. However, when conducting fieldwork today researchers must engage with and respond to various new challenges, including issues related to climate change and the global pandemic. Mizuno's life as an engaged scholar during this time of change provides an inspiration for present and future generations to study and understand the fast transformations of Southeast Asia.

A Scholar's Life between Rural Development and Institutional Change

As a "barefoot economist," Mizuno has been conducting field research for more than forty years on the transformations of land, labor, and livelihoods in Southeast Asia, particularly Indonesia. He has a lifelong relationship with Indonesia, having lived and worked there for extended periods. He has traveled to many parts of the country but regularly to West Java and more recently to Riau (East Sumatra).

Mizuno was born on September 15, 1953 in Seto (Aichi Prefecture), one of Japan's most prosperous ceramic-manufacturing regions.[1] His first trip to Southeast Asia was in July 1974, at the age of twenty, as a first-year student of economics at Kyoto University. He was keen to observe the significance of dependency theory in the context of Southeast Asia's rapid economic development at the time. He first went to Malaysia for a few days, because his father was stationed in Port Klang, Selangor, as a factory manager of a tile-manufacturing company. After that, he and his father went to Indonesia for two weeks. His father had earlier been stationed in Bandung and Belitung for eight years as a ceramics expert (1960–68).[2]

The duo traveled to Jakarta, Bandung, Surabaya, and Tretes (Prigen). It is worth noting that a few months earlier, in January 1974, Jakarta had been ravaged by lootings and anti-Chinese riots following a demonstration by university students during a state visit by Japanese Prime Minister Tanaka Kakuei. The protests were against the corruption and inequality believed to be a result of massive Japanese foreign investment.[3] In response to the student demonstration, the New Order regime took stern action by implementing a policy of depoliticization of campus life and stringent press censorship. Mizuno's first trip to Indonesia during that particular time left a deep impression on

1) The ceramics industry in Seto has a long history: it supplied roof tiles for Todaiji Temple in Nara (founded in the eighth century).
2) In Bandung, his father was stationed at Balai Penjelidikan Keramik (Ceramic Laboratory), established in 1922.
3) A student newspaper made a derogatory remark about Japan investing in Indonesia as the "yellow Yankee."

him—he noticed the general resilience of the local people under the regime's repressive policies. Upon returning to Kyoto, he attended a lecture by Nagazumi Akira (University of Tokyo) on the history of Indonesia, which inspired him to study Dutch colonial agricultural policy in Java. He also started learning Indonesian.[4] In September–December 1976, he spent ten weeks in Indonesia (Jakarta, Bogor, Ciawi, Bandung, Yogyakarta, Sidoarjo, Surabaya, Tanjung Karang, Bukit Tinggi, Medan, and Asahan) as he was now determined to study various aspects of the archipelago.

Upon graduating from Kyoto University in 1978, Mizuno started working at the Institute for Developing Economies (IDE) in Tokyo, a prominent research institute that also serves as a think tank focused on development issues in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.[5] As a young economist, he studied Southeast Asia's rural development while development projects all across the region in the 1970s were changing the rural landscape, especially with respect to issues of landownership and urbanization.[6] At that time, governments in the region relied on import substitution and inward-oriented industrialization strategies, but these had led to balance of payments difficulties. To overcome this problem, governments shifted to export-oriented strategies to sustain industrial growth by relying on competitive labor costs. This strategy, however, put pressure on the economic and social conditions in rural areas, where the majority of the population lived and worked. Scholars have noted that in emulating the developmental state model, governments in Southeast Asia often prioritized the development of big industries by means of subsidies and protection; and in doing so, they left behind small and medium-sized enterprises to compete on their own. This issue caught Mizuno's attention. In 1984 he became a visiting research fellow at the Center for Development Studies, Bogor Institute of Agriculture (PSP-IPB), and it was under the supervision of its head, Sajogyo,[7] that he went the following year for the first time to Majalaya (West Java). Majalaya has been well known since the 1930s as the center of the home weaving industry, especially sarong production. As part of his training, Mizuno mastered Indonesian and Sundanese. This language proficiency helped him during his fieldwork and in his interviews with local informants as key actors. In 1987–91 he was involved in a research project on rural

4) He also participated in seminars of the Japan Society for Southeast Asian History in the Kansai area (東南アジア史学会関西例会), organized by Ishii Yoneo, a professor of Thai history at CSEAS.

5) Established in 1958, IDE focuses on social science research on developing regions. In 1998 it was merged with the Japan External Trade Organization under the Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry. A year later it moved its office from Shinjuku, Tokyo, to Makuhari (Chiba Prefecture).

6) He was part of the research group led by Takigawa Tsutomu that studied rural Southeast Asia. During this period, he learned the ropes of fieldwork from Kano Hiroyoshi and Umehara Hiromitsu.

7) Sajogyo was the head of the PSP-IPB (1983–91) after serving as the head of Pusat Lembaga Penelitian Sosiologi Pedesaan (1972–83) and rector of Institut Pertanian Bogor (Bogor Institute of Agriculture; IPB) (1965–66).

non-farm sectors in West Java under the leadership of Benjamin White (Institute of Social Studies, The Netherlands). He also participated in a research project at the Center for Environmental Studies, Bandung Institute of Technology, led by Hasan Poerbo.

Mindful of the limitations of conventional economic models, Mizuno aptly employed historical and sociological methods to enrich his research. He learned Dutch in order to read earlier studies on the economy of the Dutch East Indies by Dutch scholars of the colonial times. This allowed him to understand the policies and the legacy of the colonial economy on present-day Indonesia, and to conduct long-term research on the economic situation at the local level, particularly on sugar plantations in Comal (Central Java) (see Kano 1994).[8] He did not hesitate to spend long periods in the field observing, living with, and interviewing local community members about their lives and occupational experiences. With colleagues at IDE, he developed a two-year research project on the rural employment structure in Burma, Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Indonesia; he contributed a chapter on occupational multiplicity and the off-farm sector in West Java (Mizuno 1995).

In 1988 Mizuno enrolled in the doctoral program at the Graduate School of Agriculture, Kyoto University, as a Ronpaku fellow. His research was on the community-based weaving industry in Majalaya. He defended his dissertation in 1994 under the supervision of Nishimura Hiroyuki, an expert on agro-economics and rural development. In his dissertation, Mizuno described the social organization of the rural weaving industry and the diversification of households. He found that community-based weaving, as a small-sized enterprise, managed to survive intense competition in the market despite the lack of government support. He also found that the industry was able to maintain its performance such that its members did not see the need to migrate to cities—as happened in other areas—to become regular wage laborers in factories. He concluded that small-sized industries constantly develop initiatives to diversify their methods and products in order to overcome various hostile conditions in the market. His dissertation was later published as book (Mizuno 1996), which was reviewed the following year:

> Mizuno's study provides us with a wealth of data on rural family weaving in a small locality. It is an important contribution to the debate on the survival of family-based industry, and will be of help to synchronic studies of the Majalayan textile industry. (Antlöv 1997, 1173)

Mizuno's dissertation indeed offered an important insight that questioned the government policy in Indonesia (and Southeast Asia in general) of favoring large industries. It was only years later, after the 1997 Asian financial crisis—and partly due to lessons

8) See also Kano *et al.* (1996; 2001).

learned from this crisis—that governments in the region started to develop comprehensive policies to provide and promote a favorable environment for nurturing small and medium-sized enterprises.

In April 1996 Mizuno moved to CSEAS as he continued his research on economic development in Southeast Asia (Mizuno and Shigetomi 1997). He became involved in two research projects: "Handicraft and Industrial Development in Southeast Asia" (1997–99) with Sekimoto Teruo (University of Tokyo), and "Culturo-ecological Structure of Network Society in Wallacea" (1995–97) with Tanaka Koji (Kyoto University). His book on Indonesia's local industry (Mizuno 1999) won the Developing Countries Research Award in 2000. Aside from research, Mizuno—now working at one of Japan's leading universities—had the opportunity to teach and nurture students of economics, particularly on rural development in Asia.[9] From 1996 to 2019 he supervised 18 doctoral students, which makes him one of the most dedicated professors in shaping the future generation of area specialists in Japan.

As a specialist on Indonesia, Mizuno observed the institutional changes that deposed authoritarianism and promoted democratic values with the 1998 Reformasi. To study these institutional changes as part of Indonesia's democratization and decentralization to support economic growth, Mizuno became the principal investigator in two important research projects funded by Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research:[10] "Changing Local Politics in Democratized Indonesia" (2002–4), which examined the rapid increase in local parliamentarians from the business sector; and "Changing Local Politico-economic Structure in the Democratizing and Decentralizing Indonesia" (2005–7), which analyzed institutional changes in the local head election system from an indirect to a direct one from 2004. These research projects allowed Mizuno to analyze institutional change in Indonesia as a case study of economic development in low- and middle-income countries.[11]

9) From 1981, CSEAS offered graduate education (at its Graduate School of Agriculture and Graduate School of Human and Environmental Studies). In 1996 it began to prepare for the establishment of the Graduate School of Asian and African Area Studies, which was set up in 1998.

10) Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research (Kakenhi) are competitive research funds. Selection of recipients is based on a peer review system under Japan's Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology and the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science. It is the largest competitive research funds scheme in Japan.

11) Mizuno was also involved in six research projects: "Anthropological Study on Local Societies in Post-Suharto Indonesia" (2001–3) with Sugishima Takashi; "Comparative Study of Safety-Network in Southeast Asia, in Special Reference to Human Aging" (2002–4) with Kono Yasuyuki; "Regionalization and Middle Class in East Asia: Americanization, Cinisization, Japanization" (2003–5) with Shiraishi Takashi; "Natural Resource Management and Socio-economic Transformation under the Decentralization in Indonesia: Toward Sulawesi Area Studies" (2004–6) with Tanaka Koji; "Comparative Study of Human Aging" (2005–7) with Matsubayashi Kozo; and "Development of Area Informatics with Emphasis on Southeast Asia" (2005–9) with Shibayama Mamoru.

The main research products from these projects are his co-edited volumes on labor union movement in Indonesia (Mizuno *et al.* 2007) and on populism in Asia (Mizuno and Pasuk 2009).

Mizuno served as the director of CSEAS for two consecutive terms, April 2006 to March 2008 and April 2008 to March 2010.[12] During his tenure, CSEAS extended its international programs[13] and became a world-class hub for Southeast Asian studies. In April 2007, with a number of collaborating institutions, CSEAS started the Global COE program "In Search of Sustainable Humanosphere in Asia and Africa (2007–2012)" headed by Sugihara Kaoru. In April 2009 CSEAS was awarded the status of Joint Usage/Research Centers by Japan's Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport, Science and Technology in acknowledgment of its years of leadership in the field of Southeast Asian studies. It was under Mizuno's directorship that CSEAS developed regional networks with the Korean Association of Southeast Studies (KASEAS),[14] Academia Sinica (Taiwan), and numerous universities in the region.[15]

After successfully completing the terms of his directorship, Mizuno devoted his time to continuing research on Indonesia's environmental changes. He was the principal investigator in a research project funded by Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research, "A Study on Regional Sustainable Humanosphere in Indonesia Based on Long-term Data and Field Work" (2011–13). The project examined socioeconomic changes in rural Indonesia, especially the increase of landless households in Java, the development of non-agricultural sectors, and issues related to forest management since the Dutch colonial times. The main research products from this project are Mizuno's co-edited volumes on agroforestry

12) During this period, he was involved in five research projects: "Non-traditional Security Issues in Southeast Asia: The Status and Issues in State Capacity and Regional Cooperation" (2007–10) with Patricio Abinales; "New Development of Southeast Asian Local Politics in the Era of Globalization: Capital City, Energy and the Border" (2008–11) with Okamoto Masaaki; "Political Impact of the Asian Economic Crisis: Comparing Political Instability" (2010–12) with Tamada Yoshifumi; "Comprehensive Forest Management Systems in Southeast Asia" (2010–14) with Yanagisawa Masayuki; and "Multi-disciplinary Study of Southeast Asia Planted Forests and Local Societies" (2010–14) with Ishikawa Noboru.

13) Since 2009, CSEAS has organized its Southeast Asia Seminar in English (previously it was in Japanese) with lecturers and participants from Japan, Southeast Asia, Northeast Asia, North America, and Europe.

14) The CSEAS-KASEAS joint conference was first held in 2009 in Jinju. Subsequently, it was organized in 2011 (in Kyoto), 2013 (in Mokpo), 2015 (in Kyoto), 2017 (in Seoul), 2020 (online), 2021 (online), and 2023 (in Kyoto).

15) From 2007 to 2011, CSEAS signed memoranda of understanding with National University of Laos, Sultan Agung Tirtayasa University (Indonesia), Cairo University (Egypt), Institute of Peruvian Studies (Peru), Royal University of Fine Arts and Royal University of Agriculture (Cambodia), Kohn Kaen University (Thailand), and Royal University of Bhutan (see Center for Southeast Asian Studies 2023).

Fig. 1 Fieldwork in Pelalawan, Riau, Indonesia (photo by Retno Kusumaningtyas, May 31, 2010)

in West Java (Mizuno and Siti 2021) and on a sustainable development path for society based on the regeneration of peatlands, especially in the Giam Siak Kecil-Bukit Batu Biosphere Reserve (Kawai *et al.* 2012; Mizuno *et al.* 2016). In a review of the 2016 volume, Peter Boomgaard (2016, 585) noted that "for those (scholars) who are interested in the annual forest conflagrations, in peat swamps forests and their fate, and in suggestions for their regeneration, this book is a must read."

From 2013 to 2015, Mizuno was involved in two research projects on contemporary Southeast Asia: "Emergence of New Growth Mechanism and Its Political Economy in Southeast Asia" (2013–15) with Mieno Fumiharu, and "The Social Bases of Care in Southeast Asia: Study of the Dynamism of Practice Based on Relatedness" (2013–15) with Hayami Yoko. Later, he served as the leader of a six-year research project titled "Toward the Regeneration of Tropical Peatland Societies: Transformability of Environmentally Vulnerable Societies and Establishment of an International Research Network" (2015–21) at the Research Institute for Humanity and Nature.[16] He was the principal investigator in a research project funded by Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research, "Land Ownership and Peatland Restoration in Indonesia" (2019–22), which investigated the use of land by local residents and its impact on peatland restoration in Sumatra and Kalimantan. The main research product of this project was a co-edited volume on long-term peatland dynamics (see Mizuno, Kozan and Haris 2023).

16) See Mizuno (2018).

Fig. 2 Mizuno Kosuke and Ami Aminah Meutia (August 2023) (photo courtesy Mizuno Kosuke)

In the course of his career, Mizuno has served in various national scientific organizations: as a member of the executive board of Japan Consortium for Area Studies 地域研究コンソーシアム (April 2006–March 2010), as a member of the executive board of the Japanese Society for Asian Studies アジア研究協会 (April 2006–March 2018),[17] and as an associate member of the Science Council of Japan 日本学術会議 (April 2007–March 2016).[18] Since April 2010 he has been a member of the editorial board of *East Asian Studies*, the journal of the Institute for East Asian Studies, Sogang University (Seoul).[19]

Since his retirement from CSEAS in March 2019, Mizuno has been a professor of development studies at the School of Environmental Science, University of Indonesia. He devotes his knowledge and time to supervising Indonesian doctoral students.[20] He has completed his research on Indonesia's labor dispute settlement system (Mizuno

17) See Japanese Society for Asian Studies (2016).

18) See, for example, a report by the Science Council of Japan on international cooperation for development and the role of area studies (Science Council of Japan 2008).

19) See *East Asian Studies* (n.d.).

20) From 2020 to 2023, Mizuno supervised six doctoral candidates at the University of Indonesia. He also lectured at an intensive course titled "Perubahan Agraria Abad 21 dan 'Sawit Rakyat' Berkelanjutan di Indonesia" (Agrarian transformation of the twenty-first century and sustainable people-based palm oil in Indonesia) organized by the Bandung-based Agrarian Resource Center and University of Padjadjaran, November 19–29, 2019 (Agrarian Resource Center 2019).

2020). He has also co-directed a research project on long-term agrarian, economic, and ecological changes on the northern coast of Java (Mizuno, Semedi, and Nooteboom 2023).

Since July 1992, Mizuno has been married to Ami Aminah Meutia, an engineer and wetland specialist who graduated from the Bandung Institute of Technology (1987) and Waseda University (PhD, 1996). They have three children: Yuji (b. 1993), Aisha (b. 1995), and Ayuna (b. 1997). His family has been the most important part of Mizuno's life. Thanks to their social and emotional support, he has been able to contribute several studies that have illuminated the field with in-depth discussions and interdisciplinary perspectives.

Contents

In Southeast Asia, Festschriften are presented mainly to eminent "home scholars" (Thongchai 2005), written in national languages, and—due to budget constraints—published and distributed in limited editions by local university presses.[21] Meanwhile, Festschriften published in the West often lack contributions from Southeast Asian "home scholars," local researchers, and collaborators, and thus they unintentionally reflect a limited access for intellectuals from the Global South to first-class scholarly resources and international academic networks. This special issue wishes to bridge such social divides by offering an alternate model of a Festschrift presented to a region-based scholar such as Mizuno, and with diverse contributors from the region. As any Festschrift highlights the collaborations and social networks of its contributors (Richetti 2012), this special issue reflects the links to scholars in Japan, Korea, and Southeast Asia that Mizuno forged as part of his academic network throughout his career.

Mizuno has a broad interest in Southeast Asia's past and present. Although this special issue contains a wide range of studies, it offers a coherent picture that speaks to three enduring themes in Mizuno's research interests: the transformations of land, labor, and livelihoods in Southeast Asia. Rather than situating them in isolation, Mizuno treats these three elements as highly connected forces that dynamically shape the region. Based on his long-term research, Mizuno sees the history of socioeconomic transformation in the region as tied to the conditions of labor, land productivity, and resilient livelihoods of local people. This special issue also reflects the fieldwork-based approach to studying and understanding the complex issue of transformation in the region, as Mizuno has experimented with, built, and directed in his research projects as

21) There are some rare exceptions. Chambert-Loir and Ambary (1999) and Hera (2019) are examples of Festschriften presented to foreign scholars and published by local commercial presses.

well as in collaborations with numerous researchers, including young scholars and those from the region.

The transformations of land, labor, and livelihoods in Southeast Asia provide a background for this special issue to focus on fieldwork research with a cross-disciplinary approach. The first three articles contain fieldwork-based research on specific locations, informed by debates in the fields of ecology, anthropology, and political science. Viengrat Nethipo discusses the impact of rubber plantations on the political life of local communities in Northeastern Thailand, especially with respect to electoral politics. Adrian Albano investigates changes in the rural landscape due to the rise of commercial farming in Ifugao, Philippines, which highlights the importance of the conservation of heritage landscapes and environmental sustainability of the local community. Suzuki Haruka examines the residential and migration history of a traditional fishing village in Riau, Indonesia. These articles, taken together, show that for the last two decades successive local governments in Southeast Asia have developed their institutions and instruments to grow the local economy and to accommodate social changes, but they are often unaware of their irreversible impacts on the environment.

The intersection of economic analysis, regional comparative perspective, and local development theories forms an important element in Kambara Kentaro's examination on the progress of Islamic finance in Malaysia and Brunei Darussalam, Je Seong Jeon's discussion on the development of civil society to promote human rights in the region, and Chalermpol Chamchan's analysis on the situation of cross-border migrant children in Thailand. Each paper has its own perspective, but collectively they highlight how various forms of regional cooperation and solidarity, often initiated by non-state actors and later developed together with supportive state institutions, have transformed the social landscape of Southeast Asia beyond what could have been imagined two decades ago.

The historical research carried out by Yamamoto Nobuto and William Horton is also based on fieldwork. For historians of Southeast Asia, the process of searching for and collecting primary data is integral to their fieldwork activities. Yamamoto's discussion on the impacts of the construction of Boven Digoel as an internment camp for political prisoners during the colonial times, and Horton's investigation into the reappearance of the *pasar malam* (night market) in Indonesia during the Japanese occupation (1942–45), are fine examples of research results obtained after a long process of gathering, examining, and analyzing primary sources made possible by the researchers' consistent commitment to fieldwork in the region.

All the articles in this special issue are a result of the researchers' embeddedness with their research subjects and the changing world they deal with, based on fieldwork. Southeast Asia has become more accessible due to increased air transport and infrastruc-

ture development. Yet, the changing requirements for fieldwork caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and the pervasive use of information and communications technologies to gather and analyze data have directly changed how researchers see "the field," develop research questions, and understand the societies they study—issues that are pertinent to our times of global challenges (see, for example, Peng 2021; Abescat *et al.* 2022).

The current trend of bureaucratization of universities in the Global North has placed restrictions on researchers pursuing field studies, especially in perilous, fragile, and violent areas in the Global South. These restrictions are often founded on potential risks that researchers may encounter during their time in the field, the scope of liability of universities (and funding agencies) in taking on the burden of such risks, and the ethics of conducting research abroad. Furthermore, the weak regulatory framework and unpredictable social setting commonly found in the Global South have provided Global North researchers with reasons to limit (and sometimes abandon) fieldwork and delegate data gathering to a plethora of local partners or interlocutors ("consulting" firms, under-resourced NGOs, precarious journalists, students looking for research experience, etc.). While this practice of outsourcing field research is not yet widespread in Southeast Asia, it highlights the epistemological privilege of fieldwork and the importance of developing real collaborations with home scholars.

As noted elsewhere, home scholars in the Global South are tied down with institutional issues and limited resources to produce and disseminate knowledge but pressed by "bibliometric coloniality" in pursuit of world-class universities (Sawahel 2023). While academic institutions in Southeast Asia have improved over the last two decades, home scholars in the region are striving to improve their scholarly engagement by expanding their regional and international connections—although they sometimes have limited space to decide the direction of academic collaboration with Global North partners. Beyond these limitations, the main consideration is how home and foreign scholars, based on their commitment to long-term fieldwork, bring new research questions, broaden their network, and deepen academic collaborations across and beyond disciplines, in their common objective to understand the region and offer potential solutions to current issues.

Fieldwork has evolved from the traditional ethnographic approach to become the indispensable practice of immersion in the local milieu in order to understand the society under study. For researchers, the field represents the space where primary data is collected for their hypothesis as well as the space where concepts are verified or falsified. The development of information and communications technologies confirms the importance of fieldwork as a contact zone between researchers and various actors to establish direct conversations that often shape the research itself. Across disciplines—whether economics, political science, linguistics, or ecology—fieldwork plays a key role as a source

of knowledge in efforts to foster scholarship and dialogues. As articles in this special issue attest, fieldwork remains a fruitful and important endeavor for conducting research in Southeast Asia in order to comprehend the region's fast transformations and future challenges.

Finally, this special issue illustrates the researchers' intellectual quest and personal orientations in conducting fieldwork in the region. Beyond the debate on access to an emic or insider perspective, long-term fieldwork experiences provide a basis for developing research. And in the end, they shape the contours of production of knowledge about the region. Mizuno often asked us, the editors of this special issue—during our training as his graduate students and later as apprentice researchers—when we last went to the field and what we learned from it, as a reflective discourse to go beyond collecting data for research purposes. While both of us often found ourselves unable to provide any deeper reflections on our respective fieldwork, we came to understand that our fieldwork reflection was part of the long process of ongoing accumulation of research experiences. In the same fashion as we, the editors and authors of the articles in this special issue, have been inspired by Mizuno's work in our own research and academic careers, we hope that the topics discussed in this special issue will benefit scholars of social change, development studies, and rural and agrarian studies who wish to enrich their research and teaching resources on Southeast Asia.

Accepted: October 15, 2024

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The Political Frontier of Rubber Plantations in Northeastern Thailand

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The promotion of rubber plantations in Northeastern Thailand has significantly shaped the region's political and socioeconomic landscape. Originally introduced to an economically marginalized, arid area, rubber cultivation gained momentum as Thailand transitioned from military-dominated rule to an electoral system in the late 1980s—a period marked by the rise of provincial business networks and increased civil society engagement in politics. With the Northeast holding a substantial portion of parliamentary seats, rubber plantations elevated the region's political relevance within Thailand. This impact became particularly evident in the 2000s, when electoral politics reached its peak. Drawing on surveys, stakeholder interviews, and field research, this article examines the contested political power surrounding rubber plantation policies. Analyzing dynamics at the national, provincial, and community levels, the study illustrates how rubber policy frameworks were shaped by different political regimes, how political networks were mobilized through various channels, and how these forces influenced local communities engaged in rubber cultivation.

Keywords: Thai politics, Northeastern Thailand, rubber plantations, democratization, provincial politics

Introduction

Thailand is the world's largest exporter of natural rubber, accounting for around 30 percent of global exports by value (Statista Research Department 2024). Although rubber planting began in the 1930s, significant promotion efforts were not initiated until 1959, focusing primarily on the southern region, following recommendations from the World Bank (World Bank 1959, 5). These efforts were bolstered by the Rubber Planting Aid Fund Act of 1960, which directed substantial government funding exclusively to plantations in the South for several decades. It was only in 1989, with the launch of the

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Green Isan megaproject led by Prime Minister Chatichai Choonhavan, that rubber cultivation was formally introduced to the Northeast. Later, Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra expanded these efforts through the One Million Rai Rubber Planting initiative (referred to here as "One-Million Rai"),[1] which specifically targeted rubber cultivation in the Northeast.

The delayed introduction of rubber to the Northeast—beginning 30 years after its establishment in the South—has had a profound impact on the region's economy and society. While many studies have examined the socioeconomic effects of these changes, the political dimensions of rubber cultivation remain underexplored. Rubber, as a high-value crop, holds economic significance; however, its cultivation and management have also become highly politicized, from decision-making processes to local implementation.

This article, based on research conducted from 2015 to 2017 that employed documentary analysis, observation, and interviews, investigates the political landscape surrounding rubber cultivation in Northeast Thailand. It is structured in three sections: the first explores national politics and rubber plantation promotion, outlining the policy framework, national context, and political forces influencing rubber policies in the Northeast. The second section analyzes provincial policy implementation through case studies of prominent rubber promoters in the Northeast. The final section examines the impact of rubber cultivation on local communities, focusing on how policies have shaped the livelihoods and social structures of residents.

National Power Play in Northeast Rubber: From Semi-Democracy to Electoral Politics

Isan in Thailand's National Politics, 1933–Present

Isan, Thailand's northeastern region, is often associated with poverty and limited educational opportunities, partly because many residents work as migrant laborers. However, the Northeast has a rich political history marked by both oppression and resistance. From 1933 to 1951, several northeastern politicians gained national prominence; however, four left-leaning ministers were murdered on suspicion of communist sympathies, leading the central government to take measures to diminish the region's political power (Dararat 2000). The Northeast also faced delayed infrastructure development due to governmental neglect, which persisted until the Vietnam War era, when strategic projects like highways and airports were established. Numerous state-sponsored development proj-

1) A rai [ไร่ râi] is a unit of area equal to 1,600 square meters (0.16 hectares, 0.3954 acres) and is used in measuring land in Thailand.

ects were subsequently implemented, though often more for propaganda and state security than for genuinely improving the livelihoods of the region's people (Viyuth 1993).

The political shifts that began in the 1990s materialized fully in 2001 with the implementation of pro-poor policies that turned national attention toward the North and Northeast. The newly founded Thai Rak Thai Party won a decisive majority in that year's election, securing 248 out of 500 parliamentary seats, with 126 from the Northeast alone. This success was largely attributed to popular policies like universal healthcare and the Thailand Village Fund, which resonated strongly across rural areas. These initiatives paved the way for Thai Rak Thai's landslide victory in 2005 and sustained success in later elections.

However, by 2006, anti-Thaksin sentiments began to emerge, particularly among conservative elites and establishment groups who felt their influence waning. Compared to the rural poor, the urban middle class benefited less from Thai Rak Thai's policies and joined the opposition. This coalition evolved into the People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD), commonly known as the Yellow Shirts, and accused Thaksin and Thai Rak Thai of winning elections—especially in the Northeast—through vote-buying from poor, rural voters (Prajak 2012, 3).

This opposition movement eventually led to the 2006 coup that ousted Thaksin from power, sparking the rise of the pro-Thaksin Red Shirts in response. Residents of the Northeast and the North comprised a significant portion of the Red Shirts movement, as they had benefited considerably from Thaksin's policies. Driven by poverty, marginalization, and resentment toward the elite who had supported the coup, the Red Shirts voiced frustration over what they saw as a disregard for the rural electorate's votes. While the Yellow Shirts, despite their anti-democratic stance, received backing from authorities and the Bangkok middle class, the Red Shirts were often labeled as violent extremists or even terrorists. This perception of a "double standard" within the socio-political system deepened their sense of injustice (Apichat *et al.* 2013, 55–58).

People from the Northeast, in particular, became a central force within the Red Shirts movement, which scholars attribute to their adaptability to shifting socioeconomic conditions and their nuanced understanding of rights and justice. Despite their political awareness and resilience, people in the Northeast continued to face profound economic inequalities (Keyes 2014; Pattana 2014; Kanokwan 2016).

Rubber Promotion Begins: The Green Isan Project

The naming of the Green Isan Project (โครงการอีสานเขียว), formally titled "His Majesty the King's Mercifulness for the Development of the Northeastern Region in Accordance with His Royal Initiatives," illustrates the tradition of elaborate titles for state-led, particularly

royal, projects in Thailand. Initially forming part of the Royal Thai Army's rural development agenda, the project originated from King Bhumipol's suggestion in March 1987 to then-Commander-in-Chief General Chavalit Yongchaiyudh to address the drought situation in the Northeast. Chavalit capitalized on the suggestion, presenting a comprehensive development plan for the region to Prime Minister General Prem Tinsulanonda, which included the Green Isan Project. With the rainy season in the Northeast lasting only from August to September, the limited precipitation provided a compelling rationale to implement the plan.

As a first step, Prem acted swiftly to authorize the Royal Thai Army's Northeast water-supply relief program within just three days. Military water-truck convoys were publicly showcased at the Royal Plaza and televised nationwide during the project's inauguration (Army Weekly Newspaper 1991). This highly ceremonial approach reflected the 1980s model of welfare provision, where the state, through bureaucratic and military channels, appeared to extend a form of paternalistic generosity to its less privileged subjects in rural areas.

In response to Chavalit's recommendation, Prime Minister Prem established a center under the Internal Security Operations Command (ISOC) to oversee and coordinate efforts within the Green Isan Project. Although ISOC was primarily a security agency, it had significantly expanded its role during the Cold War by engaging in rural development to counter communist influence. This involvement in rural development allowed ISOC to maintain its influence even after the Cold War. Puangthong (2017, 22–25) notes that ISOC became instrumental in securing authoritarian regimes after the coups of 2006 and 2014.

The center for the Green Isan Project, operating within ISOC, was tasked with regulating policy and managing both governmental and non-governmental actors in line with the project's objectives. Initially, its focus was on short-term solutions to immediate crises, such as water scarcity. This involved using military resources to enhance natural water supplies, most notably through artificial rain-making, commonly known as "The Royal Rain." The operations were carried out by various state entities, including the Royal Thai Army, the Royal Thai Navy, the Royal Thai Air Force, the Department of Police, and the Royal Rainmaking Operation Office,[2] with funding totaling 55 billion baht for the 1988–93 fiscal period (Thammaniti Press 1989, 36).

To further its aim of boosting agricultural incomes, the Green Isan Project included

2) The Royal Rainmaking Operation Office was initially under the Office of the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives (MoAC). In 1992, it was elevated to the status of a department within the Ministry and renamed the Department of Royal Rainmaking and Agricultural Aviation.

two phases of a rubber promotion program. The first phase (1989–93) received approval from Prime Minister Chatichai Choonhavan, the first elected prime minister since 1976. In this phase, the Office of the Rubber Replanting Aid Fund (ORRAF) provided subsidies to establish rubber plantations on 156,250 rai in the Northeast. This initiative was generously funded, with a cabinet-approved budget allocation of 419.87 million baht on June 20, 1989. The second phase (1997–2001), endorsed by Prime Minister Banharn Silpa-archa, saw the budget expand to 735.61 million baht, adding an additional 200,000 rai of rubber plantations. This initiative paralleled a similar rubber project in southern Thailand, supported by a World Bank loan of USD 60 million and an additional GBP 10 million from the Commonwealth Development Corporation (CDC). These funds were used to supplement subsidies for rubber planting promotion in the South between 1987 and 1990, with a target of covering 1.25 million rai.

The Northeast Emerges on the Political Landscape

At the heart of the Green Isan Project was General Chavalit Yongchaiyudh, whose political and military career was grounded in the belief that socioeconomic inequality was a root cause of insurgency and that addressing it was essential for a stable democratic regime (Baker and Pasuk 2014, 238). As a key member of the "Democratic Soldiers" faction, Chavalit aimed to alleviate rural poverty to counter communist influence. He played a crucial role in negotiating an end to the civil conflict with the Communist Party of Thailand (CPT) and later resigned as army commander-in-chief in 1990 to establish the New Aspiration Party. This party focused on economic development and security, especially in rural areas, gaining significant support in the Northeast. It won 37 seats in the 1992 election, later expanding to 125 seats in 1996—a record for a single party at that time—and propelling Chavalit to the role of Thailand's prime minister. During his brief tenure, rubber cultivation in the Northeast expanded rapidly. Krit Kongpetch, a Northeastern Member of Parliament (MP) and Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives (MoAC), secured an increased 4.5 billion baht-budget through ORRAF to further support rubber farmers (Phuchatkanraiwan 1997, 5).

The political landscape in which Chavalit operated during the 1980s was characterized as a "semi-democratic regime," where elections played an important role but were largely confined to parliamentary politics. Though businessmen gained influence in parliament, the military, elites, and monarchical networks retained control over key political decisions. The Green Isan Project, framed as an initiative under royal patronage, benefited from its association with the monarchy, which lent the project a degree of legitimacy and popular appeal. The King's approval added weight to Chavalit's strategic plans, effectively making the project a collaborative endeavor that balanced Chavalit's objectives with the

monarchy's endorsement.

The project also served a secondary purpose in addressing the residual communist influence in the Northeast. After the civil war, the state needed to reintegrate former communists and stabilize areas previously sympathetic to the CPT. Chavalit recognized that sustainable peace required providing ex-communists with land and livelihood opportunities. Degraded forest areas, managed by the Royal Forest Department (originally under the MoAC and later transferred to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment in 2004), were designated as sites for new rubber plantations. Although unsuitable for rice farming, these areas were well-suited for rubber cultivation, offering an economically viable solution for former communists with limited access to land.

Furthermore, Chavalit's strategic investment in the Northeast aligned with Thailand's shift toward electoral politics. Recognizing the growing importance of voter support in a post-Prem era, Chavalit worked to establish strong networks with the rural populace. The Northeast, which holds the largest share of seats in parliament, represented a critical political stronghold. By aligning the Green Isan Project with local interests and enhancing agricultural productivity, Chavalit aimed to secure a loyal voter base in the region. The project thus marked a transition in Thai politics, as the Northeast began to emerge as a central force, with the dynamics of power gradually shifting from elite control to broader mass politics.

In summary, the Green Isan Project was not merely an economic or agricultural development effort but also a politically charged initiative. Through his strategic alignment with royal endorsement and a focus on rural development, Chavalit leveraged the project to strengthen his political foothold in the Northeast. By positioning the state as both a provider of resources and a mediator of royal benevolence, the project exemplified the complex interplay of monarchy, military, and provincial politics in Thailand's late 20th-century development landscape.

Rubber in Electoral Politics

After the second phase of the Green Isan Project concluded in 2001, Thaksin Shinawatra's cabinet launched a new round of rubber promotion, known as the One-Million Rai Project, on May 26, 2004. This phase aimed to expand rubber cultivation by 700,000 rai in the Northeast and 300,000 rai in the North. The government mobilized agencies such as MoAC, ORRAF, and the Bank of Agriculture and Agricultural Cooperatives, providing farmers with 5,360 baht per rai in the first year, as well as training, marketing guidance, and access to agricultural loans. Following this promotion effort, central rubber markets were established in the Northeast—in Nong Khai in 2008 and Buriram in 2011. Until then, all of the country's central rubber markets had been located exclusively in the South.

Unlike the Green Isan Project, which operated under military influence, this new initiative was led by the elected government. The 1997 constitution had strengthened executive power, allowing the Thai Rak Thai Party to steer policy-making. This reform redefined the role of bureaucratic bodies, particularly the MoAC, as the cabinet took on greater leadership in rubber promotion. This shift from semi-bureaucratic to democratic governance enabled elected officials to reallocate resources from the South to the Northeast, transferring influence from bureaucrats to politicians. Consequently, rubber promotion became a strategic tool for building political networks, reshaping grassroots politics, and consolidating power.

The decision-making process for rubber promotion reveals its deep entanglement with electoral politics. Analyzing the agencies responsible for introducing rubber-related agendas in cabinet meetings provides insight into the distribution of authority in initiating government programs. From 1959 through the 1980s, the MoAC primarily led rubber-related agendas, with some input from the National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB) and limited involvement from international organizations. A review of cabinet meeting records from 1991 to 2004 indicates that, throughout the 1990s, the MoAC continued as the main agency proposing rubber initiatives, with only occasional items introduced directly by the cabinet. From 2001 to 2004, however, all rubber-related agenda items were presented directly by the cabinet, led either by the prime minister or specific cabinet members (Sophon *et al.* 2014, 3–60), reflecting a shift in decision-making authority.

As rubber became central to the formation and maintenance of political networks, rubber-related politics intensified, driving significant political shifts. A prominent example is the 2003 rubber seedling scandal involving Newin Chidchob, who was then serving as Deputy Minister of the MoAC. Newin initiated a program to provide 90 million free rubber seedlings to support farmers. Marking its entrance into the rubber sector, Charoen Pokphand (CP) Group, the country's largest agricultural conglomerate, was granted exclusive rights to supply the seedlings, a contract worth a total of 1.44 billion baht.

The State Audit Office (SAO) began investigating the deal for foul play in 2005; however, the case only gained momentum after the September 2006 coup. The Assets Examination Committee (AEC), established by the coup leaders, advanced the case, identifying 44 individuals implicated in the corruption to stand trial before the Supreme Court's Criminal Division for Holders of Political Positions (Thai Political Facts Info 2009). With mounting legal and political pressure, Newin was seen as having sufficient motivation to change his political stance. Amid post-coup political tensions, he led members of parliament under his influence to defect from the Thai Rak Thai Party and form a coalition with the Democrat Party, enabling them to establish a government with Abhisit

Vejjajiva as prime minister in late 2008.

With Newin as part of Abhisit's coalition government, the Supreme Court's Criminal Division for Holders of Political Positions dismissed all charges against him and the other defendants in September 2009. This case illustrates how rubber became a catalyst for a temporary realignment of parliamentary power, weakening the Thai Rak Thai Party's influence and paving the way for a conservative political trajectory in the years that followed. Rubber was now at the heart of electoral politics in Thailand.

Provincial Pioneers: Key Players and Strategies in Rubber Expansion

Following the launch of the One-Million Rai Project in 2004, three key actors at the provincial level contributed to the promotion of rubber plantations in the Northeast. The two MPs and one researcher/activist respectively used business, bureaucratic, and civil society networks to expand the rubber industry in the region.

The Case of MP Phinij Jarusombat

Phinij Jarusombat, born in Thailand's central region, entered the political arena in 1992, securing a seat as an MP for the Samakkhi Tham Party in Nong Khai Province. He later co-founded the Seri Tham Party, serving as its leader from 1996 to 2000, before joining the Thai Rak Thai Party, where he became a central figure within the Wang Phayanak faction, alongside Preecha Laohapongchana and approximately 40 other members (Matichon Online 2012). Phinij held key positions in Thai Rak Thai, including deputy leader, deputy prime minister, and minister of a few prominent ministries.

As an MP for Nong Khai, Phinij championed land reform, advocating for the issuance of Sor Por Kor 4-01 (ส.ป.ก. 4-01) land rights documents, which were special land deeds designated for poor farmers under the 1975 Land Reform for Agriculture Bill, and lobbying for greater distribution of rubber seedlings to local farmers. He noted that the Office of the Rubber Replanting Aid Fund (ORRAF) had requested his support in encouraging Nong Khai's farmers to adopt rubber tree cultivation, drawing upon his own experiences to persuade them (Matichon Online 2011). At that time, in 1996, fewer than 40 rubber plantations existed in Nong Khai, each covering only 5–7 rai. Yet Phinij's campaign soon gained momentum, leading to a notable expansion of rubber cultivation across both Nong Khai and Bueng Kan provinces (Sujit 2013).

During the Thai Rak Thai administration, the One-Million Rai Project rapidly expanded rubber plantations in Nong Khai and Bueng Kan, especially while Phinij served as deputy prime minister, leading to an increase in plantation area to over 400,000 rai.

Rising demand for rubber in China further elevated prices, making rubber cultivation more attractive to local farmers. After the Thai Rak Thai Party's dissolution in 2007 and his subsequent five-year political ban, Phinij shifted his focus to local projects, notably promoting rubber exports from Bueng Kan. As president of the Thai-Chinese Cultural Relationship Council (TCCRC), he worked to strengthen trade ties with China, establishing a close partnership with Rubber Valley Group, a prominent Chinese rubber company investing in Thailand's rubber sector (Prachachatthurakit 2014). At its peak in 2011, Bueng Kan had 1.4 million rai of land dedicated to rubber plantations (Matichon Online 2011). By promoting rubber plantations, Phinij not only helped develop a large-scale agricultural enterprise but also strengthened his political network by creating economic opportunities for local farmers.

In 2014, the growing number of rubber-smoking factories in Bueng Kan, which produced rubber sheets, provided the province with a competitive economic edge over others in the Northeast, where rubber was typically processed only into rubber cups. Phinij leveraged his ministerial position to forge business partnerships that fueled Bueng Kan's rubber industry growth. Initial investors included Sirithat Rojanaphruk (Com-Link Co., Ltd.) and Theppharak Luengsuwan (Namyong Terminal Public Company Limited), each overseeing 3,000–4,000 rai of rubber plantations. Later, major corporations like Thai Beverage Group's TCC Agro-Industrial, led by Charoen Siriwatthanphakdi—Thailand's largest landowner—entered the market, establishing extensive plantations beginning with 6,000 rai in Pak Khad District and 4,000 rai in Seka District (Matichon Online 2011).

Phinij also obtained high-yield RRIM 3001 seedlings from Malaysia through Sri Trang Industry Co., Ltd., which could produce up to 512 kilograms of latex per rai annually within four years. CP Group's Dhanin Chearavanont further contributed 20,000 JVP80 seedlings, known for rapid growth and high productivity, yielding up to 500 kilograms of latex per rai (Matichon Online 2011).

Through these initiatives, Phinij transformed Bueng Kan into the Northeast's largest rubber-producing province. Although his network held informal control over some land holdings in exchange for a share of farmers' income, the policies generated considerable economic gains for locals, bolstering Phinij's popularity. His case exemplifies a transformative period in Thai politics since the 1997 constitution (often associated with the Thaksin regime), where the relationship between politicians and voters began to hinge on delivering concrete, impactful policies. Phinij's rubber promotion policy, in particular, solidified his political base, representing a pivotal shift as constituents began to see direct benefits from electoral politics.

Conversely, this era also saw politicians leveraging their positions for personal gain.

Phinij's case demonstrates how a politician could use their role to build business alliances and attract investments without damaging their public image. Voters began to accept that politicians might not be entirely free from personal benefits, as long as their actions contributed to economic growth.

The Case of Supachai Phosu

Locally known as *Khru Kaeo* (Teacher Kaeo), Supachai Phosu previously served as the principal of Ban Tha Nham Kaew (ท่าหนามแก้ว) School in Nakhon Phanom Province. His political career began in 2001 when he was elected as an MP for the Thai Rak Thai Party in Nakhon Phanom, aligning with the influential Wang Nam Yom faction led by Somsak Thepsuthin and Suriya Jungrungreangkit (*Matichon* 2006, 11). Following the dissolution of the Thai Rak Thai Party, Supachai stayed committed to its legacy, continuing his political career with its successor, the People's Power Party. In 2008, the Constitutional Court ordered the dissolution of the People's Power Party, resulting in the downfall of Somchai Wongsawat's cabinet. Supachai then aligned himself with Newin's Bhumjaithai Party and supported the opposition Democratic Party in forming a new government in December 2008. From May 2009 to August 2011, he served as Minister of the MoAC.

The political climate during this period was unstable, leading to unpredictable cabinet longevity. In response, Abhisit's government launched the "*Thai Khem Khaeng*" (Strong Thailand) program, focusing on rapid infrastructure development through national budget allocation. As Minister of the MoAC, Supachai promoted rubber in the Northeast and oversaw several critical construction projects. The MoAC established three major STR 20[3)] rubber manufacturing plants in Sisaket, Ubon Ratchathani, and Nakhon Phanom, each capable of producing 20,000 tons of rubber per year. Additionally, to reduce price manipulation by middlemen, the Ministry built rubber and farm input purchasing centers in six provinces across the North and Northeast, in Phayao, Phitsanulok, Kamphaeng Phet, Chaiyaphum, Loei, and Nakhon Phanom (Prachachatthurakit 2011, 8). Supachai noted that manufacturers in Nakhon Phanom processed rubber sourced from 600,000 rai across the provinces of Nakhon Phanom, Mukdahan, Nong Khai, and Sakon Nakhon. The second factory in Udon Thani processed rubber from Loei, Nong Bua Lam Phu, Khon Kaen, Kalasin, and parts of Sakon Nakhon, while the third factory in Sisaket processed rubber from Sisaket, Ubon Ratchathani, Surin, Yasothon, and Amnat Charoen, covering over 500,000 rai in total. From 2011 to 2013, the MoAC under Supachai's leadership

3) STR 20 stands for Standard Thai Rubber 20, a type of rubber bale primarily made from field coagula mixed with crepe rubber, cup lump, or ribbed smoked sheet. Its specific parameters include: soil content not exceeding 0.16% on a 44-micron aperture, an initial plasticity (P_0) of 30, and a plasticity retention index (PRI) of 40.

expanded rubber cultivation by promoting 800,000 rai of new land—500,000 in the Northeast, 15,000 in the North, and 150,000 across the Central, East, and South regions (Suphachai Phosu, June 16, 2017, personal communication).

In 2011, Nakhon Phanom celebrated the opening of the Third Thai–Lao Friendship Bridge, linking to Thakhaek District in Khammouane Province, Laos. Supachai seized this opportunity to position Nakhon Phanom as the rubber industry hub of the Indochina region. He expressed his intent to attract more investors to the rubber processing industry, anticipating increased rubber imports from Laos and Vietnam, which would be exported from Nakhon Phanom (Komchadluek 2010).

Leveraging his teaching background, Supachai initiated a pilot project with the Ministry of Education (MoE) to promote rubber planting in northeastern schools. Schools were encouraged to allocate 1–5 rai for plantations, and the ORRAF trained teachers and students to create demonstration plots. This initiative enabled students to learn about rubber cultivation from a young age, resulting in the participation of 40 schools in Nakhon Phanom by 2010, although other provinces showed limited enthusiasm.

Supachai also aimed to establish technical colleges focused on rubber production and processing to cultivate a skilled workforce, enhancing Thailand's rubber industry and contributing to poverty alleviation among farmers (*Matichon* 2010, 16). However, the project remained unfinished as Supachai's political term came to an end.

Similar to the first case study, Supachai's experience illustrates how rubber promotion policies began to serve as vital tools for politicians, particularly during Abhisit's government, which struggled to secure seats in the Northeast. In 2007, Nakhon Phanom Province recorded the highest rate of "Vote No" in the referendum on the military government's draft constitution alongside significant opposition from Red Shirts supporters of Abhisit's government. Consequently, the rubber policy not only promoted Nakhon Phanom Province, but also bolstered Supachai's political popularity.

While both MPs featured here leveraged networks to promote rubber initiatives, their strategies differed. Phinij relied on his former ministerial business connections, whereas Supachai utilized his bureaucratic ties within the MoAC and the MoE. His approach was notably bureaucratic, favoring ORRAF and leading educational institutions over local government collaborations.

The political landscape after the 2006 coup d'état was marked by a pronounced shift towards re-centralization, a trend that intensified following the 2014 coup. The regime consolidated power through provincial administration reforms, revising regulations to enhance central bureaucratic authority and exert tighter control over local governance (Viengrat 2019). The 2014 coup further eroded local democracy by suspending all local elections until 2019. Under the post-coup authoritarian regimes, bureaucratic power

overshadowed that of elected politicians, resulting in a governance model characterized by bureaucratic inefficiency, which ultimately hindered Supachai's political aspirations.

The Case of Prasit Kanchana

Prasit Kanchana, an adviser to the Association of Rubber Plantation Fund Cooperatives in Ubon Ratchathani, exemplifies effective leadership in promoting rubber plantations in Northeast Thailand. He successfully established a civil society network that connects the civil and political sectors, positioning the association as the most influential farmers' group in the region and serving as a model for others.

Born into a rubber farming family in the southern province of Nakhon Si Thammarat, Prasit's upbringing in a region where rubber cultivation was prevalent inspired his academic pursuit of rubber research. He became a prominent expert in the field while working at the Office of Experimental Field and Central Laboratory within the Faculty of Agriculture at Ubon Ratchathani University.

Prasit's contributions to the rubber industry can be divided into two main areas: lobbying and network building. Through interviews, lectures, and public addresses, he sought to draw government attention to the needs of smallholder farmers. In 2012, official estimates indicated that Thailand had approximately one million smallholder rubber farmers, affecting around six million people. While most of these farmers received support from the ORRAF, which helped mitigate cost-benefit issues, market access remained a significant challenge. To address this, Prasit advocated for legislation promoting domestic rubber consumption, such as permitting the use of rubber in road construction. He also encouraged northeastern farmers to plant rubber alongside other crops to mitigate the risks associated with price volatility.

In addition to his advocacy, Prasit concentrated on building farmer networks to enhance bargaining power and ensure long-term sustainability. By collaborating with academics, social activists, and NGO practitioners, he organized dispersed farmers into cohesive groups, thereby strengthening their negotiating position.

In 2005, Prasit founded the Phu Foi Lom farmer group in Buntharik District, Ubon Ratchathani Province, specifically targeting an area where rubber cultivation had been nonexistent. He mobilized local farmers who wanted to cultivate rubber by enlisting the help of village chiefs, employing a strategy similar to that of NGOs. Through group discussions, farmers identified the sale of their products as a primary concern, leading them to pool resources for transporting their rubber to distant cooperatives. Over time, it became evident that the prices offered by these cooperatives were inconsistent. To address this challenge, Prasit introduced the "Paper Rubber Market," a system that facilitated instant grading and weighing of rubber at collection centers. This innovative

approach enabled online bidding, allowing farmers to collect their rubber and send it to the buying center of the successful bidder. As a result, the farmer group and others evolved into community enterprises and cooperatives.

In 2011, with the opening of the Buriram Central Rubber Market by the ORRAF, the Phu Foi Lom community enterprise merged its Buntharik District rubber collection center with the new facility, establishing a standardized pricing system. By utilizing ORRAF's infrastructure, farmers gained earlier access to reserve funds, which significantly enhanced their operational capabilities.

The success of this initiative attracted additional small-scale farmers, transforming the rubber collection center into the central market for farmers from neighboring provinces, including Sisaket, Amnat Charoen, and Yasothon. During 2011 and 2012, amid declining rubber prices under Yingluck Shinawatra's administration, farmers from southern Thailand protested, while their northeastern counterparts remained uninvolved, largely due to differing political affiliations and a lesser impact from the price drop (Prasit Kanchana, November 8, 2015, personal communication).

By 2011, the Phu Foi Lom farmer group had registered as the "Phu Foi Lom Rubber Community Enterprise," boasting over 3,000 members. In 2012, it transitioned to the "Phu Foi Lom Land Reform Area's Rubber Fund Cooperative Ltd." to achieve legal entity status for conducting business effectively. Ultimately, it formed partnerships with seven other rubber fund cooperatives, leading to the establishment of the Association of Ubon Ratchathani Funding Cooperatives Limited in 2014, which managed all aspects of rubber transactions, including purchasing, processing, and exporting to China (Chitawan 2018, 47). The cooperative association subsequently signed an MOU with a Chinese company to export a minimum of 20,000 tons of rubber bales annually (Prasit Kanchana, November 8, 2015, personal communication).

Prasit's case exemplifies the successful establishment of smallholder farmer networks to enhance the bargaining power of individual farmers in the market. Two key factors contributed to this success. First, Ubon Ratchathani lacked politicians or capitalists who owned large rubber plantations and manipulated rubber promotion for their own interests. While politicians may gain popularity through projects like processing factories or central rubber markets, these initiatives often fail to empower farmers and may benefit politicians or large plantation owners instead. In contrast, local politicians' disinterest in promoting rubber cultivation has allowed leaders like Prasit to form networks of smallholder farmers. Second, Prasit's passion for demonstrating the viability of rubber cultivation in the Northeast has been crucial. He has effectively leveraged his knowledge, skills, and connections within both government and civil sectors to establish robust networks for farmers.

From State Policy to Practice: Grassroots Transformation

This section examines grassroots village life and the ways in which state policy has influenced and transformed it across different political regimes. The villages discussed are part of the Thai Nation Development Cooperator (TNDC) program, which was initiated by the Thai government for former communists who surrendered their arms and signed contracts to regain their Thai citizenship. These individuals pledged allegiance to the national ideology of "Nation, Religion, and Monarch," as established by Cabinet Order No. 66/2523 (1980) under Prime Minister Prem Tinsulanonda.

The Case of an Ex-Communist Village

The first TNDC group was established in Northeast Thailand and comprised four villages with a total of 403 households and 806 residents across the provinces of Mukdahan, Nakhon Phanom, and Yasothon. The residents were former members of the CPT who had worked with the northeastern headquarters located in the Phu Phan mountains range, which connects these provinces. A notable example is the TNDC village Moo 7 in Tambon Um Mao, That Phanom District, Nakhon Phanom, which underwent significant transformation due to the introduction of rubber plantations.

Moo 7 consisted of 80 dwellings, with each family allocated 15 rai for cultivation and half a rai (800 square meters) for living space. The layout of the community was planned by the Royal Thai Army and included essential facilities such as a Buddhist temple and a school. Despite having designated agricultural areas, the land used for the community was repurposed from degraded highland forest and was unsuitable for rice farming. This limitation forced villagers to rely on alternative crops, such as cassava, sugarcane, and eucalyptus, to sustain their livelihoods, presenting a significant challenge.

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, the village received ongoing support from government projects focused on water resource development, job promotion, and various initiatives framed in discursive terms. Notable campaigns included "Doing Thankless Jobs" (*Pid Thong Lang Phra* ปิดทองหลังพระ), reflecting the values of humility and altruism, and "Edible Fences" (*Rua Kin Dai* รั้วกินได้), promoting the planting of edible climbing plants. These projects aimed to enhance national security and were presented alongside state-sponsored ideologies emphasizing the military, security, and Buddhism (Khemphon Chuetamhun and Summit Chaukumchang; January 10, 2016, personal communication). Although funded by the state, villagers often expressed gratitude towards the military, officials, and royal family members who visited them. Funding for these campaigns typically lasted only for the first one to three years, yet large banners reminding villagers of the state's support remained prominently displayed. Consequently, the state's role in

development was frequently perceived as one of benevolence rather than a fundamental duty owed to them by the government. This was reflected in conversations with villagers in which terms like "help," "mercifulness," and "kindness" were used when referring to government development projects without mention of their rights to receive services from the government. In contrast, when discussing projects initiated by political parties, they frequently referred to their rights as voters who had made a choice.

In contrast, the rubber promotion initiative introduced in 1998 marked a significant change. Under this campaign, 20 farmer households received support from the ORRAF to cultivate rubber in the form of a specified maximum of 14 rai per farmer. The assistance included the provision of seedlings, land preparation, and a seven-year maintenance fund of approximately 70,000 baht per farmer (Khemphon Chuetamhun, January 10, 2016, personal communication). Farmers who began planting rubber in 1998 were expected to harvest their crops in 2004, once the trees reached a height of 150 cm and a circumference of at least 50 cm, as designated by ORRAF. Following ORRAF's instructions, farmers transformed rubber into latex sheets and sold them from 2004 to 2010. Over time, they discovered that selling processed products as cup lump allowed for more efficient harvesting, leading to widespread adoption of this method among smallholder farmers in the Northeast.

Farmers acknowledged that Chavalit Yongchaiyudh played a crucial role in initiating rubber promotion projects and establishing connections with the army that aided village development. This gratitude influenced their willingness to vote for Chavalit or his endorsed candidates (Sumit Chuakumchang, January 10, 2016, personal communication). Paijit Sriworakhan, a prominent Nakhon Phanom politician, commented on this, saying, "The people's admiration for both army generals and socialist politicians is surprising, but it reflects the influence of both left- and right-wing forces on grassroots communities" (Paijit Sriworakhan, May 8, 2015, personal communication).

The first rubber harvest in 2004 marked a turning point for the village. From 2004 to 2010, rubber prices remained relatively high and stable (at 60 to 120 baht per latex sheet), compared to other crops, which produced lower returns and were harvested annually. This economic shift enabled villagers to purchase new cars, renovate homes, and send their children to college, significantly improving their material standard of living. Consequently, they recognized the impact of government programs on their lives, which fostered political awareness and engagement with various candidates who could influence their circumstances.

The Case of Ban Kaeng Subdistrict

Ban Kaeng Subdistrict of Na Kae District, Nakorn Phanom is another example that illus-

trates how rubber cultivation spurred political awareness and understanding of market mechanisms among farmers. Located on the outskirts of the Phu Phan Mountains, where the CPT headquarters once operated, most residents were former party members. Prior to being encouraged to plant rubber trees, villagers primarily cultivated rice and other short-term crops, such as bananas, cassava, and sugarcane.

The "Rubber Farmers of Ban Kaeng" group formed in 1993 with 16 members cultivating no more than 200 rai in total. They received financial support from ORRAF for three years to establish rubber plantations and began harvesting in 1999 or 2000. Initially, one kilogram of latex sold for 23 baht. In 1998, during the second phase of the Green Isan project, plantation areas expanded, and the One-Million Rai project under Thaksin further increased cultivation from 2004 to 2006. By 2015, over 4,000 rai of rubber plantations were planted in Ban Kaeng Subdistrict.

The farmer group later established the Ban Kaeng Community for Rubber Enterprise, which comprised 71 members, with the subdistrict headman (กำนัน), who owned the largest rubber plantation area (60 rai), serving as its first president. Those with larger plots often hired fellow villagers to harvest rubber, sharing profits equally from both capital and benefits (Pairoj Pimkhan, January 9, 2016, personal communication).

The enterprise sold its produce in cup lumps through an auction system, with farmers bringing their products to a central market in Ban Kaeng. Approximately ten middlemen from Nakorn Phanom, Sakon Nakorn, and Mukdahan visited the market every ten days to bid on rubber. Farmers determined their bids based on the median price established by the enterprise committee, which they had researched online. These middlemen subsequently sold the rubber to factories in Mukdahan Province, where Rubberland Products Co., Ltd. was the primary purchaser. Farmers needed to stay informed about current events and politics, as political stability directly influenced policy continuity. Leaders within the enterprise committee used smartphones to track rubber prices online and exchanged political news via the LINE social network application (Prasit Sangsri, January 9, 2016, personal communication).

The highest rubber prices in this subdistrict reached 180 baht per kilogram for latex sheets and 77 baht for cup lumps in 2011 and 2012. Farmers invested their earnings in education for their children, cars, and equipment, and they largely supported the Thai Rak Thai Party due to its rubber promotion policies.

By 2015, however, rubber prices had declined, with latex sheets selling for 30 baht per kilogram and cup lumps for 12 baht. This decline has prompted many farmers to diversify their occupations, reducing the significance of rubber production compared to their counterparts in the South, who typically do not own land and face different challenges (Plaeng Wongpreecha, January 9, 2016, personal communication).

All examples studied here illustrate the complex interactions between the state and citizens, with participation from the military, royal institution, bureaucratic officials, national politicians, and local government organizations. The nature of these relationships has evolved significantly since rubber was first introduced in 1987.

Meanwhile, rubber promotion has reshaped local life in two fundamental ways. First, it has shifted the state's role from a welfare provider to a livelihood developer, elevating public expectations that government policies will improve quality of life. Second, it has enhanced farmers' financial conditions, leading to improved commodities, facilities, political awareness, and economic understanding. This newfound political sensitivity empowers farmers to engage in the political process and demand accountability from their leaders, thus fostering democratic values.

Conclusion

The trajectory of rubber plantations in Thailand's Northeast reflects the country's political evolution. Promotion of rubber cultivation has become a critical policy intertwined with electoral politics, each reinforcing the other during the transition from military to civilian governance, making majority votes essential. To consolidate power, political leaders redirected resources from the South to the Northeast, where the population was larger. Over time, the development and execution of rubber promotion policies mirrored the changing dynamics among the military, bureaucracy, and political elite. After the 2006 coup d'état, these policies were weaponized for political maneuvering, becoming deeply embedded in the electoral process.

The leaders behind rubber promotion campaigns built connections to facilitate the expansion of plantations. During the electoral system's golden age, politicians leveraged these policies to strengthen ties with the business sector, securing benefits that bolstered their political influence. Local administrative networks played a crucial role in this promotion, and post-2006, the focus shifted from local political networks to bureaucratic ones, altering the landscape of rubber cultivation.

Furthermore, the case studies illuminate the vital roles played by civil society, showcasing instances where non-political actors successfully mobilized resources to establish civic organizations, with Ubon Ratchathani serving as a model for sustainable development. At the village level, these communities became political arenas where various actors competed for power. The military supported villagers to maintain social order, while established institutions exploited rural communities to showcase their benevolence. To secure re-election, both national and local politicians introduced programs aimed at

societal and economic transformation. The electoral push to implement these programs, alongside rubber promotion policies, effectively achieved their objectives.

While rubber prices fluctuate with global markets, this study underscores that the well-being of local communities hinges on effective government policies and their implementation. Ultimately, these outcomes empower the people and strengthen the foundations of democracy.

Accepted: September 15, 2024

Acknowledgments

The author gratefully acknowledges Wataru Fujita for initiating and partially supporting this research through the Sumitomo Foundation. Special thanks are also extended to friends at Nakhon Phanom University, particularly Jarukanya Udanont and Sorat Praweenwongwuthi, the Wongsawangpanich family in Ubon Ratchathani, and research assistants Phuangphan Phukham and Kesinee Jirawanidchakorn. The final stages of this research were funded by the Thailand Science Research and Innovation Fund, Chulalongkorn University (SOC66240005).

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From Rice to Vegetable Terraces: Agricultural Transition and Sustainability in Western Ifugao, Philippines

Adrian Albano*

In western Ifugao, traditional agricultural land uses, including rice terraces, were sustained for centuries, only to be recently converted into vegetable landscapes. Through a historical landscape analysis supported by ethnographic research methods such as participatory observation and interviews, this paper describes the agricultural transition of the Kalanguya Indigenous Peoples (IPs) occupying Tinoc, in Ifugao Province. Irrigated rice cultivation in this high-altitude part of Ifugao is carried out more for its cultural significance than for food security. As the area gradually opened up and became connected with the mainstream economy, rice was increasingly outsourced and the rice terraces were gradually replaced with temperate vegetable cultivation. The temperate climate made the area marginal land for rice but prime agricultural land for temperate vegetables. Extensive rice terraces and formerly swidden farms and forests were transformed into "vegetable terraces." Despite its climatic suitability and income potential, the transition to vegetable farming has had negative ecological and sociocultural consequences. Possible pathways to local sustainability are discussed following the concept of ecological intensification.

Keywords: rice terraces, vegetables, Indigenous Peoples, Ifugao, Cordillera

Introduction

The global community made a commitment to sustainability with the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (UN General Assembly 2015). However, translating the ambitious Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into tangible actions at the local level remains a challenge. This is particularly true in communities that have historically achieved a delicate balance between their economic, environmental, and sociocultural well-being but now face sustainability threats along with rapid agricultural transformation.

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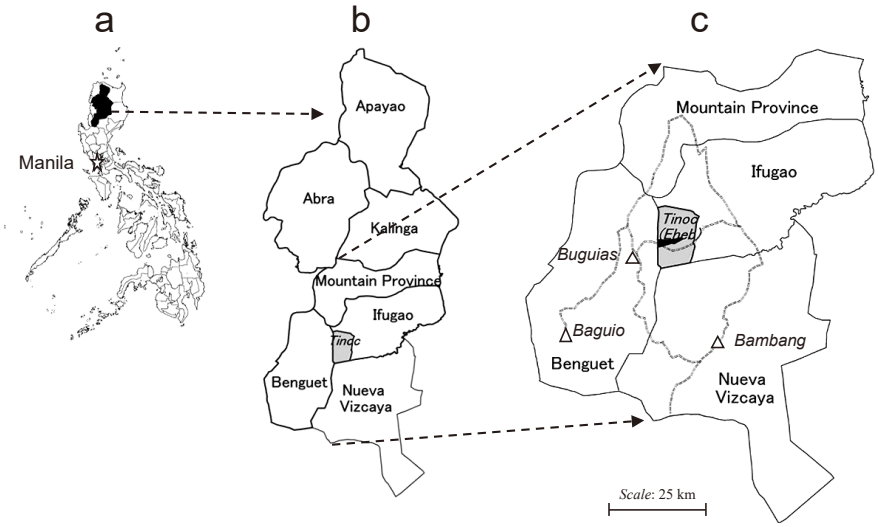


Fig. 1 Study Location

a) Philippines
b) Cordillera Administrative Region
c) Tinoc (Barangay Eheb shaded), Roads to Baguio and Bambang Markets

In the Philippines, Ifugao, rice terraces, and sustainability are almost synonymous. The province of Ifugao has picturesque, centuries-old, relatively vast rice terraces that attract tourists and sustainability researchers. The Ifugao rice terraces have been included on the Food and Agriculture Organization's list of Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) (FAO 2023) and UNESCO's World Heritage List (UNESCO 2023). In western Ifugao, however, particularly in the municipality of Tinoc (Fig. 1), a different agricultural landscape is fast emerging: vegetable terraces and vegetable-dominated landscapes being carved out from traditional land uses including rice terraces, swidden farms, and forests.

This rapid conversion of traditional land uses to commercial vegetable landscapes is a concern not only for permanently vanishing, globally important rice terraces but also for globally (and locally) important forests. The issue has not been well reported or addressed, partly because studies on Ifugao rice terraces have been focused on the more accessible and touristic municipalities in central Ifugao. Awareness of Tinoc's rice and vegetable terraces could inform future policies and programs targeting these and other areas undergoing similar agricultural transition, such as the more famous heritage landscapes of central Ifugao.

This paper starts with an ethnographic account of the Kalanguya Indigenous Peoples

in Tinoc, Ifugao Province, including a description of the people's natural environment, traditional agriculture, and local culture. It is followed by a historical narrative on how vegetable production replaced the production of rice and sweet potatoes. A closer look at the local vegetable industry shows the rationality in the transformation of rice terraces and the wider landscape into vegetable gardens. There are, however, negative trends and emerging sustainability issues, and so the paper closes with a discussion of alternative pathways toward local sustainability.

Research Methods

This research was conducted over a long period. The author grew up in Tinoc (1984–92), then lived there intermittently from 2008 to 2023, experiencing firsthand the cultivation of rice, sweet potatoes, and later vegetables. He conducted his doctoral fieldwork in Tinoc from 2010 to 2012 and returned from 2017 to 2023 as a member of the faculty at a local university. He is the administrator of the Ifugao Highland Farmers' Forum—a social media community page he created as a platform for information exchange among vegetable farmers and other industry actors—where there has been some discussion of sustainability issues and pathways.

The agricultural transition from rice to vegetable cultivation is illustrated through a combination of GIS-based land-use analysis, satellite images, and landscape photos. The case study of Barangay Eheb is used to compare changes from traditional to recent land use. The traditional land-use map of Barangay Eheb is based on a topography map prepared by the National Mapping and Resource Information Authority in 1979. The 2010 land-use map is based on a WorldView-1 satellite image of the village taken in March 2010 (Fig. 2). Satellite images of the vegetable terraces of Barangay Poblacion, Tinoc, have been obtained from Google Earth.

Information on the history of the Kalanguya people, including their past landscapes and agricultural practices, migration, and genealogy, was sourced from a literature review of studies on Kalanguya and Tinoc, Ifugao, supplemented by key informant interviews. Key informants are those regarded in the community as knowing some aspects of local history based on oral narratives. Secondary data on vegetables, such as volume and prices, was sourced from the Municipal Agricultural Office of Tinoc, the Philippine Statistics Authority, and the social media pages of local wholesale vegetable markets.

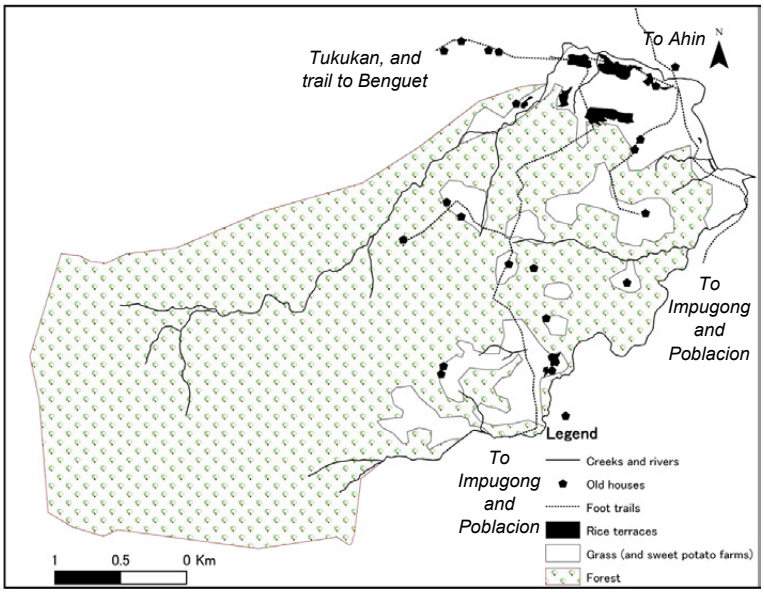


Fig. 2 Traditional Land Use in Barangay Eheb, 1979

Kalanguya Indigenous Peoples and Their Traditional Land Uses

Study Location and Kalanguya Indigenous Peoples

Tinoc (Lat: 16°40'9.13"N, Long: 120°56'23.95"E) is located in the westernmost municipality of the province of Ifugao, adjacent to the provinces of Nueva Vizcaya to the south, Benguet to the west, and Mountain Province to the north (Fig. 1). It is a fourth-class municipality with an area of around 37,000 hectares. The tri-border area of Tinoc (Ifugao), Nueva Vizcaya, and Benguet is the peak of Mount Pulag, which at 2,922 meters above sea level is the highest point in the Luzon islands. Tinoc is characterized by high-altitude terrain ranging from 800 to 2,922 meters above sea level (although the peak is a point of contention as it has a boundary with Benguet Province), relatively low temperatures compared to the country's warm lowlands, and steeply sloped mountains. It is in this environment that its inhabitants have been carving out the landscape for their livelihood, including the construction of rice terraces.

Tinoc is inhabited mostly by Kalanguya Indigenous Peoples, one of the three major ethnolinguistic groups in Ifugao (the other two being Tuwali and Ayangan). Kalanguya belongs to the Southern Cordillera group of languages, while Tuwali and Ayangan belong to the Central Cordillera group of languages (Himes 1998). As of 2020, the population of Tinoc was 18,475 individuals.

Traditional Agricultural Land Uses in Tinoc

The word "traditional" is used here primarily to distinguish previous land uses from the current dominant land use in Tinoc—commercial vegetable farming. There may have been other agricultural land uses, such as taro cultivation, before rice terraces (Acabado 2012), but for the purpose of highlighting the recent and ongoing agricultural transition to vegetable farming, traditional agricultural land uses in Tinoc refer mainly to the production of two main staple crops: rice and sweet potato.

Rice is produced in irrigated terraces, while sweet potato is cultivated in swidden farms. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization's GIAHS Project, Tinoc has a relatively small area of rice terraces—517 hectares of the 17,000 hectares in the whole of Ifugao (FAO 2023). This figure, however, is probably based on areas that are visibly being cultivated and does not include long-abandoned and "invisible" rice terraces, many of which are found in Tinoc. In another measurement of the rice terrace area in Tinoc (during the making of a three-dimensional map of Tinoc land use in 2010), the estimated rice terraces covered 922 hectares. Nevertheless, both estimates show relatively limited rice terraces in Tinoc compared to its neighbors in central Ifugao.

An early historical account of the rice terraces near Tinoc was in 1789, where Fr. Francisco Antolin narrated the travels of two Christians (from the lowlands of Nueva Vizcaya) who went to the "land of the Igorots" with "pagan guides from Tinok":

> There was somebody who told them, "Don't leave us so soon; wait for our fiesta at the harvest of the rice plots and see the killing of the carabaos and pigs, first in one town, then another, and then in others, and see the crowds and merrymaking."
>
> Our people told them, "From the poor rice fields we've seen, so many fiestas?"
>
> To this the pagans replied, "We don't eat so much rice as the Christians; if we have *gabe* (taro) and *camotes* [sweet potatoes] for food, and a little rice for our beverages . . . we're quite content." (Antolin and Scott 1970, 227)

The Christian travelers from Nueva Vizcaya did not make it to Tinoc, since their guides—who were from Tinoc—told them that Christians were not welcome there. Thus, their description of "little fields in the ravines" and "poor rice fields" (Antolin and Scott 1970, 227) was not of Tinoc. It is significant to note, however, the statement that the staple food of the people was root crops (taro and sweet potato), while rice was mainly for making beverages, particularly rice wine. Interestingly, more than two centuries later, similar accounts were offered by key informants in Tinoc about the roles of sweet potato and rice—even until the late 1980s, before the introduction of temperate vegetables.

In Barangay Eheb, rice farmers—particularly those with small total areas (i.e., less than 0.25 hectare)—as well as sharecroppers produce rice mainly to make *tapey* or rice

wine, a culturally important beverage, especially in the social status-defining redistributive feasts called *keleng* or *padit*. Based on the identified rice terraces during field research in 2012, including existing and abandoned ones, the area traditionally planted with rice in Eheb was only around 12 hectares—or only 1 percent of the total barangay area. Fig. 2 shows the land use of Eheb in 1979—a typical land use in the municipality of Tinoc: permanent but still limited areas of rice terraces, shifting patches of swidden farms for sweet potato, grass and open areas, and forests (secondary, pine, and montane).

Despite the significantly large area of terraces in the higher-elevation barangays of Tinoc—locally referred to as Upper Tinoc and including Barangays Eheb and Poblacion—their rice yields were significantly less than yields from terraces in Lower Tinoc, primarily because of their low temperature (their altitude ranged from 1,100 to 1,400 meters above sea level, while the Lower Tinoc terraces were less than 1,000 meters above sea level). The Eheb rice terraces are located downriver between mountain peaks that block the rising and setting sun. Rice production in Eheb—and Tinoc in general—is limited also because farmers there grow traditional local rice varieties, which take six to seven months from planting to harvesting.

Compared to rice, sweet potato requires less labor to cultivate. It can be grown even on unterraced slopes and in higher altitudes, producing harvestable tubers six to seven months after planting and continuously thereafter for the same or even a longer duration; thus, the yield per hectare is higher than rice. Most important, sweet potato is used to feed pigs and chickens. Both these animals have dietary, religious, and commercial importance for the people of Tinoc, who are known to regularly supply them to mining communities in Benguet (Lewis 1992).

Sustainability of Traditional Land Uses

Given the similarities in the accounts about agriculture in Tinoc in the 1980s and further back in the 1780s, it seems logical to conclude that traditional land uses have been "sustained" and are therefore sustainable. However, the fact that they lasted for at least two centuries may not necessarily mean that these traditional land uses are "sustainable" and are thus to be idealized in imagining a sustainable community for Tinoc. A closer look needs to be taken at how these traditional land uses lasted for at least the past two centuries.

Among the eight "places of the Igorot tribe of Tinok" mentioned by Fr. Antolin in 1789, only two—Tococan and Poliang—are recognizable. Ahin—often said to be the origin of the Kalanguya—appears in written records only as one of the targets of a series of expeditions by the Spanish colonial government's military from the 1850s until the 1870s. It is worth noting that most of the rice terrace owners in Barangay Poblacion

found these terraces abandoned. One person in Barangay Poblacion who came from Ahin around the 1900s was said to have been exceptionally industrious in repairing abandoned rice terraces (including irrigation), which explains why his descendants owned relatively extensive rice terraces. Meanwhile, there were mentions of Kalanguya outside Tinoc owning some rice terraces back in Tinoc but not knowing their locations since their parents outmigrated and never took them back to Tinoc.

There is still a dearth of information on what happened in Tinoc between the 1780s and the end of the Spanish colonial government, but related literature discusses migrations out of Tinoc toward Nueva Vizcaya (Rice 2008) and Benguet (Bagamaspad and Hamada-Pawid 1985). Various causes were identified for the permanent outmigrations from Tinoc, notably the Spanish colonial government's punitive missions in neighboring settlements (and more likely within Tinoc), constant threats from enemies who raided villages for human heads (i.e., the common practice of headhunting), epidemics such as smallpox (Newson 2006), and famine (Scott 1974; Bagamaspad and Hamada-Pawid 1985; Afable 1989). Adding to the outmigrations during the Spanish and American colonial periods was the mass migration with a high mortality rate during World War II. Tinoc, which was then part of the present municipality of Hungduan, played a strategic role in the last stand of the Imperial Japanese Army in the Philippines.

It is not difficult to associate rice terraces and even swidden farming with sustainability. They have lasted for at least two centuries in Tinoc, proving that they are ecologically sustainable. Alongside the ecological sustainability, however, have been social unrest and even economic disasters from regular crop failures resulting in famines, locally referred to as *hi-bitil*. It is not surprising that with gradual improvements in the political and market environment over time, along with changes in the needs and aspirations of the people tilling the land, traditional agricultural land uses also started to transform.

Introduction of Vegetable Farming

Political and Market Integration

After the United States took over the Philippines from the Spaniards in 1898, social and physical barriers between ethnolinguistic groups began to ease as a consequence of the American colonial government's policy to be friends with "non-Christian tribes." Unlike their neighboring groups, however, the Kalanguya were not recognized as a separate tribe or ethnolinguistic group. Despite being integrated into the national government, they remained invisible and on the periphery of politics. It was only in 1983 that Tinoc became a municipality separate from Hungduan—a municipality inhabited primarily by

rice-farming Tuwali speakers from central Ifugao.

In the 1980s, economic activities in Tinoc remained limited. Many Kalanguya left for employment opportunities elsewhere. One major employment opportunity at the time was in the booming temperate vegetable industry that started in Baguio. The industry emerged primarily to satisfy American demand for temperate vegetables and later fed the ever-increasing demand for temperate vegetables in warm cities such as Metro Manila. Vegetable landscapes followed the construction of the Mountain Trail (also called Halsema Highway) as it branched out from Baguio City to interior areas of the Cordillera such as Buguias, Benguet Province, and toward Bontoc, Mountain Province, near Tinoc.

Road to Vegetable Farming

Vegetable cultivation by the Kalanguya Indigenous Peoples began in the adjacent municipalities of Buguias, Benguet Province, and Bauko, Mountain Province, when Tinoc was still inaccessible by road. In the mid-1980s, as road construction reached Sitio Bot-oan in Barangay Catlubong (Buguias Municipality, Benguet Province), vegetable cultivation had already started in Tinoc with garden peas (*Pisum sativum*) as the predominant crop, since this was relatively light to haul. The long distance from Tinoc to the nearest road in Benguet made manual hauling expensive. In fact, when the road was still farther away, some farmers grew marijuana—a much lighter but more valuable (though illegal) agricultural commodity.

During the earlier years of vegetable cultivation in Tinoc (1980–90), vegetables were hauled for around four to five hours to the nearest accessible road of Sitio Bot-oan, where consumer goods were then purchased and hauled back to Tinoc. In 1992, after on-and-off construction works, the dirt road to Tinoc was finally passable for four-wheel-drive trucks. As road access improved, vegetable cultivation extended, intensified, and diversified.

The extensification of vegetable gardens was made easier by the availability of earthmoving equipment, usually the same equipment used in road opening and widening projects. Earlier, bulldozers were favored; but the preference today is for the backhoe or excavator, as the latter allows for greater slope maneuverability and enables better conservation of the more fertile topsoil during land clearing and terracing. Example of a backhoe at work is shown in Fig. 3. They are mostly secondhand imports from Japan, along with secondhand Japanese trucks enhanced to carry more than their original carrying capacity and pass through landslide-prone dirt roads.

Intensification in vegetable gardening was made possible with the ease of bringing in farm inputs, especially the heavy chicken dung that is the main source of fertilizer for vegetables. Chicken dung is brought in as a "backload" or return load after trucks take vegetables to the wholesale markets. The intensive use of fertilizers enables farmers to

Fig. 3 Backhoe Overturning Garden Soil and Re-terracing Vegetable Garden with Partially Harvested Chinese Cabbage or Wombok; Lower Vegetable Terraces Have Unharvested Wombok and Carrots (photo by Adrian Albano). Backhoe is also used in road-widening projects, and clearing forests for vegetable expansion.

skip a fallow period and to start land preparation immediately after harvesting. The types of temperate vegetables being planted have changed from lighter sweet (green) peas to heavier vegetables such as carrots, cabbage, wombok or Chinese cabbage, potatoes, and more recently tomatoes.

In the case of Barangay Eheb, the opening of the barangay road going down from the main road started in 1995, and after ten years the road reached settlements in the lower part of the barangay. In 2010 most farmers in Eheb were engaged in vegetable farming. The rice terraces located downriver near the old village and far from the road were mostly abandoned (Fig. 4), although vegetable cultivation began there after the road finally reached it in 2020.

A similar process occurred in the larger landscape of Tinoc. In 2010, a land-use map of the entire municipality of Tinoc was prepared by a group of nongovernment organizations in cooperation with the local municipal government of Tinoc and local communities (Fig. 5). Although there were challenges in accurately portraying actual land use, this 2010 land-use map captures the extensive expansion of vegetable gardens, with an estimated area of 2,384 hectares. The actual vegetable area must have been higher

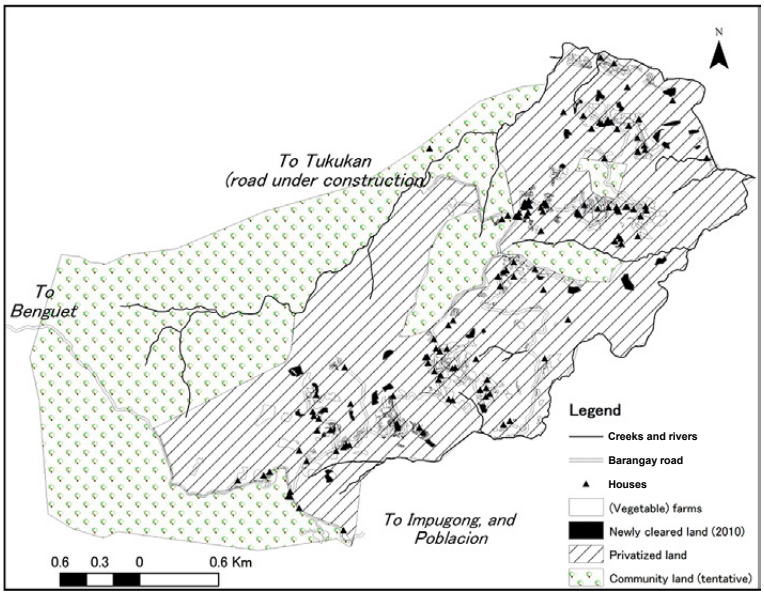


Fig. 4 Land Use in Barangay Eheb, 2010

considering that a large portion of the indicated rice terraces in Tinoc (most extensive at the center of the map) had been converted into vegetable gardens by 2010.

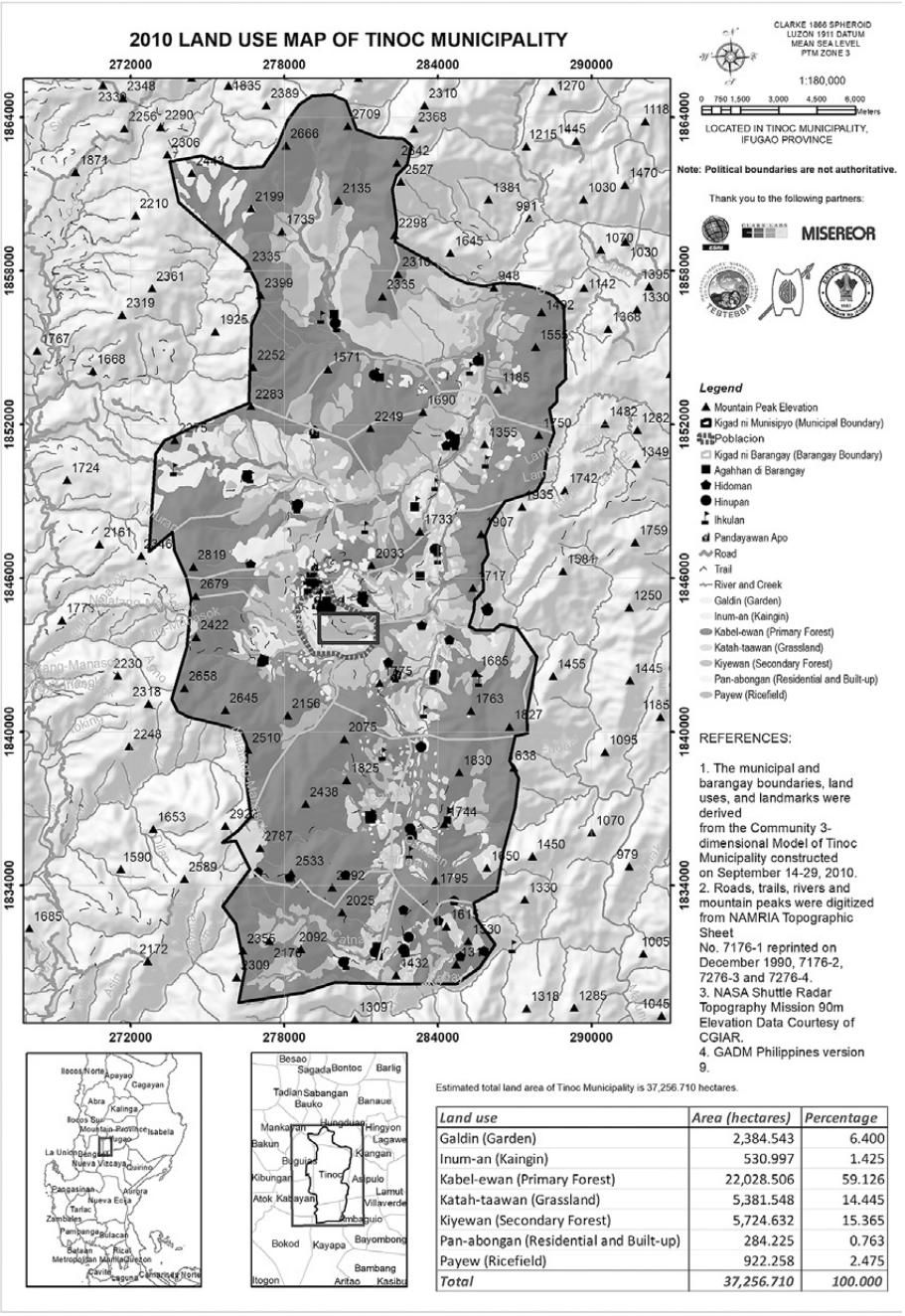
Ifugao Vegetable Terraces

A 2019 satellite image of Poblacion shows its formerly extensive rice terraces no longer irrigated (usually they were irrigated even after the rice was harvested), as they were now being planted with vegetables (Fig. 6).

A panoramic view of the same place in 2019 is shown in Fig. 7, additionally showing the abandoned and still uncultivated rice terraces near the river below.

Fig. 8 shows that as of February 2023, almost all the rice terraces in Barangay Poblacion (and in Barangay Eheb) were no longer planted with rice but with vegetables. A quick visit to Poblacion on February 1, 2023, which was within the rice planting season, showed only three small patches of rice fields being planted (Figs. 8a and 8b). In Barangay Eheb all its rice terraces are now planted with vegetables.

Two interviewees said that the small rice fields were still being cultivated mainly to keep their elderly family members busy rather than bored. The interviewee in the case of the rice terraces in Fig. 8b, Elmo Ummas, added that he thought it was an unfortunate waste to see the rice terraces being destroyed and converted into vegetable gardens. The rice parcel in the photo is what was left after its surrounding rice terraces were



Land use	Area (hectares)	Percentage
Galdin (Garden)	2,384.543	6.400
Inum-an (Kaingin)	530.997	1.425
Kabel-ewan (Primary Forest)	22,028.506	59.126
Katah-taawan (Grassland)	5,381.548	14.445
Kiyewan (Secondary Forest)	5,724.632	15.365
Pan-abongan (Residential and Built-up)	284.225	0.763
Payew (Ricefield)	922.258	2.475
Total	*37,256.710*	*100.000*

Fig. 5 2010 Land-Use Map of Tinoc (Poblacion *Payew* or Rice Fields at Center) (map courtesy of Philippine Association for Intercultural Development)

Fig. 6 2019 Satellite Image of Barangay Poblacion (Showing Vegetable Gardens That Were Formerly Rice Fields) (Google Earth)

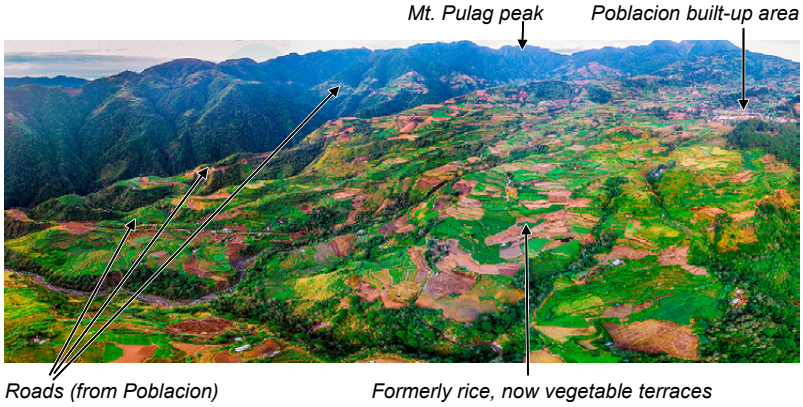


Fig. 7 Poblacion, Tinoc, Ifugao (drone image courtesy of Melvin Lacbongan, September 2019)

Fig. 8 Minimal Patches of Rice Fields Surrounded by Vast Vegetable Landscape in Poblacion, Tinoc

a) Small (400 sqm) Rice Parcel with Vast Vegetable Gardens in the Background (photo by Adrian Albano, February 1, 2023)
b) Rice Parcel with Former Rice Terraces in the Background, Intentionally Unflattened and Unterraced for Vegetable Cultivation (photo by Adrian Albano, February 1, 2023)
c) Elderly Woman Planting Rice (*Diket* or Glutinous Rice) in the 400 sqm Rice Parcel, Which Is, According to her Grandson, "To Keep Her Occupied with What She Used to Do" (photo by Adrian Albano, February 1, 2023)

"destroyed," having been converted back into sloping terrain, which is now the ideal terrain to prevent flooding for vegetable gardens. The water was being siphoned off by other farmers with vegetable farms closer to the water source. Moreover, the interviewee mentioned the challenge of cultivating a relatively large tract of rice field when most neighbors were already farming vegetables: it would be difficult to exchange labor (*maki-ubbu*) with vegetable farmers who had a distinct cropping schedule and who would prefer to exchange labor with their fellow vegetable gardeners.

Fig. 9 (9a and 9b) shows a closer and comparative look at the present and pre-vegetable landscape of Barangay Poblacion. Fig. 9a is a photo taken from the vantage point of Sitio Mugao, while Fig. 9b is a photo from an airplane that used to fly from Nueva Vizcaya to Tinoc airport. Comparing these two photos of Poblacion, taken from similar viewpoints, one can observe the agricultural landscape transition into commercial vegetables. The cultivated areas in the present landscape are all planted with vegetables

Fig. 9a Poblacion, Tinoc (photo by Adrian Albano, September 25, 2021)

Notes: A: Formerly Rice Terraces, Now Mainly Vegetable Terraces; B: Poblacion Built-up Area; C: Men Splitting Bamboo for Use as Poles for Tomato Plants on Parcel Newly Fertilized with Chicken Dung; D: A Woman Thinning Carrot Plants

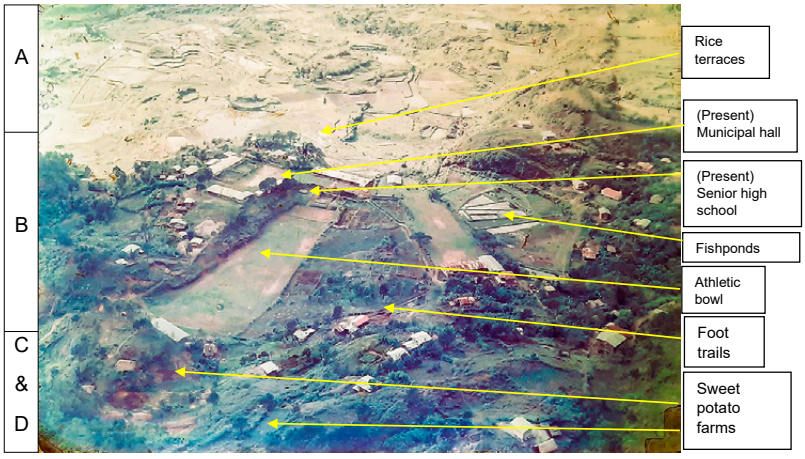


Fig. 9b Poblacion, Tinoc. Early 1980s (aerial photo by John Hellman, US Peace Corps)

(Fig. 9a). In the early 1980s, these areas were planted with traditional rice terraces (Fig. 9b, section A) and sweet potatoes (Fig. 9b, section D).

Local Vegetable Industry

Suitability of Vegetables vs. Rice and Sweet Potato

The high-altitude areas of Tinoc are considered marginal for rice, but they are prime agricultural land for temperate vegetables such as carrot, cabbage, tomato, wombok, and Irish potato. Along with the temperate climate, there is sandy loam soil that can easily be cultivated and drained even during continuous rain. Assuming no shortage in capital, a farmer could have three croppings a year. Rice can be harvested only once a year. On the other hand, sweet potatoes, despite continuously yielding root crops, still have significantly limited volume (and value) per unit area. The high income potential from vegetable production largely explains the shift away from rice and sweet potato.

In Eheb, almost all farmers are engaged in vegetable cultivation. A full-time farmer cultivates around 0.25 hectare, an average of 0.42 hectare per household, which is likely the case in most of Tinoc because of the labor intensiveness of vegetable cultivation. The cultivated area is greater for households with more members to help, such as the wife and children. There are out-of-school children (many in their teens) who operate separately from their parents. As farmers specialize in temperate vegetables, most of them now import rice from outside Tinoc. Rice is the staple food and is consumed with pork and chicken also mainly imported from outside, since farmers can no longer raise these animals along with commercial vegetables. Sweet potato is now a snack, often purchased from the vegetable trading post since few farmers are able to plant it.

Inputs and Financing

Temperate vegetables have high income potential but require a cash outlay, especially for purchasing inputs. Cash is always limited, but for many farmers in Tinoc, securing inputs is not much of a problem because these may be accessed via various credit arrangements. There are providers of inputs and cash on credit who are colloquially known as "suppliers" for creditworthy farmers. A two-tier financing arrangement is often observed. The first level is between the farmer and a local supplier who can closely monitor the farmer. The second is between the local supplier and a larger supplier who is usually a trader of farm inputs, based at a vegetable trading post. Suppliers provide inputs (seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides) and sometimes even consumer goods and farm equipment such as power sprayers and hand tractors. In return, the suppliers get

the exclusive right to dispose of or sell the farmer's produce with their usual commission or price cut. The commission varies per vegetable, per prevailing price, and per trader/supplier. The profitability of credit (supply) provision, however, attracts not just traders but even farmers and non-farmers who are able to accumulate enough capital. There is a continuum of farmer-supplier agreements in terms of profit-sharing arrangements, each with different risk implications for both supplier and farmer. A relatively common arrangement is *dinnulin*, where all expenses are accounted for and later deducted from gross sales, and the remaining amount is divided 50:50 between the farmer-laborer and supplier.

An equally important task where there is a need for financing is land terracing. Instead of manual labor using a spade and garden hoe, most terracing is now done using backhoes, which are used also in opening roads (see Fig. 3). If new farms and vegetable terraces are not close to the main road, this means the opening of private roads to connect to the main road. Payments may be by the hour (PHP 1,500–2,000/hr) or per task completed (*kontrata*). Interestingly, some equipment owners offer payment in kind: for instance, they open a road in exchange for the exclusive right to supply the farmer, which includes the right to transport and sell the farmer's produce, usually for at least five years. This makes financial sense to the equipment owner considering that truckers, who include equipment owners, charge PHP 3.50–5/kg when transporting vegetables from the farm to the trading post. Another form of payment in kind is through giving a land parcel to the equipment owner in exchange for private road construction and other earthworks.

Marketing

During harvesting, vegetables are immediately loaded onto trucks that transport them to the trading posts in La Trinidad (Benguet Province) or Bambang (Nueva Vizcaya). Thus, the farmers do not sell the vegetables themselves but via their "disposers," who are usually their suppliers of inputs or farm credit. Disposers pass on the vegetables (with at least a PHP 1/kg commission) to buyers coming from other wholesale markets in the cities or to canvassers who act as buyers for people not physically present in the trading post (i.e., *factora*). Since vegetables are perishable, especially when they are piled inside the trucks, a delay in selling and repacking from the truck could mean significant losses in quality and net saleable weight. Buyers usually deduct around 5–10 percent from the total weight of selected vegetables to hedge against such possible losses. Following the standard market chain from farmer to consumer, the chain routes for vegetables from Tinoc are summarized in Table 1.

According to Table 1, Route 1 is when a farmer or their disposer agrees to a canvasser

Table 1 Market Routes of Vegetables from Farmers in Tinoc to Consumers

Route	Farm	Truck 1	Disp	Canv/WS1	Truck 2	WS2	Rtlr	Cons
1	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
2	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
3	X	X	X	X/X	X	X	X	X
4	X	X			X		X	X
5	X						X	X
6	X							X

Legend: Farm = farmer; Truck = trucker; Disp = disposer; Canv = canvasser; WS = wholesaler; Rtlr = retailer; Cons = consumer

to sell their vegetables directly to buyers who come with their trucks to the trading post. In Route 2 the farmer or direct supplier sells to a wholesaler, who could be the main supplier or just a favored buyer having earned farmer loyalty. In Route 3 a farmer sells to a canvasser who sells to a trader/wholesaler within the trading post. This often happens when a farmer is not aware of the prevailing price and is offered a price by a canvasser who, using various forms of reasoning (even without enough cash), convinces the farmer to sell their vegetables to them without checking other buyers. Route 4 was tried by one Kalanguya trader interviewee who attempted to sell directly to retailers but at greater business risk. Route 5 describes vegetables sent by farmers directly to retail shops outside Tinoc, usually in relatively small amounts and prepackaged for retail. Route 6 is similar to Route 5, but the vegetables are sent to relatives, usually students studying outside Tinoc.

Vegetable Prices

Given the small-scale and speculative nature of vegetable production in the Philippines, the price of vegetables in the trading posts is very volatile. In addition, vegetable prices are susceptible to natural calamities, particularly typhoons, many of which occur in the Philippines every year. Based on the graph of the monthly price of the major vegetables produced in Tinoc, prices regularly peak during September–December, which is the typhoon season in the Philippines (Fig. 10). These typhoons can destroy many standing crops and also often cause landslides, blocking the delivery of vegetables from farms to the trading posts. There have also been cases when vegetable prices were down, only to be attributed later to massive imports (Quitasol 2023).

Aside from factors that have a long-term effect on vegetable prices, prices at the trading posts may vary significantly even over a few hours. On the other hand, retail prices fluctuate less. The retail prices of temperate vegetables in their major destination—

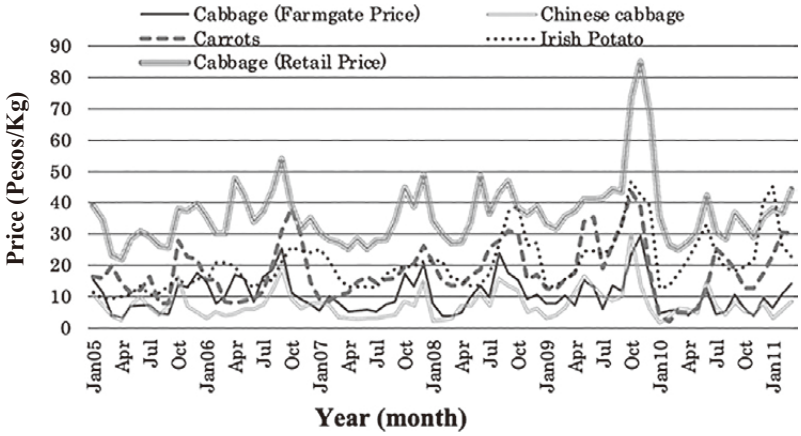


Fig. 10 Monthly Farmgate Price of Major Vegetables (2005–11) (Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Statistics)

the greater Manila area—may be 100–400 percent of the farmgate price, as shown in the monthly retail price of cabbage (Fig. 10).

Volume and Daily Traffic of Tinoc Vegetables

Despite years of producing vegetables for the market and continuous extensification, Tinoc vegetables remained invisible in government statistics. One reason was that the vegetables were sold in trading posts outside the province of Ifugao. From February to July 2020, in a move to lobby the national government for agriculture-related projects, the local government of Tinoc tried to estimate the volume of vegetables coming out of Tinoc. They designated persons located on the municipal exit roads to collect the following information: name of farmer, barangay, crop, type of vehicle, plate number, volume estimated, and destination. The estimated volumes of various vegetables produced in Tinoc from February to July 2020 are presented in Table 2.

The millions of kilos of vegetables coming out of Tinoc monthly reflect the extensiveness of vegetable gardens already established. They also show the variety of temperate vegetables being produced and the dominance of cabbage, carrot, tomato, wombok, and potato. On a normal day (i.e., without landslides hampering transportation), there could be at least twenty vegetable trucks taking produce to La Trinidad or Bambang.

Table 2 Volume of Vegetables Produced in Tinoc, Ifugao (February–July 2020)

Crop	Monthly Volume Transported to Trading Posts (kg)						Total
	February	March	April	May	June	July	
Cabbage	3,069,500	5,356,700	2,979,000	2,311,600	523,300	690,000	14,930,100
Carrot	1,085,150	1,987,600	1,442,000	1,666,300	1,646,000	1,375,300	9,202,350
Tomato	149,650	94,500	316,100	2,202,100	1,031,800	1,614,900	5,409,050
Wombok	840,300	1,260,550	689,500	669,200	206,500	451,800	4,117,850
Potato	129,400	164,100	338,600		330,300	341,200	1,303,600
Ginger	1,100			11,000	367,900	98,200	478,200
Cucumber	18,000	15,500	5,500	108,300	262,400	67,600	477,300
Bell pepper		17,400	33,000	3,000	302,300	85,900	441,600
Taro (*galyang*)	1,000				154,100	40,300	195,400
Squash	51,600	–	23,300		31,500	10,500	116,900
Radish	32,000	44,900	18,650		6,000	15,300	116,850
Sweet potato						74,500	74,500
Cauliflower	9,800	36,300	19,000	3,000	3,000		71,100
Broccoli	38,800	12,600	6,200		2,300	2,000	61,900
Celery	4,800		5,500	7,000	4,200		21,500
Onion leeks	1,300	3,000	3,000	6,300	5,200	2,000	20,800
B. Beans	10,000	500			1,000		11,500
Lettuce	3,400						3,400
Chayote				3,300			3,300
Garden peas		700			1,300		2,000
Total	5,445,800	8,994,350	5,879,350	6,991,100	4,879,100	4,869,500	37,059,200

Source: Municipal Agriculture Office (MAO), Tinoc MLGU

Trends and Sustainability Issues

Focusing on the completely converted rice terraces of Barangay Poblacion in the municipality of Tinoc, and expanding the view to include the surrounding landscape, one can see that the ongoing landscape transformation is unsustainable. This is shown by the following economic, ecological, and social indicators.

Higher Potential Income, Higher Potential Bankruptcy

Vegetable farming is colloquially equated to gambling, where farmers who are able to sell their produce at high prices are said to have hit the jackpot. Indeed, vegetable

cultivation has made several farmers instantly rich, but it has also left others in previously unimagined debt. In times of a vegetable glut, it is common to see vegetables dumped along the roads or just left unharvested, which happens almost every year. Many times the dumping of vegetables from Tinoc has caught national media attention through newspaper articles (Visaya 2020; Department of Agriculture 2021; Cariaso and Domingo 2023). Meanwhile, the price of inputs—particularly fertilizers, insecticides, herbicides, and fungicides—continues to increase. While input suppliers (pesticide and fertilizer companies) have control over the total volume and selling price of their product, vegetable farmers do not have control over either. Their production is based mainly on their speculation of the future selling price of the vegetable based on their estimate of future demand, typhoon occurrence, and what other farmers may plant—all highly unpredictable variables. Of course, it often comes as a surprise for farmers to learn of massive importation of vegetables, because these can be locally produced with the Department of Agriculture's encouragement. On the other hand, small-scale and disorganized vegetable producers in the country sometimes do not produce enough of certain vegetables, which leads to astronomical increases in domestic prices, enough to motivate vegetable smugglers to bring in imports. Whether jackpot or bankrupt, the usual tendency for vegetable farmers is to try harder next time, intensifying (spending more on inputs over the same area) and extensifying (expanding the existing garden plot or opening new areas) their vegetable farms.

Decreasing Soil Fertility, Soil Erosion, and Landslides

Farmers notice a gradual reduction of soil fertility with continuous vegetable cultivation. One farmer (A) who has been cultivating his farm for 15 years says the average size of carrots he harvests has been reduced to half compared to when he started cultivating. Conversely, he is now applying more than double the amount of chicken dung—the main fertilizer used for vegetables—that he used to.

Compared to rice terraces, vegetable terraces do not necessarily have a flat base (planting area) because aside from being labor-expensive, flat terrace bases have a smaller planting area than terraces with a sloping base. The latter also prevent flooding. However, the more sloping the soil surface, the more vulnerable it is to soil erosion and nutrient leaching. Soil erosion can be observed not just in vegetable gardens but especially along newly opened roads. There was a massive landslide in 2008 on an adjacent mountain (Lat: 16°42'21.27"N; Long: 120°56'32.37"E). Whether it was caused by too much rain or deforestation is not clear, but a satellite image of the landslide shows the mountaintop to have been cleared, partly terraced, and with road access.

Health Problems

Farmers are aware of the health risks of vegetable cultivation. Aside from several stories of illness after spraying pesticides (locally done without protective gear), Tinoc District Hospital staff identified the mishandling of chicken dung as a common cause of farmer illnesses such as typhoid. Chicken dung is especially unsanitary when it gets wet (it is also more smelly, sticky, and difficult to mix into the soil). Farmers buy it, usually dry, from chicken-dung dealers near trading posts or directly from poultry houses, transporting them as backloads on their trucks after delivering their vegetables. A water quality study by Robert Ngidlo (2013) confirmed that there was a high level of coliform bacteria in springs in Barangay Poblacion. One of the likely sources of coliform contamination that he identified was fresh chicken manure manually applied to vegetable gardens during soil preparation.

Water Shortage and Pollution

Many barangays experience problems with water supply for both domestic use and irrigation of vegetable gardens. Although watersheds have been identified for protection, these are threatened by the further expansion of vegetable gardens. For example, Eheb prepared a barangay land-use plan where some forests were identified and designated as watersheds and protected areas. However, farmers continue to expand their vegetable gardens into designated watersheds, triggering complaints from households living below the gardens that their water table would be—or may already have been—polluted. The problem is evident from the ubiquitous plastic pipes hanging and snaking along the national road from the mountain springs of Mt. Pulag National Park, located at a higher elevation from the built-up areas and far from vegetable gardens. However, some of these mountain springs dry up during the summer, when there is a long drought, prompting some households to source their domestic water from lower-lying but potentially polluted water sources.

Population Boom and Other Concerns

The local government does not have a record of the population of Tinoc when it was separated from Hungduan in 1983. In 1990—before Tinoc was connected with a farm-to-market road—the population was 8,256, and after 25 years it had doubled (Table 3). The local population growth rate is expected to increase with a higher birth rate, labor migration from the still inaccessible barangays of Asipulo (Ifugao) and Ambaguio (Nueva Vizcaya), and migrant Kalanguya coming back to Tinoc to stake a claim to their ancestral land. Tinoc's population boom is visible in the houses mushrooming conspicuously and even haphazardly along and near newly constructed mountain roads.

Table 3 Population of Tinoc, 1990–2020

Year	Individual Population
1990	8,256
2000	9,783
2010	14,147
2015	16,559
2020	18,475

Source: Municipal Planning and Development Office, MLGU, Tinoc

Land Conflicts and (Conflict-Driven) Deforestation

The fortune that can be made from vegetable production in Tinoc has increased the value of land, especially near roads. This has often led to land conflicts. Many forest clearings are not intended for immediate cultivation, which traditionally was the case when forest clearing was primarily for swidden cultivation. Rather, recent clearings are done simply to strengthen ownership claims over the land. Due to competing land claims and the absence of land titling, land conflict is common, even within clans or close kin. Amidst the land conflicts, it is worth noting that all vegetable gardens and nearby forests are already locally recognized to be privately owned. Ownership claims are stronger in lands near the roads, partly because boundary conflicts in these areas were settled earlier. For a detailed description and discussion of individual as well as collective strategies to privatize forests, and the legal pluralism in Tinoc, see Albano and Takeda (2014) and Albano *et al.* (2015).

According to Global Forest Watch (2023), by 2021 Tinoc had lost 1,580 hectares—or 7 percent—of tree cover since 2000. Without intervention, vegetable terraces will continue to encroach into the remaining forests and this unsustainable trend will continue along with the abovementioned unsustainable trends.

Discussion: What Are Some Possible Pathways to Local Sustainability?

The rice terraces and swidden farms of sweet potatoes may have been "sustained" for generations in western Ifugao, but these farms planted with the same traditional crops would not have been enough to feed an increasing population with an increasing appetite for rice and other consumer products. The transition to commercial vegetables was logical, enabling the Kalanguya to provide for themselves—though they still had to source rice, sweet potato, meat, and even rice wine from outside. Since it is not practical to go

back to the traditional agricultural land uses dominated by sweet potato and rice, how should local sustainability be imagined and pursued?

Interventions directed at achieving local sustainability in Tinoc would have to be imagined with temperate vegetables as the primary agricultural product. This is important in setting the direction of local policy. As a policy guide, this means accepting the practicality and better suitability of temperate vegetables compared to rice in high-altitude traditional terraces. Acceptance by the public is important for avoiding negative sentiments, especially on the part of outsiders seeing the former rice terraces transformed into vegetable farms. Indeed, even locals express their misgivings over the loss of the rice landscape.

Acceptance of vegetable farming and agreement among government agencies are needed also for focusing interventions on a sustainable local vegetable industry. Tinoc has been excluded from some rice productivity programs. For instance, it was not included in the GIAHS project. In hindsight, this non-inclusion made sense because no project could have prevented the conversion of rice terraces in the high-altitude barangay of Tinoc into vegetable farms. On the other hand, Tinoc has also been excluded from various vegetable support programs as these are implemented mostly in Benguet Province, the better-known producer of temperate vegetables. This can be attributed to the lack of national data showing sources of produce but also with the association of the province of Ifugao with rice terraces. Given the public sentiment about the unabated expansion of vegetable farming over traditional land uses, including forests, there should be no hesitation among external actors, including government agencies, to support vegetable production for a better, more sustainable future as imagined in the following discussion.

The future of Tinoc, without appropriate interventions, may be similar to some landscapes of Benguet Province: contiguous mountains of vegetable terraces with no watersheds. There is a need to change the current direction and follow alternative pathways. Unfortunately, there is a dearth of models of sustainability for temperate vegetable-producing areas in the Cordillera Region—in vegetable-producing areas in general, for that matter. Vegetable production has inherent negative ecological consequences, especially in the uplands (Midmore *et al.* 1996).

The ideal scenario in any agricultural system is to produce food without negative ecological consequences. However, this is almost impossible to achieve in the case of vegetables, with their ever-increasing demand and high dependence on fertilizers and pesticides. Nevertheless, there are improved technologies and processes that can help transition away from unsustainable practices. For this purpose, it is useful to introduce the concept of ecological intensification, defined as a means to make intensive and

smart use of the natural functionalities of the ecosystem in order to produce food and ecological services in a sustainable way, including existing technologies associated with agroecology and organic and restorative agriculture (Tittonell 2014). Following this concept, Daniel Gaitán-Cremaschi *et al.* (2020) were able to categorize vegetable food systems in Chile based on variables that had an important impact on the degree of ecological intensification. Following their typology, the cases of Tinoc and most of the Cordillera vegetable food systems are closest to Type 1: small-scale farmers, conventional farming practices, multiple market intermediaries, etc. There are multiple pathways to vegetable production sustainability, and this comparison to existing typologies and pathways reveals the need for multilayered (production to consumption, individual farms to the larger landscape, farmers to cooperatives) and multi-sectoral (education, health, waste disposal, water, forest, transportation, organizations, etc.) interventions.

There have been certain initiatives to help vegetable farmers. One of these is the introduction of good agricultural practices and the certification of farmers who have adopted the relevant technologies (Bajenting and Fernandez 2017). There has also been marketing assistance from the Department of Agriculture, which buys directly from farmers at a price that would prevent them from dumping (and posting on social media). The extent of these interventions, however, has been limited and benefited only a select group of vegetable farmers.

Another form of intervention in the past was through organic vegetable production. Assistance was given to farmers in Tinoc who organized the Tinoc Organic Producers Multi-purpose Cooperative. Some members were able to secure interest-free government loans to build greenhouses for producing organic vegetables. However, organic vegetable farmers experienced other problems, such as the poor ability of their federation based in La Trinidad to market their products. Members of that federation are graded according to their years of membership, and in times of oversupply priority is given to longtime members. There are buyers within Tinoc, but they can purchase only a limited volume.

A more important concern that has not yet been effectively addressed is the continued expansion of vegetable farms into forestland, since there is ineffective governance of forests and natural resources. Under various national laws, natural resource governance is assigned to various government agencies. The national agencies directly involved include the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the Department of Agriculture, which act through their regional field offices. These national agencies are supported by local government units (LGUs) at the provincial, municipal, and barangay levels. Following the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act being implemented by the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), there are also

Indigenous Peoples' organization (IPOs) that hold the Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title—the landownership title issued by the NCIP to Indigenous Peoples. For the part of Tinoc classified as Protected Areas, which is part of the Mt. Pulag Protected Landscape, the management is directly under the Mt. Pulag Protected Area Management Board.

Despite the multiple bodies and laws for regulating vegetable expansion, past efforts have had limited impact. Although the scope of this paper does not cover the legal complexity of land use regulation, the discussion will briefly demonstrate the complexity of governance in the case of Tinoc. In response to the need of the people for roads and jobs, the government opened roads and encouraged agricultural expansion despite Tinoc being a Magat River watershed and its terrain well above the 18 percent slope limit for alienable and disposable land under the Revised Forestry Code. Fast forward to 2024, and the government continues to encourage vegetable production through the allocation of budget for farm-to-market roads and provision of farm inputs and equipment (as endorsed by local government officials based on their constituents' expressed priorities). At the same time, the DENR, except for sporadic regulatory presence and actions by its local Community Environment and Natural Resource Office, has to look the other way as more roads cut through environmentally fragile slopes, terraces, and forests that surely will be followed by vegetable gardens.

Local community regulation is also limited, because, as one farmer put it, "everybody is guilty, because everybody benefited from illegal logging or forest clearing." This farmer has reserved a portion of his privatized natural forest as a protected watershed. He recognizes the need for higher authorities to help regulate excessive forest clearing because, as he admits, community members (in the barangay, and even the municipal police) are not effective in regulating their fellow villagers and fellow vegetable farmers. Farmers doing new clearings may accuse local regulatory authorities of injustice, especially if they can prove that the area is their ancestral land. On the other hand, elected officials are cautious not to threaten farmers with legal repercussions for their forest clearings because they may lose the support of these farmers in the next election. Similar observations were made as early as the 1960s in adjacent Mt. Data (Kowal 1966) and Buguias (Lewis 1992), and vegetable expansion was unstoppable. The trends that are seen in Tinoc are also already being observed in rice terraces and forests in areas of central Ifugao such as Asipulo, Kiangan, Hungduan, and Banaue.

As has been recommended for Tinoc (Albano *et al.* 2015) and other municipalities of Ifugao (Daguitan 2010; Martin 2017), local resource governance could be improved through land-use planning. There must be strict compliance in the preparation of the municipal LGUs' Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP) and the Tinoc Kalanguya Indigenous Peoples' Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development and Protection Plan

(ADSDPP). Collaborative actions by various government agencies—particularly the LGU, DENR through its Community Environment and Natural Resource Office and the Mt. Pulag Protected Area Management Board, and NCIP—are crucial. There is a need for increased public awareness that can translate into voters' demand for action from national as well as local elected officials. It is always a pleasant surprise to see such concerns expressed not just in social media but especially in mainstream media, such as the articles by Karlston Lapniten (2021) and more recently Iya Gozum (2024). The public, as consumers, can play a crucial role in sustainability efforts by expressing their preference for healthier, safer, and more sustainably produced vegetables through their purchasing practices, actually demanding and offering higher prices for such products. This way, vegetable farmers will be pressured to comply with such demand, including demonstrating proof of compliance with food safety and sustainability measures.

Concern over the cultural importance of rice terraces is not elaborated on here considering that this paper focuses on the economic rationale and practicality of converting rice terraces into vegetable farms. When it comes to preserving the cultural landscape as well as prioritizing economic needs, both cannot occur if the people choose to cultivate vegetables instead of planting irrigated rice. This said, Tinoc still has some rice terraces in its lower-altitude barangays. They remain under cultivation because rice continues to be economically viable in these areas. Cultural heritage conservation efforts could also be directed at the preservation of other symbols and expressions of Kalanguya culture, such as the larger landscape, materials, and practices outside rice terraces. The Kalanguya ancestral domain landscape still has natural forests with *kalahan* or non-pine trees along with diverse flora and fauna, which is relevant in protecting or preserving the economic and sociocultural integrity and identity of the Kalanguya Indigenous Peoples.

Conclusion

Traditional agricultural land uses in Tinoc were sustained for centuries partly because of historical outmigrations of people away from Tinoc as well as the area's geographic remoteness: it became linked to the provincial road system only in the early 1990s. As Tinoc gradually became integrated with the rest of the country politically and economically, people went to work in the booming vegetable industry in nearby Benguet and then brought the expertise with them as road and market accessibility reached Tinoc. The temperate climate in the higher-altitude areas of Tinoc made these areas marginal for rice cultivation but prime agricultural land for various temperate vegetables. The relatively extensive rice terraces in the higher-altitude areas of Tinoc, as well as

the former swidden farms and forests, have been transformed into vegetable terraces.

The ongoing agricultural transition in Tinoc yet again demonstrates the dilemma and uphill struggle in addressing sustainability goals in remaining forest communities as well as in globally important agricultural heritage landscapes. This is especially true when the people are employed mainly in agriculture, and when alternate crops prove to be superior (in terms of productivity and profitability) over traditional crops. Vegetable production now employs most local farmers and has become the dominant local industry. Prioritizing sustainability in a locality such as Tinoc would have to take into account relatively permanent vegetable gardens in the landscape, including on former rice terraces and swidden farms. In addition to the usual agricultural development and support services such as value addition and value-chain improvements, there would need to be parallel measures directed at protecting watersheds and landslide-prone landscapes. These conservation efforts would need conversations, dialogue, and agreements among various government agencies and stakeholders—like what has been envisioned in the Municipal LGUs' CLUP or the Tinoc Kalanguya IPOs' ADSDPP. The same processes of coming together, planning, and implementing are needed when dealing with wider concerns of cultural sustainability, including concerns over indigenous cultural heritage and values: there should be concerted community efforts toward common aspirations through clearer albeit multiple pathways.

Accepted: October 15, 2024

Acknowledgments

The author expresses his gratitude to: the various key informants and data contributors for this study especially the people in Tinoc, Ifugao; the Philippine Association for Intercultural Development, Inc. (PAFID) for sharing their maps and mapping resources; the reviewer and editors for the valuable comments and suggestions; the people of Japan for the scholarships (Asian Youth Fellowship, MEXT) that enabled the author to initially conduct this study; and to Prof. Takeda Shinya for being his doctoral dissertation supervisor under the Division of Ecology and Environment, Graduate School of Asian and African Area Studies (ASAFAS), Kyoto University.

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People's Choice of Place of Living and Related Factors in a Coastal Community in Riau, Indonesia

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This article analyzes how Melayu people choose their place of living in a coastal community in Riau, focusing on people who do not own land. Based on field research conducted in A Community, I discuss the following: (1) characteristics of the community, (2) people's choices of place of living, and (3) people's migration to upstream areas of the community. The relevant characteristics of A Community are that it is a fishing community—it was formed in brackish water areas around the coast—and not very dependent on land. Family dwellings and family ties are the most fundamental determinants of people's choice to live here. People's livelihoods rely on a combination of various sources of income, and employment and schooling are often outside the community. Plantation companies starting their business in the upstream areas in the late 1990s brought employment to the people but reduced fish stocks and deposited so much waste into the river that dwellings built on the water could no longer be repaired. These changes led people to migrate to upstream areas of the community. Over time, upstream migration may lead to deep cultural changes that transform this and other coastal communities such that they come to resemble their terrestrial counterparts.

Keywords: coastal area, community, place of residence, livelihood, Melayu, Indonesia

Introduction

This article analyzes how Melayu people choose their place of living at the family level in a coastal community in Riau Province, Indonesia. The answer to the question of why people live in Riau, on the island of Sumatra, is very likely closely related to the area's population dynamics. Despite the reasons being largely socioeconomic, this paper focuses on family-level factors. The family is a major component of most people's lives, and how people decide where to live is related to the way they consider living as a family. In anthropology, a group of people living in one dwelling is considered a family, and kinship is discussed in terms of dwellings (Lévi-Strauss 1988; Waterson 1990). Thus,

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the examination in this study of how people decide where to live will unfold using the dwelling as the unit of analysis.

Studies on Melayu people on the east coast of Sumatra have examined the following topics: geography and the livelihood-based classification of villages in lowland peatland areas (Momose 2002, 87–108); peatland development history (Abe 1993, 191–205; Masuda, Mizuno, and Sugihara 2016, 148–184); population dynamics and land use in peatlands (Masuda, Retno, and Mizuno 2016, 185–210); and household-level livelihood analysis in peatlands (Mizuno and Masuda 2016, 312–352). These studies have investigated people's livelihoods in relation to the land. In contrast, this article focuses on people who do not own land and examines their livelihoods in relation to rivers and seas—topics that remain underexplored in the literature.

Literature Review and Research Objective

This section provides a detailed discussion of Mizuno and Masuda's (2016, 312–352) study, which involved a household-level livelihood analysis close to that conducted in the current research. Mizuno and Masuda analyzed the complex livelihood strategies of Melayu people in the peatlands. The study targeted the Bhakti sub-village—where people settled in the 1940s—in TL Village, which is located to the west of the community covered by the current article. People living in the sub-village were not exclusively of Melayu origin and instead had engaged in intermarriage with other ethnic groups, such as Javanese (Mizuno and Masuda 2016, 319). This mixing was due to many migrants coming to the sub-village from the 1990s as it developed and the sub-village following a philosophy of not rejecting newcomers or people from other ethnic groups (Mizuno and Masuda 2016, 320–321). The main livelihoods of people in the sub-village were oil palm and rubber cultivation, though peatlands do not provide productive soils for these crops and frequent fires in the sub-village further reduced productivity. Despite these adverse conditions, people continued living in the region as they had other occupations that did not involve land cultivation, such as fishing, commerce, and public service work. The income from these non-agricultural activities accounted for up to 41.9 percent of total household income, almost equaling the income from agriculture (Mizuno and Masuda 2016, 350–351). This diversification of economic activity enabled people to stabilize their livelihoods in the peatlands, which by nature are not suited for agriculture and tend to offer insecure livelihood prospects.

Mizuno and Masuda (2016, 337–339) also showed that while people living in the sub-village were unlikely to give up their peatlands despite the low land productivity,

many had abandoned cultivating the land because of the constant fires. Furthermore, because many people living in the sub-village had migrated to the community to acquire the land (i.e., peatland) in order to stabilize their livelihoods, they believed that the land formed the foundation of their livelihood.

Despite the various contributions of the aforementioned study, at this point a question can be asked: What about the landless Melayu people living on the east coast of Sumatra? Why and how do they live there? Prior studies have not adequately covered this topic. Thus, this study describes the characteristics of the landless Melayu community living on the east coast of Sumatra, describes how they live there while focusing on their families, and considers the context of the area's development and dynamic population movements.

Research Site and Methods

The eastern coast of Sumatra borders the Strait of Malacca and has long been a trading area between inland Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula. A Community, which is studied in this article, served as a transit point for trade between Bengkalis Island, the major trading area, and the main island of Sumatra (Barnard 1998, 87–96). Rivers were used for trade in the area as they connected the interior regions to the sea. From the 1870s, rubber plantations, timber harvesting, oil fields, and oil palm and acacia plantations developed in these interior regions, which in turn led to the development of overland routes that changed the main means of transportation (Masuda, Mizuno, and Sugihara 2016, 148–184). Because of this transportational shift, coastal villages situated at the mouths of rivers became less connected to the interior regions and lagged in terms of infrastructure and other development.

A Village is an old village located at the mouth of a river that flows into the east coast of Sumatra (Fig. 1). The settlement surveyed by Mizuno and Masuda (2016) is located to the west of A Village. Mangrove forests spread around and behind the village, and coconut and rubber gardens were found farther inland. These landscapes are similar to those identified in another prior study (Takaya and Poniman 1986, 264). The area around A Village was a trading post in the Strait of Malacca from the fourteenth century and served as a fortress of the Siak Kingdom (Barnard 1998, 87–96). There are three communities or sub-villages in A Village, and this article is focused on A Community, located on the most seaward part of the village. It comprises mostly pile dwellings, with timber pile structures lifting the entire dwellings from the river bottom to the water surface. At the time of the study, the population of A Village was 1,179 across 319 households, and almost

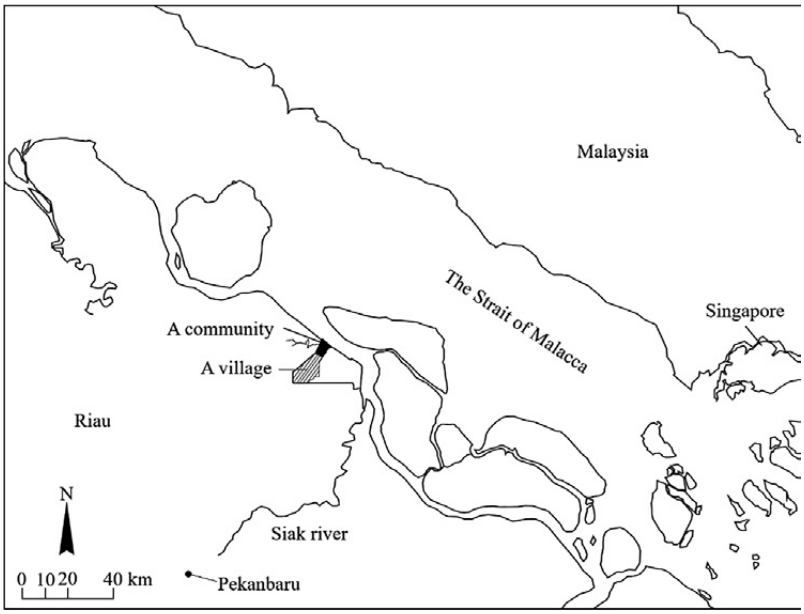

Fig. 1 Map of Research Site
Source: Prepared by Haruka Suzuki based on Badan Informasi Geospasial (2019) and the administrative map (Kabupaten Bengkalis, unpublished).

all households (as defined by the village office) were of Melayu origin (Suzuki 2019, 62–63).

Approximately one hundred households lived in their own dwellings, and fifty dwellings had more than one household living in them (Suzuki 2019, 62–63). Villagers informed the village office when they moved into or out of the village and when there were births or deaths. The village office used this information to keep track of the number of households and the population in the village, although household registration was done according to the villagers' will. There were sometimes two or even three households living together in one dwelling, as will be described later. As mentioned above, a group of people living in one dwelling is considered a family, and kinship has been discussed in terms of the dwelling situation. This perspective of the dwelling unit is used in this study when describing the characteristics of the residents of A Community.

Following the method used by Suzuki (2019, 56–82), the livelihoods of dwellings in A Community will now be described. Of the 45 dwellings surveyed, about 35 percent were associated with inland plantation companies that transported goods by boat; about 35 percent were engaged in retail, carpentry, or civil service; and about 30 percent were engaged in fishing. The average monthly income was approximately IDR 3,730,000. In

29 of the dwellings (approximately 64 percent), women earned additional income from making sago crackers using sago palm starch and small fish and from weaving traditional clothes. Their average monthly income was approximately IDR 615,000, which accounted for approximately 18 percent of the total dwelling income—though there was great variation in income because their products were made to order. In an attempt to stabilize incomes by increasing orders, the enterprise Badan Usaha Miliki Desa was organized in A Village in 2017. In two dwellings, people engaged in agriculture. Most people in A Community did not own land.

Some people received money from their children and relatives living outside the village, while others used their savings from timber harvesting activities they had earlier engaged in. Timber harvesting was a popular occupation in the 1990s and 2000s in coastal areas, including A Village. The A Village government classified about 45 percent of households as poor, supported them with rationed rice, and exempted them from medical expenses. The village government also supported single-parent households that had children of high school age or younger by providing them with daily necessities several times a year. Furthermore, plantation companies located inland provided school fees for the children of some households.

The main research method in this study was interviews with local people. Surveys were conducted in March 2018 and August 2018 targeting 45 randomly selected dwellings, and interviews were conducted on residents. The heads of the 45 surveyed dwellings ranged in age from their forties to seventies, with an average age of 59 years.

People's Choice of Where to Live

Composition of Residents[1)]

As shown in Table 1, the composition of residents was varied in the surveyed dwellings. There were nuclear families, extended families, and others, with the most common type being nuclear families made up of married couples and their children living in a dwelling. Nuclear families accounted for 35 of the 45 dwellings surveyed. In most cases, couples cared for more than one child, and the average number of residents in a dwelling was five. There were also two cases of mother–children residents and three of father–children residents. Most single-mother or single-father families were due to widowhood, but there were also cases of divorce; and the average number of residents in these dwellings was three.

1) This section is based on Suzuki (2019, 56–82).

Table 1 Composition of Residents in the Researched Dwellings

	Composition of Residents	Number of Dwellings (N = 45)	Average Number of Residents
Nuclear family	Married couple and their children	30	5
	Mother and her children	2	3
	Father and his children	3	3
Extended family	Married couple and their children + mother's parents	3	5
	Married couple and their children + father's parents	4	6
	Married couple and their children + mother's relatives	2	7
	Married couple and their children + father's relatives	0	0
Others	Siblings	1	2

Source: Field survey data, 2018

In the case of extended families, there were some where at least one parent lived with a couple and their children (these were families with parents of the wife and/or husband) and some in which a relative (only maternal relatives; there were no families with paternal relatives) lived with a couple and their children. In all cases where the couple and their children lived with the couple's parents, the children of the couple started living with the parents of the couple after marriage. Since there were cases of maternal as well as paternal parents of the couple living in the dwelling, it can be assumed that the choice of arrangement was flexible and disregarded maternal vs. paternal lineage. Finally, the "other" category included a case in which there were two siblings living together. In this dwelling, the father had died in 2000 and the mother shortly before 2018 (the year of the survey), leaving the children on their own.

In addition to the above categories, there were multiple households living together in six of the 45 dwellings surveyed. Households here refer to households identified by the village office, which are determined based on the residents' registration application. For example, in dwellings where couples lived with their parents as well as their children, there were sometimes two households living together, while in other cases there was only one household. Some single people registered their households independent of their parents so they could receive material support from the village government for low-income households. This study could not thoroughly analyze people's detailed livelihood strategies, which hinders potential discussions about the significance of household division in people's livelihood strategy choices. However, the reasoning mentioned above for changing household registration suggests that people made a liv-

ing by combining their livelihood income with the financial support they received by registering their household at the village office.

Ownership of Dwelling and Years of Residence

This subsection delves into dwelling ownership and place of residence. Tables 2 and 3 show dwelling ownership, years of residence (i.e., the number of years that the resident who has lived in a dwelling the longest has lived there), and the age of the dwelling for each category of resident composition. For years of residence, the tables show that dwellings were inherited from both the wife's and the husband's sides of the family. In some cases, family members on the wife's side lived in a residence inherited from the husband's side of the family. This indicates that residence choices were relatively flexible, without grand ties to kinship. For example, in dwelling number 7 (Table 3) the couple, their children, and the wife's parents lived together in a residence inherited from the husband's parents, who had passed away. This study could not clarify what type of inheritance took place prior to the current generation of couples (e.g., whether the inheritance on the wife's side was a continuation from the previous generation). Future research may further clarify this point and show how kinship is associated with people's choice of where to live in the region.

In the case of nuclear families, 24 of the dwellings were occupied by married couples who had built their own dwellings, and all 24 had at least one member of the couple from the village. After marriage, some couples lived together in their parents' house for several years and then built their own. In other cases, the couple began building a house immediately after marriage and left their parents' residence. For example, in dwelling number 1 (Table 2) both members of the couple were from the village, and the couple lived in the residence of the wife's parents for 25 years after marriage. In 2007 they built a new house and moved out. In dwelling number 9 (Table 2), the couple built a new house and moved into it immediately after marriage.

With respect to dwelling inheritance, there were eight cases each where couples inherited the dwelling from the wife's and the husband's parents. In these cases, the couple lived with the parents in the latter's dwelling after marriage and inherited the dwelling when the parents passed. For example, in dwelling number 31 (Table 2), in 1990 the couple inherited a dwelling built by the husband's parents more than eighty years ago. In dwelling number 32 (Table 2), the couple lived with the wife's parents outside or within the community prior to inheriting their current dwelling from the husband's parents. A comparison of years of residence and age of inherited dwellings shows a large gap in all cases: the age of the building was longer than the years of residence (Tables 2 and 3). This implies that the dwellings were passed down from one generation

Table 2 Ownership of Dwelling and Years of Residence in Nuclear Families

Dwelling No.	Ownership of Dwelling	Years of Residence	Age of Dwelling (Years)	Main Income Sources
1	The couple built it.	10	10	Rubber garden management, nurse
2		12	12	Day labor in plantation company, weaving
3		12	12	Transporting goods by ship
4		12	12	Day labor in plantation company
5		13	13	Village office staff, fishing, swiftlet farming
6		14	14	Fishing, carpentry, weaving
7		15	15	Transporting goods by ship, kindergarten teacher
8		18	18	Carpentry, sago cracker production, weaving
9		20	20	Sago cracker production, employment in plantation company
10		23	23	Employment in plantation company
11		23	23	Day labor in plantation company
12		25	25	Sago cracker production, day labor in plantation company
13		26	26	Weaving, tailoring
14		27	27	Fishing, sago cracker production
15		28	28	Carpentry, weaving
16		30	30	Day labor in plantation company
17		38	38	Village office staff, weaving
18		6	6	Fishing, sago cracker production
19		6	6	Day labor in plantation company, weaving
20		8	8	Retail store management, weaving
21		9	9	Carpentry, weaving
22		Approx. 50	Approx. 50	Day labor in plantation company, sago cracker production
23		More than 30	More than 30	Carpentry, transporting goods by ship
24		More than 38	More than 38	Transporting goods by ship, elementary school teacher
25	The couple inherited it from the wife's parents.	17	34	Retail store management, sago cracker production
26		18	Unknown	Retail store management, weaving
27		20	More than100	Fishing, sago cracker production
28		46	More than 100	Carpentry, weaving
29	The couple inherited it from the husband's parents.	10	29	Village office staff, weaving
30		10	30	Fishing
31		28	More than 80	Transporting goods by ship, weaving
32		35	More than 70	Transporting goods by ship
33	The father bought it from his sibling.	29	42	Kindergarten teacher, weaving, sago cracker production
34	The mother bought it from her sibling.	50	Unknown	Fishing, sago cracker production
35	The couple bought it from another villager.	5	More than 50	Fishing

Source: Results of interview survey, 2018

Table 3 Ownership of Dwelling and Years of Residence in Extended and Other Family Types

Dwelling No.	Composition of Residents	Ownership of Dwelling	Years of Residence	Age of Dwelling (Years)	Main Income Sources
1	Extended family	The couple built it.	18	18	Retail store management, employment in plantation company
2			Unknown	Unknown	Transporting goods by ship, junior school teacher, weaving
3		They inherited it from the wife's parents.	58	Unknown	Painting business (outside the village)
4		They inherited it from the husband's parents.	74	More than 100	Day labor in plantation company, sago cracker production
5			13	27	Employment in plantation company, sago cracker production
6			24	24	Transporting goods by ship, coconut garden management
7			8	Unknown	Employment in oil company (outside the village), transporting goods by ship, sago cracker production, kindergarten teacher
8		Mother's parents bought it from their sibling.	More than 50	More than 50	Sago cracker production
9		Father's parents bought it from their sibling.	53	53	Employment in plantation company
10	Others	Their parents built it.	17	17	Carpentry, weaving

Source: Results of interview survey, 2018

to the next. For example, in the cases of dwellings number 27 and 28 (Table 2), the families had been living there for more than a hundred years and the residents did not have much knowledge about who had built them. However, based on the ages of the buildings, it was inferred that the couple's grandparents or great-grandparents had built them; in these cases, the location of the inherited dwelling may have served as the reason for the family's choice of where to live.

In a few cases, the dwellings were purchased from siblings or village residents. In one case in which the couple purchased a dwelling from a sibling, the purchase involved a form of support for the sibling, who was in economic difficulty; with the money from the sale, the sibling moved out of the community to seek job opportunities. This suggests that sometimes families purchase dwellings not only to have a place to live but also to support other family members.

Finally, dwelling number 35 (Table 2) included a couple where both husband and wife were from outside the community. This dwelling had seemingly been home to several people who had moved into the community from outside, but many of the past owners had left within a few years because they did not fit into the somewhat closed atmosphere of A Community. In this case, the outsider couple had been living in the community for five years, having arrived in order to seek jobs, and they had bought the dwelling from people in the community.

Living Places and Main Sources of Income

In a few cases, the main source of income for a household was land-based work, such as rubber and coconut garden management.[2] In other cases, the income came from river- and sea-related jobs, civil service, retail work, carpentry, sago cracker production, and textiles. Those who worked on land near the community owned the land and cultivated farms there. Nonetheless, many in the community did not own land and often chose to work jobs unrelated to the land, which may have been the reason for their choice to live on the coast.

In fact, boat ownership was seemingly very relevant for the choice of place to live and source of income. People who owned boats had jobs related to transporting goods by boat or to fishing, or were employed in a local business.[3] Among the 45 dwellings surveyed, 26 owned boats. Boat capacity varied considerably, with the smallest weighing

2) The people who cultivated rubber and coconut palms owned the land closest to the coast. This land was covered with sago palm forests until the early 1980s, and sago starch was the staple food of these people. At that time, more people owned land than now. Coconut and rubber cultivation began later, and during the boom in coconut palm production many people sold their land to people living inland.

3) People fishing for their own consumption also owned boats.

about one ton and being used mostly for fishing and transporting daily necessities, and the largest weighing about twenty tons and being used as tugboats to transport acacia logs from the river to the sea for plantation companies. Acacia logs were loaded into large containers owned by the company operating a plantation upstream of the river, and the tugboats that pulled the logs were owned by people in the community. Therefore, in A Community, owning a boat could provide a wider range of options for income sources.

Employment in plantation companies[4] was another prominent source of income. In the late 1990s, plantation companies started operating in the upper reaches of the community. These companies have been conducting various corporate social responsibility activities ever since, such as providing financial support to surrounding villages for infrastructure development. One of these activities involved employing people in the area, which led to people from A Community getting jobs to transport acacia logs from the river to the sea by boat.

As mentioned earlier, for some women weaving and sago cracker production were important sources of income. The weavers worked mostly on looms that they set up in their own dwellings, and they chose weaving as an income source mostly because they owned a loom and their families had been weaving for generations—the family's skill in this craft had been passed on to them. Meanwhile, sago cracker production was a relatively easy task for anyone who knew how to make the crackers and had access to the ingredients. In fact, the author had a go at making sago crackers under the supervision of a local; even though it was the author's first attempt, the resulting product was good enough to be sold. Sago crackers can be produced anywhere that the ingredients are available, and thus this source of income did not influence people's choice of place of residence.

Living Outside the Community

The results of the survey on people's migration in A Community are presented in Table 4. Among the 156 people from the 45 surveyed dwellings, 53 people from 17 dwellings had family members who had experienced migration, including children. Table 4 shows the reasons for the migration of these 53 respondents, which may be categorized into four main groups: education, employment, marriage, and other.

In the case of education, many people migrated to attend high school or university,

4) Some people were employed by plantation companies, while others were just day laborers. This difference depended on the political position of people in the village; employment in plantation companies was decided purposefully by a few people in the community. These few people prioritized their families and relatives for employment, and when there was a shortage of workers other people were hired on a daily basis.

Table 4 Reasons for People's Residence Outside the Community

Reason	Place of Residence	Period	Situation after Migration	Persons (n = 53)
Education	Provincial capital, regency capital	2 years～	They returned to the village after graduation or dropping out.	6
			They did not return to the village because they got a job in the new place.	11
Work	Regency capital, around village, coastal area in other regency, Malaysia	1 year～	They returned to the village.	13
			They did not return to the village.	3
Marriage	Around village, inland in same regency, coastal area in other regency	2 years～	They returned to the village.	6
			They did not return to the village.	9
Others	Regency capital, around village, Malaysia	2 years～	They returned to the village.	3
			They did not return to the village.	2

Source: Results of interview survey, 2018

as there were no high schools or universities in the surrounding villages. Thus, children had to leave the village to live in the prefectural or provincial capital for their secondary and tertiary education, and the minimum period of migration for education purposes was two years. There were a few cases of children discontinuing their education and returning to their villages without graduating due to economic reasons, and most who went on to university came back to the village after graduation. There was one case in which a child graduated and got a job and married in the state capital.

With respect to employment, the main reasons for migration were to seek fishing places outside the village and get work there (e.g., transporting goods by boat). In some cases, people migrated to live with relatives outside the village, while in others they migrated to find jobs such as in boat transportation or in the construction industry. In both cases, people decided to migrate based on personal relationships with their relatives and job opportunities. As most people relied on fishing for a livelihood, they rarely sought out agricultural land in the areas they migrated to. In fact, the main migration destinations were prefectural capitals and their surrounding regions, coastal areas in other prefectures, and Malaysia. Some people had relatives who had already migrated to Malaysia, while others had jobs that involved transporting goods to Malaysia. Jobs related to boat-based transportation were particularly popular during the commercial logging boom period of the late 1990s and early 2000s, and they were mostly done by relatively young men in the village. After the boom, 13 of the 16 people from A Community working these jobs returned to the village: some returned because they had lost their jobs, while others married and returned with their families. Among those who did not

return after the boom, some were engaged in fishing and continued to send money to their families in the village.

In cases of outmigration due to marriage, sometimes the married couple lived in the partner's hometown after marriage and then returned to the village, while in other cases the couple did not return. This difference was thought to be related to the couple's livelihood and the availability of housing in the village. One of the reasons for intermarriage with people outside the village was related to the abovementioned commercial logging boom period, during which logging vessels frequently entered and left the village carrying timber harvested upstream. Many people working on these vessels rested or got food in the village, which led to relationships being developed with people in the village.

Other reasons for leaving the village included people wanting to see the world outside or to escape interpersonal relationships in the village. Most migrants with such motivations were young men who moved to the prefectural capital, neighboring villages, or Malaysia by seeking help from acquaintances and others. Some returned to the village after a while, but this study could not find information on those who remained outside. There were also some cases in which children from the village were adopted by relatives from outside and did not return to A Community. All the people from the village who had been adopted at an early age said that they would like to return to the village if they could, but there was no place for them to return to because their parents and relatives had passed away.

Building New Dwellings in Upstream Areas

Tables 2 and 3 show that 26 of the 45 dwellings were newly built, 12 of them upstream of the community (dwellings number 1 to 10 and 12 in Table 2 and dwelling number 1 in Table 3). Based on the age of these dwellings, it could be inferred that upstream movement had occurred for the last 25 years and was ongoing at the time of the 2018 survey.

Before understanding why people built new dwellings in upstream areas, it is necessary to summarize the details of coastal settlement ownership in the region. Under the national law, the coast is defined as the area extending seaward for 12 miles (approximately 19 kilometers) from the coast; the sea areas are what connect islands, mouths of rivers, bays, shoals, brackish wetland, and lagoons (Perpem no. 17, 2016); and the seacoast refers to the areas where the tide rises and falls (i.e., at least 100 meters from the high tide line on the landward side; Perpem no. 17, 2016). The coast and seacoast are not classified as land (Perpem no. 17, 2016) and are owned by the state. However, in a few exceptional cases, people are granted rights to manage and own coastal or seacoast lands—for example, under customary law or by virtue of having lived in the place for generations (Perpem no. 17, 2016). A Community is one of these exceptional cases.

One question emerges at this point: at the community level, how did people recognize their place of living in the coastal area? People perceived the tidal range to be approximately 1.5 kilometers inland from the mouth of the river, which was roughly the area of the community. There were no certificates of landownership issued by the village government in A Community. However, villagers knew details about local families' living places, such as where the families lived and how long they had lived there. Meanwhile, the land in the upstream areas of the community was untouched at the time of survey, and it was not customary for people to own it. All the people in the community had the right to build new dwellings in these upstream areas on a first come, first served basis. Therefore, landownership was not a constraint for people to build new dwellings in the upstream areas.

The data in Tables 2 and 3 show no significant differences in sources of income between those who migrated upstream and those who lived at the seaside. Those who owned newly built dwellings upstream still worked mostly in river- or sea-related jobs such as fishing, boat transportation, and employment in plantation companies. Dwelling number 1 (Table 2) had rubber plantation as a source of income, but this was an isolated case—not enough to suggest the possibility of a shift toward land-based sources of income. In terms of changes in income sources in the last 25 years (i.e., the period during which many new dwellings were built upstream), there was the commercial logging boom in the 1990s and 2000s, the establishment of plantation companies upstream, and A Community members becoming engaged in transporting timber on the river. The income from these jobs, combined with other income sources, probably stabilized the incomes of families in A Community. This may have encouraged people to build new dwellings since they were secure about their income and could allocate funds to build their dwellings.

Among those who migrated upstream, particularly those whose income came from employment in plantation companies, their lifestyle may have changed from the traditional coastal lifestyle. Plantation company employment is very different from traditional coastal sources of livelihood, which are based mostly on the river and sea resources (e.g., fishing). Company employment can also provide a stable source of income that allows people to maintain their traditional way of life to some extent.

Let us now consider why people built new dwellings upstream in terms of the coastal environment and architecture. Some people who built new dwellings upstream thought that dwellings near the mouth of the river were vulnerable to the potentially damaging effects of sea breezes and waves. To counter these effects and strengthen their dwellings against these natural conditions, people living at the seaside took measures such as adding timber piles for reinforcement (Suzuki 2019). In addition, some people who built

new dwellings were dissatisfied with the inadequate infrastructure on the northern bank of the community; specifically, there were only a few dwellings on the northern bank, no electricity, and no overland route, and people had to cross to the south bank by boat to obtain their daily requirements. In A Community, these problems were frequently discussed and infrastructure development was planned, but measures had yet to be taken. The main reason for the delay was the small number of residents relative to the cost of infrastructure development.

Other residents were concerned about flooding above floor level during heavy rainfall, which occurred several times a year. One such occurrence was in August 2018, while the author was conducting research in the community. At that time, there was flooding in around thirty dwellings near the mouth of the river. Although the water receded after about two days, there was extensive damage, such as goods and chattels being rendered unusable. In recent years, flooding above floor level has occurred also during high tide, mostly because of acacia wood being transported several times daily along the river; each time the vessels pass by, large waves crash against the dwellings.

Over time, dwellings on the northern bank of the river have become difficult to repair or rebuild. Most of these dwellings are wooden and require maintenance, such as adding timber piles under the floor every five to ten years (Suzuki 2019, 66). However, since the timber piles are inserted about one meter into the riverbed, it is not possible to replace them once constructed. Therefore, maintenance involves adding a new pile next to an old, decaying one. A carpenter in the community pointed out, "It is not possible to add piles in the dwellings on the northern bank because of the thick build-up of acacia bark and other materials under the floor."[5] As already mentioned, plantation companies developed acacia plantations upstream of the settlement in the late 1990s. Cut acacia is transported from the plantations to the lumberyard in the river, and when the lumberyard becomes full, acacia wood is transported to the sea via the river. The gates of the lumberyard are opened during transportation, and it is believed that this allows large quantities of acacia bark accumulated in the lumberyard to flow out and into the river and then be deposited at the mouth of the river. Indeed, on the northern bank of the community acacia bark sediment was found to be more than one meter deep in some places, and the piles of dwellings were buried under this sediment. Maintenance of these piles is nearly impossible, and these dwellings are likely to eventually topple over and collapse. Thus, from an architectural point of view, building a new dwelling at the seaside involves high risk; and people are concerned over this.

5) Interview with Mr. O, August 2, 2018.

Discussion and Conclusion

Momose (2002, 88–91) classified villages in lowland wetlands into four types according to their geographic distribution and livelihood base. Based on this classification, A Community can be categorized as a fishing village type, as it is formed in brackish water areas around the coast. Although there were relatively few people whose main source of income was fishing in A Community, many people's sources of income were based on the river and the sea. While there are reported cases of fishing village-type settlements combining rice and rubber cultivation on land (Takaya and Poniman 1986, 263–288), these types of cultivation were rarely found in A Community. Therefore, A Community can be considered to be a fishing village-type settlement characterized by an extremely low dependence on land.

Mizuno and Masuda (2016, 312–354) described Melayu villages as being open and accepting of outsiders. Meanwhile, A Community was considered to have a somewhat closed character, though temporary migratory and displacement activities were observed at the individual level. There were few migrants with family ties to the community, which represents a significant departure from the prior evidence on related communities. Thus, people in this Melayu village seemed to consider family ties and dwellings as fundamental factors behind their decision of where to live.

Landlessness was one of the factors contributing to the closed character of A Community. Only two of the 45 dwellings surveyed had land-based sources of income, while all other dwellings had sources of income that were related to the river or sea; related to the basic food, clothing, shelter, and public services of the community; or women oriented (e.g., weaving and sago cracker production). In other words, not having land in this community meant not having—or perhaps not being able to have—a land-based way of life. Thus, in A Community there were several sources of income that did not depend on land, and people often combined these sources of income—as found in previous studies (Mizuno and Masuda 2016, 350–351). Various land-based sources of income supported lives in the coastal community, though it would be a stretch to say that these sources of income were stable. Although the plantation companies in the region provided some families with a relatively stable source of income, other families still faced economic difficulties; the village government considered 45 percent of households in the community to be poor. And while the plantation companies created jobs, their entry into the region had led to a reduction in the amount of fish and to the deposition of waste in the river to such an extent that some dwellings on the river were beyond repair. Thus, the existence of these companies caused some people to change their jobs and move out. This phenomenon was one of the changes that occurred at the community level due to

statewide developments, industrial plantation development among them.

People in A Community continued to live on the coast but devised alternative means for sustaining their livelihoods. One example was employment and schooling outside the community. People in the community chose to find other sources of income that could provide better stability for their families and education for their children. Migration for educational purposes is expected to continue, as there are limited educational opportunities within A Community. Fishing is no longer a full-time occupation for most people as fish catches have declined. It is expected that in the near future public employment, jobs in acacia plantation companies, and self-employment (e.g., retail store management and weaving) will become major sources of income in the community. Potential alternatives include the creation of new employment opportunities based on people migrating, learning new skills outside the community, and bringing them back to the community.

In A Community, family members were found to have various means of financial support, including pensions and income from older adults, remittances from family members living outside the community, and employment by children; these results resonate with prior findings (Kasai 1988; Schröder-Butterfill 2004). Moreover, people bought and sold dwellings in A Community not only as a choice of where to live but also to support family members facing economic hardships.

Some people were building or had built new dwellings upstream of A Community. The reasons behind this move included a source of income, the coastal environment, and quality of buildings. People in the community were likely to have thought about ways to strike a balance with respect to these factors and attempted to make the best decisions for their families. One of the reasons people moved upstream was because of the strong and frequent waves downstream; people felt that the main reason for the large waves lapping the coast of the downstream community was boat traffic from the plantation companies. A Community and the company have a good relationship, but A Community needs to actively negotiate to reduce negative impacts from the company, such as the wave issue. In order to achieve this, it is necessary to present scientific evidence and engage in dialogue. A study on coastal erosion on the island of Bengkalis showed serious degradation, with erosion progressing 32.75 meters per year (Sutikno *et al.* 2017). However, the research site in Bengkalis is peatland and may be more prone to erosion than the main area of A Community, which is not peatland. In general, the movement of people from A Community to the upstream area showcases the potential of the transformation of coastal communities into upland ones. This change in place of residence does not simply mean changing where people live, but changing how they live, and may thus result in a major, irreversible cultural transformation.

Finally, the limitations of this study should be discussed. The study focused on

analyzing one community and was not able to make comparisons with other communities. This research also could not examine how the generation prior to the current one chose their place of residence. In future studies, I would like to further analyze the position of this community in relation to other communities in the area, as well as the villagers' migration history.

Accepted: October 15, 2024

Acknowledgments

This study was conducted under a research permit issued by the Directorate General of Higher Education, Ministry of Education and Culture, Republic of Indonesia (Research Permit Number: 11/EXT/SIP/FRP/E5/Dit.KI/IV/2017). We thank Mr. S. and other members of A Community for their cooperation in the field survey. This work was supported by JSPS KAKENHI Grant (JP21K20076).

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Indonesian Regulation

Peraturan Menteri Agraria dan Tata Ruang/Kepala Badan Pertanahan Nasional Republik Indonesia Nomor 17 Tahun 2016 tentang Penataan Pertanahan Di Wilayah Pesisir Dan Pulau-Pulau Kecil.

Boven Digoel: Projecting a New Society*

Yamamoto Nobuto**

In the aftermath of the Communist revolts in West Java and West Sumatra in 1926 and 1927, Boven Digoel was constructed as an internment camp for political prisoners. It was designed to be a place where Communists were taken from their home communities and transplanted in a foreign environment to be "re-educated" by the authorities under close surveillance. Outwardly, however, the Dutch colonial regime also used Digoel as a cautionary tale to the Indonesian populace by projecting a terrifying image of the exile colony and its feral environment. They achieved this aim by relying primarily on newspaper coverage. Such representations of Digoel came to inhabit the popular imagination during the colonial period. This article examines two prominent Malay-language newspapers, *Sin Jit Po* (Soerabaja) and *Pewarta Deli* (Medan), and their comparatively frequent reports on Digoel. Ultimately, the Digoel coverage gives insights into an important aspect of the Dutch colonial order in the Netherlands Indies, which was censorship.

Keywords: Boven Digoel, Communist, censorship, newspaper coverage, popular imagination

On August 30, 1933, Soekarno, already a prominent Indonesian nationalist and leading organizer of the Indonesian Nationalist Party (Partai Nasional Indonesia), wrote a confidential letter from the Soekamiskin prison in West Java to the Dutch prosecutor general. Nearly a month earlier, on August 1, he had been apprehended in Batavia and been confined in the prison for the second time. His letter begins as follows:

> The purpose of this [letter] is to respectfully request that I be spared—and with that also my wife and child and my old mother and father—by releasing me from further judicial proceedings or internment. I address myself to you and the Government with the prayer to set me at liberty. I further promise to withdraw from all political activities and live as a quiet citizen to provide for my family by practicing as an architect and engineer, a practice I have very much neglected on account of my political activities. I shall never break my promise. As a guarantee to that may this letter

* This is a shortened and revised version of Chapter 6 in Yamamoto (2011).

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> serve its purpose: were I to commit breach of promise, do then publish these lines and immediately intern me or in one manner or another penalize me. A breach of promise can only harm me: the publication of this letter will surely spell my social death. (Hering 1979, 154)

Soekarno's letter betrays anxiety and despair. Despite his pledge to withdraw from political life if the colonial government opted against sending him to the internment camp in Boven Digoel, Soekarno's pusillanimous words, years later, surprised many Indonesians and historians (Hering 2002, 236–237). This contradiction challenged the image of the young and fiery nationalist activist that Soekarno had meticulously built since the mid-1920s. The 1933 arrest was Soekarno's second, yet this arrest was different from the first. Soekamiskin was not merely a place of temporary confinement; Soekarno awaited the final decision from the prosecutor general on potential further isolation from political action through exile outside Java. His fear of being banished to Boven Digoel, the remote internment camp in western New Guinea for political prisoners of the Dutch East Indies, drove him to beg for the prosecutor general's mercy. However, it seems the plea did not make a difference, and Soekarno was indeed exiled—but not to Boven Digoel. Interestingly, the designated place of his exile was the town of Ende on the island of Flores. The rationale was to keep him apart from the Communist prisoners sent to Boven Digoel, preventing him from potentially influencing them. The futility of Soekarno's plea, however, is not the focus here. Instead, it is notable that Soekarno was so terrified of being banished to Digoel that he was willing to relinquish his political aspirations, effectively compromising Indonesia's independence. For the purpose of this article, Soekarno's letter serves to illustrate how Indonesian nationalists imagined Boven Digoel.

In the 1930s Dutch East Indies, Boven Digoel had an "(in)famous" (*terkenal*) reputation (Oen 1931, 2). It was also known by another name, Tanah Merah (Red Land), initially due to the color of the soil and later gaining an association with political leftists, or "reds." Those exiled to Digoel were referred to as *orang buangan* (exiles, or literally "those who are thrown away"). Established after the Communist revolts in Java in December 1926, Digoel served as a colony for those subjected to mass internal exile. The colonial government took decisive actions to dismantle the Communist mass following, rounding up thirteen thousand suspects in connection with the revolts. More than five thousand were placed in temporary preventive detention, with four thousand five hundred receiving prison sentences after trial. Those deemed particularly dangerous, including key leaders of the Indonesian Communist Party (Partai Komunis Indonesia; PKI), faced severe penalties. In response to the revolts, the government outlawed the PKI and extensively employed its power of banishment. It ordered the deportation of 1,308 individuals—noncommunist political activists as well as family members who

desired to accompany their interned spouses and parents. They were sent to a location on the upper reaches of the Digoel River in New Guinea, hence the Dutch name Boven Digoel ("upper Digoel") (Mrázek 1994, 128), where escape was nearly impossible due to the thick jungle surrounding it.

Digoel served as a place where internees were meant to live apart from Indonesians. It was not exactly a penal colony or a concentration camp; rather, it was designed as a location for transplanting Communists from their home communities to be closely monitored and "re-educated" by the authorities. Unlike the conventional concept and image of an internment camp—typically associated with isolation and oppression—the Digoel project exhibited the typical attributes of colonial engineering. The fact that some internees were permitted to bring family members to Digoel suggests that the authorities aimed to provide the internees with some semblance of a normal life there. Contrary to the standard perception of internment camps as places of isolation and oppression, no one in Digoel experienced physical abuse or direct violence akin to the conditions in German concentration camps (Pluvier 1953, 42–43; Mrázek 2019).

Legally, internees were not considered criminals. The Penal Code of 153 bis empowered the government to isolate any person deemed a threat to public order without the need for a trial or specific charges. Per Dutch instructions, Digoel internees, though confined, were expected to have the same duties and privileges as everyone else in the colony (Mrázek 2009, 301). Simultaneously, under the Penal Code of 153 bis, they could be subjected to indefinite confinement: "As in the case of the Jews, there was no time set for their release" (Mrázek 2009, 301). Consequently, Digoel symbolized indefinite isolation for Communists and served as a warning to other Indonesians.

Digoel undoubtedly stood as a symbol of political suppression in the Indies during the late 1920s and the 1930s, with the colonial government playing a significant role in constructing this potent yet intricate setup. To transform it into a symbol, the government permitted both Malay-language newspapers and Dutch-language publications to feature reports on Digoel from various angles. On the one hand, this approach created an impression of normalcy within the internment camp, albeit one fabricated and meticulously maintained under strict police supervision (Shiraishi 2021, 99–161). On the other hand, the mere existence of Digoel projected a terrifying image and conveyed a stern message to the Indonesian people. Through newspaper accounts, Indonesians gained insight into the repercussions of exile to Digoel, and the Dutch regime relied heavily on journalistic reporting to embed the Digoel project in the public consciousness, to serve as a deterrent against further political activism (Shiraishi 2021, 30). Soekarno's intense fear of being banished to Digoel, as reflected in his letter, underscores the effectiveness of this propaganda strategy.

To comprehend the evolution of the general public's perception of Digoel, it is crucial to scrutinize newspaper coverage of the camp. The colonial regime actively promoted Digoel to instill fear among Indonesians, relying significantly on newspaper reports. The content of articles on Digoel was meticulously controlled, generally falling into two categories: the first type involved reporting on life within the camp, while the second provided personal accounts of events transpiring there. Understanding the impact of these reports necessitates an examination of the authors and how, from whose perspective, Digoel was presented. All these aspects were shaped by a process of censorship, prompting questions such as: What kind of censorship was at play concerning Digoel? How did this specific censorship influence Indonesia's popular politics?

Censoring Digoel

Media reports played a crucial role in disseminating the image of Digoel among Indonesian intellectuals. News reports often covered the latest internments and releases from Digoel. Additionally, newspapers featured private letters to internees' families and relatives along with personal interviews.

Two types of newspapers carried reports on Digoel. The first were Dutch-language newspapers. While colonial officials had access to colonial (confidential) documents for information on Digoel and other internment camps, Indonesian intellectuals and leaders of the nationalist movement such as Soekarno relied on Dutch-language newspaper reports to stay informed about decisions made by the Dutch authorities. Some Dutch-language newspapers in the Indies served as semi-official mouthpieces of the colonial government, while others represented big planters and conservative parties that were often critical of government policies. These newspapers regularly covered Digoel and even had their own special correspondents for Digoel who traveled there to observe and write reports. This Dutch-centered discourse shaped the intellectual sphere in Indonesia. It represented a limited and regulated intellectual sphere because only a small number of Indonesian elites could attend Dutch Native School (Hollandsche Inlandsche School) and read Dutch newspapers. It was regulated because Dutch was the official language of communication for the Indies administration.

The second type of publications that reported on Digoel were Malay-language newspapers—and, to a lesser extent, popular Malay-language novels. Malay newspapers that regularly covered Digoel distinguished themselves in three ways: those that perceived Digoel mainly as a place for criminal elements rather than political prisoners; those that covered only factual aspects concerning Digoel; and those that carried personal accounts

of individuals who had experienced living or being interned in Digoel. Since most Malay-language newspapers were not allowed to send their journalists to Digoel, many had to rely on Dutch-language newspapers as the source of information on the camp and its development. Consequently, many Malay newspapers cited and translated articles from Dutch newspapers into Malay.

Interestingly, *Sin Jit Po*, the Chinese-Malay newspaper based in Soerabaja, East Java, began featuring Digoel early on, in December 1926. The first news regarding the Communist movement (or the "Communist rebellion," according to colonial authorities) in West Sumatra was reported in *Sin Jit Po* on December 3, 1926 under the title "Gerakan Kaoem Communist di Sumatra Barat: Keadaan di Djawa Hendak Ditjontoh" (The Communist movement in West Sumatra: Java's situation is to be imitated) (*Sin Jit Po* 1926a). It was followed by an article titled "Rahasia Communist di Soematera Barat Terboeka: Pemboenoehan di Kamang" (The Communist secret in West Sumatra exposed: the killing in Kamang) on December 24, 1926. *Sin Jit Po* also reported on the aftermath of the 1926–27 Communist rebellion with news of the trial process, announcements of Communist activists sentenced to exile, their departure from Java, and their arrival in the far-flung Digoel (*Sin Jit Po* 1926b).[1)]

Popular novels also played an important role in transmitting the image of Digoel. Within several years of its establishment, Digoel seemed to become a fashionable topic for popular novels (Chandra 2013). In 1931 the Chinese-Malay literary monthly *Boelan Poernama* published two different novel-length stories on Digoel. This Bandoeng-based journal had a circulation of ten thousand copies and was quite popular because its contributors included well-known contemporary writers. The number of subscribers reading *Boelan Poernama* suggests that its two stories on Digoel were likely circulated quite widely. The author of the first story, titled "Antara Idoep dan Mati, atawa Boeron dari Boven-Digoel" (Between life and death, or the fugitive from Boven Digoel), was an ex-Digoelist by the name of Wiranta. The second story, "Darah dan Air-Mata di Boven Digoel" (Blood and tears in Boven Digoel), was written by Oen Bo Tik (Oen 1931). Wiranta went on to publish another Digoel novel titled *Minggat dari Digoel* (Escape from Digoel), published by Awas in Soerakarta. Another popular literary journal, *Tjerita Roman*, based in Malang, also published novels on Digoel: Liem Khing Ho's *Merah* (Red) (1937), which references the Communist uprisings in 1926 and 1927; and Pouw Kioe An's *Api jang Tida Bisa Dibikin Padem* (The fire that cannot be extinguished) (1939). Kwee Tek Hoay published two novels related to Digoel: *Drama di Boven Digoel*

1) The trial of the uprising case was reported in the April 29, 1927 issue (*Sin Jit Po* 1927b; see also *Sin Jit Po* 1927d). On April 13, 1927, *Sin Jit Po* reported that the first batch of Communist exiles had reached Digoel (*Sin Jit Po* 1927a; see also *Sin Jit Po* 1927c).

(Drama in Boven Digoel), which was first serialized in the journal *Panorama* from December 15, 1929 to January 1, 1932 and then republished by Moestika in Bandoeng from 1938 to 1941; and *Penghidoepan Satoe Sri Panggoeng* (The life of a theater star) (1931), referencing the preceding Communist uprisings (Kwee 1938; Salmon 1981).[2)] In the 1930s and 1940s, Medan-based literary circles published several works of fiction featuring Digoel written by former internees. The short stories included Abd'oelxarim M.S.'s "Pandoe Anak Boeangan" (Pandoe, the internee), D'Nian S.B.'s "Ke Boven Digoel Dengan Kekasih" (To Boven Digoel with a lover), and D. E. Manu Turie's "Roestam Digoelist" (Roestam, the Digoelist) (Pramoedya 2001). The titles alone suggest the personal nature of the accounts, relating the hardship and trials experienced by Digoel prisoners; this was perhaps what most attracted readers' interest.

Since Digoel was an emerging and sensitive colonial project, during the first years of its existence the colonial regime needed to carefully establish the image it hoped to promote. Press coverage of Digoel was a key medium for this purpose, and while newspapers were allowed to carry articles on Digoel, these were carefully censored. Internees were allowed to send out letters, but they had to be written in Malay (rather than in Javanese or other regional languages) so they could be read by the censoring officers before being forwarded (*Sin Jit Po* 1927g). The few Indonesian correspondents from Malay-language newspapers who successfully gained permits to be stationed in Digoel had great difficulty reporting because "the censorship there was too tight" (*censuur disana terlampau . . . keras!*) (*Pewarta Deli* 1928e).

Censorship figures prominently in the story of Digoel in that it promoted and controlled the discourse related to the infamous camp. Censorship regulates who and what is included in or excluded from a particular discourse (Burt 1994). It gives legitimacy to a certain discourse by allowing it to circulate in society. This aspect of censorship works in a situation where power exerts itself by virtue of the sanctions it places over matters of the print and publishing industry. In the case of Digoel coverage, not only journalists but also internees contributed articles to newspapers. Internees were able to contribute articles only if they passed a pre-publication censorship review (*Pewarta Deli* 1929b). Pre-publication censorship was applied to all writings from Digoel, including personal correspondence. It differed from the post-publication censorship of journalistic publications, which was then the standard procedure in the Indies. Because of censorship's nature as a political tool of the government, it was important for the Indies regime to familiarize Indonesians with the Digoel project. Censorship was also a component of the

2) As late as 1950, Digoel continued to feature in popular novels—for instance, Njoo Cheong Seng's *Taufan Gila* (Mad storm) (1950).

Dutch defensive strategy to deter criticism from the Netherlands in the late 1920s, as highlighted by concerns raised by Dr. M. van Blankenstein, a prominent correspondent for *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*.[3)]

In sum, Digoel literature was allowed to be written and published by Indies Chinese and other writers to promote awareness of Digoel's existence and what life in the camp was like. The authorities regarded stories from Digoel as political lessons for readers, as they framed a new perception of the Indonesian nationalist movement—in this case, the "Communist radicals."

In general, political prisoners in Digoel were categorized into three: active collaborators, passive collaborators, and non-collaborators. Due to a shortage of labor, the internees were, ironically, forced to build and manage their own prison camps. By participating in the management and control of Digoel, they came to learn about Dutch colonial law and order and the necessity of self-policing. It was like a miniature colonial ward. In addition to Digoel literature, major Malay-language newspapers, both indigenous and Chinese, covered "news" on Digoel into the 1930s, and thus Boven Digoel or Tanah Merah became a familiar place for the Malay readership. The rationale was that since Digoel represented the proper colonial order and society, the more it was reported on and described, the more the general population would learn what an ideal colonial society was like.

Post-publication censorship was introduced under the Ethical Policy in the 1910s; it was designed to "listen to" and "contain" local voices. It promoted a kind of "free press" atmosphere that became a driving engine of popular politics in the 1910s and 1920s (Shiraishi 1990). However, journalists and nationalists who wrote extreme and provocative articles were penalized with jail time when they violated the *persdelict* (press offense articles of the Penal Code) (Yamamoto 2019, 92–113). Essentially no newspapers were banned or shut down before 1931, after which the new administrative measure against newspapers, called *persbreidelordonnantie* (press curbing ordinance), was introduced (Yamamoto 2019, 176–204). It is to be noted that most reports on Digoel appeared during the transitional years from the Ethical Policy to a more suppressive policy of Dutch rule in the Indies. For the most part, the atmosphere was still rather lenient in the publishing world.

Reporting about Digoel also provided an occasion for newspapers to cite each other's

3) In September 1928, van Blankenstein published a series of reports in *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant* based on his journey to Boven Digoel. In these articles, he highlighted errors that had resulted in the unjust relocation of certain individuals to Boven Digoel. The colonial authorities in the Netherlands Indies acknowledged these mistakes and repatriated some individuals from Boven Digoel (Kwantes 1981, 165–167).

articles. For instance, *Pewarta Deli* carried an article titled "Boven Digoel: orang-orang jang 'djahat' memboeat 'onar': orang-orang jang 'baik' menjanjikan 'Wilhelmus'" (Boven Digoel: "bad" people cause "trouble": "good" people promise "Wilhelmus") in its October 12, 1928 edition (*Pewarta Deli* 1928e). The article opens with a telegram from Den Haag, which refers to articles written by the Dutch journalist van Blankenstein. He was an editor of *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, which was then a very influential newspaper based in Rotterdam, and had had several opportunities to visit various places in the Indies, including Digoel. For many political activists in Indonesia and the Netherlands, his articles were considered to be a "guidebook" (*penoendjoek djalan*) for information on Digoel. Meanwhile, the same *Pewarta Deli* article cited a report on Digoel by Dr. Broesma, another Dutch journalist, which had been published in *De Locomotief*, a Semarang-based Dutch newspaper, and had also been cited by the government news agency, Aneta.

Since Malay-language newspapers had difficulty sending their correspondents to Digoel, they needed to rely on Dutch or other European journalists' accounts. Dutch and European correspondents in general could get permission to visit and stay in Digoel much more easily than indigenous or Chinese ones. Some European journalists even went to Digoel several times. Yet, they generally toed the government line and disseminated official accounts on Digoel, and therefore their reports were considered safe. These Dutch and European journalists played a significant role in promoting the image of Digoel as a healthy and ordered political camp among the European audience. Since the Netherlands was a small nation, positive reportage on Digoel was a way to prevent criticism from neighboring European nations.[4] A culture of citation, in which various newspapers appeared to be reporting on a particular topic but were, in fact, only citing each other, was thus encouraged. This was another by-product of censorship.

Under the Ethical Policy, the vernacular press served as a symbol and means to educate Indonesians; in a different way, the reportage on Digoel was supposed to serve the same purpose—a symbol of the "free" press and a means to socialize a government project. One is tempted to ask: How did the authorities achieve these objectives? What exactly was being communicated in those Digoel articles?

4) The Dutch view about Malay-language periodicals in the Indies started to change in the middle of 1927. In a confidential letter dated September 22, 1927, Prosecutor General H.G.P. Duyfies wrote to Governor-General De Graeff, saying that after the Communist uprisings in West Sumatra and West Java, he acknowledged an urgent need to act against the extremist propaganda which was being carried out in some native and Malay-Chinese newspapers (Kwantes 1978, 669–676).

Reporting on Digoel

Functioning as an internment camp, Digoel required the creation of new infrastructure carved from the tropical landscape. The initial years at Digoel were dedicated primarily to land development and the formation of an internment community, with the labor force for these endeavors provided by the internees themselves. This posed a particular challenge for those among the internees who were intellectuals and unaccustomed to rigorous manual labor and land cultivation. Geographic challenges added to the difficulties. Digoel was situated in a malaria-infested, hot, and humid region, deemed uncultivable and sparsely populated. The internees found themselves close to the Papoean tribes, whose distinctive way of life had resulted in a stereotyped portrayal of them among Indonesian readers as "headhunters" and "cannibals" (*Pewarta Deli* 1928b). Three years after its establishment, in May 1930, Digoel's internee population peaked, with 1,308 individuals recorded as being interned.

The construction phase of the Digoel project captured the interest of the general public, transforming into a form of theater akin to a newspaper rendition of a reality show. The coverage encompassed narratives of internees departing from their home communities, their arrival in the unfamiliar setting of Digoel, the challenges of their mundane yet arduous daily life, and, frequently, their unexpected return home. The entire process was publicized and made accessible to a wider audience. The following accounts serve as illustrative examples.

Departure:
In the "City" section of the *Sin Jit Po* newspaper on May 14, 1927 (*Sin Jit Po* 1927c), readers encountered a detailed account of the departure of internees destined for Digoel from Soerabaja.

On the preceding day, despite the rain, the Tandjoeng Perak seaport was unusually crowded (*terlaloe rame jang loear biasa*) in the late afternoon. The *Rumphius* was scheduled to depart for Makassar at five o'clock. Around four o'clock, the internees arrived at the port in three buses, accompanied by government officials. As the prisoners disembarked, they exchanged salutes with some of the spectators (*penonton*). The internees were easily recognizable, given their status as prominent activists affiliated with the Soerabaja PKI and branded as troublemakers (*kaoem peroesoeh*) by the authorities.

Among the spectators were family members, friends, relatives, and sympathizers of the Communist movement. Suddenly, a man broke through the crowd, shouting, "Long live Communists!" (*hidoeplah communist!*). The police promptly apprehended him, and shortly after, the prisoners boarded the ship. The group comprised 41 indigenous

persons, six ethnic Chinese, along with 11 accompanying women and children. On the *Rumphius*, ten soldiers led by a Dutch sergeant closely monitored the prisoners. Once all internees were on board, the crowd dispersed, reminiscent of the end of a show. Excitement and anxiety lingered in the internees' minds; they were uncertain whether—or when—they would reunite with family, friends, or comrades.

The Internees:

Occasionally, newspapers reported the names of internees based on court decisions. In the June 13, 1927 edition of *Sin Jit Po*, a typical article detailed new Digoel internees, listing nine individuals sentenced to internment along with summaries of their careers as activists. Below are a few examples (*Sin Jit Po* 1927d):

> I. Makki alias I. Mangki, 38 years old, a small-scale merchant, the chairperson of the Market Union (Passarbond) from the People's Association (SR) and PKI-related Workers Union of Ships and Sea; he was last located in Makassar.
>
> Noeroet gelar Soetan Radja Endah, 37 years old, a former surveyor of the Topography Service, member of SR, secretary of the Market Union (Passarbond) and Peasant Union (Sarekat Kaoem Tani), last located in Makassar.
>
> Pio, 22 years old, a former writing staff at Volkslectuur (Balai Poestaka), a drafter of the Workers Union of Automobile and Electronics (Sarekat Boeroe Bengkel dan Electrisch), a commissioner of SR and PKI, last located in Makassar.
>
> Ishak, 28 years of age, a former student journalist and agent of the Singer Corporation, a member of SR, secretary of the Peasant Union, Drivers Union, and Market Vendors, and propagandist of the PKI, last stationed in Makassar.
>
> Mohamad Sjahmin gelar Pandji Nagara, 26 years old, former journalist in the Department of Internal Affairs and in the resident office in Telok Betong, but later lost his job, and chairperson and propagandist of the PKI in Menggala, last located in Batavia.

All individuals listed as internees in the *Sin Jit Po* compilation were aged between 21 and 38, were actively associated with PKI-affiliated groups or labor unions, and included former government employees. Notably, the roster underscores that the majority of those banished to Digoel were PKI activists. Ironically, many of the individuals listed

were actively engaged in Makassar, where no Communist revolt occurred in 1926 or 1927, as was witnessed in West Java and West Sumatra. Nevertheless, authorities apprehended well-known PKI activists based on their professional backgrounds and history of activism. This underscores the perceived threat posed by the organization in the eyes of the Dutch East Indies government, leading to the corresponding harsh treatment of its members. Given the limited newspaper reports on non-Communist internees, readers were likely to assume that those sent to Digoel were primarily Communist activists, solidifying the notion of Tanah Merah as the designated place for "the reds" (*kaoem merah*).

Arrival:

Pewarta Deli, in its edition dated April 19, 1928, presented an account of the arrival of internees. This information was gleaned from interviews with the wives of Soerodjojo and Mohamad Ashari, who had recently returned from Digoel. The article documented their return to Semarang following the demise of their husbands, who succumbed to high fever and elephantiasis in Digoel (*Pewarta Deli* 1928b). The interviews took place in Semarang on March 26, 1928.

According to the information gathered from the two sources, the journey from Soerabaja to Makassar took two days by ship; this was followed by three days from Makassar to Ambon, and an additional six days from Ambon to Digoel. Upon arrival, newly admitted internees were typically accommodated in temporary housing referred to as the internees' camp (*interneering kamp*). During this initial period, they were encouraged to establish social connections and collaborate in the construction of their cottages.

Residents received a daily stipend of ƒ0.72, with ƒ0.32 allocated for food, leaving an additional ƒ0.40 for other necessities (*Sin Jit Po* 1927e). However, within a year the stipend allocation system changed. Another source noted that the government allocated ƒ6.30 per internee every two weeks, along with a daily stipend of ƒ0.30. The allowance was not disbursed in cash but in the form of rice and other essential provisions. This marked the commencement of the internees' new life in Digoel (*Pewarta Deli* 1928b).

Daily Life:

Once internees were acclimated to life in Digoel, their daily routines unfolded relatively smoothly. According to a letter from one of the initial groups of internees, published in *Bendera Islam* and cited by *Sin Jit Po* on August 1, 1927 (*Sin Jit Po* 1927e), the camp was organized into six living quarters, denoted as Kampoeng A, B, C, D, E, and F, with Kampoeng A serving as the central hub for all living quarters.

The food rations provided to the internees typically included rice, meat jerky, green peas, dried salted fish, brown sugar, shallots, salt, and similar staples. These daily

necessities were supplied through a government cooperative and other shops, forming part of their remuneration. Additionally, internees had the option to obtain goods from government shops using coupons. Due to the presence of ethnic Chinese among the internees, a Dutch correspondent suggested the possibility of internees establishing their own shops in the future (*Sin Jit Po* 1927a).

By mid-1928, four shops had been established and were operated by individuals not interned. Alongside the government-run cooperative, there were two shops managed by Chinese individuals from Malang (East Java) and one by an Indonesian from Makassar. These shops sourced their goods primarily from Ambon (*Pewarta Deli* 1929a).

Residents cultivated corn, long beans, radishes, Chinese cabbage, and other vegetables, though the soil conditions proved to be a challenge. Simultaneously, the living quarters began to take shape, with each quarter accommodating fewer than one hundred residents. Residents were granted the authority to elect their representative or "village head" (*kepala desa*) (*Sin Jit Po* 1927a).

Health:

Digoel residents faced significant health challenges, a matter underscored in an interview with an editor from *Algemeen Indisch Dagblad*, a Dutch newspaper based in Bandoeng. This interview, published in *Sin Jit Po* on August 17, 1927 (*Sin Jit Po* 1927f), highlighted health as a crucial concern for the Dutch authorities overseeing the Digoel project. The issue was frequently reported in both Malay-language and Dutch newspapers.

The prevalence of malaria in Digoel was a notable concern, attributed in part to a section of the internment camp being situated in a swampy area, a conducive environment for mosquitoes. By August 1927, efforts had been made to address health concerns, including the construction of a hospital for residents. Additionally, residents were provided with a daily regimen of quinine as a preventative measure against malaria. If a resident had a spouse, the government supplied two mosquito nets, and those with children could obtain necessary medicine from the polyclinic.

Over time, Digoel gradually began to offer a semblance of ordinary life for its residents. According to the aforementioned editor, some residents were reported to hold an optimistic outlook (*orang-orang jang tinggal di Boven Digoel ada harepan baek*) and even expressed satisfaction with their living conditions (*orang merasa seneng tinggal di Boven Digoel*).

Education:

In its editorial dated April 17, 1928, *Pewarta Deli* underscored the significance of education in the "town of Digoel" (Kota Digoel). Given that many internees were intellectuals,

education was a priority. Digoel featured two types of schools: the Dutch Native School (Hollandsch Inlandsche School), established by the government, and the Native School (Inlandsche School), which received support from the internees themselves (*Pewarta Deli* 1928a).

On September 5, 1928, *Pewarta Deli*'s "special correspondent" ("Speciaal Corr.") disclosed the names of teachers serving in Digoel schools. The Dutch-language school had Hermawan from Mandailing (Tapanoeli, Sumatra), Mhd. Said from Soerabaja (East Java), and Mrs. Niti Soemanteri from Soekaboemi (West Java). The Dutch school commission included Soeprodjo from Bandoeng (West Java) and Said Ali from Padang (West Sumatra), who were no longer considered internees (*Pewarta Deli* 1928c).

In 1928 two additional schools were established. The English School (Sekolah Inggeris), designed for both children and adults, was taught by J. Berani from Tapanoeli (Sumatra). The Islamic School (Sekolah Agama Islam) was founded by the Digoel Islam Association (Vereeniging Islam Digoel) and focused on Islam and Arabic. Its instructors included Dt. Batoeah, Mardjoeki, and Raoef from Padang (West Sumatra), Hadji Achmad Chatib from Banten (West Java), and Haroenalrasjid and Dasoeki from Soerakarta (Central Java) (*Pewarta Deli* 1928c). The teachers were generally Digoel internees (*Digoelisten*) and former PKI activists. Both the English and Islamic schools were self-supporting in terms of teachers and finance.

Returnees:

Typically, news coverage concerning individuals released from Digoel and returning to their hometowns was concise, straightforward, and less significant than coverage of those initially interned. The reports generally included only the names of the released individuals and their places of origin. They lacked details about the circumstances leading to their release, simply stating that the listed individuals were returning home as the authorities no longer deemed them a threat and expressed confidence in their adherence to the law (*Sin Tit Po* 1930).

Early release was typically granted to individuals found to have no involvement in politics. Instances of administrative "errors" came to light during annual discussions by the People's Council (Volksraad) on issues related to Digoel. In the late 1929 and early 1930 sessions, the council deliberated on the repatriation of innocent internees to their hometowns. It was revealed that some individuals interned in Digoel had no affiliation with the PKI or engagement with any other form of political activism. Instead, their presence in the internment camp was a result of distorted investigations conducted by local indigenous administrators (Binnenlandsche Bestuur) exploiting the opportunity to settle personal scores.

Subsequent investigations brought to light that certain innocent individuals had been exiled to Digoel due to their refusal to conform to the deference expected by local indigenous bureaucrats in accordance with feudal Javanese customs. These noncompliant individuals were unjustly labeled as Communists by officials. In response to these findings, the government mandated administrators implicated in the misuse of power to submit new reports on internees for whom there was evidence of innocence. After a year of monitoring in Digoel, thirty internees were granted permission to return home (*boleh dikembalikan ke negerinya*) as individuals wrongly banished, now recognized as free from any wrongdoing (*Pewarta Deli* 1930a).

Apolitical Digoel

In April 1928, an article in *Pewarta Deli* characterized Digoel as the most "developed" place in Indonesia (*paling ontwikkeld di Indonesia kita ini*). However, this assertion held more validity in the educational and political realms than in economic and material terms. Therefore, a more apt description of the Digoel community might be "most enlightened." The majority of internees were well educated and intelligent (*orang pandai*), demonstrating proficiency in reading and writing with an independent mindset (*kemerdekaan*) (*Pewarta Deli* 1928a). Reading constituted their primary pastime, and they were granted the liberty to request any books they desired. Additionally, they had access to both Malay-language and Dutch newspapers, provided they did not hold extreme viewpoints (*Pewarta Deli* 1928b). *Soeara Oemoem*, the nationalist newspaper based in Soerabaja and led by Dr. Soetomo, was particularly popular among the internees (*Pewarta Deli* 1938).

Administratively, Digoel demonstrated a form of "development" from the perspective of colonial management. It served as an exemplary instance of colonial self-governance, wherein the Digoelists endeavored to lead ordinary lives under decidedly abnormal circumstances. This abnormality was evident through the absence of political activities, as reported in newspaper articles and other documents pertaining to the internees' lives. The peculiarity of these circumstances becomes particularly apparent when one considers that many Digoelists were former activists deeply committed to politics, unions, and the labor movement. This abnormal condition had, in essence, become the new normal in Digoel.

The endeavor to establish a sense of normalcy significantly influenced the governance of Digoel. In practice, authorities employed two governance methods. The first involved organizing residents into categories to manage their attitudes and thought processes. The Dutch journalist Broersma, in reports dated October 12, 1928 and cited by

Aneta (*Pewarta Deli* 1928e), emphasized the need to segregate "good seeds" from "bad" ones (*perloe diadaken soeatoe perpisahan antara bibit jang baik dan bibit jang djahat*). "Bad" internees were those causing disturbances, while "good" internees included those who participated in activities such as singing "Wilhelmus," the unofficial Dutch national anthem, on August 31 and expressed remorse for their past "mistakes." This categorization mirrored the government's own practice of classifying residents based on behavior. In November 1928, the government announced in the People's Council that Digoel internees would be classified into three categories: the recalcitrants (*de onverzoenlijken*), those who complied half-heartedly (*de halfslachtingen*), and those with good intentions (*de welwillenden*) (Shiraishi 2021, 36). These categories were later recognized in the Malay language as *kaoem kiri* (leftist group), *kaoem tengah-tengah* (middle group), and *kaoem kanan* (rightist group), respectively (*Sin Jit Po* 1929). Internees in the last category were eligible for repatriation contingent on demonstrating good behavior while in Digoel.

This categorization significantly impacted the education of the internees' children. Children of *werkwillingen*, those who were willing to cooperate with governance, were permitted to attend the standard school, in this case, the Dutch Native School, which received government subsidies.[5] This school, with two government-hired teachers and eighty pupils, carried out instruction in Dutch. In contrast, the colonial authorities did not establish a school for the children of "recalcitrants," those unwilling to cooperate with the authorities. Instead, these residents established their own schools with government permission and operated under government supervision.

Another method of governance involved the establishment of robust administrative units. Maintaining order and harmony at Digoel necessitated active cooperation from the internees themselves. The ideal form of government was one that was self-sustaining. While some individuals were identified as "revolutionaries" (*revolutionair*), those who refused to cooperate with the authorities, a significant number of former Communists underwent a change of allegiance, assuming roles as pseudo-government officials (*Pewarta Deli* 1930b). In Kampoeng A, for example, the internees Gondhojoewono served as the "village representative," Ngadiran as an officer (*rechercheur*), and Soedibjo as a spy (*spion*). They collaborated closely with the Dutch controller of Digoel, Monsou, and were frequently invited to his house for social events. They even submitted a petition to the governor-general urging that Controller Monsou not be transferred when his term

5) *De werkwillingen* were those who performed paid services for the administration—such as police officers, teachers, nurses, and all salaried workers. *De zogenaamde naturalisten* were those who refused to perform labor for the government, whether on principle or due to considerations related to opportunity (Soetan Sjahrir 1960, 52–53).

ended (*Pewarta Deli* 1930c).

On September 29, 1928, authorities introduced a neighborhood watch system called "the guardian of order and peace" (*Rust en orde bewaarder*, or "R.O.B."). The guards, dressed in yellow jackets with neckties and "R.O.B." badges, had a multifaceted role. First, they ensured compliance with the ban on gatherings where politics and governmental regulations were discussed. Second, they engaged in propaganda dissemination to foster greater cooperation with the government. Last, they informed residents about the conditions for repatriation, emphasizing adherence to rules and petitioning for the governor-general's pardon.

Individuals who refused to cooperate were branded as unrepentant and steadfast in their adherence to Communist ideals. The most radical among them were segregated in South Digoel, where living conditions were considerably worse than in the "developed" North Digoel. These internees were frequently characterized as "bad people" (*orang djahat*) and deemed ignorant (*bodoh*), drawing comparisons to the indigenous Papoean tribes, insinuating their deservingness of relocation. The authorities faced embarrassment as the number of "bad people" increased over time, reaching nearly a hundred according to government statistics. The management of this undesirable and unexpected trend became a sensitive issue for the authorities and their collaborators.

The presence of "bad people" and their associates posed significant challenges for the internees who had become collaborators with the government. During a meeting with the assistant resident from Ambon, Gondhojoewono, the representative of Kampoeng A, raised a concern related to the dependents of the internees. Specifically, the issue involved the practice of repatriating female residents to their hometowns. Gondhojoewono highlighted that some female residents arrived in Digoel with the status of being associated with a Communist and subsequently developed an interest in and acquired knowledge about Communism. As a result, he opposed the idea of allowing them to return home (or leave at their discretion), fearing that they would disseminate Communist ideas in their hometowns. In demonstrating his reformed stance on Communism, Gondhojoewono showcased his concern for containing the influence of Communism not only within Digoel but also beyond its confines.

However, the assistant resident responded somewhat indifferently, stating that government policy permitted female residents who had chosen to accompany their husband or father to leave at their own discretion, on the sole condition that they would not be allowed to return to Digoel. This response from the assistant resident suggests that at this juncture the Dutch East Indies government may have been less apprehensive about the proliferation of Communism in Java. Communism, once a major threat to colonial rule, seemed to have transformed into a relatively insignificant issue confined to the

remote setting of Digoel.

Individuals who aligned with the government were referred to as "rightists" (*orang "kanan"*) by their fellow Digoelists. In an interview with the reporter "F.A." published in *Pewarta Deli* on July 21, 1930, Hasanoesi, an internee (*seorang geinterneerde*) then hospitalized outside Digoel due to a severe illness, compiled a list of collaborators. Some of these collaborators were previously prominent activists and leaders of PKI-related organizations, frequently mentioned in newspapers and political gatherings and thus widely recognizable. Hasanoesi's list included 14 collaborators:

1. Gondhojoewono from Semarang (the representative of Kampoeng A)
2. Soeprodjo from Bandoeng
3. Soekindar from Semarang
4. H.S.S. Parpatieh from Padang
5. Prapto from Semarang
6. Ngadiran (the officer) from Malang
7. Abdoel Karim from Langsa
8. Soendag from Ternate
9. Moeh. Sanoesi from Bandoeng
10. Mardjohan from Semarang
11. Mochtar Balok from Padang
12. Niti Soemantri from Bandoeng
13. Ngilman from Bantam
14. Soediono (the spy) from Soerabaja

In addition to revealing these names, Hasanoesi advised Communist activists to select their leaders judiciously so as to avoid ending up with false leaders who might betray their comrades. According to Hasanoesi, the 14 former Communists were now primarily seeking their own comfort, and their change of allegiance had contributed to the success of the government project in Digoel (*Pewarta Deli* 1930d).

Conclusion

This article delves into the political dimensions of the Digoel project, specifically examining the concealed messages that were disseminated by the colonial regime through news coverage of the camp and aimed at depoliticizing political activism. The disclosure of the lives of internees in Digoel did not necessarily instill fear among Indonesians,

though political activists might have interpreted a different narrative. Many readers expressed eagerness to follow accounts related to Digoel. The colonial authorities had specific motives in utilizing the news media to promote the Digoel project. Readers of Malay-language newspapers became acquainted with the perceived normalcy in Digoel, as the routine daily lives of internees—individuals ostensibly banished from public view—were extensively reported on, including intimate details. This coverage allowed readers to closely monitor the expansion and development of Digoel, possibly even more attentively than the developments unfolding in their immediate communities. The internment camp emerged as a prominent topic for consumers of print media.

The evolution of Digoel as a significant colonial undertaking was remarkable. There was a rapid increase in the number of internees in the initial three years after the camp's establishment, reaching 1,308 individuals in May 1930 (Kwantes 1981, 463). However, thereafter the numbers underwent a substantial decline. In January 1931 the resident count was 1,178, a number that dropped further to 793 by January 1932 and 553 by January 1933. By January 1934, the population had dwindled to a mere 440 residents, less than one-third of the peak population recorded (Kwantes 1982, 468–469).

In 1928 Dr. Soetomo, the prominent nationalist leader who established the political party Union of the Indonesian Nations (Persatoean Bangsa Indonesia) in 1930, projected that an increasing influx of individuals to Digoel would strengthen the Communist movement ("*Semakin banjak orang jang dikirim ke Digoel, pergerakan semakin tambah-tambah koeat*") (*Pewarta Deli* 1928d). Contrary to this expectation, the Communist movement lost momentum over time. As a result, newspapers also appeared to lose interest in covering Digoel. For instance, *Sin Jit Po* covered Digoel 21 times in 1927 but only twice in 1930. Nevertheless, the diminishing number of internees and news reports did not diminish the overall impact of the Digoel project. In the initial years, reports in mass publications regarding the internment camp were crucial in contributing to the project's success. The intensive reporting on Digoel by newspapers between 1927 and 1930 played a pivotal role in shaping the image and discourse surrounding this artificial community.

The political purpose of journalistic portrayals of the Digoel project was to instruct the general public. While reports on Digoel served as a deterrent for potential agitators, they also presented the camp as an exemplary model of a well-governed and self-sufficient community that the broader Dutch East Indies colony could emulate. Furthermore, Digoel was conceived as an inescapable destination for political offenders. The ideal colonial project operated based on principles of stringent surveillance, betrayal, and mutual scrutiny.

In Digoel, as well as in the rest of colonial Indonesia in the 1930s (Yamamoto 2019;

Shiraishi 2021), no mobilization politics were permitted to emerge. This message was clearly comprehended by activists and general readers alike. Even Soekarno himself grasped the message, which prompted him to take the risk of writing a letter seeking clemency from the prosecutor general, jeopardizing his reputation. He understood that political actions carried consequences, and that as long as he adhered to colonial law and order and behaved as a *goed* (good; *baek* in Indonesian) citizen, he would not be deemed a threat. Soekarno attempted to protect himself from being sent to Digoel by pledging to withdraw from political life. As the fear of indefinite exile in Digoel reshaped Soekarno's political intentions, the Digoel project effectively compromised his idealism and activism.

Accepted: October 15, 2024

Acknowledgements

Elizabeth Chandra and the anonymous reviewer provided constructive comments on the manuscript, and I am grateful for their feedback.

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Festivals in a Time of War: *Pasar Malam* in Japanese-Occupied Indonesia

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The advent of World War II in 1940 and the occupation of the Indies by the Japanese military for almost three and a half years were great shocks to residents of the Indies and brought about innumerable changes. However, the commonly reproduced cartoonish image of a nation uniformly suffering under the yoke of arbitrary Japanese military overlords from 1942 to 1945 was not particularly apt. The beloved Indonesian *pasar malam* festival is assumed to have vanished during the wartime years, as has been explicitly claimed in the case of the Pasar Malam Gambir. In fact, while somewhat unstable during the wartime years, the institution of the *pasar malam* never really disappeared, and 1943 could even be described as the "Year of the Festival" due to the relatively high visibility of *pasar malam* around Indonesia. Examinations of newspaper articles and published programs help to show how these festivals continued to be socially, economically, and even administratively important in somewhat new ways, foreshadowing postwar changes.

Keywords: *pasar malam*, Japanese occupation, Indonesia, propaganda, entertainment

In Indonesia, a traditional event called a *pasar malam* (night market) has been organized annually in many locales, reportedly since the early nineteenth century. Although it is called a night market, it is neither a market nor open exclusively at night. Still, money does change hands. Developing in parallel with the world's fairs of Western countries in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Rydell 1984; Mitchell 1991; Bloembergen 2006) and even Japan (Ruoff 2010), it is a large-scale festival blending enlightening exhibitions, entertainment and activities, and cafes and restaurants. Gradually developing over time—like Dutch colonialism itself—the *pasar malam* came into its own in the early twentieth century, displaying the marvels of the modern Western world. Along with it came other kinds of exhibitions, the most extensive being the international Semarang Koloniale Tentoonstelling (Colonial Exhibition) of 1914, which could be compared to some world's fairs (see Heel 1916 and various issues of the local daily *De Locomotief* from

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1914). The Semarang Colonial Exhibition welcomed 677,266 visitors and included pavilions from Australia, China, Formosa (Taiwan), and Japan in addition to those of Indonesian regions and a number of large companies. There were also professional exhibitions held in Indonesia, like the Rubber Exhibition at the International Rubber Congress in Batavia (Jakarta) in October 1914, but such professional exhibitions had very different audiences than the *pasar malam*. Most *pasar malam* were local affairs with large popular audiences seeking entertainment.

Organization of a large-scale event was both complicated and costly; while an organizing committee could easily be formed, some form of support from both government and business was almost always essential. The interests of those institutions were essential and likely to run counter to the popular expectations of entertainment. Each *pasar malam* was thus a unique blend of what could be assembled given the specific kinds of support offered by interested parties and the particular local context.

During the final decades of the Dutch colonial era, the government in the colonial capital played a central role in holding an annual *pasar malam* in Batavia for about two weeks before and after the queen's birthday on August 31. One of the major festivals in Indonesia, the Pasar Malam Gambir was not held in 1940 or 1941, due to the war in Europe and the occupation of the Netherlands. Smaller, more irregularly scheduled *pasar malam*, however, still were held throughout the colony. Chinese organizations, for example, held numerous small *pasar malam* as fundraisers for charities. For example, in October 1941 a *pasar malam* was held in Surabaya, Java's second-largest city. Despite taking place two months before the eruption of the Pacific War and the Netherlands East Indies' declaration of war on Japan, 50 percent of its proceeds were donated to the war fund, 25 percent to the ambulance fund, and 25 percent to Chinese charities. The native Indonesian political party Parindra's affiliated organization Roekoen Tani (Farmers' Association) also held a *pasar malam* and agricultural exhibition in Paree (Kediri) to coincide with its congress in October 1941 (*De Indische Courant*, September 20, 1941).

The long-anticipated war reached Indonesia in December 1941 with the Netherlands East Indies' declaration of war. After only three months, on March 9, 1942, the Dutch surrendered to the Imperial Japanese Armed Forces. With the complete occupation of Indonesia and establishment of three regional military administrations, both the Japanese military administration and Indonesian society began to change at a dizzying pace. A contradictory blend of the convenient status quo and ideologically essential radical change initially appeared. Even as all sides were still making adjustments, *pasar malam* began to appear throughout the areas of Java controlled by the 16th Army.

These festivals, like virtually anything that could be construed as positive or pleasant during the Japanese occupation, have been systematically forgotten, at least in public

discourse. In the context of the struggle against the returning Dutch or within the sphere of domestic politics, collaboration—or even the perception of benefiting from the Japanese occupation—was dangerous to individuals and the Republic itself. One of the very few passing references to *pasar malam* can be found in a short article on the Nippon Eigasha Jakarta Studio in a massive 700-page encyclopedia on the war in Indonesia (Okada 2010, 367; Post 2010). The very existence of *pasar malam* begs examination and explanation about their content and functions in wartime Indonesia under Japanese military administrations.

Early Wartime Festivals

While it is far from certain that this was the first held after the Japanese arrived, a *pasar malam* was held in Bandung beginning on August 1, 1942; this festival was visited by high-level Japanese officials and reported about in the local Indonesian press. During the next several months, additional *pasar malam* were held in numerous cities and towns on Java, including in Jogjakarta and Semarang in October.

The Bandung *pasar malam* of 1942 was an important event for the Japanese occupation, and the cover of the program booklet proudly states that it was produced by the Barisan Propaganda (Propaganda Front) of the Japanese government with the assistance of the City of Bandung. The opening ceremony was held on August 1, around 6 p.m. Local clocks had been adjusted 90 minutes ahead to Tokyo time on March 27, 1942, meaning that it was still quite light. Both Indonesian and Japanese attendees at the opening ceremony, sitting in rows of sturdy wooden chairs, seemed very relaxed and familiar with the activities and with each other. The speakers stood on the lawn in front of one of the pavilions, surrounded on three sides by the audience.

According to the extremely succinct opening speech by Yokoyama Ryuichi, a prominent cartoonist who represented the Propaganda Section, the purpose of the *pasar malam* was to provide residents a broad perspective on original arts and culture as well as the Indonesian economy in particular and Asia's economy in general. The Dutch- and German-educated mayor of Bandung, Raden A. Atmadinata,[1)] immediately expanded on this theme more enthusiastically, explaining the importance of *pasar malam* for the economy, because people could understand crops and handicrafts of various regions; this provided a kind of map for trade—where goods could be found and where products might be sent. At the same time, the games and cultural performances would not only entertain

1) Raden Atmadinata was also chair of the Bandung-based Nederlandsch-Indische Jaarbeurs (Netherlands-Indies Annual Market) for 1942 (*Regeerings-almanak* 1942, 627; Djawa Gunseikanbu 1944), so it is very likely that he was then the chair of the organizing committee for the *pasar malam*.

but also help plant the seeds of love for the national culture and arts (Pasar Malam Ra'jat Bandoeng 1942).

While an Indonesian-language program was printed, coverage of the Bandung *pasar malam* in the press provides a relatively good sense of what the administration wanted to emphasize. Military officials toured the various exhibits, and photographs were printed in the Indonesian weekly magazine *Pandji Poestaka* one week after the opening ceremony, helping to show some of the exhibits as well as the participation and approval of the Japanese officials. The cover of that issue, of necessity striving to appeal to local people, shows the opening gate with masses of people milling around, flags and loudspeakers on poles, and even a Ferris wheel in the background. The photographs of the opening ceremony clearly show the pavilion of the Body for Information about Woven Cloth, while other pictures show the Nippon Kan with its "beautiful pictures" of nature and also of the Pacific War. Military officials are shown touring the national publisher Balai Poestaka's display with its reading materials for the public, the Nippon Kan with its pictures on the outside wall, and an agricultural section showing local agricultural methods.

The *pasar malam* apparently met with the approval of both Japanese military officials and the Indonesian community, as it was extended five days, from August 19 to 23, and a flyer was printed to supplement the printed catalog.[2] This flyer is also instructive in showing the daily events that made the *pasar malam* important. Tickets were sold only from 6 p.m., and entry was allowed from 7 p.m. except on Sunday, when it was open from 1 p.m. Performances of stories such as "Tengkorak" (Skulls), "Mantoe Prijijai" (Aristocratic son-in-law), "Oelar jang Tjantik" (Beautiful snake), and "Dasima" were performed by the Opera Moulin Rouge Revue every day. Most of these stories were well-known from prewar novelettes and even films. One of two traditional historical drama troupes (*ketoprak*) performed every day, while Cabaret Miss Mimi performed various dances from around Indonesia and the world daily. There were also *wayang golek* performances by Dalang Atmadja, and of course music of various kinds, including Angklung Garut, which had toured in Japan, and sports such as boxing.

The other *pasar malam* of significance in 1942 was the Jakarta "Pasar Malam Gambir," which had been canceled for two years (Pemandangan di Pasar Malam 1942). Beginning on September 3, 1942, on a somewhat reduced scale, the *pasar malam* was officially held to commemorate six months of Japanese occupation, and the Japanese army probably hoped to follow its slogan of "grabbing the hearts of the people" in an attempt to get closer to the Indonesian people. This *pasar malam* included Japanese industry and

2) "Programa Pasar Malem, Samboengan dari tanggal 19 sampai 23 Hachigatsu 2602" [*Pasar malam* program, continued from August 19 to 23, 1942] (Bandung: Barisan Propaganda Dai Nippon, Bandoeng Syakuseo). Thanks are due to Heri Waluyanto for showing me this flyer.

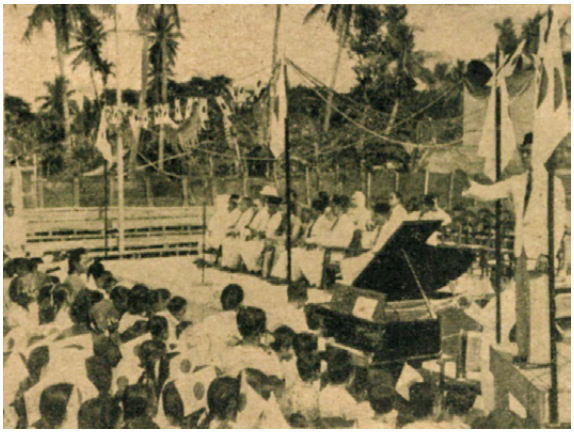

Fig. 1 Making Children Happy in the Jakarta *Pasar Malam* of 1942 (*Pandji Poestaka* 20[24] [1942]: 835)

military equipment, a special building focusing on social affairs sponsored by the city government, a special handicraft room with weaving, wood products, sea products, *jamu* (traditional medicine) stands, *keroncong*[3] singing, and sports such as wrestling—even though there was a major sports festival during the same period.

As noted in a critical discussion of a crowded exhibition of paintings by Indonesian artists, the *pasar malam* was also a place to have fun (St. 1942, 848), not to think or seriously consider things. The Jakarta *pasar malam* was held close to the traditional time in early September (September 3–13, 1942). One of the featured activities was singing songs, and children were the focus in at least one event, led by the composer Koesbini and with various VIPs like Deputy Mayor H. Dachlan Abdoellah and the chair of the *pasar malam* organizing committee sitting on the dais listening to the children sing. During the next year, high-profile *pasar malam* were the rage, serving a special role in the political economy of mass mobilization.

Smaller festivities were held throughout Java for other occasions, such as Meiji-Setsu, a celebration of the nineteenth-century Meiji emperor's birthday on November 3. One such event was in Surakarta (Solo), where a four-day celebration was held between November 1 and 4, 1942 (Komite Perajaän 1942). The first day merely had an opening speech by the chair of the organizing committee, Mr. K. R. M. T. Wongsonagoro, on the Solo radio station at 8:45 p.m. Each day there were music performances, films, as well as various traditional performances such as Golek Mataram, *wayang orang*, and *ketoprak*. On the third day, twenty-five thousand schoolchildren collected at their schools and then

3) A hybrid form of music popular in Indonesia in the early twentieth century

Fig. 2 The Japanese-Style Gate of the *Pasar Malam* in Modjokuto, East Java, in September 1942 (*Pandji Poestaka* 20[24]: 839)

went to designated locations for ceremonies. There were also some sports activities on the third and fourth days. Most—or possibly all—of these activities and performances were free and held at preexisting facilities throughout the city center.

June–October 1943 Festivals

On June 16, 1943, Japanese Prime Minister Tojo Hideki announced that Indonesians would be allowed to participate more in government, albeit gradually. It was a relatively peaceful period of the war, at least in western Indonesia. Plans for *pasar malam* were already in motion in various places, including Jakarta. The *pasar malam* in Jakarta was scheduled to be held daily from 10 a.m. to 11 p.m. from June 25 to July 15 (21 days). In colonial times, the *pasar malam* was held in late August and early September for two weeks and one day to celebrate Queen Wilhelmina's birthday. The Japanese daily *Jawa Shinbun* (June 24, 1943) published eight photographs in a set of articles under the heading "*Pasar Malam* Opens Tomorrow" showing some of the Rakutenchi (former Prinsenpark) festival grounds. The 1943 *pasar malam* grounds occupied nearly twice the area of the previous year.[4)]

4) While Japanese-language sources stated the area of the 1943 grounds was 70,000 *tsubo* (1 *tsubo* equals approximately 3.3 m^2, thus approximately 231,000 m^2), the Indonesian-language text of *Djawa Baroe* stated it was 70,000 m^2 (thus 21,212 *tsubo*). As *Jawa Shinbun* also states that the previous year occupied 36,000 *tsubo*, *tsubo* is probably the correct unit (*Jawa Shinbun*, June 24, 1943; Djawa Baroe 1943).

Under the leadership of the large construction company Obayashi Corporation, a number of new pavilions had been built, older pavilions renovated, and new decorations created with a large budget (*Jawa Shinbun*, June 24, 1943).[5] Some of these buildings were the New Java Industrial Hall, Japan Industry Hall, and Poetera Hall. Poetera stood for Poesat Tenaga Ra'jat, or Center for the People's Power, and was the mass organization of the time which the military administration hoped would help promote cooperation with the administration in labor recruitment and other affairs; Poetera allowed Indonesian nationalists to reach a large public on Java. In addition to the pavilions intended to enlighten visitors, such as a building for the Assembly of the People's Forces formed in January, the Health Hall, and the Photo Gallery, there was also an athletic stadium, a music hall, a theater, a movie theater, an aquarium, a cafeteria, and a shop. At the Japan Industry Hall, products from twenty companies such as textiles, electrical products, oil, rubber, and beer were displayed, while in a photo exhibition the Japanese newspaper *Asahi Shinbun* exhibited 108 photos introducing Japan, providing an opportunity for visitors to learn about the country. The Poetera Hall also provided support for war and the Fatherland Defense Volunteer Army. The Bintang Surabaya Theater Company, the Bintang Jakarta Theater Company, and Miss Tjitjih's Theater Company performed regularly in addition to various Javanese entertainers, including theater troupes, traditional dancers, gamelan ensembles, and martial arts specialists from West Java. There were also performances such as Javanese shadow puppet plays (*wayang kulit*) and *benjang*, which was described as a mix of Indonesian *pencak* martial arts, American wrestling, sumo, and jujutsu (*Jawa Shinbun*, June 24, 1943; *Pembangoen*, July 3, 1943; Nippon Eigasha Djawa 1943a). In short, there was a wide range of events that combined enlightening activities and entertainment, information about Japanese society, and a display of Indonesian culture. It was a celebration.

All things were not equal at the fair, however. While there was an entry fee, many of the performances had additional fees, which would have made it difficult for many children and poorer people to attend. Other parts of the fair were free, and gamelan was played on a tower, allowing everyone to hear the music. Most free things were in "educational" sections with photographs or displays intended to educate the visitor, although that was not necessarily seen as bad. *Asia Raya* (July 14, 1943) called attention to one such free educational item: the "Poetera" Agricultural Quiz, which could be entered with a postcard and with prizes of *f*10–25 paid for by *Asia Raya*, *f*5–7.5 paid for by another Jakarta daily, *Pembangoen*, and *f*2.5 paid for by Poetera itself. Additionally, there were exhibitions and descriptions of medical supplies that could be made locally

5) The total cost was listed as ¥XX0,000, a vague but not entirely meaningless figure.

Fig. 3 The Gamelan Music Platform (*Pandji Poestaka* 21[20/21] [1942/1943]: 763)

(one was described in detail in the newspaper), information related to aquafarming, and explanations related to the production of soap for personal use. All of these provided educational, economic, and perhaps other social benefits to attendees.

A Sundanese commentator writing in *Pandji Poestaka* as a "grandfather" described the crowded atmosphere on the opening night, where he was dragged against his will, and expressed his excitement about the peaceful "Eastern" atmosphere. However, he lamented that some of his "grandchildren" did not take advantage of the opportunity to learn, as there were handicrafts that could replace many foreign goods that could not be obtained any more—although in his opinion tennis balls were still a problem as he was crazy about tennis. He resolved to not push his grandchildren anymore, or they would not even give him a cup of coffee (Aki Pangebon 1943, 762). This humorous article was perhaps the strongest statement of the organizing and sponsoring elites, as the author claimed that the whole purpose of going to the *pasar malam* was really to see things that could provide financial or other real benefits to the fairgoer.

The *pasar malam* was meant to draw as many people as possible. Special streetcar and bus services were provided to and from various parts of the city, as well as to and from the major train stations, until midnight. Traffic around the fairgrounds was subject to special restrictions. The entrance fee was 10 cents for Indonesian adults and 5 cents for Indonesian children, but double for Japanese, Arabs, Chinese, Indians, and other

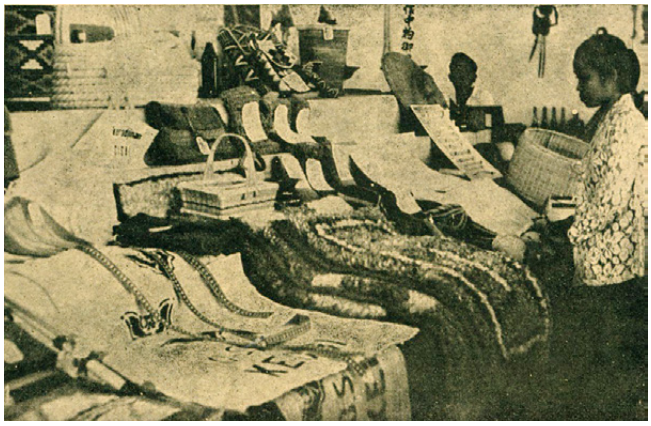

Fig. 4 Local Handicrafts at the Pasar Malam Jakarta in 1943 (*Pandji Poestaka* 21[20/21] [1942/1943]: 764)

Fig. 5 The Pasar Malam Jakarta (小野佐世男ジヤワ従軍画譜 1945)

ethnic groups. On July 4, between 12 noon and 2 p.m., all performances were free in order to provide an opportunity for students, soldiers, and the poor. This special occasion drew more than ten thousand people during the day, which was very unusual (*Pembangoen*, July 3, 1943; July 5, 1943). Other times, in addition to entry tickets there were performances and activities with additional charges. About four hundred thousand people visited the event over the 21 days, the proceeds were donated to charity, and the *pasar malam* was declared a success. Naturally, some of the information that the Japanese

military administration (including Indonesian civil servants) wanted disseminated would have reached many of the attendees.

More than any photograph could, the Japanese illustrator Ono Saseo, who spent the entire war attached to the Propaganda Section of the 16th Army on Java, captured the atmosphere of chaotic merriment, with men, women, and children crowded into the area, each doing their own thing: children walking hand in hand with parents; mothers bending over their reluctant children; squatting children; as well as adults talking, walking, or looking around. The illustrations also show balloons, a Ferris wheel, and other activities fading into the distance, and a large banner reading "Djakarta." Taken in this context, pictures of stage plays (*sandiwara*), dancing, and the night scenery in the popular semi-bilingual magazine *Djawa Baroe* are more meaningful.

The Pasar Malam Jakarta of 1943 was important enough to be covered in a significant newsreel story (Nippon Eigasha Djawa 1943a) emphasizing the goal of defeating the enemy and showing that this *pasar malam* was better than those of previous years. The newsreel story showed the making of thread, an aquarium, agricultural products, the Poetera Hall, handicrafts of the women's section, agricultural methods, the merry-go-round, and the general scenery of the *pasar malam*. Interestingly, there was a short section showing the health section with a clinic, which included both a mock display and apparently real doctors and nurses examining and treating a patient.

During the course of the *pasar malam*, on July 7, Japanese Prime Minister Tojo arrived in Jakarta for a brief visit to Java during his trip through Southeast Asia, returning to Tokyo by July 12. His visits to schools, reception by the public on the road to and from the airport, meetings with local VIPs, and public addresses to large groups of Indonesians had a significant impact. The special issues of *Pandji Poestaka* and *Djawa Baroe* at the time mixed extended coverage of the prime minister's activities and various important people's reactions to his visit on the one hand with the *pasar malam* on the other, creating what must have been an exciting atmosphere for many. Things were happening in peaceful wartime Java. Two weeks after the fair, the large port city on the other end of Java, Surabaya, was bombed by the Allies for the first time, bringing the war a little closer.

Pasar malam were still held in various other places in the same year, giving the illusion that life in Indonesia had returned to normal. Bandung held a *pasar malam* in July, while Malang in East Java also held a fair and published a catalog. Extant pamphlets reveal war slogans along with the color-printed advertisements and cultural performance schedules. The war was there.

One of the *pasar malam* later in the year was in Semarang, the large port city in north-central Java. This *pasar malam* was held on October 1–24, coinciding with the Muslim Lebaran (Idul Fitri) holiday at the end of the fasting month. As with *pasar malam*

Fig. 6 Program Booklet, Semarang Pasar Malam, 1943

in other areas, the date of the Semarang event seems to have been consciously set in a different time frame than in the colonial past. In 1934 it had been held from July 24 to August 12.

With a large rising sun casting warm red light everywhere and a mixed Indonesian- and Chinese-style building graced with Japanese flags on the cover, a program booklet provided detailed information about the schedule and organization of the *pasar malam*. This booklet indicated that the event's purpose was to help defeat the Allies, and so the familiar slogan "Amerika kita setrika, Inggris kita linggis" (America we will flatten with an iron, England we will beat with a crowbar) was written in red letters at the bottom of each page. There was a special section on the "Planned Efforts to Defeat the Allies and Defend [Our] Homeland in the Pasar Malam Semarang," listing speeches, comedy contests, and plays (p. 11) as well as poster and painting contests, slogan contests, and singing (p. 13). This was listed separately from the general program. Naturally, it was noted that the proceeds were to go to charities, as was common for most *pasar malam*.

Like in other program booklets, a large section was devoted to advertisements—in this case mixed throughout the book, but with more in the final sections. These could be very important in disseminating information about available products and services. Poetera was a major sponsor of the Semarang Pasar Malam, and the purposes and structure of both the main Java-wide organization and the Semarang area branch were presented. There was a section on health written by Dr. R. Soedjono Djoned Poesponegoro

(*Boekoe Programa Pasar Malam Semarang*, pp. 33, 35) focusing on a few points to ensure good health. These addressed issues related to pregnant women, babies and children, food, cleanliness of the body and home, the importance of physical activity for health, and vaccinations. There was also a section on freshwater aquaculture by Moerdoko (pp. 37, 29) that described the characteristics and advantages of seven types of fish, increasing interest in the *pasar malam* aquaculture displays before the opening date. The final fish described was *ikan Moedjair* (*Tilapia zillii*), which had the potential benefit of helping to eliminate malarial mosquitos in some areas. Named after the Indonesian who first cultivated it, this fish was widely promoted during the war (*Perihal Ikan-Moedjair* 1945).

Sulawesi 1943

Java was not the only site of *pasar malam* held during the war, or even just in 1943. In Sulawesi, local governments and prominent residents actively organized festivals that seemed largely to be in line with Japanese administrative expectations. With the official holiday for the Japanese emperor's birthday (April 29), Tenchōsetsu, approaching, a committee in Bone began to plan a three-day *pasar malam*, with daytime activities on those days (*Pewarta Selebes* [Makassar], March 11, 1943). Another *pasar malam* in Majene was scheduled for the next month. Around March 16, planning began for a large *pasar malam* in Bantaeng to be held in Lembangtjina/Bantaeng between April 24 and May 2, 1943 (*Pewarta Selebes* [Makassar], March 16, 1943). Bantaeng was a particularly important symbolic location, as it had been the site of a major battle in 1942.

Makassar also held a *pasar malam* in October 1943 for two weeks at its normal time. Film crews were on hand to record events for *Berita Film di Djawa* (Film news in Java), and a short segment made it to the Java newsreels in Indonesian and Japanese (Nippon Eigasha Djawa 1943b)—although with musical background unrelated to Makassar. The buildings shown in the film were made of local materials with thatched roofs rather than modern buildings like in the festivals on Java. Traditional dances that might appeal to distant audiences, as well as scenes of crowded audiences, were filmed for the news. Local newspapers presented the *pasar malam* very differently, showing badminton competitions and people looking at pictures in the Nippon Hall (*Pewarta Selebes* [Makassar], October 11, 1943). Boxing, basketball, and *keroncong* music were to close the 15-day *pasar malam*, which was extended for another two days. Besides boxing and *sandiwara* plays, the local newspaper discussed the competition among *goen* (administrative districts) for a prize awarded to the best agricultural products, and a whole range of similar activities.

Only a few days after the Makassar fair closed on October 17, the Goa *pasar malam*

Fig. 7 Badminton at the Makassar Public *Pasar Malam*, 1943 (*Pewarta Selebes* [Makassar], October 11, 1943)

opened on October 20, 1943, about 50 km away (*Pewarta Selebes*, October 20, 1943).

A Shift in Atmosphere

The year 1944 seems to have brought a shift in the mood of the military administration, at least on Java, and along with that a shift in the mood of society. The desperation of the war situation for Japan could be felt in the urgency with which everything was—at least *pro forma*—directed toward the collective goal: the defeat of enemies, ultimate victory of Japan, and creation of a new Asia under Japanese leadership. While war occupied a greater percentage of newspaper content as the size and number of pages decreased due to paper shortages, shortages of food, clothing, medicine, and other goods developed to different degrees throughout Java, which also changed the general atmosphere.

By August 1943, the long-running magazine *Pandji Poestaka* had shifted to war-related images for its covers. These were often images of soldiers or civilians in military support roles, though there were periodic breaks with pictures of agriculture, children, or sports. The other major magazine published in Jakarta, the highly illustrated *Djawa Baroe*, did not fully switch to war-related images until around October 1944. However, this was part of a gradual shift during 1944 in imagery and mood, and naturally *pasar malam* were involved in this shift.

Pasar Malam in 1944

On September 7, 1944, the government of Japanese Prime Minister Koiso Kuniaki announced in the 85th Teikoku Gikai (Imperial Diet) session that Japan would grant Indonesia its independence in the future. A range of spontaneous as well as carefully calculated reactions and expressions of both joy and appreciation appeared throughout Java. On September 8, 1944, the head of the military administration on Java, the Saikō Shikikan, officially declared that the Indonesian flag was to be used alongside the Japanese flag and that the song "Indonesia Raya" was now recognized as the national anthem. On September 17, 1944, September 7 was declared "Indonesian Independence Promise Day."

In Jogjakarta, a decision was made to hold a *pasar malam* in October in the hope that residents would be filled with joy "because there is indeed reason to be joyful" (Panitya Pasar Malam 1944, 1). The printed program contained the *pasar malam* committee's explanation, followed by the national anthem—"Indonesia Raya" (p. 2)—an explanation from Prime Minister Koiso about Indonesian independence (p. 3), an explanation about official policies for the use of the national anthems and national flags (pp. 4–6), descriptions of the Central Javanese "princes" meeting with the Saikō Shikikan (pp. 7–8), and a statement by Sukarno and the fifth meeting of the Chuo Sangi In (the consultative body on Java). Finally, the leaders and main members of the *pasar malam* committee and the twenty subcommittees were listed, and the air raid procedures were explained. Only on pages 21–23 was the schedule explained. Following that were more essays on the steps toward independence, the constructive efforts of the *pasar malam*, and explanations about animal husbandry (especially chickens) and the issuance of clothes in the Jogjakarta area. The remainder of the 77-page booklet was made up of advertisements.

The tone of the booklet conveyed a restrained, mature, serious celebration. That this was a celebration is clearest from the daily scheduled performances of *sandiwara* dramas, *wayang orang*, *wayang potehi* Indonesia,[6] and music. Sports such as soccer, kendo, boxing, sumo, and wrestling occupied multiple days, but *kroncong* singing occupied the final slot, closing out the 15-day fair.

Similar celebrations were organized throughout Java, although the timing and extent of the celebrations varied. Not all were designed as *pasar malam*; in fact, some preceded Koiso's announcement. Pekalongan, a coastal city west of Semarang, had held its third annual Pasar Malam Kesenian (Cultural *pasar malam*) from July 22 to August 6. This *pasar malam* was "protected" by the Japanese regional head and assisted by the Barisan

6) A form of traditional Chinese puppetry

Propaganda of the Japanese Army. In fact, the social calendar on Java was quite packed with activities, including health campaigns, sports activities, and in December a celebration of the start of the war.

Areas outside of Java were somewhat different, as the war situation continued to worsen. *Pasar malam* continued to be held in Sulawesi, and in September–October 1944 the second page of the *Pewarta Selebes* almost always mentioned either events at the Makassar Pasar Malam Oemoem or the *pasar malam* scheduled for other regional towns in South Sulawesi. Along with these was explicit reference to the promise of independence, but it is not clear whether the *pasar malam* were explicitly designed in that context.

Conclusion

While far from complete, the descriptions that appear in wartime materials offer a picture of the *pasar malam* during the Japanese occupation as sites of entertainment and enjoyment for the public. These festivals were almost certainly larger, longer, and more common in the first two years of the war, when goods were a little easier to obtain and there was less of a foreboding feeling brought on by the encroaching Allies and the battles gradually approaching Japan and even Java. However, their presence throughout the wartime period and changing forms provides an opportunity to reconsider the places and functions of *pasar malam*, to consider changes over time, and to remember that in the end, life went on for the residents of Indonesia.

We have seen that often *pasar malam* appeared to be either charity events or responses to Tojo's promise of greater political participation or Koiso's promise of Indonesian independence. These "spontaneous" Indonesian responses must be viewed critically, but not entirely cynically, as everyone knew that such promises were never offered by the Dutch, nor had Japanese offered them earlier, though the Philippines and Burma had obtained a form of independence. It seems reasonable to expect that over two years the Indonesians and Japanese had learned to play a game together, and that the Indonesians knew it was important to respond positively, if only to ensure future benefits, and the Japanese knew that knowledge of such promises needed to be spread around. That was probably not difficult, as events like the 1942 Pasar Malam Bandung opening ceremony showed that Indonesian officials could be more serious about producing "real" economic results than Japanese.

More broadly, it seems that a culture that emphasized a serious purpose for everything was being created during the Japanese occupation, through the *pasar malam* and

other activities. Publications blended into *pasar malam* promoted new forms of agriculture and aquaculture, whether for health reasons (eliminating breeding grounds for malarial mosquitos) or for food and income. Healthy sports activities and Japanese-language competitions came to have a place both within festivals and by themselves. Nonetheless, it would be a mistake to see such things as originating with the Japanese occupation—health officials and businesses had always seen the *pasar malam* as potential grounds for propaganda efforts. However, the notion of festivals being solely for enjoyment was gradually reduced and almost eliminated during the Japanese occupation, though the activities and the fun were not.

In 1944 and 1945 it was clear throughout Indonesia that the war was at a critical juncture, though the abrupt ending in August 1945 was not easy to foresee. The numbers of newspaper pages were reduced, magazine covers grew more military oriented, and more articles focused on the war. Creation of the Peta self-defense force meant that Indonesians themselves were involved in the military as well, as magazines like *Pradjoerit* (Soldier) (1944–45) and fiction like Karim Halim's *Roman-Pantjaroba Palawidja* (Palawija, a novel of many changes) (1945) reminded readers. In urban areas, some people suffered from hunger due to food shortages; many rural areas were worse.

Pasar malam did continue. The Pasar Malam BPP Bogor in April 1945 and the headlining *sandiwara* Tjahaja Timoer were extended until April 18; boxing was held on April 11, soccer between April 13 and 15, and *kroncong* on April 14 (*Asia Raya*, April 9, 1945). A *pasar malam* scheduled in Madiun for July or August 1945 even had a "struggle" section, which—with local police approval—published biographies of three national heroes who had fought against the Dutch in earlier centuries (Panitya Pasar Malam Madioen 1945). Nonetheless, big *pasar malam* did not reappear until the end of the occupation, and even then, financial losses and political instability during the fighting between the Netherlands and the Republic of Indonesia resulted in the cancellation of a number of important *pasar malam*.

Reappearing and evolving during a short period when a "normal" life was possible for many, *pasar malam* were important for Indonesians at that time. However, it should not be forgotten that officially the *pasar malam* brought people together for serious purposes: learning important knowledge, moving toward independence, and, most important, the purpose of winning the war, a war that led to another war (1945–49) which most Indonesians were far more invested in. The *pasar malam* of the Japanese occupation are also a page in the history of the common people.

Accepted: October 15, 2024

Acknowledgments

Research for this paper was supported by JSPS Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research (B) 19H01321 (Principal Investigator, Mayumi Yamamoto). The assistance of many people was essential for materials and language help, including Mayumi Yamamoto, Didi Kwartanada, Hisashi Nakamura, Atep Kurnia, Heri Waluyanto, and Arya Anggara.

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Progress and Challenges of Islamic Economics and Finance in the Contemporary Malay World*

Kambara Kentaro**

This article describes the progress and challenges of Islamic economics and finance in Malaysia and Brunei Darussalam. Islamic economics can be defined as the system of economic knowledge that Islamic economics thinkers established based on Islamic teachings, while Islamic finance refers to financial services adhering to Shari'a (Islamic law). The Islamic financial industry has developed predominantly in Malaysia and Brunei Darussalam over the past four decades. There are some criticisms of Islamic financial services in terms of their Shari'a compliance. By tracing the development of Islamic finance in the contemporary Malay world, this article shows what the ideal method of Islamic financial services has been and why and how the practice has faced criticism.

Keywords: Islamic economics, Islamic financial services, Shari'a-compliant finance, Malaysia, Brunei Darussalam

Introduction

In recent years, the Islamic financial industry has grown rapidly in Southeast Asia. Its stable growth has made Southeast Asia an important area for global Islamic finance. In 2022 Southeast Asian markets made up 17 percent of global Islamic banking assets, and it is forecasted that the Islamic financial industry in the region will grow faster than conventional banking. Along with the global increase in awareness of environmental, social, and governance investing, countries in the region have increased their Islamic banking products and institutions in the development of Islamic economics and finance. Among ASEAN countries, Malaysia has become the fastest growing in developing Islamic

* This is a revised version of Chapter 2 of my Ph.D. thesis, 現代マレー世界におけるイスラーム型マイクロクレジットと実体経済——動産担保貸付（アッ＝ラフヌ）の役割と動態—— (Islamic Microcredit and Real Economy in the Contemporary Malay World: Role and Dynamics of Islamic Collateral Loan, Ar-Rahnu) (Kyoto University, 2018).

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banking over the last four decades. In addition, Brunei Darussalam (hereafter Brunei) has established Islamic banking as an alternative strategic industry to the oil and gas sector.

How has the Islamic financial industry developed in the contemporary Malay world (i.e., Brunei, Indonesia, and Malaysia), where the government establishes relevant policies and guidelines?

This paper focuses on two countries, Malaysia and Brunei, where the formation of Islamic finance is based largely on the intention to promote the real economy, especially the development of businesses by the Malay population.[1] Kitamura Hideki (2021, 259) concluded, "in Malaysia, Islamic banking is an ethno-political tool rather than simply a religious economic phenomenon, and Shari'ah compliance in banking implies promoting the economic success of Malay Muslims." In Brunei, one of the objectives behind the establishment of the Islamic Development Bank of Brunei (IDBB), which was Islamized and reorganized in 2000, included the intention of the Economic Planning Unit to encourage the development of businesses by Malay Muslims (Kambara 2015). Thus, the formation of Islamic financial institutions in both countries is regarded as promoting the economic development of the Malay population.

In Indonesia, the drive for the introduction of Islamic finance is not completely government oriented. Since the government formulated Pancasila as the state philosophy, there has not been a strong need to establish Islamic finance or support its institutions in order to please the Muslim population as in Malaysia and Brunei. The New Order government in its early period (1966–81) was overly cautious about political activism among the Muslim population and hence implemented a depoliticization policy (Yasin 2010, 117). It was only during 1986–97, after depoliticization was considered accomplished, that the government tried to accommodate the aspirations of the Muslim population. Mutiara Dwi Sari *et al.* (2016, 180) showed that Muslim intellectuals and ulama revisited the idea of establishing Islamic banks in Indonesia in the 1980s. The formation of Islamic finance in Indonesia is said to have been triggered by the 1997 Asian financial crisis, after which institutional efforts were enhanced (Hamada 2010). Thus, Indonesia linked full-fledged participation in Islamic financial institutions with the promotion of the real economy under the command of the government.

This article aims to clarify the progress and challenges of the Islamic financial industry in Malaysia and Brunei in relation to the real economy. In particular, it investigates both the external and internal variables that determine the development of Islamic finance in both countries.

Generally, the financial sector's contribution to economic development is to facilitate

1) In Malaysia, Malays are officially defined as Muslims by virtue of Article 160 of the federal constitution. Likewise, in Brunei, Malay citizens are defined by law as Muslims.

the transfer of funds between economic agents. Modern banks are therefore required to collect deposits from "surplus entities" in their receiving operations and provide loans to "deficit entities," that is, households and firms willing to spend and invest beyond their income and savings, in their credit operations.

This article examines the receiving and credit operations of Islamic financial institutions in Malaysia and Brunei from the perspective of their contribution to the real economy. It starts with a historical overview of the Islamic financial system in the two countries—its introduction and development. This description is based on official papers obtained from Islamic financial institutions in the region as well as secondary sources in Malay, English, and Japanese. Next, referring to data on the receiving and credit operations of the Islamic banking sector, this article examines the relationship between Islamic finance and the real economy. It concludes with a brief review of the significance and contribution of the Islamic financial industry to Southeast Asia's economy.

Overview of the Establishment of the Islamic Financial System in the Contemporary Malay World

This section provides a history of the development of Islamic finance in Malaysia and Brunei, countries representing the modern Malay world. Specifically, we discuss financial institutions—such as Islamic banks in Malaysia and Brunei—as well as institutions that embody and facilitate financial transactions, such as laws and Shari'a advisory boards and councils. Furthermore, we examine the ratio of Islamic financial assets to total financial assets in Malaysia and Brunei. Finally, we discuss the characteristics of the development of the Islamic financial system in the contemporary Malay world.

History of the Islamic Financial System in Malaysia

One of the Islamic financial strategies in Malaysia is to "develop a comprehensive Islamic financial system which would have a greater outreach to the various segments of Malaysian society" (Muhammad and Ahmed 2016, 116). The introduction of Islamic finance in Malaysia dates back to 1962, with the establishment of Perbadanan Wang Simpanan Bakal Bakal Haji (Pilgrims Savings Fund Corporation). In 1969 the organization was merged with the Hajj Affairs Office, established in 1951 in Penang, to form Lembaga Urusan Tabung Haji (Pilgrims Management and Fund Board).

When comparing the system of Islamic finance in Malaysia with that in Middle Eastern countries, Lembaga Urusan Tabung Haji—which provides installment savings for pilgrims—represents the uniqueness of Southeast Asian Islamic finance (Kosugi and

Nagaoka 2010). The significance of this fund is its contribution to future developments in the Islamic financial system, such as the establishment of the Islamic Bank of Malaysia. In relation to the real economy, the Pilgrims Fund plays the role of "a developmental financial institution that invests the savings of would-be pilgrims in accordance with the Shari'ah" (Muhammad and Ahmed 2016, 114).

Marjan Muhammad and Mezbah Uddin Ahmed (2016) divided the development of Malaysia's Islamic financial system into three stages. First, from 1983 to 1993, financial institutions were established and laws were enacted to serve as the foundation of the Islamic financial system. After the Islamic Banking Act (1983) was passed, Bank Islam Malaysia Berhad was established as the first Islamic commercial bank in the country. This was followed by the introduction of the Interest-Free Banking Scheme in 1993. This scheme provides for an Islamic banking window in conventional banks, where customers can enjoy Islamic financial services. The Syarikat Takaful Malaysia Berhad initiative began in 1981. This came about through the efforts of a project team set up by the Malaysian government to investigate the feasibility of an Islamic insurance company in the country. The head office was incorporated on November 29, 1984 and opened for business on July 22, 1985, when Islamic insurance products were offered (Syarikat Takaful Malaysia Berhad 2024).

The second stage was from 1993 to 2001. In 1994 the Islamic Interbank Money Market was established to secure liquid assets for Islamic banks. In 1996 the Shari'a Advisory Council was formed at the Islamic Bank of Malaysia, followed by the establishment of a Shari'a Advisory Council at the Securities Commission Malaysia in 1997. In July 1997 the Shari'a Advisory Council was incorporated at Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM; Central Bank of Malaysia). Its purpose was to unify decisions on Islamic law issues associated with the business of Islamic finance and advise BNM accordingly. Its significance was such that in 2003 it was positioned as the sole authoritative body dealing with Shari'a issues in Islamic finance, takaful, and financing (Muhammad and Ahmed 2016). In 1999 the second Islamic bank in Malaysia, Bank Muamalat Malaysia, was established.

In the third stage of the development of Malaysia's Islamic financial system, after 2001, the vision for the Islamic financial industry and its internationalization was promoted. From the 2000s, various government and central bank policies and guidelines were issued to set the future direction for the Islamic financial industry. For example, BNM announced the Financial Sector Master Plan 2001, which set the goal for the Islamic banking sector to acquire a share of more than 20 percent of total financial assets by 2010. In an effort to internationalize the industry, the Malaysia International Islamic Finance Centre Concept was announced; this aimed to make Malaysia a hub for the growing international Islamic financial industry. "Guidelines on International Islamic Bank," which

embodied this concept, was formulated by BNM in 2008 and outlined the procedures for establishing an international Islamic bank. In 2010 BNM published the Financial Sector Blueprint 2011–2015, which identified the internationalization of Islamic finance as a priority area.

In the 2000s a number of research and educational institutions for Islamic finance were established. In 2001 the Islamic Banking and Financial Institute Malaysia was set up for practitioners. The Research Center for Islamic Finance was established at the National University of Malaysia in 2001 with the primary objective of promoting research activities in the field of Islamic economics and finance. The IIUM Institute of Islamic Banking and Finance was established in 2004 at the International Islamic University Malaysia. The International Center of Education in Islamic Finance and the International Shari'a Research Academy for Islamic Finance were established in 2006 to meet the demand for human resources in the growing global Islamic financial industry.

The Islamic Financial Services Board was created in Kuala Lumpur in 2002 as an international body to standardize regulations for Islamic finance. International Islamic Liquidity Management, established in 2010, started creating a Shari'a-compliant short-term Islamic financial instrument for efficient Islamic financial liquidity management.

With respect to the size of Islamic financial assets in Malaysia, Islamic banks and the banking sector as a whole increased in value between 1997 and 2022 (Fig. 1). Comparing the two, it can be seen that in 1997 the total assets of Islamic banks accounted for approximately 2.64 percent of the assets of the banking sector. However, by 2012 this share had increased to approximately 20 percent. The increase suggests that the Financial

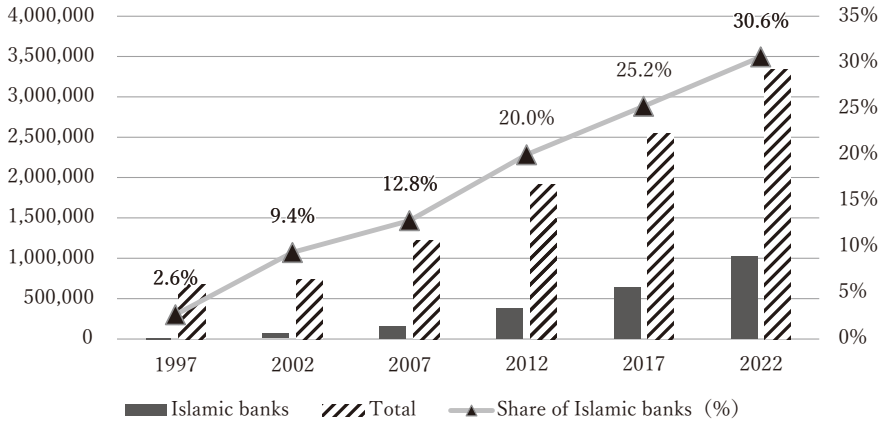

Fig. 1 Comparison of Assets between Islamic Banks and the Banking Sector as a Whole in Malaysia (in million ringgit)

Source: Bank Negara Malaysia (2013; 2023)

Sector Master Plan's goal of increasing the Islamic banking sector's financial assets to at least 20 percent of total assets by 2010 was achieved. The figure had reached 30 percent by November 2022.

History of the Islamic Financial System in Brunei

Before undertaking an overview of the history of the Islamic financial system in Brunei, it would be prudent to recall how the banking sector developed prior to the introduction of the Islamic financial system in the country. After that, we explore the significance and characteristics of Islamic financial practices.

The formation of the banking sector in Brunei dates back to the 1940s and 1950s, when branches of Western banks were set up in the country. Commercial banking started with the opening of a branch of the Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Cooperation (HSBC) in 1947, when Brunei was a British protectorate. In the 1960s, Southeast Asian banks started to emerge in addition to Western banks. In the Malaysian capital, the Malayan Bank and United Malayan Banking Corp. opened branches in October 1960 and June 1963, respectively.

The first Bruneian-owned bank, the National Bank of Brunei, was established in 1965. In 1980 the Philippine-owned Island Development Bank was established, with the Bruneian royal family holding approximately 60 percent of the capital and Enrique Zobel of the Ayala Group in the Philippines holding approximately 40 percent and serving as the bank's president. The bank later came to be owned by the Brunei government (Sugawara 1986; Sidhu 2010).

In 1985 Japan's Dai-Ichi Kangyo Bank (第一勧銀) took a 20 percent stake in Island Development Bank. The following year the bank was renamed the International Bank of Brunei, with Zobel resigning from the bank's board and Abdul Rahman of the Ministry of Finance becoming president (Saunders 2002).

As described above, Western and Southeast Asian banks dominated the banking sector in Brunei. Notably, HSBC and the Chartered Bank of Brunei had a significant share in the sector through their deals with Brunei Shell Petroleum (Skully 1984).

From the 1990s, interest-free Islamic financial institutions were established in Brunei. Hassanal Bolkiah, the 29th sultan, set up the first one, Perbadanan Tabung Amanah Islam Brunei (TAIB), in 1991. The initial objectives of the corporation were to plan and participate in industrial and economic development projects in Brunei and abroad through financial services and to enable Malay Muslims to accumulate funds for performing their religious obligation of Hajj, the pilgrimage to Makkah. Notably, the Religious Advisory Committee in TAIB was responsible for making recommendations to the sultan about whether investments could be allowed from a Shari'a-compliant perspective. The

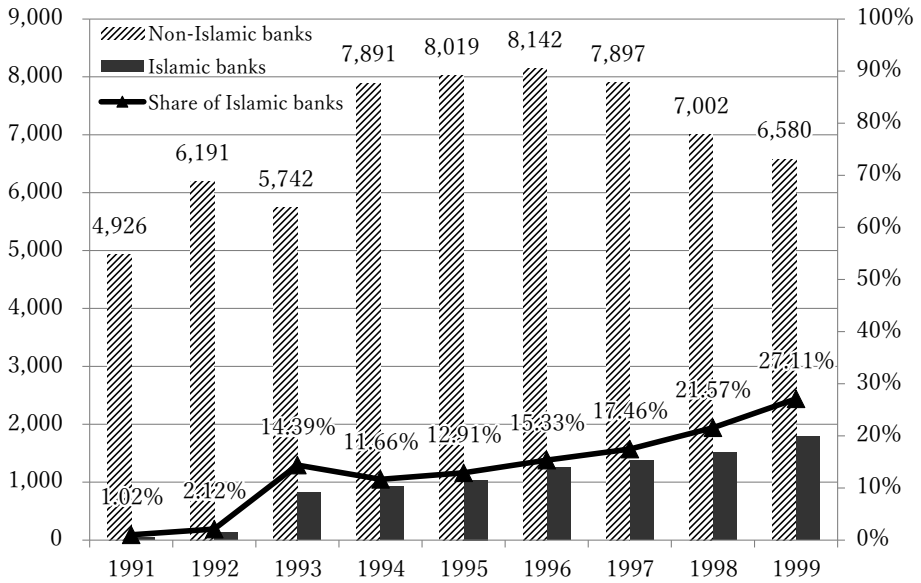

Fig. 2 Assets of Islamic and Non-Islamic Banks and the Share of Islamic Banks in Brunei, 1991–99 (in million Brunei dollars)

Source: Compiled by Kambara Kentaro from TAIB and IBB annual reports for each year (IBB since 1993) and Brunei Darussalam Statistical Yearbook 2002.

sultan appointed the president, vice president, and other directors of TAIB.

In January 1993 the International Bank of Brunei was renamed Islamic Bank of Brunei (IBB). Later the same year, IBB decided to offer shares to local Muslim investors; 7,583 people applied for about 15.11 million shares (totaling approximately BND 30.23 million). Consequently, 14 million shares totaling 28 million Brunei dollars were offered to them (Torii 1995).

Fig. 2 shows that from 1991 to 1999, the assets of Islamic banks had increased not only in absolute value but also in their share of total banking assets—from approximately 1 percent to 27 percent. In particular, it can be seen that from 1996 to 1999, the amount of assets of Islamic banks increased in inverse proportion to the decrease in assets of non-Islamic banks.

The Development Bank of Brunei was established in March 1995 and referred to in the Fifth National Development Plan for industrial development (Torii 1995). In 2000 it was renamed the Islamic Development Bank of Brunei. The bank was required to contribute to the policies of the Economic Planning Unit, which aimed to promote Brunei Malays' businesses. The bank gradually converted its assets and liabilities to the Islamic financial system beginning in July 2000. For instance, in 2000 only about one-tenth—

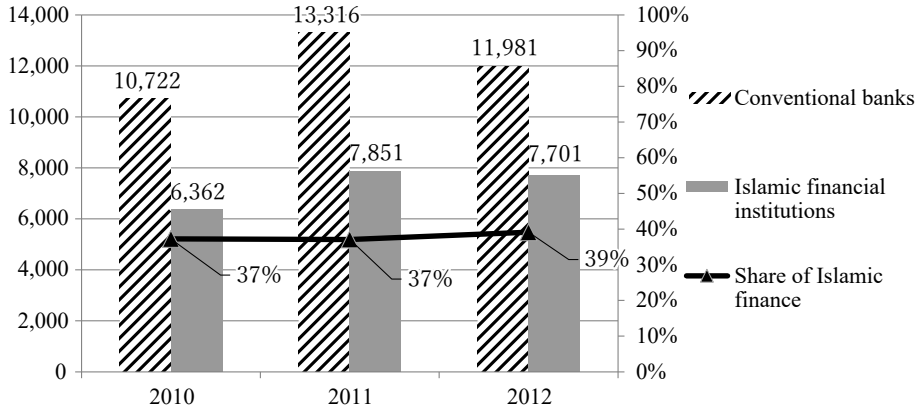

Fig. 3 Assets of Islamic and Conventional Banks and Share of Islamic Bank Assets, Brunei, 2010–12 (in million Brunei dollars)

Source: Prepared by Kambara Kentaro from the website of the Monetary and Financial Services Authority of Brunei Darussalam.

BND 90.98 million—of its total assets of BND 938.72 million were invested in the Islamic financial system. But in 2001 the figure had risen to a quarter of its total assets of BND 1,190.25 million.

In 2005 IBB and IDBB merged to form Bank Islam Brunei Darussalam (BIBD), which opened in 2006 and was one of the largest financial institutions in Brunei, with total assets of BND 7.5 billion, total deposits of BND 5.3 billion, more than seven hundred employees, and 150,000 customers that year. As shown in Fig. 3, the asset share of the Islamic banking sector increased from 2010 to 2012, whereas that of non-Islamic banks decreased from 2010 to 2011.

The Role of Islamic Finance in Receiving Operations and Its Reality

With respect to the functioning of the Islamic financial system in the real economy of the modern Malay world, this article shows how the receiving operations of Islamic financial institutions developed. Nagaoka Shinsuke (2011, 23) has pointed out that one of the reasons for the commercial success of Islamic banks in Middle Eastern countries was that they "succeeded in collecting 'savings' from many Muslims who had been hesitant to deposit money in modern capitalist-type banks that charged interest for religious reasons." Receiving operations in the retail field are regarded as important not only in terms of management but also in terms of contributing to the real economy. This

is because through financing, deficit entities use more of their own production to earn profits, but their source of funds is the financial resources saved by surplus entities (World Bank 1989).

Receiving Services of Islamic Financial Institutions in Malaysia

Fig. 4 presents the amount and share of deposits in the Malaysian banking sector as a whole as well as in Islamic banks from 1996 to 2012. First, as in the case of total assets, the figure shows that Islamic banks' deposits increased in value, and their share of deposits in the banking sector as a whole also increased. In 2012 this share was approximately 21.76 percent.

Islamic finance in Malaysia plays a significant role in the operations of Muslims who do not prefer interest-bearing financial instruments. One successful example of Malaysia's efforts in building an Islamic financial system is the Muslim Pilgrimage Savings Corporation, Malaysia's first Islamic financial institution. The purposes of this institution were to "manage the funds of Malaysian Muslims who wish to make the pilgrimage to Makkah" (Nagaoka 2011, 20) and to "increase the savings rate of the Malays and use it as a source of funds for economic development" (Torii 2002, 763) through managing funds for the pilgrimage. In 1963, when the Muslim Pilgrimage Savings Corporation commenced operations, it collected approximately 46,600 ringgit from 1,281 depositors (Mannan 1996). In 2015 it was reorganized into the Pilgrimage Reserve Management

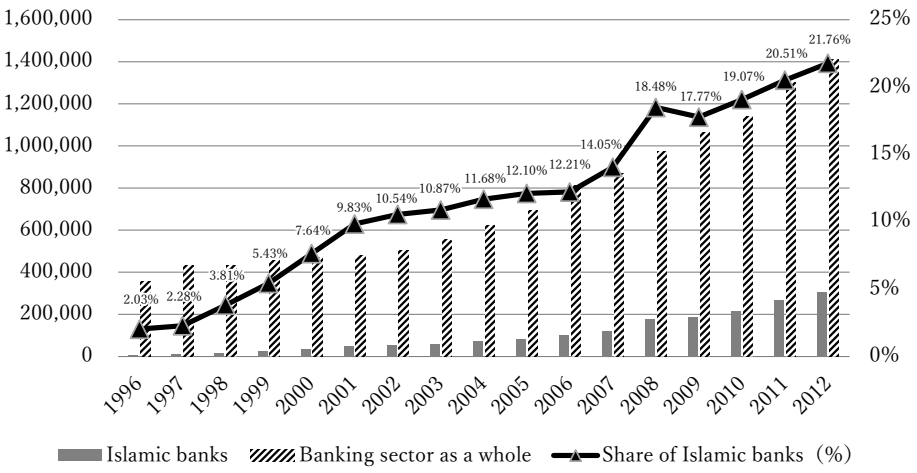

Fig. 4 Deposits in Islamic and Conventional Banks and Share of Islamic Bank Deposits, Malaysia (in million ringgit)

Source: Prepared by Kambara Kentaro based on Bank Negara Malaysia (2013) and Bank Negara Malaysia annual reports.

Fund. The number of the depositors was approximately 9.15 million and the amount of the total savings approximately 89 billion ringgit in 2023 (Lembaga Tabung Haji 2023).

Pointing out that Muslims in Malaysian rural areas tended to have an aversion to interest-bearing financial instruments, Zakariya Man (1988) highlighted the importance of exploring the possibility of their developing a relationship with the Islamic Bank of Malaysia. He explained that the majority of potential rural depositors were Muslims who had never had a bank account and had been saving in kind rather than cash, and that their deposits could provide support for banks in the future. In other words, Man believed there was room for Malaysia's Islamic banking sector to mobilize the savings of rural Muslims, which had been stagnant. In turn, these savings could be used to finance economic development.

From 2006 to 2012, there were more firms and financial institutions than individuals making deposits (BNM 2013). The share of deposits by businesses (approximately 34 percent) ranked first, followed by financial institutions (approximately 25.3 percent) and individuals (approximately 24.5 percent). Government deposits also accounted for approximately 13–16 percent of total deposits between 2006 and 2012. This may have been because public institutions, such as governments and universities, encouraged public employees to set up accounts with Islamic banks for salary transfers and other purposes.

Receiving Services by Islamic Financial Institutions in Brunei

This article looks at deposit data to describe and evaluate the development of Islamic financial operations in Brunei.

Fig. 5 shows the total deposits of the banking sector as a whole and of the Islamic banking sector in Brunei in the 1990s, based on the annual reports of Brunei Islamic Bank and Brunei Islamic Credit and Savings Corporation. Fig. 6 displays the total deposits of the banking sector as a whole and of the Islamic banking sector in Brunei from 2011 to 2013, compiled from the annual reports of BIBD for each year and Autoriti Monetari Brunei Darussalam (2014).

Fig. 5 shows that deposits in the Islamic banking sector increased rapidly after IBB was established in 1993. The ratio of Islamic banking sector deposits to total banking sector deposits also increased from 1992—when only TAIB had been established and Islamic banking deposits accounted for 2.66 percent of the total—to 1993, when the figure was almost 14 percent. Fig. 6 indicates that from 2011 to 2013, BIBD's share of deposits in the total banking sector remained constant at an average of 25.4 percent. However, data on the total deposits of TAIB from 2011 to 2013 is not included in Fig. 6 due to data constraints, so it is not possible to show the total deposits of Islamic financial institutions here.

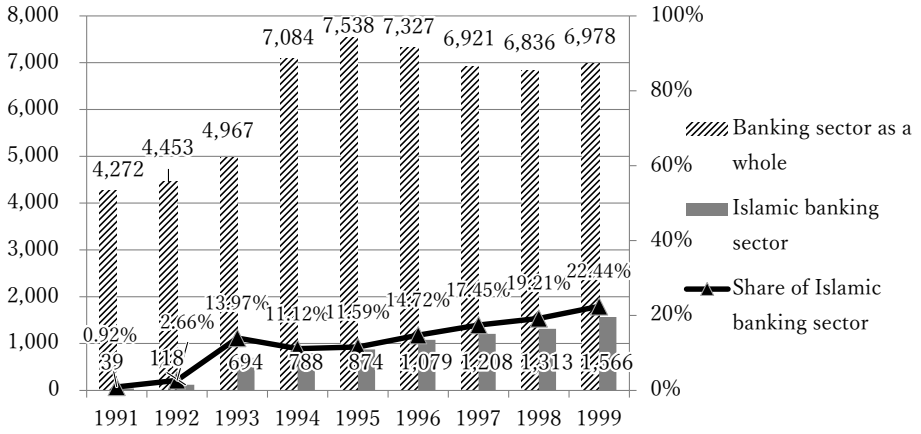

Fig. 5 Deposits in Islamic and Conventional Banks and Share of Islamic Bank Deposits, Brunei (in million Brunei dollars)

Source: Prepared by Kambara Kentaro based on the annual reports of Bank Islam Brunei Darussalam and Brunei Islamic Credit and Savings Corporation for each year and Brunei Darussalam Statistical Yearbook 2000/2001.

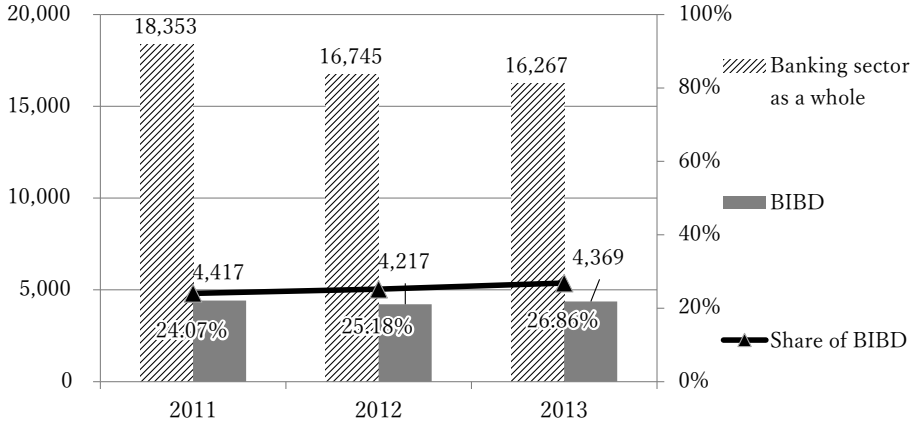

Fig. 6 Deposits in Bank Islam Brunei Darussalam and the Banking Sector as a Whole and Share of BIBD Deposits (in million Brunei dollars)

Source: Prepared by Kambara Kentaro based on annual reports of Bank Islam Brunei Darussalam for each year and Autoriti Monetari Brunei Darussalam (2014).

In previous studies, the introduction and operation of the Islamic banking sector were credited with successfully mobilizing domestic savings. Muhammed Ebrahim and Tan Kai Joo (2001) noted that both TAIB and IBB attracted deposits in the retail sector rapidly and on a large scale during the 1990s. In particular, TAIB is credited with serving

a niche market in the retail sector by building long-term relationships with its clients (Salma 2007; Venardos 2012). This is specifically the case with savings accounts for children under the age of 12 and savings accounts opened for the pilgrimage to Makkah. In fact, when TAIB was first established, it had ten thousand depositors and BND 118 million in deposits. By 1997, it had expanded to thirty-four thousand depositors and BND 430 million in deposits (Jabatan Penerangan 1998).

Role and Problems of Islamic Financial Credit Services in the Real Economy

In this section we examine the relationship between Islamic finance and the real economy, focusing on the credit operations of Islamic banks in the contemporary Malay world. Specifically, we use the annual reports of Islamic banks in Malaysia and Brunei to analyze their lending operations and compare them to the banking sector as a whole in order to identify the characteristics of Islamic banks' lending operations.

Credit Services by Islamic Banks in Malaysia

First, we look at the kind of lending done by the Islamic banking sector in Malaysia between 2006 and 2012, based on a report by BNM (2013).

Rodney Wilson (1998) notes that Islamic financing accounted for only 0.6–2.2 percent of total lending between 1993 and 1997 in Malaysia. He concludes that the role of Islam in Malaysia's economic development is questionable and that Islamic influence on economic development has been marginal. However, from Fig. 7 we see that Islamic banks accounted for approximately 6.7 percent of total lending in 2006. From then, the amount and share of the banking sector as a whole increased, and as of 2012 Islamic banks accounted for approximately 21.5 percent of all loans.

Which needs of the real economy are being met by lending by the Islamic banking sector? In this section, we compare data for the banking sector as a whole and the Islamic banking sector according to the purpose of lending from 2006 to 2012 and list the latter's characteristics (Figs. 8 and 9).

The first characteristic of loans given by the Islamic banking sector between 2006 and 2012 is that a large percentage of these were for purchasing transportation and passenger vehicles—approximately 29.7 percent and 28.7 percent, respectively. On the other hand, approximately 15.5 percent and 14.6 percent of loans given by the overall banking sector during the same period were for the purchase of transportation and passenger vehicles, respectively. This data shows that Islamic banks provided more loans for purchasing transportation and passenger vehicles than did conventional banks.

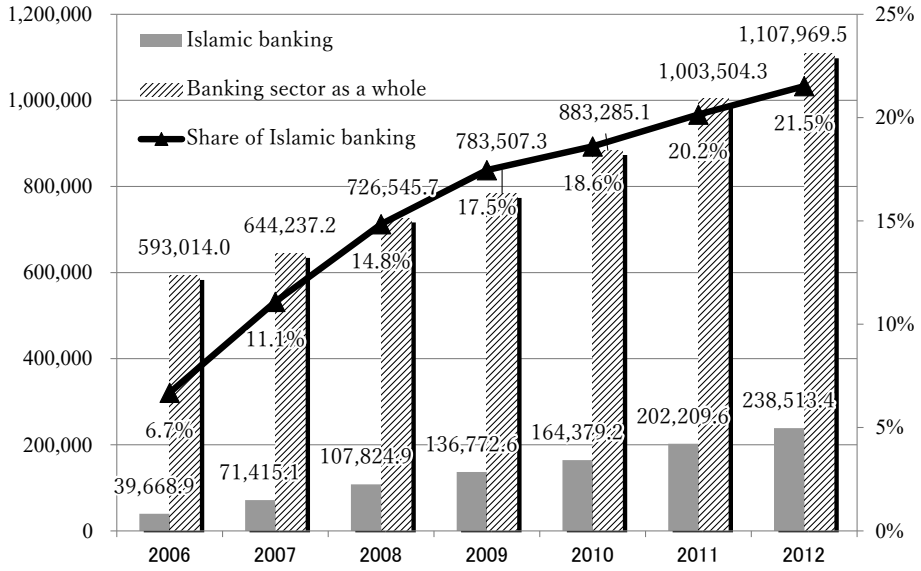

Fig. 7 Lending by Islamic and Conventional Banks and Share of Islamic Bank Lending, Malaysia (in million ringgit)

Source: Prepared by Kambara Kentaro based on Bank Negara Malaysia (2013).

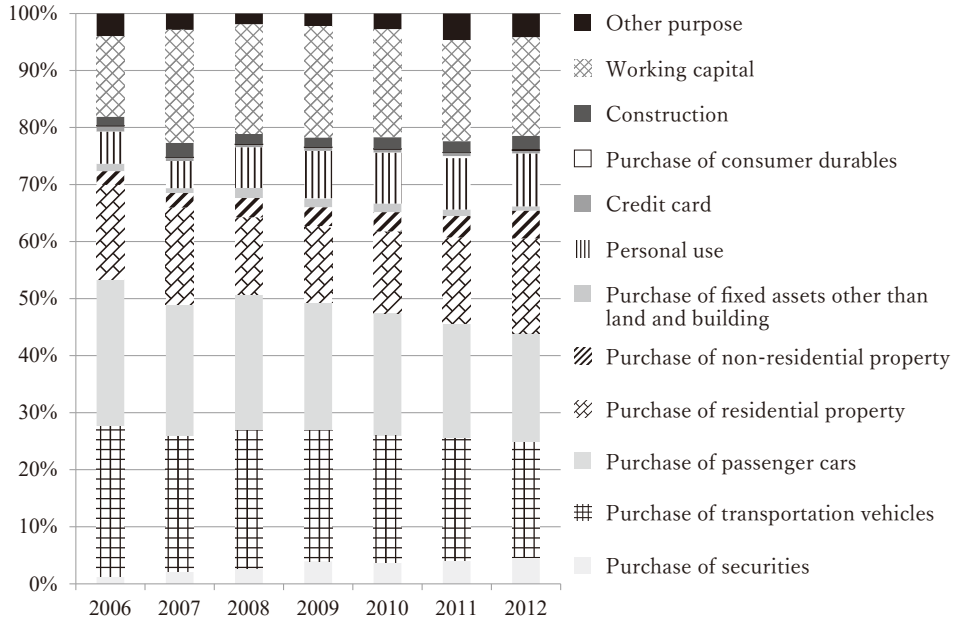

Fig. 8 Islamic Banking Sector Lending in Malaysia, by Purpose

Source: Prepared by Kambara Kentaro based on Bank Negara Malaysia (2013).

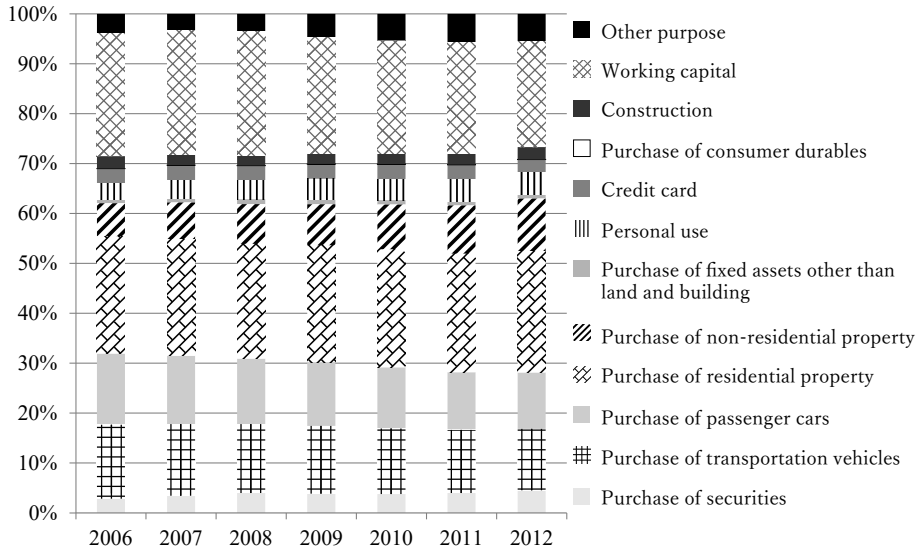

Fig. 9 Overall Banking Sector Lending in Malaysia, by Purpose
Source: Prepared by Kambara Kentaro based on Bank Negara Malaysia (2013).

Second, loans for personal consumption purposes were larger in Islamic banks than in the banking sector as a whole from 2006 to 2012. Such loans in the banking sector as a whole accounted for an average of about 4.6 percent of all loans, compared to about 9.8 percent in Islamic banks. For example, in 2012 loans for personal consumption purposes accounted for approximately 5 percent of all loans in the banking sector but approximately 11.4 percent of all loans in Islamic banks. Thus, Islamic banks financed a larger proportion of consumption activities by individual customers than did conventional banks.

Conversely, the average share of loans for working capital purposes related to production activities in the real economy was approximately 26.8 percent of total loans, while the average share of Islamic banks was approximately 23.3 percent. In other words, during 2006–12 loans provided by Islamic banks were less likely to be channeled to the production sector.

Credit Services by Islamic Banks in Brunei

How have Islamic banks provided credit in Brunei since the early 1990s? In this section, we examine the lending operations of the Islamic banking sector in Brunei—namely, TAIB, IBB, and BIBD—from a quantitative perspective. Until the early 2000s, the majority of lending by Islamic banks did not contribute to the production sector made up of firms but to the consumption sector made up of households and non-productive sectors

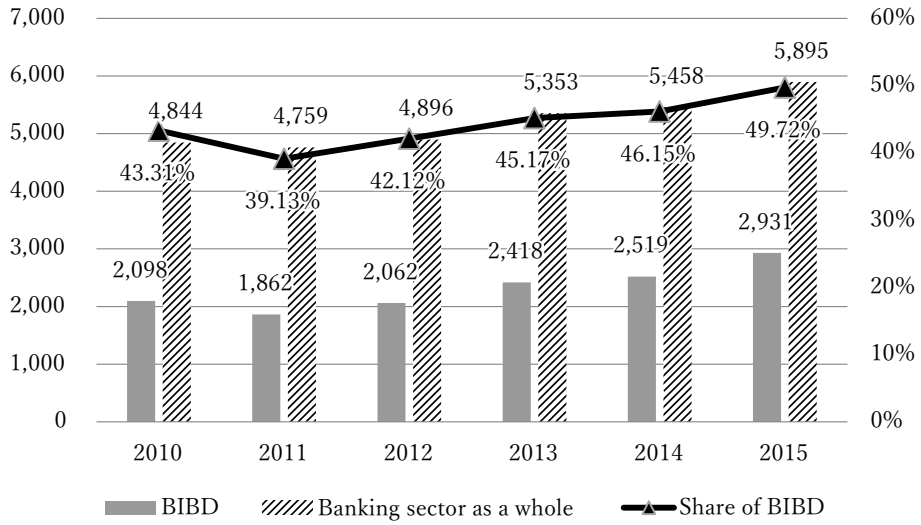

Fig. 10 Lending by All Bruneian Financial Institutions and BIBD (2010–15) (in million Brunei dollars)
Sources: BIBD annual reports 2011–15; Brunei Darussalam Statistical Yearbook 2013 (p. 173) and 2015 (p. 178)

(Salma 2007, 290). However, the lending trends in the early 2010s have not been clarified to date. Therefore, this section examines lending trends in the Islamic banking sector based on its financial statements and compares them with those in the banking sector as a whole.

First, we compare trends in bank lending in the Islamic banking sector and the banking sector as a whole from 2010 to 2015 (Fig. 10). Looking at BIBD's lending in the 2010s, the Islamic banking sector's lending increased approximately 1.4 times—from BND 2,098 million in 2010 to BND 2,931 million in 2015. BIBD's share of total lending by the banking sector as a whole also increased—from approximately 39.1 percent in 2011 to 49.7 percent in 2015. Moreover, if TAIB lending, for which no data are available, is included, it can be estimated that lending by the Islamic banking sector as of 2015 was more than half the amount of the entire banking sector.

Next, we examine trends in lending by sector, referring to the data on financing and advances by sector from BIBD's 2011–15 annual reports. BIBD lending can be divided into the corporate sector (agriculture, finance, manufacturing, transportation, infrastructure, commercial services, real estate development for commercial purposes, tourism, telecommunications, information and technology, oil and natural gas) and the household sector (residential assets and personal consumption).

Lending to the corporate sector was particularly brisk in the 2010s. From 2011 to

2015, lending to the household sector increased by approximately 1.36 times, from BND 1,215 million to BND 1,659.89 million, while lending to the corporate sector almost doubled—from BND 647.17 million to BND 1,278.36 million.

The increase in corporate sector lending was driven primarily by the manufacturing and transportation sectors as well as the oil and natural gas industry, which is considered to include these sectors. Lending to the manufacturing sector increased sharply from BND 95.19 million in 2011 to BND 174.03 million in 2012, while lending to the transportation sector increased from BND 46.17 million to BND 173.41 million. For the transportation industry in particular, the increase in lending from 2011 to 2012 was approximately 2.76 times.

These remarkable increases were due largely to the following two developments in wholesale banking in 2012. First, BIBD signed a cooperation agreement with the Belait Shipping Company to jointly invest in its shipbuilding business. Second, BIBD, together with the Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ (Malaysia), Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation (Europe), and HSBC as co-lead managers, arranged a USD 170 million loan agreement for Brunei Gas Carriers, a state-owned shipping company, to build liquefied natural gas ships (Oxford Business Group 2014).

In terms of BIBD's lending, from 2013 its lending to the oil and natural gas industry led corporate sector lending and the bank's overall lending, accounting for approximately 46.1 percent of corporate sector lending and approximately 19.6 percent of total lending, at BND 474.78 million in 2013. As of 2015, its lending had increased to BND 747.25 million, or about 58.5 percent of corporate lending and 25.5 percent of total lending.

According to BIBD's 2013 annual report, on September 6, 2013, when lending to the oil and natural gas industry was in full swing, a new branch of the bank was established in Kuala Bright, which houses BIBD's first corporate banking center. Opened by Mr. Bahrin (Yang Mulia Dato Paduka Awang Hj Bahrin bin Abdullah), deputy minister of finance and president of BIBD, the branch was part of the Local Business Development Framework for the Oil & Gas Industry. This framework was expected to contribute to a certain percentage of lending to the oil and gas industry by BIBD.

In the 1990s and early 2000s BIBD lending was mainly to the household sector, and in the 2010s there was a trend toward lending to the corporate sector. However, even in the 2010s, lending to the household sector accounted for approximately 60 percent of total lending, and the oil and natural gas sector, which is a wholesale business, was the driving force for lending to the corporate sector. Thus, lending to the production sector, which is oriented toward the economic diversification of the economy away from dependence on the oil and natural gas sector, was conspicuously absent, as pointed out in previous studies.

Characteristics of the Islamic Banking Sector in the Contemporary Malay World

We have analyzed the history of the Islamic banking sector in Malaysia and Brunei in the modern Malay world and the trends and characteristics of the receiving and credit operations of the sector in relation to the real economy. This article shows that the origins of the Islamic financial system and its operations in Malaysia and Brunei share similar characteristics and challenges.

The first similarity is that pilgrimage funds such as Tabung Haji in Malaysia and TAIB in Brunei were catalysts for the establishment of the Islamic financial system. Second, pilgrimage funds are valued for their receiving operations. The size of deposits in both countries' Islamic banking sector accounted for approximately 20 percent of the total in 2012.

Until the early 2000s, Islamic finance credit operations accounted for a relatively large share of lending, mainly in the consumption sector and a smaller share in the production sector (Nakagawa 2006). In previous studies on the relationship between Islamic finance credit operations and the real economy, it was pointed out that it would be desirable to channel loans toward productive sectors such as agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and manufacturing (Nakagawa 2006). However, in both Malaysia and Brunei, a large proportion of loans from Islamic banks ended up being for consumption purposes: in Malaysia for the purchase of transportation and passenger vehicles, and in Brunei for personal consumption.

Conclusion

Southeast Asia has received international attention for its contribution to the development of the Islamic financial industry. The ability of the Islamic financial industry to deal with the 1997–98 Asian financial crisis and the 2008 global financial crisis showed its robustness and led to a recognition of the region's important position in the growing global Islamic financial industry. Since the introduction of Islamic banking in Malaysia and Brunei, the Islamic financial industry has experienced tremendous change beyond its original intentions. Over the years, Malaysia and Brunei have developed a regulatory, legal, and fiscal infrastructure for the industry such that it no longer sits in a niche market. In both countries, the Islamic financial industry has innovated and expanded its roles in response to the prevailing economic situation. As a result, it has gradually come to play an important role in both the overall financial market and the real economy in

both countries.

The quantitative expansion of receiving services and the contents of related documents paint a picture of how Islamic finance expanded by mobilizing the savings of the Malay public, who previously did not have bank accounts. In terms of economic benefits to Malay people, Islamic financial institutions have come to play a role in financial inclusion in the Malay world.

Examining the data on credit operations by purpose, it was found that Islamic financial institutions in Malaysia had a larger share of lending for consumption activities, particularly the purchase of vehicles, than for the production sector. On the other hand, in Brunei, while lending for personal consumption purposes constituted a relatively major portion of total lending, the oil and natural gas industry accounted for a larger share. Considering Brunei's economy, it is possible that the increase in lending to the oil and natural gas industry, which is state-owned, was linked to the goal of stimulating the economy of the Malay population engaged in related industries.

Accepted: October 15, 2024

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The Asian Solidarity Movement in Korean Civil Society: Observations on Thirty Years of Development

Je Seong Jeon*

"Asian solidarity movement" has been a catchphrase for the international activities of Korean civil society for three decades. The activism of Korean civil society started to become tangible in the early 1990s, mainly because of Korea's democratization and globalization. This article begins by describing the origin, growth, and diversification of this solidarity movement. It then emphasizes recent changes that can be observed in two key areas, namely, issues and participation. Unlike in earlier phases of the movement, when activists focused mainly on issues directly relevant to Korea, today's activism is more concerned with universal values. It also attracts citizens beyond activists and intellectuals.

Keywords: labor, migration, Korea, East Timor, Burma/Myanmar, Southeast Asia, ODA, Indonesia

Over the past thirty years, "Asian solidarity movement" has been a catchphrase for the international activities of Korean civil society. In the early 1990s, Korean civil society became aware of and concerned with intervening in issues faced by other Asian people. Later, in the early 2000s, Korean civil society tried to define its activities with respect to Asian issues under the umbrella of Asiayeondaeundong (Asian solidarity movement). This study illustrates how the Asian solidarity movement has changed over three decades. A discussion of the background of this movement as well as its growth and diversification is followed by an analysis of recent developments within the movement.

Considering the Asian solidarity movement's three-decade history, there have been surprisingly few academic publications on it. The outcome of the first comprehensive examination of the movement was the *2006 Dong-Asia Yeondae Undong Danche Baekseo* (2006 East Asian Solidarity Movement Almanac), published by Seonam Forum—

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a group of scholars supported by the Seonam Foundation, a nonprofit organization based in Seoul. This book describes and evaluates the development of the solidarity movement from the 1990s to the early 2000s. Notably, it includes Southeast Asia within East Asia, moving away from the exclusive synonymity of East Asia with Northeast Asia. In 2015 Youngmi Yang, an experienced activist in the Asian solidarity movement, wrote a book chapter describing the diverse activities of various sectors within the movement and presented her reflections on the movement with a focus on its limitations.[1)]

The most recent evaluation of the movement is a research report in Korean published by Jeonbuk National University Institute for Southeast Asian Studies in collaboration with scholars and activists (Jeon 2021).[2)] The 270-page report contains the history of the Asian solidarity movement, including special chapters on solidarity movements in the health and migrant labor sectors, case study chapters on major organizations, and a list of Asian solidarity movement organizations. Building on the conclusions of the report, this article summarizes the historical dynamics of the Asian solidarity movement as it spread to various sectors and analyzes recent changes within the movement. It demonstrates that the movement has entered a new phase, particularly after the Myanmar crisis since May 2021.

The Beginnings of the Asian Solidarity Movement

The Asian solidarity movement emerged in the early 1990s, when civil society was developing rapidly in Korea along with the country's democratization after the June 1987 protests. Workers and farmers organized nationwide, and new issue-based movements emerged to address various areas of concern, such as the environment, peace, women, and human rights. The term "nongovernmental organization" (NGO) came into use and quickly became commonplace. A total of 4,023 organizations in Korea considered themselves NGOs in 2000, of which 77.5 percent had been established in the 1980s and 1990s (Cho 2003, Ch. 5). They included Gyeongsilyeon (Citizens' Coalition for Economic Justice; CCEJ), founded in 1989, and Chamyeoyeondae (People's Solidarity for Participatory Democracy; PSPD), founded in 1994.

These emerging organizations became the main actors in the international solidarity

1) We can find several papers focusing on specific themes within the movement, such as Asian women workers' solidarity (Park 2008), the utility of information and communications technology (Jeon 2008), the role of Burmese refugees in Korea (Suh 2015), Myanmar student activism in Korea (Lee 2022), solidarity education for Myanmar (An 2021), and the "Sorry, Vietnam" campaign of Koreans (Yoon 2018).

2) The report is available for free download in Jeon (2021).

movement, which differentiated itself from old patterns in Korea. In the past—after the Korean War and during the ensuing authoritarian era—international solidarity activities in Korea meant getting help from European and American civic groups or international organizations to solve domestic problems related to human rights, poverty, etc. However, after democratization, Korean civil society did not seek unilateral assistance from abroad; instead, it sought to reciprocally provide and receive help.

In 1989, the year after the Seoul Olympics, the Korean government liberalized overseas travel for Koreans; and in 1992, conditions for overseas travel such as the completion of anticommunist education were also abolished. This liberalization created an environment that increased the potential for face-to-face international activities by Korean NGOs. After Korea's entry into the United Nations in 1991, Korean activists were invited to participate in international conferences sponsored by the UN. This allowed Korean NGOs to assume an international and regional role. International conferences served as opportunities for Korean NGOs to appreciate the importance of international involvement and to strengthen their international networks.[3)]

Before the 1990s, Korean NGOs were not involved in helping people in developing countries in Asia. However, in the early 1990s the movement to help fellow Asians began. The first initiatives were advocacy activities for Asian workers in Korean companies, both within Korea and abroad. From the late 1980s to the early 1990s, large numbers of Asian foreign workers began to flow into Korea. Many of these workers had to toil in jobs that were deemed difficult, dirty, and dangerous (or "3D"), and they faced the harsh realities of overexploitation and violence (Seol 2003). In response to this problem, NGOs were founded to shelter and advocate for migrant workers in major industrial areas from the early 1990s.[4)] The 13 Nepalese workers' sit-in protest at Myeongdong Cathedral in January 1995 (Han 2015) led to the formation of Oeigukinijunodongundonghyupeihoi, or Oeinohyup (Joint Committee for Migrant Workers in Korea). Thirty-seven organizations concerned with foreign workers in various industrial cities established this national network for strengthening and coordinating their advocacy activities (Jeon 2003). Later, Oeinohyup became a member of the

3) For example, the UN Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 provided important momentum for Korean environmental groups, and the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in 1993 was a crucial opportunity for human rights groups in Korea. The interview with Youngmi Yang, ex-chairwoman of the International Solidarity Committee in PSPD, was conducted in May 2020.

4) According to Dr. Joo-young Kim, using various sources, as of 2020 at least 153 organizations were actively serving foreign workers in Korea. Only three of these organizations were established in the late 1980s; approximately 20 percent were founded in the 1990s and 40 percent in the 2000s (Jeon 2021, Ch. 3).

Migrant Forum in Asia.

In 1995 Chamyeoyeondae (People's Solidarity for Participatory Democracy; PSPD), the biggest advocacy NGO in Korea, started monitoring the overseas operations of Korean companies. Democratization led to massive labor strikes and an independent national union in Korea. Korean companies began moving their factories overseas—mainly to Indonesia, Vietnam, and China—to avoid militant workers and rising wages. In 1995, PSPD sent its first monitoring team to Indonesia to investigate human rights violations in Korean companies that were in conflict with local workers.[5] PSPD again sent teams to Indonesia in 1996 and 1998. It sent its first fact-finding team to Vietnam and China in 1998. In 2000, this monitoring of human rights violations in overseas Korean companies led to the establishment of Kukjeminjuyeondae (Korean House for International Solidarity), which specialized in monitoring activities. Kukjeminjuyeondae's monitoring began to cover new areas such as India, Cambodia, and Burma/Myanmar (Jeon 2021, Ch. 5).

While labor rights in Korean companies were related directly to Korea, other issues not directly related to Korea had emerged. The Santa Cruz Massacre in East Timor, committed by the Indonesian military in 1991, attracted global attention thanks to the post-Cold War situation and aroused the sympathy of Korean human rights activists, especially Korean Catholics. On November 12, 1996, the fifth anniversary of the massacre, Minbyun (Lawyers for a Democratic Society), Sarangbang (a human rights movement organization), and individuals from the Catholic Church set up the Dongtimoryeondaemoim (East Timor Solidarity Group) network to support the East Timor independence movement (Sarangbang 1996; Ohmynews 2002).

This network is the first in Korea to have been formed solely for the improvement of human rights in a low-income country. It invited East Timor Foreign-Minister-in-Exile José Ramos Horta for public talks, organized protests in front of the Indonesian Embassy in Seoul, held fundraising activities, published reports, distributed documentary films, and participated in the Asia Pacific Coalition for East Timor. The group remained active until East Timor became independent in 2002. In addition to this group's activities, the May 18 Foundation, established to commemorate the 1980 Gwangju Uprising, awarded the first Gwangju Human Rights Award to Xanana Gusmao, the leader of the East Timorese independence movement, in 2000. This solidarity activism for East Timor was one of the three major pioneering activities launched by Korean NGOs for the Asian solidarity movement along with advocacy for migrant workers' rights and monitoring of overseas Korean companies.

Economic crises and regional cooperation from the late 1990s forced Korea's Asian

5) The major findings were published in two journal articles (Shin and Lee 1995; Shin 2011). The history of the activities was recorded on the PSPD website (PSPD 2014a).

solidarity movement to look into Southeast Asia more seriously. The 1997 Asian economic crisis, which began in Thailand and extended to Indonesia as well as South Korea, evoked a sense of a common fate between Koreans and Southeast Asians. This provided momentum for Korean labor unions to join the Asian solidarity movement. The Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU), which was focused on relationships with Europe, Brazil, and South Africa, became more active in establishing networks with labor unions and NGOs in Southeast Asia.[6] KCTU sent its first field-research team to Southeast Asia—Indonesia, Thailand, and the Philippines—to survey the conditions of labor unions (KCTU 2003) and participated in the Asian Transnational Corporations Monitoring Network, which was interested in labor rights.

The acceleration of East Asian regional cooperation initiated by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations after the 1997 economic crisis also indirectly contributed to broadening the interest of Korean activists in Southeast Asia. At the thirtieth anniversary celebration of its founding, ASEAN invited the heads of government of Korea, China, and Japan; and one year later it launched the ASEAN Plus Three (APT) Summit. South Korea's liberal president Kim Dae-Jung said that he felt keenly aware of Korea's fateful ties with Southeast Asia after participating in the APT Summit (Lee 2007).

As the Korean government was invited to ASEAN-centered meetings, Korea's relationship with ASEAN and its members was mentioned more frequently in the Korean media, and exchanges in the private sector between Korea and ASEAN also increased accordingly. ASEAN and its civil society were experimenting with "participatory regionalism" (Acharya 2003), and some Korean activists and intellectuals felt that this energy had the potential to enhance the people-centered "East Asian Community" (Jeon 2007). This congenial atmosphere contributed to spreading the idea that Southeast Asian partners were more important than other Asian partners for Korea's Asian solidarity movement.

Broadening and Deepening of Solidarity: New Issues and Actors

Since the 2000s, the Asian solidarity movement in Korean civil society has diversified to include a variety of sectors and actors. Entering the 2000s, a series of discussions were held within PSPD to look back on international solidarity activities and set a new direction. The International Solidarity Committee of PSPD discussed what slogans would best represent the orientation of the "Asian solidarity movement." The slogans "*Uri*

6) Interview with Yongmo Yoon, ex-international officer in KCTU and researcher in the Korean Labor Society Institute, September 2006.

Sogei Asia" (Asia in us: Asia in Korea) and "*Asia Sogei Uri*" (We in Asia: Korea in Asia) were proposed. The former represented human rights advocacy for Asian migrants in Korea, from workers' rights to marriage migrants' and refugees' rights. The latter represented the monitoring of Korean activities in Asia—first Korean companies and later Korean official development assistance (ODA). As the chairperson of the committee at the time, I asked to add the value-oriented slogan "*Uriga Kumkuneun Asia*" (Asia we dream of), and later the committee transformed the slogan to "*Uriga Mandenun Asia*" (Asia we make) (PSPD 2014a). This meant that Koreans should think about and practice the values to pursue in Asia. Solidarity for East Timor's independence was the best example of a value-oriented activity from Korean NGOs. This type of solidarity was later adopted in Korea in the 2000s to support democracy in Burma.

"Asia in Korea": Changing Focus to Asian Migrants in General

The changing patterns of migration inflow to Korea affected the development of the Asian solidarity movement. Beginning in the 2000s, the increasing number of marriage migrants from Asian nations raised problems of social integration and human rights. In 2021, according to the Korean Statistical Information Service, marriage immigrants numbered more than 160,000. The places of origin were, in descending order, China, Vietnam, Japan, the Philippines, Thailand, and Cambodia. Women accounted for 80 percent (KOSIS n.d.). To respond to this new pattern of migration, the advocacy movement for Asian migrants (the "Asia in Korea" category) expanded to encompass the issue of Asian marriage migrants in Korea.

Ijuyeoseonginkweonsenteo (Women Migrants Human Rights Center) was established in 2001 and spread its branches at the provincial level. Ten years later, organizations concerned with women migrants had been established in almost every county. This organizational achievement could be realized partly due to the transformation of the existing organizations for migrant workers into organizations for migrants in general. The Korean government also established as many as 218 Multicultural Family Support Centers nationwide to help with the social integration of transnational-marriage families by providing programs such as counseling, occupational training, Korean language instruction, interpretation, and translation services. Many centers employed ex-activists who had previously worked at NGOs dealing with migrants' rights. These ex-activists were able to help marriage migrants connect with government assistance.

Refugee rights advocacy in Korea began in earnest in 2000. The initial momentum came from the collective application for refugee status by Burmese migrants in Korea. The Korean government ratified the 1951 Refugee Convention in 1992. However, no one in Korea was recognized as a refugee in March 2000 when a Burmese migrant, Kyaw Swa

Linn, carrying out support activities for Burma's democratization applied for asylum. The Korean government did not accept the migrant and instead decided to deport him. In response to this unprecedented situation, 14 human rights organizations led by Minbyun issued a statement opposing the Korean government's decision and started to conduct public campaigns together with Burmese migrants. They prevented the government from deporting Swa Linn. Soon after, twenty other Burmese migrants registered asylum claims. Three of the Burmese asylum seekers obtained refugee status in January 2003 and four more in 2005 (Suh 2015, 763–765).

"Korea in Asia": Extending Engagement to Peace, Environment, and Development

"Korea in Asia" activities, which encompassed the responsibility of Koreans for their behavior in Asia, extended to issues concerning the Vietnam War (1955–75). From September 1964 to March 1973, 325,517 South Korean soldiers served in the war. A Korean student studying in Vietnam wrote a widely read news article on victims' testimonies of the civilian massacre committed by Korean soldiers during the Vietnam War (Koo 1999). This was the spark that started the "Sorry Vietnam" campaign. The campaign, which developed in numerous ways, included peace tours, fact-finding investigations, peace education, medical volunteerism, people's tribunals, advocacy for victims, scholarships, and the operation of a peace museum.[7] The campaign led to the establishment in 2016 of Hanvepyeonghwajaedan (Korea-Vietnam Peace Foundation) as an organization dedicated to the pursuit of Asian and international peace. Nguyễn Thị Thanh, one of the victims of the Phong Nhi Phong Nhat village massacre, filed a lawsuit against the Republic of Korea government in April 2020. She won the case in the first trial and obtained a historic judgment for compensation in Korea (*Hankook Ilbo* 2023).

In the meantime, the Korean environmental movement started to extend its interest to Southeast Asia in the late 1990s. For example, Hwangyungundongyeonhap (Korean Federation for Environmental Movements; KFEM), which focused on Northeast Asia and carried out initiatives such as the creation of an information-sharing website for Japan and China (Jeon 2008), sent the first research team to Indonesia in 1998 to assess the haze problem and the protection of tropical rainforest. It has been monitoring environmental destruction caused by Korean companies in Asia for two decades. As KFEM served as the Korean branch of Friends of the Earth, it was possible for it to connect with environmental movements in almost all countries in Asia through its network.

In the mid-2000s, Korean NGOs initiated monitoring activities for Korean ODA

7) Korean dentists and medical doctors who organized Vietnampyeonghwaeiryoyeondae (Vietnam Peace Medical Solidarity) visited the victims' villages in Vietnam and performed medical volunteer work every year from 2000 to 2019 (Jeon 2021, Ch. 7).

for the first time. "ODA monitoring" was a new term in Korean civil society. The Korean government started to provide ODA—with a priority on serving Asian countries—after the establishment of the Korea International Cooperation Agency in 1991. It increased its volume of ODA after joining the OECD in 1996, particularly in response to affiliation with the OECD Development Assistance Committee in 2010. Korean development NGOs participated in ODA as minor actors, though their number has increased rapidly since the 2000s. The Korea NGO Council for Overseas Development Cooperation was established in 1999, and the number of members increased from 39 in 2005 to 140 in 2021. Many of the above organizations conduct their activities in Asia, especially in Southeast Asia.[8] Besides development NGOs, advocacy NGOs such as CCEJ and PSPD along with other NGOs concerned with the environment and human rights launched ODA monitoring activities in the mid-2000s (Kim 2013). They followed coordinated pathways to organize the Global Call to Action Against Poverty in Korea in 2005 and Korea Civil Society Forum on International Development Cooperation in 2010. The main demands of these ODA monitoring groups have been to overcome the fragmentation of Korean aid and increase its transparency and accountability (PSPD 2014b).

"Asia We Make": Democratic Asia Against State Violence

In parallel with that development, Asian election monitoring activities were conducted to encourage more universal values in the spirit of "Asia we make." PSPD dispatched an election monitoring team to Indonesia during the 1999 general election, which was the first such intervention in the history of Korean civil society. Subsequently, PSPD, along with the Asian Network for Free Elections in Bangkok, dispatched its observers to elections in Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, Cambodia, Thailand, and Myanmar (Jeon 2021, Ch. 1).

Advocacy for Burmese refugees in Korea evolved into activities against Burmese military rule (Seonam Forum 2006, Ch. 2). In September 2004 as many as 45 NGOs in Korea issued a joint statement criticizing Burmese military rule and supporting the pro-democracy movement in Burma (PSPD 2004), and later they formed a network named Solidarity for Burmese Democratization.[9] The majority of participants were migrant workers' rights advocacy groups, including Burmese migrant communities. In this way, migrant activism provided an important stimulus to motivate the solidarity movement for Burmese democratization in 2000s Korea. Korean NGOs together with Burmese

8) Dahye Kim, a JISEAS researcher, found 68 Korean NGOs participating in activities to aid Southeast Asia in the health and medical fields as of March 2021 (Jeon 2021, 78–80).

9) A statement in 2007 condemning military violence toward peaceful protesters in Myanmar was signed by representatives from 56 organizations (PSPD 2007).

migrants conducted anti-military campaigns through public lectures, the publication of books and reports, and the holding of protest rallies in front of the Embassy of Myanmar in Seoul.[10] The Burmese democratization campaign in Korea, which lasted almost a decade, involved complex issues such as advocating for Burmese refugee rights, criticizing state violence against peaceful protests, exposing human rights violations and the illegal arms trade by Korean companies, monitoring elections, and providing emergency aid for cyclone victims, long-term aid for refugee camps, and humanitarian aid for Rohingya (Yang 2022).

As a result of such experiences, the solidarity movement deepened and grew more committed. For example, irregular and one-time encounters, such as one-off conferences, are no longer enough for Korean activists concerned about Asian solidarity. Activists have worked to overcome such limitations in various ways (Jeon 2008). From the early 2000s, a variety of new initiatives for encouraging Asian solidarity were presented by the international program of the May 18 Memorial Foundation in Gwangju. The foundation is a nonprofit organization that was set up through donations from victims of state violence and further funded by the Korean government. The foundation's major programs include the Gwangju Prize for Human Rights (since 2000); the Exchange Program of International Interns (since 2001); the Gwangju International Peace Forum, currently the Gwangju Democracy Forum (since 2004); the Gwangju Asian Human Rights Folk School (since 2004); the Solidarity Program for Asian Democracy Movement, which provides financial support for Asian NGOs (since 2005); and scholarships for Asian activists to support their master's program.

Emerging Actors and Networks

Although Asian solidarity movements in Korea were increasing in number and becoming more active, there were few Korean NGO activists working for Asian solidarity. According to a survey conducted by Seonam Forum in 2006, 73 percent of the international officers in NGOs remarked on the lack of human resources available for Asian solidarity work. Most NGOs had only one international program officer. The activists surveyed pointed to a lack of funds, low interest from the mass media, underdevelopment in Asian studies, and ethnocentrism among Koreans as their major obstacles (Seonam Forum 2006; Jeon 2011).

However, new actors stepped in to fill vital vacancies. Asian migrants to Korea became new agents for the movement. In 2003, a rock and roll band—Stop Crackdown—was

10) PSPD set up the special website "Burma and Us" and continuously updated it with basic knowledge and campaign news. It was a meaningful experiment; however, the site no longer exists. For an official analysis of the activities, see PSPD (2014c.).

formed by Asian migrant workers: a Nepalese vocalist, an Indonesian keyboard player, and two guitarists and a drummer from Burma/Myanmar. They actively participated in mass rallies and performed their songs of resistance. The band showed that migrants had voices: they were subjects, not objects. Like the band, many other Asian migrants participated in and even stood at the forefront of solidarity movements. Burmese migrant workers organized the Korean branch of the National League for Democracy and led many protests in front of the Embassy of Myanmar alongside Korean supporters. They became an integral part of Korean NGOs' activism for Burma's democratization. In addition, Burmese migrants' long struggle to apply for refugee status allowed Koreans to learn about the deficiencies of their country's refugee recognition system, despite Korea being a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention (Suh 2015). Marriage migrant women were the objects of education and counseling services at first, but as they got used to the Korean language and way of life, some of them became the subjects at Multicultural Family Support Centers to provide education and other social services to other migrants.

It is important to note that public interest lawyers emerged as new actors in the movement. Gonggam, the first organization of public interest lawyers, was formed in 2004. It has advocated for various minority groups, including migrants and refugees in Korea. APLI (Advocates for Public Interest Law) was established in 2011 and participated in the Asian solidarity movement (Shin 2022). Public interest lawyers from the ADI (Asian Dignity Initiative) have been actively engaged in litigating the Rohingya crisis since 2016. As of March 2021, there were 135 public interest lawyers active in various fields in Korea (Jodeak 2021), some of them participating in the Asian solidarity movement and contributing through legal aid, field investigations, and legislative petitions. Their commitment and legal knowledge about human rights were very helpful in supplementing the solidarity movement's human resources.

Korean activists working in Asian umbrella organizations—such as Forum-Asia (Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development) and the Committee for Asian Women in Bangkok along with the Asia Monitor Resource Centre and Asian Human Rights Commission in Hong Kong—also became new agents for fostering Asian solidarity in Korea. The activists shared ideas, information, and networks that they had developed for the mutual benefit of all concerned. Not only on an individual level but also on an organizational level, Korean and Asian civil society networks grew more connected. Korean NGOs developed a more visible solidarity movement internationally by joining transnational networks in Asia,[11] becoming branches of such networks, or even forming

11) The major networks are Forum-Asia, Asian Network for Free Elections, and Asian NGO Network on National Human Rights Institutions in Bangkok; Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development in Chiang Mai; and Reality of Aid and Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network in Manila.

international networks originating in Korea. For example, the Asia Democracy Network, launched in Seoul in 2013, encompasses more than three hundred Asian NGOs. Also in 2013, the Asia Development Alliance was founded in Bangkok and developed into a network organization covering thirty groups in twenty Asian countries, with its secretariat located in Seoul.[12)]

A New Stage of the Movement

The spread of democracy and the improvement of human rights in the region, like the "great transition" in Indonesia, gave Korean activists a sense of accomplishment and pride in their work toward achieving Asian solidarity.[13)] However, political changes, from the 2014 coup in Thailand to the 2021 coup in Myanmar, demonstrated the regression of democracy in the region. Hong Kong and Thai citizens protested in a series of mass rallies. Images and reports from the protests were delivered to Korean citizens in real time through various social media channels. Protesters even appealed directly to Korean citizens for support. A Hong Kong protester sang a Korean demonstration song (BBC News Korea 2019). International students, migrants, and refugees from Thailand staged rallies in Seoul demanding that the Thai monarchy be reformed. Young Myanmar students held a rally asking for help in front of the Korean Embassy in Yangon, with picket signs and speeches in Korean (MBC News 2021). Myanmar migrants in Korea stood again at the forefront, asking for solidarity and action from Korea.

The large-scale protests of young people in Hong Kong and Thailand from 2019 to 2020, and the civil disobedience movement in Myanmar after the coup in 2021, awakened Korean activists to remobilize their resources for the Asian solidarity movement. In particular, Myanmar's military coup on February 1, 2021 generated several unprecedented outcomes in Korean civil society. First, the number of Korean organizations working to intervene in Myanmar's affairs increased significantly. A few years ago, only 32 NGOs had signed a joint statement condemning the Rohingya massacre (Seong 2018). However, immediately after the 2021 coup, 240 Korean organizations signed a joint statement condemning the Myanmar military (Tha Byae, March 3, 2021). Various social and religious groups issued critical statements, and there was even one signed by 151

12) See the websites of ADN and ADA.

13) The "great transition" unfolded as follows: the collapse of Suharto's 32-year dictatorship (1998); Indonesia's first free general elections in 44 years (1999); the East Timor referendum ending 25 years of Indonesian colonial rule (1999); East Timor's independence from Indonesia (2002); and the Aceh Peace Agreement, which ended the 29-year civil war in Aceh (2005).

scholars of Southeast Asian studies (Eom 2021; *Hankook Ilbo* 2021; Kim 2021).

What was even more surprising was that many citizens and students, beyond civil society activists and scholars, participated in activities to support the Myanmar citizens' resistance. Looking back, it is clear that Korean civil society organizations' Asian solidarity actions had not been carried out with widespread public support and participation. However, the civil disobedience movement by Myanmar citizens against military violence evoked sympathy from ordinary Korean people. The suffering of Myanmar citizens recalled Koreans' memories of military violence and dictatorship in the 1970s and 1980s. The sympathy led to Koreans supporting solidarity activities with Myanmar citizens. A clear indicator of civic engagement is financial donations. One NGO, Korean Solidarity for Overseas Community Organization, raised over 530 million won (approximately USD 430,000) for Myanmar citizens in 2021 alone (KOCO 2022, 307).

School students also expressed their sympathy for Myanmar citizens. For example, middle school students in Incheon city drew pictures containing messages of solidarity and posted them on social media (An 2021). Female high school students in Changwon city wrote phrases in support of Myanmar citizens in the schoolyard (KBS News 2021). Schoolteachers taught special classes on the current situation and historical context of the Myanmar crisis. International students from Myanmar were often invited to these classes (Lee 2022). Students who heard the story of the resistance expressed a desire to do something to support Myanmar citizens.

Another new phenomenon was that citizens began participating in activism not only in Seoul or migrant-populated areas but also in major cities all over the country. There was no precedent for civic engagement actions in cities across the country in response to human rights situations in foreign countries. The most prominent area that showed support was Gwangju city (Yeosu MBC News 2021). The life-and-death struggle of Myanmar citizens aroused strong sympathy from Gwangju citizens, who shared the memory of the May 18 Gwangju Uprising, citizens' resistance against the coup d'état in 1980. Activists and citizens gathered under the name of Myanmar-Gwangju Solidarity issued twenty statements against Myanmar's military rule over the 22 months from the organization's inauguration in March 2021 and conducted various activities, including demonstrations, exhibitions, concerts, and seminars. They raised 310 million won (USD 251,000) and provided 250 million won to the National Unity Government, labor unions, prisoners' advocates, and internally displaced people in Myanmar. The May 18 Memorial Foundation awarded Cynthia Maung the Gwangju Human Rights Award, and its members visited refugee camps and the Mae Tao Clinic in Mae Sot (a city on the Thailand-Myanmar border) with Korean activists in 2022. The foundation also met with Myanmar's National Unity Government figures and ethnic minority leaders for discussions on the Myanmar

crisis (May 18 Memorial Foundation 2022).

Interestingly, civic actions corresponded with political decisions of the Korean government and political parties. President Moon Jae-in posted a Facebook message supporting democracy in Myanmar. The National Assembly also issued a statement against the coup in Myanmar. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced specific measures, such as suspending military cooperation with Myanmar and extending the stays of Myanmar workers on humanitarian grounds (Song 2021). Local governments also issued statements supporting the democratization of Myanmar and provided special scholarships to international students from Myanmar (Oh 2021). These responses were very unusual because the Korean government, even though it regards democracy as its core value, generally refrains from making critical comments or acting against authoritarianism and human rights violations in foreign countries. It can be assumed that civic solidarity action for Myanmar people led to these unprecedented political statements and decisions from the Korean government.

Conclusion: More Universal, More Participatory

Democracy and UN membership formed the opportunity structure for Korean NGOs' Asian solidarity movements. Korea's transition to democracy, which began in 1987, resulted in the emergence of civil society in the country. Korea's entry into the United Nations in 1991 served as a chance for this newly emerged civil society to forge its role in international solidarity movements. In the early 1990s, the inflow of Asian immigrants to Korea and the outflow of Korean companies into Asian countries pushed Korean civil society to focus on advocating for Asian labor rights in Korean companies. The Asian solidarity movement began with a sense of responsibility by responding to specific issues related to Korea.

The Asian solidarity movement, although it started in this way, has grown to encompass a much larger range of issues and areas of concern.[14] As time passed, it also came to embrace issues less related to Korea. Korean civil society started out intending to connect with civil societies in other Asian countries to solve Korea-related problems. However, once connected, civil societies in other Asian countries began asking Korean civil society to act in solidarity to help resolve their problems. In response to this, Korean civil

14) JISEAS compiled a list titled "Korean Civil Society Organizations Engaging in Southeast Asian Issues." It contains information on 61 organizations operating English websites and active in the solidarity movement related to labor, migrant and refugee rights, transnational companies monitoring, environment, democracy, peace, and ODA issues (JISEAS 2021, 244–270).

society developed a broader view of Asian issues encompassing those beyond Korea. Thus, the movement has developed into one that emphasizes the universal values of human rights, democracy, and peace throughout Asia.

Immigrants, who were once the "objects" of solidarity, emerged as "subjects" of the solidarity movement. The participation of public interest lawyers strengthened the solidarity movement's expertise. Korean civil society actively joined transnational networks in Asia and even contributed to launching transnational networks for Asia. The advancement of information and communications technology and the spread of social networking services contributed—and continue to do so—to the development of the movement in terms of networking, information exchange, joint action, and empathy formation. Recently, the movement has grown to incorporate people beyond activists and intellectuals. The Myanmar military coup of February 2021 was a particularly significant turning point that helped elevate the movement to new heights and enabled it to glimpse new horizons.

Despite its thirty years of development, Korean civil society's Asian solidarity movement still faces challenges. Lack of human resources and funding are persistent problems. Most organizations have only one activist for international solidarity. Funding is often discrete, being provided on a project-by-project basis. Even though public participation has increased, there is a problem of bias. While Korean citizens sympathize greatly with Myanmar's civil disobedience movement, their response to the Muslim Rohingya genocide has been muted. They support democratization but are less enthusiastic about accepting refugees. Asian solidarity activists in Korea are interested in the attitudes of the great powers and the United Nations, but they are less efficient about employing ASEAN or East Asian regional cooperation.

That is why the role of scholars of Southeast Asian studies in Korea should be expanded. Over the past thirty years, Southeast Asia area specialists have participated actively in the Asian solidarity movement in Korea by sharing their knowledge and networks.[15] Although they have served with dedication for a long time, I would like to propose at least two new roles for them. First, scholars should provide knowledge and understanding of ASEAN and its regional cooperation in order to help Asian solidarity activists interact with ASEAN appropriately and effectively. Second, scholars should serve as a bridge between the state and civil society by encouraging Korean governments to invite Asian solidarity activists to various bilateral and multilateral diplomatic dialogue forums and events; in this way, civil society's hopes and ideas can be reflected in inter-

15) At least ten scholars of Southeast Asian studies—Yoon Hwan Shin, Je Seong Jeon, Nankyung Choi, Eunsook Jung, Eunhong Park, Jaehyeon Lee, Hyungjong Kim, Inwon Hwang, Jinyoung Park, and Bubmo Jung—have participated in PSPD's activities for Asian solidarity.

governmental cooperation.

Accepted: October 15, 2024

Acknowledgements

This work was supported by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Korea and the National Research Foundation of Korea (NRF-2022S1A5C2A01092544).

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Protecting Migrant Children in Thailand: Importance of Social Integration and Roles of Civil Society

Chalermpol Chamchan*

This paper investigates access to birth registration, education, and health care for cross-border migrant children in Thailand. It also emphasizes the importance of integrating migrant populations into Thai society and the role local civil society organizations play in protecting and improving children's access to these rights. Data collected from previous fieldwork conducted in Thailand's border areas (Mae Sot-Tak, Chumporn, Ranong, Phang-nga, and Chiang Rai) from 2016 to 2020 is analyzed here. With regional variations, the quantitative survey found that between 40 percent and 80 percent of migrant children born in Thailand had their births registered. School enrollment rates for children aged 7 to 14 ranged from 50 percent to almost 100 percent. Notably, most children were enrolled at NGO-run migrant children's learning centers (MLCs), with less than half attending Thai regular schools (except for Chiang Rai, where Thai school enrollment surpassed MLC enrollment). When it came to access to health care, a large proportion of children (ranging from 30 percent to 95 percent) in all the surveyed areas lacked health insurance coverage. Qualitative data analysis revealed a discrepancy between Thai laws and their practical application. While regulations permit birth registration, school enrollment, and health insurance access for all migrant children regardless of their parents' immigration status, numerous obstacles still restrict their access to these rights. The analysis demonstrates that the social integration of migrants and active local civil society organizations can be crucial enablers and mechanisms for protecting migrant children's rights while simultaneously improving the quality of life for both cross-border migrants and local Thais in the communities surveyed.

Keywords: migrant children, cross-border migrant, birth registration, child protection, Thailand

Background and Objectives

Due to demographic transitions, with changes in its population structure, Thailand has been an aged society since 2005. With its low birth rate, the country is anticipated to

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have a smaller proportion of working-age population in the near future while the proportion of the aged population will keep growing (NESDB and UNFPA Thailand 2011). Correspondingly, some policy recommendations have been proposed and discussed, such as improving the quality of the future workforce with a greater focus on human development and quality birth, pronatalist policies to increase birth rate, accepting more migrant workers to fill the labor shortage, promoting active aging, encouraging older workers to remain in the labor market, and innovating and adopting new technologies (Pramote *et al.* 2019). The purpose of such policies is either to maintain the size of the labor force or to enhance the economic productivity of each labor unit. Labor shortage is one of the main concerns with an aging population. The issue of replacement migration has been discussed as a possible solution to the declining and aging population of many aged societies, such as Japan, South Korea, the United Kingdom, the United States, and the European Union (United Nations Population Division 2000). In the case of Thailand, migration of workers from neighboring countries—Myanmar, Cambodia, and Laos—might be an option to consider.

There are a large number of cross-border migrants residing, mobilizing, and working in Thailand, the majority of whom—around 80 percent—are from Myanmar. Many of them—especially low-skilled workers in the agricultural, fishery, construction, and manufacturing sectors (Aphichat, Wathinee *et al.* 2016; Harkins 2019)—migrated into Thailand without valid documents and consequently became undocumented for both residential and working status. The majority of workers are of reproductive age, and many of them have children who were born in Thailand (Ball and Moselle 2015). Although, according to regulations, migrant workers are expected to work in Thailand temporarily for a certain period and then return to their home country, in practice many of them have been living in Thailand with their family for years (Huguet *et al.* 2012). Some even plan to raise their children in Thailand and not return home (Chalermpol and Kanya 2022).

According to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the United Nations Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, all children below the age of 18 years—including those who were born to migrant parents—have a right to birth registration (United Nations 1989; Ball *et al.* 2017), which is the primary condition for facilitating other basic rights and protections. As defined by the United Nations Children's Fund (2013), birth registration is "the continuous, permanent and universal recording, within the civil registry, of the occurrence and characteristics of births in accordance with the legal requirements of a country." It is the official recording of the child's birth—and, in fact, of his or her existence—by the state administration. Information contained in the birth registration generally includes the names of the child and parents, date and place of birth, birth

attendants or witnesses, and name with signature of the registrar (UNICEF 2002). The record is crucial as a "passport to protection" that helps the child secure the right to a name and nationality (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2015). It also safeguards other human rights from childhood to adulthood—especially rights to health care and education; protections against human trafficking and other forms of exploitation and abuse; and state benefits and participation in society (UNICEF 2002). As reported by UNICEF in 2013, among children under the age of five in 158 countries, the births of more than one-third (35 percent)—or nearly 230 million—were not registered. More than half the unregistered births were in Asia (UNICEF 2013).

In the case of migrant children, birth registration is important because it provides documentary evidence of the child's nationality based on the nationality of the parents—even though in many host countries, including Thailand, nationality is not granted according to place of birth. A lack of birth registration as proof of identity and belonging to a nation-state often sets the stage for de facto statelessness and causes difficulties for both remaining in the host country and returning to the origin country (Ensor and Gozdziak 2010, cited in Ball *et al.* 2017). Since 2008, Thai law has adopted the principle of universal access to birth registration for all births in Thailand, including the births of children to displaced persons and parents who are either documented or undocumented migrant workers. The Civil Registration Act revised in that year includes "The Central Civil Registration Department Procedures for Issuing ID Cards for Non-Thai Persons," which gives tacit authority to proceed with issuing ID cards for everyone born in Thailand (Valenta 2007; Inter-Parliamentary Union 2015). However, in practice, there is still limited access to the civil registration system for migrant parents, with numerous obstacles and constraints that need to be investigated. When considering replacement migration as a solution for Thailand's shrinking labor force, second-generation migrant children might be a good choice to replace the workforce in the long run. Ensuring their access to birth registration, education, and health care, which are crucial for human development, is thus important both in terms of basic human rights protection and for the country to have a quality substitute labor force in the long term (Janta and Harte 2016).

According to the literature, the main barriers to birth registration and other rights of migrant children are that they are not universally perceived as fundamental rights and consequently are given low priority by most relevant stakeholders, including migrant parents. In some settings where the legislation and administration of the civil registration system are open to facilitating accessibility to birth registration, there are socioeconomic as well as cultural barriers to impede the accessibility of migrant children (UNICEF 2002; Ball *et al.* 2017). Some factors that have been identified as constraints are a lack of sufficient information and knowledge about the requirements and procedures

for registration, illiteracy and language limitations, and low confidence among parents due to their illegal status and an uncertain future for themselves and their child in the host country. Previous studies have suggested that social integration in the host community, with clear directive integration policy as a long-term agenda at the macro level, can provide migrants with better abilities and opportunities to cope with these challenges (Valenta 2007; Pracha 2010; Huguet *et al.* 2012). Civil society groups, including nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and community-based organizations, constitute another mechanism that can play an important role in this area—not only on the issue of migrant children's rights and protection but also for the migrant population in general (Jampaklay 2011; Chalermpol *et al.* 2016).

This paper aims to present the current situation with regard to access to birth registration, education, and health care for cross-border migrant children in Thailand. The importance of social integration among the migrant population in Thai society and the role of civil society (i.e., community-based organizations) to facilitate better access to these rights of migrant children are explored and highlighted.

Methodology

This study disseminates and analyzes the dataset from three studies on cross-border migrant children's families in Thailand during 2016–20. The first study is "A Baseline Survey of Empowering Civil Society Organizations for the Protection of Migrant Children (ECPMC) Project," conducted in September–December 2016 by a research team from the Institute for Population and Social Research, Mahidol University (IPSR-MU). A quantitative questionnaire survey and qualitative fieldwork were carried out in three study sites: Mae Sot (Tak Province), Ranong, and Chumporn in Thailand. The questionnaire survey collected quantitative data on status and access to birth registration, education, and needed health services of migrant households, with a focus on household members aged 0–14 years. Data was collected on 604 migrant households with 869 migrant children in Mae Sot (Tak Province, n = 338), Ranong (n = 231), and Chumporn (n = 300). Qualitative data was collected in each study site through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with key local stakeholders, including members of migrant communities and community-based organizations, representatives from the local Thai authorities (civil registration office, public health facilities, public schools, local governmental organizations), and nongovernmental organizations. Approximately twenty key stakeholders were interviewed or included in focus group discussions in each study site.

The second study is "Migrant Children Population: Child Rearing, Access to Health

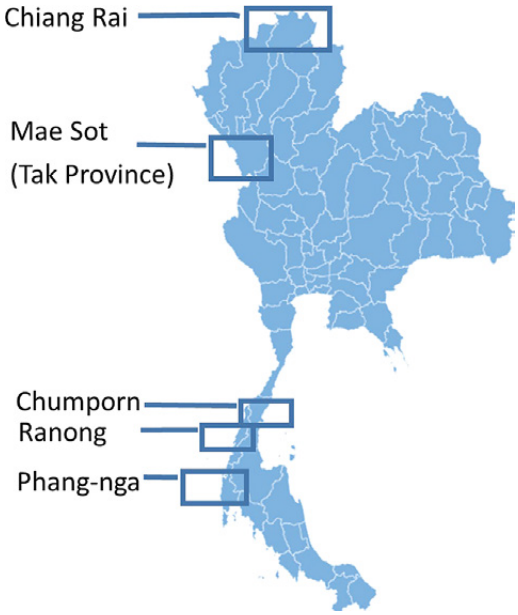

Fig. 1 Five Study Sites of Three Studies, 2016–20
Source: Author

Services and Education in Special Economic Zone (SEZ) Mae Sot, Tak Province," conducted by IPSR-MU in 2018. A questionnaire survey was carried out on migrant families, covering a total of 803 migrant children aged 0–14 years in the SEZ development area of Mae Sot (Tak Province). The study also included qualitative data collection through focus group discussions and in-depth interviews with 65 migrant children's caregivers as well as representatives of relevant local public, private, nongovernmental, and community organizations.

The third study is "An Assessment of Access to Birth Registration among Migrant Children: The Quantitative Study" conducted by IPSR-MU and UNICEF-Thailand. This study was based on a quantitative survey in January–March 2020 to assess access to birth registration, school enrollment, and health insurance coverage among 723 migrant children aged 0–14 years in two provinces: Chiang Rai (n = 417) and Phang-nga (n = 306).

The survey and data collection protocols of all three studies were reviewed and approved for research ethics by the Institutional Review Board, Institute for Population and Social Research (IRB-IPSR), before the fieldwork started. The certificate of approval (COA) numbers are COA. No. 2016/08-083, COA. No. 2018/10-307, and COA. No. 2019/11-447, respectively.

Cross-border Migrant Workers and Migrant Children in Thailand

Over the years, the Thai government has tried to regularize the millions of cross-border foreign migrants through One-Stop Service Centers (OSSCs), where undocumented migrants can register, at no penalty, and obtain travel documents and work permits for a limited stay in Thailand. At the same time, the government has implemented a nationality verification program for undocumented workers and ethnic minorities as a basis for issuing alien cards. Bilateral MOUs were negotiated between Thailand and its neighbors to systematize migrant worker management to fill the widening labor gaps in the Thai manufacturing and service sectors (Chalermpol and Kanya 2016). However, the job categories were limited to a few occupations, and permits were issued for only a two-year stay (renewable for an additional two years), after which the migrant had to return to the home country to restart the process. The Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) introduced a health insurance program for migrants and their accompanying dependents, but the migrants had to pay annual premiums in order to be eligible (Malee *et al.* 2017).

It was reported that in 2016, 1.2 million cross-border migrant workers from Myanmar, Laos, and Cambodia registered with the Thai government through OSSCs. Of them, about 24,000 were workers' dependents, including migrant children (Office of Foreign Workers Administration 2017). Interestingly, the number of dependents registered at the OSSCs in 2016 appeared to be significantly lower than those in 2014 and 2015, which were about 93,000 and 39,000, respectively. Other groups of documented migrants were those who completed the nationality verification process and those who came to Thailand under bilateral MOU agreements. These groups of workers were reported to be 900,000 and 440,000 in 2017. Thus, the total number of documented migrants in Thailand was around 2.55 million at the time (Office of Foreign Workers Administration 2016). This number was, however, believed to be much lower than the actual number of migrants living in the country. According to the migrant population estimation by IPSR-MU in December 2015, the total number of migrant workers from Myanmar, Cambodia, and Lao PDR was estimated at 3,518,851; of them, 2,782,880 were from Myanmar, 454,000 from Cambodia, and 281,971 from Lao PDR. The number of workers' dependents was estimated to be 1,032,198, making a total of 4,551,049 migrants (Patama *et al.* 2016). By comparing the officially documented number with the estimated one, it may be concluded that nearly two million cross-border migrants were still left undocumented, though the exact number is unknown.

In the second half of 2019 (July–December), the number of migrant workers from the above three countries was estimated at 2,782,994. However, in the first six months

of 2020, the number had declined by about 300,000 to 2,472,978 (Yongyuth and Sirawit 2020).

With respect to migrant children (defined in this study as the population under 15 years of age who were children or accompanying dependents of migrant workers from Myanmar, Laos, and Cambodia), the actual number in Thailand is unknown, and it is difficult to find any reference even for an estimate. According to the 2010 national Population and Housing Census, the total number of migrants aged below 15 from Myanmar, Cambodia, and Lao PDR was reported to be 140,684: 107,519 Burmese, 22,799 Cambodian, and 10,365 Laotian (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board 2013). An estimate in 2012 reported the number of migrant children as 311,000, accounting for around 10 percent of the estimated total migrant population in Thailand. Approximately half of them were believed to have been born in the country (Huguet *et al.* 2012). UNICEF (2020) estimated the total migrant population (documented and undocumented) in Thailand in 2019 at approximately 3.6 million. It estimated the number of accompanying dependents under the age of 18 years at about 14 percent, or approximately 500,000 children and youths (UNICEF 2020).

Findings

Access to Birth Registration

According to the United Nations Children's Fund (2002, 3), "Lack of birth registration is a violation of the child's inalienable human right to be given an identity at birth and to be regarded as part of society."

In the quantitative survey in five study sites during 2016–20, most of the migrant children aged 0–14 years were found to have been born in Thailand (ranging from 65.5 percent to 94.1 percent) (see Fig. 2). The proportion of children born in Thailand was found to be the highest in Phang-nga (94.1 percent) and Chiang Rai (92.8 percent) in the 2020 survey, followed by Chumporn (90.4 percent) and Ranong (82 percent) in the 2016 survey, and the lowest in Mae Sot-Tak (65.5 percent and 76.2 percent) in the 2016 and 2018 surveys, respectively.

With respect to migrant children's birth registration access, Thai law allows registration of birth in Thailand to parents who are undocumented migrant workers and/or entered the country and/or are working illegally (Roman and Sowirin 2019). However, in practice—based on the qualitative fieldwork in Mae Sot-Tak, Ranong, and Chumporn—there are numerous obstacles limiting access to the civil registration system. According to migrant parents and NGO representatives, there is a requirement for documentation

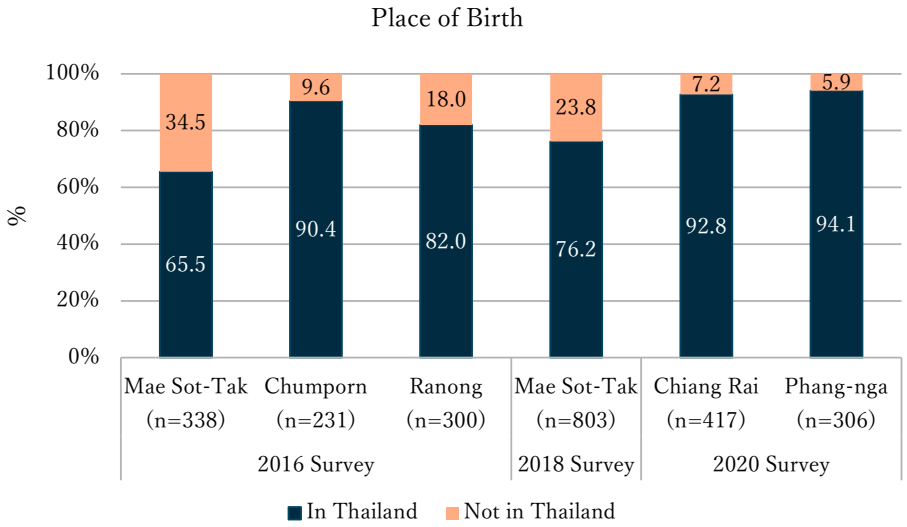

Fig. 2 Place of Birth of Migrant Children aged 0–14 Years in Five Study Sites
Source: Analyzed by author

(a birth certificate issued by the hospital if the birth was in the hospital, or a document or other form of proof signed by a Thai community leader if the birth was at home or in the community) to be presented to the registrar to affirm that the birth occurred in Thailand.

The required documentation may vary from case to case, based on the discretion of the registrar. Some sites require a photo of the newborn and parents, or a witness who attests to the birth (e.g., an employer). Some registrars might ask the local health center staff to screen the supporting documentation before issuing a report of the birth. In other sites, staff from the registrar's office might investigate and require evidence proving that the birth occurred in Thailand (rather than in the migrants' country of origin).

Delayed reports of a birth might incur a fine of 100 to 200 baht. Also, the registrar might set up a committee to investigate the proof of birth and reasons for late registration. Some key informants, including the registrar, mentioned that the parents' personal ID or passport needed to be provided to ensure accurate recording of data (e.g., spellings of name and address). A birth could be registered without these identification documents from parents, though that could impact the type of birth registration the child received. If the parents were undocumented migrants (having no valid documents to live or work in Thailand) but had ever registered a birth for a previous child, that documentation could be used as a reference for the current birth. In some study sites the registrar required at least one supporting document, even an expired one. Some other registrars accepted

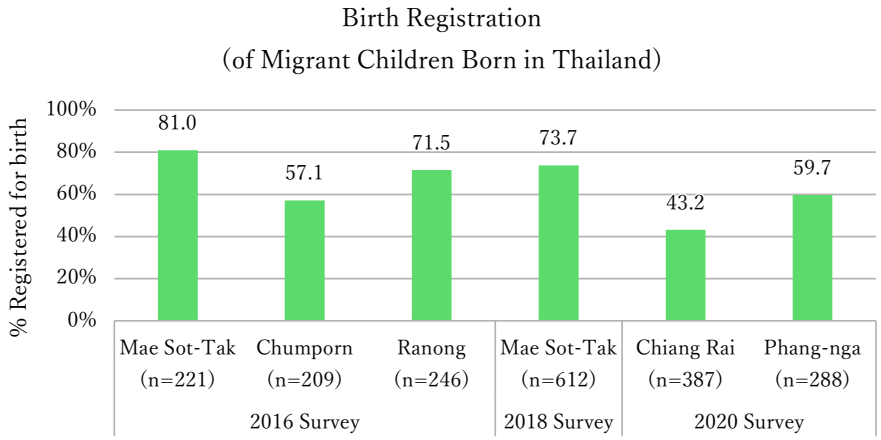

Fig. 3 Birth Registration of Migrant Children Aged 0–14 Years Born in Thailand in Five Survey Sites

Source: Analyzed by author

only current (i.e., non-expired) documents. Some registration offices would not register the birth if one parent had identification documents but the other did not. These examples clearly indicate the inconsistency of implementation and the discretion practiced at the operational level with regard to the birth registration regulations and guidelines of the 2008 Civil Registration Act in the study sites.

The results of the 2016 survey (see Fig. 3) show that the percentage of migrant children born in Thailand within the 15 years preceding the survey (aged 0–14 years in 2016) whose births were registered ranged from 81 percent in Mae Sot-Tak to 71.5 percent in Ranong, and 57.1 percent in Chumporn. This finding is somewhat inconsistent with the finding of the Thailand Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey (MICS) in 2015–16 that there were only 2.5 percent of children under the age of five in non-Thai families whose birth had not been registered (National Statistical Office 2016). In the 2018 survey, the percentage of migrant children in Mae Sot-Tak who had been born in Thailand and whose birth had been registered was found to be 73.7 percent, lower than the figure in 2016. In Chiang Rai and Phang-nga, access to birth registration of migrant children born in Thailand was reported at only 43.2 percent and 59.7 percent, respectively, in the 2020 survey.[1)]

1) It must be noted that this information is based solely on reports by migrant worker families during the questionnaire survey. Information on place of birth and whether the child's birth was registered or not was not verified through documents or provable evidence from the family. The use and interpretation of these findings are limited by this fact.

This finding indicates that since 2008, when Thailand implemented a policy allowing all children born in the country—regardless of their nationality or legal documentation status—to be registered at birth, there has been some improvement in migrant children's access to birth registration. However, the improvement is minimal (surveys during 2016–20 found that only 43.2 percent to 81 percent of migrant children were able to have their birth registered), suggesting that significant barriers or challenges still remain in ensuring widespread and equitable access. However, as the quantitative survey was conducted only for children who were born and living in Thailand at the time, the percentage of children with birth registration found in the survey is likely to be an overestimation. It is possible that some of the children born in Thailand but whose birth was not registered had moved or been sent back to their country of origin with or by their parents. As observed in Ranong, there were a number of migrant mothers who crossed the border to deliver a child at a Thai hospital and returned to Myanmar without registering the birth at the district office. In cases where parents did not register the birth, a commonly cited reason was that they did not know they needed to (29.2 percent). One-fourth of parents did not know where to register, 18 percent said there was a lack of personnel to assist them, and one-tenth could not speak Thai.

Access to Education and Health Insurance

According to the United Nations' CRC, economic, social, and cultural rights along with accessible and affordable education and health services must be protected and fulfilled for all children (UNICEF and National University of Lanus 2010). In keeping with this principle, Thailand has implemented the "Education for All" Policy since 2005. In cooperation with other relevant stakeholders in both the government and nongovernment sectors, the Ministry of Education provides education opportunities for all children in the country, including migrant children, irrespective of their or their parents' documentation (Premjai 2011; Kamowan 2013). Standard education in Thailand is offered from age 7 to 15 years.

According to Kanya Apipormchaisakul and Chalermpol Chamchan (2020), in the study sites there are two systems for educating children of cross-border parents. The first is through the Thai education system (including both formal and non-formal educational curricula) (Thithimadee 2021). However, the qualitative fieldwork showed that this required the child to be able to communicate in Thai to a certain level. Some schools gave language tests to help place foreign children at an appropriate level, but that was usually for older children. The default grade for new foreign students was primary grade 1. This could create glaring disparities when older migrant children were required to sit in the first or second grade with much younger Thai students. According to migrant

families, the documentation required for applying to attend Thai schools usually included an ID document from the parent or guardian (if that was not available, the Thai community leader or employer could vouch for the parent). Thus, even if a child did not have a birth certificate, he or she could attend school. From the qualitative fieldwork, it appeared that accepting a cross-border child into a Thai school seemed to be at the discretion of the school administration. But the schools in the study sites indicated that they had the capacity to accept more cross-border children if the demand was there. Migrant parents who chose to enroll their child in a Thai school were couples who planned or intended to work and live in Thailand for an extended period. They believed that if their child had a Thai education he or she would be able to find work more easily. Still, there was some prejudice in mixing children of foreign migrants with Thai students; this aversion was mostly on the part of Thai students' parents. Thus, in many schools and early childhood development centers, there was some segregation of Thai and non-Thai students.

The second education system for cross-border children is through learning centers—migrant children's learning centers, or MLCs—managed by local NGOs. During the study period, in some areas—for example, Mae Sot-Tak—MLCs were under the monitoring and supervision of the province's Education Service Area Office (Primary Educational Service Area Office Tak-2, 2021). The centers had to report their enrollment each year. However, they did not receive direct financial support from the Education Service Area Office or Thai government. MLCs did not require documents from the child in most cases, though they sometimes required documentation from the parents. Some MLCs were found to be collaborating with formal Thai schools to help foreign students improve their Thai language and academic skills in order to transition to Thai schools. In Mae Sot-Tak, MLCs were starting to connect with counterparts on the Myanmar side to arrange for the potential transfer of credits and qualifications. In Chumporn, students who completed the curriculum at an MLC could use their diploma to continue their studies in Myanmar without dropping a grade. However, the converse was not applicable: migrant children who had studied in centers or schools in their home country could not transfer those credits to Thai schools, due to the language difference.

In the quantitative surveys (see Fig. 4), it was reported that most of the school-age children (7–14 years) of migrants in the study sites were going to school: ranging from 84.4 percent in Ranong to 98.8 percent in Chiang Rai. The exception was Chumporn, where the percentage of migrant children studying in 2016 was quite low: only 50 percent. This finding still indicated a better educational situation among migrant children than the report by Save the Children (2016), which found that 60 percent of migrant children in Thailand were left out of school. Of the children who were studying in the study sites excluding Chumporn and Chiang Rai, a larger proportion were in MLCs than in Thai

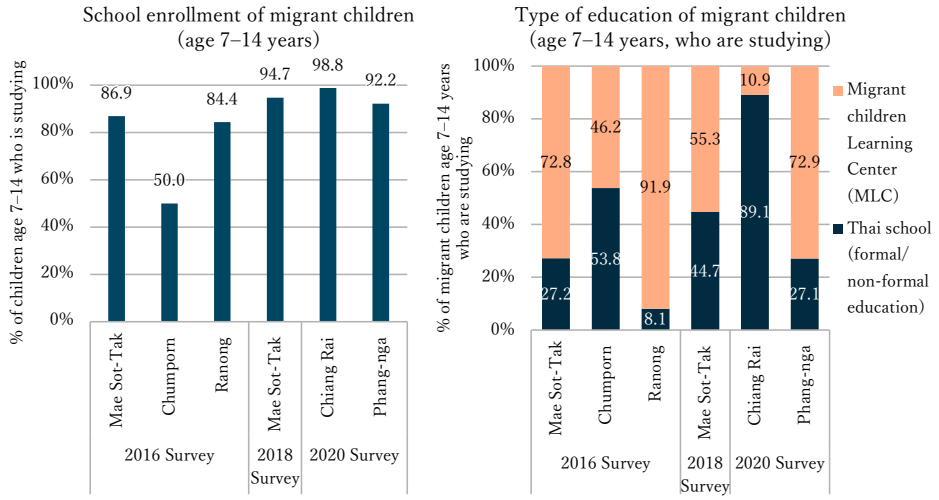

Fig. 4 Education Enrollment of Migrant Children Aged 7–14 Years in Five Study Sites
Source: Analyzed by author

schools. This was especially the case in Ranong, where the percentage of enrollment at Thai schools was very low: only 8.1 percent. On the other hand, in Chiang Rai and Chumporn, the enrollment of migrant students was found to be higher at Thai schools than at MLCs. This difference was due primarily to the unique contexts of migrant populations and educational management in each study site. MLCs are more easily available and better managed in Ranong, whereas they are less accessible in Chiang Rai and Chumphon.

When it comes to access to health insurance or health protection, migrant children under the age of seven years are eligible to buy health insurance at the child rate from public hospitals under the Ministry of Public Health in Thailand (Chalermpol and Kanya 2016). The Migrant Health Insurance Scheme is administered by the MOPH. The scheme was established in 1998 with the initial purpose of providing health protection to irregular migrant workers who had registered and applied for a work permit. The annual premium for migrant workers (including children aged seven years and above) from 2016 to 2020 was 1,600 baht, plus 500 baht for the medical checkup. For migrant children younger than seven years, the annual premium in 2016 was 365 baht (Chalermpol and Kanya 2016). In all the study sites, this health insurance was found to be sold by MOPH hospitals to newborn migrant children on the condition that the child's birth was registered and the child had a documented address.

The surveys revealed that health insurance coverage among migrant children remained limited in all study sites except Chiang Rai: only about one-third of children in

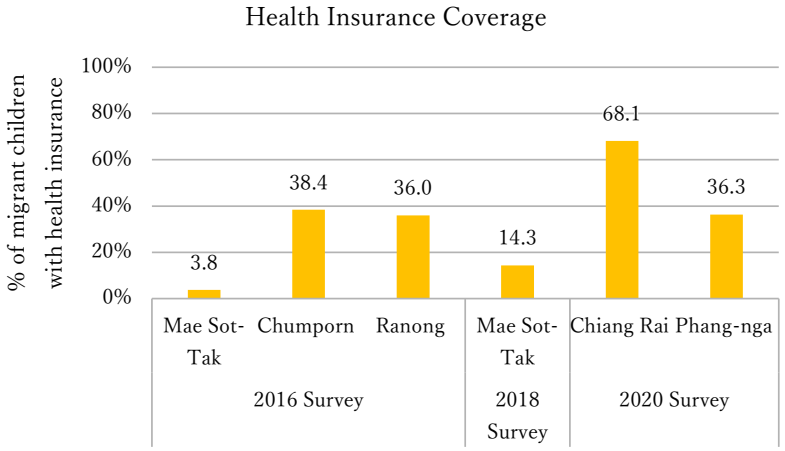

Fig. 5 Health Insurance Coverage of Migrant Children in Five Study Sites
Source: Analyzed by author

Chumphon, Ranong, and Phang-nga were covered (see Fig. 5). Coverage in Mae Sot-Tak was exceptionally low: only 3.8 percent, according to the 2016 survey and 14.3 percent in the 2018 survey. This limited health insurance coverage implied limited access to institutional health services for migrant children in Thailand. The situation in Chiang Rai, however, was different—there, health insurance coverage was found to be 68.1 percent.

Importance of Social Integration and Roles of Civil Society

"Social integration" here refers to, first, the acculturation or cultural adaptation of migrant populations to the local Thai community—for example, in terms of language ability and usage, daily clothing, having Thai friends, etc. Second, it can be indicated by the level of participation by migrants in daily or social activities in their local communities, for example, daily shopping at the local Thai market, greeting Thais, participating in religious and cultural events with Thai communities. According to the typology of Aphichat Chamratrithirong, Sureeporn Punpuing *et al.* (2016), there are four possible categories in the social integration of Thailand's cross-border migrant population (see Fig. 6).

"Integration" indicates the highest degree of social integration: migrants participate actively in the local community and at the same time are able to retain their own sociocultural identity. "Assimilation" is the second-highest category: migrants participate well in the local community but seem to lose their own sociocultural identity. The next category, "separation," is where migrants are unable to participate in the local community but are able to keep their own sociocultural identity. "Marginalization" is the

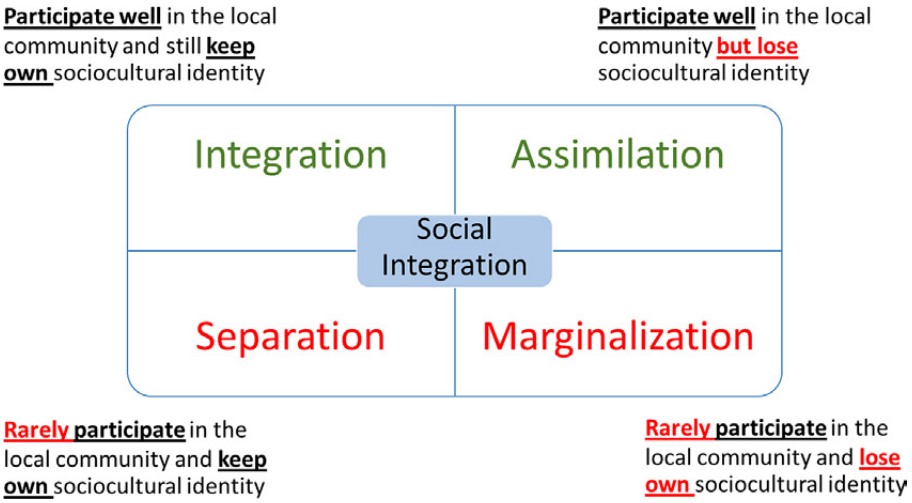

Fig. 6 Typology of Social Integration of Migrant Population
Source: Author, based on Berry (1992; 1997; 2002) in Aphichat, Sureeporn *et al.* (2016)

worst situation in social integration: migrants are unable to participate well in the local community but are unable to keep—or they lose—their own sociocultural identity after moving to Thailand.[2)]

Aphichat, Sureeporn *et al.* (2016) found that Laotian migrant workers appeared to be more socially integrated in Thai society compared to migrants from Myanmar and Cambodia. While Laotian migrants were found able to "integrate" with Thai society and culture—due to sociocultural similarities between Thailand and Lao PDR—Cambodian and Myanmar migrants were more "assimilated" and "separated," respectively (Aphichat, Sureeporn *et al.* 2016).

According to the findings from the first study (the baseline survey of the ECPMC project), improving migrant children's access to birth registration, education, and health care requires the social integration of migrants in local Thai communities. According to the 2016 survey findings (Fig. 3), only 81 percent, 57.1 percent, and 71.5 percent of migrant children aged 0–14 years born in Mae Sot-Tak, Chumporn, and Ranong, respectively, had their births registered. The survey also asked parents who had not registered their child's birth to provide reasons for not doing so (see Fig. 7). A common

2) Sumalee Chaisuparakul (2015) also studied the social integration of cross-border migrants in Thai communities, focusing on migrants from Cambodia. She ranked the levels of social integration from "assimilation" to "integration," "multiculturalism," and "segregation." According to Aphichat, Sureeporn *et al.* (2016), though "assimilation" might indicate a higher level of integration, the category of "integration"—where migrants keep their own sociocultural identity—seems to be more preferable.

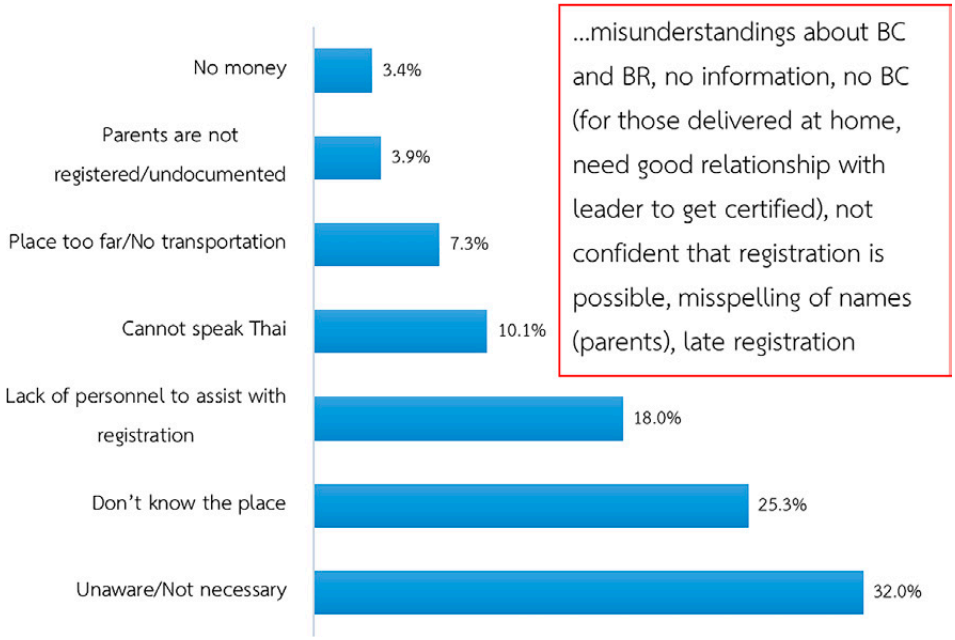

Fig. 7 Reasons for Not Registering Birth of Migrant Children from the 2016 Survey in Mae Sot-Tak, Chumporn, and Ranong (n = 178)

Source: Analyzed by author

reason given by parents was that they did not know they should or were not aware that birth registration was important (32 percent of all sampled children without birth registration in the three survey sites, n = 178). This is similar to the problem found in a study in Indonesia on access to birth registration for children of transnational labor migrants (Ball *et al.* 2017). About one-fourth of migrant parents in Thailand did not know where to go to register, 18 percent said there was a lack of personnel to assist them, and one-tenth could not speak Thai.

The qualitative fieldwork (in 2016 and 2018) revealed that the main barriers to birth registration included misunderstandings about the difference between the birth certificate (or birth notification) issued by the Thai hospital where the child was delivered and the birth registration that needed to be processed at the civil registration office. It was found that many migrant parents thought the certificate and registration were the same document; thus, when they received the certificate, they did not visit the civil registration office to register the birth. Another problem is that many migrants, though aware of their right to register the birth of their child born in Thailand, were not confident that registration was possible or allowed by the Thai authorities.

Some migrant parents ran into problems when the information on different sets of documents was inconsistent. One common problem was variations in the spelling of the parents' names in the Thai language on the personal ID form (i.e., work permit, temporary passport) and the birth certificate from the hospital. In cases of home births,[3] parents were required to get a report or certificate of birth (considered to be a birth certificate) issued and signed by the local leader (i.e., the village headman). In some cases, an additional document was required from the employer of the parent(s) who were cross-border migrants. This group was more at risk of not having their child's birth registered compared to those delivering in a hospital. In some cases local officials did not fully cooperate in the birth certificate process or were slow in issuing documents, causing parents to miss the 15-day birth registration deadline. Late birth registration was more complicated, requiring more documentation and evidence. In addition to these problems, the fieldwork found that some Thais (including hospital staff and community leaders) still did not clearly understand the implications of birth registration nor the rights of migrant populations, which in many cases became obstacles or constraining factors in access to birth registration for migrant children. Some Thais still held the misunderstanding that registering a cross-border birth would confer Thai citizenship to the child.

Based on the above findings, social integration can play an important role in facilitating better communication and cooperation among stakeholders in order to mitigate barriers to birth registration for migrants. It can help with resolving issues of misunderstanding and lack of awareness among the migrant population as well as Thais about the importance of birth registration and its difference from a birth certificate; misspelling of migrants' names in Thai documents, which are filled out mostly by Thai personnel who do not know how to correctly spell the name based on the original spelling; lack of support in getting the report of birth for babies delivered at home or in the community from Thai village headmen; lack of knowledge about the location, procedure, and documentation requirements for birth registration. These problems can be resolved with support from local Thais in the community or from Thai authorities at a civil registration office or public hospital. The stakeholders here are identified as the migrant population themselves, Thais in the general population, Thai and migrant community leaders, migrant workers' employers, and Thai authorities (especially civil registration officers

3) Some pregnant migrant women do not deliver their child in a hospital (and do not attend antenatal care facilities) due to a variety of reasons—for instance, a lack of documentation, personal ID, or health insurance. Also, migrant couples who give birth in Thailand usually have to bear the entire cost of delivery. There are other barriers, such as communication or language difficulties, lack of knowledge about the distance to be traveled, and too long a distance to the site for delivery (especially in remote areas).

as well as health staff at hospitals and Tambon Health Promotion Hospitals).

In Mae Sot-Tak, Ranong, and Chumporn, community-based organizations (CBOs)—civil society groups with support from local NGOs—played a crucial role not only with respect to migrant children's rights but also other issues. Most of these CBOs were created spontaneously by groups of cross-border migrants trying to address common problems they faced. The work was driven by a volunteer mindset of regular people and leaders in the community. Some CBOs that were more organized had formed cremation funds, community health posts, and health savings funds to support members. At the time of the study (2016–18), the CBOs were populated mostly by non-Thai migrants, with some informal participation from Thais. Without Thai members, most of the CBOs faced difficulties and constraints. In some areas, a new model of CBOs with a mixture of Thai and migrant members was introduced, with encouragement and support from NGOs and local authorities. When a CBO is developed and strengthened with enough capacity, it is expected to serve as the intermediary for various activities (covering not only birth registration but also health care, savings, education, and social welfare) to improve the quality of life of both migrants and Thais in the community. CBOs are ideally situated to serve as a link between migrant populations, local Thais, and government agencies (see Fig. 8).

Two types of CBOs were observed to exist in the study areas—one formed independently by migrants and the other as an externally funded project of an NGO or external agency. In the independent CBO, members volunteered their services and expected no monetary compensation. While the willingness of volunteers to work for the community was commendable, independent CBOs' capacity was limited compared to CBOs that received external funding support. Capacity building—for fundraising, project proposal writing, program management and monitoring, and skills in coordinating with Thai counterparts—is believed to be important for strengthening and sustaining cooperative work by independent CBOs in the long run.

Conclusion

From the quantitative and qualitative data collected in three studies during 2016–20 on cross-border migrant families in Thailand, this paper describes birth registration among migrant children born in Thailand and gives some evidence about their access to education and health protection. Based on quantitative surveys in five study sites, it was found that among migrant children aged 0–14 years born in Thailand, 40 percent to 80 percent of the births were registered with the local Thai registrar. The main reasons for not

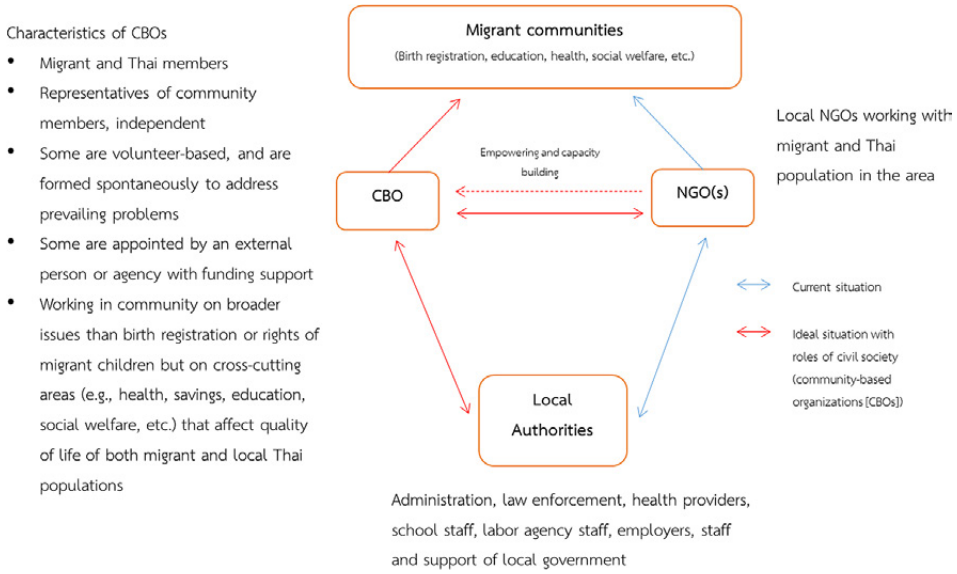

Fig. 8 Role of Civil Society in Supporting Migrant Communities and Enhancing Migrant Child Protection: The Community-Based Organization (CBO) Model

Source: Author

registering births included a lack of awareness among migrant parents about the importance of registration, a lack of information about where to register, a lack of information about personnel who could assist with the registration procedure, an inability to communicate in Thai, transportation difficulties, etc. Other problems that constrained access to birth registration included misunderstandings among migrants about the difference between a birth certificate and birth registration, a lack of confidence that the registration of migrant newborns was allowed by Thai officials, the documentation required for registration, inconsistent spelling of migrant parents' names in required documents (e.g., the ID document and birth certificate), and difficulty getting a birth report from Thai community leaders in cases of home births. There was also a misconception among local Thais that registering a cross-border birth would confer Thai citizenship to the child; this could limit support from local people in facilitating access to birth registration, etc.

This paper spotlights some specific issues that social integration on the part of migrants could help to facilitate or mitigate, including barriers of access to their children's birth registration. Coordination and communication among stakeholders can be enhanced or improved through social integration. CBOs are highlighted as another recommendation from the qualitative findings to act as an intermediary mechanism linking the migrant

community to local Thais and Thai authorities for various purposes. Such purposes go beyond birth registration to include aspects such as health care, savings, education, and social welfare. CBOs are expected to take on the roles of NGOs currently working in the area, with the hope that they will be more sustainable and better responsive to the needs of both migrant populations and local Thais.

Though this was not investigated in the current study, experiences in European countries suggest that providing migrant children with access to education and language training could be a potential strategy for promoting social integration of the migrant population (Dayton-Johnson *et al.* 2007; Janta and Harte 2016). This study on five study sites found that 50 percent to almost 100 percent of migrant children aged 7–14 years were studying, but only a small proportion were enrolled in Thai schools where Thai was the medium of instruction. Most of the children were enrolled at NGO-run migrant children's learning centers. As shown by a previous study, Thai immigration law restrictions that grant only temporary status to migrant children, with almost no possibility of granting permanent residence—and thus have unclear implications for the children's legal status in the future—are the key factors explaining why migrant parents see less benefit to sending their children to Thai schools (Kamowan 2013). In order to address and resolve issues that discourage migrant parents from sending their children to Thai schools, such as the temporary status of migrant children and the uncertainty of their future legal status, it is necessary to have a clear and coherent integration policy for the migrant population that might link to a pathway to citizenship or possible residency status for the children. This would enhance access to birth registration, education, and health care for migrant children and at the same time promote the social integration of migrants into the Thai community. The country would also benefit from these children—and the migrant population in general—as a replacement for the declining domestic workforce in the long run.

Accepted: October 15, 2024

Notes

The data used in this paper is from three research projects: (1) "A Baseline Survey of Empowering Civil Society Organizations for the Protection of Migrant Children (ECPMC) Project," supported by the World Vision Foundation of Thailand and the European Union; (2) "Migrant Children Population: Child Rearing, Access to Health Services and Education in Special Economic Zone (SEZ) Mae Sot, Tak Province," supported by Thailand Science Research and Innovation; and (3) "An Assessment of Access to Birth Registration among Migrant Children: The Quantitative Study," by UNICEF-Thailand. The views and discussions in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views or opinions of the research-supporting agencies.

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Displacing Kinship: The Intimacies of Intergenerational Trauma in Vietnamese American Cultural Production

Linh Thủy Nguyễn

Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2024.

For the better part of the last half-century, trauma has been a ubiquitous frame through which we make sense of ourselves and others. While the idea of trauma may encourage empathy as well as exploration into personal and collective histories, it more often than not normalizes historical outcomes, pathologizes reaction to violence, and forces closure. When the framework is used for understanding the behavior of others, it often compresses their lived experiences into well-worn narratives that underwrite projects of settler colonialism, imperialism, and structural racism. Unsurprisingly, trauma has reigned in refugee studies in general and Vietnamese refugee studies in particular. Linh Thuỷ Nguyễn's *Displacing Kinship: The Intimacies of Intergenerational Trauma in Vietnamese American Cultural Production* makes a vital intervention by prompting us to ask, "Why is the discourse of trauma accessed more readily than the frame of racism or state violence in discussions of U.S. involvement in Vietnam," which "gets lost in the personal narratives of the children of Vietnamese refugees?" (p. 2). In raising this question, Nguyễn makes a very compelling argument based on her reading of documents, sociological research, and refugee cultural productions to redirect how we think about the refugee family in relation to US racial and imperial projects.

The necessity of Nguyễn's question is laid out in the introductory chapter. The exigencies of a racist empire are occluded in stock narratives about trauma at the site of the refugee family. While the Vietnam War consistently shows up as "the source of trauma in second-generation and diasporic cultural productions," Nguyễn argues, its narrativization "elides the overwhelming presence of assimilation as the source of violence and trauma" (p. 4). This elision prevents us from a deeper and wider understanding of refugee family and community. Nguyễn brings in the wider context of empire to situate US racist assimilation. The trauma is explained in terms of not just US intervention in the Vietnam War and the devastation in that violent imperial adventure but also the aftermath of the war. Rightly, Nguyễn lays out the trauma that came as a result of the legacy of US war making, such as the destruction of economic and social infrastructures in both South

and North Vietnam and the lasting effects of tactical defoliants like Agent Orange. Nguyễn points to the US embargo of Vietnam immediately following the North's victory that resulted in hardship and pain not only through the postwar economic costs to Vietnamese but also by keeping families apart due to a communication ban between those in the US and their kin in Vietnam. This account of the source of trauma for Vietnamese and refugees beyond the pat narratives of unexamined war violence is absolutely vital in any conversation about refugee family, community, and politics. In the introduction, which sets up the problem for the book as a whole, this necessary spotlight on US actions overshadows the part that Vietnamese played in that tumultuous history albeit within the global chessboard of empire. Colonized peoples fought for their liberation and state-building projects, all of which also came with serious levels of violence for the people being liberated as well as those doing the liberating. The resulting division and recrimination continue to play a major part in the disaffection of refugee family and community relations in a perilous dialectics with US imperialism and racist assimilation. Readers, however, should not rush to the conclusion that in righting the egregious omission of US violence in narratives of refugee trauma, the book's historical account may render refugees inert in their own history. The author's purpose becomes clear as the argument unfolds in the rest of the book, not necessarily to correct our view of the sources of refugee trauma but to redirect our thinking and reframe our being in the world away from trauma as a constraining mode of identification. It is a complex and satisfying argument.

Chapter 1 compellingly tackles the task of answering the above "Why" question. This chapter shows how narratives about the Vietnamese refugee family were deployed in 1975, right at the beginning of postwar refugee resettlement. Officially released photos and stories to the media began portraying the Vietnamese refugee family as modern, educated and therefore Westernized, and racially Asian. These were the traits that would fix Vietnamese into the heteronormative mold of the Asian model minority, in contradistinction to Black and Latino families caught in the urban and rural racial poverty of the 1970s and 1980s. This distinction became enshrined in sociological research of the era that functioned to extend state power with its Cold War projections abroad and racist configurations of power at home. By presenting Vietnamese refugee families through the "dual global imaginaries" that made intelligible their flight from the repressive regimes of revolution and liberation in the Socialist bloc to the freedom offered by the United States' "educational crusade against Communism," Nguyễn argues, refugee families were cast in "sentimental and sociological inclusion, or a 'feeling of kinship' that African Americans have historically been excluded from" (p. 34). Besides a few exceptions, the bulk of sociological research about Vietnamese refugees validated this state narrative. The US Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, for instance, hired a research firm to conduct longitudinal studies of Vietnamese refugee resettlement through quarterly surveys from 1975 to 1984 (p. 38). This was in continuity with prior state-sponsored sociological studies that denigrated the Black family, such as the 1965 Moynihan Report authored by Assistant Secretary of Labor Daniel Patrick Moynihan. The stage was set for refugee racialization

as part of the Asian model minority within the restructured anti-Black racism of the post-Civil Rights era. Later sociological studies in the late 1990s and beyond extended this mode of Vietnamese refugee racialization through the valorization of the East Asian culture of hard work, Confucianist centrality of family and education, and community cohesion and resources. These narratives generated by sociological research obscure the very epistemological formation of the refugee family as dependent upon the wages of whiteness.

From this critique, the author launches an "anti-romantic approach to family" (p. 15). What is meant, however, is not a trajectory devoid of sentiments. The rest of the book takes readers on a journey of "engagement with the affective and relational resonances of assimilation as read through the lens of family" (p. 26), culminating in calls for alternative forms of intimacy and relations holding together community not premised upon identities like Vietnamese, Asian, and American, as these are tied to ethnic or national political formations through the heteronormative family.

Chapter 2 analyzes two graphic novels, G. B. Tran's *Vietnamerica* and Thi Bui's *The Best We Could Do*, for the way they also recontextualize Vietnamese family affect in geographical Southeast Asia and the longer view of history. Instead of depicting refugees as being "saved" by the US, these works reveal shifting parental relations and uneven refugee experiences of war, integration, and racialized poverty in the US. Nguyễn reads these works for the feminist ambivalence displayed by Tran and Bui, in their witnessing of "their parents' lives before them as they step into roles of child, mother, or partner," and the necessity of "constructing a relational practice of kinship that opens possibilities for relationships yet to be" (p. 90). Chapter 3 focuses on intergenerational and queer traumas through an examination of Ocean Vuong's *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous* and the music, interviews, and documentary film by Thao Nguyen of the indie band Thao & The Get Down Stay Down. This chapter finds these texts suggesting a "bodily memory of something other than trauma," in a "public feeling opened to political possibilities and ways of being that keep open the meanings, affects, and experiences of being 'queer' or 'Vietnamese' or 'Vietnamese American'" without consolidating them as "identities, nationalities, and allegiances" (p. 120).

Chapter 4 arrives at the author's concept of displacing kinship through revisitation of the texts covered in previous chapters as well as the work of the visual artist Trinh Mai. This chapter starts with Miss Hannah Peace, the woman who inspired Toni Morison's *Sula*, as an embodiment of a memory accessible only through a state of *being with* her lived experience and that of her community, rather than a capturing in research and representation. As such, Nguyễn goes beyond Marianne Hirsch's concept of postmemory that bounds traumatic events in time and space. Instead, Nguyễn proposes a women of color feminist approach that opens up alternative politics of intimacy and presence to call for a letting go of trauma as the primary mode of identification and knowledge and a move toward being with others that forges new relations. This "being with" is nonverbal and nonnarrative, resisting the reification of relations into sociological knowledge and representational politics. The epilogue reiterates the disconnection at the site of the family as revealing the

violence of empire and racist assimilation. Such disconnection calls out for alternative intimacies that do not rely on familial reproduction of trauma nor identitarian forms of being and belonging.

This book makes a necessary intervention in Critical Refugee Studies, reorienting the field toward future configurations of intimacies. It should be included in undergraduate and graduate curricula addressing refugees, empire, racialization, kinship, and feminist/queer studies.

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Colonial Law Making: Cambodia under the French

Sally Frances Low
Singapore: NUS Press, 2024.

Anyone who has stepped into the former Palais de Justice, opposite the Royal Palace in Phnom Penh, will feel the air of France's colonial heritage in Cambodia. Inaugurated in 1925 and more recently housing the offices of Cambodia's Ministry of Justice and the Appeal Court, the compound represented the heyday of colonial law in this former protectorate of France (1863–1953). It is therefore fitting that Sally Frances Low opens her fascinating monograph *Colonial Law Making: Cambodia under the French* with a description of this symbol of colonial rule. The book is a sensitive and thoughtful analysis of how colonial law was conceived and practiced under the French. It is meticulously put together, based on many years of archival research, especially in the National Archives of Cambodia and the Archives Nationales d'Outre-Mer in France. Patiently and rigorously, Low has unearthed a vast amount of archival sources and combined these in a lucid narrative that brings to life an important aspect of colonial rule. Interweaving accounts of the structural conditions of colonial Cambodia with personal stories of the colonizers and colonized, the author has produced an engaging legal history that reveals law both as a tool of a colonial civilizing mission and as a means of domination. In essence, Low posits that "colonial law justified, established, authorised, ordered and influenced colonial rule" (p. 3).

The book makes an original and well-researched contribution to the scholarship on colonial law (Merry 2003; Dezalay and Garth 2010) and fills an important gap in our understanding of French colonial rule in Cambodia (Forest 1979; Edwards 2007). Yet, Low is attentive also to both the connections and the variations in the ways in which the law is imagined and practiced across different colonial contexts and empires. As someone who is neither a historian nor an expert in the literature on colonial law, I have focused in this review more on the socio-legal legacy of colonial law making in Cambodia. I highlight in the following some key themes that transcend the book's

chapters: the nature of indirect rule in the protectorate and the role of the monarchy, contestations between colonial rulers and local elites and how these shaped the law and its practice in unique ways, how colonial law and jurisdictions categorized and divided the protectorate along ethnic lines, and the long-lasting legacies of French colonial law in postcolonial Cambodia.

First, since Cambodia was a protectorate, the exercise of colonial rule there invariably differed from other parts of French Indochina. Low shows how a narrative of protection, grounded in the 1863 Treaty of Amity, Commerce and Protection, was seized upon by the French to expand their powers well beyond the terms of the treaty and at the expense of King Norodom, who nominally ruled Cambodia for much of the second half of the nineteenth century. Considering the monarchy's significance in Cambodian history and tradition, its symbolic power was mobilized by the French to legitimize their own domination over the protectorate, illustrated by the fact that laws were soon jointly promulgated by the King and the *résident supérieur*, the highest's colonial official in Cambodia. Thus, while ostensibly employed in support of a mission to modernize and "civilize" Cambodia, colonial law maintained a close relationship with custom and helped to legitimize authoritarian rule. This relationship between law, order, and largely unaccountable rulers continued in new guises through much of Cambodia's postcolonial history (Chandler 2019).

Second, Low astutely reveals that contestations between colonial rulers and local elites were at the core of how colonial law was conceived and shaped. The law became an arena for struggles over control, in which different conceptions of law, justice, and rule stood in opposition. From these contestations emerged "hybridised" concepts of law that, according to Low, melded "old" Cambodian methods of rule with "new" French approaches of governance. Thus, while the French imposed on the protectorate a state-based hierarchy of legal codes and courts, especially during the early twentieth century (Blazy 2014), they simultaneously relied on negotiations with local elites in the exercise of power and thereby accommodated established structures of clientelism and customary notions of law. The book highlights with the example of Prince Sihanouk's rule under the Sangkum how such hybridized notions of law and governance continued into the post-colonial era. Other observers will feel reminded of the legal and judicial reforms during the 1990s or even the hybrid Khmer Rouge Tribunal (Ciorciari and Heindel 2014)—each combining and thus "hybridising" rule of law concepts and structures with distinct Cambodian elements and understandings of law.

The result is a compelling account that portrays Cambodians as neither passive nor powerless but rather as active participants in the making and shaping of the colonial law of the protectorate. Yet, ordinary, non-elite Cambodians remain in the background. The author acknowledges that the archives on which this book relied are inherently elite-made and -focused. The lived experiences of ordinary people under colonial law are therefore difficult to reconstruct. However, building on her long-standing experience of working in Cambodia, Low remains sensitive to her subjects and aware of the power imbalances inherent in her archival materials.

Third, Low provides a fascinating account of how colonial law categorized populations along ethnic lines and divided them into different jurisdictions. There were effectively three such jurisdictions: one for French citizens and other Europeans; one for "foreign Asiatics," predominantly ethnic Vietnamese but also Chinese; and the "indigenous" jurisdiction, which covered the majority Khmer population (Hoeffel 1932). The people in each jurisdiction were governed by different laws and courts, with the indigenous jurisdiction remaining mostly in the hands of Cambodian judges. The result was a discriminatory system of jurisdictions with no equality before the law that not only distinguished between the colonizer and the colonized but also among the colonized populations of the protectorate. As such, colonial law incorporated and, in many ways, exacerbated existing ethnic tensions, especially with regard to ethnic Vietnamese communities (Thun and Keo 2024). The ethnicity-based categorizations and distinctions were carried over into post-independence Cambodia, where many long-term residents of Vietnamese origin remain stateless to this day (Sperfeldt 2020).

Throughout the book, Low carefully identifies and traces the long-lasting legacies of colonial legal arrangements. The French influence on Cambodia's formal legal and judicial system remains visible to this day, with French development cooperation having played a central role in the reform of the Criminal Code and Criminal Procedure Code during the 1990s. Although colonial law introduced many of the foundational rule of law concepts and institutions that are still used in Cambodia today, their application in practice was frequently restricted as the law also served as an instrument of domination. The result is the façade of a relatively well-developed postcolonial legal infrastructure behind which hybridized notions of law and rule continue to reverberate (Sperfeldt 2016). For instance, colonial restrictions prevented the emergence of an independent and robust Cambodian legal profession, leaving a legacy of a lack of autonomy in the legal field. This was further exacerbated by a general neglect of legal education—the first law diploma in Cambodia was offered only in 1949 and the Faculty of Law and Economics established only post-independence, in 1957.

Overall, Low has produced a thought-provoking account of how a fusion of Cambodian traditions and French influences shaped the nature, authority, and practice of law in Cambodia. This book is a must-read for those wanting to obtain a fresh and insightful understanding of the contested making and working of colonial law and its long afterlife, both in Cambodia and beyond.

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Turning Land into Capital: Development and Dispossession in the Mekong Region

PHILIP HIRSCH, KEVIN WOODS, NATALIA SCURRAH, and MICHAEL B. DWYER, eds.
Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2022.

What is land? The anthropologist Tania Li (2014, 589) observed that "Land is a strange object" and can be considered "an assemblage of materialities, relations, technologies and discourses that have to be pulled together and made to align." These multiple facets of land make discussions about land relations and land politics increasingly complex. This complexity is reflected in the interdisciplinary discussions over the past decade about global land grabbing, with the Mekong region emerging as a key area for exploring this topic. Under the influence of globalization and the market economy, land in this region has transformed from a traditional production factor into a mobile and appreciating asset. This process, known as land capitalization, has triggered various socio-economic and political concerns. The edited volume *Turning Land into Capital: Development and Dispossession in the Mekong Region* thoroughly explains these issues.

The introduction of the book discusses the complexity of land capitalization, with its social, economic, and political factors and resulting struggles, resistance, accumulation, and exploitation issues.

This chapter identifies three main forms of land capitalization: improvement, commodification, and financialization. "Improvement" is a social process of investing "labor and materials to make land more productive" (p. 174) in the context of modernity and development. "Commodification" is the process of gaining land control through transforming social-property relations in favor of monetary investment. "Financialization" encompasses the multiple financial actors as well as state-owned enterprises controlling land in its various forms with various outcomes.

Using as an example the Mekong region—Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, and Southwest China—the volume examines the practices and profound impacts of the above three processes at different national and local levels.

The book is divided into two main parts: (1) a broad overview of the Mekong region and a comparison of land governance between countries within this region (Chapters 1 to 4), and (2) case studies of five countries (Chapters 5 to 9). Chapter 1 examines cross-border land deals in the Mekong region, specifically the complex motivations behind them, their heterogeneity, the intricate interactions among multiple actors, and how these transactions shape the regional geopolitical landscape. It also highlights how cross-border land investments intertwine with the region's turbulent history. Chapter 2 discusses changes in land governance in Myanmar, Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia from colonialism to socialism during the Cold War, exploring historical legacies of land governance in the Mekong region and their impact on contemporary land policies and practices. It also addresses long-standing indigenous discontent. Chapter 3 provides an in-depth analysis of the history of agrarian modernization in the Mekong region, examining both past developments and current market-oriented trends. It critiques the current agricultural policies dominated by large-scale farming, especially neoliberal agrarian modernization, expressing concerns about drastic changes in agricultural structures and uneven development. The chapter emphasizes the importance of smallholder agriculture and its contribution to social justice and economic development. Chapter 4 illustrates how the three main forms of land capitalization shape land ownership and governance, leading to unequal land access and exclusion, which reveals the complexity of land justice struggles. Notably, the justice issues have received growing attention from land science researchers (Meyfroidt *et al.* 2022), as reflected in the Global Land Programme Science Plan and Implementation Strategy 2024–2028.

The second part of the book (Chapters 5 to 9) offers a detailed examination of the history and current state of land governance in Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam. Case studies are presented to reveal the main strategies and characteristics of land capitalization processes in each country. Land tenure insecurity and the resistance behaviors of smallholders in unstable conditions are also addressed in these chapters. Specifically, Chapter 5 delves into the history and current state of land governance in Cambodia and the interplay of land commodification, state formation, and agrarian capitalism. It highlights three crucial processes: land titling and the creation of credit markets, integration into regional agricultural trade, and large-scale economic

land concessions (ELCs). Chapter 6 discusses the political dynamics of land development in Laos. It emphasizes that land policies and practices there have been shaped against the backdrop of the country's history and its geopolitical and economic imperatives, with two distinct modes of land capitalization: concessions based on state land, and smallholder development based on private land. Chapter 7 explores how race, ethnicity, and war have influenced land policies and practices in Myanmar. Specifically, it addresses the long-standing contestation of racial, ethnic, and national identities and unequal power relations, represented by "Burman-led crony capitalism and non-Burman strongmen economies" (p. 130) in land commodification. Chapter 8 explores the evolution of land relations and how land has been improved, commodified, and financialized in Thailand's "highly unequal rural society" (p. 136). In addition, it highlights the countermovement limiting accumulation and dispossession by engaging with the Polanyian notions of fictitious commodity and double movement, as well as cross-border investment through contract farming and long-term land rental in neighboring countries. Chapter 9 examines the historical evolution of land policy and property relations, with a focus on the current "land recovery" policies as reverse land reform seeking domestic and foreign investments in the name of national development in Vietnam. It extends the discussion to the balance between protecting smallholders and promoting economic development.

The following points are worth noting. First, the book reveals the diversity and complexity of land capitalization in the Mekong region along various dimensions, exploring how land is capitalized through different processes and how these are influenced by geopolitics, historical legacies, and ideologies. It highlights internal differentiation in the processes of land capitalization within each country as well as interactions within the Mekong region, noting similarities in agrarian modernization and transborder investment in agriculture between Vietnam, Thailand, and China. However, the differentiation of processes within countries could have done with a more in-depth examination. Also, the book does not contain a separate chapter on China despite the speed and scale of Chinese capital entering the Mekong region and the impacts of China's Going Out policy and Belt and Road Initiative. As S. M. Borras *et al.* (2018) pointed out, it is crucial to consider not only investment flows from China but also those within and into China.

Second, the book effectively highlights the persistence of land capitalization issues over time, described as casting "a long shadow" (p. 30). As mentioned in Chapter 2, colonialism, war, and socialism have profoundly impacted current land governance. In other words, the production, shaping, and reshaping of land relations unfold through ongoing social processes (for instance, the ELCs in Cambodia and the ethnic and racial dynamics as well as unequal power relations in Myanmar).

Third, the book elaborately describes the upland-lowland differences and the linkages between certain Mekong countries in terms of ethnicities, agro-ecological practices, migrations, and tenure systems. For instance, it addresses differentiation in land access in Cambodia, different modes of land capitalization in Laos and Myanmar, and land reform for differently allocating individual land

use rights in Vietnam. However, these dynamic processes in land capitalization deserve to be explored further.

Fourth, although this is not extensively covered, the book sheds light on the plight of marginalized groups in the land capitalization process, such as smallholders and migrant laborers. As a Cambodian farmer notes, "I do not like the situation now. I wish I could have the livelihood like before" (p. 76), reflecting the uncertain future of inhabitants of the Mekong region. This echoes M. Vatikiotis's (2017, 304) description of Southeast Asia as being caught "in a cycle of relentless tragedy."

The volume is rich in content. Its contributors, who have long been engaged in research on land politics and land relations, have based their work on an abundance of research results. Undoubtedly, the book makes a significant contribution to understanding the ongoing issues of land grabbing, crop booms, agricultural transformation, and rural-urban interactions in the Mekong region and other developing countries. For a better understanding of land politics and land system changes in the Mekong region and situating these topics in broader academic contexts as well as disciplinary fields (such as environmental outcomes), this book can serve as an important reference along with two other open access resources: the report titled "State of Land in the Mekong Region" (2019) and the collection titled "The Agrarian Transition in the Mekong Region: Pathways Towards Sustainable Land Systems" in the *Journal of Land Use Science* (2024). This book also offers a valuable foundation for further discussions on smallholder agriculture, rural development, nation building, and regional sustainable development. It is likely to be of great interest to researchers in the fields of Southeast Asian studies, agrarian studies, and land system science.

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Enigmatic Objects: Notes towards a History of the Museum in the Philippines
Resil B. Mojares
Manila: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2023.

Redoubled attention on the Philippines in light of the quincentennial of the first circumnavigation of the world has prompted historians to emphasize the archipelago's significant role in the global exchange of commodities and knowledge. Ancillary to this endeavor is the study of collection and display of its cultural artifacts. Shaped by a complex colonial history that includes the violence of colonial ethnology, museum objects have often been overlooked for what they most clearly reveal: the history of the institutions and personalities responsible for collecting them.

Resil Mojares's *Enigmatic Objects* is an attempt to chronicle the development of museums in the Philippines—an underexplored topic which he tackles with characteristic erudition. Mojares notes that scholars tend to focus on how colonizers represented Filipinos, leaving inchoate how Filipinos represent themselves (p. 53). This reflects a broader pattern of delayed institutional development, exemplified by the National Museum of the Philippines' official establishment as a government trust only in 1998. Prior to this, Philippine museums existed on an ad hoc basis, often under the jurisdiction of various government departments (p. 129). In order to write a longer history of museums, Mojares had to consider the history of private collections, which forms the second part of the book. These collections were assembled by the ilustrado class, whose curiosity cabinets eventually formed the foundation of museum institutions (p. 232). The anecdotes on Jose Rizal, Trinidad Pardo de Tavera, Isabelo de los Reyes, Pedro Paterno, and the lesser-known friar Clemente Ignacio offer insights into how museums function as both repositories of knowledge and vehicles for wresting power from colonial authorities. However, the nuances of their motivations—and the larger implications of their collections—are left under-examined. The valorization of figures like Pardo de Tavera and Paterno understates the excesses of the colonial nationalist gaze that so often accompanied early collecting practices. For instance, Mojares considers the *Velarde Map*—the earliest map to include the shoals of the West Philippine Sea—only for the challenges of its preservation, disregarding how it reinforced certain cartographic perspectives that served colonial and then later nationalist interests.

There are notable omissions, which may explain why the essays are presented as "notes," signaling both the provisional nature of the work and an acknowledgment of the author's subjective stance. Mojares (2013) employs a similar approach in *Isabelo's Archive*: under-promising as a methodological strategy that grants curatorial freedom to the researcher, while still fostering remarkable discussions. Despite this caveat, the book leaves this reader wanting more direct engagement with contemporary issues facing museums, such as projects to decolonize and repatriate Philippine artifacts dispersed worldwide. *Enigmatic Objects* undeniably initiates some of these conversations, but it often feels like a history only half told.

One notable gap in contextualization is Mojares's explanation for why educational institutions became the first sites for museums, which he attributes largely to an 1865 royal decree mandating secondary schools to establish natural history museums, laboratories, and botanical gardens. This gives short shrift to the grassroots efforts of an emerging intellectual class which since the late eighteenth century had been a channel for spreading Enlightenment ideals.

The idea that early museums were predominantly curated by European missionaries and bureaucrats with the intent of imposing European values on local populations (p. 80) is therefore an oversimplification. As Mojares regrettably only briefly discusses, civic organizations such as the Sociedad Económica de los Amigos del País, whose members included individuals who first identified as Filipino, created an invisible college that significantly supported the organization of trade schools and the establishment of a museum (pp. 81–84).

The Enlightenment museum was a public space dedicated to the diffusion of useful knowledge, whose central innovation was the organization and display of an accessible taxonomy of the natural and artistic worlds. The founding mission of early Philippine museums followed this trajectory, seeking to cultivate an informed citizenry and democratize education. However, racial inequalities are also in evidence in these initiatives. While these museums were founded with liberal ideals, they also reflected the deep social hierarchies of their time. This tension between the democratic aspirations of education and the realities of colonial power is further explored in the chapter "The First Colonial Museum," which revisits the 1891 inauguration of Museo-Biblioteca de Filipinas under Pedro Paterno's direction. Mojares emphasizes the foreignness of this museum, whose collections were shaped by a desire to control and categorize the world around them. However, recalling both established and more recent scholarship, such neat conclusions remain curious. Writing in *The Birth of the Museum*, Tony Bennett (1995), whom Mojares cites, criticizes the unquestioned application of this Foucauldian perspective (p. 86). The emergence of the museum was part of a broader set of institutions, from clinics and prisons to department stores, which were all linked to new academic disciplines and ways of seeing the world. It is due to this ongoing discussion that rather than centering on quixotic personalities like Paterno and revisiting intellectual histories that Mojares has already adeptly explored, the history of Philippine museums urgently needs to be written under the lens of institution building, where the establishment of museums is viewed as part of broader efforts to advocate for humanistic education. In line with Bennett, Mojares writes that historically, objects like artworks and natural specimens were often hidden from public view, accessible only to elites. However, in the nineteenth century museums opened to the general public, making them witnesses to a new form of power. Museums, though enclosed, became sites where power was displayed to the masses through public exhibitions.

Indeed, historians from Benedict Anderson to Renato Constantino and John Schumacher have already established how colonial education inadvertently laid the groundwork for Filipino identity formation. Perhaps this volume's essays would have been more nuanced if the colonial museum's

function was evaluated as part of a more complex dynamic involving local responses and eventual resistance.

Mojares's concentration on the Spanish colonial era and ethnographic museums leaves another gap: the contributions of the father-son duo Roman and Alfonso Ongpin, who are mentioned only in their roles in establishing the first art supply store (p. 273). The younger Ongpin lived in the waning years of Spanish colonization (which is perhaps why he was not thoroughly considered), but his contribution cannot be understated as a conservator and collector of ilustrado paintings. He played a crucial role in establishing some of the country's most important collections, selling or donating works to the Lopez Museum, the National Museum, the National Library, and the museum in Fort Santiago. His minor role in Mojares's book is an unfortunate oversight, given Ongpin's influence in shaping not only public art collections but also the representation of Philippine culture during a transitional period in the nation's history. This reader is also baffled by how the historian Epifanio de los Santos, an avid collector of rare Filipiniana, is mentioned merely in a supporting role to his friend Pardo de Tavera, whose contributions have already been established in Mojares's earlier studies (p. 236). De los Santos's personal collection of Filipiniana laid the groundwork for the establishment of modern archives in the Philippines, and it is for this reason that the primary avenue in Metro Manila is named after him.

Mojares's historical framework also overlooks some questions of continuity and exhibits a bias toward colonial agency, glossing over the instability and inadequacy of the Spanish conquest of the Philippines. In Mojares's own account the National Museum led a nomadic life, shifting from one provisional space to another until 1927, when it finally found a home in a government building. That it inherited ilustrado collections was less a triumph of preservation than the salvage of a colonized nation's fragments. The absence of local participation in shaping the colonial museum parallels the resistance and evasion strategies used by Indigenous, Moro, and Chinese communities against colonial rule. However, a shift in perspective would yield, from the very records Mojares has cited, accounts of donations from the nineteenth century of artifacts, textiles, weaponry, precious stones, and minerals by Indigenous peoples given with the intention to be included in museum collections. Why were these not highlighted in the essays?

The exploration of intriguing ocean objects in Philippine museums in the chapters "Hunters, Gatherers, and Traders" and "Four Ways of Looking" illustrates the uniqueness of Philippine objects and the institutions that house them. The Venus' flower basket, a marine sponge in whose protective structure a pair of crustaceans called *Spongicola venustus* take shelter, was discovered in 1841. Classified as a form of naturally occurring glass, the Venus' flower basket is sometimes displayed alongside oriental arts and crafts. The glass sponge's popularity as a museum exhibit in Europe underscored Spain's significant lack of understanding about its most distant colony (p. 190). The essay on the dugong, an endangered sea creature native to the region from which the rare mermaid ivory is derived, touches on the symbiotic relationship between humans and animals

(p. 324). However, the absence of Indigenous perspectives about the dugong, while lurking just beneath the surface of Mojares's accounts, might be the most important issue *Enigmatic Objects* is trying to address.

In the chapter "The Painted Prince," about the display of the tattooed Mindanaoan slave named Giolo at the Bodleian Library, Mojares critically engages with the fundamental issue of how institutions display humans and their remains. While museums often preserve—and at times petrify—living things, disconnecting them from the dynamic contexts through static displays, there are times when imagining the opposite can be as haunting (pp. 170–173).

While Mojares effectively deconstructs the misappropriation of archival practices, the essays leave room to resurrect their affordances and potential in a postcolonial context. The choice to not discuss issues in this format feels like a missed opportunity to confront the ongoing tensions between Indigenous knowledge, ilustrado ambitions, and the colonial ethnographic frame that persists in museum displays.

A recurring theme in Mojares's essays on museum collections is knowledge precarity, an insightful framework considering the numerous natural calamities, fires, and wars that have destroyed entire collections, such as that of the *gabinete* of Ateneo de Manila (p. 7). However, the author does not explicitly steer the essays into a deep reflection on the topic, avoiding a conversation about the material realities of museums.

Enigmatic Objects presents a robustly detailed history of Philippine museums, but it is a history book that is yet to be completed. Nevertheless, there are many moving sentences in the essays that will leave the reader breathless. While *Enigmatic Objects* is undoubtedly an essential contribution to Philippine historiography, it suffers from burying beneath layers of fascinating anecdotes the hard questions about how museums might serve the living heritage they are meant to protect.

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Arabic Literary Culture in Southeast Asia in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries

Andrew C. S. Peacock

Leiden: Brill [Handbuch Der Orientalistik vol. 175], 2024.

In his latest monograph, Andrew C. S. Peacock presents an exceptional study on Southeast Asian manuscript traditions in Arabic before the advent of print in the region. While Arabic was not as widely spoken as Malay and Portuguese in maritime Southeast Asia (p. 17), it played a central role in Muslim intellectual life. *Arabic Literary Culture in Southeast Asia in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* explores "Arabic texts that were composed in seventeenth to eighteenth-century Southeast Asia, or for a Southeast Asian audience, and the Arabic texts that were read and copied in the region" (p. 2). It especially covers Arabic texts collected, copied, or commissioned by several royal courts in the Indonesian Archipelago: Banten, Aceh, Palembang, Bone, and Makassar.

The book gathers 66 Arabic treatises whose manuscripts are preserved in Perpustakaan Nasional Republik Indonesia Jakarta, overseas libraries, and private collections or digitalized by scholars and archival schemes. Colophons and marginalia provide subtle and often overlooked information on completion dates, places, ownerships, and patronages, giving an idea of the manuscripts' circulation and connecting the manuscripts to wider literary networks in Asia, Africa, and Europe. This monograph might be one of the most comprehensive in the field, given Peacock's ambitious quest of presenting a monograph covering extensive studies of Arabic manuscripts in Southeast Asia, many of which are of Middle Eastern and North African or Indian provenance.

Peacock argues that Arabic manuscripts do not merely function as historical antiques nor *kramat* relics but instead reflect "the texture of Muslim life and thought" (Johns 1996) and constitute the Arabic "textual culture" (Bray and Evans 2007) in the region. He criticizes the prevailing trend of Southeast Asian scholarship that focuses only on textual cultures in vernacular languages such as Malay, Javanese, or Bugis, especially after the rise of *pesantren* in the nineteenth century. Instead, he asserts that "the royal court was the major centre for the writing and reading of an indigenous Southeast Asian Arabic literature before the nineteenth century" (pp. 2–3).

This book examines "the place of Southeast Asia in the broader literary and intellectual networks of the Arabophone Islamic world" (p. 5) and refutes the existing frameworks on Arabic literary networks. Peacock argues that "a common Indian Ocean literary culture in Arabic seems to be based in part on the fallacy that the entire region was united in its commitment to the Shafii madhhab and Ash'ari theology" (p. 401). This criticism may refer to the works of Ronit Ricci (2011), Sebastian Prange (2018), and Mahmood Kooria (2019; 2022) quoted earlier in the introduction. Peacock argues that Arabic literary networks in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries "were of far broader reach than the Indian Ocean" (p. 400). This claim is supported by his decade-long research, discussion of which is divided into eight chapters.

Chapter 1 sets out the theoretical frameworks of Arabic manuscript traditions, state formation, patronage, Islamization, and vernacular languages beyond Indian Ocean networks. It argues that Arabic constituted the lingua franca for trading and diplomacy in Southeast Asia. This complemented Malay as another lingua franca of Southeast Asia in forming the Arabicized Malay or Jawi script while contesting against Portuguese as the international maritime tongue of the Indian Ocean trade networks. Chapter 2 examines the proliferation of local textual production in Southeast Asia in Arabic, especially after the medieval Hijaz transformed into an intellectual hub for South and Southeast Asian scholars. This chapter is helpful for general readers who are unfamiliar with the topics of Islamization in Southeast Asia and the instilling of Sufism in the region. It also provides an introduction to scholarly disputes over *wujūdi* (the monist doctrine of "unity of being"/*waḥdat al-wujūd*, associated with Ibn ʻArabī) theology (p. 18).

Chapter 3 follows up on the trans-regional debates on *waḥdat al-wujūd* that brought theological and sociopolitical consequences to Muslim states and intelligentsia, as exemplified in Acehnese scholars' disputes in Sumatra and the Hijaz. It takes account of several Arabic manuscripts capturing Acehnese polemics on the spread of *wujūdiyya* in Aceh and its opposition at the dawn of the seventeenth century. Chapter 4 analyzes the Bantenese royal court's patronage of the Hijazi scholar Ibn ʻAllān (d. AD 1057/1648 AH), whose commentaries on al-Ghazāli's treatises were copied, reproduced, translated, and circulated to counter the spread of the *wujūdiyya* doctrine in Java. Chapters 3 and 4 suggest that Hanbalī intellectual influence was introduced in seventeenth-century Southeast Asia through allusions to Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya's thoughts in Ibn ʻAllān's *al-Mawāhib al-Rabbāniyya*, composed in AD 1637/1046 AH. This finding, again, challenges the existing idea of "a common intellectual culture across the Indian Ocean" (p. 401) committed to Shāfi'ism and Ash'ārism.

Chapter 5 discusses the growing participation of Southeast Asian scholars in grasping sophisticated Arabic texts by the Sulawesi-origin scholar Yūsuf al-Maqāsirī (d. AD 1699/1111 AH), who later settled as a royal mentor and mufti in the mid-seventeenth-century Banten Sultanate and whose Arabic writings became primary sources for the court, before discussing works by his followers from southern Sulawesi. It shows how al-Maqāsirī traveled beyond the Indian Ocean in pursuit of knowledge (pp. 157–193) and how his followers from southern Sulawesi began a "bazaar" (colloquial) Arabic literary tradition that was "very different from the *fuṣḥā* of the classical texts, mixed with local phrases and grammar" (pp. 17, 362). Chapter 6 focuses on the understudied Banten scholar ʻAbdallāh b. ʻAbd al-Qahhār, who induced Sufism to Banten royals in the eighteenth century, while comparing his literary culture to his contemporary but better-known Sumatra scholar ʻAbd aṣ-Ṣamad al-Palimbānī. In contrast to the glory days of the Palembang Sultanate, the fall of Banten Kraton changed the trajectory of manuscript tradition to patronize composing new Arabic texts in Java and recycling older manuscripts rather than importing new Arabic texts from the Middle East.

Chapter 7, arguably the main chapter of the book, showcases the manuscript collections of the Banten Sultanate. This, the longest chapter, goes from tracking orientalist documentation of the existing Arabic texts currently preserved in Indonesia and the Netherlands to classifying the manuscripts into several categories based on their themes and utilities. Overall, the Arabic manuscript collections of the Banten court reflect a common readership across Southeast Asian regions, engaging with disputes in global Islamic scholarship while also showcasing "bestsellers that were read widely in both the Middle East and India" (p. 397). Chapter 8 sums up the key findings and arguments, notably by highlighting the wide reach of the Arabic language and manuscripts in Banten, Aceh, Palembang, Bone, and Makassar, stressing the historical value of Arabic collections that did not circulate widely beyond their local courts of origin and extending the theoretical framework of Arabic literary networks to have a "far broader reach than the Indian Ocean" (p. 400).

This book is rich with primary sources, illustrations, and historical analysis. Many of the manuscripts it discusses have not been discussed before, making their appearance in this book the "sole source for many of the texts discussed here" (p. 6). The volume stands out as a crucial work for understanding Arabic literary culture in the Muslim world, particularly in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Southeast Asia. Its thorough examination of Southeast Asian royal courts positions the book as an essential resource for specialists as well as students beginning their study of Arabic manuscripts and global Islamic intellectual history.

Despite its merits, the volume is not without its shortcomings. Peacock appears to miscomprehend "Arabic cosmopolis" and "monsoon Islam" as limiting categories of closed and distinctive Muslim lives and thought in the periphery (p. 401), while adopting the unfit political term *dār al-Islām* (abode of Islam) to describe globalized literary networks (Cf. Calasso and Lancioni 2017). While the author's claim about the vast influence of Hanbalīsm is somewhat valid, it tends to be overly deterministic. This is because Peacock relies mainly on allusions to al-Jawziyya's ideas, using them to downplay the legal pluralism in the Indian Ocean, which according to him was unified around Shāfi'ism and Ash'ārism (pp. 3–5, 401–402). The author's characterization of Pasai as a "remote corner of the *dār al-Islām*" (p. 27) seems contradictory, given his position against Southeast Asia being viewed as a peripheral region. Despite these criticisms, this book is one of the more significant contributions to the field of Southeast Asia's Arabic literary culture and the broader Muslim world.

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Transnational Philippines: Cultural Encounters in Philippine Literature in Spanish

Axel Gasquet and Rocío Ortuño Casanova, eds.
Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2024.

Readers, students, and scholars interested in Southeast Asian literature will be gifted with an unusual account of the history of the Philippines born from an exploration of works written in Spanish about the Philippines and by Filipino authors. Taken together, the 12 chapters of *Transnational Philippines* reveal the logic of colonial and postcolonial ideologies, the processes of assimilation and emancipation, the entanglement of the Philippines in global networks of trade and culture, and the impact of these on the literary traditions that followed the encounters among Spain, Mexico, Cuba and Puerto Rico, the United States, and the Chinese and Japanese peoples in the Philippines. The breadth of the book's temporal scope (from the sixteenth century to the Japanese occupation in World War II) and the diversity of the textual genres examined (missionary chronicles, travelogues, poems, essays, novels, and short stories) provide a fundamental historical overview of the subject and a compelling argument for understanding the Philippines as a transnational space.

This volume expands on existing works dedicated to the analysis of transnational aspects of Filipino culture, such as Denise Cruz's study of the construction of Filipino femininity through cultural contact across the Pacific in what she calls the "transpacific filipina" (*Transpacific Femi-*

nities: The Making of the Modern Filipina, 2012) and Irene Villaescusa Illán's understanding of Filipino nationalism in literature written in Spanish as a transcultural phenomenon that explains the national and international entanglements that shaped this literary tradition in the early twentieth century (*Transcultural Nationalism in Hispanofilipino Literature*, 2020). The major contribution of *Transnational Philippines* to the field of Hispano-Filipino studies as a transcultural space is its refusal to understand the textual production of Philippine literature written in Spanish according to conventional literary genres and within the boundaries of national literatures.

The volume contributes to several fields at whose intersections it comfortably stands: Spanish Asian studies, the global Hispanophone, transpacific studies, and Global South studies. Moreover, the book succeeds in breaking down the rigid categories of national and even world literatures: the former is disrupted by the book's consideration of the post/colonial context of the Philippine tradition between empires—the Spanish and the US-American—in literature written in Spanish; and the latter by questioning the dynamics between a presumed center (peninsular Spain) and other peripheries (Mexico, Cuba, and Puerto Rico) in the production of what has been called the Hispanic Philippines. More important to this reviewer is the book's break with the dichotomy of Hispanism into peninsular and Latin American fields of study, as stated in the introduction. This rupture in the field opens up new questions and forms of inquiry that destabilize the canon and seek to diversify existing and dominant perspectives on Spanish colonialism and Hispanic studies.

In order to break with the existing geopolitical categories of Hispanic studies, the book's editors—Axel Gasquet and Rocío Ortuño Casanova—approach the corpus from a post-national perspective that aims to overcome the constraints imposed by national borders, linguistic boundaries, and generic categories (p. 7). The chapters demonstrate a fair attempt to question what constitutes a literary text and to suggest new ways of understanding it. What can we learn from reading travelogues, chronicles, and memoirs as fiction or as examples of life writing? The affordances of (discursive and comparative) close readings of missionary chronicles and state decrees, for example, challenge official histories and show what John D. Blanco rightly points out: that "the crown and the church agreed to *represent* the conquest" (p. 32) rather than retell it. The volume shows how hybrid genres such as biographies, letters, essays, opinion columns, folklore, and travel books are exemplary case studies in literature, alongside the novel, for understanding the social microcosms that national imaginaries create and for challenging dominant colonial histories with nuanced literary analysis.

More specifically, the three chapters that appear in Part 1, "The Transnational Grounds of Philippine Literature in Spanish," are crucial to understanding the extent to which religion, language, and commerce were intertwined in the Spanish colonial administration of the Philippines. Blanco's chapter shows how the Spanish administration and the Church deliberately modeled the discourse of the "spiritual context" from conquest to pacification of the territory. Paula C. Park argues that contact between the "peripheries"—Mexico and the Philippines—created a sense of

belonging to a global Hispanic community. Finally, Marlon James Sales suggests that linguistic contact created a new language for Filipino expression that is not only a form of untranslatable translingualism but is cognitively mediated by a perpetual state of translation.

In Part 2, "The (Re-)Conquest of History," Ana M. Rodríguez-Rodríguez, Luis Castellví Laukamp, and Rocío Ortuño Casanova cross the fine line that separates fiction, myth, and history in canonical texts. Rodríguez-Rodríguez exposes the bias of Francisco de Combes's *Historia de Mindanao y Joló* (History of Mindanao and Jolo) (1897) and shows the complexity of the relationship between Christian and Muslim encounters in the context of the Philippines, where the alterity of the *indio* is replaced by that of the *moro*. Castellví Laukamp argues that one of the earliest chronicles of the Philippines, written by the Spaniard Pedro Chirino, should be understood as a form of *Christian marvellous* (through fairy tales and utopian images of natural resources and people) consciously echoing Alejo Carpentier's *lo real maravilloso* (magical realism). Crucially, Castellví Laukamp shows how Chirino's marvellous accounts were criticized by the *ilustrados*, thus pointing to the existence of a sophisticated literary genealogy that rewrote history according to the inevitable ideological shifts that occurred across centuries. This is also what Ortuño Casanova shows with a focus on the turn of the twentieth century through the different representations of the legend of the Chinese pirate Li-Mahong in the work of Isabelo de los Reyes, Cecilio Apostol, and Antonio Abad, which construct and deconstruct the figure of the (Chinese) pirate either as the invasive "yellow peril" or as a romantic hero embodying ideals of freedom that echo other Hispanic and Western traditions.

Part 3, "Modernity and Globalization," includes two articles that show how music and folklore are dynamic practices that not only reproduce and maintain local and indigenous traditions and practices of hearing and seeing the world through various cosmovisions but also help to capture the hybridity and agency of people in creating their own. More specifically, Kristina A. Escondo's reading of the works of De los Reyes and Adelina Gurrea as folklore reveals the interventions of these writers as transcultural agents. Escondo shows how these authors' preoccupation with representing old and new (pre- and postcolonial) practices of everyday life as folklore produced two types of texts: ethnographic essays (De los Reyes conceived of folklore as an anthropological science) and short stories that captured oral traditions. meLê yamomo's chapter in this section explores how journalism and literature were spaces for auditory and musical experiences (he even discusses concrete examples of musical references in José Rizal's *Noli Me Tangere* [Touch me not]) to argue that they served to create a "listening public sphere in globalizing Manila" (p. 176).

Part 4, "Anti-colonial Writings in the Colonial Language," shows the consolidation of the Spanish language as an anticolonial tool that served, on the one hand, to shape—through metaphors of the body and health—the narratives of nation and migration shared by the Puerto Rican author José Julian de Acosta, the Cuban José Martí, and the Filipino Trinidad Pardo de Tavera (Ernest Rafael Hartwell), and, on the other, to return the colonial gaze to Spain in the travelogue of the

Filipino *ilustrado* Antonio Luna on his travels to the metropolis (Cristina Guillén Arnáiz). Drawing on philosophy, Hartwell extends the concept of biopolitics to these post/colonial contexts as a way of historicizing the concept; the chapter puts the Foucauldian concept in dialogue with what can be understood as its Latin American counterpart: Walter Mignolo and Anibal Quijano's coloniality of power. Hartwell argues, through three case studies, that processes of migration between colonized territories occur both as assimilation and as disruption of the national body by a migrant subject who is a laboring body (*brazo*), a spiritual patriot (*de corazón*), or a forked tongue (*lengua*). In the same section, Guillén Arnáiz's chapter furthers the debate on the subversive potential of resisting language-cultures, specifically by highlighting Luna's sharp tongue (in Filipino Spanish) to describe Spain and the Spaniards in *Impresiones* (Impressions) (1891). In line with one of the aims of the book, Guillén Arnáiz shows how travel writing functions not only as a lens through which others may be seen, but also as a form of autoethnographic writing in which "the Filipino colonial subject, always observed, takes on the voice of the narrator" (p. 220).

In Part 5, "Narratives of the Self and World War II," the final two chapters arrive at the Japanese occupation of the Philippines to complete the book's timeline and to explore the porous genres of travel writing and testimony as forms of life writing. David R. George Jr.'s nuanced close reading of Antonio Pérez de Olaguer's travelogues successfully demonstrates that the identity of traveler/narrator is not a stable category that produces one or the other, but a constant exercise in entering and leaving different identities. Supporting his case study, George complicates the idea of Hispano-Filipino identity written with a hyphen by wondering about another form of identitarian split represented with a slash: Spanish/Filipino. Sony Coráñez Bolton adds a final argument to understand the significance of textual production in Spanish at the end of the colonial period, culminating in the horrific genocide of World War II. The argument is that José Reyes's book *Terrorismo y Redención* (Terrorism and redemption) (1947) "saves Philippine modernity from Japanese occupation, but also secures the morality of a US imperialism as saviour and legitimate executor of rational violence through atomic science" (p. 280). For this reviewer, the significance of this last chapter lies in its recognition of gender violence, with a section devoted to the role of Filipino women during the war (as subjects of care—nurses—but also as objects of comfort for Japanese soldiers). The parallels that Coráñez Bolton draws between the representation of gender violence in Reyes's testimony and Catholic martyrdom are fascinating. This leads me to comment on what are, in my opinion, two absences in the book: a careful consideration of women's writing (which is nonetheless advanced in the introduction) and of the intersections of gender and colonialism, with the exception of Coráñez Bolton's chapter and occasional references within other chapters.

In conclusion, this edited volume challenges Eurocentric perspectives on Hispanic studies and offers a new way to study the Philippines from a Hispanic transpacific perspective, without dismissing the role of Chinese and Japanese peoples in the Philippines, in order to understand the archipelago as a transnational territory. Each chapter is an enjoyable read as a piece of the puzzle

of Philippine history and its literary heritage and can easily be studied on its own. Together with its Spanish-language counterpart, *El desafío de la modernidad en la literatura hispanofilipina (1885–1935)* (The challenge of modernity in Hispano-Filipino literature [1885–1935]), also edited by Gasquet and Ortuño Casanova but published by Brill, it becomes essential reading for anyone interested in a critical study of Philippine literature written in Spanish and how it participates in the history of the Philippines.

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Contesting Indonesia: Islamist, Separatist, and Communal Violence since 1945

Kirsten E. Schulze
Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2024.

Many academic publications—in English and Indonesian—have discussed the issue of postindependence violence in Indonesia. However, with a few exceptions, none focuses on the study of violence and its link to the ideas of national belonging as well as imagination and contestation over the Indonesian state. Previous studies have generally examined violence in a fragmented manner, with scholars treating cases of violence along separate themes with different academic debates that do not necessarily speak to each other. This is what makes *Contesting Indonesia* noteworthy and distinctive not only for its depth of content and robust argument but also for its conceptual/theoretical framework and solid methodological approach. For example, the author, Kirsten Schulze, does not use only the existing (secondary) literature but also draws upon fieldwork, oral narratives, and a range of written primary sources as well as direct interviews with 474 diverse informants (scholars, peace activists, actors of violence, etc.) spanning over more than twenty years. Schulze genuinely and luminously connects, "synthesizes," and repackages varied existing academic works on violence in postindependence Indonesia into a single theme: the contest for the state's national imaginary and belonging.

To back this notion, Schulze draws upon the concepts and theories of several leading scholars, including the "imagined community" of Benedict Anderson, the "invented tradition" of Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, and the ideas of belonging from Ernest Gellner and other noted scholars. She also includes select cases of postindependence violence: Islamist violence (i.e., Darul Islam and Jemaah Islamiyah), secessionist revolts (i.e., East Timor and Aceh), and interreligious conflicts (i.e., Christian-Muslim communal violence in Poso and Ambon). As the author rightly

notes, not all violent conflicts in the country relate to the notions of Indonesia's national imaginary and belonging. Schulze writes, "It is interested in *where* the violence is located, not just in a geographic sense but above all in a conceptual sense." Accordingly, it is imperative to examine "Islamist, separatist, and communal violence in relation to the notion of the national imaginary as well as in relation to the concept of belonging, asking *what is Indonesia*? and *what does it mean to be Indonesian*? [italics in original]" (p. 4).

The book is divided into six chapters. The first two explore violence committed by two Islamist groups in Indonesia: Darul Islam (DI) rebellions from 1947 to 1965 and Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) violent jihadism or terrorism from 1993 to 2009. Chapter 1 examines four cases of DI revolts in various locations: West Java (led by Sekarmadji Marijan Kartosoewirjo), Aceh (led by Daud Beureueh), South Sulawesi (led by Abdul Kahar Muzzakar), and South Kalimantan (led by Ibnu Hadjar). The author has chosen these four cases perhaps because they are the most popular ones, though DI-related rebellions are not limited to these four; one other is Amir Fatah's rebellion in Central Java. The chapter scrutinizes the causes, goals, ideological underpinnings, and evolution of DI rebellions, arguing that the primary roots of DI uprisings "lie in Islam having been part and parcel of Indonesian nationalism" (p. 25) in the early twentieth century. The use of the man-made philosophy of Pancasila (meaning "five precepts")—rather than God (Allah)-made laws (Islamic Sharia)—as the state ideology and the foundational concept of the newly established country of Indonesia was at the heart of DI (and later JI) revolts. Although these rebellions were centered in DI, each had local variations with respect to the factors, principles, approaches, and rationales of their contest over the Indonesian state and struggle against President Sukarno's rule. For example, while Kartosoewirjo conceptualized Indonesia as an Islamic state, Ibnu Hadjar preferred an Islamic kingdom (of South Kalimantan, run by the Islamic State of Indonesia) and Muzzakar envisioned an Islamic Republic of Indonesia Eastern Section (pp. 47–51).

Chapter 2 studies JI's historical dynamics, membership variations, and ideological foundations as well as the narratives and Islamist national imaginaries set forth by its main founders: Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Ba'asyir. It also examines President Suharto's anti-Islamist policies that directly affected Islamist activists, including JI members. Even though JI evolved out of the DI religious and political movement, and indeed, JI shares some fundamental aspects with DI (e.g., opposition to the Indonesian state, the state ideology, and the Constitution and a desire to replace them with Islamic forms of state, governance, and laws), these two Islamist groups have some differences. For example, unlike DI, which is more locally based, JI is more Salafi, militant, and international, endorsing local, regional, and global jihad for the sake of Islam (p. 81). Also, while Kartosoewirjo's source of inspiration and imagination was Muhammad's Islamic state of Madinah, the JI founders' bases of inspiration (and imaginary) for their Islamic state concepts were more varied—including the Qur'an, Hadith, the practice of Muhammad's companions, and the way Muslims lived before the end of the Ottoman Empire in 1924 (p. 73). Some JI key members also

envisioned establishing an Islamic caliphate beyond Indonesia.

The following two chapters deal with separatist violence in East Timor (Chapter 3) and Aceh (Chapter 4). Chapter 3 discusses the violence that occurred from the Indonesian invasion of East Timor in December 1975 to the post-referendum in September 1999. It also analyzes competing narratives of the violence and the competing national imaginaries (between the Indonesian government and FRETILIN—the Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor) as well as Jakarta's attempt at "Indonesianizing" East Timorese and integrating East Timor into the Indonesian state, which ultimately failed. Schulze argues that both the decision to integrate East Timor and the decision to have a referendum on independence during President Habibie's administration (1998–99) were "underwritten by Indonesia's national imaginary" (p. 85), though the two decisions had different forms of imagination. Chapter 4 discusses the root causes of the prolonged conflict between the Indonesian Army and the separatist group Free Aceh Movement (GAM), strategies of combat developed by the army (including kidnapping, torture, and killing), as well as the political and economic grievances of Acehnese. The chapter also investigates the emergence of GAM and its narratives on conflict and national imaginaries. It shows that the Aceh secessionist violence was deeply rooted in the Indonesian state's unitary and "secular" pluralist character, which left little room for Aceh's more Islamic identity (p. 123).

The remaining two chapters are about the interreligious violence between Christians and Muslims in Poso and Ambon. Chapter 5 is devoted to the study of the Poso sectarian violence from 1998 to 2007, examining its root causes, phases, and dynamics, from small-scale urban riots to massive communal disturbances; uneasy Christian-Muslim relations before and during the violence; the combatants and their goals, strategies, and national imaginaries; in-migration of various ethnoreligious communities to Poso; Islamization processes; and the opportunity structure for change due to political transitions that could provide rationales and foundations for the eruption of violence. The chapter shows that the Poso violence was triggered by "the shift of the Indonesian national imaginary in a more Islamic direction in the late New Order" (p. 156), together with demographic changes on the ground due to an influx of Muslim migrant groups that Poso's Christians saw as an existential peril (p. 187). It also demonstrates that the organized violent conflict from 2000 to 2007 was backed by "misaligned national imaginaries between Jakarta and Poso" (p. 156).

Chapter 6 discusses the Ambon violence, examining its root causes, phases, and developments, as well as the place of Ambon and its populace (Ambonese) in the Indonesian national imaginary. Schulze argues that the Ambon chaos was driven by multiple factors, including the shifting demographic composition and power balance between Ambon's Christian and Muslim communities resulting from the state-imposed transmigration policies, the corrosion of local customary laws (*adat*), and the increasing level of education of Ambonese Muslims (p. 225), all of which affected the region's economic, political, and social dynamics. The Ambon havoc was rooted also

in the changing of the Indonesian national imaginary from a "secular" to a more Islamic tone during the late Suharto's rule, which created fears and worries among Ambonese Christians (p. 190). The Ambon violence is read through "filters of history" in which lengthy collective historical memories (e.g., different experiences between Muslims and Christians during colonial times) also played active roles. This chapter also discusses competing ideas of national imaginaries and belonging among varied actors: native Ambonese Christians and Muslims, foreign combatants (e.g., jihadists from Java), as well as the central and local governments.

A few reflections might be useful for further discussion. If violence erupts in "peripheral" areas—geographically, ideologically, religiously, ethnically, or developmentally—as the author argues (pp. 5–6), why do all regions on the "edge" in this archipelagic country not experience massive violence? Why does violence take place only in a few peripheral regions? Why do all those who embrace a "peripheral" ideology not engage in violent behaviors? I wonder also why the book does not discuss Communist violence. Communists, like the other groups discussed in this volume (Islamists, separatists, jihadists, Christian fighters, etc.), also committed a sequence of killings, terrorist activities, and revolts targeting the government and various Muslim groups (e.g., the Kanigoro incident) after independence, which resulted in massive reprisal raids in 1948 (the Madiun unrest) and 1965–66 (the anti-Communist campaign) as well as challenged the national imaginary and belonging. It is surprising that the book does not investigate the renewed communal violence that broke out in various locations in Ambon between 2010 and 2011. As for the Ambon conflict, it is significant to underline the roles played by two Ambonese/Malukan Muslim military generals (Suaidi Marasabessy and Rustam Kastor) who were vital in the deployment and mobilization of the military forces, making the Christian-Muslim sectarian violence in Ambon/Maluku more vicious and massive than in Poso. This means that the role of an agency is crucial in determining the degrees or levels of violence in society. Lastly, although the idea of the contention over the national imaginary and belonging among varied state and non-state actors is valid, the question remains: who actually engaged in this contest—was it the grassroots (e.g., ordinary people or civil servants) or a few elite members within the government/authorities (e.g., high-ranking bureaucrats and military commanders) and non-state institutions (leaders of Islamist, separatist, and religious organizations)? Do ordinary people really care about the forms of the Indonesian government?

Notwithstanding these small questions, this book is undeniably valuable and stimulating. Readers will benefit from its rich ethnographic, historical, and primary data and sources on Indonesia's varied violence since independence, as well as from the author's thought-provoking analyses and arguments on the violence and its links to the contestation over the country's national imaginary and belonging.

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The First Asians in the Americas: A Transpacific History

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Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2024.

Diego Javier Luis's *The First Asians in the Americas: A Transpacific History* is a monumental work of scholarship. Devoted to tracking the experiences and transformations of Asians in the Americas, the book sheds much needed light on a topic that has until relatively recently remained one of the dark spots of global history: the Transpacific connections that permeated across the Hispanic world and beyond. Luis joins a flourishing scholarship—embodied by the work of Tatiana Seijas, Deborah Oropeza, and Cristina Lee—focused on uncovering the human side of this exchange.

The First Asians in the Americas is an ambitious project. It seeks to reconstruct the experience of Asian migrants—free and forced—in the Americas and their changing identity and cultural alignment across the centuries of the early modern era in the colonial context of the Hispanic Monarchy. Through the experiences of individuals as they appear in the archives, the book reconstructs the transformation of Asian travelers into *chinos*—and the process of cultural imposition that this transformation entailed—while revealing the strategies of cooperation and resistance, careful bargaining, strategic displays of loyalty toward colonial hierarchies, and knowledge exchange with other minorities that Asians in the Hispanic world resorted to in order to survive and prosper. In the process, Luis also retraces changes in the cultural perception and identity of Asian migrants. This dual approach puts the human subject of the study in conversation with the changing cultural environment and provides a dynamic analysis that is best exemplified by the illuminating transformation of Asians into *chinos*, the caste designation through which colonial bureaucracies—mostly in New Spain, but to a different degree in other parts of the empire—made sense of the arrivals from across the Pacific Ocean and placed them within a broader imperial ordering.

Underpinning this grand ambition is Luis's masterful use of language, which enables him to equally transmit complex concepts and to impress the reader with vivid narrations of life in the seventeenth century. The section on the Pacific Passage in Chapter 2 of the book shall remain one of the most artful reconstructions of life within the Manila Galleon. The second pillar upon which the book is built is excellent research work. Anyone familiar with sources on the Spanish Empire will appreciate the wide range of primary sources that inform Luis's analysis. This depth of research has enabled the author to perform one of the most difficult tasks of modern scholarship with a measure of success.

Yet, despite the amazing scholarship displayed in this volume, the reader cannot fail to notice certain shortcomings. These relate mostly to the strength of the argument developed by Luis in relation to the ambitious goals of the book. The research follows John-Paul Ghobrial's methodology of global microhistory (p. 14; see Ghobrial 2019) by necessity given the scattered nature of the information contained in the sources. This in itself is a logical choice, but microhistory is limited

in the types of empirical claims that it can make. When it comes to tracing the evolution of *chinos* as a caste—the identity and cultural transformations taking place for Asians in the Hispanic world—the collection of case studies is only half of the story. The book would have benefited from placing this type of evidence and narrative alongside a more structuralist analysis of the racial and social policies of the Spanish Empire and its legal scaffolding. Sadly, while the hidden imperial structure is constantly referred to, it is not dissected in depth. Spanish policies, race-making, and imperial goals are secondary in the book.

This is completely understandable given Luis's objective of giving a voice to the volume's Asian subjects, but it is necessary to have a more structural approach to contrast the claim that imperial imposition played a fundamental role in the transformation process of Asians in the Americas, especially given the wide scope of the research, both chronologically and thematically. This imbalance in analytical terms is compounded by the framework of the study. Luis eschews Rebecca Earle's criticism that modern race theory is difficult to apply to Spanish imperial frameworks. Instead, he favors Geraldine Heng's Foucauldian characterization of race as a relationship of power, extending racial theory to religion, culture, and sexuality (p. 21). Alas, race is not religion or sexuality. They are their own categories, and this is especially important in the case of the Hispanic world, where religion plays a fundamental role in allocating one's place in society. This is observable in the evidence contained in the book. The use of blasphemy as a legal strategy to restrain slave owners rested on the fact that there was an expectation on the part of the enslaver to instruct their slaves on the principles of the faith. That this strategy worked implies that courts of law gave precedence to religious matters over ownership in this regard and means that religion could bypass racialized social dynamics (pp. 151–156).

A flexible approach to race is the current norm in the United States, where race's primacy as an engine of history is undisputed. The book itself is very reliant on methodologies, debates, and literature of the North American historiography. But to be fully convincing, the claim that race was the fundamental dynamic driving the experience of Asians in the Hispanic world needs a more structured comparison to the "imperial race-making" policy. Connected to the case of religion is that of privileges and duties in what essentially was an early modern society. The cases of race fluidity, in which Asians would strategically claim to be either *indios* or *chinos*, betray the fact that rather than a straightforward stratification of society based on race, there was a distinction of duties and privileges. For example, *indios* were liable to pay the *tributo* but were exempt from the Inquisitorial jurisdiction and from paying *alcábalas*. Spanish descendants held the privilege to openly carry weapons but in return fell under the control of the Holy Inquisition. As *chinos*, Asians could be enslaved legally—until the emancipation of 1672—which explains their interest at times in being considered *indios* (p. 119). Without a proper structural analysis, there is no conclusive way of proving whether the ultimate dynamic at work in Spanish American societies was social stratification based on race imposed by imperial authorities, or compartmentalization with differing

privileges and duties based on *nationes* (a canonical and historical term for racial groups in the Middle Ages and in scholastic thought) under a common divinity as was the case with medieval scholastic politics. Once again, a clear definition of what imperial race-making was and how it operated is fundamental to keep track of the claims. The assertion that Spanish suspicion and fear of the Chinese community—which led to the 1603 massacre of *sangleyes* in Manila—was the catalyst for the classification of Asian subjects in the empire sits at odds with the evidence provided by Immaculada Alva Rodríguez (1997, 66) that in 1604 the governor ordered citizens to accommodate Chinese sojourners in their own homes for the trading season. Similarly, racialized fear and distrust after the uprising of Afro-Mexican troops in Veracruz in 1645 led to a renewed prohibition on carrying arms that included *chinos* (p. 117). Yet in the eighteenth century, two battalions of black and *chino* militias appeared as the only garrison protecting the town of Acapulco, the terminal for the Pacific trade and a harbor of vital importance for the exertion of Spanish control over the Philippines (p. 214). If fear was the prime mover in the racial categorization of Asians in the Hispanic Monarchy and racialization was the prime organizer of social relations and hierarchies, how can we explain these contradictions?

Finally, the book misses a golden opportunity to address the Marxist challenge that class above all things—including race, gender, and religion—determined the distribution of power and the stratification of society. Admittedly, this is not a goal of the author, and it is not necessary to address this somewhat antiquated conception of social history. Not everything is necessarily dialectical materialism. But the wealth of information contained in this book certainly puts it in a strong position to add to this larger theoretical debate more forcefully. Yet, with the focus on Asians as players in a racialized environment in which power structures are portrayed as skewed against them, the instances of *chinos* as *encomenderos*, slave owners, and even town officials, as subjects capable of seeking legal redress all the way from the local authorities to the king and the Council of the Indies, even capable of starting litigation against Sebastián Hurtado de Corcuera (pp. 196–197)—a nobleman and an ex-governor of the Philippines, no less—are left unexplored. What can the legal agency and capacity to rise in the social scale of certain *chinos* tell us about the power mechanisms of the Spanish Empire, especially in a comparative setting? Could the same petitions, complaints, and litigations have been successful—or even raised—in the case of the British and Dutch Empires in Asia, where power and political capital were determined through corporate hierarchy and mercantile patronage? It is easy for a reader to demand more, but those unfamiliar with Spanish sources should be mindful of the difficulty simply of compiling the information that the book contains. Yet, it is also easy to see that the volume could have expanded its reach beyond the North American debates. The capacity of Asians to contest their enslavement is in direct conversation with the work of Chloe Ireton (2020) on slavery in the Spanish Americas, and the question of whether economic rationale could trump religious and racial prejudices speaks as well to recent works on early modern trade (Trivellato *et al.* 2014, especially the chapter by

Giuseppe Marcocci, pp. 91–107).

In short, *The First Asians in the Americas* is a work of scholarship that will soon find its place in Transpacific literature, and it has the potential as well to contribute to debates beyond its geographical focus. Its faults are simply based on the question of whether it lives up to the ambitious goals it has imposed on itself. And the ambitiousness is perhaps understandable given the need for this incipient field to establish itself more solidly in the scholarship. To this end, *The First Asians in the Americas* represents a confident step forward. One does not need to agree with the book's core argument to find it extremely valuable. Luis may not have provided a final answer to the debate over Transpacific connections, but he has certainly built bridges for others to raise new questions.

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