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Pocketing the Prize: Lingering Patterns of Prestige in Southeast Asian Studies

Jemma Purdey* and Antje Missbach**

While the field of Southeast Asian studies in US, European, and Australian academies faces challenges and decline, the discipline has developed significantly in Southeast Asia and elsewhere in Asia. Given the apparent shift in academic investment, this examination of patterns in awarding prizes for work in the field over the past two decades seeks to understand where "prestige" in the field is located. Assuming that prizes are more than just recognition for a scholar's individual work, and that they also act as indicators for the development of Southeast Asian studies in a broader sense, this analysis concludes that prestige continues to be bestowed predominantly to those studying, working, and publishing in countries outside the region, particularly the United States. Our analysis reveals that overwhelmingly awardees of the preeminent book prizes given for excellence in Southeast Asian studies completed their higher research degree in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia (91 percent) and are currently affiliated with institutions in Europe, the United States, and Australia (94 percent). Although the number of institutions based in Asia, both old and new, has increased in recent decades, these institutions do not yet award book prizes akin to those under study, nor is there a regional association that does. It may be that a lack of institutionalized collaboration across these regional centers is one of the factors that indirectly boosts the ongoing dominance of institutions based in the US, Europe, and Australia. Rather than explaining this absence, in this article we seek to raise questions about the current state of Southeast Asian studies, who is shaping global ideas about Southeast Asia, and who currently—and will in the future—constitute their "communities of assessment" (Appadurai 2000).

Keywords: academic awards, knowledge production

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Introduction

In 2014 the eminent America-based Thai scholar Thongchai Winichakul delivered the keynote address at the Association for Asian Studies (AAS) conference, an important gathering for scholars in the field in North America and arguably also globally. He observed that in the context of "post-Cold War conditions and paradigms," Asian studies was undergoing significant change. He noted the development of academies in Asia and the proliferation of PhD programs in the region, meaning that the West was no longer the sole producer of scholars with great expertise in, or knowledge about, Asia. Though he gave no timeline, Thongchai (2014, 883) predicted, "It is very likely that Asian studies in Asian countries will become more important in global scholarship." He recounted, anecdotally it should be noted, that within the Western ("Euro-American and Australian") academy students in classrooms studying Asia were more and more likely to be from Asia and likewise taught by lecturers from there. He highlighted the ongoing imbalance in intellectual relationships between scholars in the West and those in Asia. Whilst his speech was in part based on observations and extrapolations, his message was prescient:

> The intellectual relationship in Asian studies between the Euro-American and Asian academies is complicated by the ongoing hegemony of the West, thanks to the lasting legacies of the colonial and Cold War foundations of academia, and the reactions to such hegemony and the variety of alternatives in Asia . . . [T]he friction in this relationship is likely to become an important factor in the production of scholarship in Asian studies. How the effects will play out is beyond my ability to foresee. But we should pay attention to this issue and let our discussions begin. (Thongchai 2014, 891)

This article seeks to contribute to the ongoing discussion sparked by Thongchai and many others who have addressed the global power asymmetries in knowledge production in great depth, including the "geopolitics of knowledge" (Mignolo 2002), its (neo)colonial extractivism (Melber 2018), its "competition fetish" (Shahjahan and Morgan 2016), and the "machineries of neoliberal academia" (Burman 2018, 60) that seek to enhance the race for more and faster knowledge production. Addressing parochialism within the origin story, structures, and pedagogy of area studies is an ongoing project with which a vital literature and debate has been deeply engaged for several decades (Heryanto 2002; Jackson 2019; Fleschenberg and Baumann 2020). In response to criticism of the power structures underlying Western (or Euro-centric or US-centric or even Australia-centric) knowledge production, the field has rightly continued to confront its past and consider a future located in Southeast Asia and elsewhere in Asia. In the region itself, governments, individual scholars, and networks have embarked on establishing the requisite institutional frameworks for research and teaching centers, publications, and associations for

the development of the field of study.

Whilst these theoretical debates continue, critical empirical examination is needed to document and analyze progress and emancipatory claim-making from within the Southeast Asian academy and elsewhere in Asia. We are interested to learn how much, if anything, has changed in response to this debate. In this article we scrutinize the current state of the relationship between the "local" academy and the "Western" academy and ultimately its impact on the production of knowledge. The underlying question driving our explorations concerns who is "shaping global ideas about Southeast Asia" (Farrelly 2018, 8) and who currently—and will in the future—constitute their "communities of assessment" (Appadurai 2000).

Investigating these questions demands a broad, multiregional, and multifaceted approach, including a combination of surveys, qualitative biographical studies, and mobility mapping. This article contributes toward this larger goal of assessing the progress of these developments locally, and the ways in which they are being seen in the broader context of the field globally, by tracing the awarding of prestigious book prizes for Southeast Asian studies from 2000 to 2022. The production of academic outputs, and especially the recognition and appreciation of produced knowledge, provides an indicator of the state of the field.

This article is structured along the following themes: first, we discuss the significance of networks and mobility in academia more generally to apprehend the impacts of the flows of Southeast Asian undergraduate and postgraduate students into US, Australian, and European academies on the epistemology of the field. Second, we shift the focus to book prizes and symbolic capital to offer a short history of Southeast Asian studies book prizes. Third, we present our empirical findings to illustrate clear patterns of prestige in current Southeast Asian studies. Fourth, in order to further analyze our findings, we return to the issues of politics, prizes, and prestige in academia; and fifth, we ask what the development of local academies for Southeast Asian studies in East and Southeast Asia means for knowledge production on Southeast Asia and whether these emerging centers are interested in challenging the prevalent dominance in one way or another. We close this article with a short conclusion and suggestions for future investigations about the de-Westernization of the institutional framework globally, which we argue would inhibit deeply ingrained patterns of prestige.

Networks and Mobility

Our focus is on the preeminent prizes for books published in Southeast Asian studies. A survey of book prizes in the field helps to illustrate not only who was awarded but

where the awardees studied and now work. Based on our findings, which are outlined in detail below, most prizes are awarded to scholars trained and based in[1] the US, the UK, Europe, and Australia. The findings further show that authors from the Global South ("insiders") who are affiliated with institutions in the Global North tend to dominate the field (publication count and citations), while homeland-based scholars are in the periphery ("outsiders"). With their insider-leaning hybrid positionality, overseas scholars from the Global South in the Global North accrue more network-mediated benefits than their colleagues residing in the Global South and perhaps even more than their Global North colleagues who lack the hybrid positionalities (Arnado 2021). We pose the question, when will we expect to see symbols of prestige transferred from these countries in the Global North to an academy based in the region? We argue that prizes serve as signposts for such mobilities and ultimately the development of the discipline both within and outside US, Australian, and European institutions. The book prize, in this regard, becomes a litmus test for institutional change and inclusivity and for what knowledge is valued and ultimately accorded prestige.

For the purpose of this study, our interest is not in the subject matter or discipline of the awarded books. Neither do we seek to make a determination about the identity, ethnicity, or nationality of the individual authors. Taking into consideration that some authors could hold more than one citizenship makes the question of identity far more complex and is beyond the scope of this article. Whilst such analysis is undoubtedly critically important in order to answer broader questions about the future of Southeast Asian studies, we believe it should be reserved for another more deeply biographical study including whole-of-life interviews and career tracking.[2] In this instance, our concern is with the institutional representation reflected in prize giving and receiving and its requisite association with prestige in the field.

Support for research institutions, publishing, and higher-degree teaching programs is a key step toward creating what Arjun Appadurai (2000) described as a "community of assessment" and Robert Cribb (2005) termed "circles of esteem" within the academy, whereby the rules and parameters for a discipline or field of research are established and its membership decided. We ask, where is the field of Southeast Asian studies on this journey so far? Is it moving toward a process of institution building within Southeast Asian studies in the region that includes the creation of the necessary circles of esteem

1) "Based in" refers to scholars who appeared to be resident (living and working) in these countries at the time we conducted the research. We did not seek to establish their citizenship status, which may have consisted of more than one citizenship.

2) We plan to conduct future studies tracing the career trajectories of book prize awardees in order to measure the impact of the accolades on their academic life, using whole-of-life interviews and associated quantitative methodologies.

within its academy, in order to ultimately establish its own community of assessment capable of judging its own symbols of prestige? Will Southeast Asian studies in these relatively new centers ever catch up with or even overtake the declining (in terms of student and faculty numbers) centers of Southeast Asian knowledge production in the West? What role do institutions such as professional associations, research institutes, publishers, scholarship programs, award programs, and governments play in promoting and directing Southeast Asian studies?

Though intrinsically linked to a broader discussion on the future of Southeast Asian studies, our article is intended not so much to trace epistemological trajectories as to look for signs of the impacts of the transnational collaboration, scholarly exchange, and academic interconnections that Carlo Bonura and Laurie Sears (2007) hoped would shift the discipline from its unidirectional path.

Book Prizes and Symbolic Capital

Receiving a top award in one's field translates to academic currency with significant bearing on the career trajectory of the recipient. In this way, the awardees of such prizes are not just examples of what is regarded as good science but also trailblazers for the future institutional development of the discipline. Where the recipients of these prizes choose to carry out their doctoral study and—also important—thereafter choose to pursue their careers correlates with the status and prestige of those institutions themselves. The book prize is only one of several signifiers/symbols of excellence and prestige in academia and elsewhere, bestowing what Pierre Bourdieu (1977, 179) called "symbol capital," which "takes the form of prestige and renown." Other symbols carrying this capital include fellowships, invitations for keynote speeches, publications in highly regarded journals and book series, for example, as well as career promotion and—as has been much discussed—citation metrics (Cribb 2005; English 2005). Whilst all these achievements most certainly benefit the individual scholar, we have chosen to highlight book prizes for what they reveal about the locus of prestige within Southeast Asian studies temporally, geographically, and on an institutional level as well as what they reveal about institutional development and legitimacy not only for beneficiaries but also for the givers of prizes (Best 2008).

At the AAS conference in March 2022, eight years after Thongchai's keynote address, the prestigious Harry J. Benda Prize was awarded for the 37th time since its establishment in 1977 in honor of the pioneering Yale historian. Managed by a committee of the AAS, the Benda Prize was initially given biennially to a promising emerging scholar.

Since 1991 it has been an annual award for a first book on Southeast Asia in the humanities and social sciences, and in 2022 it bestowed a US$1,000 prize on the awardee. The winner of the 2022 award was Teren Sevea for his *Miracles and Material Life: Rice, Ore, Traps and Guns in Islamic Malaya* (Cambridge University Press, 2020). A decade earlier, in 2012, the winner was Karen Strassler for *Refracted Visions: Popular Photography and National Modernity in Java* (Duke University Press, 2010). In 2000 the award was given to Suzanne April Brenner for *The Domestication of Desire: Women, Wealth, and Modernity in Java* (Princeton University Press, 1998).

Though these book prizes were separated by decades, during which many observers highlighted key shifts in who was learning and teaching in this field, it remains the case that between 2000 and 2022 those recognized by the Benda Prize givers as the best "new" talent were all US based, as were their publishers.[3] In the case of the Benda Prize, perhaps this is unremarkable for a number of reasons, including that it is given by a committee of the US-based AAS and most of the books are published by university presses with long and prestigious Southeast Asian lists (more on this below). Nonetheless, the competition is not limited to AAS membership. The Benda Prize (like all the prizes under study here) is open to authors from anywhere in the world without restrictions on nationality or institutional affiliation.

As already mentioned, for some time now debates within Asian studies have grappled with and called for a decentering/decolonization/de-Westernization of the field, with an emphasis on the "growing importance of Asia not only as the object of studies by the 'first world' academia but also as the producer of knowledge" (Thongchai 2014, 881). We acknowledge and embrace the ways in which, for many decades, the flow of scholars across borders has disrupted a reductionist understanding and blurred the boundaries of classification and origin for who is producing knowledge about Southeast Asia. As we seek to demonstrate, our small study was conceived with this very much top of mind.

The prizes under study here were selected for two reasons: eligibility for entry was open to English-language sole-authored books of original work (regarded as the pinnacle of quality research output), and there were no limitations on the authors' nationality or place of residence.[4] These prizes are the Harry J. Benda Prize, the ICAS Book Prize, the George McT. Kahin Prize, the EuroSEAS Book Prize, and the Asia Society's short-lived Bernard Schwartz Book Award. Each prize was awarded by associations based in

3) See the discussion on the relationship between Southeast Asian studies and university presses below.

4) Consequently, book prizes awarded by the Asian Studies Association of Australia, for example, were not included as these are limited to applications from residents and students enrolled in Australian institutions.

Europe and the US. Notably, the period under study saw a proliferation of prizes for Southeast Asian studies,[5] whilst the number of publications[6] in the field largely remained constant.

As mentioned, our focus was not only on the authors and books themselves but also on the institutions where the awardees undertook their PhD, the institutions in which they were based at the time of our research, and their publishers, as it is the latter who often decide which book to submit to a competition. Bearing in mind that many of the submitted, longlisted/shortlisted, and winning books are first books, it is likely that authors depend on the support and resources of their publishers to participate in competitions.

In seeking to understand where the field of study is positioned today—who is involved and what type of work is held in high regard—and what the future might look like, it is salient to consider the origins of the prizes. The following stories highlight the roles of key individuals, and the prizes still awarded in their honor reveal the potential of deeper biographical studies to tell us much more about the wider social, political, and cultural contexts—links between the imperatives of the nation-state and scholarship, for example—that ultimately enable and facilitate the production of knowledge.

The man for whom the aforementioned Benda Prize is named, Harry J. Benda, was a Czech Jewish refugee from Nazism. In the 1940s Benda found temporary sanctuary in colonial Netherlands Indies, from where he was later interned by the Japanese. After the war he migrated to New Zealand. In the early 1950s, Benda undertook his PhD at Cornell University's then booming Modern Indonesia Program in the company of George McT. Kahin, Ruth McVey, Benedict Anderson, and Herb Feith (Purdey 2011). After Benda's death at just 52 years of age, W. F. Wertheim, who had known him as a young man in the Netherlands Indies, opened his obituary to his friend by positioning him between the "old" and "new" worlds of colonial European and American traditions in Southeast Asian studies:

> The postwar period has witnessed an impressive burgeoning of American scholarship on Indonesia, which was before the war largely the preserve of Dutch colonial experts. Among the prominent American students of Indonesian history, sociology and political science, Harry Benda occupied a special place, since in certain respects he formed a link between Dutch and foreign scholarship. (Wertheim 1972, 214)

5) As will be detailed later, our survey indicates that over the 22 years under investigation, 42 books were awarded prizes matching our criteria (sole-authored, original, open). The small sample size is indicative of the relative scarcity and therefore enhanced prestige attached to these prizes, on the one hand, and the relatively marginal state of the field within the academy on the other.

6) Using open-access sources we compiled data for book publications on Southeast Asian studies topics from 15 leading academic publishers. Together they published a total of over two thousand books between 2000 and 2022.

Studies by Bonura and Sears (2007), McVey (1995), and many others provide critical accounts of the colonial projects of the European and US-American powers that sought to acquire knowledge of the cultures, languages, and histories of the peoples of Southeast Asia whom they governed—their subjects—and the lingering aftermath of this colonialist pursuit of "instrumental knowledge" (Bonura and Sears 2007, 15). As Heather Sutherland (2012, 106) explained in relation to Indonesian or Indology studies in the Dutch academy, "The origins of the teaching of Indonesian languages, ethnography and law at university level were pragmatic, driven by the need for more professionally qualified colonial officials."

For the founders of Southeast Asian studies in the US—Kahin, Benda, Clifford Geertz—and the Australians John Legge, Jamie Mackie, and Herb Feith (also a European Jewish refugee), their first encounters with the region were tied to and shaped by World War II (Reid 2009; Purdey 2011) and thereby inextricably "inaugurated the field of Southeast Asian studies in the United States" (Bonura and Sears 2007). As Bonura and Sears (2007, 15) describe it: "WWII changed US attitudes toward Southeast Asia, where the Pacific war was being fought, rich natural resources were located and the battleground for the Cold War was slowly coming into focus." Benda and his largely US-trained cohort from the 1950s went on to pen seminal texts in the study of the politics, nationalist histories, and cultures of the region. They established a community of scholars who formed the discipline and, most important, prescribed and rewarded its standards for excellence in the form of scholarships, fellowships, tenure, publishing contracts, and prizes. Seven decades later, what is the continuing legacy of this post-World War II project on Southeast Asian studies, particularly when it comes to defining excellence and patterns of prestige for the community of its contemporary adherents?

Our analysis of the small but highly prestigious collection of prizes for Southeast Asian studies indicates that the production of the most prized and thereby valued knowledge about the peoples and cultures of the region remains centered in the academy based in the US, Europe, the UK, and—to a lesser extent—Australia. The dominance of US-based and -trained scholars is hard to ignore. Observing this continuing pattern of awarding prestige made us wonder whether academic award committees and judges were still lagging behind in their oft-stated efforts to "decolonize" academia, particularly Southeast Asian studies in this case. Despite the rising intensity of the debate in recent decades, there appears to be little noticeable change in how quality is denoted. What are the enduring power structures in both the publishing institutions and quality-measuring award committees that may inhibit change? Are the book award committees gatekeepers who unconsciously act against the emancipatory trends of the discipline? Or is it the case that academia can decolonize as much as it wants, but as long as Western-based academic book publishers remain dominant, nothing much will change (Schöpf 2020)?

In the last two decades, there has been a proliferation of prizes for Southeast Asian studies and Asian studies more broadly. As already mentioned, the Harry J. Benda Prize, first awarded in 1977, is the longest-running major book prize for work on Southeast Asia. The AAS awards the prize annually to an "outstanding newer scholar from any discipline or country specialization of Southeast Asian studies for a first book in the field" (Association for Asian Studies 2019b). For 26 years this was the most significant and prestigious international book prize for emerging talent in Southeast Asian studies as recognized by those within the discipline.

In 2003 the International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS), based at Leiden University in the Netherlands, established the ICAS Book Prize (IBP) for outstanding publications in the field of Asian studies. Initially two book prizes were given biennially, the ICAS Social Science Award and ICAS Humanities Award, and also a prize for best dissertation in those disciplines; more categories of prizes have since been added.[7] Indeed, as is the intention behind many prizes, ICAS hoped that they would "bring a focus to academic publications on Asia; to increase their worldwide visibility and to encourage a further interest in the world of Asian Studies" (International Convention of Asia Scholars, n.d.a.). However, the creators of the IBP had a further rationale for establishing the prize that went beyond promotion and celebration of talent in the field: "New awards must be justified by an argument that some additional, formal expression of esteem is needed or at least desirable" (Best 2008, 13). The ICAS website states the following:

> Right from the start, the IBP was designed to be different in nature than the (few) prizes in the field of Asian studies at that time. The existing prizes were limited to particular regions or disciplines, and often named after one of the professorial stars in the field. Access to and judgement of the prizes tended to occur in a rather closed circle of familiarity, and was mostly resistant to outside interference. There was clearly room for improvement and innovation. (Van der Velde 2020)

Joel Best describes the proliferation of prizes as, in part, representing a process of legitimation, for "any group that feels its accomplishments are insufficiently appreciated . . . can establish its own awards for excellence. This helps ratify and display esteem both within the group and for others" (Best 2008, 15). More recently, ICAS has expanded its list of awards to include publications in languages other than English: "With this multilingual approach, in cooperation with a host of partners and sponsors worldwide, ICAS is increasingly decentring the landscape of knowledge about and in Asia" (International Convention of Asia Scholars, n.d.b.). ICAS Book Prizes are awarded also for books published in Chinese, French, Russian, Portuguese/Spanish, German, Japanese, and

7) An amount of 2,500 euros is awarded to each major prize winner—half of which is cash and half of which is given as a travel grant to attend the next ICAS conference.

Korean. Of these eight languages, however, five are European—and so far, the list does not include a Southeast Asian language (International Convention of Asia Scholars, n.d.a.; n.d.b.). Since the prize was established, three books on Southeast Asian subjects have won the main Humanities and Social Science prizes, although more Southeast Asia-related works have been on other, also prestigious, shortlists for the dissertation prize and Colleagues' Choice Award. For the purposes of this analysis, we have included only the books that claimed either of the two top prizes.

In 2007 the Association for Asian Studies created the George McT. Kahin Prize, to be given biennially "to an outstanding scholar of Southeast Asian studies from any discipline or country specialization to recognize distinguished scholarly work on Southeast Asia beyond the author's first book" (Association for Asian Studies 2019a). The award was initiated to honor Kahin's (1918–2000) contributions to the field of Southeast Asian studies by the Cornell University Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kahin's friends and students, and the Southeast Asia Council of the Association for Asian Studies (Association for Asian Studies 2019a).[8] As briefly mentioned, Kahin's legacy looms large over Southeast Asian studies, and especially Indonesian studies, in the American academy and also globally. Kahin was a founding member of the preeminent Southeast Asia Program at Cornell University and the head of the Cornell Modern Indonesia Project in the early 1950s. The program—and Kahin himself—attracted students from around the world, in turn establishing an international network of Cornell-trained scholars in centers for Southeast Asian studies (Lev 2007).

In 2015 the European Association for Southeast Asian Studies (EuroSEAS) established two book prizes to be awarded at its conference—initially every three years and now biennial. Arguably a latecomer to prize-giving, EuroSEAS was founded in 1992 to encourage scholarly cooperation within Europe in the field of Southeast Asian studies. The EuroSEAS Humanities Book Prize was set up for the best academic book on Southeast Asia in the humanities—including archeology, art history, history, literature, performing arts, and religious studies—and the EuroSEAS Social Science Book Prize for the best academic book on Southeast Asia published in the social sciences—including anthropology, economics, law, politics and international relations, and sociology.[9]

The Bernard Schwartz Book Award is something of an outlier in that it was not awarded by an academic association or collective but rather by the Asia Society, a New York-based organization focused on connecting business, philanthropy, and policy makers with an interest in Asia. For only six years, from 2009 to 2015, this book award—named for a wealthy New York businessman and philanthropist—was given for "nonfiction books

8) In 2022 a prize of US$1,000 was awarded to the winner.
9) In 2022 the prizewinners were each awarded 750 euros.

that provide outstanding contributions to the understanding of contemporary Asia and/or U.S.-Asia relations . . . [and] designed to advance public awareness of the changes taking place in Asia and the implications for the wider world" (Asia Society Policy Institute 2024). Of the six books awarded the rich US$20,000 prize, two were on Southeast Asia: *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia* by James C. Scott (2010 winner) and *Tearing Apart the Land: Islam and Legitimacy in Southern Thailand* by Duncan McCargo (2009 winner). Unlike the other awards listed above, this prize was judged by a jury made up of experts not exclusively from within academia but also from the media, business, and government.

Patterns of Prestige

We examined the lists of winners of the above book prizes awarded to publications on Southeast Asia in the social sciences and humanities from 2000 to 2022, a total of 42 individual winners. As mentioned, during this period there was a sharp rise in the number of prizes—from only one in 2000 (the Benda Prize) to six in 2009–10—before falling back to five. The prizes are variously awarded annually and biennially. Books in the fields of Indonesian and Vietnamese studies accounted for over half of the prizes examined, and 62 percent of the recipients were men.

Our study was concerned primarily with identifying the institutional affiliations of the prizewinners—for both their PhD study and for most recent employment—and the books' publishers. Beyond gender, we did not seek to include details related to the identity, nationality, or ethnicity of individual authors because such data, even when available, would need to be qualified by interviews and other quantitative methods.

We found that 98 percent of the prizewinners had done their PhD in Europe, Australia, or North America (Fig. 1). The exception was one prizewinner who completed their doctorate in the Philippines.[10)]

Of these winners, 46 percent had received their doctorate from just three American universities: Cornell, Yale, and Harvard (Table 1).[11)]

10) Sixty-two percent of the awarded authors completed their PhD in the US, 14 percent in Australia, and 12 percent in the UK. The remaining 12 percent obtained their PhD from other European universities, one Canadian university, and one university in the Philippines.

11) Universities that house centers for Southeast Asian studies (such as Yale University, Cornell University, and University of Hawai'i) also have publishers with imprints with Southeast Asia series. Logically, this creates an ecosystem in which these publishers have more editors with expertise in Southeast Asia, which in turn means greater support for books in this field of study, including those written by authors with affiliations to Southeast Asian studies.

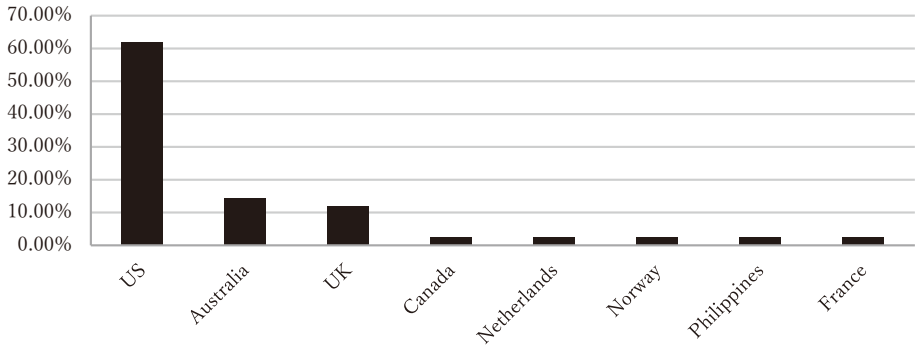

Fig. 1 Location Where Prizewinners Obtained Their PhD
Source: Data collected by Jemma Purdey. Data is for the period 2000–22.

Table 1 Top Institutions from Which Prizewinners Obtained Their PhD

Institution	Proportion of Prizewinners
Cornell University	24%
Yale University	12%
Harvard University	10%
Cambridge University	7%
Australian National University	7%

Source: Data collected by Jemma Purdey. Data is for the period 2000–22.

Among those who received one of the book prizes during the period under study, 62 percent at the time of writing are affiliated[12] with institutions in North America, 14 percent with institutions in the UK, 5 percent with institutions in Australia, and 7 percent with institutions in the Asian region (two in Singapore and one in the Philippines) (Fig. 2). One is in Israel, and the rest have affiliations in European countries. All recipients appear to have maintained careers in academia and remain active in the field of Southeast Asian studies.

Seventy-nine percent of the awarded books were published by US-based publishers and 14 percent by publishers in the UK (Table 2). The Singapore-based NUS Press accounted for 5 percent (two awarded publications) and the Philippines' Ateneo de Manila University Press for 2 percent (one publication).

The two most successful presses—the University of Hawai'i Press and Cambridge University Press—were also two of the most prolific publishers of work on Southeast

12) In most cases this means staff in a university institution. In some cases, it may be an adjunct or similar; however, it is their primary institutional affiliation. Data were compiled from open-access online sources, including public university websites, LinkedIn, and personal websites and blogs.

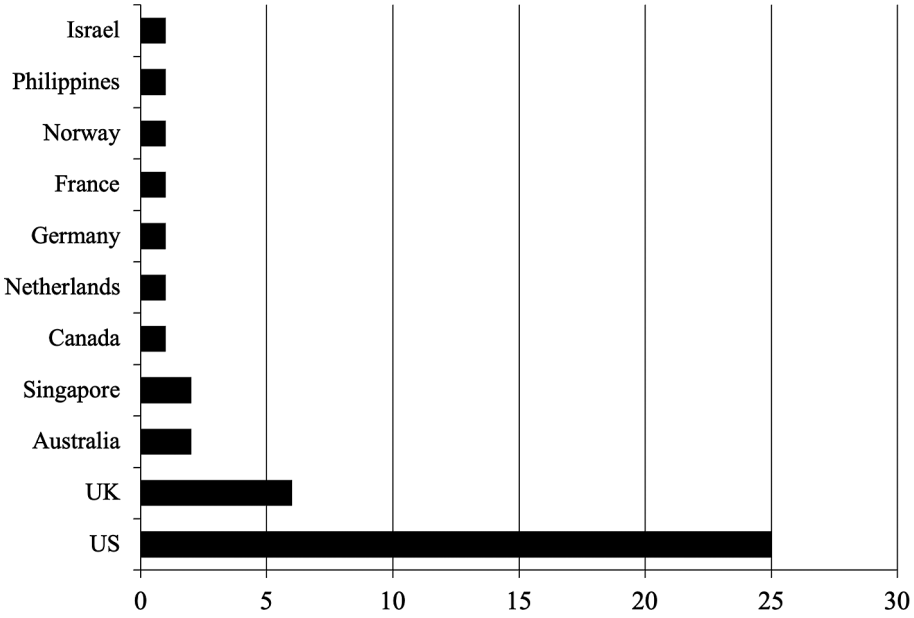

Fig. 2 Prizewinners' Current Country of Employment
Source: Data collected by Jemma Purdey. Data is for the period 2000–22.

Table 2 Locations of Top Prizewinning Publishing Houses

Publishing House	Proportion of Prizewinning Books Published
University of Hawai'i Press	17%
Cambridge University Press	12%
Duke University Press	10%
Cornell University Press, Princeton University Press, Yale University Press, Oxford University Press, University of California Press	7%

Source: Data collected by Jemma Purdey. Data is for the period 2000–22.

Asia during the period under study. Nonetheless, simply having a long publication list of Southeast Asian titles did not equate to success in prize winning. In the period surveyed, Singapore's ISEAS Publishing and NUS Press had the longest lists of Southeast Asia-related titles, with more than a thousand between them.[13] Even taking into account their important position in the region and dedication to Southeast Asian studies, the sheer

13) Based on data publicly available on the publishers' websites. Note that there are many other publishers of Southeast Asian studies in the region, but we have chosen to focus on these two based on their significant output and potential influence.

number is rather remarkable. Nevertheless, from their combined long list of Southeast Asia-related publications, only two books (both co-publications between NUS Press and the University of Hawai'i Press) received a major book prize between 2000 and 2022. Duke University Press, which ranked third for most prizes awarded, had the best return, publishing one to four Southeast Asia-related books per year (a total of 48 books) and taking home four prizes. Despite the good intention to offer greater opportunity to prizes for which access and judgment had "tended to occur in a rather closed circle of familiarity" (Van der Velde 2020), the old tradition of bestowing prizes and awards to people trained in the Global North and the older centers for Southeast Asian studies has continued. Whilst ICAS and arguably also AAS and EuroSEAS include a diverse and global membership, the organizations are Europe and US based.

Politics, Prizes, and Prestige in Academia

> Esteem is one of those rather admirable emotions that provides pleasure to both the giver and the receiver. A recipient of esteem, of course, basks in the admiration of others, but the giver also derives great satisfaction from the sense of having made an apt judgment about another scholar. (Best 2008, 8)

Why study the awarding patterns of book prizes? As Bourdieu (1977), James English (2005), Sarah Bowskill (2022), and others have written, such prizes carry symbolic, cultural, and economic capital, which can translate into prestige, status, career advancement, and advantages in their relevant field. The authors/recipients of such awards are accorded the benefits brought from winning such a prize, but equally, the givers and audiences also benefit: "in this way, awards can dramatize a group's values, and in the process affirm its solidarity" (Cribb 2005; Best 2008, 8). Book prizes have definitory power in that they define what good science is—what is valued—and who a good scientist is (they manifest a Western understanding of doing research, defining research gaps, applying appropriate methodology, and using appropriate language in science communication). This provides new directions for disciplines and enables them to define their present values as well as future orientation.

Our focus was on prizes open to submissions of English-language books of original work without limitations on place of publication, nationality, or affiliation. This excluded book prizes awarded by the Asian Studies Association of Australia (ASAA), for example, for which only Australians or those affiliated with Australian universities are eligible to apply. The awards under study were all given to single-authored books (although their guidelines do not necessarily exclude multi-authored books). With the exception of the

short-lived Bernard Schwartz Book Award, the prizes were awarded by associations of, or for, Asian or Southeast Asian studies. In each case the judging criteria and form of the expert panel were vague, but in general the selection was carried out by a committee of members of the respective association.

All the prizes required nominations to be submitted by the publisher.[14] Perhaps this was deemed to be the most expedient process, in that the publishers would need to arrange for review copies and so on and would often have the resources to complete the submission. In reality, as the resources of many publishers shrink, more and more of this sort of work is taken on by the authors themselves. As such, the divide grows ever wider between publishers with the means to participate in the award submission process and those without.[15] Without such support, increasingly, the onus is on the authors to, first, be connected into the right networks to know about the prizes; and, second, have the time and resources to submit an application, pursue their publishers to make review copies available, and so on. The nomination processes are in themselves impediments to greater representation from authors who publish outside well-resourced publishing houses on the one hand, and/or do not personally have the time and resources available to undertake the process of submitting their books on the other. Therefore, even as the number of prizes available has increased,[16] outside of a few well-funded and well-staffed US and UK university presses, the resources available within publishing houses have declined, with reduced budgets for libraries and research, and digital "disruption" (Mrva-Montoya 2012; Greco 2017; Björnmalm 2018).

The adage "success follows success" most certainly plays a part, as the reputations of well-resourced publishers attract the "best" manuscripts and authors to their imprints, in turn developing a "prestige brand" that can both attract and inhibit certain authors (with thoughts such as "I'm not good enough, so why even try?"). The reality of academic rankings and notions of prestige around particular publishers filters through and influences

14) It is beyond the scope of this article to consider the "gatekeeping" role of large university presses in their manuscript selection process. Suffice it to say that due to resource limitations, this often involves a tiered sorting process, with several hurdles before a manuscript is likely to be considered. The entry point for many is by way of introduction from a contact such as a supervisor or colleague who has previously worked with a publisher or editor of a book series, for example. Another hurdle is the submission of work that is of a very high standard of English and the Anglophone-centrism more generally (Burman 2018, 50).

15) See note 11 regarding universities in the US with the resources (human and financial) to support Southeast Asian imprints in their university presses (notably, Cornell, Hawai'i, and Duke).

16) As publishers (particularly smaller ones) have less and less resources to market books and provide alternative promotional pathways for authors, for academic communities (associations and so on) prize giving is one way of drawing attention to certain works. This may also help to explain the proliferation of awards during the period under study.

advice given to early career academics seeking tenure, for example. Largely unwritten, such standards related to reputation and rank impact directly on choices authors make, including not to publish with local regional publishers such as ISEAS or NUS Press but instead to seek out larger US- or Europe-based houses.

When it comes to notions of prestige and excellence in shaping ideas about Southeast Asia, decisions made by US-based university presses and the organizing committees and judging panels responsible for US- and Europe-based book prizes still hold great weight. Whilst not entirely surprising, and recognizing that yawning resource inequalities and strategic imperatives all play a part, the results documented here indicate that the field is possibly further from where Nicholas Farrelly (2018) and others anticipated US-centric influence might be in 2023. The pathways to prestige in the field of Southeast Asian studies remain too narrow and do not reflect the growth in sources of knowledge and the varieties of expertise about Southeast Asia. As Southeast Asian studies centers grow in number across the region and more broadly in Asia, where are their equivalent associations and initiatives establishing prizes like those discussed in this study and thereby establishing their own symbols of prestige?

New Centers for Southeast Asia Knowledge Production

Bearing in mind the patterns of prestige evident in our findings, one may wonder where signs of diversity and vitality to challenge the dominance of US-based scholars and publishers in the field exist or may emerge. For the past twenty years, the field has undergone a significant reflexive exercise to examine its legitimacy. During this time institution-building projects have been launched within the Southeast Asian academy, which was (coincidentally?) coupled with a decline in research and teaching in these areas in the Western academy. Can the de-Westernization of Southeast Asian studies counter the hegemonic knowledge production about Southeast Asia that has so long been under the aegis of Western academic institutions and with it the associated patterns of prestige? What would be the benefits of a "transfer" of such centers of prestige to the region?

Mieno Fumiharu *et al.* (2021) posit that since such debates about the tensions between regionally based Southeast Asia scholarship and scholarship in the West were initiated in the early to mid-2000s, there appears to have been a noticeable shift: "Southeast Asian studies have become remarkably globalized, through a series of transformations including a significant geographic shift of major research centers from the West to Asia itself."

Southeast Asian studies has become increasingly globally focused, with a locus of

key knowledge production emerging in the region itself, as well as elsewhere in Asia—indicated by the burgeoning of research centers, academic journals, and teaching programs. Cynthia Chou (2017) and others observe that these recent patterns indicate a new self-confidence within Asia more broadly and Southeast Asia in particular. In the past decade, in Singapore, Indonesia, and Malaysia higher education reforms and investment on the back of strengthening economies have shown increased confidence and commitment to the knowledge production sector, with new research centers and journals receiving funding from their governments and other entities.

Since the early 2000s Singapore has led the way, extending its investments in institutions supporting research and publishing, and in the process attracting growing numbers of higher degree research students from the region and beyond (Thompson and Sinha 2019). Singapore's flagship research institution, the Asia Research Institute at the National University of Singapore, has positioned itself as a leader in the field of Asian studies and research globally. Its director, Tim Bunnell (2023), credited this in part to its location, which provides an "incomparable institutional and geographical home for research on Asia." Several generations of Southeast Asian scholars have been trained there, and a small number have managed to find ongoing employment in Singapore's universities.

Malaysian universities have become an attractive choice for both international and local students to enjoy an international (English-language) education at a lower cost. In addition, there are as many as ten foreign university branch campuses in the country (Grapragasem *et al.* 2014). The Department of Southeast Asian Studies (DSEAS) at the Universiti Malaya was established in 1975 in accordance with one of the objectives of the 1967 ASEAN Declaration—to promote Southeast Asian studies. Other Malaysian universities offer distinguished profiles and expertise in Southeast Asian studies, such as IKMAS at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, though DSEAS alone offers postgraduate programs.

In Indonesia the internationalization of the higher education sector has been under way since the early 2000s, with numerous government regulations and instructions, including collaboration with foreign universities, international recognition, and validation of academic programs through accreditation and the adoption of international standards in teaching and learning (Bandur 2013). In 2017 the Center for Southeast Asian Social Studies at Universitas Gadjah Mada established *IKAT: The Indonesian Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, and it holds a regular series of international seminars and conferences. Universitas Indonesia started a Southeast Asian studies program in response to what it claimed were the needs of society (anyone interested in the diversity of sociocultural and political phenomena in Southeast Asia) and also a growing employment

market (diplomats, educators, journalists, practitioners, politicians, diplomats) in which formal education at the master's level in Southeast Asian studies was sought after.

The rapid expansion of Thailand's education sector in the 1990s, including institutions of higher learning, saw a prolific "localized Thai response" (Charnvit 2016) in Southeast Asian studies in the 2000s. Centers and programs for undergraduate and postgraduate study were established in numerous universities—Thammasat, Chulalongkorn, and Mahidol, among others. Chulalongkorn University, in particular, hosts centers for research and teaching in Thai studies and Southeast Asian studies more broadly. The Institute for Thai Studies was established in Chulalongkorn University in 2010 as a research center for Thai-Tai studies, emerging from what was previously a government initiative called the Thai Studies Project founded in 1975 (Institute of Thai Studies, n.d.). The institute supports a strong publications program in Thai and English, including a number of journals and book imprints, and has well-established international networks, scholarships, and research activities. Also at Chulalongkorn University, the Thai Studies Center provides postgraduate teaching programs and supports some research activity (Thai Studies Center 2024). Similarly, the university's Southeast Asian Studies Program, established in 2003, offers an English-language master's degree in Southeast Asian studies, inviting prospective students to "Understand Southeast Asia from a Southeast Asian Standpoint" (Southeast Asian Studies, n.d.). The three programs and institutions at Chulalongkorn link together to form what appears to be a strong and dynamic research and teaching ecosystem with significant international reach. Outside of the capital city, Walailak University and Payap University also offer Southeast Asian studies programs. While we see important investments being made in regional knowledge production, we agree with Thongchai Winichakul's findings that higher education and research in Southeast Asia have become hyper-utilitarian and—maybe more frustrating—that most Southeast Asian countries are thriving on education in the natural sciences and communication technology at the expense of social sciences and the humanities (Thongchai 2020, 11). Perhaps this development is characteristic not only of the new but also of some older knowledge production centers.

Elsewhere in Asia, Japan has been a long-term and significant contributor to the production of knowledge on Southeast Asia. The Institute for Southeast Asian Studies was established as an intramural organization at Kyoto University in 1963, as a research department responsible for comprehensive research on Southeast Asia. This was followed by the Center for Southeast Asian Studies (CSEAS), which became a government organization in 1965. The current iteration of CSEAS came about in January 2017 through the merger of various predecessors, and it is currently at the center of global initiatives to revisit and reconsider area studies in order to question, shape, and foster the politics

of knowledge production. CSEAS hosts the Secretariat for the Consortium for Southeast Asian Studies in Asia (SEASIA), established in 2013 by area studies institutions in North and Southeast Asia. As of 2023, the consortium included 15 institutions from ten countries.[17] SEASIA holds regular conferences, but so far it has not awarded any book prizes. The Asian Law and Society Association, an interdisciplinary association based in Waseda University, is perhaps the only institution based in the region to offer a book prize for Asian studies. It awarded the prize to Southeast Asian studies-related books twice between 2017 and 2023.[18] Both books were on Myanmar and published by US university publishers.

More recently, as China has extended its economic and geopolitical engagement with the countries and economies of Southeast Asia through its Belt and Road Initiative, it has looked to expand its knowledge of these societies, polities, and cultures (Saw 2006; Ngeow 2022). In 2016 China's Ministry of Education issued the Education Action Plan for the Belt and Road Initiative, launching a coordinated effort to follow the lead of its infrastructure and investment program to build university campuses and research and cultural centers in the region (Ngeow 2022). This follows an initiative launched by the ministry in 2011, China's Regional and Country Studies Bases policy, calling for a nationwide network of area studies centers in China to carry out basic and applied research on foreign regions and subregions (Myers and Barrios 2018). In recent years this has translated into an investment in China's academy in the study of various regions, including Southeast Asia, with a particular emphasis on language and economics (Van der Eng 2019). As Ngeow Chow-Bing and others point out, China's ascendency as a knowledge producer and provider within Southeast Asia, though initially faced with "teething problems" (Hoon 2024), is well under way (Ngeow 2022). The ramifications of this geopolitical shift for the production and dissemination of knowledge and the development of networks within the Southeast Asian region are potentially history shaping: "China is now confident to be a teacher, proud of its achievements, and ready to offer its knowledge to the world, especially to the developing world" (Ngeow 2022, 223). So far, however, we have been unable to identify any Southeast Asian studies-related book prizes bestowed by Chinese institutions.

In Korea, in just the past decade several new centers and institutes with a focus on Southeast Asian studies have been established (Ahn and Jeon 2019). The Southeast Asia Center was set up in 2012 at Seoul National University to cater to existing socioeconomic

17) The countries with member institutions are China (and Hong Kong), Taiwan, the Philippines, Brunei, Cambodia, Thailand, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, and Singapore (Consortium for Southeast Asian Studies in Asia 2023).

18) The prize consists of US$300 cash and ALSA membership (Asian Law and Society Association 2023).

and cultural interest in Southeast Asia within Korea. In late 2018 the Jeonbuk National University Institute for Southeast Asian Studies was launched. Its activities include an annual lecture and paper series, policy reports, and other publications with the aim to "contribute to Korean society by raising awareness of Southeast Asia"; but to date no specific book award for Southeast Asian studies scholars has been established (Jeon 2020).

Chou made the following observation:

> The Southeast Asian studies project, which began primarily in the West and has come under severe attack by globalist thinkers in one way or another, has significantly not crumbled under these pressures. Instead, it has forged ahead into an exciting new phase of expanding its spheres of knowledge production. (Chou 2017, 245–246)

Indisputably, the production of knowledge is heavily influenced by hegemonic imbalances, competition privileges, and impermeable patterns of prestige, which—while increasingly challenged by metacriticism of science—still rest on long-lasting mechanisms and self-perpetuating principles of "quality assurance" that determine what good science is and what makes a good scientist (Shahjahan and Morgan 2016). Unlike the old academic core disciplines (such as history and philosophy), which are by default Western-centric and introspective, the newer area studies are directed at understanding the other. Although the outward orientation seems like a specific trait of Southeast Asian studies/area studies, its purpose is nevertheless also self-serving, as the Western gaze has dominated knowledge production through its institutionalized academic hegemony. This hegemony remains visible in the award-giving practices in Southeast Asian studies/area studies. Our findings testify that most books deemed worthy of prizes have been written by scholars trained and based in the Global North and published by Global North publishers.

We are not yet able to answer what the ongoing exclusion of works by Southeast Asia scholars outside the US, the UK, Europe, and Australia in award giving means for progress in the development of Southeast Asian studies in the region itself. Consortia of prominent regional institutions such as SEASIA, working together, may have the potential to generate new momentum in the middle to long term. Nonetheless, current trends show that arbiters of prestige in the field are still based outside the region. In the short term, we wonder whether it might be possible to make changes to the ways in which the book prizes are designed and the eligibility and nomination process managed, which would make for a more inclusive competition.[19] As it stands, the nomination processes

19) Initiatives by organizations like AAS and others in the Western academy provide funding and scholarships to emerging scholars working on Southeast Asia and from the region. If sustained over a long period of time and, crucially, extended to those who are both from and in the region, such initiatives may contribute to shifting the balance to the region.

for the prizes under study advantage resource-rich publishers and individuals. The ASAA's decision to move away from publisher nomination to peer nomination for the recently inaugurated Reid Prize may potentially widen the field of play by reducing the dependency on resource-rich publishers and authors; and the ASAA prize's region-based model could be one that others follow.

Following Cribb's notion of "circles of esteem," one approach may be for a book prize to emerge from within, governed by scholars based in the region. Indeed, the proliferation of prizes shows that this would not be difficult to implement, but instead the major challenge is how to imbue the prize with the same prestige as existing (Euro-American) prizes. A community of scholars based in the region could choose to ignore existing measures entirely and begin anew, defining their own standards and levels for esteem focused around a gold-standard book prize for Southeast Asian studies by their own definition. Of course, there is every chance that a prize committee based in Bangkok or Singapore might simply replicate existing patterns or definitions of prestige. As described in the origin stories of the existing prizes, their very naming, together with the historical and institutional impetus (and resources) behind the creation of such awards, matter greatly.

Conclusion

It is well acknowledged that the discipline of area studies and subdiscipline of Southeast Asian studies emerged in the wake of World War II, with the geopolitical imperatives of the Cold War in the US, Australia, and elsewhere in the West to "know" the new nation-states emerging in this region. Born from an American hegemonic imperative to understand, inform public policy, and extract from Southeast Asia, knowledge production about "other" cultures, peoples, places, and languages occurred primarily in the Western academy and was conducted by non-Southeast Asians (Said 1978; Cumings 1997; Chou and Houben 2006).The loss of interest in area studies in Western academies since the early 1990s, with the end of the Cold War, has resulted in an institutional decline in the deep study of places, cultures, and languages, including Southeast Asia. This is evident not only in the closure of some institutions and programs but also in reduced funding and scope for research and teaching in Southeast Asian studies in the remaining higher education institutions in the West (Aspinall and Crouch 2023). Unsurprisingly, there is a growing interest in recruiting more secondary and tertiary students from Southeast Asian countries, particularly if they bring in their own funding or scholarships.

Alongside the decline of the discipline in some parts of the world and an emergence of interest in other parts, scholars and researchers within Southeast Asian studies have

debated epistemologies and reflected deeply on their field (Sutherland 2012; Mielke and Hornidge 2017; Fleschenberg and Baumann 2020). A focus on the underlying power imbalances or the positionalities of those who thrive in the discipline is also not new (Feith 1965; Reid 1999; Kratoska *et al.* 2005; Asif 2020).[20] Bonura and Sears (2007, 17) and others proposed linkages between new and old Southeast Asian studies hubs as potential antidotes to the presumption that Southeast Asian studies remained largely a "unidirectional project in which academies in Europe, the US, Australia or Japan remain distant from the methods, scholarship and academic trends or politics emerging out of Southeast Asia." While many strategic temporary and ongoing partnerships, exchanges, and collaborations have been established—including Western universities setting up campuses in the Southeast Asian region with, it must be said, varying levels of success—it remains to be seen whether they can contribute to overcoming the deeply embedded power imbalances in knowledge production and knowledge appreciation (Missbach 2011).

Though such discussions are beyond the scope of this article, we are keenly aware that many questions remain about the mid- to long-term geostrategic relevance and implications of emerging hubs of knowledge production elsewhere in Asia and beyond. What is driving this invigoration within Southeast Asian studies in the region and emerging centers? And will Southeast Asian studies in these new centers ever catch up with, let alone overtake, the declining centers of Southeast Asia knowledge production in the West? Why do top-tier Southeast Asia scholars continue to select US, UK, and Australian institutions for pursuing their advanced degrees? As Manan Ahmed Asif has pointed out, it is imperative to derive such insights from these scholars themselves:

> What the post-colonised scholar asks are the resources for being a scholar, for accessing the archives in Europe and the United States, for accessing the social capital of European and US-American universities, for availing themselves of the distribution circuits of printing presses of the world, newspapers of the world, conferences of the world. The post-colonised scholar wishes for the security for their body in order for their minds to be able to question their own local, their own history as constructed and as imagined. (Asif 2020, 77)

As Asif argues, why should scholars from the region not continue to be trained in well-resourced "traditional" centers in the Global North and West? At the same time, what do we know about the emerging generation that is being trained locally in Southeast Asia

20) Others include Purdey (2012), Acharya and Buzan (2017), Antweiler (2017), Chou (2017), Derichs (2017), Mielke and Hornidge (2017), Chua *et al.* (2019), and Jackson (2019). The reflection on positionalities occurred largely within and among scholars in countries outside Asia, in what has historically been referred to as the "West"—US, UK, Europe, and Australia and New Zealand—or between this cohort and a small number of scholars from the countries under study (Vickers 2020; Mieno *et al.* 2021).

or elsewhere in emerging centers? What are the connections and bridges being forged between them?

Where and how Southeast Asia knowledge is being created, disseminated, consumed, and prized today, and where it is likely to be created and lauded in the future, depend largely on the institutional, societal-structural, and national interests and biases that exist within the process of knowledge production. Whilst book prizes represent only a part of the economy of prestige within Southeast Asian studies, our survey shows that the work deemed most valuable is a product of expert training emanating from the West and feeds directly back into its institutional structures. So far, the flows of scholars (including the "new" generation from Southeast Asia) are indeed unidirectional (into and within the West), and there is nothing to indicate this will change any time soon.

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"Karampátan ñg Tao": Tracing the Rise of Tagalog Human Rights Discourse Using a Textual Corpus

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This essay is a preliminary study on the rise of human rights discourse in the Tagalog language from the late nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth using a carefully designed textual corpus. The corpus is made up of original Tagalog texts as well as translations of political treatises from European languages into Tagalog. While it has been found that *karapatan* (rights) is indeed a central notion in the development of a specifically Tagalog revolutionary discourse, the matter of its "inherence" in the *tao* (human being) has followed a particularly convoluted path due to the existence of alternative interpretations revolving around the moral "worthiness" of individuals and classes.

Keywords: human rights, Tagalog, political lexicography, text corpora

Introduction

This essay aims to trace the historical process of development of the phrase "karapatang pantao," the modern Tagalog equivalent for "human rights," from the late nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth. It attempts to do this by using a carefully designed textual corpus. There are many difficulties with such an endeavor. Most pertinent is how to avoid arbitrariness and the charge of impressionism in the construction of such a corpus.

On the one hand, the most important type of textual source for Reinhart Koselleck's (1972, xxiv) massive multivolume project *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe: Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland* (Historical basic concepts: A historical lexicon of political-social language in Germany) (1972–97) falls under the category of "classical" writers and works. The tendency to refer to the use of "classical writers and works" as main references can be seen in the article "Recht, Gerechtigkeit" (Right/law, justice), which comprehensively discusses the contributions of Hugo Grotius, Jean Bodin, Thomas Hobbes, Samuel von Pufendorf, John Locke, Christian Thomasius, Christian

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Wolff, Montesquieu, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau in tracing the development of the modern German concept of rights (Loos and Schreiber 1982). On the other hand, Rolf Reichardt and Eberhard Schmitt's (1985, 46) equally important *Handbuch politisch-sozialer Grundbegriffe in Frankreich 1680–1820* (Handbook of basic sociopolitical concepts in France 1680–1820) branded Koselleck's approach as a problematic *Gipfelwanderungen*, or jumping from one mountain peak to another. This latter project, therefore, tried as much as possible to avoid the so-called classics and made far greater use of all types of dictionaries, encyclopedias, memoirs, magazines, newspapers, pamphlets, flyers, minutes of meetings, catechisms, almanacs, songs, etc. (cf. Schmale 2000). The aim of the *Handbuch*, in contrast with Koselleck's *Lexikon*, was to more closely reflect daily political usages and arrive at greater social representativeness. The *Handbuch* thus had to move away from intellectual history toward something approximating a history of mentalities in France. In relation to this, the increasing use of automated word search, frequency lists, and collocational analysis on massive amounts of digitized textual materials has revolutionized the possible scope and rigor of this type of conceptual history in recent years.

Pursuing similar undertakings in the Philippine context is complicated by several limitations. First, Koselleck's approach presupposes a corpus of generally uncontested classic works by universally recognized authors on law and politics throughout the centuries, which does not exist in the Tagalog language. Any proposed selection of Tagalog texts would not appear self-evident in the way that the inclusion of the writings of Hobbes and Locke in a history of European political thought would be. Second, large comprehensive digital corpora comparable with Gallica of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France (with ten million texts) and the Deutsche Digitale Bibliothek (with fifty million digital objects), which would facilitate implementing a project similar to Reichardt and Schmitt's *Handbuch*, do not yet exist for Tagalog or for any Philippine language. The future availability of well-designed large textual corpora will minimize questions regarding arbitrariness in the selection of materials.

Since massively large corpora are not yet available for the historical study of Tagalog political discourse (as well as those of other Philippine languages), a quality corpus of selected texts may serve to give some preliminary insights on this important topic without foreclosing any possible future discoveries or refutations of findings based on more complete datasets. The proposed quality corpus includes selected Tagalog dictionaries from 1613 to 1978, original political treatises in Tagalog from 1889 to 1941, as well as translations from various European languages into Tagalog from 1593 to 1913. The present corpus has therefore been constructed which includes the following materials:

1) An early Tagalog translation: *Doctrina Christiana, en lengua española y tagala* (Christian doctrine in Spanish and Tagalog languages) (translated 1593);
2) Original Tagalog works from the late nineteenth century Philippine Revolution: Jose Rizal's "Liham sa mga Kadalagahan sa Malolos" (Letter to the young women of Malolos) (1889); Emilio Jacinto's "Kartilya" (primer) of the Kataastasaang Kagalang-galang na Katipunan ng mga Anak ng Bayan (The Highest and Most Revered Association of the Sons and Daughters of the People; KKK) (1892); documents of the KKK (1896–97) (Richardson 2013); Jacinto's "Liwanag at Dilim" (Light and darkness) (1896);
3) Translations into Tagalog from the late nineteenth century Philippine Revolution: *Déclaration des droits de l'homme et du citoyen, 1789* (Declaration of the rights of man and the citizen, 1789) (1949) (translated c. 1891–92); Friedrich Schiller's *Wilhelm Tell* (translated 1886–87); Apolinario Mabini's *Programa Constitucional de la República Filipina* (Constitutional program of the Philippine Republic) (self-translated in 1898);
4) Original Tagalog works from the Philippine labor movement: Lope K. Santos's socialist novel *Banaag at Sikat* (Glimmer and ray) ([1906] 1993); Carlos Ronquillo's *Bagong Buhay: Ang mga Katutubong karapatan ng mga Manggagawa sa Harap ng Wagas na Matwid* (New life [socialism]: The inherent rights of the worker in the light of pure reason) (1910); Cirilo S. Honorio's *Tagumpay ng Manggagawa: May Kalakip na Sampung Utos, Pitong Wika, Tula at Tuluyang Ukol sa Manggagawa na Sinulat ng mga Tanyag na Manunulat* (Workers' victory: Including ten commandments, seven discourses, poems, and prose about workers written by well-known writers) (1925); Crisanto Evangelista's pamphlet *Patnubay sa Kalayaan at Kapayapaan* (Guide to freedom and peace) (1941);
5) Translations into Tagalog from the Philippine labor movement: Plataforma y Constitución del Gremio de Impresores, Litografos y Encuadernadores (Platform and constitution of the Guild of Printers, Lithographers, and Binders) (translated 1904); Errico Malatesta's *Fra contadini: dialogo sull'anarchia* (Among peasants: A dialogue on anarchy) (translated 1913).

It is a truism that the construction of a bounded or restricted textual corpus must inevitably give rise to certain conceptions regarding the history of a particular language. The most important thing, therefore, is to ensure the transparency of the principles behind the construction of the corpus itself. In this particular case, and in contrast with Kosellek's *Lexikon* and Reichardt and Schmitt's *Handbuch*, translations of texts from the late nineteenth century onward associated with the Philippine Revolution of 1896 and the

rise of the Philippine labor movement play an especially significant role insofar as these are able to show traces of the historically and linguistically conditioned constraints and possibilities in the dissemination of ideas originating from Europe. Many of the works included in the present corpus are quite rare, obscure, and little read by today's scholars. Despite the limitations of this bounded corpus, transparency with respect to its construction, in terms of both its inclusions and omissions, can allow for a more precise and constructive discussion of the established textual facts and their possible interpretation and organization. What is given importance here is the dialectic between creativity and constraint posed by language as an intersubjective reality on both the synchronic and diachronic planes.

The present author has been involved in several small and medium-scale efforts in the digitization of Philippine materials and has focused his personal efforts on digitizing textual materials from the first decades of the Philippine labor movement to the rise of the Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas (Communist Party of the Philippines; PKP). In fact, his early work was devoted to the exploration of these materials (Guillermo 2009b). He is well aware that many more texts which have already been digitized could be included in the present corpus to give further nuance to the thesis he is presenting. However, due to space constraints, most of these materials had to be left out of consideration. These can be the subject of future studies.

The present approach might be called a certain kind of linguistic empiricism due to its close attention to the recording and interpretation of concrete textual phenomena in definite collocational contexts (Sy 2022). Moreover, by methodologically eschewing tendencies toward any strong "etymologism," the current approach diverges from the otherwise useful contributions in this field by Zeus Salazar (1999; Guillermo 2009a). The contrast between Salazar's strong etymologism in the study of Philippine political vocabularies and a more empiricist approach to the same phenomena can be summarized as follows: where Salazar inextricably ties what he seemingly considers to be the true and unchanging semantic content of a word to its (purported) root, the second approach tries to draw out meanings from actual and verifiable usages of the relevant words as these appear through time. Unreflected hermeneutic predilections and strategies may also be made more visible when these come into conflict with textual facts. This study therefore tends toward the politico-lexicographic and is partly intended as an aid in advancing the more speculative and thematic approaches in intellectual history such as those previously embarked upon by Cesar Adib Majul (1996), Rolando Gripaldo (2001), and Johaina Crisostomo (2021). Indeed, these previous studies have, for the most part, dealt only very lightly with the problems of language and translation.

Why is it important to study the historical development of modern political discourse

in Tagalog and other Philippine languages? For the most part, scholars interested in Philippine politics, with the exception of some brilliant scholars such as Benedict Kerkvliet (1990) and the Japanese political anthropologist Kusaka Wataru (2017), have shown little interest in how the masses, the rural and urban poor, and the working classes have actively discussed what counts as politics among themselves in the languages available to them (Ileto 2001). However, this kind of work is, on the one hand, becoming more and more indispensable even in mainstream scholarship due to the increasingly stiff competition faced by the complacently English-speaking liberal political establishment from non-traditional populist contenders from other factions of the Philippine ruling elite. This study contributes to scholarship on the languages of politics in the Philippines even as it has been inspired by Benedict Anderson's (1990) similar work on Indonesia. On the other hand, such studies have always been crucial from the point of view of progressive and transformative Philippine politics, which is premised on the active participation and self-mobilization of the masses in the remaking of Philippine society (Guillermo *et al.* 2022).

The French *Déclaration des droits de l'homme et du citoyen, 1789* in Tagalog Translation: "Les droits naturels et imprescriptibles" (Natural and Imprescriptible Rights)

The Tagalog translation of the French *Déclaration des droits de l'homme et du citoyen, 1789*, which was supposedly written by Jose Rizal (1861–96) (c. 1891–92; 1961a), the novelist and Philippine national hero, during his stay in Hong Kong is an early example of the development of the uneasy Tagalog reception of the European discourse on "rights." The Tagalog translation is accompanied in its original printed form by a Spanish translation which it very closely mirrors. It is not clear whether the Tagalog translation was based on the Spanish text or vice versa. There is no source indicated for the Spanish text, and it is plainly quite different from the "Declaración de los derechos del hombre y del ciudadano, 1793" (Declaration of the rights of man and of the citizen, 1793), the canonical 1793 translation by Antonio Nariño (1981). Moreover, the Tagalog translation and the Spanish version accompanying it are both substantially abridged versions of the original *Déclaration*. The preamble of the *Déclaration* is omitted from the translation. One suspects that the accompanying Spanish translation was partially meant to lend a somewhat spurious authority to the accuracy and completeness of the Tagalog translation.

In the original French text with 17 articles, including the title, *droit(s)* is mentioned a total of 11 times. Seven instances of these are translated consistently using *karampatan*,

while the other four occurrences are simply elided in both the Tagalog and accompanying Spanish translations. Though it does not seem self-evident, some dictionaries (Almario 2010) claim that *karampatan* shares the same root (*dapat*, ought) as *karapatan*, but one can also speculate on a possible derivation from *katampatan* (deserving/meritorious) instead. *Karampatan* would, however, eventually lose out to *karapatan* as the standard translation for "right."

Article I of the *Déclaration* contains the famous sentence "Les hommes naissent et demeurent libres et égaux en droits" (Men are born and remain free and equal in rights). This is translated into Tagalog as "Ang tao'y malayang ipinaganak; nananatiling malayá at sa karampata'y paris-paris" (The human being is born free; remains free and equal in rights). The first thing one observes is that the Tagalog translation conveys the idea that a *tao* (human being), once born into the world, is free and equal to others in terms of rights. This is very close to the sixth *Sabi* (saying) in Rizal's (1961b) essay "Sa mga kababayang dalaga ng Malolos" (To the young women of Malolos) (1889): "Ang tao'y inianak na paris-paris hubad at walang tali" (Each human being is born equal [*paris-paris*], naked, and without fetters). This is reminiscent of Rousseau's phrasing in *Du Contrat Social* (The social contract) (1762), "L'homme est né libre, & partout il est dans les fers" (Man is born free and everywhere he is in chains)—but also quite different. Where Rizal writes of being born *paris-paris* (equal), Rousseau writes *libre* (free); where Rizal writes "walang tali" (without any fetters), Rousseau writes "dans les fers" (in chains). One notes that the Tagalog translation as well as Rizal's essay did not yet make use of the word *pantay-pantay* (even, equal), which is more commonly used in contemporary Filipino for "equal," but instead used *paris-paris* (coming in pairs, or identical).

The Tagalog translation (like the accompanying Spanish translation) does not include the first sentence of Article II of the French original, which is as follows: "Le but de toute association politique est la conservation des droits naturels et imprescriptibles de l'Homme" (The goal of all political association is the conservation of the natural and inalienable rights of man). The important phrase "droits naturels et imprescriptibles" (natural and imprescriptible rights) is therefore left untranslated. While the range of meaning of the French *imprescriptible* may include "inalienable" in its English sense, the word *inaliénable* itself occurs in the *Déclaration* in the phrase "les droits naturels, inaliénables et sacrés de l'Homme" (the natural, inalienable, and sacred rights of man), which appears in the untranslated preamble. The legal meaning of *imprescriptible* as "not being subject to any limitation or abridgement" is quite different from *inaliénable*, which means "non-transferable" or "cannot be taken away."

The succeeding sentence in Article II, which contains an enumeration of basic rights, however, is maintained ("la liberté, la propriété, la sûreté, et la résistance à

l'oppression" [liberty, property, security, and the resistance to oppression]). Quite important among these, especially for the purposes of the Tagalog translation, is the assertion of the right to "la résistance à l'oppression" (resistance to oppression), which is translated as "pagsuay sa umaapi" (to disobey/revolt against the oppressor). Another occurrence of "droits naturels" (natural rights) in Article IV is left untranslated ("l'exercice des droits naturels de chaque homme" [the exercise of natural rights by each person/man]). A stand-alone occurrence of *droit* in Article V is again left untranslated ("le droit de défendre" [the right to forbid]).

The right to free expression, characterized in Article XI as "un des droits les plus précieux de l'Homme" (one of the most precious rights of man), is translated straightforwardly as "isa sa mga mahalagang karampátan ñg tao" (one of the most important rights of the human being). On the other hand, the phrase "droits de l'Homme et du Citoyen" (rights of man and of the citizen) is truncated in the Tagalog translation as "karampátan ñg tao" (right of the human being), which drops the mention of "citizen." This latter word was difficult to translate since it did not yet have a fixed equivalent in the Tagalog language at the time. A stand-alone mention of *droits* in Article XVI is unproblematically translated as *karampatan* ("la garantie des Droits" [guarantee the rights]). Finally, with reference to property, Article XVII contains the phrase "un droit inviolable et sacré" (an inviolable and sacred right), which is translated as "dakilà at di magagahas [*sic*] na karampatan" (great and inviolable right). (A typographical error has rendered the correct Tagalog word *magagahis* [can be violated/subdued/overpowered] as *magagahas*.)

To summarize, the Tagalog translation of the *Déclaration* attempts to express the following ideas in relation to *karampatan* (right): (1) *tao* are born *paris-paris* (equal); (2) *tao* are born with "karampatang paris-paris" (equal rights); (3) these *karampatan* that *tao* are born with are "di magagahis" (cannot be taken away); (4) *tao* possess the *karampatan* to "pagsuay sa umaapi" (disobey/revolt against the oppressor).

The Tagalog translation clearly elides all translations for difficult concepts pertaining to *droit* such as *naturel*, *imprescriptible*, and *inaliénable*. The main reason for these elisions is probably that each of these individual concepts may not have had any straightforward terminological equivalents in late nineteenth century Tagalog. The result is that these concepts, so important in providing the ideological background of the *Déclaration* in contractualist and natural law perspectives, simply disappear. The main innovation of this text is that it introduced what may have been one of the first Tagalog translations of "human rights" as "karampátan ñg tao."

"Karampátan ñg Tao" and Notions of "Worthiness"

The Tagalog *tao* derives from the Proto-Austronesian (PAN) **Cau*, which means "person" or "human being" (Greenhill *et al.* 2008). Its closest cognates are *tau*, *tawo*, and *tawu*, which are found throughout the Philippine archipelago (Ilokano [*tao*], Ilonggo [*tawo*], Cebuano [*tao/tawo*], Bikol [*tawo*], etc.). *Tao* and its closest cognates are also spread out in the present-day territories of Malaysia and Indonesia in Sabah (*tau*), Sarawak (*tau*), Sulawesi (*tau/tawu*), and Sumba (*tau*). It is found in the languages of Papua New Guinea in New Britain (*tau*) and Port Moresby (*tau*). Much farther east, one also finds it on the island of Guam (*tao*).

The first printed bilingual and biscript book in Tagalog and Spanish, the *Doctrina Christiana, en lengua española y tagala* (Christian doctrine in Spanish and Tagalog languages) (1593), contains some of the earliest appearances of *tawo/tawu* in print. There are 29 occurrences of *tawo/tawu* in the baybayin writing system spelled as ᜆᜏᜓ "ta-wo" (human being). Some of the more relevant usages are ᜈᜃᜆᜏ ᜆᜏᜓ "nagkatawan tawo" (to take on a human form), ᜀᜉᜃᜆᜏᜓ ᜈᜒᜌ "ang pagkatawo niya" (his humanness, human quality, or nature), ᜃᜉᜓᜏ ᜋᜓᜆᜏᜓ "kapuwa mo tawo" (your fellow human being), and ᜎᜑᜈᜆᜏᜓ "lahat ng tawo" (all human beings). It is hard to determine whether some of these constitute new usages and collocations due to translational processes or whether they belong to older cultural-linguistic strata. However, an extant recorded usage of perhaps much older provenance from the Philippine area, though not in Tagalog, may be found in an idiom present in the *ambahan* poetic form written in the Hanunoo language in the Mangyan writing system, ᜨᜳᜤᜦᜯᜳᜧᜲᜥᜭ (no ga tawo di ngaran) (Postma 2005, 64). This can be unpacked very literally as "if something appears to be that to which the name *tawo* can be applied." In this particular case, being a *tao*, or *pagkatao*, is not simply a given but something which must be ascertained before one can relate to that being as a fellow *tawo*. For example, ᜰᜣᜬᜬᜢᜰᜧ || ᜨᜳᜤᜦᜯᜳᜧᜲᜥᜭ || ᜩᜩᜨᜤᜲᜰᜮᜳᜧᜲᜫ (Sa kang yaya ugsadan/No ga tawo di ngaran/Pagpanagislod diman) may be translated in a more abbreviated form as "to you who are outside the house/if you are a *tawo*/come in." A *tawo* is worthy of hospitality, while a being who is not a *tawo* is, by implication, unwelcome to enter.

Pedro de San Buenaventura's *Vocabulario de Lengua Tagala* (Vocabulary of the Tagalog language) (1613) defines *tauo* (pronounced ta-wo) as *hombre* (man) and as *persona* (person). Interestingly, it also defines the word as "estos Tagalos por si mismo, a diferencia de los demás naciones. Dilì tauo at Castila" (these Tagalogs themselves, in contradistinction with other nations. Not a *tao*, rather a Spaniard). In contrast with this, however, *ca-taou-han* is defined in the same dictionary as *humanidad* (humanity) in a presumably broader sense. It is significant that San Buenaventura's dictionary recorded

what may have been a pre-Hispanic "anthropological nominalism" which did not yet recognize the usage of *tauo* as a universal category translatable as "human" (Losurdo 2019, 424). The third edition of Juan Jose de Noceda and Pedro de Sanlucar's *Vocabulario de la Lengua Tagala* (Vocabulary of the Tagalog language) (1860) more conventionally defines *tauo* as *gente* (people, folk) and gives an example followed by a translation: "Mey tauo sa Simbahan, hay gente en la Iglesia" (There are people in the church). Like San Buenaventura, Noceda and Sanlucar also define *cataouhan* as *humanidad*. However, the question arises whether *cataouhan* was a Tagalog concept existing originally independent of Christian theology or whether it was devised specifically by the Spaniards to serve as an equivalent to *humanidad*, which had its origins in a specifically European Christological vocabulary (Bödeker 1982, 1063). The philosophically realist, and probably newer, usage of *cataouhan* as a synonym for *humanidad* may indicate a crucial transition from nominalism to realism in the history of *tauo*. In noting this, it is not being asserted that the resulting term *cataouhan* is flatly "non-indigenous," since such a stark distinction between the "indigenous" and "non-indigenous" does not make any sense in translational studies which cannot rigidly bracket out one side from the other. *Cataouhan* now simply exists until the present day in the Tagalog language.

The updated 1860 edition of Noceda and Sanlucar's Tagalog dictionary is separated by only a few decades from Rizal's Tagalog translation of the play *Wilhelm Tell*. Rizal undertook the translation in 1886–87 during his stay in Germany upon the request of his brother Paciano (Schiller 1907; Guillermo 2009c). The latter was apparently keen on using it for nationalist propaganda purposes. Originally published and performed in 1804, this play is considered Friedrich Schiller's (1759–1805) most popular and politically significant play (Schiller 2000). It is important to note that *Wilhelm Tell* was written during a significant period of transition in the development of modern European (and specifically German) political concepts called the *Sattelzeit* (Koselleck 1972; Guillermo 2009c). Koselleck invented the term *Sattelzeit* (saddle period) to refer to the historical period between the middle of the eighteenth and the middle of the nineteenth centuries, when the most important European political and social concepts supposedly obtained their present and more recognizably "modern" meaning. Schiller's play was composed right in the middle of this period.

It so happened that the era in which Schiller was writing was when modern conceptualizations of the German idea of *Menschlichkeit* (humanity in the moral sense) (as well as *humanité* in French) were also consolidating and taking shape. According to Henri Duranton (2000, 11–12), the history of the concept of *humanité* in French from the seventeenth century onward reveals three major strands: (1) "le caractère de ce qui est humain or la nature humaine" (the character of that which is human or human nature);

(2) "un sentiment du bonté, de bienveillance pour son prochain qui fait éprouver compassion ou pitié pour le reste des hommes" (a sense of kindness, of benevolence for one's neighbor which makes one feel compassion or pity for the rest of mankind); (3) "le genre humain dans son ensemble, tous les hommes" (humankind as a whole, all men). On the other hand, in the German language the theological senses of *Menschheit* carried over into the eighteenth century in the senses of *Mitmenschlichkeit* (humanity) and *Nächstenliebe* (love for one's neighbor). In the same period, the quantitative and collective meaning of *Menschheit* denoting all human beings (*alle Menschen*), formerly very rare, began to enter popular usage in Germany (Bödeker 1982, 1063–1064). In broad strokes, one observes the existence of two main tendencies in both French and German in employing *humanité* and *Menschheit* as generic terms for the human species as well as in reference to the possession of certain moral-ethical attributes.

With respect to Rizal's *Wilhelm Tell* translation, an observable feature is his penchant for translating, or neutralizing, several different German words into single Tagalog equivalents (Guillermo 2009c, 174). *Tao* is one of the most interesting cases. Generic concepts of *tao* such as *Mensch* (human being, person), *Mann* (man), or *Leute* (people, folk) are more or less unproblematically made equivalent to *tao* as this has been defined in the Spanish dictionaries as *hombre*, *persona*, and *gente*. For example, the sentence "Wo Mensch dem Menschen gegenübersteht" (Where a human being [*Mensch*] faces another human being) is translated as "kapag sa tao humahadlang ang kapwa tao" (when a human being [*tao*] is obstructed by his or her fellow human being). More interesting are Rizal's idiomatic translations of German *Menschlichkeit* in the following examples:

> Wenn Ihr Mitleid fühlt und *Menschlichkeit*- Steht auf! (If you feel compassion and possess humanity—stand up!)
>
> Kung kayo ay may habag at may pagkatao. Tumindig kayo! (If you feel compassion and possess humanity. Stand up!) (Guillermo 2009c, 148)
>
> Du Glaubst an *Menschlichkeit*! (You have faith in humanity!)
>
> Naniniwala ka sa magandang loob ng kapwa tao! (You believe in the innate goodness of your fellow human being!) (Guillermo 2009c, 100)

Pagkatao, equated in the first example with *Menschlichkeit*, therefore implies not just the fact that one can be counted as human but also that one feels a moral sense of responsibility for other human beings. The second example shows how Rizal tried to define rather than translate *Menschlichkeit* in Tagalog as "magandang loob ng kapwa tao" (innate goodness of fellow human beings). In Rizal's translation of *Menschlichkeit* as

pagkatao, it therefore appears that *pagka-tao* (being human) implies not only the bare fact of one's existence as a *tao* but also one's possession of the moral-ethical attributes associated with the concept of a human being.

Another interesting translational record for understanding the meaning of *tao* and *pagkatao* as compared with Rizal's usage is a Tagalog translation of a famous nineteenth-century anarchist pamphlet. It is said that one of the books which served as the basis for the Constitution of the Union Obrera Democratica, the first Philippine labor union—established in 1902—was *Fra contadini: dialogo sull'anarchia* (1884) by the Italian anarchist Errico Malatesta (1853–1932). This pamphlet was translated into Tagalog in 1913, most likely from a Spanish version, by Arturo Soriano under the pseudonym Kabisang Tales (a character from Rizal's *El Filibusterismo*) and published as *Dalawang magbubukid (entre campesinos): mahalagang salitaan ukol sa pagsasamahan ng mga tao* (Two peasants: Important conversations about human society) (1913) (Sison 1966; Scott 1992). Little information is available about Soriano. He worked as a printer and became a leading member and officer of the Union de Impresores de Filipinas, Katipunan Anak ng Bayan (Association of the Sons of the People) as well as the PKP (established in 1930) (Richardson 2011, 25). Because the original Spanish source text cannot yet be identified, the most accessible Spanish translation by the anarchist writer Diego Abad de Santillan (1897–1983) will have to serve as a kind of hypothetical point of comparison. For example, words appearing in the Spanish translation such as *gente* (people, folk) and *persona* (person) are rendered as *tao* in the Tagalog. However, the instances in the Spanish translation where *humano* (human) appears seem to be rather more complex. On the one hand, "género humano" (human species) in the Spanish, or the fact of existing as a human as defined by some common attributes, appears in the Tagalog as *pagkatao* (to be human). On the other hand, "deber humano" (human duty), the moral dimension of being human in the Spanish, appears in the Tagalog as *pagpapakatao* (literally translatable as "the striving to become fully human").

One can observe here some kind of misalignment with Rizal's translations of *Mensch* as *tao* and of *Menschlichkeit* as *pagkatao*. In Rizal's case, *tao* can be interpreted as pertaining to the mere fact of existing as a human while *pagkatao* (being truly human) could be understood as the state of possessing the moral-ethical attributes of genuine humanity. In contrast with this, Soriano's translation implies that *pagkatao* simply pertains to existing as a member of the "género humano" (human species), whereas *pagpapakatao* refers to the striving to become truly human. In spite of this, both Soriano's and Rizal's renderings imply, in different ways, the Tagalog folk saying "Madali maging tao pero mahirap magpakatao" (It is easy to be a human [*tao*] but difficult to become a human being [*pagka-tao*]), which suggests a gap between merely existing as a human being on the one

hand and attaining one's essence as a human being on the other.

The difference between Soriano's and Rizal's translations reveals a certain ambivalence in the meaning of *pagkatao*, which might even be traceable to the ᜊᜄᜃᜆᜏ (*pagkatawo*) in the *Doctrina Christiana* of 1593. Following Soriano's usage, *pagkatao* could simply be taken as pertaining to the mere fact of existing as human (*pagka-tao*). However, Rizal's interpretation of *pagkatao* as a translational equivalent of *Menschlichkeit* means that a person who has *pagkatao* has attained the moral-ethical attributes associated with truly being a *tao*. The question which arises is, can one become a *tao* without undergoing the process of *pagpapakatao*? If the answer is in the negative, what is the status of a *tao* which has not yet become *tao* through *pagpapakatao*? The first meaning of *tao* takes *pagkatao* as the starting point and premise, while the second meaning takes it as the endpoint.

If the *tao* in "karampátan ñg tao" is an ambivalent concept, what then of *karampátan*? The use of the word *karampátan/karapatan* as "right" was in fact rather novel at the turn of the twentieth century. Its collocation with *tao* was therefore a relatively new linguistic innovation in Tagalog. In order to look more closely at this idea of "karampátan ñg tao" (human rights), one would have to look at the development of the concept of "rights" in Tagalog.

The earliest Tagalog dictionary, by San Buenaventura (1613), does not mention *karapatan* but defines Spanish *derecho* ("right"/"law") in the sense of "straight" as *matouir*. The 1754 edition of Noceda and Sanlucar's Tagalog dictionary also defines *derecho* as *matoid/matouid* (straight). However, *carampatan* appears there as the Tagalog equivalent of *ajustamiento* (fitting) and *mediania* (average). In Domingo de los Santos's Tagalog dictionary (1794), *derecho* is once again defined as *matouir* (straight). *Carampatan* also appears but as an equivalent to *razonable* (reasonable). And for the first time in a Tagalog dictionary, *carapatan* appears in De los Santos with the meaning *merecimiento* (deserving, worthy). In the updated 1860 edition of Noceda and Sanlucar's dictionary, *derecho* appears again as *matoid* (straight) while *carampatan* (and *catampatan*) is defined as *justo* (fair, just), *razonable* (reasonable), and *mediania* (average). However, the later edition contains *carapatan*, which is defined as *aptitud* (suitable) and *mérito* (worth). The Serrano Laktaw dictionary (1889) again defines *derecho* as *matowid* (straight) and *katowiran* (reason). *Karapatan* (now spelled in the modern way with the letter "k") is given quite a few equivalents, which include *dignidad* (dignity), *mérito* (worth), *merecimiento* (being deserving, worthiness), and *aptitud* (suitable). For its part, the Calderon Tagalog dictionary (1915) defines *derecho* (law, justice, fairness) both as *matwid* and as *karampatan*. On the other hand, *karapatan* is still considered equivalent to *dignidad* (dignity), *mérito* (worth), *merecimiento* (worthiness), and *aptitud* (suitable).

It was therefore only in the 1860 edition of the Noceda and Sanlucar dictionary and

in the Calderon dictionary of 1915 that *carampatan* began to be equated with *derecho* (right). These earlier dictionaries stand in contrast with the modern Tagalog-English dictionary of Vito Santos (1978), which plainly distinguishes between *karapatan* defined as the equivalent to the English "right(s)" and Spanish *derecho(s)* and its other, older meaning as "deserving" and "worthy," which is now equated with the Tagalog *karapat-dapat*. *Karapatan* never seemed to escape its meaning as "worthiness" in dictionaries from 1613 to 1918.

Collected Katipunan texts (Richardson 2013) show at least twenty appearances of *karapatan*. Most of these occurrences can be understood without much ambiguity as still pertaining to "worthiness." For example, a person has to pass certain trials to prove that he is "may karapatang tanggapin" (worthy of being accepted) into the organization. Another usage equates *karapatan* with "what is necessary." For example, the phrase "sa karapatang kami'y magsidalo" is best understood as "the necessity that we should attend." The same holds for "tamuhin natin ang . . . kaunting karapatan sa kabuhayan ng tao," which should be read as "to enjoy the few necessities in human life." Another possible meaning of *karapatan* is "capable of," which can be seen in the sentence "Tunay na kami ay umasa din, gaya ng makapal na mga kababayan na nagakala na ang inang España ay siyang tanging may karapatang mag bigay ng kaginhawahan nitong Katagalugan" (It is true that we hoped like many of our countrymen who thought that Mother Spain was the only one capable of bringing prosperity to the Katagalugan). The phrase "taong may tunay na karapatang magpanukala" may indeed be read as "the person with a right to make a proposal." However, this "right" depends on the "merit," "privilege," or "entitlement" of the person in question. It could just as well be understood as "the person who is entitled to make proposals." The same persistent connection of *karapatan* with worthiness holds for the self-translation by the lawyer and revolutionary leader Apolinario Mabini (1864–1903) of his *Programa Constitucional de la República Filipina* (1898) into Tagalog as *Panukala sa Pagkakana nang Republika nang Pilipinas* (Draft constitution of the Republic of the Philippines) (1898). In this work, *carapatan* is used as the translational equivalent of *digno* (worthy), *aptitud* (suitability), *honradez* (uprightness), and *capaces* (capable). On the other hand, *derecho(s)* is translated most frequently as *capangyarihan* (power) and *catuiran(g)*. The phrase "derechos individuales" (individual rights) is translated twice as "catuirang quiniquilala . . . sa mga mamamayan" (the recognized right[s] of the people), which also indicates the difficulties encountered in finding a Tagalog equivalent for the word "individual."

There is thus a dual ambivalence in the terms *tao* and *karapatan*, which are both necessary for formulating the notion of "human rights." A case in point from Malatesta's (1913, 86) pamphlet is the phrase in the Spanish translation "los hombres tienen el derecho"

(Men have the right), which is rendered in Tagalog as "mga tao'y laging may karapatan" (Human beings always have rights). On the one hand, the question arises of whether the *tao* "always" possesses *karapatan* by simply being a *tao* or whether the *tao* has to go through a process of *pagpapakatao* in order to claim these *karapatan*. On the other hand, are *karapatan* inherent in the *tao*, or does the *tao* have to prove his or her moral "worthiness," being *karapat-dapat*, to be able to possess *karapatan*? One possible way of reading this ambivalence is to read it against the notion of the "inherence" of rights. In short, in order to be truly a *tao*, one must go through a moral process of *pagpapakatao*, and it is only when one has finally become a *tao* that one proves one's worthiness of possessing *karapatan*. Rights (*karapatan*) are therefore predicates which are not inherent in the subject (*tao*).

Schiller's *Wilhelm Tell* in Tagalog Translation: "Natürliche und Unveräusserliche Rechte" (Natural and Inalienable Rights)

Rizal's abovementioned Tagalog translation of *Wilhelm Tell* consistently used *katwiran* as the translational equivalent of the German word *Recht*. For example, *Volkes Rechte* (the rights of the people) was translated as "katwiran ng bayan" (the right[s] of the people). In contrast to this, Mariano Ponce's heavily edited version of Rizal's translation (Schiller 1907) already reflects the shifts in usage at the turn of the century. In this connection, one notes that the literary scholar Christopher Mitch Cerda observed that Felipe Calderon's (1868–1908) "Ang ABC nang mamamayang Filipino" (The ABCs of the Filipino citizen) already represents, as early as 1905, the slow, indecisive transition from the use of *catuiran* to *carapatan* as the translation for *derecho(s)*. In his revised version, Ponce replaced all of Rizal's translations of *Recht* as *katwiran* with *karapatan* (Schiller 1907). For instance, the German sentence "Das Volk hat aber doch gewisse Rechte" (But the people have definite rights) was originally translated by Rizal as "Ngunit ang bayan ay may ilan din namang katwiran" (But the people do have some rights [*katwiran*]). Ponce would retain the whole sentence while replacing *katwiran* with *karapatan* as follows: "Ngunit ang bayan ay may ilan din namang karapatan" (But the people do have a few rights [*karapatan*]). Nevertheless, as far as Rizal was concerned, *Recht* did not pose any insuperable challenge to translation since he had come upon *katwiran* as a more or less consistent translational equivalent. However, some of Schiller's most famous lines on rights were much more difficult to translate. For example:

> Wenn der Gedrückte nirgends *Recht* kann finden,

Wenn unerträglich wird die Last - greift er
Hinauf getrosten Mutes in den Himmel,
Und holt herunter seine *ew'gen Rechte*,
Die droben hangen *unveräusserlich*
Und *unzerbrechlich* wie die Sterne selbst

(When the oppressed can find no justice [*Recht*],
When the burden can no longer be endured—
he reaches up confidently to the sky,
And brings down his eternal rights [*ew'gen Rechte*],
Which hang above, inalienable [*unveräusserlich*]
And unbreakable [*unzerbrechlich*] like the stars themselves) (Guillermo 2009c, 133)

is translated by Rizal as:

Kapag ang nagigipit ay ualang makitang *tulong*,
kapag ang bigat ng pasa'i lumabis . . .
kukunin nga niyang masaya sa langit at ipananaog sa lupa
ang *di matingkalang katuiran* nahahayag doon
sa itaas *di nababago* at *di nasisira*,
paris din ng mga bituin . . .

(When the oppressed can find no aid [*tulong*],
When the burden can no longer be endured—
he reaches up happily to the sky and brings down to Earth
the *incomprehensible rights* [*di matingkalang katuiran*] proclaimed there,
Hanging above, *eternal* [*di nagbabago*] and *indestructible* [*di nasisira*]
Like the stars themselves) (Guillermo 2009c, 133)

One notices that Rizal rather idiomatically translates *Recht* in the stanza's first line as *tulong* (help, aid), while *ew'gen Rechte* (eternal rights) in the fourth is puzzlingly translated as "di matingkalang katuiran" (incomprehensible rights/reason [*katwiran*]). The "eternal rights" Schiller speaks of which will be grasped from the sky and brought down to Earth obviously pertain to "natural rights." *Unzerbrechlich* (unbreakable) in the sixth line is very faithfully translated as *di nasisira* (cannot be broken). However, problems arise in the translation of *unveräusserlich*. The German verb *veräußern* simply means "to sell or alienate." *Unveräusserlich* is therefore defined as something which cannot be sold or is "inalienable." Rizal's translation of *unveräusserlich* as *di nagbabago* (unchanging) clearly does not capture the legal, commercial, and contractualist inflections of the original German concept. Schiller's equation of "ew'gen Rechte" (eternal rights) with "unveräusserliche Rechte" (inalienable rights) reflects the efforts of natural law thinking

to preclude the possibility that one can, through a perfectly legal contractual relationship, divest oneself of one's own fundamental rights. It attempts to preempt and void the legitimacy of any contract which may be entered into by a willing (or even coerced) subject to sell himself or herself into slavery. Schiller's play is therefore firmly grounded in the tradition of natural law. A just society is one where the natural rights of human beings are recognized. Schiller's hypothetical example for one such society is that wherein "der alte Urstand der Natur" (the ancient state of nature) holds. Rizal struggled to translate the idea of *Natur* in the instances where it occurs in the play (Guillermo 2009c, 172–175). But since there was no available direct translational equivalent for "nature" in late nineteenth century Tagalog, the closest translation he could devise for the abovementioned phrase was "ang matandang lagay ng lupa" (the ancient state/situation of the land). Translating *Natur* as *lupa* (land) obviously does not capture any of its philosophical shades of meaning. In terms of the discourse on rights, it is evident that Rizal's Tagalog translation of *Wilhelm Tell* found it impossibly difficult to articulate the dominant European philosophical paradigms of contractualism and natural law. It could therefore not move from a representation of rights as "natural," and therefore "eternal," to their purported "inalienability."

Moreover, though the translation tried to convey the idea of *Revolutionsrecht* (the right to revolution) which an oppressed people could resort to in order to overthrow unjust authority, Tagalog readers might have been stumped over what this puzzling talk about "di matingkalang katuiran" was about. The conceptual equivalents of *unveräusserlich* and *Natur* in the German *Wilhelm Tell* and *inaliénable* and *nature* in the French *Déclaration* therefore find no Tagalog translations. There is thus a translational impasse which needs to be overcome.

Jacinto's "Liwanag at Dilim": "Ang Katwirang Tinataglay na Talaga ng Pagkatao"

Like Rizal's *Wilhelm Tell* translation, and in contrast with the Tagalog translation of the *Déclaration* (from around four years earlier), Emilio Jacinto's (1875–99) famous politico-philosophical essay "Liwanag at Dilim" (Light and darkness) (1896) (Almario 2013, 154–176) does not have any mention of the words *karapatan* and *karampatan*, in the sense of rights, at all. However, it is incontestable that in some cases, and consonant with both Rizal's earlier and Mabini's later usage, Jacinto—often referred to as the "Brains of the Revolution"—employed *katuiran* and *matwid* in a similar sense as rights. It must nevertheless be emphasized that this usage unavoidably induces semantic slippages

between the two dominant translational meanings of *katuiran* as "right" and as "reason." For example, a sentence from Article IV of the *Déclaration* of 1789 is as follows:

> La liberté consiste à pouvoir faire tout ce qui ne nuit pas à autrui: ainsi, l'exercice des *droits naturels* de chaque homme n'a de bornes que celles qui assurent aux autres Membres de la Société la jouissance de ces mêmes droits.
>
> (Liberty consists in being able to do anything which does not harm others: therefore, the exercise of the *natural rights* of each person is not limited except by the assurance that other members of society will enjoy the same rights.)

This is translated very incompletely in the Tagalog translation of the *Déclaration* attributed to Rizal with the simple sentence "Kalayahan [*La liberté*] ay ang makagawâ ñg balang [*à pouvoir faire tout*] dî makasasamâ sa ibá [*qui ne nuit pas à autrui*]" (Freedom is being able to do whatever does not harm others) such that, as has been remarked above, the phrase "droits naturels" (natural rights) is completely elided. For Jacinto's part, his short text contains a version of Article IV and a definition of *kalayaan* (freedom) which is somewhat more complete but also quite free: "Ang kalayaan ng tao ay ang katwirang tinataglay na talaga ng pagkatao na umisip at gumawa ng anumang ibigin kung ito'y di nalalaban sa katwiran ng iba" (The freedom of a human being is the right [*katwiran*] truly possessed in being human [*pagkatao*] to think and act according to what he desires as long as this does not come in conflict with the rights [*katwiran*] of others) (Almario 2013, 156).

Possible translational correspondences with Article IV of the *Déclaration* may be unpacked as shown in Table 1. Both sentences are plainly definitions of *liberté*/*kalayaan* (freedom). Line number 4 from the *Déclaration* has apparently been shifted translationally to position 8 in Jacinto's sentence since these correspond closely with each other. This is because the French "pouvoir faire tout" (being able to do everything) is very similar to the Tagalog "na umisip at gumawa ng anumang ibigin" (to think and act as one desires). The latter simply unpacks the "faire tout" (do everything) as applying to both thoughts and deeds ("umisip at gumawa"). Line number 9 from the *Déclaration* represents the notion that rights should not be limited except in order to ensure that others will be able to enjoy the same rights ("ces mêmes droits")—that is to say, the free exercise of one's rights should not come in conflict with the equally free exercise by others of these very same rights. The underlying implication is that rights, under certain conditions, can be limited. This is also the same idea in line number 9 from Jacinto but in simplified form. The Tagalog line simply asserts that one can think and act as one desires as long as one's thoughts and actions do not conflict with the *katwiran* of others. Like *droit*, therefore, the free exercise of *katwiran* is strictly limited by the assurance that these should not

Table 1 Possible Translational Equivalences between Article IV of the *Déclaration* and Jacinto's "Liwanag at Dilim"

	French Original	Literal Translation	Tagalog Translation	Literal Translation
1	La liberté	freedom	Ang kalayaan	freedom
2			ng tao	of human beings
3	consiste à	consists in	ay	is
4	pouvoir faire tout	being able to do everything		
5	ce qui ne nuit pas à autrui	which does not harm others		
6	ainsi, l'exercice	therefore, the exercise		
7	des **droits** naturels de chaque homme	of the natural rights of each man	ang **katwirang** tinataglay na talaga ng pagkatao	the *katwiran* which is truly possessed in being human
8			na umisip at gumawa ng anumang ibigin	to think and act as one desires
9	n'a de bornes que celles qui assurent aux autres Membres de la Société la jouissance de ces mêmes **droits**	is not limited except by the assurance that other members of society will enjoy the same rights	kung ito'y di nalalaban sa **katwiran** ng iba	if this does not come into conflict with the *katwiran* of others

Source: Ramon Guillermo

come in conflict with everyone else's free exercise of these same *droit* or *katwiran*. Finally, it is presumed that line number 7 in the *Déclaration* has received a translation in Jacinto's line number 7. One can further break down line number 7 into its component parts. The phrase "chaque homme" (each man) corresponds to *pagkatao* (being human). *Droits* can be provisionally equated translationally with *katwiran*. However, as has been pointed out above, *naturel* (natural) represents a translational obstacle for nineteenth-century Tagalog. How does Jacinto attempt to overcome this? *Naturel* is apparently translated as "tinataglay na talaga." The Tagalog word *taglay* means "to possess," while *talaga* means "truly, genuinely, or even designated" (*katalagahan* in its theological usage means "what is preordained"). "Tinataglay na talaga" thus seems to emphasize the unquestionable and rightful possession of something within a particular theo-cosmological non-naturalistic conception of the world.

One sees, therefore, that unlike the earlier Tagalog translation, Jacinto here seems to make a serious attempt to render the phrase "droits naturels de chaque homme" (natural rights of each human being) as "katwirang tinataglay na talaga ng pagkatao" (*katwiran* truly possessed in being human). One ought to emphasize here how the conceptual inherence of *katwiran* (right) in *pagka-tao* (being human) now finds expression in Tagalog without having to resort to any direct translational equivalent for "natural."

Moreover, given the plausible translational impulse behind it, this is one instance where *katwiran* may be understood as standing in for "right." This interpretation is further reinforced by the explicit assertion that rights cannot simply be exercised without restraint and may be limited (*borner*) in order to ensure the universalizability of these rights perhaps in the sense of Immanuel Kant's (2016, 28) statement "ich soll niemals anders verfahren, als so, daß ich auch wollen könne, meine Maxime solle ein allgemeines Gesetz werden" (I should never act otherwise than that I could also want my maxim to become a general law).

One must, however, take note of all the semantic slippages which the word *katwiran* generates. The very next sentence states, "Ayon sa wastong bait, ang *katwirang* ito ay siyang ikaiba ng tao sa lahat ng nilalang" (According to good conscience, this [capacity to] reason is what differentiates human beings from other creatures) (Almario 2013, 156). This usage seems to straightforwardly refer to "reason" rather than rights. The translational neutralization of both "rights" and "reason" in Tagalog as *katwiran* can therefore lead to grave difficulties in interpretation. One could conceive of different possible ways of reading Jacinto's definition of *kalayaan*, which could interpret *katwiran* as "rights," "reason," or even a synthesis of both. However, there are also other usages of the related word *matwid* in the same essay which are close to the sense of "right" (Guillermo 2009c, 143). The following passage is an example:

> Datapwat ang katotohanan ay walang katapusan; ang *matwid* ay hindi nababago sapagkat kung totoo na ang ilaw ay nagpapaliwanag, magpahanggang kailanman ay magpapaliwanag. Kung may *matwid* ako na mag-ari ng tunay na sa akin, kapag ako'y di nakapag-ari ay *di na matwid*.
>
> (Since truth is eternal; what is just [*matwid*] does not change because if it is true that light enlightens, it will give light eternally. If I have the right [*matwid*] to own something that is really mine, if I do not own it, this is not just [*matwid*]). (Almario 2013, 159)

One sees in the selected passage how *matwid* can be used to refer translationally to "right," "reason," and what is "just." The phrase "ang matwid ay hindi nababago" (justice/right does not change) adds the attribute of "permanence" to the *katwiran*/*matwid*, which is "taglay ng pagkatao" (an attribute of being human). Another similar usage of *matwid* in Jacinto's essay is in the phrase "pagsasanggalang ng mga banal na matwid ng kalahatan" (the defense of the sacred rights [*matwid*] of all). "Banal na matwid" (sacred *matwid*) is "les droits sacrés" (sacred rights) in the *Déclaration*. If one is unable to defend these rights (which are made plural by *mga*), it may happen that "muling maagaw ang iyong mga matwid" (your rights [*matwid*] will once again be taken from you). Being deprived of one's rights through force (*maagaw*), or even by one's own neglect or acquiescence, does not at all mean that these have suddenly lost their inherence. It just means that the aim of the "political association" mentioned in Article XII of the *Déclaration*,

which is the "conservation des droits naturels et imprescriptibles de l'homme" (preservation of the natural and imprescriptible rights of man), has not been adequately achieved.

Even though Jacinto does not use the word *karapatan* itself, it seems that his usage of *katuiran* in its stead actually paved the way for a concept of "right" in Tagalog which could detach itself from the discourse of "worthiness." Despite the interpretative issues engendered by the translational neutralization of "right" and "reason" as *katwiran*, one possible and very important advantage of *katwiran* is that it is able to circumvent the abovementioned semantic ambivalences of *karapatan*. This is arguably the case with Jacinto's abovementioned possible translation of "natural right" in the sense of inherence, as "katwirang tinataglay na talaga ng pagkatao" (*katwiran* truly possessed in being human). How then does Jacinto deal with the observed ambivalences of *tao*, *pagkatao*, and *pagpapakatao*? It is here that his assertion of the equality of rights is significant. According to him, "Ang lahat ng tao'y magkakapantay sapagkat iisa ang pagkatao ng lahat" (All human beings are equal because they share in a single humanity). Furthermore, "At dahil ang tao ay tunay na magkakapantay at walang makapagsasabing siya'y lalong tao sa kanyang kapwa" (And because human beings are really equal and no one can say that he or she exceeds the humanity [*lalong tao*] of his or her fellow human being). Finally, one can add here Jacinto's declaration in the "Kartilya" of the Katipunan (1892) that "Maitim man at maputi ang kulay ng balat, lahat ng tao'y magkakapantay; mangyayaring ang isa'y higtan sa dunong, sa yaman, sa ganda . . .; ngunit di mahihigtan sa pagkatao" (One's skin may be dark or white, but all human beings are equal; one may be more learned, wealthier, more beautiful than another . . .; but cannot exceed the other in humanity [*mahihigtan sa pagkatao*]) (Almario 2013, 143).

Jacinto does not leave any doubt about his notion of *pagkatao*. All those born as human beings, with no exceptions, are equal by birth because they all share in a single *pagkatao*. No one can claim that he or she is "lalong tao" (more human) or "higit ang pagkatao" (more of a human being) than anyone else. And because everyone is equally human, they also equally possess the "katwirang tinataglay na talaga ng pagkatao" (*katwiran* truly possessed in being human) as inherent attributes. It is true, however, that the label *tao* sometimes seems to no longer fit its referent in Jacinto's ruminations. According to him, "Kung sa tao'y wala ang kalayaan ay dili mangyayaring makatalastas ng puri, ng katwiran, ng kagalingan, at ang pangalang tao'y di rin nababagay sa kanya" (If a human being is not free, he or she cannot discern honor, rights, good, and the name human [*tao*] is no longer fitting) (Almario 2013, 156). It seems that Jacinto is here raising the possibility that the name *tao* can no longer be an appropriate signifier for a person. The crucial question therefore arises: Can a *tao* actually lose his or her *pagkatao* in Jacinto's thinking? Can a *tao* stop being a *tao*? In order to answer this, one must carefully

consider the following passages:

> Ay! Kung sa mga Bayan ay sukat nang sumupil ang kulungan, ang panggapos, at ang panghampas katulad din ng hayop ay dahil sa ang mga A.N.B. ay di tao, pagkat ang *katwiran ng pagkatao* ay namamatay na sa kanilang puso.
>
> (*Ay!* If the *bayan* can be suppressed by jails, shackles, and floggings like an animal [*hayop*], it is because the sons and daughters of the people are not *tao* [*di tao*], because the reason [*katwiran*] of their being human [*pagkatao*] is perishing in their hearts.) (Almario 2013, 156)
>
> Bakit ang Tagalog ay kulang-kulang na apat na raang taong namuhay sa kaalipinan na pinagtipunang kusa ng lahat ng pag-ayop, pagdusta, at pag-api ng kasakiman at katampalasan ng Kastila? . . . Dahil kanyang *itinakwil* at *pinayurakan* ang Kalayaang ipinagkaloob ng Maykapal upang mabuhay sa kaginhawaan; at dahil dito nga'y nawala sa mga mata ang ilaw at lumayo sa puso ang kapatak mang ligaya.
>
> (Why have the Tagalog lived for almost four hundred years in slavery accumulating humiliation, degradation, and oppression under the greedy and villainous Spaniards? . . . Because s/he has rejected [*itinakwil*] and allowed the freedom [*kalayaan*] God gave him/her to be trampled upon [*pinayurakan*] in order to live in comfort; and because of this his/her eyes have lost their light and his/her heart feels not a drop of happiness.) (Almario 2013, 158)

These passages seem to point to a state of affairs where the *tao* loses his or her character of being a *tao* and becomes its conceptual opposite, a *hayop* (animal). Indeed, Crisostomo (2021, 278–279) believes that this is an argument for the alienability of rights in Jacinto. However, as a corrective, Jacinto's rhetorical question must be understood in light of other, more axiomatic, passages such as the following: "Kung sa santinakpan ay walang lakas, walang dunong na makakakayang bumago ng ating *pagkatao*, ay wala rin namang makapakikialam sa ating kalayaan" (If the universe does not have any power, no intelligence which can change our being human [*pagkatao*], there is also nothing which can impede our freedom) (Almario 2013, 156).

Jacinto quite clearly asserts in these lines that nothing in the universe (*santinakpan*) can change the nature of *pagkatao*. Even under extreme conditions of subjugation, *kalayaan* (freedom) cannot completely die out in the heart of the *tao* and the light of reason cannot fully be extinguished in his or her eyes. For Jacinto, therefore, the "katwirang tinataglay na talaga ng pagkatao" (*katwiran* truly possessed in being human) will necessarily remain unchanged under any circumstances, even the most oppressive ones.

As a point of comparison, one can consider the following sentence from Rizal's essay for the women of Malolos: "taong walang sariling isip, ay taong walang pagkatao; ang bulag na taga sunod sa isip ng iba, ay parang hayop na susunod-sunod sa tali" (a human being who cannot think for herself is a human who lacks the attributes of being human;

the blind who merely follows what others think is like an animal that is tethered to a rope) (Rizal 1961b). In this case, the *tao* has become similar or comparable to a *hayop* or animal. One should emphasize Rizal's usage of *parang* (like, similar to). In other words, he stops short of considering the actual conversion of *tao* into *hayop*. Rizal's very notion of "taong walang pagkatao" (a human who lacks the attributes of being human) points to an aporia. It means that someone who lacks *pagkatao* (the attributes of being human) cannot be called a *hayop* but must still be called a *tao*. This implies that the rights of *pagkatao* which may have been taken away by the oppressor are nevertheless still inherent in each *tao* and may be restored. The name of the entity called *tao* does not change even though he or she may fail to live up to what is considered the essence of being *tao*. What Jacinto and Rizal actually gesture toward is the notion that even as *pagkatao* is inherent in terms of rights as a political principle, it is still paradoxically something which should be striven for as moral beings. In other words, a human can be "inhuman" or can still lack humanity but nevertheless remain indubitably human.

In short, Jacinto's phrase "katwirang tinataglay na talaga ng pagkatao" (right[s] truly possessed in being human) heralds the formulation of something approximating the notion of rights inherence in Tagalog. His further clarifications of *katwiran* as something that is *hindi nagbabago* (unchanging) and of *pagkatao* as being indisputably *magkakapantay* (equal) put to rest any remaining ambivalences. But if rights are indeed inherent, how does one explain conditions where humans are deprived of them? The original founding document of the Katipunan (dated January 1892) sheds some light on this question. Paragraph 18 of the first section, titled "Casaysayan" (History), contains the following:

> Nangag papangap na manga lalaquing maningning (ilustrados) may pinag aralan at conoa,i, manga majal, datapoa,i, labis ang manga *cabastosan* at dito y maquiquita. Sa alin mang pulong nang manga Castila ay ang tagalog na mapaquilajoc ay ibinibilang na *alangan sa canilang pag catauo* at cung magcaminsan ay jindi pa aloquin nang luclocan (baga man maningning na capoa nila,) lalo pa cung pumapanjic sa canilang manga tirajang bajay; datapoa cung sila ang naquiquituloy ay ualang pag-casiyajan ang nang mga tagalog at sila,i, sinasalubong nang boong ucol at pag irog, tuloy ipinag papalagay jalos na silay manga Dioses, bucod pa sa ganoong manga asal ay balang tagalog na causapin jindi iguinagalang caunti man caya ngat ang mapuputi na ang bujoc sa catandaan, ano man ang catungcolang, jauac ay cung tauagin ay icao, tuloy tutungayaoin ng negro o chongo. ¿Ganito caya ang naquiquicapatid? Jindi cung di ganoon ang naquiquipag cagalit at jumajamon nang auay o guerra.
>
> (The pretensions of the enlightened men [*ilustrados*] who have education and profess to be highborn, but of excessive rudeness [*cabastosan*] which can be observed here. In any meeting among Spaniards joined by a Tagalog whose person [*pag catauo*] is considered unworthy of such company, he is sometimes not even offered a seat [even though he is just as enlightened as they are], especially if they are in a Spaniard's house; on the other hand, if they enter the house of a Tagalog, they are received enthusiastically with respect and love so that they believe themselves to be gods.

> Aside from this behavior, they do not speak with the least respect to all Tagalogs so that they use informal modes of address even with those whose hair is white with age, regardless of their official positions, even to the point of calling them "niggers" or "monkeys." Is this the way to demonstrate fraternity? No. Because this is the way to express hatred and challenge the other to a fight or to a war.) (Richardson 2013, 8)

The paragraph seems to be a dramatization of a typical encounter between Spaniards who claim to be "enlightened" and upper-class Tagalogs. Spaniards are said to be excessively *bastos* (uncouth, rude) in their dealings with Tagalogs based on the following: (1) in the Spaniard's house, they sometimes do not even offer a seat to the Tagalog who is present; (2) they use informal modes of address even for Tagalogs of advanced age or high status; and (3) they even hurl insults at Tagalogs, calling them "monkeys" or "Negroes." In contrast to this, they behave as if they are gods who should be worshipped by the indios. This disparity is explained, according to the paragraph, by the fact that Spaniards consider Tagalogs as "alangan sa canilang pag catauo" (not quite equal to their human-beingness). In Jacinto's phrasing, therefore, they consider themselves to be "lalong tao" (more human) or "higit ang pagkatao" (more of a human being) compared to Tagalogs. As such, they consider Tagalogs—and of course indios as a whole—not necessarily as "lower" fellow human beings or subhumans but perhaps even as *hayop* who can be called *chongo* (monkey). Certainly, taking offense at being called a *negro* could be problematic since it may draw from the same European racist sentiment which may have been imbibed by some ilustrado indios. However, one ought to remember Jacinto's assertion that "Maitim man at maputi ang kulay ng balat, lahat ng tao'y magkakapantay" (The skin may be dark or light, but all human beings are equal). The fact is that the Spaniards in this dramatization refuse to "recognize" the equal humanity of indios (as well as "Negroes"). The Katipunan founding document thus finds no other recourse to rectify this degrading situation than to declare *pag jiualay* (separation) from Spain since the nonrecognition of the humanity of indios is tantamount to "jumajamon nang auay o guerra" (challenging to a fight or war). As Jacinto wrote: "Ang Kalayaan nga ay siyang pinakahaligi, at sinumang mangapos na sumira at pumuwing ng haligi at upang maigiba ang kabahayan ay dapat na *pugnawin* at kinakailangang *lipulin*" (Freedom is the very pillar, and whoever puts it in chains to destroy the pillar and demolish the house must be crushed and annihilated) (Almario 2013, 157).

To revolt against the oppressor, to "lipulin at pugnawin" (annihilate and crush) him, is not only possible but also a duty of those who have been deprived of their freedoms. This is fully in accord with Article II of the *Déclaration* regarding the right to revolt against oppressors ("la résistance à l'oppression"), translated into Tagalog as "pagsuay sa umaapi" (to challenge the oppressor). The responsibility of the revolutionaries is then to create a society where these rights of the indios are recognized and which is capable of

"pagsasanggalang ng mga banal na matwid ng kalahatan" (protecting the sacred rights of all). As Article II of the French *Déclaration* states, "Le but de toute association politique est la conservation des droits naturels et imprescriptibles de l'Homme" (The goal of all political association is the conservation of the natural and inalienable rights of Man). Ironically, therefore, the verbal *declaration* of the inherence of rights requires at the same time a foundational *revolutionary* act of making these rights truly inherent in the human being.

The Rise of the Labor Movement and the Modern Discourse of *Karapatan*

The direct appropriation of Jacinto's phrase "katwirang tinataglay na talaga ng pagkatao" (right[s] truly possessed in being human) can be observed in the labor leader Hermenegildo Cruz's (1880–1943) short text on the founding of a Workers' School (Paaralan ng mga Manggagawa) in the early years of the twentieth century: "Sa makatwid ang ipinakikilala ng *Derecho Natural* ay yaong mga katwirang katutubo, na taglay ng tao sa kanyang pagkatao . . ." (Therefore, what Derecho Natural [natural right] introduces are those innate rights which are possessed by a human/person in his or her being human) (Cruz 1905). One notices here the use of both *taglay* (to possess) and *katutubo* (innate/inborn) even as the word used for "right(s)" continued to be *katwiran*. Cruz was also the president of the Gremio de Impresores, Litografos y Encuardenadores (Guild of Printers, Lithographers, and Binders), which had earlier published a "Plataforma y Constitución" (Platform and constitution) (1904). In the Tagalog translation accompanying the Spanish document, which was kindly supplied by the scholar Mitch Cerda, one observes the translation of "derechos de asociados" (rights of members) as "karapatan ng mga kasapi" (rights of members) as well as a generally consistent usage of *karapatan* as an equivalent for *derecho(s)* in the text itself.

However, the full-blown transition to the more contemporary modern idiom was accomplished by Lope K. Santos (1879–1963), Cruz's contemporary and fellow teacher at the aforementioned Workers' School. The latter was an important labor leader and the first president of the Union del Trabajo de Filipinas (Philippine Labor Union) (Richardson 2011, 21). He is also considered a foremost Filipino journalist and prominent Tagalog writer.

Santos's socialist novel *Banaag at Sikat* ([1906] 1993) powerfully reflects the dominant usage of *karapatan* at the turn of the twentieth century. One already sees here the fully developed and modern concept of *karapatan* as rights. This novel contains a more sure-footed translation of "natural rights" as "mga katutubong karapatan" (innate or inborn rights), which is still familiar to most Tagalog speakers of the present day.

Santos also includes in the novel formulations such as the right of the worker to the fruits of his or her labor, such as "karapatang makinabang sa bagay na pinagtulungan" (right to benefit from something produced cooperatively) and "pag-uusig ng kanyang karapatan sa nagagawa" (his or her demand for his or her right to what he or she has produced). One also finds phrases here such as "karapatan nang mabuhay" (right to live) and "karapatan sa buhay" (right to life), which, in relation to proletarian demands, more explicitly come in tension with the "sacred" bourgeois right to private property as stated in Article XVII of the French *Déclaration*.

It is in this regard that Santos's novel contains perhaps the first printed instance in Tagalog of describing *karapatan* in the context of what was then a new word, *kalikasan*. The first appearance of this word in a Tagalog dictionary as the equivalent of *natural* and *naturaleza* was apparently much later, in 1922 (Ignacio 1922; Guillermo 2009c, 172). This word had just been invented to serve as a direct equivalent to *naturaleza* (nature) and now began to form a conceptual bond with *karapatan* though its root word *likas*. The phrase "likas na karapatan," though not present in Santos's novel, is still in use today as a result of this process. Santos describes the "karapatan nang mabuhay" (right to life) as follows:

> Paglitaw ng tao sa ibabaw ng lupa ay may *karapatan nang mabuhay*. Ano mang kailangan niya'y naririto rin lamang sa lupa ay di dapat pagkasalatan. Ang *kalikasan* o *Naturaleza* ay mayamang-mayamang hindi sukat magkulang sa pagbuhay sa lahat ng tao. Ang umangkin ng alin mang bahagi o ari ng *Kalikasan*, ay pagnanakaw. Ang mag- ari o sumarili ng ano mang bagay na labis na sa kailangan ng kanyang buhay, at kakulangan ng sa iba, ay pangangamkam at pagpatay sa kapwa. Ang lupa at ang puhunan, ay siyang lalung- lalo nang hindi maaaring sabihing akin, ni iyo, ni kanya, kundi atin: sapagka't ang una'y pinaka-punlaan ng mga binhi ng buhay na panlahat, at ang ikalawa'y pinaka-kasangkapan sa pagbuhay ng mga itinatanim ng paggawa ng lahat.
>
> (As soon as a human being appears on the surface of the earth, he or she has the right to life. Everything he or she needs is on this earth and should be sufficient. Nature is bountiful and can never be lacking in providing for all human beings. The appropriation of any part or ownership of Nature is thievery. To own or take for oneself more than what a person needs for his/her life and deprive others is pillage and murder of one's fellow human being. Land and capital cannot be said to be mine, yours, his/hers, but rather ours, because the first is the soil for seeds of life for everyone, and the second is the instrument for giving life to what has been cultivated by the labor of all.) (Santos [1906] 1993, 37)

Carlos Ronquillo (1877–1941), a revolutionary and chronicler of the 1896 Philippine Revolution, wrote a somewhat obscure work titled *Bagong Buhay: Ang mga Katutubong karapatan ng mga Manggagawa sa Harap ng Wagas na Matwid* (New life [socialism]: The inherent rights of the worker in the light of pure reason) (1910), which expanded upon

the various usages found in Santos's novel. One notices in its very title how the meanings of the words *katwiran*, *matwid*, and *karapatan* have been clarified to attain their more contemporary meanings. *Katwiran* and *matwid* now pertain to *razon* (reason) in all of its usages in Ronquillo's book so that "wagas na matwid" now attains a kind of allusion to Kantian "pure reason" (*reine Vernunft*). On the other hand, *karapatan*—having completely superseded the earlier usage of *katwiran*—is now definitively equated with "rights." Ronquillo speaks of "katutubong karapatan ng tao" (inherent rights of human beings) and "katutubong karapatan ng mga manggagawa" (workers' inherent rights). Three basic rights are mentioned: (1) "katutubong karapatan sa buhay" (inherent right to life), which subsumes "karapatan sa hanapbuhay" (right to work); (2) "karapatan sa karangalan" (right to dignity); and (3) "karapatan sa kalayaan" (right to freedom). According to Ronquillo, to violate these rights would be "labag sa karapatan" (contrary to rights). This may be the first time that this very contemporary idiom would appear in the materials used for this study. "Walang karapatan" (having no right), also a popular contemporary idiom, appears here perhaps for the first time in print. According to Ronquillo, the "katutubong karapatan" (native rights) are as follows:

> . . . mga *karapatang* kasamasama na natin paglabas sa maliwanag at mga karapatang di maiwawalay kailan man ni ng tunay na nag-aangkin, palibhasa'y pawang *likas* at angkin ng buhay natin, sapul pa sa tiyan ng nagkakandong na ina. Iyan ang mga *karapatang* di mangyayaring bawiin, ni pigilin, paris ng mga *karapatang* likha ng mga bulaang.
>
> (. . . the rights [*karapatan*] which accompany us as we come out into the world and the rights which cannot ever be separated even by those who possess it, because these are natural [*likas*] and a part of our life, even as we were still in the womb of our mothers. These are the rights which cannot be taken away, unlike the rights fabricated by pretenders.) (Ronquillo 1910, 8)

The above quotation attempts to translate both "droits naturels" (natural rights) and "droits inalienables" (inalienable rights). For the first time in Tagalog, *karapatan* is described as being *likas* (natural) to *pagkatao* (being human). This is more explicitly formulated in another part of Ronquillo's work which contains the phrase "karapatang likas sa pagkatao" (a right which is in the nature of being human). The phrase "droits naturels" (natural rights) thus finally finds an equivalent as the Tagalog "karapatang likas." Such usages of *likas* have in the meantime become quite common in contemporary Filipino. Furthermore, the idea of "inalienable" is expressed in the above passage as "mga karapatang di maiwawalay kailan man ni ng tunay na nag-aangkin" (rights which can never be separated even by those who rightly possess them). Though rather long-winded, it accurately explains what inalienability means for the possessors of rights who cannot divest themselves of these rights even by means of their own consent to self-

enslavement through outwardly legal contracts.

Moving further on, Soriano's Tagalog translation of Malatesta's work from 1913 demonstrates that *karapatan* had already definitively superseded *katwiran* as the most frequently used equivalent for "rights." For instance, the sentence "ang lahat ng tao'y may karapatan sa mga pinakapangulong bagay sa pamumuhay, gayon din sa mga kasangkapang kailangan natin sa paggawa" (all human beings have the right to the main necessities of life as well as the instruments we need for production) (Malatesta 1913, 25) can be compared to the Spanish translation: "cada uno tiene derecho a las primeras materias, y a los instrumentos de trabajo" (each one has the right to the raw materials and to the instruments of labor). The Tagalog translation obviously diverges from the Spanish version "materia prima" (raw materials) as "pinakapangulong bagay sa pamumuhay" (main necessities of life), but the meaning of *karapatan* as "right" is nevertheless evident.

After a span of around three decades from the publication of Santos's *Banaag at Sikat*, Crisanto Evangelista (1888–1942), the first general secretary of the PKP (PKP-1930), wrote *Patnubay sa Kalayaan at Kapayapaan* (1941), which can serve as a useful record for the further development of the Tagalog word *karapatan* (Richardson 2011, 21). What is striking with Evangelista's usages of *karapatan* is the shift of emphasis toward civil rights and liberties which still reflected the anti-fascist policies of the Popular Front on an international level (Pagkakaisa ng Bayan). This orientation can be seen in the following examples: "karapatang demokratiko" (democratic rights), "karapatan sa pagkamamamayan" (citizenship rights), "karapatang bumoto" (right to vote), "karapatan sa paghalal" (right to elect), "malayang karapatan sa pagsasapi-sapi" (right to free association), "malayang karapatan sa pagpupulong" (right to hold meetings), "karapatang makapagpahayag" (right to free expression). In Evangelista's rights idiom, in order for these rights to be recognized ("kilalanin ang karapatan"), the people must collectively stand up for ("naninindigan sa karapatan") and demand their rights ("pag-uusig ng karapatan"). Quite importantly, Evangelista's essay contains the phrase "di-malalabag na karapatan sa pagkatao" (the inviolable right to being human). *Pagkatao* therefore does not here only guarantee the possession of rights but has now itself become a right. This phrase is equivalent to the human right to have rights. Finally, in consonance with the burgeoning anticolonial struggles of the time in Asia and Africa and in anticipation of their explosion in the postwar era, Evangelista also called for the collective, national right known as the "karapatan sa sariling pagpapasya" (right to self-determination) (Lenin 1964; Prashad 2020).

The works cited above trace the main contours of the conceptual and lexical process of development of the language of "human rights" in the Philippines. On the one hand, in definitively replacing *katwiran* as the translation for "rights," *karapatan* shed its

earlier connotations of worthiness and instead became something inherent in *pagkatao*. On the other hand, the term *pagkatao* also came to be understood in a rights context as being *katutubo* (inherent) and *pantay-pantay* (equal) in each *tao* and not a result of becoming worthy by traversing the moral journey of *pagpapakatao*. The outcome of this process is that one does not have to prove one's "worthiness" to be in possession of rights. As Mabini put it, "todos los derechos que por naturaleza y con anterioridad a toda ley humana posee cualquier ciudadano" (all these rights that by nature and prior to all human law are possessed by each citizen) (Guillermo 2016, 21). This was, as he put it, "mi religion" (my religion), which he inflexibly held onto until his death after the ultimate defeat of the revolution and exile. Through an arduous process of translation, a Tagalog tradition supporting the equality and inherence of rights was decisively established. The incomplete appropriation of such notions as "droits naturels" (natural rights) and "droits inalienables" (inalienable rights) may not necessarily point to inadequate translational efforts but rather to their perceived superfluity in early Tagalog revolutionary thought.

One cannot escape the observation that the development of this modern language of rights is inseparable from the conceptual and linguistic labors of both the anticolonial nationalist revolution and the militant labor movement which succeeded it as its radical heir. The rise of *karapatan* as the definitive word for "rights" must, however, be attributed to the latter, which employed it as an essential part of the incipient language of class struggle. *Karapatan* thereafter became a central, if disputed, concept in the language of social change and revolutionary transformation in the Philippines (Kerkvliet 1990, 270–273).

An Early Anti-"Bolshevist" Reaction and the Return of Moral "Worthiness"

In between Santos's *Banaag at Sikat* and Evangelista's *Patnubay sa Kalayaan at Kapayapaan*, one discovers an ideologically significant Tagalog response to the development of *karapatan* after the Philippine Revolution and during the first decades of the labor movement. This is a small book with the full title of "*Tagumpay ng Manggagawa": May Kalakip na Sampung Utos, Pitong Wika, Tula at Tuluyang Ukol sa Manggagawa na Sinulat ng mga Tanyag na Manunulat* (Workers' victory: Including ten commandments, seven discourses, poems, and prose about workers written by well-known writers) (1925). Relatively little is known about the author of the book, Cirilo S. Honorio (1902–?), except that he was admitted to the Philippine Bar in 1948 and served in various administrative posts in government thereafter. He was involved in the early Philippine labor movement as the secretary of the radically affiliated Union de Chineleros (Slipper-

Makers' Union). He is cited by Jim Richardson (2011) as a prodigious collector of materials on the Philippine labor movement. In contrast with the ideas expressed in *Tagumpay*, Honorio seems to have never definitively severed his ties with Evangelista and other leaders of the Communist movement (Richardson, email dated July 19, 2023).

Honorio's take on *karapatan* revolves around a new elucidation of the meaning of *pagkapantay-pantay* (equality). In his view, "nagiging mapalad ang katayuan [ng manggagawa] sa harap ng puhunan; mapalad na taglay ay ang karapatan" (workers are becoming more fortunate in their standing before capital, since they can now face capital as bearers of rights). Everything has changed, because "may ngalang sila at karapatan sa pagharap sa tanan" (they have a name and the right to face all and sundry) (Honorio 1925, 44). Workers' possession of a "name" and the "right to face all and sundry" may refer to their political enfranchisement and public recognition as subjects. Honorio (1925, 47) then defines what he considers the essence of human equality: "Ang tao'y pantay pantay sa harap ng pagkakataon pagka't pulos kayong may pusong marunong umibig, may damdaming marunong mahiya, at may diwang marunong humatol" (Human beings are equal because all of you have a heart that knows love, a sense of shame, and a spirit that can judge).

Taking this fundamentally moral-ethical concept of equality as his starting point, Honorio brings the attention of the reader to a speech delivered by one Jose Catindig on May 1, 1923 and disputes what he calls the wrong understanding of "equality" expressed therein:

> Iya'y ang maling pakahulugan ng marami sa kawikaang "ang lahat ay pantay pantay sa ibabaw ng lupa." Oo, pagkakamaling hindi nating masaksihan, na upang magkapantaypantay, lalo't sa harap ng pagkamanggagawa, ang ating marunong ay ibinabagsak at ang mayayaman ay iginuguho. Naririyan di umano ang katarungan.
>
> (This is the widespread wrong interpretation of the saying "everyone is equal on the face of the earth." Yes, this is a mistake we cannot countenance, that in order to be equal, especially in the case of workers, that our educated should be ousted and the wealthy overthrown. This is what they call justice [*katarungan*].) (Honorio 1925, 58)

Attributing this erroneous idea to the *bolsibiki* (Bolsheviks), he avers, "Ang ganyang simulain ay umaalipin sa karapatan ng maliliit; siyang nagiging dahil ng pagsasamantala sa maraming kapos palad; at siyang nagiging paghagdan ng ilan sa ibabaw ng marami" (This goal has enslaved the rights of the common people; has become the cause behind the exploitation of many of the unfortunates; and has led to the ascendance of the few over the many) (Honorio 1925, 58). According to him, this concept is the reason why those who have been exposed to the "kamandag ng bolsibiki" (Bolshevik poison) have

become "bulag, at kung di ma'y napipiringan ng di umano'y pagkakapantaypantay" (blinded, if not blindfolded, by this supposed equality). The notion of "enslaved rights" may indicate Honorio's perception that what he takes to be the "Bolshevik" interpretation of rights, as disseminated by the radical labor movement, has become the dominant understanding among the masses. As an alternative to the Bolshevik notion of equality, Honorio proposes the following:

> Ang kailanga'y turuan ang nasa abang kalagayan tulungan sa kanyang ikapagbibihis, *huag karapatan na lamang* kungdi sampu ng pananagutan at tungkulin ay ituro. Kailangang pasulungin ang mga manggagawa, padunungin at pasaganain upang *maging pantaypantay* sa magandang kapalaran. Naririyan ang tagumpay ng pagkakapantaypantay.
>
> (What has to be done is to help the underprivileged in the provision of their needs, not just rights [*karapatan*] but also their responsibilities and duties must be taught. Workers must be made to progress, they must be educated and live in prosperity so that they can be equal [*pantaypantay*] in their good fortune. This is the victory of equality.) (Honorio 1925, 59)

The problem with the supposed Bolshevik interpretation of the phrase "ang lahat ay pantay pantay sa ibabaw ng lupa" (everyone is equal on this earth) is that it assumes this equality as a starting point rather than an endpoint. While admitting the "bitter reality" of the existing oppressive and discriminatory conditions faced by workers, Honorio believed that the American occupation, as opposed to the grim Spanish colonial era, made the Philippines into a "bayang bukas pang pinto ng pagkakataon" (land of opportunity) where knowledge and education were there for everyone's taking. When it came to wealth, he believed that wealthy Filipinos, who were quite small in number, were "nahihiyasan ng magandang puso" (those who have generous hearts). The Philippines was a place where "ang kayamanan . . . ay nakalaan para sa marami at hindi para sa ilan lamang" (riches . . . are allotted for the majority and not for the few) (Honorio 1925, 60). On the other hand, even given these favorable conditions, workers were still mainly responsible for improving their lot. Honorio estimated that of every 100 workers, 40 exerted more than the least possible of effort during work (*gumagawa*), 30 not only worked but also possessed diligence (*matiyaga*), 25 not only worked and possessed diligence but were also industrious (*masipag*), while only five did not only work and possess diligence and industry but had initiative (*masikap*). Only the "ulirang manggagawa" (model worker) who possessed all four of these traits, each bearing distinctly moral-ethical undertones, could hope to "maging pantaypantay sa magandang kapalaran" (become equal in good fortune) (Honorio 1925, 25). Honorio (1925, 41) explicitly reframed this in terms of *pagkatao*: "Sa ganyang paraan ang mga ulirang manggagawa ay nagkakaroon ng maningning na katangian sa harap ng mga tao, hindi ngayon at tao, kungdi doon sa mga husto ang pagkatao" (In

this way, the model worker attains a shining quality in front of other people, not to those now who are human [*tao*], but to those who have attained genuine humanity [*pagkatao*]). Those who were "ngayon at tao" (now and human) had to pass through a virtuous process of *pagpapakatao* in order to attain the state of being "husto ang pagkatao" (completely human). It was thus only in this context that the purportedly "correct" meanings of equality and rights were understood. In contrast with Honorio's notion, Rizal's aporetic phrase "taong walang pagkatao" did not necessarily imply any weakening of the assertion of the equality of the *tao* as *tao*. In this way, Honorio arrived full circle at the very opposite of Jacinto and the Philippine labor movement's arduously developed formulations.

In Honorio's view, workers schooled in the "Bolshevik" interpretation of equality easily took offense at the slightest oppression because they were "kilalang kilala at nasasaulong lagi ay ang karapatan" (well acquainted with and know by heart their rights). Being educated in their rights, the worker reacted negatively to anything he or she felt was an imposition, "magngangalit at isisigaw ay ang kanyang karapatan" (becomes angry and begins shouting his rights). These eventually gave rise to *sigalutan* (conflict) and *panunulisan* (criminality). And this was all due to their mistaken "pananalig sa karaparatang hindi mo matawaran" (belief in rights which cannot be diminished). The main issue, therefore, with the Bolshevik interpretation of equality was the support it lent for the rigid inherence of rights in human beings which could not be diminished, when for Honorio, equality was something that was plainly not inherent but rather earned by developing one's moral-ethical qualities (as a worker) and diligently fulfilling one's rights and duties. Only moral worthiness and not political equality could serve as an adequate basis of rights claims. It was only by going through a process of *pagpapakatao* in becoming genuinely human (*husto ang pagkatao*) that one became worthy of asserting one's *karapatan*. In short, what Honorio hoped to accomplish was a remoralization of rights which returned to the original ambivalences of *karapatan* and *pagkatao*. This kind of anti-Communist discourse should certainly be situated within the wider racist American colonial project of democratic tutelage.

Conclusion

In the meantime, the Tagalog/Filipino discourse on rights has gone through more than seven decades after Evangelista's pamphlet. Nevertheless, one sees that the most general contours of rights discourse in the Philippines had already attained some of their most durable forms by the middle of the twentieth century. Succeeding decades of elite liberal democracy, authoritarianism, populism, as well as the ebbs and flows of mass

struggle have shaped and continue to shape Tagalog/Filipino rights discourse. Only further studies can elaborate on these more recent developments.

The rise of Tagalog human rights discourse can be traced from Rizal ("karampátan ñg tao" [rights of the human being]) and Jacinto ("katwirang tinataglay na talaga ng pagkatao" [rights truly possessed by being human]) to Santos ("mga katutubong karapatan ng tao" [rights innate/inborn to human beings]; "karapatan nang mabuhay" [right to life]) and Evangelista ("karapatan sa sariling pagpapasya" [right to self-determination]). There is no doubt that the discourse of rights is central to what, borrowing from Anderson (1990), can be called "revolutionary Tagalog." Its revolutionary pedigree can be traced to the earliest efforts to articulate the inherence of rights by overcoming the traditionalist discourse of "worthiness" rooted in the semantic ambivalences of *pagkatao* and *karapatan*. This history shows that it is mistaken to make the hasty generalization that "rights" did not play a central role in the ideological discourse of the Katipunan (Salazar 1999; Guillermo 2009c, 150–151). It is more correct to say that the modes of rights inherence distinctive to the European discourses of "natural rights" and "inalienable rights" demonstrably played negligible roles in the evolution of the Tagalog notion of *karapatan*. Jacinto's development of the phrase "katwirang tinataglay na talaga ng pagkatao" (rights truly possessed by being human) argues for inherence without making any explicit recourse to European contractualist or natural rights paradigms. The fact that Tagalog—like many other Asian languages belonging to other intellectual-linguistic worlds from that of Europe—did not have easy translations for such crucial European ideas as "nature," "inalienable," "individual," or "citizen" does not necessarily create a translational cul-de-sac. This is aside from the fact that these notions themselves have exceedingly fraught and recent histories even in European languages (Koselleck 1972). Languages as intersubjective realities not only impose unique translational constraints but also generate very specific semantic possibilities. What Jacinto tried to contravene most of all were notions internal to the Tagalog idiom of *pagkatao* which would permit for a differential understanding of this concept. He thus objected to formulations such as "lalong tao" (more human) or "higit ang pagkatao" (more of a human being), which would allow the colonizers to consider indios as "alangan sa kanilang pagkatao" (not quite equal to their human-beingness) and more akin to *hayop* than human beings. This kind of colonialist exclusionary discourse has accurately been described as "naturalistic de-specification" since it seeks to assert the inequality of rights between social groups on racial grounds (Losurdo 2015, 181). While Santos and Evangelista's contributions prove the general observation that radical labor movements were indeed at the forefront of rights struggles in the twentieth century (Chibber 2013, 147–148), Honorio's eloquent intervention arguably articulates all of the major conservative tropes which have been targeted against militant labor unions and

the Left up to the present day. He deploys "the classic argument of conservative ideology, an argument that aims at belittling the importance of the objective transformation of political institutions compared to the moral change 'within the inner man' (*in interiore homine*)" (Losurdo 2004, 240). After the more directly colonial strategies of exclusionary "racial de-specification," Honorio's remoralization of the political struggle for rights, now taking place within and among Filipinos, is tantamount to what has been called the "moral de-specification" of the working classes, where the "granting" of rights to unionization or collective bargaining, for example, are made dependent on proofs of their moral-ethical "worthiness." As a corollary, this de-specification of the working classes entails the "specification" of the capitalist and landed classes who are not only wealthier but also considered morally superior.

Santos eventually stabilized Tagalog rights discourse by introducing the more standard phraseology of "mga katutubong karapatan ng tao" (rights innate/inborn to human beings) as well as radicalized it by introducing the "karapatan nang mabuhay" (right to life) and other similar formulations which counterposed the needs of the hungry before the rigidly protected right to property of the wealthy few (Losurdo 2004, 88). For his part, Evangelista explicitly framed the people's demand for these rights ("pag-uusig ng karapatan") during the global anti-fascist campaigns as a struggle for recognition ("kilalanin ang karapatan") (Losurdo 2016, 83). His Leninist anticolonial and anti-imperialist call for "karapatan sa sariling pagpapasya" (right to self-determination) was fully in accord with what would be the future position of the Bandung Conference (1955) that this right should be considered the "pre-requisite of the full enjoyment of all fundamental Human Rights" (Final Communiqué 1955; Moyn 2010).

Finally, the present study can also be considered as a contribution to the study of the global dissemination, translation, and reception not just of the discourse of rights in general but also of the French *Déclaration* of 1789, Schiller's *Wilhelm Tell*, Malatesta's anarchist pamphlet, as well as Marxist-Leninist texts and ideas. The above account should make clear that the Philippine anticolonial revolution was also a world-historical struggle for the recognition of human rights, the very first in Asia. This complex dialectical interpenetration and mutual determination of linguistic and more narrowly material realities is necessarily undergirded by social reproduction and human needs. And insofar as these political, social, and cultural rights have only been imperfectly achieved more than a century later, such revolutions can only be considered not as failures but as unfinished revolutions (Ileto 1998).

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Historical Violence and the Child: Normalcy and Familial Relations in Children's Books on the Marcos Dictatorship

Mary Grace R. Concepcion*

The Marcos dictatorship remains a contested period in Philippine history. Children's books on this period of martial law narrate how children confronted the violence that disrupted their families. Using Clémentine Beauvais' concept of the "mighty child," I analyze the depiction of politicized children in Augie Rivera's *Isang Harding Papel* (A garden of flowers) (2014) and *Si Jhun-Jhun, Noong Bago Ideklara ang Batas Militar* (Jhun-Jhun before the declaration of martial law) (2001) and Sandra Nicole Roldan's *At the School Gate* (2018). I interrogate how the child protagonists established normalcy and exercised their agency during the dictatorship. I also examine the adult-child relations that could affect such politicization. By defining normalcy and structuring their lives, these children from activist families maintained order despite the political chaos. However, in some of the texts the adult characters are passive and evade discussion of the causes of violence. Hence, the characters' familial problems are not elevated to the country's struggle. Rather than the characters confronting the structural defects that give rise to despotic governments, these familial problems are resolved with the downfall of the Marcos dictatorship, with the celebratory narrative of the 1986 People Power Revolution undermining both the characters' and the people's agency. This study is important since children's books may mediate a remembrance of the past, especially for the generation with no memories of the period.

Keywords: Marcos dictatorship, children's literature, children's rights, childhood, 1986 People Power Revolution

Shortly after the 2022 national presidential elections in the Philippines, the multi-awarded children's book publisher Adarna House was accused of destabilizing the government. In a Facebook post on May 12, 2022, Alex Paul Monteagudo of the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency "red-tagged" Adarna House as "subtly radicaliz[ing] the Filipino children against our Government" by selling discounted copies of children's books on the Marcos dictatorship. Similarly, National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed

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Conflict (NTF-ELCAC)[1] spokesperson Lorraine Badoy in her Facebook comment alleged the books "plant hate and lies in the tender hearts of our children" (Cabalza 2022; Magramo 2022). Immediately after this Facebook post and comment became viral, the books were sold out.

Such pronouncements are indicative of the power of children and children's books to pose a threat to authoritarian rule. Children's books are vehicles for the continuation of historical memory, for depictions of the past have implications for the future. The martial law declared by Ferdinand E. Marcos Sr. in 1972 and lasting until his ouster in the 1986 People Power Revolution was mired with media censorship and human rights violations. Amnesty International documents that 3,257 people were killed, 35,000 tortured, and 70,000 imprisoned during the regime (McCoy 2012, 119). In May 2022, fifty years after the declaration of martial law, Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr.—the dictator's son and namesake—won the Philippine presidency by 31 million votes, more than 50 percent more than those garnered by his closest opponent, Vice President Leonor "Leni" Robredo. However, Bongbong Marcos's campaign machinery relied on social media disinformation and fake news.[2] Many educators and historians feared the systemic whitewashing of martial law in school textbooks and social media through disinformation and historical revisionism (see Ardivilla 2016; Curaming 2017; Bautista 2018; Ong and Cabañes 2018; Aguilar 2019; Uyheng *et al.* 2021).

Censorship, communist red-tagging, and the erasure of the history of Marcos atrocities were real concerns in the production of children's books about the period. However, there is a need to investigate these children's books: What stories do they tell

1) As a counterinsurgency measure since 1969, the Philippine government has "red-tagged" or accused staunch critics of being members of the Communist Party of the Philippines and its armed wing, the New People's Army. This became more systematic under the Rodrigo Duterte administration through the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC). Made up of former military officials, the NTF-ELCAC "red-tagged" activists, journalists, intellectuals, celebrities, and politicians who were vocal in their opposition to the Duterte administration. Those who were "red-tagged" were subject to political harassment and could become victims of extrajudicial killings. Various human rights groups have demanded the abolition of the NTF-ELCAC (Human Rights Watch 2022).

   The National Intelligence Coordinating Agency, which oversees the government's counter-intelligence and anti-terrorism operations, is part of the NTF-ELCAC (National Intelligence Coordinating Agency 2022).

2) According to the fact-checking group Tsek.ph, social media posts on Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. during the 2022 presidential campaign contained mostly misleading but positive information. Marcos Jr. earlier denied, but later admitted, having a "troll army" (paid organized keyboard warriors with false identities) to promote his image. The whistleblower Brittany Kaiser disclosed that the Marcos family had approached the now nonoperational political think tank Cambridge Analytica to "'rebrand' the Marcos family's image on social media" in time for Marcos Jr.'s vice presidential candidacy in 2016 (Tomacruz 2020; Buan 2022; Parry 2022).

of this period? How do these books portray children as main characters? How do they depict Philippine society under martial law? Most important, how does the family act as the locus of early political awakening in the child's world? These questions are important since children's books fill in the imagination of child readers who have no memory of the period. By interrogating how these child protagonists confront the violence and disruptions of family life caused by state fascism, I examine the texts' relationship with history and society, and their intervention in the present and past. In doing so, I also raise ethical considerations in the rendering of violence in children's books.

In this paper, I analyze how the child characters establish normalcy and exercise agency in children's books on the Marcos dictatorship that depict historical and political violence. More specifically, I examine the representations of the politicized child and the family dynamics that may influence such politicization. I study the literary devices of these texts, and the paratexts that would situate these books within their discursive milieu.

Normalcy and Children's Literature in the Philippines

Studies have been done on the construction of normalcy and middle classness in children's literature in terms of addressee and marketability. These works also analyze the concept of childhood in the Philippines, the uses of children's literature, and the language use in these books that reveals attitudes toward children.

Eugene Evasco (2011, 110–112) notes that while there may be no universal concept of childhood, dominant notions of childhood are rooted in the West. In a traditional setting, children are deemed as inferior and obedient to adults instead of capable thinking individuals. Hence, stories in textbooks are instructional materials to teach "moral lessons" (Evasco 2011, 122). While children are regarded as "unfinished" or "incomplete" adults (Evasco 2011, 117; Fechter 2014, 143), treating children as "inferior to adults" emphasizes the need for "correct behavior." It promotes a way of thinking that is static and hierarchical rather than contextual, cultural, and changing (see Fechter 2014; Eaude 2017, 19). The child—and consequently the future adult—view problems as being resolved with "simple solutions" and not with creative judgment that can confront the complexities of everyday life (Eaude 2017, 19).

Literature for children is "defined through its intended readers" (Aquino 2013, 146) and is categorized by reading levels and other similar metrics (Sunico *et al.* 2016). Children's literature is also intended to impart values to maintain the existing social order (Tolentino 2008, 5–6). It portrays a childhood that is "ideal—creative, happy, different, optimistic, productive, and having other positive characteristics that would create an

obedient child" (Tolentino 2008, 5). Moreover, writers and publishers of children's books face various gatekeepers (such as parents, educators, critics, and award-giving bodies), potential economic volatility, and the restrictiveness of government policies on education (Sagun and Luyt 2020, 634).

Children's literature in the Philippines is not limited to folklore or fantasy but also tackles the modern experiences of childhood (Tolentino 2008, 4). There is a robust production of stories depicting the "culture of childhood," which is the unique and everyday realities of growing up, rather than the "culture of children," which packages legends, myths, and folk traditions as children's tales (Sunico *et al.* 2016, 75; Villanueva 2016, 32). Part of this "culture of childhood" is the difficulties children face. In her study of Philippine children's books from 1990 to 2018, Lalaine Aquino (2020, 293–297) enumerates these difficulties as illness, family issues, poverty, and abuse. These books still replicate the current ideology of the child as "lower," "less privileged," and "less powerful" despite the child protagonists exhibiting resilience and courage (Aquino 2020, 306). Philippine children's books rarely establish the social connections of the country's problems with familial life. The child's complicated reality is instead rendered simplistically through simple language (Evasco 2011, 113).

From the abovementioned studies, it appears that children's literature in the Philippines is primarily pedagogical: for reading comprehension and for learning about the community. However, the portrayal of historical violence and societal injustices in these texts should also be critically examined. These texts may insinuate the complexities of memory, trauma, and unequal power relations in the hope of producing a generation of readers who are more questioning of abusive relations and despotic governments. With this, I turn to ethical criticism to elucidate the sensitivities in portraying historical violence in texts targeted toward young readers.

Framing Children's Agency and Politicization amidst Historical Violence

In stories portraying historical violence, writers and publishers exercise extra caution to protect the vulnerable child. This affects the representation of politicized child characters and the depiction of disturbing events. Niall Nance-Carroll (2021) writes that children and young people in politics are met with suspicion because of their "supposed naivete" and their interference in adult affairs. In this view, children do not have their own agency and are instead manipulated by adults for their own political agenda (Nance-Carroll 2021, 6, 16). Critics may argue over the supposed "age appropriateness" of such political topics, but as Rick Salutin (2006, A17) succinctly writes, "the world our kids live in is

age inappropriate, but they have to live there." Julia Mickenberg and Philip Nel (2011, 455) articulate the need for writing about such issues despite the contradiction: "Books advocating international understanding and criticizing abuse of authority are implicitly promoting peace; books that explicitly argue for peace are inevitably about war."

Lydia Kokkola (2003) mentions that with respect to ethical considerations, there is a tightrope to be walked in disclosing complex historical details. Revealing too much may upset children who are not prepared for such a magnitude of information. Revealing too little may mislead readers and whitewash history. In addition, language may not fully capture the enormity of human suffering, as in stories of the Holocaust. Kokkola borrows Leona Toker's concept of "eloquent reticence" to navigate sensitivity in narrating disturbing details. Moreover, "framed silences" also presuppose an adult intermediary reading alongside the child to supply gaps in information (Kokkola 2003, 26–28). In children's books on the Chilean dictatorship, for instance, some strategies of "framed silences" tell the stories of political violence through allegory and fable, or juxtapose innocuous words with images subtly suggesting marks of torture and slogans of protest (Garcia-Gonzalez 2020, 175).

With these concerns, I examine representations of the politicized child and the portrayal of historical violence that affected the family during martial law in the Philippines. Historical violence includes state violence during and after the period of martial law, such as militarization, incarceration, and political disappearances. Violence could also be due to structural inequalities, leading the child to confront class differences or live in poverty. The "politicized child" may mean someone who experiences, comprehends, and/or confronts these acts of violence. However, even if the child is seen as subverting the dictatorship, it does not necessarily mean that he/she has become more politically conscious. In the case of children's books on the Chilean dictatorship, Bernardita Muñoz-Chereau (2018, 238, 243) criticizes the idealized yet unbelievable child "superheroes" whose cunning outwits the encroaching military but whose political understanding and motivations are not explored in the texts. I also probe whether the texts in this study suggest that the injustices ended alongside the collapse of the Marcos dictatorship or exist up to the present.

This paper examines the family dynamics and the construction of normalcy in three children's books portraying life under the Marcos dictatorship: Augie Rivera's *Isang Harding Papel* (A garden of flowers) (2014) and *Si Jhun-Jhun, Noong Bago Ideklara ang Batas Militar* (Jhun-Jhun before the declaration of martial law) (2001) and Sandra Nicole Roldan's *At the School Gate* (2018). These books have children as protagonists and narrators who face political persecution because of the political involvement of their family members. I argue that in the three texts, the protagonists' struggles for normalcy—

i.e., constructing their own ordered world or reclaiming their "everyday lives"—are ways for the child characters to survive or even fight back against the dictatorship. Though absences may protect children from overwhelming information, some of the texts limit children's powers through silences that do not fully explain the historical situation of martial law. Instead, these absences may create a different understanding of history and may elide the historical forces that created authoritarian governments and structural inequalities.

Will Ortiz (2008, 279) writes that as historical fiction, children's books on history articulate the "political, ideological and nationalist aims" of the period, though they may not be concerned with "exactness in historical facts" (see also Oziewicz 2020, 522–524). Thus, these texts are fictionalized accounts based on stories about the milieu and framed within a nationalist project (Krawatzek and Friess 2022, 6). While Ortiz examines the bigger nationalistic aims, I analyze the intimate world of the child characters and their familial relations. Though my study is situated within the period of martial law in order to delineate an era, I am more concerned with the portrayal of historical violence and societal oppression that persisted beyond the Marcos dictatorship. For instance, *Si Jhun-Jhun* shows the problems of poverty and child labor that still exist. *At the School Gate* centers on the father's torture and arrest after martial law.

There are children's books on martial law in the form of fables (such as *The Magic Arrow*, Banal 2021), picture books (*EDSA*, Molina 2013), explanations of political systems (*Ito ang Diktadura* [This is the dictatorship], Plantel 2017a; and *Mga Uring Panlipunan* [Social classes], Plantel 2017b), or fragmented accounts of methods of torture (*Silent Witnesses [Mga Tahimik na Saksi]*, Alampay 2019). I am more concerned with books that have plots and delineate story progression, conflict, and resolution. Moreover, fictionalized accounts with a recognizable narrative show the perceptions of the characters and the construction of the child in the textual world. Paradoxically, this child is created by an adult author for his or her intended child audience and must live in the world with injustices created by adults (Beauvais 2015, 156).[3)]

Studies in Philippine children's and young adult literature problematize the portrayal of children as inferior to adults and their depictions as "active" or "passive" characters (see

3) I have excluded biographies in the form of children's books such as Ed Maranan's *Edjop: A Child of the Storm* (2009), Lara Saguisag's *Ninoy Aquino: A Courageous Homecoming* (2010), Jose T. Gamboa's *Brocka: The Filmmaker Without Fear* (2013), Luchie Maranan's *A Voice of Hope in a Time of Darkness: The Songs of Susan Fernandez-Magno* (2014), and Luz B. Maranan's *Lakay Billy: Defender of the Indigenous People* (2018). These construct the heroism of notable personalities and not the everyday life of an "ordinary" child during martial law. Also not included is young adult literature such as Cyan Abad-Jugo's novel *Salingkit* (2012) because the narrative is longer, more sustained, and intended for a teenage audience.

Ortiz 2008; Evasco 2011; Aquino 2020; Faire 2021). I go beyond such dichotomizations on the child's superior or subordinate status and add further to these concepts on the child's agency. Informed by Beauvais' concept of the "mighty child," I examine the child's strength in their future potential. In a play on the word "might," which could mean "power" and "possibilities," Beauvais locates the temporality of adult-child relations both within and outside the text:

> Because the implied child reader of children's literature *might* be taught by the children's book something that the adult *does not yet know*, that child is powerful in some sense of the word power—a sense that I call "might." (Beauvais 2015)

The child's and adult's powers are "time-bound," for while seen as an authority, the adult is faced with limited time and is expected not to live through the future. In contrast, the child, who is usually considered to be "less," may gain power through the text written by the adult (Beauvais 2015, 3). By focusing on the family dynamics and construction of normalcy in these texts, I look at how adults justify or challenge the society that they create, and how children struggle to comprehend this world and later shape the future.

I also examine how the child characters establish "normalcy" amidst the historical violence that affects their families. Shifting family structures may result in differing views of what is "normal" (Morillo *et al.* 2013, 24–25). As an indicator of "normalcy," one may look at the aspirations of families since they are also tied with the concept of an "ideal family" (Grant 2023, 117; see also Bantang *et al.* 2022). In relation to political violence, normalcy may mean wanting to lead "ordinary lives" that are free from persecution and oppression (Hrckova and Zeller 2021, 105). Does normalcy mean guaranteeing a carefree and innocent childhood, and the preservation of the family unit? Is it the acceptance of the new social order ushered in by the dictatorship, and thereby the construction of the "new normal"? How do the characters in the texts assert structure, order, and control despite state intrusions into both their private and public lives?

In relation to the concept of the mighty child, I interrogate how children exercise their agency in processing their family's situation and surroundings. In this sense, agency means the capacity for children to think and act "whether to ensure their own interests or to modify the world that surrounds them" (Pufall and Unsworth 2004, 9). By so doing, children create their own social realities as well as their identities. I examine how children comprehend the overlapping worlds of family, school, and the bigger society and the creative ways in which they push the limits of dictatorships.

I analyze how paratexts and literary devices such as metaphors and symbolism frame the narrative, characterize familial relations, and construct normalcy. I also probe how the celebratory narrative of the 1986 EDSA People Power Revolution punctuated the

turmoil experienced during martial law.[4] *Isang Harding Papel* undermines the narrative of the child Jenny Cortes, who waits and structures her days around the cultural markers of the dictatorship. The text presents an ordered world of the dictatorship, while the mother's activism is treated lightly. *Si Jhun-Jhun, Noong Bago Ideklara ang Batas Militar* may depict political violence and poverty as depriving the child of a carefree childhood, but the paratexts resolve such political and societal conflicts. *At the School Gate* describes the tension of state surveillance in addition to the typical school problems of teenage girls. The text also draws a contrast between "normal" non-political families and activist families. I conclude by elucidating how children as political actors are presented in the texts, and the effects of silences in the texts. Through these texts, I study the implications of martial law and the 1986 EDSA People Power Revolution for children with no memory of the period.

Cultural Objects of the Dictatorship in *Isang Harding Papel*

Isang Harding Papel, a story by Augie Rivera with illustrations by Rommel Joson, is about seven-year-old Jenny, whose mother, Aling Chit, is incarcerated during the Marcos dictatorship. Jenny's mother gives Jenny a paper flower every time Jenny visits. Despite the difficulties of growing up with an absent mother, Jenny is lovingly raised by her grandmother Lola Priming. After seven years, Aling Chit is released following the 1986 EDSA People Power Revolution and finally reunites with her now 14-year-old daughter. This story was published only in Filipino without English translation and is targeted toward children eight years old and above. Hence, the words are relatively simple and the sentences short. Kata Garcia, product development officer at Adarna House, mentioned that the publisher wanted to focus on publishing in Filipino around 2014. Hence, there are no English translations of books produced during that period (personal interview with Garcia, November 7, 2023).

An award-winning children's book writer, Rivera tackles difficult subjects such as dyslexia and sexual and verbal abuse. Though he was sheltered from the horrors of

4) From February 22 to 25, 1986, millions marched along Epifanio de los Santos Avenue (EDSA) following the massive violence and cheating in the 1986 snap elections. Ferdinand E. Marcos Sr. was declared the winner over Corazon Aquino, the widow of slain Senator Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr., who was Marcos's top political opponent. The People Power Revolution of 1986 ended the twenty-year dictatorial rule of Marcos Sr. and was celebrated worldwide as the overthrow of an authoritarian regime through a "peaceful revolution." However, the Corazon Aquino government, which took over, preserved the ruling elites and failed to solve the problems of poverty, landlessness, and human rights abuses (see Thompson 1996; Anderson 2004; Curaming and Claudio 2010).

martial law while growing up, he based *Isang Harding Papel* on the real-life experiences of his cousin's mother, who was a political detainee at the time. Rivera acknowledges the challenges in writing about historical violence but hopes that child readers will realize that even children can be part of social change. In both *Isang Harding Papel* and *Si Jhun-Jhun*, Rivera focuses more on character development than historical details in order to make the characters

> more believable, relatable, and child-like, so other children could easily empathize with them. Through their stories, we hope the child reader would get curious and want to know more about history and the conditions and struggles of children during these most difficult periods in our nation's past. (Email correspondence with Rivera, October 12, 2023)

Rivera wrote the manuscript of *Isang Harding Papel* before *Si Jhun-Jhun* (2001), but he revived the former book project in 2014 when he felt that the Marcos historical revisionism was becoming more rampant (personal interview with Garcia, November 7, 2023).

As part of Adarna House's marketing strategy, *Isang Harding Papel* is included in the #NeverAgain bundle with other titles on the Marcos dictatorship and EDSA Revolution, including *Si Jhun-Jhun*. Since its publication in 2014, it is already in its ninth printing, with 45,000 copies released as of 2023. The book is available both in the Philippines and overseas through local and international distributors. It may be ordered through Adarna House's official website and other online shopping platforms. Parents, librarians, and NGOs buy such books, and schools include *Isang Harding Papel* in required reading for History subjects (personal interview with Garcia, November 7, 2023). In 2016 *Isang Harding Papel* was adapted and staged as a musical performed by students from the Raya School, in Quezon City. Though the book does not specify that the story is based on the life of Jenny, a child of a political detainee and Rivera's relative (Bolido 2014), various write-ups, interviews with the author, promotional materials, and book tours have mentioned this detail.

The book was published through the EDSA People Power Commission, which aims to commemorate and preserve the stories behind the nonviolent uprising that toppled the Marcos dictatorship. *Isang Harding Papel* highlights the peaceful aspects of martial law, despite the actual violence during the dictatorship. Since the author focuses more on the child's character than on historical details, the text avoids explanations for the mother's activism and the reasons for the people's uprising that led to the 1986 EDSA People Power Revolution. The adults evade the difficult and complex questions the child asks, and the 1986 EDSA People Power Revolution is depicted as a glorious, sudden event.

The story is about a child waiting for her mother to be released from prison until

the 1986 EDSA People Power Revolution. The blurb explains:

> Napupuno na ng mga bulaklak ang kwarto ni Jenny pero wala pa rin ang nanay niya. Panahon ng Martial Law, panahon ng pinaiiral na disiplina para daw sa kaunlaran. Pero para kay Jenny, panahon iyon ng pagkakalayo nilang mag-ina. Hanggang kalian kaya matatapos ang pagbuo niya ng harding papel?
>
> Jenny's room is full of flowers, but her mother is still not here. This is the time of martial law, a time when discipline is enforced, they say, for progress. But for Jenny, this is the time when she is separated from her mother. When will she finish creating her garden of flowers? (Rivera 2014)

The book depicts everyday life under the Marcos dictatorship in an orderly and disciplined world that exists outside of prison. Jenny observes the clean streets, white walls, painted trash cans, and "metro aide" street sweepers. The giant billboards of President Ferdinand E. Marcos Sr. and First Lady Imelda Marcos emphasize an orderly life with the slogan "Sa Ikauunlad ng Bayan, Disiplina ang Kailangan" (For the country's progress, discipline is needed). Jenny's grandmother affirms this emphasis by attributing it to the New Society under Marcos Sr.: "Panahon ng Batas Militar at ayon kay Lola, ang kalinisan, kaayusan, katahimikan, at iba pang mga pagbabago sa paligid ay bahagi ng pinapangarap ni Marcos na 'Bagong Lipunan'" (This is the time of martial law, and Grandmother says that cleanliness, order, peacefulness, and other changes around us are part of Marcos's vision of the New Society) (Rivera 2014, 5–6).

Through its emphasis on order and structure, the Marcos dictatorship is depicted as normal and not imposed through the silencing of dissent. This normalcy is constructed also through cultural markers of life under martial law such as bell-bottom jeans, the "Bagong Lipunan" (New Society) hymn, curfew, metro aides, Metrocom (military police), and the Nutribun.[5] A glossary of these terms appears at the end of *Isang Harding Papel*. Except for the bell-bottom jeans, which originated from the West, these things did not just contribute to the sights and sounds of the times; they normalized the dictatorship

5) The "Bagong Lipunan" (New Society) hymn was the anthem of Marcos Sr.'s "New Society," with lyrics by National Artists Levi Celerio and music by Felipe Padilla de Leon.

Metro aides are street sweepers of Metro Manila. Their uniform consists of a yellow long-sleeved shirt, red pants, and a *salakot* or cone-shaped hat made from bamboo and rattan.

The Philippine Constabulary Metropolitan Command, or Metrocom, was a police force established in 1967 to operate within Metro Manila. Tasked with augmenting the local police, Metrocom strictly implemented curfew and violently dispersed activists during rallies (Marcos 1967).

A Nutribun was an oversized round bread that was distributed to public school children during martial law. A project of the United States Agency for International Development to address malnutrition, the Nutribun was misrepresented as having been introduced by First Lady Imelda Marcos. Sacks of Nutribun were stamped "Courtesy of Imelda Marcos-Tulungan project" (Dalupang 2016).

because they instilled the principles of the New Society within everyday lives.[6] These projects and cultural markers were impositions to "place social conduct within the purview of state policy" (Espiritu 2017, 53). They reminded citizens of the discipline that was the guiding tenet of the New Society through ceremony, cleanliness, proper nutrition, community regulations, and military presence. The text treats these markers as keeping the order of the New Society rather than objects that promoted or masked the violence and militarization of the dictatorship. Rather, these markers promoted the generational identification (see Krawatzek and Friess 2022, 5) of what was fashionable in the 1970s and late 1980s.

Similarly, activism is treated as a by-product of the era and is minimized to highlight the peacefulness and progress during the dictatorship. In *Isang Harding Papel*, picture collages of the figures of President Ferdinand E. Marcos Sr. and First Lady Imelda Marcos are in color, with their gazes looming over the full-page spread (Rivera 2014, 5–8). In contrast, the newspapers, which are used for the paper flowers, show pictures of political demonstrations that are taken from real-life photos of news headlines. However, these are in faded sepia, recede into the background, and are placed at the sides of the page. Even the slogans in the placards are vague and open-ended, such as "Mabuhay ang kultura ng masa" (Long live the culture of the masses) and "Makiisa sa mga tsuper" (Unite with the drivers) (Rivera 2014, 17–18), rather than about pressing issues such as oil price hikes, militarization, and imperialist aggression. They do not indicate the concrete issues faced by the masses and public transportation drivers. This implies that activism is both a specter and a margin. Though it forms the undercurrent of Jenny's family life, activism is decentered yet hovering. Instead of redefining the center, the pictures of activism in the story are static and unmoving. Therefore, activism is depicted as a marginal ghost that is softened, muted, and waning into oblivion. On the other hand, the paper flower is on the middle of the page, which underscores the yearnings of mother and child to be reunited.

This evasion of activism is more telling in Aling Chit's and Lola Priming's explanation of the former's imprisonment, which is told lightly and playfully. It glosses over the political repression that directly affects the family:

6) Compared to other Philippine presidencies after World War II, the Marcos dictatorship was unique in that it created an ideology centered around President Ferdinand E. Marcos Sr. and First Lady Imelda Marcos. Through appropriation of the Malakas and Maganda origin myth, the Marcos couple were mythologized as the "father" and "mother" of the "New Society." Vicente Rafael (2000, 282–304) studied how commissioned biographies of the Marcoses wove personal lives into the fate and destiny of the nation. Talitha Espiritu (2017, 53–83) scrutinized how Filipino values and ideology were reformulated to fit the goals of the New Society.

"Bakit po kayo ipinakulong?" muntik nang mabulunan si Aling Chit sa tanong ng anak niya.

"Paano, pag may rally, lahat ng pinapalabas naming mga dula sa kalye, laban kay Marcos. Hindi niya siguro nagustuhan!" pabirong sagot niya.

"Ang sabihin mo, pakalat-kalat kasi sa kalsada 'yang nanay mo, kaya napasama sa mga 'iwinalis'!" hagikgik ni Lola Priming.

"Why are you imprisoned?" Aling Chit almost choked at her child's question.

"Because whenever there is a rally, all our street plays are against Marcos. Maybe he didn't like it!" she answered jokingly.

"Well, your mother is just messing around in the streets, that's why she was swept away!" Lola Priming laughed. (Rivera 2014, 16)

Activism is treated lightly and talked about jokingly. Not much is said on why the mother is in prison in the first place, nor questioning why staging a street play would be grounds for imprisonment. Aquino (2020, 304–305) observes that in *Isang Harding Papel*, as well as in other Philippine children's stories, the child character asks questions, but "[i]n several instances, the adults do not give a direct answer as if expecting the child to 'read between the lines.'" Aquino wonders whether the adults belittle the child's understanding or shield them from the difficulties of life. Nonetheless, further explaining the circumstances of the mother's arrest could have better exposed the abuses of the dictatorship.

The political struggles of the family are treated ahistorically since the familial situation is not anchored to the specific historical and material conditions that created martial law. Though Aling Chit is humanized as a gentle and loving mother, there are no questions on why she is treated as an enemy of the state. No explanations are given for why she is blindfolded during Jenny's prison visits. The absence of these reasons affects the framing of the narrative. Jenny's problem is when her mother will come home rather than why her mother is imprisoned in the first place.

Without explaining the political implications of Aling Chit's incarceration, the dilemma shifts to mere absentee parenting rather than the cruelties of the dictatorship. The separation of mother and child may be no different from absentee parenting because of economic reasons, such as the parent's migration as an overseas Filipino worker. Jenny's problems are more about growing up without her parents: her sadness in being bullied for having no parents, and being the only child without parents watching her school play. Yet, this conflict is resolved easily. Lola Priming attends Jenny's school program and applauds enthusiastically. Aling Chit simply explains that Jenny's father died when Jenny was a baby and that she herself will be home soon.

Earlier, the order and discipline of martial law are touted despite the incarceration of dissidents, who include Jenny's mother. Jenny forces herself to have order and discipline

to organize the days of the week. Her mother will give Jenny a paper flower in exchange for stories about her weeklong activities. This construction of normalcy—which again is structured through the cultural markers of the dictatorship—serves as a coping mechanism for Jenny. Though there may not be an outright refusal of these cultural markers, there are subtle and comic subversions of their meanings. The whole school laughs when the "Bagong Lipunan" (New Society) hymn recording becomes garbled during the flag ceremony. It is not mentioned how the recording broke. Lola Priming chases their pet dog, playfully named Makoy (a moniker for Marcos Sr. as a tongue-in-cheek reference to him as "tuta ng mga 'Kano" or "lapdog of the Americans," which was a slogan chanted by activists), when the dog urinates on her (Rivera 2014, 19–20).

The most evident objects in this book are the Nutribun and paper flowers. Incorrectly touted as a project of First Lady Imelda Marcos, the Nutribun was distributed to public school children for free and was part of everyday school life for those growing up in that period. At first, the Nutribun was seen as desirable. Jenny mulls, "Baka tinitingnan kung masarap ang palaman!" (Maybe the soldiers are checking if the sandwich spread is delicious!) when even the Nutribun is subject to military inspection before entering prison (Rivera 2014, 10). Jenny excitedly announces that she has brought a Nutribun as a present for her mother. The Nutribun is treated as a source of nourishment that the child happily and excitedly accepts and gifts, rather than a product of the dictatorship that should be treated with revulsion.

In this text the Nutribun is depicted positively despite varying recollections regarding the bread. Some recall it as being filling, milky, and tasty, while others remember it as being bland or infested with *bukbok* (weevils). The disparities in taste and quality were due to the Nutribun being produced in local bakeries with different source materials (Orillos 2018). Whether or not the family members in *Isang Harding Papel* have differing attitudes toward the Nutribun—or life during the dictatorship as a whole—the messaging may leave a positive impact on readers if the Nutribun is portrayed favorably despite the contradictory memories and controversies surrounding it.

Later, the Nutribun, which Jenny initially regarded as desirable, numbs her teeth when eaten with ice cream (Rivera 2014, 20). However, this incident is treated as accidental and not an active rejection of the Nutribun. The Nutribun is afterward transformed into a vessel in which Aling Chit smuggles crepe paper, scissors, a pencil, and wire to create paper flowers. Ironically, the Nutribun—a creation of the dictatorship—becomes a medium to bind the parent-child relationship disrupted by the dictatorship. Yet, Jenny does not acknowledge the Nutribun as a project of the Marcoses that would make the dictatorship palatable and acceptable. Such programs mask gross human rights violations, including the detention of Jenny's mother.

In the end, the titular garden of paper flowers acts as a reminder of the mother's presence amidst the looming markers of the dictatorship that permeate everyday life. In the final page, the garden of flowers has transformed into the masses of people in the 1986 EDSA People Power Revolution. This fulfills Jenny's wish, "'Sana, umuwi na ang nanay ko'" (I hope my mother comes home) (Rivera 2014, 29). However, there seems to be no clear explanation for how this plaintive yearning would give rise to a historic event that ended the dictatorship.

Jenny expresses some agency in structuring her life by pursuing her own activities and organizing her world. She attempts to normalize her childhood around the dictatorship that took her mother away from her. But overall, Jenny is depicted as a child who waits and wonders: she grows up as if in a time-lapse. From a seven-year-old child in the moment of the story's telling, she abruptly turns 14 years old on the next page. In the context of the mighty child, both the "might" as future potential and the "might" as strength are depicted as static. Jenny's power is undeveloped because the present is sutured into the future. The implied repetitiveness of her life during the unsaid years suggests a lack of processing of both her personal circumstances and the country's events, which deprives her of the potential to mature in political consciousness. The child's strength seems to be overridden by the EDSA Revolution, which leads to her reunion with her mother. However, the sociohistorical causes of the 1986 EDSA People Power Revolution are not explained.

Despite their activism, the adults are depicted not as activists but as parents first. The book could have developed Aling Chit as an activist mother and Lola Priming as a grandmother who mothered an activist mother. However, the text does not acknowledge the agency of people, or their capacity to act and decide for both personal and political ends. The activism of the mother is unexplained. The grandmother merely does the telling. The child Jenny grows up, but not in political consciousness. The thousands who marched in the People Power Revolution just suddenly appear and are not shown as fearless and determined to end the dictatorship.

This kind of narrative resolution may be rooted in the spontaneous, nonaggressive, and festive atmosphere of the 1986 EDSA Revolution, which mobilized even ordinary civilians who did not usually participate in street protests (Gonzaga 2009, 115–116). Because they are not members of political organizations, they are immune to influence from the vanguard party and are not bound by traditional ideologies. The people in the 1986 EDSA Revolution felt they had contributed to the revolution through simple gestures like distributing food, amassing numbers, and praying. Hence, Fernando Gonzaga (2009, 114) described the 1986 EDSA Revolution as "the work of the multitude as grand narratives are abandoned for micro-political tactics." Since the revolution is deemed a

"singular event," and in part because of the influence of the Catholic Church in rallying the people, it is regarded as a miraculous work of divine justice (Gonzaga 2009, 125–126).

By robbing the characters of their agency, the narrative resolution in *Isang Harding Papel* may decentralize focus and encourage passivity where the historical outcome is celebrated, rather than connecting the outcome to political processes. Though Beauvais (2015, 177–178) cautions against placing impossible demands on children or shaming them, a more empowering narrative is to present child characters with the agency to try to solve the problems they face (Muñoz-Chereau 2018, 243), or children "who are willing to question the status quo" (Mickenberg and Nel 2011, 467).

Nonetheless, *Isang Harding Papel* contains an optimistic message of hope, which not even the dictatorship can take away. This hope functions as an abstract concept that propels the narrative forward. But ironically, the characters just optimistically wish that history would work in their favor without actively taking part in it. A text that seemingly normalizes growing up with an imprisoned mother should raise more questions on the injustices that led to the mother's imprisonment. There may be a happy resolution to the story since the Marcos dictatorship ends and the family is reunited. But despite this arbitrary closure in the textual universe, one may wonder whether the reader has become more cognizant of the importance, and even the failures, of the 1986 EDSA People Power Revolution. Without delving into the social, political, and historical beginnings and end of martial law, the text merely highlights the fashion and objects of the Marcos dictatorship. Hence, Jenny's predicament is simply treated as one child's personal problem since the narrative is not elevated to the story of a people.

Paratexts and Play in *Si Jhun-Jhun, Noong Bago Ideklara ang Batas Militar*

Also written by Augie Rivera, with illustrations by Brian Vallesteros, *Si Jhun-Jhun, Noong Bago Ideklara ang Batas Militar* (2001) is about Jhun-Jhun, whose brother Jamie becomes a *desaparecido*, or a victim of forced disappearance. Intrigued by his brother's activities, Jhun-Jhun follows him to the shoe factory where he works. There, Jhun-Jhun finds that Jaime has joined the workers on strike. Jhun-Jhun furtively marches with them toward Mendiola and witnesses the violence between the military and the rallyists. After the dispersal of the rally, Jhun-Jhun looks for Jaime but only manages to retrieve his brother's left slipper. Jhun-Jhun and his mother unsuccessfully look for Jaime in the military camps. Jhun-Jhun later works as a street vendor and secretly attends political demonstrations wearing his brother's left slipper.

UNICEF and Adarna House commissioned Rivera to write the *Batang Historyador*

(Young historian) series, of which *Si Jhun-Jhun* is a part. Aside from highlighting children's rights, the series aims to portray the lives of Filipino children in different eras of history. The *Batang Historyador* series was envisioned as an "alternative way of teaching history through stories," Rivera explained. "Though the child's life is fictionalized, the historical backdrop, events, places, where and when the story might happen, are real. To make history 'come alive' is through stories and personal accounts from primary sources, and even historical fiction" (email correspondence with Rivera, October 12, 2023).

Initially Rivera offered *Isang Harding Papel* to depict the martial law years as a *Batang Historyador* installment, but he ended up writing *Si Jhun-Jhun* instead. The inspiration for this story came from a photo of the aftermath of the brutal dispersal of a political rally that was "full of broken bottles, stones, and slippers." Rivera asserted that it was important to write about harsh realities in children's books, especially during challenging times in the country's history. However, he emphasized it was important to handle violence appropriately. For instance, Jhun-Jhun is shown hiding under a banner during the rally's dispersal so that there is a "filter" to "minimize the violence from the child's point-of-view" (email correspondence with Rivera, October 12, 2023).

Aside from being part of the *Batang Historyador* series, *Si Jhun-Jhun* is also included in Adarna House's #NeverAgain series. As of February 2023 it was already in its 11th printing, with 55,000 copies released. The Department of Education orders copies in bulk since the *Batang Historyador* series is required reading for Philippine history classes. NGOs and local governments also buy these books en masse. The sales of both *Si Jhun-Jhun* and *Isang Harding Papel* increased dramatically in 2022 after the election of Ferdinand Marcos Jr. as Philippine president and the NTF-ELCAC red-tagging of the #NeverAgain series. Parents from both the Philippines and diasporic communities buy the books not only to teach Philippine culture and history but to educate their children about the atrocities of martial law (personal interview with Garcia, November 7, 2023).

The story of *Si Jhun-Jhun* shows how state violence permeates Jhun-Jhun's private world. The paratexts emphasize the historical conflicts surrounding the child during martial law and how these tensions are simply resolved with the end of an era. A short historical note describes the first three months of 1970, before the declaration of martial law in 1972, as a time of protest against the Marcos Sr. administration. However, this historical note refrains from labeling the period as the First Quarter Storm of 1970—a series of anti-government marches, demonstrations, and protests, which was a historic event in itself. Though the note explains that this civil unrest was the pretext for the declaration of martial law, the focus is on martial law rather than the First Quarter Storm. If the First Quarter Storm had been named, the inquiring adult or child reader may research on that period and analyze the key actors and historical forces that gave rise to

the event that would lead to martial law. The causality of history would then be established. The story of Jhun-Jhun may have taken place at any time during martial law, and not necessarily during the First Quarter Storm. The historical note emphasizes the suppression of dissent through the closure of Senate, the control of media outlets, and the imprisonment of the administration's critics. These protests, the historical note also explains, culminated in EDSA 1 People Power. In contrast to not labeling the First Quarter Storm, the note explicitly points to the end of the dictatorship as EDSA 1 People Power. Though the historical note justifies the rallies during the Marcos Sr. presidency, it nonetheless emphasizes the historic end rather than the beginning of the Marcos dictatorship.

The 1986 EDSA People Power Revolution is viewed as an idyllic time that continues up to the present with respect to children's rights. Since the *Batang Historyador* series is jointly published with UNICEF, the book's paratexts contain a brief introduction to UNICEF and the simplified version of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1), which was adopted on November 20, 1989.

The historical note affirms the right of the child to free expression as stipulated in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (2). Because of these conventions, the notion of child's rights has spread in the country since the late 1980s and has entered academic and popular discourse (Evasco 2011, 114). With the book's paratexts, readers may be assured that children are protected through an international entity and will no longer suffer state violence as during the Marcos dictatorship. Normalcy is situated by highlighting the abnormal: order is restored in the present day because what is proper and just is being enforced in the present era, compared to the imbalance of powers in the past. This implies that children's rights are safeguarded now, as if the political repression of children ended along with the Marcos dictatorship.[7)]

The world of *Si Jhun-Jhun* is permeated with objects and events referring to protests, such as slogans, placards, factory strikes, and Mendiola rallies. This contrasts with the

7) While there has been some progress with respect to children's rights after the ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1990, many Filipino children still do not live decently. The 31 percent of children living below the poverty line do not have access to good nutrition, potable drinking water, and education. Moreover, children across socioeconomic classes experience cyberbullying as well as physical and emotional violence (Coram International 2018; UNICEF Philippines 2018).

Children have also been reported as casualties in the "war on drugs" launched by President Rodrigo Duterte. Several NGOs have reported that 101 children were killed from July 2016 through December 2018 (Human Rights Watch 2020). Children experience police brutality, since drug raids happen inside their homes. They may also witness the extrajudicial killing of their parents. These children are forced to stop schooling because of the loss of a breadwinner, and they leave their communities for fear of further violence. They become child laborers or are prone to sex trafficking and other criminal activities (Human Rights Watch 2020).

ordered and disciplined world of *Isang Harding Papel*, which is defined by the cultural markers of the New Society. Readers are also confronted with inequalities due to social class. While his older brother Jaime works in a shoe factory, Jhun-Jhun sells newspapers and boiled bananas instead of playing on the streets. His childhood is lost not only through political violence but also due to poverty.

The story is told in the language of play to foreground childhood simplicity and imagination and the later destruction of the carefree world of the child. The symbolism of the brother's slipper and the meaning of the streets signal the childhood loss of innocence. The story opens with Jhun-Jhun playing *tumbang preso* (a game in which an empty can is hit with slippers) on the street with his playmates. To Jaime's annoyance, Jhun-Jhun's favorite weapon is his brother's slipper. Jhun-Jhun naively reasons that his brother's slipper is imbued with magical powers. In reality, the slipper is just bigger and can easily topple the can.

Later, Jaime scolds Jhun-Jhun for sequestering his slipper for play since Jaime needs both slippers to run his "errands." The slipper is a symbol of mobility for Jaime, which Jhun-Jhun laments since this also signals Jaime's bourgeoning adult independence. The brothers no longer enjoy childhood activities together (Rivera 2001, 11). The mother explains to Jhun-Jhun that growing older is the way things are: "It's really like that, *anak* (child). Your *kuya* (big brother) is working. . . . And besides, he's getting older, so he's busy with other things now" (Rivera 2001, 12). Finding one's individuality is construed as normal as growing up, which may sadly lead to growing apart. Later, political involvement is revealed as forming the bigger and more adult world of Jaime, which causes the rupture of sibling bonds.

The innocent childhood world of Jhun-Jhun is shattered as depicted in the violent rally dispersal. In the commotion, Jhun-Jhun hides under a red banner and counts to ten, like playing a game of hide-and-seek. He retreats from state aggression through play, almost a tug-of-war between childhood and adulthood. Amidst the debris, he marvels at the slippers left behind by the rallyists. He observes, "All that was left were stones, broken glass, placards, banners, and slippers! Lots of slippers—as if a thousand people had played *tumbang preso*!" (Rivera 2001, 25). This strikes the reader with the bitter realization of the material remains of one's existence. Like the shoes that are frequently displayed in Holocaust memorials, these slippers mark absence, with their owners lost and presumably annihilated. Much like Kokkola's (2003, 25–26) "framed silences," this "abyss of silence" that contains "informational gaps" and withholds overwhelming details may resonate on an emotional level. With Jhun-Jhun's right slipper missing, he wears his brother's left slipper, which he miraculously locates in the sea of slippers.

In the end, this story portrays the subversion of the child who secretly goes to rallies

despite his mother's objections. Wearing his brother's left slipper symbolizes Jhun-Jhun filling the role of his brother and continuing the fight. This contrasts with the passivity of the mother, who waits, prays, and hopes. Unlike *Isang Harding Papel*, where the mother is reunited with her child amidst the triumph of the 1986 EDSA People Power Revolution, *Si Jhun-Jhun* does not end happily. Jaime is never found, and his whereabouts remain uncertain: "They did not know where he was. Maybe he was in prison. Maybe he was in hiding. No one knew" (Rivera 2001, 26).

Jhun-Jhun bears the consequences of his brother's disappearance and is suddenly thrown into adulthood because of poverty. He struggles both as a child working odd jobs and as a child whose family life is disrupted by state violence. The child earns a living as a street vendor and has no more time to play. The streets are no longer his playground and safe refuge but a battlefield where he lost his brother and where he now must make a living. Despite Jhun-Jhun's abrupt transitioning to adulthood because of political repression, the story is not defeatist and ends with a glimmer of hope through the continuance of the brother's fight.

At first glance, Jhun-Jhun might be considered a mighty child because of his agency in attending political demonstrations without adult approval. But despite this, one wonders at his political maturity. A mighty child's potential lies in the child's understanding of the social world, which may translate into political commitment in the future. Jaime's left slipper may be symbolic of leftist ideology, but is Jhun-Jhun's political consciousness raised by his continuation of his brother's fight? Is there an understanding of what the child is fighting for? Jhun-Jhun may engage in political participation—i.e., participating in collective actions to enact social change (termed "critical action")—but it is unclear whether he has grown in political consciousness or in his ability to make meaningful connections on the nature of societal inequalities (termed "critical reflection") (see Godfrey and Grayman 2014; Diemer and Rapa 2016, 222). Hence, one also wonders whether Jhun-Jhun will sustain his political activities into adulthood.

While the text does not delve into Jhun-Jhun's political consciousness, the illustrations, which depict placards, may hint at the nature of the demonstrations during the rule of Ferdinand Marcos Sr. The historical note which foregrounds the story describes broadly the tense political climate and repression during the Marcos Sr. presidency. However, the historical note and the illustrations are not specific about the social and economic dilemma of those times. The illustrations may depict the slogans "FM [Ferdinand Marcos] Busog sa Pera ng Bayan" (FM devours the country's money), "Buwis ng mamamayan nasaan na" (Where are the taxes of the people), "US-Imperyalismo Salot ng Mundo" (US-imperialism curse of the world) (Rivera 2001, 18–19). Yet these calls are not easily discernible since they are blocked or cut from the frame. The picture

spread at the end of the book contains the slogan "Para sa Demokrasya" (For democracy), which is vague and open-ended. What is democracy in this sense? The other slogan, "Marcos Diktador" (Marcos dictator), though a common slogan and chant, seems to be stating the obvious (Rivera 2001, 30). While these slogans may point toward government corruption and anti-imperialism, they are toned down and do not capture fully the economic and political crisis nor the concrete demands of the activists.

Photographs can anchor the fictive world of the text to historical events. Yet, the historical importance of the photographs in *Si Jhun-Jhun* is diluted. The front and back covers contain pictures with slogans from the First Quarter Storm, but they are arranged in a collage and difficult to read. Moreover, these pictures are not in the original black and white but in faded purplish pink. Hence, the original photographs are glazed with more subdued hues of red, as if the anger and violence associated with the color red have receded in memory.

Si Jhun-Jhun illustrates how the tension of the narrative is resolved in the paratexts. Despite the seemingly explicit description of the violence that Jhun-Jhun faces, the martial law period is depicted as a repressive yet bygone era where societal conflicts belong only to the past. Hence, Jhun-Jhun does not need to develop his political consciousness—why would he, when his struggles end after the dictatorship? Though the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child may help reassure readers of the idealized world where children's rights are protected, it does not address the structural defects that cause the continuing political repression and poverty.

Resisting State Intrusion in *At the School Gate*

At the School Gate (2018) is about a 15-year-old schoolgirl who must deal with the arrest of her father and the surveillance of a military agent years after martial law. Written by Sandra Nicole Roldan and illustrated by Nina Martinez, this is a semi-autobiographical account of the author's own experiences as the child of an activist father who was politically detained during martial law. The martial law activist and political detainee Bobby Roldan, Sandra's father, was arrested for the second time in 1991 while working for an NGO during the Corazon Aquino presidency (Peña 2021).

Compared to *Si Jhun-Jhun* and *Isang Harding Papel*, *At the School Gate* has a longer narrative structure since this is aimed at an older, teen audience, as hinted at by the age of the protagonist. Stories targeted at teenagers 13 to 18 years old include various individuals and institutions that influence the child, such as parents, peers, teachers, school, mass media, church, and government (Evasco 2011, 109). In addition, the main

plot is set after the 1986 EDSA People Power Revolution to show that the problems and political repression continued after the end of the Marcos dictatorship.[8)]

The story begins with 15-year-old Ella Cortez rushing to finish her column for the school paper as her Aunt Em arrives to pick her up from school. When they stop by the canteen, the aunt reveals that Ella's father, Buddy, has been arrested for the third time despite being no longer part of the underground movement. As Aunt Em and Ella are leaving the canteen, an unknown man "with bullet teeth" (Roldan 2018, 21) who is assumed to be a military agent follows them around. In the coming days, this man trails Ella at the school gate. Courageously, Ella confronts the man and tells him to leave her alone.

Roldan created this story "to question the very pastness of Martial Law, and to show that human rights atrocities affect not just the activists but also their families and their children" (Unlocking the School Gate, 2023). As a trauma response to being put under military surveillance at the age of 14, Roldan wrote various iterations of this story for over twenty years. The story appeared first as high school diary entries and then as requirements for fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and young adult fiction workshop classes while the author was working on her undergraduate and graduate degrees in creative writing. Roldan crafted Ella "as a stand-in for myself" but directed the narrative as a wish fulfillment for actions she wished she had been able to do differently:

> In the story, she was able to do the things that I could not do in real life, like confront the perpetrators of state violence. It was very important for me that Ella would feel empowered at the end of the story. It was precisely because I did not feel that way, not even now, 30 plus years after that traumatic event. (Unlocking the School Gate, 2023)

Though Roldan acknowledges that the story is "dark and terrifying," she made sure that "there were moments of light" by portraying the "possibility for hope, for fighting back, for being brave, even in the darkest and most difficult times" (Unlocking the School Gate, 2023).

In 2016, Rodrigo Duterte was campaigning for the presidency and there was the threat of a return to authoritarian rule. To warn against the horrors of dictatorship, the publisher Bookmark included *At the School Gate* in a martial law anthology but later (in 2018) released it as a stand-alone illustrated children's book. Five thousand copies were first printed, of which Roldan estimates that around two thousand to three thousand were

8) Human rights violations continued in the succeeding presidencies after the dictatorship. The US-sponsored low-intensity conflict under the Corazon Aquino administration continued Marcos Sr.'s program of deploying vigilantes in the countryside for counterinsurgency activities (Curaming and Claudio 2010, 11).

sold. The book is available both locally and overseas, mostly through small independent bookstores and online sellers. Roldan mentioned that there was a demand for this book especially during Christmastime as well as the anniversary of the martial law declaration and 1986 EDSA People Power Revolution. The book was also included in numerous best book of the year lists (personal interview with Roldan, October 20, 2023; Unlocking the School Gate, 2023).

With a longer narrative than *Isang Harding Papel* and *Si Jhun-Jhun*, *At the School Gate* tells more about the circumstances of the family through flashbacks: how Ella was conceived in the Camp Crame Detention Center in 1976 during her mother's "conjugal visit" to her father, and how she grew up with her father's comrades sleeping in their house. The story proceeds with the euphoria of the 1986 EDSA People Power Revolution. Yet, Ella's familial situation is not as rosy. Shortly after the end of the dictatorship, Ella's parents separate in 1987. Her mother migrates to the United States, while her father remains in the Philippines to become a filmmaker. Ella has to "play grownup" (Roldan 2018, 11) and assume the more adult role of doing household chores and paying bills.

Unlike the earlier texts, *At the School Gate* does not celebrate the end of the dictatorship but sees the continuity of repressive regimes. Ella breaks the naïve illusion:

> I thought that period in our family life ended in 1986 with People Power. Everyone flashed the *Laban* (Fight) sign, Cory had yellow confetti parades, and EDSA became the most famous street in the world. I was so excited because Americans on TV kept saying congratulations to the Philippines. I thought it was like winning the Sweepstakes and all Filipinos would become rich. No more beggars in the street or little kids selling *sampaguita* (jasmine flowers) at night. I didn't know better because I was only nine at the time. I now know things are more complicated. I should have remembered my Grade Four history lesson: Bad presidents like Marcos may come and go but They will always stay in power. (Roldan 2018, 11)

Despite Ella's father's proletarian political involvement, the text hints at Ella's middle class life. For instance, she studies in a Catholic private school, whose tuition fees may be prohibitive for working class families. Her grandmother lives in a house with a garden and lovebirds, and her grandfather drops her to school in a station wagon. Her mother works in the United States, and her remittances may help sustain the family. Her father becomes a documentary filmmaker for nongovernmental organizations after the 1986 EDSA People Power Revolution, not a skilled blue-collar worker. However, the family's middle classness is different because it is not marked by material comforts. And though the father attempts to reconstruct his life after the revolution "aboveground," there is a haunting danger that the state may revive trumped-up charges from his underground years. Thus, Ella struggles to maintain normalcy despite the disruption of family life through her father's second arrest.

The attempt to maintain middle class normalcy is parallel to the transformation of EDSA from a site of struggle[9] to a locale of consumerism. EDSA is both highway and historical event since it is the site of the nonviolent 1986 People Power Revolution that ended the Marcos dictatorship. Touted as a "middle class revolution," the 1986 EDSA People Power Revolution mobilized the elites and the middle class who were politicized by the assassination of Senator Benigno Aquino Jr. (Curaming and Claudio 2010, 9). Previously called Highway 54, Epifanio de los Santos Avenue or EDSA is a long stretch that connects gated subdivisions (e.g., Corinthian Gardens, Forbes Park, and Dasmariñas Village), commercial areas such as Cubao, and business districts like Ortigas and Makati. However, in the 1990s EDSA marked consumerist excess with flyovers traversing high-rise buildings and mega malls.[10] Within this stretch one also encountered markers of poverty and urban decay such as shanties, street vendors, beggars, and traffic jams (Rafael 2000, 180; Serquiña 2014, 46).

The transition of EDSA from its political to commercial significance affects the private and familial world of Ella. The 1986 EDSA People Power Revolution marks a time when there were changes in Ella's familial life, such as the separation of her parents in 1987. The revolution also hopefully signals the end of the political persecution of her family. As a major avenue, EDSA is also a liminal space of everyday annoyance resulting in school tardiness marked by "traffic at EDSA and asphyxiation while commuting": Ella

9) EDSA as the site of middle class "revolution" figured prominently in the ouster campaign of President Estrada. The EDSA People Power II from January 16 to 20, 2001 was a bloodless protest that demanded the resignation of President Joseph "Erap" Estrada due to corruption and plunder charges. Mostly middle class forces from the coalitions Kompil II and Estrada Resign Movement, and students from elite universities, gravitated toward the Our Lady of EDSA shrine located at the intersection of EDSA and Ortigas Avenue.

On May 1, 2001, Estrada supporters stormed Malacañang Palace in a riot known as EDSA III, which left four dead and almost a hundred wounded. Instigated by three senatorial candidates—Juan Ponce Enrile, Gregorio Honasan, and Panfilo Lacson Jr.—who had close contacts with military officials, Estrada's political party Puwersa ng Masa (Force of the Masses), and the religious groups Iglesia ni Cristo and El Shaddai, EDSA III was carried out primarily by the urban poor (Gloria 2015). Analysts describe EDSA II as "an organized, morally legitimate citizen's movement" and EDSA III as "disorganized, morally illegitimate, and resulting from elite manipulation" (Garrido 2008, 444). However, Marco Garrido (2008, 456) saw EDSA III as the *masa*'s (urban poor's) "departure from a regime of symbolic domination, a departure marked by the *masa*'s sudden and ferocious visibility."

10) Rafael (2000, 180) succinctly writes, "By the 1990s, whatever democratizing promise the EDSA revolt held out has long been extinguished. The return of cacique democracy has also meant the containment of mass politics away from the scenes of its emergence and in the direction of new sites of popular gatherings: the new and enormous shopping malls of metro Manila. Perhaps it is not too far-fetched to suggest that the latter period of Aquino's regime will be remembered as the era of the mega-malls, when a consumerist ethos managed to substitute the privatized, tightly policed, air-conditioned, and brownout resistant spaces of Robinson's and Shoemart for the communal exhilaration and confrontational politics of EDSA and Mendiola, the street that led to Malacañang."

has to endure "a two-hour jeep-bus-tricycle ride home" (Roldan 2018, 2). Ella's irritation over the traffic leads to a realization of the subtle class divide in her private school: "Don't they know not everyone can afford to be driven to school? I was annoyed at the world and I wanted to be out there, fixing it" (Roldan 2018, 2). Stripped of its association with the dictatorship, EDSA has become a battleground for the everyday frustrations Ella faces.

As the title suggests, *At the School Gate* demarcates the boundaries of the private and the public, with the school expanding the child's social domain. Because of Ella's father's political involvement, the personal realm of Ella's family and school life overlaps with the bigger political world. First, political activism forms the identity of Ella and her brothers, who are named after the Filipino military leader Gabriela Silang, the activist Liliosa Hilao, and the German philosopher Karl Marx. That Ella declares her full name Liliosa Gabriela Cortez to the military agent to fight him is an assertion of her identity and an act of defiance.

Second, torture, arrest, and surveillance are state intrusions into the private world by "violating its sense of domestic space" (Reyes 2018, 476–478). These forms of harassment inflict not only physical but also psychological pain by "denying its victims any power over their lives" (McCoy 2012, 117). Military interrogation (and surveillance) is not merely the extraction of information but an assertion of the state's power over the individual (Reyes 2018, 478). In *At the School Gate*, the "enemy" is called "They" throughout the text. The military agent is described ominously as a "tall man wearing army boots" and rendered as faceless except for the "teeth as shiny as bullets" (Roldan 2018, 15)[11]—hence an unknown yet real entity. This threat is likened to the turtle Elvis, who may leave bite marks on the lily pads in Ella's grandmother's pond but remains unseen: "Elvis was real. Just like that man with the bullet-toothed grin. I wished I could pretend he was imaginary" (Roldan 2018, 26–27). The dichotomy between the abstract and concrete shows the networks within the regime's actual military surveillance. Ella's encounter with the military agent outside the school gate is described as "It was us against Them, me against him" (Roldan 2018, 37). The military agent waiting outside the school gate is a manifestation of the state's coercion over an individual.

Third, Ella notes the disconnect between her father being treated as an enemy of the state and the simple father she knows. When Ella's father's arrest is shown on a television news show, her five-year-old cousin innocently asks, "Tito Buddy is on TV! His hands are tied behind his back! Why? Did he do something bad?" (Roldan 2018, 14). The public spectacle of Ella's father's arrest is an intrusion into Ella's private familial life.

11) In her study of martial law memoirs, Portia Reyes (2018, 478) notes how captured activists express the "facelessness of the torturers" when recounting torture sessions. Similarly, the captured activists label these torturers as "they."

The family knows the truth of the father being "legal" and no longer "underground" (Roldan 2018, 18) versus the manufactured state lies. Aunt Em surmises, "Maybe this is Their way of raising funds for the elections" (Roldan 2018, 18). Moreover, the family's familiarity and keen attention to detail debunk the state's projection of the father as an emasculated, meek, and bruised high-ranking officer of an armed rebel group. Ella points to the subtle features of his clothing that deviate from his usual style, such as the "sleeves were buttoned at the wrists, not rolled up to his elbows like he usually wore them" (Roldan 2018, 18), concealing the marks of torture on his arms. The questionable circumstances surrounding the father's arrest are further confounded by the news anchor misstating his name as Buggy instead of Buddy (Roldan 2018, 17–18).

After her father's arrest, Ella grapples for normalcy by maintaining order in school. The opening line of the book is telling: "You know things are bad when you're fifteen" (Roldan 2018, 2). Ella feels stifled in her Catholic school and faces the challenges of running the school paper in addition to commuting long hours through EDSA. In the latter part of the book, the school gate acts as a symbol of the worlds that must be maintained. As Ella approaches the school gate, her attention shifts from the familial crisis brought about by political repression to the orderly world of the school inhabited by "normal," perhaps nonpolitical families. The contrast is stark as Ella observes the comfortable and well-groomed children being dropped off by their parents: "Nice, normal families saying their good mornings, kissing their goodbyes" (Roldan 2018, 34). However, the spectacle of her father's arrest on television jars the child's private world, since teachers and classmates ask about it at school. This causes Ella to be a spectacle as well.

Symbolically, the school gate serves as a demarcation of boundaries. The military agent cannot enter the school premises but can only surveil Ella from outside. This may show the limitations of the state's power over the child. Remembering her father's advice, "As long as there's something wrong, you don't stop fighting. You just learn to fight in a different way" (Roldan 2018, 38), Ella uses this as leverage to assert her power. She fights through giving information on everyday details of her school life such as finishing an article for the school paper, studying for an exam, and what she ate for lunch: "They wanted to find out stuff about me? Then I'll tell them stuff about me" (Roldan 2018, 38). By directly confronting the military man, she affirms that the military cannot penetrate her school life and by extension her own world.

The mighty child here is constructed as someone who asserts the normalcy of everyday life despite the abnormal conditions. Ella shows the enemy that she and her family are not defeated and that they are going on with their lives unafraid: "I decided I wouldn't let Them ruin my life" (Roldan 2018, 38). Whether or not her confrontation with the military man makes an impact or not seems unimportant, as Ella observes: "He

didn't say anything but I could tell he was surprised. He wasn't grinning anymore. Maybe he didn't understand a word I said. It didn't matter" (Roldan 2018, 40). She wrests power from the military to the point that the military agent's reaction does not matter. Yet, Ella's assertion is important as it affirms her refusal to be controlled psychologically by state torture. The weight of her father's imprisonment and her military surveillance is summed up in her plaintive words "Go tell Papa I'm OK" (Roldan 2018, 38). Though they may not harm the military agent (Ella even doubts whether he understands the implications of her request), these words are important for her to regain her life.

The mighty child in this story not only shows courage in facing adversity but expresses strength in future possibilities. The ending juxtaposes the uncertain fate of Ella's father vis-à-vis the everyday struggles of a typical high school girl:

> I was glad. I had other things to worry about. Like the strain this event was putting on my family. Not knowing what will happen in the coming months. The possibility I'd never see Papa again.
>
> Like the surprise quiz Ms. Orlina was probably giving right now at First Period! Backpack over my shoulder, I ran through the school gates, and past the nuns watching over students in the lobby. Despite everything, I made it to class on time and got a passing score for the surprise quiz. A small miracle? Not really. I read my notes in the car on the way to school. Traffic has its good uses after all. (Roldan 2018, 40)

The story does not end happily but remains open-ended. The reader does not know whether the father will be released or what will happen to the family. Nonetheless, Ella maintains her agency in her daily life by accepting—but at the same time addressing—the big obstacles and petty inconveniences. Despite the overwhelming environment and uncontrollable situations, she focuses on things she can do, such as reading notes in traffic that would prepare her for a surprise quiz. The mighty child, then, is interested in future possibilities by trying to handle the present to the best of her capabilities.

Though all three texts depict incarceration and enforced disappearances of family members during the Marcos dictatorship, the extent of political violence is elided in *Isang Harding Papel* and *Si Jhun-Jhun*. However, the failures of the 1986 EDSA People Power Revolution are embedded in the narrative of *At the School Gate*. The adults in *At the School Gate* explain the circumstances of arrest and state surveillance. The main characters in *Si Jhun-Jhun* and *Isang Harding Papel* are not shown to have further matured politically, since the child's understanding does not extend beyond the family. On the other hand, the protagonist in *At the School Gate* knows the limits of her powers, yet empowers herself by asserting that the state cannot enter her private life.

Conclusion

Fifty years after the declaration of martial law in 1972, the son of the dictator was elected into the highest political position in the country. In the Philippines, as in Southeast Asia in general, this raises important questions about how the younger generations view historical violence they have not experienced.[12] This study on the portrayal of historical violence in children's books set during the period of martial law hopes to contribute to the growing scholarship on literary and artistic works targeted to the young who were not born during that time. By interrogating narratives passed on to the next generation, one may analyze the nature of memory and non-memory not only in the Philippines but in Southeast Asia in general. This study could be a point of comparison between the way children's books treat dictatorships within the region, on the one hand, and the prevailing silences and historical revisionism of despotic regimes on the other.

Many studies approach children's literature in the Philippines as a pedagogical tool. This paper on stories on the Marcos dictatorship instead focuses on the more difficult topic of historical violence and the role of children's literature in mediating our present-day understanding of the past. By focusing on familial relations and the child's construction of normalcy, I analyze how martial law informs adult-child relations. State intrusion and violence may disrupt the family through arrest, incarceration, and disappearance. These extraordinary circumstances as depicted in the fictive world of the text may portray children with the agency to challenge the existing powers, adaptability to societal conflicts, or acceptance of the status quo. Through the concept of the mighty child, I locate the tensions of adult-child relationships: adults may have limited power because of their time-bound temporality, while children are endowed with might because of their future potential. I have also shown how political violence forms the subjectivity of these child characters by looking into how they respond to state repression that directly affects their lives and how they are depicted as having the potential to change their environments.

"Framed silences," or the withholding of gruesome details by suggesting gaps in information, may paradoxically reveal more in a manner that is emotionally manageable.

12) For instance, the present generation of Vietnamese youth distance themselves from memories of the Vietnam War and treat war memorials as spaces for casual strolling instead of sites of remembrance (Schwenkel 2011, 130–134). But in the case of Indonesia, the time, distance, and opening up of "democratic spaces" allowed families (particularly children) of Indonesian political detainees to circulate their narratives countering the state-sanctioned history of Suharto's New Order. The families' efforts to convey the painful memories of their elders parallel Marianne Hirsch's (2008) description of the passing down of the memories and trauma of political violence of the previous generation to their offspring. Through these memories, descendants of Indonesian political prisoners uncover stories and express them through their own artistic endeavors (Leong 2021, 6–7).

However, absences and silences may be a problem when the causes and effects of historical injustices are glossed over, such as the ways in which texts withhold specific details of martial law history to give way to the euphoric narrative of the 1986 EDSA People Power Revolution. Though there may be gaps and silences on historical details within literary texts, the emplotment of the narrative can have profound implications in constructing one's view of history, and ultimately of collective memory (White 1984; Temin and Dahl 2017, 906–907). These narrative reconstructions of history—even if written in fictive mode—may have an affective impact on the audience, especially since "stories seem engaging and concrete, rather than abstract" (Polletta *et al.* 2011, 110). Narrative resolutions that connect the past to the present and instill political responsibility and agency empower child readers to see themselves as active agents of social change (Temin and Dahl 2017, 906).

Further debates may arise on what may be construed as "normal" and whether an "unconventional" family unit becomes the child's normal since the child grows up in that context. However, questions should go beyond who or what is considered normal—rather, the more pressing problem is why family life is disrupted so as to distress a child. In the three discussed texts, state violence deprives children of an untroubled childhood and a stable family life. The children's attempts at "normalization" may be mechanisms to survive a dictatorship. Amidst the repressive state power intruding into the domestic sphere, the child characters attempt to "normalize" their situation by continuing with their daily routines in the aftermath of their parents' arrest.

Though these children's books are fictive renditions, their portrayal of the private and public worlds of the child is important to both child and adult readers. It is not enough to simply write stories about martial law; stories that show the causality and connection of historical events, as well as the growth and strength of the characters, may have a more empowering potential. Though there may be limits of representation in depicting historical violence in children's books, "framing silences" more effectively can still reveal what is important. The careful, yet powerful, rendering of the Marcos dictatorship may have a deep and lasting impact, more so since martial law is a contested period in Philippine history.

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The Palaeogeographic Evolution of the Wonosobo Volcanic Area and Its Impacts on Ancient Life in the Cradle of the Javanese Civilization

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This paper investigates the palaeogeographic evolution of the Wonosobo Volcanic Area (WVA) of Central Java, Indonesia and its impact on ancient human life beginning from the Ancient Mataram era of the seventh-eighth centuries. Primary observations conducted across nine zones of three distinct volcano units were cross-referenced with existing geological and topographical maps and relevant secondary literature to create a chronology of landform evolution. Traces of past life were found spread throughout the WVA. In the Sundoro Stratovolcano area, which was still experiencing activity in the time of Ancient Mataram, volcanic eruptions were disastrous, with evidence of at least one settlement buried. But in the Sumbing and Dieng Volcanic Complex areas, which have been inactive for two-three centuries, the impact of volcanism on human life is not as apparent. Instead, the denudation process, exacerbated by the climate conditions, is more influential, as evidenced by various archaeological relics that are buried in alluvial material. This study provides alternative information about the contribution of natural factors in influencing the dynamics of life in Ancient Mataram. This study also offers new insights into the influence of palaeogeographic changes on human-environment interaction on a long temporal scale.

Keywords: palaeogeography, volcanic landform, Ancient Mataram, Central Java

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Introduction

Since ancient times, volcanoes have been at the heart of—and the inspiration for—civilizations due to their natural resource potential and the social-spiritual benefits of the human-volcano relationship (Sutikno *et al.* 2007; Bachri *et al.* 2015). But little is known about the evolution of volcanic landforms and its influence on ancient life. What natural processes are involved in this evolution and how have they impacted the way people live with the environment?

Indonesia offers the ideal place for such an inquiry. Active volcanoes are a primary feature of the Indonesian landscape, as indicated by the large number distributed across various regions of the country. Globally, Indonesia is home to no less than 13 percent of the world's active volcanoes, making it the country with the highest level of volcanism (Zaennudin 2010; Verstappen 2013). According to historical records, 47 percent of eruptions in Indonesia have occurred on the island of Java. Volcanoes have been active since the beginning of the island's formation in the Eocene Epoch (Hall 2009) and eruptions are expected to continue to evolve naturally over time given Java's geological conditions (Verstappen 2010). Volcanic landforms and mountains account for 60 percent of Java's land cover (Hadmoko *et al.* 2017), with stratovolcanoes the most common morphological type (Ashari and Purwantara 2022).

As an essential landform of Java, volcanoes have been the center of ancient civilizations on the island. Lavigne *et al.* (2008) explain that volcanic slopes have been occupied by people for thousands of years. Most of Degroot's (2009) findings of hundreds of temple relics in Central Java are in the volcanic landscape compared to other regions. Indeed, the Borobudur and Prambanan temple compounds, referred to as the ancient capital are between two volcanoes. But volcanic activity has also ruined civilizations: the ancient village site of Liyangan on the eastern slope of Sundoro Stratovolcano (Riyanto 2015) and the Asu Temple Complex on the western slope of Merapi Stratovolcano (Ashari 2013) were both buried by pyroclastic material. Thus, the evolution of volcanic landforms has been an essential factor in determining the emergence, development, and disappearance of ancient civilizations on Java.

The influence of landform evolution on life has long been studied. Wang and He's (2022) study on fluvial stretches demonstrated that human life is closely related to the evolution of rivers. Similarly, Lu *et al.* (2019) and Ashari (2022) found that the evolution of the fluvial landscape has impacted ancient settlements. The research of Ghilardi *et al.* (2017) details how the slow evolution of landforms has allowed human civilizations to develop longer, resulting in various forms of cultural remains. In contrast, when landscape changes suddenly occur, the impact on civilizations is more severe. In their study of a

piedmont area, Zhang *et al.* (2022) proved that the evolution of land that caused flood fixation provided opportunities for the development of a more advanced civilization. These studies provide insight into the close relationship of landscape evolution to human life and culture. Slow change provides a stable environment for cultural development. On the other hand, massive changes can trigger disasters that hinder or even eliminate a culture.

The particular influence of volcanic landscape dynamics on human life has also received significant attention. However, previous studies tend to focus on catastrophic events, instead of gradual evolution over a longer temporal scale. A single catastrophic event can cause a direct impact on human civilization, such as the burial of Pompeii by the eruption of Vesuvius in 79 CE (Sheets 2015) or the burial of the three kingdoms on Sumbawa Island by the eruption of Tambora in 1815 (Sutawidjaja *et al.* 2006). Volcanic eruptions can also affect conditions in the global atmosphere, which then affect human life across a wider area, as happened in the eruption of Krakatoa in 1883 (Schröder 2002) and Tambora in 1815 (Wood 2015). Unlike these studies, however, this research elaborates on the impact of various events related to the evolution of the volcanic landscape over a longer time frame.

Volcanic landforms can evolve both through eruptions and denudation processes controlled by exogenous forces. To investigate the natural processes involved in this evolution and the impact of they have had on human life over time, this study focuses on the Wonosobo Volcanic Area (WVA) in Central Java. The WVA is dominated by three main volcanic morphologies, namely the twin Sumbing and Sundoro stratovolcanoes and the Dieng Volcanic Complex (DVC). This region is known as the cradle of the Javanese civilization (Degroot 2009) and has been inhabited for thousands of years, during which time numerous natural processes have changed the land conditions.[1)] In examining the paleogeographic evolution of the WVA and its impact on human life, this study provides new information about the role of natural factors in the dynamics of Ancient Mataram and new insights into the influence of palaeogeographic changes on human-environment interaction in ancient times.

Methods

The Study Area

The study was carried out across the Wonosobo Volcanic Area (WVA), where volcanic features align along a SE-NW axis with Sumbing Stratovolcano in the southeast, Sundoro

1) According to the Global Volcanism Program of the Smithsonian Institution, more than one million people lived in the Wonosobo Volcanic Area in 2021.

Stratovolcano in the middle, and Dieng Volcanic Complex (DVC) in the northwestern quarter of the area (Fig. 1). Administratively, the research area spans six regencies in Central Java Province with a total area of 1,326 km^2 (Fig. 1). Three large rivers originate from the WVA, namely the Serayu (181 km long), the Progo (138 km long), and the Bogowonto (67 km long), thus it plays a vital role in the hydrologic system of Central Java.

Data Collection and Analysis

The study area is divided into nine zones. The Sumbing and Sundoro stratovolcanoes are each divided into four zones to represent all slope sectors, namely SE, SW, NW, and NE. Meanwhile, the DVC is classified as a separate zone (Fig. 2). In each zone, observations were conducted to obtain primary data on the geological and geomorphological conditions, archaeological sites, toponyms, and other traces of past life. The largest number of observation points is in the DVC, with nine locations spread throughout the DVC volcano complex. Observations were carried out to obtain primary data on the geological and geomorphological conditions to estimate the genesis and create a chronology of landform evolution in the WVA. We applied Verstappen's method (2014) to conduct a geomorphological-synthetic survey.

Meanwhile, secondary data was interpreted. Existing remote sensing images were sourced for data on geomorphologic conditions. Relevant literature was reviewed for pertinent historical and archaeological facts as well as relevant information about landform evolution and community life in Ancient Mataram era (Table 1). Finally, geological data was acquired from geological maps and geomorphological data from Indonesian Topographical Maps (Geospatial Information Agency of Indonesia 2000). This data was cross-referenced to create a chronology of landform evolution, as depicted in Figs. 3 and 4. Descriptive data analysis was supported by GIS analysis using average nearest neighbor and buffering.

This study combines a geographic and historic approach. A descriptive analysis was employed to better understand the chronology of natural events in the past and thus paint a picture of landform evolution. To construct the chronology, we begin with careful observation of existing geomorphologic conditions and rely on the basic concept of "the present is the key to the past." There are four stages to this analysis (Table 2). To better understand past life in the study area, a four-step historical analysis was employed: source collection (heuristics), source critique (verification), interpretation, and writing (historiography).

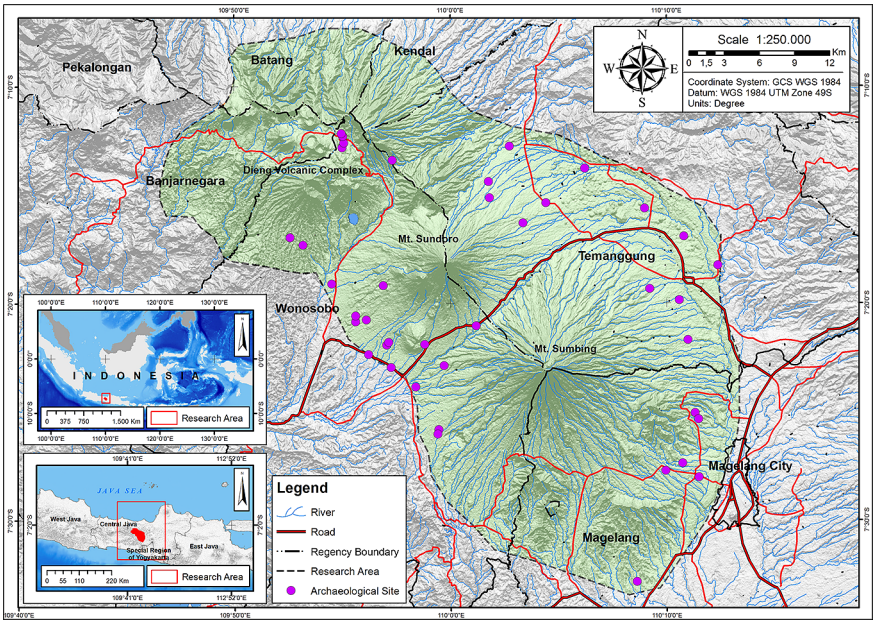

Fig. 1 The Study Area

Source: Indonesia Topographical Maps; Degroot 2009; Sukronedi *et al.* 2018

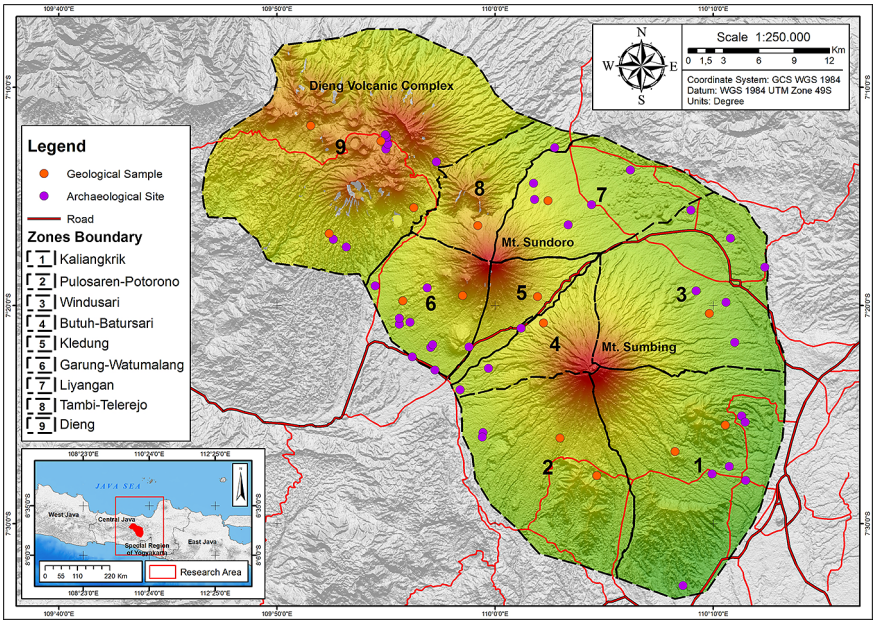

Fig. 2 Zoning for Analysis Based on the Physiographical Unit of the Study Area

Source: Indonesia Topographical Maps; Degroot 2009; Sukronedi *et al.* 2018

Table 1 Data Types, Data Collection Techniques, and Data Instruments/Sources

No	Variables	Data Collection Techniques	Instruments/data Sources
1	Geomorphological conditions: - Morphography - Morphometry - Morphogenesis - Morphocronology - Morphoarrangement	Observation	Observation sheets, GPS, geological compass, abney level, roll meter, digital camera
		Remote sensing image interpretation	Landsat 8 OLI Imagery and Google Earth Engine
		Document analysis	Indonesian Topographical Map (Geospatial Information Agency of Indonesia 2000), Sheets on Wonosobo, Parakan, Temanggung, Kertek, Kaliangkrik, Magelang, Watumalang, Batur, and Kejajar
		Literature study	Ashari (2014; 2019)
2	Geological conditions: - Lithology - Stratigraphy	Observation	Observation sheets, GPS, geological hammer, geological compass, digital camera
		Document analysis	Indonesian Geological Map, Sheets on Magelang-Semarang (Thanden *et al.* 1996), and Banjarnegara-Pekalongan (Condon *et al.* 1996)
		Literature study	Harijoko *et al.* (2010; 2016)
3	Historical and archaeological remains	Literature study	Riyanto (2015; 2017), Tanudirjo *et al.* (2019), Sukronedi *et al.* (2018), Santiko (2013)
4	Toponyms and local wisdom	Literature study	Sukronedi *et al.* (2018), Lavigne *et al.* (2008)

Table 2 Landform Evolution: Four Stages of Analysis

Stages	Analysis Procedures
Stage 1	Describe all the geomorphologic aspects of existing landforms, including the morphology, materials, geomorphologic processes, genesis, climate, and tectonics, using the combined methods of King, Davis, Penck, and Verstappen (as explained in Huggett 2017; Pramono and Ashari 2014).
Stage 2	Interpret the genesis and development of landforms based on the concept of "the present is the key to the past," recognizing that current geomorphological conditions are the result of past processes. This process is supported by the interpretation of various types of rock formations in the study area.
Stage 3	Apply the basic concepts of geomorphology to ensure the accuracy of the interpretation.
Stage 4	Examine secondary data to confirm absolute dating. When this is not possible, determine chronological events by performing relative dating.

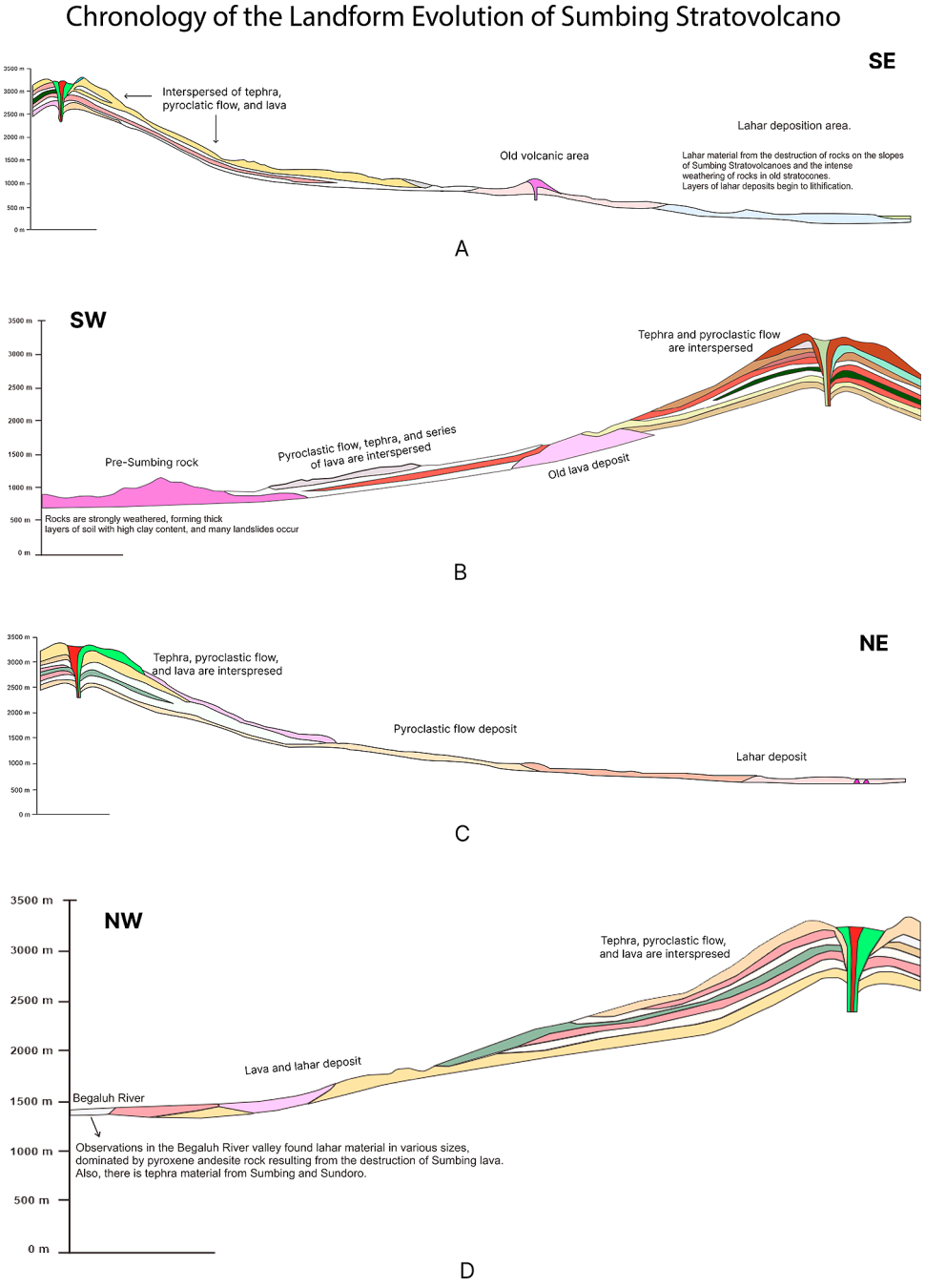

Fig. 3 Reconstruction of Paleoeruption Affecting the Evolution of Landforms in Sumbing Volcano. (A) SE side, (B) SW side, (C) NE side, and (D) NW side

Source: Sitorus *et al.* 1994

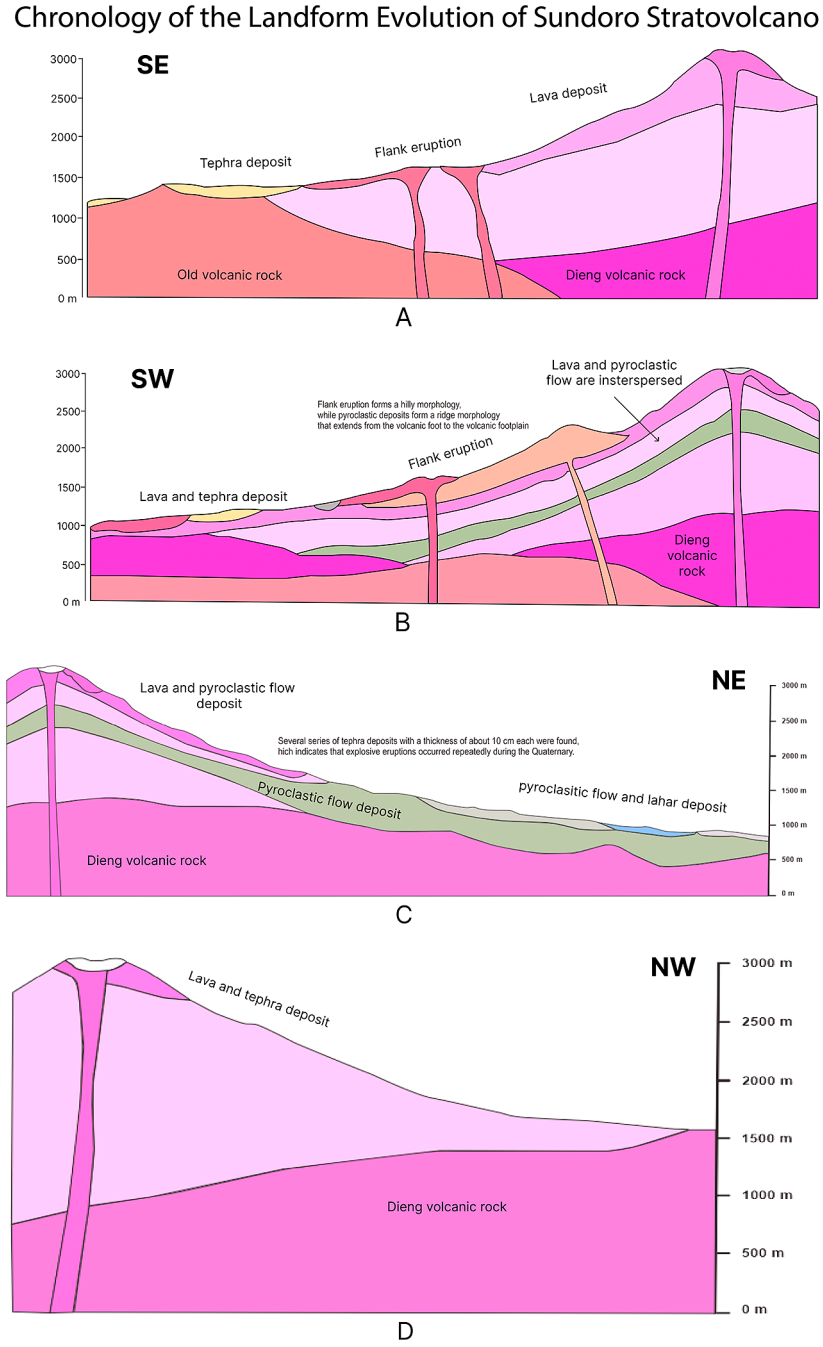

Fig. 4 Reconstruction of Paleoeruption Affecting the Evolution of Landforms in the Sundoro Volcano. (A) SE side, (B) SW side, (C) NE side, and (D) NW side

Source: Sukhyar *et al.* 1992

Results

1. *Physiographic Conditions and Paleogeographic Evolution of the Wonosobo Volcanic Area*

(1) Sumbing Stratovolcano

Sumbing is a stratovolcano in the southeast of the WVA with a height of 3,371 masl. According to the Center of Volcanology and Geological Disaster Mitigation (CVGDM) of the Republic Indonesia (2014a), the crater lip of the northeastern part of this volcano was destroyed by the eruption. It looks torn, or split, and hence was given the name Sumbing, meaning "chipped." The Cultural Heritage Conservation Center (locally known as BPCB) of Central Java Province provides a different explanation, wherein the name Sumbing comes from *Wukir Sumving*, which was the name for Sumbing Volcano in the Ancient Mataram era, as referenced in the Mantyasih I Inscription of 829 Çaka, or 907 CE (Sukronedi *et al.* 2018).

Sumbing is unique in that it has a perfect cone shape that is divided into three sectors, as explained by Verstappen (2013). These are: the cone (tip) as the first sector, the slope as the second sector, and the foot as the third sector. Each sector is distinguished by a break, or sudden change, in slope. Sumbing's constituent rocks are andesite, basalt, and dacite. The CVGDM (2014a) explains that Sumbing experienced an eruption in 1730 CE, which created a peak crater with a lava dome and lava flowed toward the lowest crater lip. Lavigne *et al.* (2008) confirm that: 1) the eruption in 1730 CE formed the lava dome that exists today and 2) a pyroclastic flow formed due to collapse in one part of the dome. According to Suhendro *et al*. (2024), Sumbing has experienced seven explosive eruptions. All eruptions occurred between 27.4 Ka and 1.1 Ka, meaning that there have been no major explosive eruptions in the last 9,000 years.

Sumbing's slopes exhibit complex physiographic conditions. The SE zone is formed by a protracted volcanism marked by a diverse array of eruptions. Tephra deposits are 30 meters thick and spread across the slope and foot sectors. Following the deposition of this tephra, a 25-meter-thick pyroclastic flow was deposited. The youngest material is a 12-meter-thick andesite lava flow that extends in a narrow strip. The evolution of the landform in the SE zone began with the emergence and activity of Mount Kekep during the first period of Sumbing activity. Subsequent volcanic activity formed Mount Giyanti and Mount Condong in a second period. Finally, the cone of Sumbing Stratovolcano was formed in the third period of activity. Overall, this zone was the most affected by the Sumbing eruption from the first period to the last (Fig. 3A).

Material on the SE slopes of Sumbing Volcano consists of lahars sourced from rock disintegration on the upper slopes of Sumbing and weathered rocks from various old stratovolcano units. Observations from various sample locations in the field indicate

that deposits from these various sources have mostly lithified, forming more solid and hard layers.

The SW zone of Sumbing was formed from explosive eruptions that produced tephra deposition and pyroclastic flows, preceded by effusive eruptions that produced andesite lava. This zone is relatively older than other parts of Sumbing's slopes. The chronology of landform evolution in this area is divided into three periods. The first period occurred during the transition between the Tertiary and the Quaternary periods of the Pleistocene Epoch and is marked by the formation of Potorono Hill. In the second period, Namu-Namu Lava was deposited. Finally, in the third period, multiple eruptions produced (in chronological order): pyroclastic flow, tephra, lava, another pyroclastic flow, and a lava deposit interrupted by the deposition of pyroclastic flow (Fig. 3B). Potorono Hill has experienced advanced weathering. Field observations establish that rock weathering in this area has formed thick layers of sticky and clay-like soil and relatively rare rock outcrops. This advanced soil layer significantly affects the geomorphic processes on Potorono Hill, causing numerous mass movement events, especially of the slide type.

The rocks in the NE zone of Sumbing demonstrate that the eruptions have been dominated by explosive events interspersed with effusive periods that resulted in the deposition of lava material. This zone is generally related to the youngest activity of Sumbing, in which tephra and pyroclastic flows are interspersed with lava. This zone exhibits ideal stratovolcano conditions (Sutikno *et al.* 2007; Verstappen 2013), where lava deposition is limited to the volcanic cone area, pyroclastic deposition extends to the volcanic slopes, and the lowest foot sector is filled with lava deposits (Fig. 3C).

The NW zone of Sumbing also exhibits the distinct characteristics of a composite volcano formed by alternating explosive and effusive eruptions. Explosive eruptions are marked by ash-lapili-sized tephra material and pyroclastic flows, while the effusive eruptions are marked by lava flows. The lithology of this zone is quite complex, consisting of lava deposits, pyroclastic flows, and tephra. The pyroclastic flow deposits are 25 meters thick and are 27,400 (± 550) years old, while the lava deposits are 20 meters thick. Interestingly, there are 5-meter-thick tephra deposits from Sundoro at the volcanic foot. All volcanic activity in this zone is from the third period of Sumbing and is therefore young (Fig. 3D).

Our findings from observations in the Begaluh River valley, on the northeast side of Sumbing Volcano, indicate scattered lahar material of various sizes, predominantly composed of andesite rocks. Because this river serves as the drainage system for the junction of Sumbing and Sundoro stratovolcanoes, the lava material found in the valley are products of the eruptions of these two volcanoes. The lahar deposits are dominated by light gray disintegrated pyroxene andesite from Sumbing. Additionally, there is also

smaller-grained disintegrated pumice material with sharp edges, from both Sumbing and Sundoro.

In the absence of eruption data during the post-colonial era, it can be assumed that most eruption events occurred before this period. Lithological and stratigraphic evidence demonstrates that volcanic activity took place over a long period and impacted different zones of the cone, slope, and foot of Sumbing differently. The earliest volcanic event formed rocks in one specific zone (the SE), as did the last volcanic event (in the NW zone). A parasitic cone at the foot of Sumbing is the center of distinct volcanic activity that is older than the Sumbing Volcano itself, instead of a flank eruption.

Radial valleys have formed on the slopes and foot of Sumbing. Valley morphometry is characterized by deep valley bottoms and steep valley slopes. These radial valleys are found on all sides of the volcano, indicating that the denudation process has taken place towards the Sumbing cone structure. The intensive denudation process is evidence that the volcanism process no longer balances the denudation process; thus, the morphology of the stratovolcano cone is modified by the formation of radial valleys. This process increases the risks of erosion, sedimentation, and mass movement events, which are now of more concern than volcanic eruptions.

The geological map of Sumbing Volcano (Sitorus *et al.* 1994) shows how these hazards have changed. Eruptions were a threat in very ancient periods, as indicated by the presence of aged pyroclastic materials and lava. Meanwhile, the youngest materials are colluvium and alluvium, which do not interleave with volcanic products and are products of denudation processes caused by exogenous forces. Thick layers of colluvium and alluvium material are the result of long-standing erosion-deposition processes and mass movement events, both of which have threatened the human population over the past few centuries.

The paleogeographic evolution of Sumbing Volcano can be outlined as follows: a stratovolcano morphology was constructed during the Quaternary period, followed by the destruction of this morphology by exogenous forces of the wet tropical climate, a process that has increased since the last eruption in 1730 CE. Morphological development in Sumbing began with pre-Sumbing volcanism in the southeast and southwest, followed by the formation of stratovolcano morphology through a series of alternating effusive and explosive eruptions. Since the last volcanic eruption, a denudation process has begun that continues today. Compared to other volcanic units in the WVA, Sumbing Volcano is the most denuded.

(2) Sundoro Stratovolcano

Sundoro is just northwest of Sumbing and close enough that the two are referred to as twin stratovolcanoes by Lavigne *et al.* (2008). Sundoro has a height of 3,153 masl, with

a perfect cone shape known as one of the most symmetrical morphologies on Java Island. Its concave slope is divided into three sectors bounded by slope notches, which are commonly found in stratovolcano morphology. Some of the local community refer to Sundoro as Sindoro, while the ancient name referenced in the Mantyasih I Inscription is Wukir Susundara (Sukronedi *et al.* 2018).

Sundoro has a history of more eruptions than Sumbing. According to the CVGDM (2014b), eleven major eruptions occurred between 1806 and 1970. These eruptions tended to produce ash rain, material throwing, and lava flows a short distance from the eruption center, whether that was the main crater of Sundoro or the parasitic cone of Mount Kembang. The last increase in volcanic activity occurred from 2011–12. According to Prambada *et al*. (2016), Sundoro experienced 12 major eruptions, referred to as eruptive groups, ranging from 33,619 cal BP (~34 Ka) to the last at 515–453 cal BP. The CVGDM has established an observation post to monitor the volcanic activity of the twin stratovolcanoes, but considering the greater threat of Sundoro compared to Sumbing, the post is on the northeast side of the foot of Sundoro. Few locals are aware of the potential hazards of the volcano because the phreatic eruptions that occur periodically in the Sundoro crater are too small for the residents to notice (Lavigne *et al.* 2008).

Sundoro is composed of the same main rocks as Sumbing, with the exception of dacite, which is absent. Examination of the geological map of Sundoro Volcano (Sukhyar *et al.* 1992) produces two important findings. First, tephra material is widely and evenly distributed throughout Sundoro's slopes. This is evidence that the explosive eruptions that occurred in the main crater spread out evenly and were not directed at a certain zone. In addition, there are 1,720-year-old pyroclastic deposits in all zones of Sundoro's slopes. Second, material from the Sundoro eruptions is also distributed across a large area of the slopes of Sumbing. This indicates that these two nearby volcanoes experienced different periods of activity. Sumbing was active first and was no longer significantly active when Sundoro was at the peak of its activity.

Exogenous-induced geomorphic processes in Sundoro predate those in Sumbing. Radial valleys are not significant on the slopes or feet of Sundoro. In other words, the Sundoro stratovolcano cone has not been modified much by the formation of radial valleys due to exogenous forces. Morphometrically, the radial valleys that have been formed do not have deep valley floors or steep slopes as in Sumbing. This condition is due to Sundoro's recent volcanic activity, which balances the effects of the denudation process. Given this geomorphic status, Sundoro still faces the threat of eruption while Sumbing faces threats of erosion, mass movement events, and sedimentation.

The physiographic conditions of each Sundoro slope are as complex as Sumbing. The SE zone of the Sundoro cone is based on a foundation of Dieng volcanic rock. Activity

in this area is characterized by repeating effusive and explosive eruptions. A series of four lava flow deposits is interspersed with tephra deposits. On the SE slope, lava deposits are covered by a layer of tephra that is more than 8 meters thick. Meanwhile, in the SE foot, lava deposits (as the oldest material) are buried by 1,720-year-old pyroclastic flow deposits that are more than 4 meters thick (Fig. 4A).

The SW zone of Sundoro is based on a foundation of Dieng volcanic rocks and old Pagerluhur rocks. This zone was formed by a central eruption and three subsequent flank eruptions. The first flank eruption formed the Watu Parasitic Cone, the second formed the Kembang Parasitic Cone, and the third formed the Kekep Parasitic Cone. Therefore, the overall geochronology of this area is characterized by the formation of the main volcanic cone and subsequent parasitic cones. Following the formation of the main cone, magma activity broke through its slope to form parasitic cones. The first magma breakthrough caused the flank eruption that formed Mount Kembang. After it was formed, Mount Kembang underwent a breakthrough that formed Mount Kekep. The last breakthrough formed Mount Watu. Mount Kembang is an active parasitic cone that produces lava material and ash rain (Fig. 4B). Field observations revealed various parasitic cones on the southwest side of Sundoro that form a distinctive hill morphology not found in other parts of Sundoro Stratovolcano. Similarly, the deposits of a 1,720-year-old pyroclastic flow form an elongated edge morphology from the volcano's foot to the volcanic foot plain in a certain part of the southwest zone of Sundoro.

The NE zone of Sundoro is also formed from alternating explosive and effusive eruptions. Explosive eruptions are marked by the presence of widespread tephra deposits and pyroclastic flows that form thick deposits, especially on the slopes. Effusive eruptions are marked by several lava deposits and lava domes that dominate the volcanic cone area. On the NE slope and foot, we find rock outcrops with pyroclastic flow and tephra material deposition, around the Liyangan Site. This material buried the Ancient Village of Liyangan and thus, the eruption is assumed to have occurred later than the eighth century (Fig. 4C). Observations conducted at the Liyangan Site, in the transition area between the volcanic foot and slope, yielded findings of several outcrops indicating tephra layering. This suggests that the tephra material encompassing the entire NE side of Sundoro, as indicated on the geological map (Sukhyar *et al.* 1992), is a product of explosive eruptions that occurred repeatedly during the Quaternary period. This is further indicated by the tephra's thickness, which is approximately 10 cm in each layer.

The width of the NW side of Sundoro is limited by the structure of the Telerejo volcano to the north. The NW zone was formed by a lava-dominant deposition, which formed lava bands that flowed north until colliding with the Telerejo morphology and then flowing northeast. Meanwhile, the pyroclastic flow moved towards the northwest and was deflected

by Telerejo's morphology. The geochronology in this zone is therefore mostly related to lava flows. The morphology of the base of the volcano has not developed because it is directly adjacent to the Telerejo volcano and forms a plain between the volcanoes (Fig. 4D).

As a stratovolcano, Sundoro's evolution is comparable Sumbing's in that it also experienced the formation of stratovolcano morphology followed by endogenous force destruction. However, the evolution in Sundoro differs from Sumbing in at least two respects. First, the landform evolution in Sundoro did not begin with a pre-Sundoro eruption, like the eruption that formed Potorono Hill on Sumbing. Instead, the various parasitic cones present are products of flank eruptions that interleaved the stratovolcano morphology through alternating explosive and effusive eruptions. Second, this volcano remains relatively active and its explosive-effusive eruption activity is the most recent in the WVA compared to Sumbing and Dieng. Therefore, this volcano is the least denuded. Erosion and mass movements are minimal, and as a result, the formation of radial valleys is relatively limited compared to other volcanic units in the WVA.

(3) Dieng Volcanic Complex (DVC)

The DVC is a prominent volcanic complex in Indonesia and it occupies the northwestern quarter of the WVA. Verstappen (2013) explains that the DVC is a group of small to medium-sized volcanic features that developed in the caldera of an old volcano. The caldera frame is formed from the ruins of the southern slope of Mount Prahu. This structure was previously interpreted as a caldera with only its northern part remaining. However, since the DVC is located above the intersection of faults, it is possible that this arc structure was formed due to a volcano-tectonic collapse. The most recent Holocene volcanic activity was experienced in the southern part of this caldera cliff. Young and active volcanoes in the Dieng complex have produced a variety of volcanic landforms, including eruption craters, tuff ring craters, scoria cones, small stratovolcanoes, and lava flows. In general, eruptions in this area vary from explosive to effusive and phreatic (Verstappen 2013; Harijoko *et al.* 2016).

The DVC consists of 12 volcanic units and four volcanic units bordering the DVC. Prahu, which is 3.6 Ma, is the oldest volcano in the complex, followed by Nagasari (2.99 Ma), Bisma (2.53 Ma), Pangonan–Merdada (0.37 Ma), Kendil (0.19 Ma), Pakuwaja (0.13 Ma), and Seroja (0.07 Ma). Volcanic activity in the DVC is generally divided into three stages, namely the pre-collapse episode, the second episode, and the youngest episode. The pre-collapse episode is represented by several stratovolcanoes on the edge of the DVC, namely Prahu, Telerejo, Sidede, Bisma, Nagasari, and Jimat. All these stratovolcanoes consist of pyroclastic deposits and lava flows (Verstappen 2013; Harijoko *et al.* 2016). Telerejo and Bisma have open craters towards the south. According to

Bronto *et al.* (2014), the open horseshoe crater of Bisma Volcano is a symptom of the collapse of one of the stratovolcano's slopes.

In the second episode, namely Pangonan-Merdada, Bucu, and Pagerkandang created several stratocones and covered the caldera with volcanic products. The activity of this second episode is believed to be the main source of the Dieng tephra, which covers the Dieng and Batur depressions. Furthermore, the youngest episode, in the southeast area of the DVC, created several volcanic cones, including Seroja, Prambanan, Sikunir, Pakuwaja, and Kendil. Recent activity in the DVC is marked by phreatic explosive events. Several volcanic events recorded since the eighteenth century occurred in geothermal areas such as Sileri, Pakuwaja, Sikidang, and Candradimuka (Harijoko *et al.* 2016). Geomorphologically, the slopes of the oldest stratocone units, formed during the first episode, have significantly eroded, resulting in wide and deep radial valleys. Prahu and Bisma Volcano, the two oldest units, clearly exhibit denudation processes. Meanwhile, younger stratocone units, especially those composed of hard lava like Pakuwaja, still maintain their morphology and are unaffected by erosion.

The volcanic activity in the DVC has been both explosive and effusive. Currently, the geomorphic process in Dieng is dominated by exogenous denudation on various volcanic structures. Observations in the area of Bisma and Seroja volcanoes attest that the denudation process has begun to strengthen, leading to the formation of deep radial valleys, especially in Bisma, which is older. Thick alluvium, formed from the deposition of weathered material eroded off the caldera slopes, is found in Bisma's horseshoe crater. The denudation process has also begun in the younger Seroja volcano, marked by the occurrence of mass movement events. In addition, a deposit of debris in one of the sectors of Bisma volcano is formed from parts of the volcano's body that collapsed during an eruption.

On the slope and the foot of Prahu Volcano that have subsided, lava material from the activity of Prahu was buried by the Dieng tephra. When this happened, tephra deposits began to be heavily layered by alluvium eroded from the volcanic slopes. Likewise, tephra material and lava, some of which is extremely weathered, are found throughout the Pagerkandang, Prambanan, Sikunir, and Pakuwaja areas. Materials from the volcanic activity of Pangonan and Merdada are currently eroding in the Pangonan Volcano area and are being deposited as alluvium in the Dieng Depression.

The Dieng Volcanic Complex (DVC) is a different volcanic unit compared to Sumbing and Sundoro. The DVC is not a single stratovolcano, but rather a volcanic complex containing dozens of small to medium-sized stratocones. As a volcanic complex, the landscape evolution also differs from the other two units. Landform evolution in the DVC began with the formation of several stratocone units in one area. Subsequently, a volcano-

tectonic process occurred, causing subsidence on one of the stratocone slopes, a phenomenon not found in other volcanic units of the WVA. The stratocones then experienced explosive eruptions, forming a crater morphology. Finally, effusive eruptions resulted in massive stratocone units. All these processes occurred before human habitation. At present, denudation processes dominate the landscape. Because the stratocone units have different ages, the impact of denudation on modifying the stratocone slopes also varies. Older stratocones tend to be more eroded because they have undergone advanced weathering and have been exposed to denudation influences for a long time, even though they are composed of an immense amount of lava. Because mass movement events and erosion now dominate the DVC, the local population is more familiar with these processes, rather than volcanism, as threats.

2. *The Impact of Paleogeographic Evolution on Ancient Life in the Wonosobo Volcanic Area*

(1) A Brief History of the Ancient Mataram Kingdom and the Three Sacred Volcanoes

The oldest evidence of an Ancient Mataram kingdom is widely believed to be the Canggal Inscription dated 732 CE, which documents the establishment of a linga on Sthirangga Hill and the name of Sanjaya as ruler (Poerbatjaraka 1951; Poesponegoro and Notosusanto 2010; Santiko 2013). Sanjaya's name is an important indication of the existence of Ancient Mataram because the name is related to the identity of the region in the Mantyasih I Inscription of 907 CE. The name Medang (or Mdang) was used interchangeably with Mataram in inscriptions, and both names were referred to in the Bujangga Manik manuscript of the late sixteenth century (Noorduyn 2019).

The spread of archeological findings from the Ancient Mataram period in Central Java points to the plains of Kedu and Kuwu (Prambanan), which are surrounded by mountains, as the center of the civilization. This region became the core area of a government supported by the peripheries. The core area included the villages (wanua) and the larger administrative regions (watak) of Merapi, Merbabu, Sundoro, and Sumbing, where there were many sacred buildings. This core area was supported by the wanua and watak around Mount Dieng, Ungaran, and the southern hills, which were important peripheral areas (Tjahjono 2008; Degroot 2009).

Sanjaya is considered to be the early ruler of the ancient kingdom of Mataram in Central Java. However, several other inscriptions from the eighth and ninth centuries refer to Sailendra as the ruler as well as a dynasty in ancient Mataram.[2)] Regardless of

2) These include: the Sojomerto Inscription of 725 CE, the Kalasan Inscription of 778 CE, the Kelurak Inscription of 782 CE, the Abhayagiriwihara Inscription of 792 CE, the Karangtengah Inscription of 824 CE, the Kayumwangan Inscription of 824 CE, and the Nalanda Inscription of the middle of the ninth century.

whether there was one or two dynasties in Ancient Mataram in the Central Java period, the names of the rulers, emperors, and rulers of autonomous regions from the inscriptions demonstrate that the territory under their control spread across the Kedu-Kuwu plain. The Kedu plain lies between the present-day Sumbing and Sundoro stratovolcanoes, and included the interconnected territories of Garung, Wungkalhumalang (or Watuhumalang), and Patapan. Thus, the Ancient Mataram kingdom first emerged in the seventh-eighth centuries from the Kedu region (Lombard 1996a). Indeed, as Boechari (2012) explains, a road through the Kledung gap once connected the Kedu plain with Wonosobo, penetrating Garung and Dieng to reach the north coast.

According to the sixteenth-century manuscript Tantu Panggelaran, Mount Dieng was an important holy place where Bhatara Guru went to meditate and ask Lord Brahma and Vishnu to bless residents. Dieng is interpreted as a mountain area where the gods reside (Lombard 1996b). The name Dieng, whose original form is Di Hyang, symbolizes the Sanskrit word Devälaya, which means "the abode of the gods" (Coedès 1975). Zoetmulder (1983) mentions the mountains as places with actively inhabited villages close to holy buildings/hermitages during the Hindu-Buddhist period. The names of Mount Dieng (or Diheng), Sindara (or Sundara/Sundoro), and Kedu (Sumbing) are also mentioned in the late fifteenth-century literary work Bujangga Manik as inhabited holy places (Noorduyn 2019).

These three sacred mountains, Dieng-Sundoro-Sumbing, are also recorded in the Kuti Inscription of 840 CE. In this inscription, the name Śataśṛngga is referenced, which may be close to Dieng. Śataśṛngga is also referenced in the Tĕlang II, or Wanagiri II, Inscription of 904 CE, as well as Randusari I, or Poh, Inscription of 905 CE, as the burial place of an emperor, or "mahārāja lumāḥ ing çataçṛngga." In the Mahabarata epic, Satrasrengga (or Saptaarga) is the hermitage of Begawan Wiyasa. The portrayal of the mountainous region as a place of sacred buildings as well as inhabited villages is supported by the Randusari I Inscription, which refers to the guardian of the sacred building Marhyang in the village of Sima and the guardian of the emperor's sacred territory in Çataçṛngga (Stutterheim 1940; Suhadi and Soekarto 1986; Poesponegoro and Notosusanto 2010).

(2) Signs of Ancient Life Impacted by Paleogeographic Evolution

Sumbing has not experienced eruption activity, either explosive or effusive, for hundreds of years. Today, Sumbing's volcanic activity consists of gas emissions limited to the crater area. Although the only recorded eruption in history is the lava flow that occurred around the peak crater, this does not mean that Sumbing's volcanic activity since the Ancient Mataram era has not had a significant impact on human life. In the case of Sumbing, impacts have been caused by the denudation of the stratovolcano morphology, instead of

volcanic eruptions.

There are fewer traces of archaeological remains in the Sumbing region than in other regions of the WVA. Various archaeological findings are concentrated in the NE zone of Sumbing, which is close to the center of Ancient Mataram in the Kedu/Progo Valley area. The archaeological sites include the following temples and temple complexes: Selogriyo, Batur, Wonokerso, Brongkol, Pikatan, and Gondosuli. Findings from these sites are essentially a part, or a continuation, of findings from sites in the Sundoro region. The only archaeological site found outside the NE zone of Sumbing is Rong cave, in the SE zone.

Of the temple findings, Selogriyo Temple has been restored and the superstructure remains intact, although the foundation is misshapen. This is evidence that the area has not experienced severe affects from drastic natural processes. Although the height of the temple is relatively close to Sumbing's, the structure remains relatively intact in all parts. No part of the temple was lost in the main Sumbing eruption, as happened at several sites in the Sundoro region and the Asu Temple Complex at the foot of Merapi, which is far east of the WVA (Ashari 2013). Giyanti Massif, a nearby old and inactive volcano, has played a role in protecting Selogriyo Temple from Sumbing's eruptions. Batur Temple, which is on one of the peaks of Giyanti Massif, is not buried by volcanic material and retains its foundation, although the top of the peak has been flattened to form a wide space.

Gondosuli Temple Complex spans hundreds of kilometers and contains temples that are not in situ. Findings in the complex include a sculpture of a bull, a large yoni, nine stone pedestals, and the Gondosuli Inscription dated 827 CE. The Gondosuli Temple site is currently located slightly lower than the surrounding land, but it is not significantly buried. Various former temple components are buried by the deposition of alluvial sediments because the complex is at the foot of the volcano, where eroded material from the upper slopes tends to deposit. Meanwhile, only ruins and traces of foundations remain of the other three temples, namely Wonokerso, Brongkol, and Pikatan. However, there have never been any reports or findings indicating that the destruction of these temple structures is due to an eruption. In summary, the archaeological sites in the Sumbing area do not exhibit damage due to the impact of explosive eruptions, but rather, due to the dynamics of the exogenous processes such as erosion and deposition of alluvial material.

Unlike Sumbing, Sundoro is the most active among all volcanic landform units in the WVA. Although present activity is not substantial compared to, for example, Merapi Stratovolcano, which 56 km to the east, Sundoro is the volcano to have experienced the most recent explosive eruption in the WVA. Sundoro has not only experienced a major eruptions centered on the main crater, but also flank eruptions that produced parasitic cones. Thus, the evolution of landforms by volcanism potentially influenced human life

during the Ancient Mataram period in numerous ways.

Tephra material and pyroclastic flow have been deposited evenly throughout the Sundoro area for the past 1,720 years. At the same time, a pyroclastic flow in the northern zone descended the northern slope and was diverted NE when it was blocked by the Telerejo volcano structure. The volcanism process that deposited tephra material, pyroclastic flows, and lava continued until the period of lava dome formation, which marked the end of magmatic activity 1,480 thousand years ago. The volcanic activity that affected the entirety of Sundoro at that time possibly influenced the ancient settlements that had developed in the surrounding area.

Many archaeological remains, especially temple ruins, have been found in the area of Sundoro, with the northeast zone yielding the richest archaeological remains. At least fourteen archaeological sites from the Ancient Mataram era have been found in this zone. Archaeological remains are also found in other zones, but are more limited in number. These include Bongkotan Temple in the SW zone and the ancient Tlahab Road in the SE zone. Most temple ruins consist only of foundations, temple stones, or sculptures. Pringapus Temple, at a height of 956 m on the NE slope of Sundoro, is the only temple that has been restored up to the superstructure. On the other hand, Perot Temple, which was only 300 m from Pringapus, has disappeared (Degroot 2009).

Most remaining temple foundations are now lower than the surface of the surrounding land, except Gunung Pertapan Temple, which is on a hill. This positioning, together with the intact temple ruin findings, indicate the possibility that the temples were damaged by eruptive material. As a comparison, the Pendem Temple on the NW side of Merapi Volcano was found after excavating eruptive material to a depth of 2 meters. The excavation yielded the foundation and the foot of the temple while the structure above it had been destroyed and the material scattered nearby. Sambisari Temple in the southeast foothills of Merapi is also lower than the surrounding land but has been reconstructed up to the superstructure.

The Liyangan Site on the northwest side of Sundoro is the finding that most demonstrates the impact of volcanism on life in Ancient Mataram. The Liyangan Site is a proxy for the possibility that similar phenomena also occurred in other zones or sectors of Sundoro. This is supported by the geological fact that tephra material and pyroclastic deposits of the last generation, as found in Liyangan, are also spread across all zones and sectors of Sundoro. The conditions at the Liyangan Site reinforce suspicions that damage to temples in the Sundoro area were caused by material impact from the eruption. Meanwhile, the temple damage due to eruptive material is evidence that past life in this area was affected by volcanic eruptions (Fig. 5A).

Liyangan, or Liangan, was an ancient village with settlement areas, agriculture, and

Fig. 5 Archaeological Sites Buried by Geomorphological Product Materials. (A) Tephra deposits and pyroclastic density current (PDC) bury Liyangan Ancient Village. (B) Alluvium sediments cover the Dieng Temple Complex

Source: Field observation, 2022

a culture based on Hindu worship that developed from the second to the ninth centuries, from pre-Hindu times to the glory of Ancient Mataram (Riyanto 2015; 2017). Liyangan was covered with pyroclastic material from eruptions of Sundoro. Excavation of pyroclastic material has yielded Batur, worship altars, stones, *petirtaan* (waters), and burnt wooden buildings (Riyanto 2015; Tanudirjo *et al.* 2019). Eight temples were found within a 10 km radius of Liyangan, some with complete structures and others only with remaining stones and sculptures (Degroot 2017). The Liyangan Site area contains two types of rocks, namely, tephra and pyroclastic flow. The brownish-yellow tephra material consists of scoria and lithic fragments with substantial andesite composition; it is extremely weathered and buries the lower part of the temple in Liyangan. Meanwhile, the material that buried the upper part of the temple is a rather dark gray pyroclastic flow deposit consisting of breadcrust bomb fragments with an andesitic composition; this material contains charcoal that is 1,720 years old (Nurnusanto 2014).

The DVC, from a historical perspective, is the starting point of the development of the Ancient Mataram civilization. Traces of ancient life in the DVC region can be identified based on the existence of temples built in the period from 730–750 CE (Harriyadi 2019). Dieng Temple is the main relic of life in this zone. This temple consists of several complexes scattered in the Dieng basin, including six temple units. The temples of the Arjuna group (Dwarawati, Gatotkaca, and Bima) have been restored (Degroot 2009), as well as Setyaki Temple in the west. In addition to temples, there are numerous other archaeological remains in the DVC, including ancient roads, sculptures, former building structures, water channels, inscriptions, pottery fragments, ceramic fragments, and metal objects (Harriyadi 2019).

The six temples in the Dieng Temple Complex are spread across the Dieng basin,

an inter-stratocone basin that is popularly considered a plateau. Although the stratocone around the Dieng Temple Complex experienced an explosive eruption that produced Dieng tephra, this occurred before the temples were built. The temples were therefore damaged by other factors. Some temple ruins were found buried by alluvial material, instead of tephra (such as on the west side of the Arjuna Temple Complex and the Kunthi Temple Site that was newly discovered in 2020). The excavated ruins and temples were positioned about two meters lower than the surrounding land, evidence that the landform evolution that occurred in the Dieng region has greatly impacted human life. However, rather than explosive volcanic eruptions, it is the denudation process that has affected human life in this zone. The rapid erosion and mass movement events on the stratocone slopes during the past thirteen centuries have contributed to the transfer of large amounts of material to the foot of the stratocone and the basin, thus burying the temples (Fig. 5B).

The landform denudation cannot be separated from the climate of the Dieng region, which is characterized by high rainfall and therefore can accelerate weathering and trigger erosion and mass movement. In addition, locals have carried out forest exploration for centuries. Following limited utilization of forests in the previous four centuries, the development of the ancient civilization from the eighth to the thirteenth century contributed to the opening of forests for settlements. Contemporaneous to the construction of the temples, intensive forest exploration transformed primary forests to secondary forests (Harriyadi 2019). This increased rainwater runoff, which flowed into the basin and deposited sediment. A water channel at what is currently known as the Gangsiran Aswatama Site was constructed to reduce the amount of water entering the basin. When this channel failed to work due to a massive accumulation of sediments, the Dieng Basin flooded. The presence of one-meter-thick peat on the surface of the Dieng Basin is an indicator of the waterlogging that has occurred for a long time. Interestingly, in the Balekambang Reservoir area south of the Arjuna Temple Complex, there are lake deposits that date to the fifth century (Luthfian 2014). This indicates that sedimentation in the Dieng Basin may have been occurring since the beginning of the limited forest opening, in the fourth century.

Numerous clearly identifiable archaeological remains exist in the Dieng area, including temple structures, ancient roads, and ancient drainage channels. Some of these are on the stratocone slopes, an indicator that the remains were not damaged by an explosive eruption. Nevertheless, ancient life in this zone was impacted by denudation caused by exogenous forces. In the face of the natural paleogeographic evolution, inhabitants have recognized the changing characteristics of the surrounding environment and adapted. This indicates a human-environment or human-landscape interaction that produces ways of life and adaptation as socio-cultural products.

Inhabitants' adaptation to the paleogeographic evolution of the DVC, in particular, is evident. Among the various temples in this complex, Arjuna Temple was the first to be built. Its Indian architectural style is characterized by a low foundation and high temple feet. Interestingly, the temples built after Arjuna have higher foundations and shorter feet. Thus, the inhabitants adapted by altering the temple architecture to avoid waterlogging, which became common in this area, as explained above.

Discussion

The human settlements of Ancient Mataram, which endured for centuries, were affected by several Sundoro eruptions before migrating to lower areas in the Progo Valley and then to East Java. The findings of this study support Andreastuti *et al.* (2006), who put forward the idea that the end of the Ancient Mataram civilization in Central Java was the result of numerous volcanic eruptions rather than a single big eruption.

This study also finds that the evolution of landforms in volcanic environments is not only influenced by volcanic eruptions, but also by land denudation caused by exogenous processes that occur in volcanic morphology. While the impact of such exogenous processes is not as substantial as that from a volcanic eruption, accumulated impacts over a long period of time can create obstacles to human livelihoods such that people are encouraged to migrate and rebuild in new locations. Deforestation that occurred over centuries in the DVC (Harriyadi 2019), for example, caused rapid sedimentation in the basin area, which had become the center of the Mataram civilization. Humans responded by leaving the area because the environment was no longer livable. This finding is consistent with previous studies of other landscapes (Ghilardi *et al.* 2017; Lu *et al.* 2019; Wang and He 2022; Zhang *et al.* 2022), which find that when the environmental conditions of an area are no longer suitable, the civilization there begins to decline.

The evolution of volcanic landforms, especially via an eruption process, does not always have a negative impact on human life or precipitate the decline of a civilization. Although the long record of the influence of volcanism on human life deals with eruption disasters (Doocy *et al.* 2013), many studies detail how volcanism also creates opportunities (see for example Grattan 2006). Several studies on modern Indonesia confirm that societies can enjoy various long-term benefits from intermittent eruptions (Lavigne *et al.* 2008; Bachri *et al.* 2015) and that people do not necessarily view eruptions as a threat, but rather as events that will lead to changes for the better (Dove 2008; Donovan 2010). This study finds no evidence of benefits to ancient life from the evolution of volcanic landscapes in the WVA, but rather evidence of various processes inhibiting life in the area.

Explosive volcanic eruptions in the WVA occurred long before human habitation, except in the case of Sundoro Stratovolcano, where it has been proven that eruptions buried ancient settlements from the second century. Nevertheless, these volcanic activities had a positive impact on the availability of land, biological, and water resources that were essential for the livelihoods of past populations. Volcanic activity affects soil conditions, vegetation, and climate, and thus shaped the environment of these past inhabitants.

Records of land and vegetation conditions during the medieval period in Sumbing, Sundoro, and Dieng remain extremely limited. This study is not supported by a paleoenvironmental reconstruction that examines pollen grains, which serve as indicators of past vegetation conditions. However, examinations conducted by Harriyadi (2019) indicate that the volcanic lands of the WVA were largely covered by tropical forests in the Hindu-Buddhist period. Van Steenis (2010), based on observations of the Java Mountains in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, explains that low-lying areas were mostly covered by tropical forests, while highland areas were covered by elfin forests. The presence of forests, and the biological resources available within them, became the main support for the development of civilization in this area.

Volcanic eruptions produce thick layers of soils with high fertility. Additionally, the soil is easy to cultivate and thus supports agricultural activity to meet food needs. An inscription found in Dieng from the year 776 CE refers to the establishment of rice fields in this area and agricultural activity was present in the ancient village of Liyangan during the second century (Riyanto 2015; 2017). Volcanic eruptions in the short term can trigger climate anomalies, as evidenced by several volcanoes in Indonesia, such as Tambora and Krakatoa. However, due to the scarcity of information regarding the paleoenvironment, it is still unknown how the characteristics of past climates relate to volcanic eruptions, which subsequently affect human life.

Conclusion

Human life, from the ancient past to the present, cannot be separated from the surrounding environmental conditions. While the impacts of volcanism have been studied in terms of single catastrophic eruptions, we examine the long-term evolution of the volcanic landscape. Studies of three main volcano units in the Wonosobo Volcanic Area demonstrate that the evolution of volcanoes has influenced life since the Ancient Mataram era, both through eruptions and denudation of the volcanic morphological structure.

In the Sundoro Stratovolcano area, which was still experiencing activity in the time of Ancient Mataram, volcanic eruptions were disastrous, with evidence of at least one

settlement buried. But in the Sumbing and DVC areas, which have been inactive for two-three centuries, the impact of volcanism on human life is not as apparent. Instead, the denudation process, exacerbated by the climate conditions, is more influential, as evidenced by various archaeological relics that are buried in alluvial material. Anthropogenic footprints in the form of changing land use have accelerated denudation since ancient times, causing humans to adapt by changing the way they build temples and migrating.

While we have created a volcanic landform evolution chronology, future studies are highly recommended to analyze the chronology based on absolute dating, which can be counter-referenced with the historical data of ancient inscriptions. Overall, we hope that this study improves understanding of the impact of volcanic landform evolution on human life and on human-environment interaction on a long temporal scale.

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Traditional Chinese Medicine and Tiger Beliefs: Tracing an Animist-Analogist Transition in China and Vietnam

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Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) is often considered the main driver of the declining number of increasingly rare animals (including tigers, rhinos and pangolins), although there is little biomedical evidence supporting the usage of animal products from these species. What, then, are the underlying cultural and ontological factors driving demand for them? Based on published sources on Chinese (Han) and Vietnamese (Kinh) tiger lore and culture as well as anthropological fieldwork among the Katu and related Katuic-speaking groups, this paper analyzes how the tiger has been viewed over time in Vietnam and China, two core demand areas for animal-based traditional medicines, and compares "high-culture" and rural perceptions in the Sino-Vietnamese region. Tentatively, the paper reveals a transition from a view of the tiger as a divinity or powerful spirit towards a more material and instrumental (magical) perception in more recent iterations of the TCM complex. Heuristically using Descola's typology of ontologies, the paper attempts a holistic analysis of this perceptional and conceptual transformation, interpreting it as a movement along an animism-analogism continuum.

Keywords: animism, analogism, ontology, tiger bone, Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), tiger spirit, Katu, Vietnamese folklore, Chinese folklore

Introduction

Approximately four thousand wild tigers remain in the world today, a decline of 96 percent compared to one century ago. During the last seven decades at least, this decline has been fueled primarily by demand for the animal from China, countries with large ethnic Chinese communities, or countries strongly influenced by ideas from Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM). According to the Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA), these countries are now also driving trade in animal parts from leopards, African lions, and jaguars, with parts of these big cats "being passed off as tiger." Tibetan traditional elites

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were once big consumers of such items, but the EIA claims that the leading consumers are now China's elite. According to the EIA, "bones, teeth and claws [from the tiger] are also very much in demand and trafficked by the same criminal networks dealing in other big cats, pangolin scales, bear gall bladder, ivory, rhino horn, musk deer pods and red sandalwood from south Asia into China."[1)]

Evidently, insatiable demand in East- and Southeast Asia for traditional medicine, notably substances derived from tiger bone, is the major driver of the near extinction of the wild tiger. Why do people believe that tiger bone contains healing and empowering properties and why is this belief so widely spread and deeply entrenched in Chinese culture—and in other countries influenced by Sinitic civilization? These and related questions are the issues addressed in this paper.[2)]

I suggest that at least a beginning of an answer is to be found in the mindset, or ontological character, of the Sino-Vietnamese civilization. The French anthropologist Philippe Descola (2013) refers to this ontological type as "analogism," owing to its strong emphasis on analogical thinking, or the notion that the cosmos is a coherent whole integrated by the symbolic associations and correspondences among its constituent elements.[3)] Another characteristic of analogism is the pervasiveness of what I call magical causation, or the notion that nature's forces may be harnessed and directed by human agency. These features distinguish analogism from other ontologies such as animism and naturalism, as the former is premised on the principle of social, or inter-subjective, causation and the latter on material, or physical, causation (or the "laws of physics"). Briefly, my proposition is that the TCM complex is founded in large part on an analogistic elaboration of the universal human faculty of symbolism and the idea of magical causation—essentially as formulated by J. G. Frazer in his "laws of sympathetic magic" (Frazer 1967 [1890]).[4)]

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1) https://eia-international.org/wildlife/saving-tigers/tiger-trade/

2) Note that some studies suggest pharmaceutical properties in the chemical compounds found in tiger bone (Li *et al.*, 2017). The question remains whether the price and demand for tiger products are proportionate to the value of these chemical properties.

3) Descola (2013, 13) outlines four generic ontological types—animism, naturalism, totemism and analogism—under which he subsumes all known cosmologies, past and present. His point of departure is the presumed universal cognitive dichotomy between "interiority" (mind, soul) and "physicality" (roughly corresponding to "bodily endowments and dispositions"). Starting from this premise, there are four logical possible ways in which any subject ("Self") may identify an "Other" in terms of similarity or difference: (1) shared interiority, different physicality (animism); (2) shared physicality, different interiority (naturalism); (3) shared interiority and physicality (totemism); and (4) different interiority and physicality (analogism). For a synthesis of Descola's typology and a discussion of his concept of analogism, see Århem, K. (2016a, 8–9, 13–15).

4) Frazer distinguishes between two categories of magic: one is the notion that like produces like, which he called the Law of Similarity (or homeopathic magic); in the other, things which have ↗

Magical causation, I maintain, accounts for the assumed effectiveness and curative powers of tiger-bone substances—as well as many, if not most, other animal-derived substances in TCM and "magical medicines" more generally. Significantly, magical medicines figure prominently in analogistic ontologies past and present and across the world, characteristically in complex and stratified premodern states, or in societies influenced by such polities—in Africa, East and Southeast Asia, Mesoamerica, the Andean region of South America, and in medieval and early-modern Europe (Descola 2013). Ancient Chinese cosmology is prototypical of such an analogistic ontological regime (Descola 2013, 201, 206; cf. Granet 1968; 1998). Although there is no single or monolithic tradition of "Traditional Chinese Medicine," I argue that the TCM complex, particularly its ideas pertaining to *animal-based medicine*, can be seen as an expression of analogism as defined by Descola. Indeed, in many respects, the TCM complex appears to operate on the analogistic-magical principles characteristic of what medieval and early-modern scholars and practitioners refer to as "natural magic," i.e., the idea that certain natural objects and substances have intrinsic occult powers to cure or cause illness or other perceived effects (Descola 2013, 202; Kieckhefer 2014).[5)]

The cultural perception of the tiger, and the human-tiger relationship in East- and Southeast Asia as a whole, is complex and varies significantly according to social, cultural, and historical circumstances. Different sectors and segments of the societies and populations in the region are influenced by different religions (Buddhism, Daoism, Confucianism, and so on), political-economic ideologies (Marxism, capitalism, and so on), and ontological orientations (notably, animism, analogism, and naturalism). In this paper, I focus on the relationship between—and the complex inter-twining of—animism and analogism understood as ontological types, or regimes, viewed through the prism of the human-tiger relationship.

Alongside the objectified and instrumental (magical) notion of the tiger as a source of medicine expressed in the Sinitic TCM complex, a very different perception of the tiger as a revered and feared spirit being, or divinity, exists in Southeast Asia. Such a perception is typical of an animistic ontology. In the animistic universe, all beings and most things are perceived as intentional subjects in a social cosmos populated by human

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↘ once been in contact continue to act on each other, even at a distance. This notion he called the Law of Contact (or contagious magic). In his discussion of Frazer's view of magic, Tambiah (1990) has observed that the first Law builds on metaphorical associations and the second on metonymical ones. On magical causation, see also Mauss (1972), Gell (1998), and Århem, K. (2016a, 14).

5) This magical power was not necessarily believed to derive from the physical properties of specific objects or phenomena, but rather from certain features of these entities that *associated* them with occult powers in the realm of nature, or "influences that flowed from the distant reaches of the cosmos" such as "emanations coming from the stars or planets" (Kieckhefer 2014, 13).

and other-than-human beings, including animals, plants, natural phenomena, celestial bodies, and a plethora of lesser and greater spirits and divinities that all act and interact as meta-persons in an intersubjective cosmic society (cf. Århem, K. 2016a; Sahlins 2017).

While the objectified and instrumental notion of the tiger seems to permeate all classes and segments of Chinese (and Vietnamese) society today, the *consumption* of tiger-bone medicine is a prerogative of the wealthy, urban population. The subjectified animistic conception of the tiger as a divine being, on the other hand, remains predominant only among ethnic minority groups and peasant communities in the uplands and rural hinterlands of the region. This social and spatial distribution of the two contrasting perceptions—and the ontological regimes of which they form a part—is, I propose, a result of a long and complex historical process involving a gradual ontological transition from animism towards analogism, a process probably originating in the urban power centers of Sinitic civilizations millennia ago and continuing in the present, as evident in traces of animism in Sino-Vietnamese culture today (including in the TCM complex).

At a general theoretical and methodological level, this paper addresses the little explored issue of ontological change and to what extent it is possible to empirically determine the boundaries between different ontological types as defined by Descola. In other words, where does one ontological regime end and another begin in what would seem to be a fluid and continuous cultural-historical process? In the paper, we will thus explore the nebulous conceptual borderland between animism and analogism and the apparent transition from animism to analogism in the Sinitic civilization common to China and Vietnam. In this venture, the changing perception and cultural role of the tiger is, I suggest, particularly revealing.

The ethnographic and historical data presented in the following derive from my reading of published sources on Chinese (Han) and Vietnamese (Kinh) culture as well as my anthropological fieldwork among the Katu and related Katuic-speaking groups[6] in the Central Annamitic region of Laos and Vietnam. In addition to my in-depth research among Katuic groups, I have lived and worked in China and Vietnam for several years and, as a result, have acquired some degree of familiarity with both majority and minority cultures in the two countries.[7] It is worth stressing, as will become clear in the follow-

6) The Katuic ethno-linguistic group belongs to the Mon-Khmer language family.

7) The author spent one and a half years in Northeastern China, teaching English and studying Chinese in Harbin (2000–01) and about four years in Vietnam between 2004 and 2010, including two years based at the Vietnam Museum of Ethnology in Hanoi (in collaboration with the Department of Social Anthropology at Gothenburg University), and four months doing socio-economic consultancies for the World Wildlife Fund and SUFORD among ethnic minorities in Central Vietnam (and Laos). Later, from 2007–14, he carried out research for his PhD on Katuic culture and religion, conducting fieldwork for five months among the Katu people in Vietnam, and an additional three weeks among Katuic groups in Sekong Province of Laos. This paper is not only based on these fieldwork periods, but also on general observations made while living in Hanoi.

ing, that minority and majority traditions are intimately intertwined in both countries, just as they are throughout the region as a whole. This is not least evident in the tiger lore reviewed below.

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Having outlined the general questions and objectives of the paper and briefly introduced my argument in the preceding pages, I want—before proceeding—to clarify the selection of my sources and their scope, and finally, to offer a brief note on the relation between Chinese and Vietnamese medical traditions.

First, this paper is greatly inspired by Chris Coggins's seminal book *The Tiger and the Pangolin*, particularly the chapter dedicated to human-tiger relations in China's southeast (Coggins 2003, 51–86). Coggins attempts to trace the evolution of tiger-perceptions from an "animistic view" as found in rural villages in the region, but also as it appears in a variety of *official* records. He then analyzes changes in the conceptions of the tiger caused by European big-game hunters, missionaries, and, in more recent times, the Marxist-Leninist and Maoist materialist ideologies. In his analysis, he relies on various historical records, mainly written by state officials, as well as on his own field-work and interviews.

Coggins's book makes frequent reference to the accounts about tigers and tiger beliefs recorded by Caldwell, an American missionary who lived and worked in rural Fujian (then Fukien), during the first decades of the twentieth century. Caldwell's accounts fill an important gap between historical records, which tend to be terse, and stories collected by Coggins from rural villagers during his fieldwork in Fujian. Coggins makes no overt claims to represent "the totality of Chinese culture," but he does include data that are relevant outside the narrow scope of a particular region. Although the region described by both Caldwell and Coggins was, and is, mainly inhabited by a mixture of different Han Chinese groups—primarily Hakka-speakers in Coggins's case—it can nonetheless be seen as representing certain facets of Chinese civilization and popular culture.[8] Many of my arguments in this paper are extrapolations and elaborations of arguments made by Coggins.

Interestingly, Coggins points out that the original inhabitants of his principal study area (in Meihuashan, Fujian) were probably Yue (believed to be related to the ancient Vietnamese) and Man groups (ancestors of the Miao-Yao-She ethnic groups). He notes

8) This is another reason for using these two sources to gain some understanding of what the tiger means in (South) Chinese folk culture, as the tiger has been extinct for hundreds of years in other parts of China. Southern China is, in fact, one of the parts of China where the tiger survived longest, and Caldwell's account is one of very few accounts available in the English language that gives us valuable insights about tiger lore of people who lived *among* tigers.

that the latter groups, according to the *Houhan Shu* (Book of the Later Han), "believed that their primary ancestor turned into a white tiger after his death" (Coggins 2003, 54). However, for the last several hundred years, indeed probably for more than a millennium, Southeast China has been predominantly populated by several linguistically diverse Han Chinese groups, with Coggins's study area now inhabited by Hakka-speaking Han Chinese. The ethnic She are still present in some areas of Fujian and sometimes intermarry with the Hakka-speakers, but the bulk of the original ethnic groups have migrated further south and into Southeast Asia.

A noteworthy detail, according to Coggins, is that "philologists believe that the Mandarin word for tiger (*hu*) may have derived from Austro-Asiatic and/or Miao-Yao-She roots.[9] This is the same root word as the standard word for tiger in Vietnamese (*con hổ*). The tiger also has several nicknames in Chinese, Vietnamese, and Katu languages. In Vietnamese, for example, the tiger is often referred to as *Ông Ba Mươi* ("Sir Thirty"). Meanwhile, the Katu word for tiger, *abhuy*, literally means "spirit" or "god." As a sidenote, we may note that Khmu for tiger (*rwaay*) is quite similar to both the Katu word for soul (*röväi*) and the Chewong word for soul (*ruwai* [cf. Howell 1989]). and the Chewong word for soul (*ruwai*); these three peoples all speak languages of the Mon-Khmer family.

When reading Coggins and Caldwell, I was struck by the many similarities between their accounts of South Chinese folk beliefs regarding the tiger and my own material collected among the Katu in the highlands of Central Vietnam. As part of my comparative analysis, I decided to cross-check if similar notions and ideas about the tiger were documented by the French missionary Léopold Cadière in his three-volume work on Vietnamese folk religion, *Croyances et pratiques religieuses des Viêtnamiens* (also compiled during the early decades of the twentieth century). This monumental work covers a vast array of Vietnamese religious traditions, from rural folk beliefs to religious-philosophical ideas about the nature of the human soul (the latter perhaps more familiar to the urban Vietnamese elite). The meticulous accounts of rural folk-religion, which Cadière collected during his more than fifty years in Central Vietnam, make these volumes priceless.

It seemed to me that these sparse but important sources on tiger lore and human-tiger relations (by Coggins and Caldwell in Southeast China and Cadière in Central Vietnam), together with my field research among the Katu, could provide a comparative basis for tracing a process of ontological transformation from animism to analogism in the Sino-Vietnamese region. Highland Katuic groups are generally regarded as typically animistic (cf. Århem, K. 2016a), while Chinese high culture and philosophical traditions (including many of the philosophical foundations of the TCM complex), as noted above, have been

9) Please refer to Coggins (2003, 54) for the references he provides for this statement.

categorized by Descola as analogistic. In other words, folk-religious notions of the tiger in the source material from South China thus suggests a gradual transformation from an animistic conception of the tiger (and of reality more generally), which persisted until recently in the rural hinterland of China, to an analogistic one, which has been dominant in Chinese civilization for centuries and is manifested in the Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) complex.

Finally, a word on the relationship between the medicinal traditions of China and Vietnam. Vietnam was a vassal state of China for nearly one thousand years (with interruptions, the figure of 800 years is often cited). Despite this, Vietnam has developed a distinct medicinal tradition, referred to as *thuốc nam*, or "southern medicine" (as opposed to *thuốc bac*, or "northern medicine," i.e., Chinese medicine proper (cf. Hoang Bao Chau *et al.* 1999, 3–31)). The oldest *thuốc nam* texts extant today appear to be the writings (in Chinese) of the Vietnamese monk Tuệ Tĩnh (1330–89), who died in China. Nonetheless, Vietnamese scholars generally agree that many *thuốc nam materia medica* texts existed prior to those by Tuệ Tĩnh, but that these writings were destroyed during the Ming invasion from 1420–27 (Hoang Bao Chau *et al.* 1999), or have been lost for other reasons. Most other Vietnamese *materia medica* texts are of a later date. However, as *materia medica* traditions are typical of the urban intellectual elite, all *thuốc nam* texts are heavily influenced by Chinese traditions. Just like in China, however, local traditions in Vietnam's rural communities (even communities located close to cultural/urban centers) can differ from the high-culture medical norms (cf. Frick 1957; Strickmann 2002). With this background, let us turn to our first ethnographic example, the Katu people in the uplands of Central Vietnam.

I Tiger Ethnography among the Katu in Upland Vietnam

As mentioned above, the word for tiger in Katu is *abhuy*, meaning "spirit/god." The tiger may also be referred to simply as *abhuöp*, or "grandfather" (implying a relationship of deep respect). Sometimes the two words are used together, i.e., *abhuy abhuöp*, or "grandfather spirit." According to the Vietnamese ethnographer of Katu culture, Luu Hung, his elderly informants insisted: "In the past, our fathers and grandfathers never dared to hunt tiger" (Luu Hung 2007, 119). Nonetheless, they could provide detailed information about what needed to be done in case a tiger was accidentally caught and killed in a spear trap: the trap owner should return to the village, narrate the event in whispers to a friend, and then go to another village to stay for a few days before returning home. Meanwhile, on hearing the news about the killed tiger, the villagers should go to the site of the kill

to enact a ritual dialogue between the villagers and the spirit of the tiger, with one man representing the villagers and another the tiger:[10)]

> Villager: Why are you dead, Sir [Grandfather]?
> Tiger (Spirit): I have died because I have fallen. I have been too stupid.
> Villager: Why have you died, Sir?
> Tiger: I have died because I am too cruel; I have eaten the pigs and the cows [belonging to the village]. You have not killed me.
> Villager: Can we eat your flesh?
> Tiger: Yes, you can. (Luu Hung 2007)

Thereafter, the two men should silently leave the site of the kill while other villagers, their faces hidden behind masks, approach the carcass, beating gongs and drums and howling to drive away the spirit of the dead tiger. A fire is made to singe and grill the animal while continuing to beat drums and gongs. Then:

> . . . the villagers, including old folk and women, eat the meat of the tiger on the spot, not leaving the place until they have completely consumed the animal, even if that required them to spend the night in the forest. When all [the meat] is eaten, the bones of the tiger are wrapped and buried in the soil, and this place would become a sacred and feared spot which [henceforth] no one would dare to visit. (Luu Hung 2007)

Another of Luu Hung's Katu interlocutors provides a slightly different and more elaborate account of what happens after the capture and killing of a tiger (Luu Hung 2007, 120). The following is a summary of this account. After the kill, the men return to the village to celebrate the event by raising a decorated ritual pole to which a "fake buffalo" (in the form of a bunch of banana flowers) is tied. The villagers kill a chicken and walk around the post, beating gongs and drums. They then go to the place where the body of the tiger remains, to cut its head and bury it "so that the tiger spirit would not come to the village and harm its inhabitants." They move the tiger's body to another place, where they burn "all its hair," and then they carry the body to the village. There, to the sounds of drums and gongs, they again walk around the decorated ritual post, carrying the tiger's body, and eventually take it to the Village Hall (*guöl*)—the ritual and political center of the village—where the village elders sacrifice a pig dedicated to the tiger spirit. Following these ritual procedures, the men chop up the body, cook the meat and eat it—all in the *guöl*. The remaining bones are then collected and buried far away from the village in the forest. Villagers are henceforth prohibited from visiting or even passing by this place as well as the site where the tiger body was singed.

10) This and the following paragraphs, including the quotations, mainly draw on Luu Hung (2007).

Back in the village, further rituals are carried out. The trap owner, posing as a tiger and wrapped in a blanket, leaves the village accompanied by a group of men beating drums and gongs. They pass through a "tunnel" of bamboo stems and flowers erected for the occasion and stop at a spot some distance from the village gate. At this spot, which is enclosed by a bamboo fence, they plant several wooden spears in the ground to mark where the tiger spirit must remain, never to enter the village again. This enclosed space is called *töram*, or "forbidden place."[11] Other evidence suggests that the *töram* is regarded as a kind of grave, or "home" for the slain tiger's soul or spirit. Indeed, the *töram* enclosure is explicitly compared to the Katu lineage ossuary (*ping*), where the bones of deceased kinsmen are placed and their souls find a permanent resting place.[12]

In several respects, the rituals following the killing of a tiger and the feasting on its meat recall the Katu buffalo sacrifice and communal feast, which accompany every important public event, such as a wedding, a funeral, or the construction of a new communal house. The act of driving away the spirit, or ghost, of the tiger reproduces the rituals following the burial of a deceased villager (which also traditionally take place some distance away from the village). Among the Katu, the spirit of the dead person is perceived as a threat to the living until a protracted funerary process is completed. In the past, this process involved a second burial in which the bones of several dead lineage members were collected and placed in the collective lineage grave, or tomb house (*ping*), in the village cemetery.

Luu Hung's accounts of the rituals after a tiger kill also largely accord with my findings, although differing in certain details.[13] My interlocutors repeatedly affirmed that tigers *could* purposely be trapped, but only if they posed a great danger to the village and its livestock. Even though the Katu leave their livestock to roam freely around the villages, it appears that livestock would only rarely be attacked. But it is important to note that villagers feared— and still do fear—the dead (i.e., killed) tiger more than the live animal. One informant explained that the entire body of the tiger must be eaten during the night after a kill and gongs and drums must be continuously beaten during the entire night; otherwise, the spirit of the tiger "could strike the whole village dead." Likewise, the whiskers of the tiger are cut and secretly buried by the trap owner at the site of the kill to prevent any stranger or ill-willed person from using them for sorcery to kill or

11) The word *töram* marks a particular place or space that is forbidden to visit and it carries the connotation of danger. In this case, the naming signals that the enclosed space is inhabited by the dangerous tiger spirit.

12) Information provided by elderly Katu informants on the explicit comparison between the tiger *töram* and the ossuary (*ping*) or "tomb house" of the deceased comes from personal communication with Århem, K. and his unpublished field notes (2019), which he has kindly shared with me.

13) See Århem, N. (2009).

cause harm to the villagers. Indeed, informants claimed that the whiskers are the most dangerous part of the tiger's body.[14] My informants added that whenever a tiger is killed, the hunter must also address the spirit of the tiger, asking it to be merciful and forgiving, saying: "Excuse me [Grandfather Spirit], I did not intend to kill you; I put the trap for other animals to get some food for my family. Please do not be angry, do not take revenge on our village or give us bad luck . . ."

The parallels between a tiger burial and the funerary process of a deceased human person are remarkable: the bones of the tiger are buried in the forest, far away from the living, and the spirit of the slain tiger is given a "second" burial, as it were, in the *töram* near the village of the killers. These parallels strongly suggest that the tiger was perceived and treated as an "other-than-human person," indeed, as a superior spirit (cf. Sahlins 2017). This subjectification of the tiger—subjectification being the hallmark of an animistic ontology—contrasts with the objectified (magical) notion of the tiger as a source of medicine and whose bones, far from being ritually buried, are turned into a magical substance to be sold and consumed as a curative and potentiating super tonic (see below).

It must be noted, however, that with the War in Vietnam in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the Katu solidified their identity as belonging to the Vietnamese Nation and entered a period of rapid and profound cultural transformation that continues into the present. One effect of the War was a massive inflow of rifles, which, in turn, allowed the Katu to actively hunt tigers to supply the animal-trade networks in the region with tiger bones for medicine production in the urban centers of Vietnam and China (cf. Århem, N. 2015).[15] By the early 2000s, simultaneously with the construction of the Ho Chi Minh Highway that now cuts through the Annamite region connecting Northern and Southern Vietnam (Århem, N. and Nguyễn Thị Thanh Bình 2006), tigers had already become exceedingly rare in the region. It is now believed that the tiger is virtually extinct in the Central Annamites.

II Tiger Traditions among the Kinh (Vietnamese) in the Not-so-Distant Past

The spiritual relationship to the tiger exemplified by the Katu case and typical of an animistic worldview more generally is not limited to the indigenous upland groups in Vietnam. In his seminal book on Vietnamese culture, ethnologist Nguyễn Văn Huyên

14) Århem, K. (personal communication).

15) While the tiger is now virtually extinct in the Central Annamites where the Katu live, other rare and commercially valuable animals are currently hunted or collected by Katu hunters, including pangolins, bears, rare turtles (for their supposed medical properties) and game animals (whose meat is in great demand in urban centers).

(2002, 243) writes:[16]

> Certain animals have a supernatural power because of their strength and their age. The tiger for instance is a popular object of cult. It is given names as 'venerable,' 'master,' 'general' in respect. It is venerated not only because of its terrible strength but also because of its powerful spirit: it is sensitive to the pleadings of people; it is a lover of justice and eats only those who commit a crime punished by celestial laws, if it devours by carelessness an innocent person or the only son of a helpless old man, it knows how to redeem its error in meeting the needs of the unfortunate parent, even paying the expenses of the funeral.

Nguyễn paints a picture of ideas that were likely disappearing in many areas of Vietnam well before his own death in 1975. Hữu Ngọc, however, in his book *Wandering through Vietnamese Culture* (2006, 71), demonstrates that certain forms of tiger worship were still very much alive and well in more recent years, even in areas of central Hanoi. These Vietnamese scholars, in their English-language books, do not provide the Vietnamese terms for tiger, but Cadière (1955, 229) does: *ông thầy* (master), *mệ* (prince), and *ngài* (Your/His Highness). These terms also provide insight into Vietnamese tiger beliefs. Even if these beliefs are far less important today than previously, traditional perceptions of the tiger are important to understanding the historical trajectory of the animist conception of the tiger and its transformation in Vietnam during the twentieth century.

Cadière (1955) dedicates considerable attention to the folk conceptions of the tiger in his study of Vietnamese religion and traditions. He confirms Nguyễn's findings, writing that some of his informants even referred to the tiger as *trời* (heaven).[17] He gives several examples of how villagers, when sensing or seeing a tiger in the vicinity, plead for its mercy and prostrate before it, asking the tiger not to attack them (after which the tiger supposedly left them in peace). Here is one account of the many given by Cadière:

> At the beginning of July 1898, an individual from Cương-hà, looking for wild jackfruit in the mountain area of Rềnh Rềnh, found a particular tree that was heavily laden with fruits. He picked a large quantity of the fruits and then began to eat them while sitting at the foot of the tree. Suddenly, a tiger came out from the underbrush and attacked him, *placing a paw on one his ears*, but then leaping a short distance away and squatting down. The unfortunate fruit-collector lost consciousness and fell to the ground. After a while, returning to his senses, he addressed the tiger: "Lord, you have everything, you lack nothing, but I am poor and I came here only to look for jackfruit not to die from hunger. Please, I beg you not to harm me." After this, the man straightened himself up and made three large prostrations towards the tiger, which then left without harming him further. (Cadière 1955, 233, author's translation and italics added)

16) Professor Nguyễn Văn Huyên was one of the most renowned and respected Vietnamese ethnologists of the twentieth century. He was also Vietnam's Minister of Education from 1946 to 1975. His book *The Ancient Civilization of Vietnam* was originally published in Vietnamese in 1944 and has been reprinted several times. Apart from the English translation published 1995, it has also been published in French.

17) Among them a sergeant of the Royal Tomb in Huế (Cadière 1955, 229–230).

A curious but perhaps significant detail in this passage, which Cadière does not comment on, is that the tiger retreats momentarily after touching the man's ear. Interestingly, Chinese tiger lore collected in the 1920s by Caldwell (2007) in rural communities of Southern China, thousands of kilometers away, also mentions that if a tiger happens to touch its victim's ear during an attack, it leaves the victim unharmed. (We shall have more to say on Chinese tiger lore below.)

Returning to Vietnam, both Cadière and Nguyễn Văn Huyên tell us of worship directed to the Tiger Deity, even though it remains unclear whether this deity is the tiger itself or not. Another revealing tiger story related by Cadière is that of a man named Sâm, a medical practitioner residing in Kẻ-chao Village (in Nha-tịnh), who was one day attacked and killed by a tiger. A few days later, the late Sâm appeared in the dream of a friend, Sergeant Nuôi. According to the latter, Sâm's spirit told him: "I am very unhappy; the tiger has already caught several people [before], there is no longer space on its back and I am forced to sit all the way back, next to the tail. It's a very embarrassing situation, you must save me!" Sergeant Nuôi replied (in the dream) that he would try to help him, but insisted that Sâm, in turn, help him make the tiger fall into his (Sergeant Nuôi's) trap. He also promised Sâm's spirit that he would put a pair of *batonnets* [sacred rods, possibly incense] in the temple of Đức thầy. Although Đức thầy literally means "Noble Master," it is also understood to be the name of the "Tiger Deity" (Cadière 1955, 232). It is unclear whether this deity is a tiger or simply presides over tigers. The *batonnets* would serve as an invitation for Sâm's spirit to take part in the offering ceremonies given by the local villagers to Đức thầy on certain ritual occasions. According to the account, the day following the dream, Sergeant Nuôi went to the forest to dig a tiger pit-trap in which the tiger was eventually caught and killed (Cadière 1955, 232).

According to Cadière, the account reflects a general belief that the spirits of people previously caught by the tiger actually "guide" and "direct" it, helping it avoid traps. These spirits could also make a tiger capture and kill several people from the same family, since the spirit of the deceased person riding on its back would yearn for the places where it used to dwell and thus unwittingly lead the tiger to attack the first victim's kin. To avoid this calamity, it was important to find the body of a tiger-victim and bury the person properly, with all the appropriate funerary ceremonies.[18)]

Very similar ideas exist today among the Katu. In one village, I was told that the spirit of a human who is killed by a tiger "follows the tiger," although the expression that

18) The moral of the tale seems to be that as long as a person killed by a tiger remains unburied, his spirit belongs, as it were, to the tiger who killed him—as a helper and ally of the tiger. But, as soon as the victim's body is recovered and properly buried, his spirit is returned to his human kinsfolk.

the victim "rides on the back of the tiger" was not used in this case.[19] However, other Katu interlocutors claimed that the female Animal Guardian (Komorbarr)—an important figure in the Katu spirit pantheon—sometimes "rides the biggest animal in a wild-pig herd" and when she does so, the herd avoids all kinds of traps.[20] Certain magical leaves could, however, be used by hunters to cause Komorbarr to lose "concentration" (i.e., momentarily lose control over her animal herds), after which the animals would run straight into the hunters' traps. It is perhaps significant that in the origin story of Komorbarr, she is described as once having been an ordinary maiden who was killed by the forest spirit after insulting a dead game animal and upon death was mystically transformed into his wife (Århem, N. 2009; cf. Århem, K. 2016b).

Despite the traditional notion of the tiger as a divine or quasi-divine being, it was occasionally hunted in rural areas by ethnic Vietnamese (Kinh) even in pre-colonial times. The hunting, however, appears to have been primarily "defensive" or protective in nature. As a rule, tigers were only killed if they had attacked, or threatened to attack, people or their livestock (again, the same idea is held today by the Katu). Cadière also tells us that sacrifices were regularly offered to the Tiger Deity, and a further sacrifice was required before killing a tiger caught in a pit trap. None of our historical sources, however, give any indication that a tiger would be hunted specifically for the sake of selling its body parts—as is the case today.

Although Cadière's ethnography is extremely detailed and rich, the only tiger body parts he mentions as used after the animal has been killed are the collarbones (see below). It is significant that nothing in Cadière's account suggests the practice of using tiger bones to produce medicine concoctions for curative or protective purposes in the rural communities he studied. Instead, Cadière's interlocutors seemed to emphasize the potential harm that the tiger's body parts could cause. The first thing to be done after killing a tiger was to burn its whiskers, mainly because they could otherwise be used by evil sorcerers to exterminate entire clans within the village (cf., the observation above of an almost identical practice among the Katu). To be more precise, tiger whiskers can be used to construct an evil fetish called the *con thuôc đ̣ộc* (literally: "poison medicine creature").[21]

This evil subject-object is the mirror image of a similar (but opposite type) of

19) But I did hear a story of a woman who was carried away on the back of a large "spirit bird" only to be brought back to her house after the intercession of the village medium.

20) In China, the idea that demons ride on people and animals is common (Strickmann 2002).

21) I use the term "fetish" to signify an object that is perceived as an embodied, sentient subject—a powerful metaperson. In this case, the "evil" fetish made from the tiger's whiskers is a magical object in the sense that it embodies the tiger's fierce, predatory power, i.e., it operates on the associative principle of "contagious magic" in which the whiskers metonymically represent the power of the tiger as a living predatory animal.

fetish-creature: the benevolent *con ngọc*. (Cadière translates *con ngọc* as "animal-pearl" but a more literal translation would be "jade creature.") Cadière describes how villages of the high valleys of Thanh-Ha, in the Song-Gianh area, were accused by other villages of producing and keeping *con thuôc đ*ộ*c* and he provides two accounts of how the "breeding" of such evil creatures was done:

> The person [who wants to produce a poison creature] takes the whiskers of the [dead] tiger and inserts them into a young bamboo stand . . . After three months and ten days, those tiger whiskers give birth to what some say is a mouse, while others say is a snake. It is the excrement from this creature which is poisonous. The person that has raised the creature [the breeder] feeds it once a year, on the fifteenth day of the seventh month. He will need to grill either rice or maize and then bring it to the creature in his garden. The poison creature does not stay in his house. The creature approaches [the food], eats it, and then deposes its excrement nearby. The breeder then carefully collects the excrement. When he wishes to use the poison, he takes a small pinch of this substance and throw it on [food or medicine] products that he sells at the market, or otherwise [spreads] the substance on other exposed goods there. However, not all of those who later eat the contaminated items will die, but only those belonging to the clan [*ho*, lineage] that the poisoner has in mind . . . . All mysterious diseases are considered to be caused by *con thuố*c *doc*, and certain doctors are specialized in curing such illnesses; the remedies [they use] are equally mysterious [magical]. (Cadière 1955, 227–228, author's translation)

In another version [of the accounts about the poison-creature]:

> The tiger's whiskers eventually give birth to a multitude of worms that the breeder-poisoner painstakingly collects and carries far away from his house. The following day he will find two worms coming towards him, one male and one female, and these are the poison-creatures ["animaux-poisons"]. He will feed them with meat and then collect their saliva ["bave"], which will constitute the poison. Those who cultivate [breed] poison-creatures do so to receive favors from their *ma* [spirit, ghost], an evil and hateful *ma*. The more harm they [the poisoners] cause to people, the more the *ma* will protect them, and the more successful they will be in their enterprises. Often the spirit will allow the poisoner to convey the poison to his victims in the shape of seemingly good medicine, and only after seven months, the victim will suddenly die of a mysterious disease. If for some reason the poisoner fails to produce victims [for the *ma*], the spirit of the poison-creature will instead take vengeance on the poisoner himself, making him ill. (Cadière 1955, 227–228, author's translation)

These accounts are reminiscent of similar beliefs among the Katu. The "good" fetish of the Kinh (i.e., the "pearl-creature" mentioned above) resembles what the Katu call *djerriel* (usually described as beautiful stones or sometimes as stones found inside the stomach of wild animals), which are believed to bring their owners good fortune. *Djerriel* stones, however, need to be "fed"—that is, given offerings or sacrifices. Among the Katu, certain *djerriel* (and other fetish-like subject-objects) are more powerful than ordinary

djerriel, but they are also more demanding. For example, the *djerriel acha baak* (literally "white dog stone") and *kalurr* (the leaves of certain magical trees called "black cobra trees"), two spirit-objects that the Katu used in the past when they attacked other villages (or were attacked by enemy villages), must be fed with human (enemy) blood or they will attack their owners.[22)]

The ideas behind the poison-creatures described by Cadière are also reminiscent (although not in the details) of the deadly spirit of the *chölaar* poison, which figures in Katu folk beliefs and is made by burning a piece of tree bark mixed with several other ingredients. A man can request the spirit to attack an enemy village, potentially wiping out all its inhabitants by causing lethal illness (cf. Århem, N. 2009). The main difference between Kinh and the Katu stories about "poison-creatures" is that, in the Katu case, no such spirit object was regarded as categorically "good" or "evil," yet these fierce spirits "naturally" craved human blood; if you were not prepared to feed them, you must simply avoid using them.

Regarding popular uses of the tiger body parts among rural Kinh people, Cadière only mentions the collarbones (*vây-khái*) as having benign and protective power. A tiger collarbone (the left one if it was from a male, the right one from a female) could be worn as powerful talismans to repel tigers. If a person wore a female collarbone, the tiger would escape towards the left of the wearer, and vice-versa. A curious detail here is that the collarbone amulets were also believed to give their wearer "protection from the power of mandarins" in that the wearer would be treated benevolently in all dealings with the mandarin authorities. Tiger collarbones therefore sold at a high price. That said, I find it odd that Cadière does not even mention the usage of tiger bones to produce "tiger-bone glue," since today there is hardly any Vietnamese who has *not* heard of this substance, which is generally regarded as a powerful medicine (*thuốc*). I return to this issue in Section 5. First, however, we make an excursion into Chinese tiger lore.

22) The "dog stone," a white stone of particular shape with a red spot, signaled its presence with a barking sound. When found in the forest, it was brought into the village where it was kept in the village hall, the Guöl. Its spirit was said to protect the village from enemy attack, but also to sometimes accompany the warriors when raiding enemy villages ("blood hunting"). The *kalurr* spirit, or "black cobra spirit," by contrast, was regarded as an exceptionally aggressive spirit. Leaves of the *kalurr* tree were invariably carried by the warriors when raiding enemy villages to make the raiders fierce and brave, but the leaves were also used as a protective measure to avert revenge attacks after a successful raid; the leaves were buried in the ground in a circle around the village to repel the attackers (Århem, N. 2009, Ch. 9; see also Hickey 1993, 117–121; Costello 1972; and Århem, K., unpublished manuscript).

III Chinese Tiger Accounts from the 1920s

The above observations on Vietnamese tiger lore are very similar to the ones made by Caldwell, who hunted big game in southern China in the 1920s. In his book *Blue Tiger* (2007 [1924]), Caldwell describes how, in his struggle to convert villagers to Christianity in rural Fukien Province, he discovered that he could use his hunting skills to prove the superiority of the Christian God over the divinities and spirits worshiped by peasants, local shamans, and literati. In one instance related by Caldwell, villagers claimed that in one mountain area, all the animals were protected by the local spirits and therefore "impossible to kill." These were, according to locals, spirit animals, or shape shifters, rather than "mere animals." Thus, when Caldwell killed several of the supposed spirit animals, he managed to dispel the "superstitions" about their immortality and promote his Christian faith.[23)]

Caldwell also relates, how, on other occasions, the local literati and other knowledgeable people refused to acknowledge the tigers that he killed as "true" tigers if they lacked certain internal or external markings—presumably because true tigers were believed to be "impossible to kill."[24)] The idea that certain animals are not "ordinary animals," but rather spirit beings in animal form, is prevalent among the Katu to this day. Similarly, an ordinary pangolin, for example, may be killed for food or commercial purposes, but if the pangolin is seen in water, it is not considered to be a mere pangolin, but rather a *böyöa* an aquatic spirit creature in pangolin shape.

Perhaps the most interesting part of Caldwell's account for our present purpose is what he has to say about how his Chinese interlocutors regarded tiger body parts. He writes:

> From the Chinese point of view, the skin is not the most valuable part of the tiger. Almost always before a tiger hunt or drive is made . . . the hunters burn incense and offer sacrifices before the gods in a temple, or at some shrine, and a solemn covenant is entered into to the effect that, if the hunt is successful, the skin of the trophy becomes the property of the god. Thus, it happens that in many temples may be found handsome tiger-skin robes spread in the chair occupied by some *god having to do with the chase*. Both the god known as Duai Uong, or 'god of the land' or place, and the 'Pearly Emperor' [the Supreme God or Heaven] have thus become the possessors of far too many handsome tiger and leopard skins. (Caldwell 2007, 55, italics added)

23) Chris Coggins (2003) provides an overview of what is historically known about tiger hunting and tiger lore in this same region (Southern China); the picture is similar to that given by Cadière concerning Vietnam in the past.

24) Caldwell does not say what the locals meant by "true tigers," but the perception of them as immortal strongly suggests that true tigers were held to be divine beings and therefore "could not be killed."

One cannot fail to see parallels here with the Katu, who make sure that certain body parts of a killed game animal, particularly the skulls, are always placed in the communal *guöl* house, henceforth becoming objects of reverence. During the collective ritual in the *guöl* following every successful hunt, the spirit of the slain animal (*röval addah*), which resides in its skull, is returned to the female Animal Guardian (Komorbarr), who is the exact Katu counterpart to Caldwell's "god having to do with the chase" in the quote above (see Luu Hung 2007; Århem, N. 2009). This divinity is most likely identical with the Tiger Deity (Đức thầy, literally "Noble Master") mentioned by Cadière (1955).

However, Caldwell mentions the medical usage of tiger flesh, bones, and blood among rural folks in South China:

> The flesh of the big cat is very valuable for medicinal purposes. When a hunt is successful it often happens that several cows are killed and the flesh mixed with that of the tiger, all then being sold at the exorbitant price which [is] cheerfully paid for tiger meat. The bones of a tiger are boiled for a number of days until a gelatin-like mass is produced. This is [also] sold at very high prices as an exceptionally efficacious medicine . . . .
> . . . In fact, but little attention was paid to the tiger until every available drop of blood had been sopped up with rags torn from the clothing, while men and children almost fought for the blood-stained grass. The blood of the tiger is very highly prized for two purposes. A bit of blood-stained rag is worn about the neck of a child as prevention against attack by measles or smallpox devils. And, too, it is claimed that a blood-stained handkerchief or rag waved in front of an attacking dog will flag the animal, causing it to turn tail and retreat. (Caldwell 2007, 55)

Caldwell also describes a specific incident when a "well-dressed literati" sopped up the blood oozing out from a tiger he had killed. Caldwell calls this "literati" a scholar, but it should be noted that the term was used more generally to designate any educated person working within the Chinese administration during this period. Overall, Caldwell's accounts do not allow us to separate which elements of tiger lore originated in folk beliefs and which were more likely derived from the upper strata (literati) of the communities he visited. Nonetheless, there appears to be a fair amount of co-existence and admixture among what might be termed "magical" (analogistic) notions of tiger-derived medicine, on the one hand, and more animistic perceptions of the tiger as a divinity, on the other. This is not surprising, since many of the communities Caldwell describes were not far from urban centers and the influences of metropolitan Chinese culture.

From what we can learn from Caldwell's account of South-Chinese tiger lore, most of the rural inhabitants of Fukien in the 1920s regarded the tiger as a divine being and, therefore, the animal should (or could) not be hunted *solely* for food or to be sold in parts as medicine. Tigers were only hunted when they became a serious threat to livestock

and humans, but even then, the matter was hardly taken lightly; killing a tiger required extensive ritual precautions and sanctioning by local authorities. How and when does the tiger change from being regarded as a divine being into a source of medicine, an important element in the pharmacopeia of Traditional Chinese Medicine? Is it possible that the tiger was never entirely "de-spiritualized"? Does the high price that its body parts fetch today, particularly tiger-bone products, derive from the animal's formerly divine status? In other words, are there traces of animism in the latter-day medicinal consumption of tiger products?

It is near at hand to assume that it is precisely because of the animal's (former) divine nature that its bones and other body parts are attributed with extraordinary healing powers. But, judging from the evidence from the Katu and other indigenous upland groups, animistic people in the region do not seem to have, or have had, such a notion. The idea that a dead tiger poses a lethal danger certainly exists among the Katu, but this does not translate into "tiger-bone glue" becoming a super-tonic. Katu folk-medicine has been, and remains, primarily herbal, even though the Katu consider wild game meat more nourishing than the meat of domestic animals. The ideal game animal for Katu traditional hunters is, and always has been, the wild pig. While certain rare and strange-looking animals, such as the pangolin, are associated with spirits and attributed with spirit powers, the Katu do not believe that the pangolin's body holds any particular medicinal properties.

Similarly, from what we know about rural folks in Vietnam and South China, the tiger was also widely regarded as a divine or quasi-divine being well into the twentieth century and killed only when it was considered necessary to protect life and livestock. This brings us back to the questions of how—and when—did the tiger turn into a source of potent medicine? To answer these, we must briefly examine the TCM complex and its conceptual underpinnings.

IV The TCM Complex: An Overview

In his classification of ontological types, Descola (2013) describes classical Chinese philosophy and cosmology—which presumably includes the ontological premises underlying Traditional Chinese Medicine—as analogistic. But what is TCM and to what extent can it be regarded as founded on a coherent theory or system of ideas? Liz Chee (2021), a sinologist and specialist on the TCM complex, provides an illuminating overview. According to her, there is no monolithic Traditional Chinese Medicine. Rather, TCM in its current form should be understood as a blend of various cultural, ideological, and

scientific influences originating not only from within China, but also from outside it. While animal-based medicine appears to have played only a minute role in classical Chinese medicine (the medicine documented in the old scholarly treatises), its importance increased radically during the Communist era. However, in "folk," or "vulgar" (popular), medicine, which is less well documented in the early treatises, the role of animals has likely always been important. Communist-era medicine has drawn widely from both classical and folk medicine traditions. Western observers, however, have tended to downplay or disregard the "vulgar" part of Chinese medicine in their efforts to "upgrade perceptions" of those components of Chinese medicine they find valuable (e.g., plant-based pharmacopeia and practices such as acupuncture).[25] Ironically, much of this process of unwittingly ignoring certain parts of the TCM complex took place precisely as the Communist state frenetically increased production of animal-based medicine, particularly during the 1960s and 70s (Chee 2021).

The evolution of Chinese medicine during the Communist period, however, has also placed it within a framework explicitly viewed by the Chinese state as thoroughly scientific, using many of the same tools as biomedicine to validate it (such as test protocols, laboratory experimentation, laws, and regulations). Despite the havoc that traditional Chinese medical ideas has caused to the survival and conservation of many of the world's rare animal species and the controversies concerning TCM's role in the spread of zoonotic diseases, TCM, as a whole, has steadily gained global acceptance and prestige. Yet, animal-based medicine within TCM remains an "Achilles heel" within the otherwise widely accepted body of knowledge (Chee 2021, 3–4). Chee thus argues that, rather than having always been a core element of Chinese medicine, animal-based Chinese medicine, in its contemporary form, is a unique product of modern Communist China born of a process she calls "faunal medicalization" (Chee 2021).

When asked about the origins and the role of animal-based medicine, TCM physicians interviewed by Chee often answered by quoting classical sayings such as "*yi du*, *gong zu*" ("use poison to attack poison") and "*yi xing*, *bu xing*" ("use shape to nourish shape," e.g., because walnuts have the shape of a brain, they are good for the brain). In other words, they cite old maxims implying pure homeopathic magic, echoing Frazer's Law of Similarity. Another saying Chee often heard was that certain animals were "*bu yi jingxue*" ("enriching to essence and blood"). To understand these sayings, one must grasp that in traditional Chinese medicine, particularly in its vulgar (popular) form, the body is not entirely material, nor is it monolithic. Rather, it is a composite entity, or a body-cum-soul divided into multiple constituent parts, thus exemplifying Descola's characterization of

25) For further discussion of this, see Chee (2021, 2).

analogism almost to the letter (cf. Descola 2013, 201, 207).[26] To simplify, important bodily organs, substances, or fluids, such as blood, are soul-like components in themselves (cf. Cadière 1955). Nourishing your blood with the blood of an animal was thus not only, or exclusively, a "physical" process in Chinese folk medicine. In the new "scientized" version of this medicine, however, the process is presented as an exclusively physical one (i.e., basing the efficacy of Chinese medicine on the same logic as that of biomedicine). Interestingly, however, Chee notes that Chinese researcher Zu Shuxian (in a paper published in 2019) proposed the theory that Chinese animal-based medicine is "derived from the worship of animals" (Chee 2021, 5).

In this light, it can hardly be seen as controversial to claim that much of classical Chinese medicine has a magical component. Much of the ethnography bears this out. Strickmann (2002) shows how cow bezoars, now vital in TCM, were previously sought precisely for their demon-expelling qualities. In his in-depth study of local medicine during the earliest days of Communist China, Frick (1957) likewise claims that "magic and medicine are inseparably associated in the minds of people." In popular thought and in practice, any animal-derived medical substance was considered to have both spiritual-magical *and* material-physical efficacy. However, modern, state-sponsored Chinese medicine emphasizes the latter. Nonetheless, the Communist state has actively popularized local medical traditions such that they are now available to an infinitely larger client base beyond China. Moreover, globalization has brought new products into the (now-) global animal-based medicine market. For example, Chinese road construction teams in the Amazon have created a market for jaguar parts, thus incorporating a new species into the TCM pharmacopoeia (Chee 2021, 7). Indeed, the massive construction projects that form part of the Belt and Road Initiative often work as "giant vacuum cleaners of wildlife" (Nijman, quoted in Chee 2021, 7).

In sum, modern-day Sino-Vietnamese animal-based medicine is an odd, multifaceted mixture of old and new ideas, practices, and substances that is difficult to characterize according to a single classification system, including Descola's ontological types. Some aspects are animistic, others lean towards analogism or even naturalism. In my view, and in line with Descola's typology, the analogistic elements dominate. On this account, I suggest that exploring cultural perceptions of the tiger in the Sino-Vietnamese region is also a means of exploring the differences and similarities between animistic and

26) Descola (2013, 201) writes: "[analogism] is a mode of identification [ontology] that divides up the whole collection of existing beings into a multiplicity of essences, forms and substances . . . arranged on a graduated scale so that it becomes possible to recompose the system . . . into a dense network of analogies . . . ." He continues: "This immeasurable multiplication of the elementary parts that make up the world is reflected within each of those parts (including human beings), [bringing] the material and the immaterial together . . . in the respective scales of the microcosm and the macrocosm" (Descola 2013, 207).

analogistic cosmologies—not only as ontological types, but also as cultural practices.

V Tiger-bone Medicine: A Contemporary Vietnamese Case

At this point, it may be appropriate to hear what a retired Vietnamese wildlife trader in Hanoi, whom I interviewed in early 2022 (via WhatsApp), had to say about the trade in tiger-derived medicine and how it is prepared. The region in northern Vietnam where he worked as an animal trader is one populated by Kinh, Thai-speaking groups, and Hmong. The Hmong, according to this informant, were the most proficient hunters and therefore very useful as helpers and assistants, but there was no lucrative market for the animals among the Hmong. The animals he caught (or bought) were virtually always sent to Hanoi, where they would fetch the highest price. A popular product is *cao hổ cốt* (what he translated as "tiger-bone glue"), a sticky, gelatin-like substance derived from cooked tiger bone. Noting that when he was young, "tigers were rare [in northwest Vietnam], but people could see them once in a while," he gave a detailed account of how to prepare the glue, why people buy it, and how to sell it:

> First, the meat is taken off from the bones. The [cooked] meat is tasty, but the smell is so bad that you can only take a few bites. Then, the carcass is put in a stream for about ten days. The bones are then cut into small pieces and put in a big pot of water, first to boil and then to simmer. Other animal bones are also added to the mix, including bones from *son dương* (serow) and a single black cat. It is important that the animals [skeletons, carcasses] are added in odd numbers: 1, 3, 5, 7, etc. To make a very strong *cao cốt*, the complete skeletons of three tigers should be used. We learned all this from visiting Chinese people.
>
> The medicine is good for people with aching joints. We believe the medicine works because the tiger is very strong, it is the top predator, and it can move very fast. We always bought tigers from ethnic minority hunters. In 2009, tiger glue sold for about 10 million VND per 100 g in Hanoi. One tiger, plus the correct amount of other animal bones, yields about 1.5 kg of glue. You only sell the glue to relatives because there is no way to tell real glue from fake glue. You must be able to trust the seller.

Much of this account is confirmed in Dr. Đỗ Tất Lợi's (2006) opus magnum about Sino-Vietnamese traditional medicine.[27] In it, he writes:

> [I]n the past, tiger-bone glue was only cooked in the mountains and the forests because the people in the lowlands were superstitious and feared that preparing it in the house would bring misfortune.

27) Dr. Đỗ Tất Lợi is a renowned expert and practitioner of Traditional Vietnamese Medicine (TVM) and author of the standard treatise on the subject. Traditional medicine is considered a science in both Vietnam and China and in 1996 Đỗ Tất Lợi received "The Ho Chi Minh prize for science" for his book and his longstanding research on TVM.

> Now, however, it is possible to prepare it normally in factories. . . . In the mountainous areas, according to traditional practices, people rarely use only tiger bones but add bones from many other animals and plants. When preparing the glue, it is best to use five tiger skeletons, one skeleton of monkey and one of *sơn dương* [serow]. Since the tiger is considered "the king," it should be followed by "two [auxiliary] gods" . . . The carcass should be left for 15–20 days in a stream. After that, the bones should be hung to dry. It was believed that this would "clear out the bad *qi*" [vital substance or energy]. (Author's translation)

The "present" in Đỗ Tất Lợi's account likely spans from the 1960s to the 1970s, which is when he conducted the research for his book (which has been reprinted in Vietnam several times). During this time, wild animals were used to produce traditional medicine in state factories. Because we know very little from this period, we can only conjecture that the system was relatively similar to that established in China during the same period (Chee 2021). It is also possible that tiger bones from Vietnam were sold directly to the TCM industry in China and processed there. In any case, Vietnamese state-employed traditional medicine practitioners were quite familiar with the Chinese system under Mao (see below).

VI The Tiger and the TCM Complex in Broader Context: Culture, Politics, Commerce

Returning to folk conceptions of the tiger in Vietnam and Southern China, it is clear from the accounts of Cadière, Nguyễn Văn Huyên and Hữu Ngọc (Vietnam), and Caldwell (China) that the tiger remained a divine or quasi-divine being well into the early- and even mid-twentieth century. It was certainly not merely perceived as a source of medicine, and definitely not in the Western bio-medical sense of the term. In China, members of the ruling class, mandarins, and noblemen had for centuries used tiger parts and tiger hunting to symbolically express their power. Strassberg (quoted in Marks 2006, 70) demonstrates that this practice dates at least to the writings of Mencius (372–289 BCE). Describing the reign of the Duke of Zhou, held up as an ideal ruler with the Mandate of Heaven, Mencius writes: "The duke of Zhou assisted King Wu of the Zhou dynasty to destroy [Shang] . . . He drove the tigers, leopards, rhinoceroses, and elephants far away, and the world was greatly delighted" (Marks 2006, 70).

Prior to that, Duke Huan, another ancient paragon of wise rulership, is described in the *Guanzi* as "displaying his control over the wild periphery" by frightening off a tiger, and, "hence asserting his right to rule" (Marks 2006, 71).[28] Marks, following Strassberg,

28) The *Guanzi* is a collective work attributed to the so-called Qi scholars, including Mencius, likely dating to the middle of the fourth century BCE (Bellah 2011, 443–444, 464).

also provides later evidence of similar traditions among the Chinese aristocracy with close ties to the imperial court during the Manchu period. Thus, he notes how "Manchu noblemen and Chinese officials of various ranks had their portraits painted with them seated on chairs draped with a tiger pelt" (Marks 2006, 69). Indeed, this dominance over tigers and other wild beasts was ritually enacted in the yearly autumn hunt of the Manchu rulers, when "hundreds, if not thousands of deer, wild boar, birds of all kinds, and occasionally tigers [were killed]" (Marks 2006, 69).

More than two millennia after Mencius, when Mao initiates the national Dahuyundong campaign with slogans such as "kill the tiger, banish evil," he is knowingly or unknowingly continuing the longstanding tradition of asserting divine power by subjugating wild animals (Coggins 2003, 428). This campaign coincided with a record production of animal products in the state's medicine factories, one of the few sources of foreign currencies for the People's Republic at the time. Chinese medicine under Mao encapsulates many of the paradoxes that continue to characterize the TCM industry today. In the immediate aftermath of the establishment of China's Communist state (1949), many of China's Western and Japan-trained doctors were motivated to finally modernize medical sciences in China and completely abandon the millennia-old TCM tradition, which they regarded as incurably non-scientific. Many openly characterized Chinese medicine at this time as "witchcraft" (Chee 2021, 29–31). However, the sheer number of traditional practitioners and their swift involvement in politics made it hard for the "Western" faction to eliminate them.

Instead, a middle-ground position began to dominate, articulated in the slogan *fei yi, cun yao* ("retain Chinese drugs, abandon Chinese medicine"). This meant, in essence, respecting the existence of an ancient "people's medicine," which had discovered many useful herbs and concoctions over time, while recognizing that the major tenets and discourses of Chinese traditional medicine were unsubstantiated. The task at hand was to scientifically analyze this "great treasure house" (in Mao's words) through modern methods. Unfortunately for those in the "radical Western medicine faction," by explicitly claiming that Chinese medicine could never make any sense through the lens of scientific medicine, they contradicted Mao's dictum, leading to their eventual eradication. In fact, despite *seemingly* positioning themselves in the middle ground (through their slogans etc.), Mao and several others within the top echelon of power preferred Chinese medicine over Western medicine and wished to combine the two (Chee 2021, 32).

This situation explains how the national production of animal-based medicines in the new, Communist understanding of TCM increased exponentially, as did Chinese export of these products, particularly to other East Asian countries. Even when supplies of high-value ingredients for TCM could not be supplied by China itself, it imported

these from other places (notably, rhino horns from Africa) and continued to increase its production of traditional medicine for export until the 1990s. Although there was already an extensive trade in the body parts of tigers and other rare and high-value animals for medicinal purposes in pre-Mao times, the scale and volume of this trade massively increased during the Communist period. In fact, the trade in wild animals was one of the few means for the CCP (Chinese Communist Party) to accumulate foreign currency during its first several decades of existence. A peak period in both domestic consumption and foreign exports of animal-derived medicines can be marked as beginning in 1978, when China's "Open Door Policy" began, and tapering in the early 1990s, when China drastically reduced its trade in wild animals as it ratified the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and joined the World Trade Organization (cf. Mills 2015).

By the early 1990s, however, the tiger and other animal species important for the medicine trade were virtually extinct in the wild (cf. Coggins 2003) and many Chinese medicine firms were already operating with animal parts imported from other countries. According to Dang (1998, 26), in the year 1990, China made a record profit of 700 million USD from the export of medicinal products, a considerable portion of which was animal-based medicine. The exact proportion of these medicinal exports comprised of particular animals is impossible to confirm, but Chee (2021, 73–76) notes that the exports remained very high both during the Great Leap Forward period and during the Cultural Revolution. Dang (1998) also notes, hinting at the well-established trade in TCM products between Communist China and several non-Communist countries, "[that] in South Korea in the year 1988, up to 80% of private hospitals [had made use of] medicines made from Rhinoceros horn." When the journalist and conservation activist J. A. Mills carried out her research on animal trade in South Korea in the early 1990s, she confirmed that whereas TCM clinics and practitioners were still a prominent feature of the national health sector, various bans on animal trade had already rendered the import of animal medicine products very difficult (Mills 2015).

The enormous demand for wild animal products by an increasingly opulent clientele, consisting of nouveau-riche domestic and overseas Chinese, Taiwanese, Japanese, and South (and even North) Koreans, proved an existential threat to the wild tiger in China and Vietnam and contributed to diminishing tiger populations in Laos, Thailand, India, Indonesia and Russia. When, in the early 1990s, Chinese and Vietnamese authorities began to cooperate with Western-based NGOs to protect the tiger (initially perhaps hoping to be able to continue to use them as a resource for traditional medicine production), it was too late to save the wild populations in the two countries.

Conclusion: An Ontological Transition?

A central question addressed in this paper is whether the original impetus for the growing demand for tiger-bone medicine is based on the animistic notion of the tiger as divinity and, hence, whether the notion of the tiger as a source of traditional medicine can be seen as part and parcel of an animistic worldview. We established in the first half of the paper that there is, or has been until recently, widespread folk traditions about the tiger among ethnic Vietnamese (and rural Chinese) very similar to the animistic ideas of indigenous upland groups, as exemplified by the tiger ethnography of the Katu people in Central Vietnam. In a brief ethnographic and historical survey of tiger lore among indigenous groups and rural folks in the Sino-Vietnamese hinterland, we found little evidence of tiger bones (or other animal body parts) being regarded and used as medicine. We did find, however, traces of such ideas and practices existing alongside a predominantly animistic notion of the tiger in rural parts of South China and inland Vietnam (as reported by Caldwell, Cadière, and Nguyễn Văn Huyên in accounts dating from the early- and mid-twentieth century).

I therefore contend that the notion of the tiger as a source of medicine—as manifested in the Sino-Vietnamese traditional medicine complex—developed in China in an intellectual and ontological environment that progressively distanced itself from its animistic roots. Centered on ideas such as the "theory of the five elements," the cosmological dualism of *yin* and *yang*, and the "doctrine of correspondences," this was the intellectual milieu that, in the fourth and third centuries BCE, gave birth to the philosophical-religious complex today labelled Taoism. This ancient Chinese root cosmology, according to some scholars defining Chinese thought well into the twentieth century (see Overmyer, 1993, 981), can be understood as a Sinitic version of the generic ontological type Descola calls analogism.[29)]

Also prominent in this intellectual tradition is the idea that nature's forces may be harnessed and directed by human agency. The use of tiger-bone medicine as a curative and empowering super-tonic in the Sino-Vietnamese medical tradition is a manifestation of this underlying idea of magical causation (as is geomancy, or *feng shui*). A super tonic such as tiger-bone medicine, which is presumed to "balance the cosmic forces of yin and yang," cannot be easily translated into the language of Western biomedicine. Yet, like biomedicine, its healing and potentiating effects are assumed by its users and practitioners to be "natural," objective, and empirical. These effects are inherent in the physical substance itself (tiger bone, in this case) and mediated only by the expert knowledge and skills of the traditional medicine practitioner (and the production process

29) Schipper's (1993) account of Taoist cosmology is perhaps the closest one can come to a concretization of what Descola means by analogism (cf. Descola 2013, 207 [referring to Granet 1968]).

of the medicine), not by any spiritual or divine agency, as in animism.

As such, the TCM conception of the tiger is neither typically animistic nor naturalistic. It is, I propose, in terms of Descola's ontological typology, analogistic. More precisely, it rests on what may be called a "magical theory of reality," where magical causation is elevated to the integrating principle of the cosmos—a cosmos made comprehensible by symbolic associations and analogical correspondences and sustained by human ritual action, such as offerings, animal sacrifices, and the worship of ancestors and divinities. This mode of thought (or, rather, onto-praxis) is not only typical of Sino-Vietnamese analogism, but also characteristic of the theories and practices of natural magic, alchemy, and astrology in medieval and early-modern Europe as well as of what is pejoratively known as "fetishism" in present-day West- and Central Africa and of "traditional medicine" in Africa more generally.[30)]

In sum, I have in this paper proposed, based on anthropological fieldwork among Katuic-speaking upland groups in Vietnam (and Laos) and a review of historical ethnography from Vietnam and China, that it is possible to distinguish two prototypical notions of the tiger and the human-tiger relationship in the region. In one, the tiger is perceived as a divinity or spirit being in animal form. In another, the tiger is perceived as an exceptionally powerful animal whose body parts, particularly bones, can be used for making vitalizing and curative medicines. The former notion is typical of animistic indigenous upland groups; the latter, particularly as manifested in so-called traditional medicine in China and Vietnam, represents an analogistic ontology typical of the Sino-Vietnamese civilization.

I have also provided evidence that suggests that an animistic notion of the tiger has been widespread among the majority populations in China and Vietnam and, thus, that there has been a cultural and historical shift from an animistic toward what I call a magical concept of the tiger in these civilizations. This conceptual shift, I argue, suggests a major, albeit incomplete, ontological transformation from an animistic understanding of reality towards a fundamentally different, analogistic, ontological orientation. I say "incomplete transition" because traces of animism remain evident in the predominantly analogistic traditions of both Vietnam and China. Conversely, analogistic features are present in the animistic cosmologies of the upland minorities in the region, as indicated by the use of magical objects (such as spirit objects, or fetishes) in these populations, as briefly described above.[31)]

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30) The parallels between the Sino-Vietnamese and African preoccupation with traditional (magical) medicine and their common penchant for wild-animal foods ("bush food") are remarkable and deserve further study.

31) Some of these analogistic elements in Katu cosmology, and in Katuic culture more generally, are briefly discussed in Århem, N. (2015) and Århem, K. (2016a).

These preliminary conclusions intimate that the conceptual boundaries between the two ontological types under consideration are elusive and empirically difficult to establish. An account of the transition from animism to analogism, as has been attempted here, is necessarily incomplete. A full account of ontological change is a complex undertaking, requiring painstaking ethnographical, historical, and comparative study of whole regions; one which, in the process, is likely to challenge any typology of ontologies and, possibly, constructively reconsider the concept of ontology itself.[32] In this light, the paper can be considered an exploratory journey through the uncharted conceptual and empirical borderland between animism and analogism in the Sino-Vietnamese region.

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32) I here refer primarily to ontology as defined by Descola (2013), which I find instructive and heuristically useful.

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Fire Dancers in Thailand's Tourism Industry: Art, Affect, and Labor

Tiffany Rae Pollock

New York: Cornell University Press, 2024.

Tiffany Rae Pollock's *Fire Dancers in Thailand's Tourism Industry: Art, Affect, and Labor* is an invitation to a deeper understanding of the affective worlds of fire dancers in Thailand's tourism industry. Informed by an ethnography in the popular Southern Thailand islands of Koh Samui and Koh Phi Phi, and to some extent Koh Phangan, Koh Lanta, and Bangkok, the book narrates how fire dancers navigate the tourism economy, build communities in increasingly precarious environments, manage their identities, give meaning to their art and labor, and create opportunities despite challenges. One important tenet of the book is that by giving prominence to the voices of fire dancers, the reader is challenged to move beyond the stereotype of fire dancers as mere beach labor entangled with promiscuity and accept them as active social agents who negotiate interpersonal, cultural, political, and economic constructions to give meaning to their art form.

The central foundation of the discussion is guided by the theory of affect, a "key component of fire dance labor as it is moved and exchanged among bodies to create feelings on the beach through performances and engagements" (p. 14). The introduction vividly sets the scene of a fire dance on Thailand's southern islands. It lightens the imagination and guides the reader to integrate themselves within the often-unobserved shifts that occur in island destinations from daytime to nighttime economies. The reader is then introduced to a brief history of the emergence and development of fire dance in Thailand, beginning with flow art—a movement practice introduced in the country by the backpacking tourist community in the 1980s and 1990s. The discussion briefly presents how fire art began in Thailand, founded principally on the community ethos of flow art, before its integration into the neoliberal tourism economy and its consolidation primarily as an island genre catering to young international tourists arriving in Thailand's beaches for its popular parties and the generally lively beach scene. This shift into the market exchange led to changing performance motivations amongst fire dancers. The shift was accelerated by the tourism boom in Thailand from 2009, leading to the development of more bars and a demand for more labor across the industry. Competition in the fire dance scene has since intensified as positions in the tourism

industry—specifically fire dancing—are filled by underpaid migrant laborers (mostly undocumented) from surrounding countries, especially Myanmar.

While the author acknowledges the lack of recorded history of fire dancing in Thailand and her dependence on oral history, an important aspect missing from the beginning of the book is how fire dancing evolved within Thailand and came to be integrated into the tourism industry and form a core part of the tourist experience. Furthermore, considering that the erotic/sexualized narrative is superimposed on the discussion of Thailand's beach tourism (fire dancing in particular), an explanation of how fire dancing became entangled in bars, beach parties, etc., would have helped to clarify how the negative image of fire dancers (as deviant beach boys) became consolidated in Thai society. In many instances throughout the book, Pollock creates an image of the local Thai community—and Thailand, in a totalizing or universal sense—perceiving fire dancing and fire dancers to be not valued, not acceptable, not artists, deviant, shameful, dirty, sexualized and marginalized figures, dangerous, uneducated young men, and bad for the environment. From this point of view, the discussion appears judgmental without a clear historical analysis of the negative perceptions in line with the changing fire scene and broader tourism politics in Thailand. For instance, in Chapter 1 the author presents an encounter with a government official of a national park in Koh Phi Phi, where the official proposes to the author that "instead of researching on the topic, we must change the practice. He wanted fire dancing to stop because it was bad for the environment and dirty" (p. 24). The author criticizes this view, but as a reader I was curious about the historical roots of such perceptions, which remain unexplored in the book.

In general, the book lacks local community perspectives (beyond that of the dancers), which limits the analysis. Thai society is depicted largely through the author's lens, and a supposed Thai image, culture, femininities, and the like are continuously brought forward, reinforcing colonial and orientalist tropes. Indeed, the coloniality of the discussion, subsumed in dichotomized and orientalist thinking, Western feminist narratives, and paradoxes common in anthropological studies of the East, is a big criticism of the book. This perspective is partly due also to the lack of deep reflection on the author's positionality throughout the book. Though Pollock briefly mentions her positionality as a young white woman from Canada in the introduction, how this intersects with her perception is largely absent.

The book has seven core chapters, each engaging in varying themes and voices of fire dancers and their community. Chapter 1 explores the village-to-beach narrative commonly observed among fire dancers. Readers are introduced to Som and his journey from a "poor village boy" to a highly paid performer in Thailand's tourism industry. The author challenges the dominant narrative of tourism as exploitative and presents a discussion on how tourism has led to dramatic shifts in fire dancers' lives because of encounters, friendships, and opportunities on the beaches. The chapter also explores how dancers are eroticized via racialized colonial affects and imaginaries, and how dancers themselves navigate these imaginaries that provide opportunities to reimagine their bodies

and increase their social and economic capital. However, despite the author engaging very briefly with the theme of Eurocentrism in the beginning, the rest of the discussion is largely uncritical and does not engage with the colonial and neocolonial histories shaping the landscape of aesthetics and "exotic" tourism imaginaries leading to the fire dancers' perceptions.

The author highlights that the dancers' dark skin is a fascination for tourists (i.e., white/Western tourists), and dancers work out to have their bodies crafted for *farang* (foreign/Western) imaginations and the exotic gaze. Fire dancers have become empowered and learned to love their skin color thanks to foreign female tourists' fascination with dark skin. This is in contrast to the culture in which fire dancers live, where dark skin is associated with low status. Empowerment is uncritically presented as a reality that was founded because of the "white gaze." The chapter extends to further colonial dichotomies of modesty (Thai femininities), Western female sexuality, and more with little to no engagement with the important theme of coloniality (and whiteness) underpinning these interactions. Indeed, the book has largely ignored much of the extensive literature that has been written about colonial and neocolonial legacies of tourism (see, for instance Richter 1989; Hall and Tucker 2004; Tucker 2009; Patil 2011; Williams 2012) and beyond that plays an important role in contextualizing the sociopolitical and economic dynamics presented in the book.

Chapter 2 explores fire dance as a form of affective labor, emphasizing the creation of energies and intersections of sexuality. Chapter 3 laments the anxieties stemming from the influx of Burmese dancers in Thailand's fire dance scene and how fire dancers build solidarity to sustain their art. Chapter 4 expands on the concept of sharing and collaboration, centered around a fire dance center for community building, developed by one of the pioneer fire dancers in Thailand. Burmese dancers' narratives are explored in depth, paying particular attention to how they renegotiate deviant subjectivities ascribed to them. A form of reverse gaze is also observed where Thai dancers position Burmese dancers as "deviant beach boys" as a method of differentiation. Racial and class distinctions within the fire dance scene are also highlighted, such as luxury venues (acceptable to the upper class) favoring white performers over locals, because they are "considered to be better artists in a global hierarchy of value" (p. 73). Unfortunately, while the author briefly mentions art in white neoliberal capitalist markets, the analysis of whiteness, capitalism, and coloniality remains superficial.

Chapter 5 focuses on the concept of *sabai sabai* (contentment) in tourism economies and fire dancers' lives, while Chapter 6 highlights fire dancers' resilience amidst neoliberal capitalist expansions. The discussion centers on the concept of "slow violence" or "unspectacular violence" in tourist economies. Lastly, Chapter 7 investigates the gender dynamics of the fire dance scene, bringing into the discussion the voices of female fire dancers in Thailand, who are in a minority. While the author acknowledges how the image of Thailand as a sex scape has largely shaped Thai femininities, she frequently imposes Western feminist and Eurocentric ideals that cannot be ignored. For instance, she claims that "while Thais do frequent tourist entertainment areas, women

are not present, and if they are they are in a group" (p. 129), and "I am yet to see a group of Thai women alone at any beach party (without an accompanying male)" (p. 129), and "if a man and woman are hanging out together in public, it is usually because they are intimately involved or related" (p. 129). Such depictions are essentialist and orientalist in nature (see Mohanty 1984; Spivak 1988; Grewal and Kaplan 1994), but besides this, I wonder whether they imply a hierarchy of modernity (Western) and the opposite (the other) where the solo presence of a woman in such a setting represents cosmopolitanism.

Adding to this, compared to the stories of the Thai female fire dancers Kat and Khao, who both had foreign boyfriends and were depicted as having a "different type of femininity that opposes dominant Thai ideals" (p. 130), Dao was identified as the "most conservative" (p. 138). Her conservativeness was symbolized by her being rarely sighted in public without her (Thai) boyfriend, being accompanied by another male ("big brother") in the fire art center in case her boyfriend was away, not driving, not drinking, occasionally smoking ("which is not acceptable for women in Thailand"), dressing modestly, coming from a conservative family, soft-spoken, and shy (p. 138). Funnily, despite Dao's depiction based on the author's heavily Westernized ideas of feminism, Dao left her career as a teacher to become a fire dancer, occupying a hyper-masculine space. I was surprised at how the author failed to comprehend her agency. Similarly, being a *farang* is continuously associated with cosmopolitanism. Such representations risk reinforcing hierarchies of modernity aligned with Western ideals.

Despite its limitations, the book presents valuable insights into the realities of fire dancers, shaped by capitalist (tourism) structures and affective labor and the complexities of tourism, labor, and identity in Thailand.

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The Story of Southeast Asia

Eric C. Thompson

Singapore: NUS Press, 2024.

The Story of Southeast Asia is certainly not the first or only book on Southeast Asia. Dozens of academic works from various perspectives have been published on the region. The question is, why did Eric C. Thompson decide to be part of those dozens of researchers? Thompson explains that he was introduced to Southeast Asian studies while a graduate student at the University of Washington in 1990. This sparked an interest in Southeast Asia and led to a career at the National University of Singapore along with the opportunity to explore his interest through scientific research. Thompson has had a stellar academic career in Southeast Asian studies, having published dozens of studies on the region in journals and books. In general, his research falls within the scope of sociology, gender, and anthropology.

At the outset, *The Story of Southeast Asia* contains a disclaimer that it is not a theoretical book but can be used to look at Southeast Asia from a social-theoretical and historical perspective. Nevertheless, the book is written from the perspective of history and anthropology, using Ernesto Laclau's theoretical approach that social structure can be understood as objective reality composed of sentiments laid down through the historical choices of subjective actors (p. xiii). From the perspective of historical studies, the long historical periodization of this book is seen as a form of writing *longue durée* history or history over a long duration. Although it is not specifically explained, this choice is seen as an attempt to correctly understand the historical process. Fernand Braudel, who introduced the concept of *longue durée*, believed that the longer the time perspective, the greater the chance of interpreting events correctly (Henley and Schulte Nordholt 2015). *Longue durée* has led historians to shift the direction of their research from social movements to social structures (Vovelle 1978), as Thompson does in this book.

The human activities that shaped the layers of social structure and cultural meaning in Southeast Asia are explained by Thompson in eight chapters. The discussion begins with Southeast Asia in prehistory, in the chapter titled "Populating Land and Seas." Starting with a focus on human activities in the Southeast Asian region from fifty thousand years ago, the narrative continues with

the development of humans in the Stone Age and the gradual formation of community culture. In the absence of written sources, the study of human tidal waves in this section is based on three important sources: archeology, genetics, and comparative linguistics (p. 22).

In Chapter 2, "Hub of the World," Thompson turns to Southeast Asia in the Iron Age, beginning with the transition from the Bronze Age to the Iron Age. Once again, the author chronologically explains the characteristics of Southeast Asian life during this period. In short, during the Bronze and Iron Ages, Southeast Asian societies began to engage in a variety of social activities that were not limited to just one community. They started to engage in broader interactions between communities and between regions. They began to voyage and trade in various commodities, such as agricultural products and crafts. In addition, the region began to connect with a number of other regions that became world trade centers in their time. Centuries later, the Malacca Strait even became an important part of the trade boom that occurred around the fifth to third centuries BC (Sutherland 2007).

In Chapter 3, "God Kings of the Golden Lands," Thompson enters an era when people already lived in a complex, established system with a government, written language, religion, arts and architecture, economic systems, defense, and politics. Chapter 4, "Power, Piety and Reformation," discusses how the relationship between religion and power influenced the political order of Southeast Asian societies (p. 93). It also discusses Srivijaya and the process of formation of the Malay world, which later came to be associated with Islam.

In Chapter 5, "Family and Gender in Flux," Thompson discusses kinship and family values in terms of the patrilineal system, matrilineal system, and degrees of bilateral or cognatic kinship. The gender aspect is discussed in terms of gender pluralism, gender and politics and power, gender reordered, and religious reform and gendered economies. The process of identity formation in Southeast Asian societies is discussed in Chapter 6, "Emergent Identities." The discussion begins with a description of the factors that influence the formation of community identity, such as language and lineage, movement and migration, servitude and trade. The classification of Indigenous people in Southeast Asia is also a factor in the formation of community identity: racial classification became a tool for the colonial state to organize diverse populations under its control.

Chapter 7 goes on to discuss contesting sovereignty from the fifteenth century to the mid-twentieth. Contesting sovereignty generally involved foreign (European) parties seeking control of Southeast Asian territories from the local ruling elites. In the mid-twentieth century, Southeast Asian territories began to transition into independent and modern states: "European colonialism challenged Southeast Asians to think of themselves in new ways" (p. 180). Perhaps we can agree with this statement: European colonialism in Southeast Asia, especially in Indonesia, sparked struggles for people to escape colonialism and establish sovereign states (Hall 1988; Ricklefs *et al.* 2010).

Long interactions with foreigners made Southeast Asian societies adaptive and able to adopt

new ideas and practices, as discussed in Chapter 8, "Modern Southeast Asia." Colonies in Southeast Asia began to emerge as modern states, with the exception of Thailand and Brunei Darussalam, which retained their dynastic systems. Independent states in the region began to connect with one another through the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, which was established in 1967. This chapter discusses state building in terms of education, printing and the public sphere, mass media, urbanization and social movements, and the mobilization of militaries.

Overall, Thompson successfully presents the process of formation of the Southeast Asian region from the prehistoric era to the modern era in the twentieth century. The book's historical narrative shows the involvement of actors (subjects) who shaped social structures as objective reality. The history of the formation of social structures in Southeast Asian societies is presented chronologically and in depth. To answer the question in the first paragraph of this article: this book is fundamentally different from the dozens of other books on Southeast Asia because Thompson looks at Southeast Asia as a whole over the *longue durée*, studying the development of the social structure of Southeast Asian societies over a long time period.

Unfortunately, the discussion in this book is similar to M. C. Ricklefs' work published 14 years earlier. The perspective of social structure and ethnicity was used by Ricklefs and his four co-authors in *A New History of Southeast Asia* (Ricklefs *et al.* 2010). Ricklefs' book can be said to be a further development of D. G. E. Hall's (1988) work, which was the first scientifically written book on Southeast Asian history. Nevertheless, what is interesting about *The Story of Southeast Asia* is Thompson's choice to start his study from prehistory, so that readers can see Southeast Asia as a region that developed through a very long process. Therefore, this book can be an initial reference or introduction to understanding the historical-anthropological aspects of Southeast Asia before moving on to authoritative theoretical sources in the fields of history, anthropology, sociology, and politics.

Thompson would have done well to pay attention to the various conflicts still occurring in Southeast Asia. Conflicts between the majority population and the Moro Muslim minority in the Philippines, the Patani in Thailand, and the Rohingya in Myanmar have led to problems of human rights violations (Idi 2018). Conflicts need to be considered because they are closely connected to the long process of nation formation in Southeast Asia from an anthropological-historical perspective.

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Subjects and Sojourners: A History of Indochinese in France

Charles Keith

Oakland: University of California Press, 2024.

In *Subjects and Sojourners: A History of Indochinese in France*, Charles Keith offers a sweeping, detailed history of Indochinese colonial subjects who sojourned in France from the 1850s to the 1950s. The book sheds light on how their travel experiences transformed them and, consequently, their own societies upon their return. As the title suggests, the book indeed discusses "Indochinese" (Vietnamese, Khmer, and Lao) sojourners, but it is mostly about Vietnamese men. This is because, as Keith acknowledges, most Indochinese sojourners in France came from (and returned to) the Vietnamese regions of Cochinchina, Annam, and Tonkin rather than the Khmer and Lao regions and were also overwhelmingly male.

The book's central argument is that the presence of these colonial subjects in France meant that "colonial society" also existed in France: "The extension of the French imperial nation-state into Indochina, in turn, extended Indochina's colonial society into France" (p. 6). In other words, the Indochinese who sojourned in France did not leave colonial society but were "one of colonial society's core structural features: they are best conceived of and studied as a form of human circulation within colonial society, rather than outside of it" (p. 6). This book's argument therefore departs from those of scholars who confine "colonial society" to Indochina's borders.

Keith also positions *Subjects and Sojourners* as a corrective to what he thinks is the problematic tendency in global and transnational histories of colonial subjects in Europe to overemphasize, and sometimes fetishize, connections and commonalities between colonial subjects from Asia, Africa, and Latin America (p. 7). These studies may help explain political projects like Black Internationalism or various forms of anticolonialism. However, these historians, Keith argues, tend to inadequately contend with pluralisms and divisions among colonial subjects. They also tend to have weak area knowledge of their case studies and neglect archival collections outside of Europe as well as sources in "non-European" languages. In contrast, *Subjects and Sojourners* is

authored by a historian of modern Vietnam and seeks to be more attentive to pluralisms and divisions by studying the history of Indochinese sojourns in France in the context of Indochina's history itself and by drawing on Vietnamese-language colonial-era materials in archives in the former Indochina. It engages memoirs, travelogues, newspapers, fiction, and more.

It is a delightful book. Reading it is like peering into a kaleidoscope through which one sees a cornucopia of characters across social classes along with their varying motivations and experiences. The diversity is often juxtaposed, with a single page displaying the voices of eight or more individuals. We hear directly from "monarchs, imperial officials, students, journalists, writers, actors, painters, musicians, entrepreneurs, sailors, soldiers, domestics, artisans, factory workers, and others" (p. 9).

The monograph is structured as a round-trip journey from Indochina to France and back, in which the reader is invited to be a participant-observer. It begins by showing the forces bringing around two hundred thousand colonial subjects to the docks where ships wait to carry them to the French metropole. Such forces include having to fight in the two World Wars, the need to study public administration and economic development, being cooks and domestic workers for French families, and more. In the next chapter, we join the colonial subjects on the ship and observe their weeks-long experiences as they cross the ocean. We see how life on board "not only mirrored colonial society's diversity and divisions, but the ship's structures, rules, and routines often magnified them" (p. 43). And once we arrive in France, we get a sense of the sojourners' daily lives, the food they ate, the clothes they wore, what they did for leisure, the relationships they had, and their ties to home. Some were cultural sojourners, some were labor sojourners, and some were political sojourners. And we hear from them directly about how their experiences affected their worldviews and identities. And finally—and this is what makes *Subjects and Sojourners* especially distinct from other studies of the sojourns of colonial subjects to imperial metropoles—we return to Indochina with them to see how "their time abroad profoundly marked colonial and postcolonial societies in Indochina after their returns" (p. 4). The sojourners' travels to France transformed Southeast Asia. Consider how, in the summer of 1945, the three key figures who helped lead seizures of power in what would become the nations of Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos—Hồ Chí Minh, Sơn Ngọc Thành, and Phetsarath Ratanavongsa, respectively—had all lived in France (p. 277). In the case of Vietnam, consider how in October 1945, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam "named a commission to guide its education system along 'democratic, national, and scientific' principles; about 80 percent held degrees from France" (p. 280).

The book abounds with details, anecdotes, and quotations, all of which are inherently interesting. Given this abundance, the book would best serve as a kind of reference encyclopedia helpful for someone interested in any kind of migration experience of Indochinese in France. But for this same reason, the book also felt sprawling, and I would have appreciated more guidance on how to make sense of the vast amount of variegated material. As someone interested in Vietnamese

anticolonialism, I wanted to know: how did Vietnamese people's sojourns affect their responses to colonialism? Keith puts on display hundreds of quotations that might support an argument, but he refrains from offering arguments or generalizable answers. This could be a virtue as it leaves the reader confronted with the complexity of how being in France shaped Vietnamese responses to colonialism. But I still would have appreciated some more inductive theorizing from the examples. In the rest of this review, I will discuss two potential answers that I noticed from the book to the question of how being in France influenced Vietnamese anticolonialism.

First, being in France generated within Vietnamese sojourners empowering feelings of freedom and equality that they never would have experienced if they had not traveled abroad. And such feelings were often directed toward "strengthening" Vietnam. If freedom means having options and being aware of possibilities to choose from, then being in France made the Vietnamese freer as they engaged with "new" people, texts, and ideas that expanded their political, philosophical, and cultural horizons and imaginations. Nguyễn Tường Tam (who became Nhất Linh) "inhaled France's newspapers and novels, 'pondering their craft and how to incorporate it into and transform Vietnamese literature.'" According to his brother, it was only by coming to France that he "had seen the face of a progressive and democratic civilization, and he now knew what freedom and equality was" (p. 2). Sometimes, being mistaken for Japanese or Chinese allowed Vietnamese to dodge their status as colonial subjects (p. 3). Vietnamese students were exposed to diverse political ideologies such as anarchism, republicanism, various Marxisms, and even right-wing ideologies such as Nazism (p. 218). They were freer to study, debate, and discuss these ideas in France than back home, and their differences led to conflicts in the 1930s. They opened each other's mail and destroyed newspapers and posters they did not like (p. 2). And it was not just new literature and political ideas that students encountered. One Vietnamese medical student requested financial help to ship back three hundred kilos of medical books he had acquired in France. "In Tonkin," Lê Văn Chinh wrote, "there is no library in this field; these books will help preserve the learned instruction and good advice of the masters of French medicine" (p. 97).

In France, Vietnamese sojourners found opportunities to exercise their freedom despite the French government's clear attempts to control them for colonial purposes. These Vietnamese had their own motivations which they acted on, and this may have had subversive effects. For example, Phạm Quỳnh and Nguyễn Văn Vĩnh were sent to France to "tout the administration's reform agenda in speeches and meetings with politicians and journalists," but the two men went off on their own and "embarked on a dizzying program of museums, libraries, historic sights, theaters, and restaurants," "dabbled in politics," attended a lecture by a French Communist, and had meals with radicals such as the future Hồ Chí Minh (p. 22). And while the French had their own motivations for creating a "colonial exhibition" and showcasing Indochinese Buddhist monks carrying out rituals "under the gaze of curious onlookers," these monks had come to Europe to proselytize their own religion, feeling that Europeans had been coming to spread their religion in Indochina so now

they had a right to spread Buddhism in Europe (p. 74).

With these new feelings of freedom, some Vietnamese reveled in new sensations of anticolonial power. For example, Phạm Chí Phụng encountered French men who tried to intimidate him by saying they had served as secret police back in Indochina, but, he said, "on their own soil, they are just starving dogs . . . I terrified them during our conversations, for here we have a freedom of opinion that bears no resemblance to politics in our country" (p. 65). Even encounters with European prostitutes took on an anticolonial character, such as when some Indochinese men described their encounters with prostitutes and their acts of sexual domination of French women as a kind of racialized and political revenge against the colonizer (p. 175).

The second thing I noticed is that, although Vietnamese sojourners experienced new feelings of being powerful, they also experienced new feelings of powerlessness. Of course, many would have felt powerless in certain ways back in Indochina, but being in France allowed them to see more clearly the stark contrast between French strength and Vietnamese weakness in the realms of science, art, philosophy, administration, and governance. And yet, these negative feelings also motivated national "self-strengthening." For example, earlier Indochinese sojourners to France, such as the men sent by Emperor Tự Đức to France in 1867 to buy books (p. 18), saw their sojourn in terms of figuring out what they could do for Indochina. One official said: "thanks to reading European works translated into Chinese as well as my trip to Paris, I had come to understand France's morals and its administrative system. Indochina must imitate Europe" (p. 18). And Đào Trinh Nhất could not help but compare the differences between metropole and colony: "it is impossible to guess how many bookstores there are in Paris, much like it is impossible to guess how many opium dens or Fontaine liquor stores there are in Saigon and Cholon" (p. 165). We do not know whether Đào Trinh Nhất saw such differences as primarily a result of colonial oppression or due to a lack of Vietnamese efforts. Regardless, the ability of Vietnamese to make such comparisons inspired new desires for self-cultivation. Consider how Tạ Quang Bửu, after appreciating the *Mona Lisa* and reading Edmond Rostand and Paul Valéry, realized these works of genius and "by extension his own 'inferiority, impotence, and infirmity'" (p. 165). Such realizations may have inspired young Vietnamese to turn inward to be self-critical in order to cultivate themselves. Some students, as Trịnh Hưng Ngẫu put it, "crazily waste their parents' money, dress in the latest fashions, have nothing at all in their minds, understand nothing of what they see, and eventually return home empty-handed. At this rate, how will our nation advance on the path of progress?" (p. 167). In short, some people experienced new feelings of powerfulness and also powerlessness through their travels, and both often appeared to motivate these individuals to think about how to construct Vietnamese dignity.

There is much more to say about this rich book that space does not permit. I will end by saying that if anyone wants to understand modern Vietnam, and if we consider how the Vietnamese who shaped modern Vietnam were shaped by their experiences in France, then this book becomes

enormously valuable, even essential.

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The Dragon's Underbelly: Dynamics and Dilemmas in Vietnam's Economy and Politics

Nhu Truong and Tuong Vu, eds.
Singapore: ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute, 2023.

Since the mid-1990s, Vietnam has topped the list of countries expected to become Asia's next economic miracle. The social, cultural, and geographical parallels between Vietnam and the "Asian tigers"—Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore—and the "Asian dragon"—China—are too many and too striking for this temptation to be avoided. All these societies place education and hard work extremely high in their value systems. Vietnam is often seen as a little China in terms of its social and cultural institutions as well as its political and economic system. Like other high-growth Asian economies, Vietnam is located along the busiest trade route connecting the Pacific and Indian Oceans. And yet, the expectation remains just that—an expectation—even after three decades. Why has Vietnam defied this persistent belief? Why has Vietnam not become an Asian tiger even though it has often been labeled an Asian dragon? Answering this question could also debunk two other powerful myths about Vietnam. The first is related to the nature of the state in Vietnam and claims that it is a developmental state, a kind of government that actively intervenes in the economy to help boost its competitiveness. The second is related to the strategic trajectory of Vietnam and maintains that the country is in transition from a state-directed to a market economy or from totalitarianism to democracy.

The Dragon's Underbelly addresses these issues by examining several aspects of Vietnam's politics and economy and the interplay between the two. In Part 1, Chapter 1, by Nhu Truong and Tuong Vu and Thuy Nguyen, and Chapter 2, by Vu Quang Viet, offer historical perspectives on Vietnam's development path since the launch of *Doi Moi* ("reform," literally "renovation") in 1986. Chapter 3, by Upalat Korwatanasakul, and Chapter 4, by Truong Quang Hoan, explore the dynamic pattern of Vietnam's position in the global value chains, which is key to understanding the nature of Vietnam's economic growth in the last decades. Chapter 5, by Yoon Ah Oh, is unique as it focuses on Vietnam's economic dependence on China, an important factor that both informs and shapes Vietnam's development path.

Part 2 of the volume looks at various issues in state-society relations in contemporary

Vietnam. In Chapter 6, Mai Fujita examines the evolving state-business relationships by asking "who owns and leads Vietnam's largest firms." Chapter 7, by Quang Chau and Mai Van Tinh, sheds light on the way and the architecture with which the Vietnam Communist Party (VCP) controls the country's higher education, a critical elite-producing and knowledge-producing institution. In Chapter 8, Nguyen Thuc Cuong and Hoang Cam Thanh investigate an increasingly salient dimension of social life in Vietnam called "mediatized infrapolitics," a realm of unobtrusive resistance to state power that capitalizes on the penetration of the Internet in people's everyday lives. Chapter 9, by Thinh-Van Vu, discusses the relations of Vietnam's trade unions with workers on the one hand and with the state on the other. Chapter 10, by Trinh Khanh Ly, offers case studies on another, no less critical, dimension of workers' lives and state-labor relations in Vietnam—labor export and illegal migration.

The book's Part 3 compares Vietnam with China, the bigger "dragon." In Chapter 11, Nguyen Khac Giang uses game theory to argue that Vietnam's Communist regime is more responsive to popular demands than is its Chinese counterpart. Chapter 12, by Duy Trinh, compares the sincerity of Vietnam's and China's anti-corruption campaigns by examining the breadth of these campaigns and their limitations due to political protection.

The chapters in Part 1 document well how Vietnam has resisted the "rising dragon" narrative with its economic performance. As a result of its economic liberalization in the first decade after *Doi Moi*, its gross domestic product (GDP) grew spectacularly from about 3 percent in 1986 to 9.5 percent in 1995. But as a consequence of the Asian financial crisis (1997–98), the GDP plunged to nearly 5 percent in 1999. In the two decades from 2000 to 2019, Vietnam's GDP stabilized around 6.4 percent, peaking at about 7.5 percent in 2004–5 and bottoming out at about 5 percent in 2012 (pp. 53, 75). As Vu Quang Viet points out, Vietnam's economic performance in the three decades between 1990 and 2018, measured by the annual average of GDP growth, was similar to India's (6.8 percent for Vietnam and 6.3 percent for India) and far lower than China's (9.3 percent). Vietnam is clearly not in the same league as the Asian "tiger" and "dragon" economies. If China achieved four decades of annual growth in per capita GDP at 7–9 percent, and South Korea three decades at 7–8 percent, Vietnam achieved only one decade of high growth (the 2000s) at almost 6 percent (pp. 52–55). Viet estimates that if Vietnam continues with the same rate of growth as in the 2010s while other countries stand still, it will take 29 years for it to catch up with China, 54 years with South Korea, 24 years with Thailand, and 36 years with the world average in terms of per capita GDP (p. 56).

As the chapters in Part 1 show, Vietnam's economic "success"—if its mediocre performance can be called a success—has been heavily reliant on foreign direct investment (FDI). In many countries, FDI inflows bring not just capital but also a higher level of technology. Not so in Vietnam. The chapters by Upalat Korwatanasakul and Truong Quang Hoan meticulously demonstrate how Vietnam's rapid economic development has resulted from the country's occupying a niche in the

global value chains and how this niche is too comfortable to escape. In this niche, Vietnam imported an increasingly larger amount of intermediate goods for final exports while the share of domestic value added in gross exports decreased greatly. In this respect, Vietnam has moved in the opposite direction to that of China and the major economies in Southeast Asia (pp. 76, 114–117). The comfortability of this niche stems, as Yoon Ah Oh suggests, from Vietnam's proximity to and dependence on China. The "China boom" made it easier for Vietnam to jump-start manufacturing-led industrialization, but at the same time it also disincentivized Vietnam's economic structure from pursuing technological progress (pp. 159–160). The irony is, as Viet notes, "no country in Asia has relied on FDI inflows as much as Vietnam; with respect to industrial deepening, it is likely that few countries have benefited less from high levels of FDI" (p. 60). He observes that labor productivity in the FDI sector declined sharply while that of the non-state domestic sector nearly stagnated during 2005–18 (p. 65). In the big picture painted by these chapters, Vietnam's income is generated largely by low-skilled labor and the country is falling into the middle-income trap. If the "China boom" was fueled by cheap labor, cheap land, cheap capital, and cheap technology, the "Vietnam success" has relied mainly on cheap labor and cheap land, with state-owned enterprises (SOEs) enjoying cheap capital and nobody getting cheap technology.

Why did the "little dragon" not want to rise? Or, to use a phrase that has become famous in Vietnam, why did Vietnam not want to develop? The contributors to this volume agree that the answer can be found in Vietnam's industrial policy and the VCP's vision of modernization. The policy and vision assign a "leading role" to the SOEs and entice foreign investment with land rental and tax incentives, all at the expense of the private sector. This explains the joke-but-not-joke that Vietnam belongs to the unique category of "countries that don't want to develop." At a deeper level, this apparently irrational behavior makes sense from the VCP's perspective. "The regime is walking a tightrope and must navigate a delicate balance," Nhu Truong and Tuong Vu argue, "between imperatives for rapid development and increased existential threats, particularly in scenarios where the party has failed to be responsive to societal needs and unrest" (p. 11). This observation is reinforced by the chapters in Part 2, which portray a ruling party that worships its control of society. Still, this argument fails to clarify why Vietnam's development path is in many ways the opposite of China's, where the ruling Communist Party also worships its control of society and also has been walking a tightrope between the imperatives of rapid growth and regime preservation.

The chapters of Part 3, which compare Vietnam with China, do not solve this puzzle. Using game theory to analyze the nested games between political leaders, those who select them, the population at large, and foreign powers, Nguyen Khac Giang's chapter promises to shed light on the underlying structures and their related equilibria of the overall political struggles in the two countries. However, the author's interpretations of the players' preferences are questionable, rendering his conclusion less reliable. For example, the discussion of the regime's payoff order in

the stage of "authoritarian consolidation" seems to be mistaken for a previous period (pp. 324–325). Duy Trinh's chapter on the political protection in Vietnam's and China's anti-corruption campaigns also offers weak arguments as it employs weak proxies for what it aims to measure. In particular, instead of collecting stories about officials' personal ties to VCP chief Nguyen Phu Trong, the author assumes that if—and only if—a person was born in the same province, worked at the same organization, or went to the same university as the VCP chief, he or she had relevant informal connections to Trong (p. 352).

Overall, although the book does not explicitly address the "Vietnam in transition" narrative and although some chapters habitually adopt this narrative, the picture that emerges from the volume is far from aligned with this narrative. In this picture, rather than transitioning toward a market economy and democracy, Vietnam gets stuck in hard authoritarianism and crony capitalism and will tend to stay there as long as this combination serves the interests of the ruling Communist Party. What the book does not discuss, but can be inferred from Chapter 5's findings, is that Vietnam's economy may get another chance to take off when the China boom comes to an end and the global supply chains are rearranged as a result of the US-China rivalry. This moment may be coming soon. *The Dragon's Underbelly* is an excellent contribution to the literature on Vietnam's politics and economy. It also provides thought-provoking case studies for the discussion of economic development and societal modernization. Most important, it helps to debunk powerful myths about Vietnam and about the path to development.

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The Politics of Coercion: State and Regime Making in Cambodia

Neil Loughlin
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How has coercion evolved and persisted in Cambodia? Who benefits politically and economically, and how? How and to what extent has the state constructed a clientelist system? Neil Loughlin's well-researched *The Politics of Coercion* addresses these questions, examining contemporary Cambodia through the frame of its coercive underpinnings. The author, a political scientist at City University of London, specializes in research on authoritarianism, Southeast Asia (specifically Cambodia), China, and human rights. This book is based on his dissertation.

The book commences with a puzzle: What explains the contested, unstable durability of an over-four-decade-long regime-led state in Cambodia? The author addresses this question by

explaining that besides theatrics, pageantry, and memorialization, regime-directed state coercion entrenched the dominance of ruling elites and the Cambodian People's Party (CPP) under the personalized rule of former Prime Minister Hun Sen. By coercion, the author refers to historically embedded "acts of violence" and "the regime's authority over society," which include "high- and low-intensity coercion" (p. 3). The origins of the coercive CPP-led state date back to 1975, when the Khmer Rouge violently seized power; this was followed by civil war, United Nations occupation, and the birth of a regime that relied not only on coercion but also on electoral patronage and crony capitalism. Today, stability in Cambodia is managed by kleptocratic elites who have co-opted bureaucrats, extracting and sharing rent.

Chapter 1 traces the roots of Cambodia's current-day coercive coalition to the embers of the 1975–79 Khmer Rouge regime (which itself had destroyed the country's postcolonial state and political structures). The new coalition used "coercive-intensive" (p. 21) state-society relations to retain power. As a result, by the late 1980s one party (the CPP) dominated the regime and was able to lord it over state and society ever after. This occurred despite insurgent threats, extreme economic cleavages, and foreign intervention by Vietnam. The leadership was dominated by Hun Sen, Sar Keng, and Tea Banh.

Chapter 2 considers the period 1979–89, an era in which the CPP consolidated its power over Cambodia. Vietnamese troops withdrew in 1989, and the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) was deployed in 1992–93. Though UNTAC oversaw the 1993 election (producing two prime ministers), the 1997 putsch secured the CPP's power for good, and the party never looked back. This was due principally to the state's use of violence rather than elections. Villagers were coerced, bureaucrats (including the military) were co-opted, and an "economic elite was nurtured" (p. 18). Ultimately, any elite challengers ended up supporting Hun Sen.

Chapter 3 contends that electoral clientelism was secondary to CPP coercion during 1999–2018. Loughlin argues that despite the CPP's use of coercion and "authoritarian rule" during this period, the country held "competitive elections" until 2018, when Cambodia returned to single-party rule (p. 60). Indeed, though electoral clientelism was a CPP tool in the 2000s, it was overshadowed by state coercion. The author then examines each election, showing the patronage as well as poll irregularities and violence that the CPP used to maintain control. The author suggests that the CPP's near losses in the 2013 general election and 2017 commune election represented a genuine threat to the ruling coalition even though the Hun Sen-led regime dominated the state. Furthermore, the chapter looks at the participation of the regime in Cambodia's endemic land-grabbing crisis. Ultimately, coercion was the preeminent factor guaranteeing the survival of the elites.

Chapter 4 scrutinizes the regime's efforts to legitimize its control. Using various narratives such as "stability" (p. 78), "peace" (p. 92), and the "threat of 'color revolution'" (p. 81), the CPP sought to justify its continued right to dominate the state and country, thanks to which leading elites could share in the exploitation of national resources. Such claims were leveraged also to

justify coercion against the regime's opponents and to guarantee the regime's survival. The regime also used "lawfare" to legally repress dissent while relying on quiescent security forces to ensure "law and order in the name of stability" (p. 89). The completely uncompetitive 2018 general election, which garnered the CPP victories in all electoral seats, was touted by the regime as proof of its democratic legitimacy. This claim was made despite any effective opposition, amid allegations of coercion, and with the CPP's mobilization of voters. The regime's effort to present itself as a democratic, stabilizing, electorally legitimate force was an attempt to prevent change, protect the coalition, and hold on to power.

Chapter 5 looks at the internal security apparatus that has guaranteed the CPP-led regime's survival. The chapter goes into extreme detail to explain the two levels of security for Hun Sen and the regime. The first is the regular armed forces, supported by the police, which has been co-opted by the CPP and is institutionally dominated by the prime minister through the allocation of patronage and other benefits. This first tier is bloated at the top and relatively inefficient. The second level is made up of the elite "bodyguard" units (p. 110). This tier is well armed, trained, and tasked with acting as a sort of Praetorian Guard to ensure security for CPP officials, particularly the prime minister and his family.

Chapter 6 focuses on Cambodia's capitalist tycoons, who—working in league with state elites such as Hun Sen, CPP heads, and senior bureaucrats—are allowed to predatorily siphon off resources for their venal interests in return for their eager support of the regime. As a result, Cambodia has evolved into a veritable kleptocracy where society is exploited by the wealthy few at the expense of the marginalized majority. These few oscillate around a highly stratified economic system that is manipulated and arbitrated by Hun Sen. But in fact the state expects subservience from its elite tycoon clients and has been willing to use compulsion and coercion to ensure lasting control.

The Conclusion restates the book's initial purpose, which is to explore the durability of the authoritarian regime in Cambodia. The author restates that the use of coercion has been a central reason for the persistence of Cambodia's CPP-led regime. State coercion, utilized for the regime's survival, as well as tycoons' support for the regime have led to a widening of the gap between rich and poor as well as an increasingly entrenched widening of state-society cleavages. The author then considers the 2023 decision by Hun Sen to step down as prime minister in favor of his son Hun Manet. With the father still retaining much of the power, the accession of the son (with other family members in leading political positions) inaugurated the political dynasty of the Hun family. The author argues that Hun Sen will likely try to "steward" (p. 139) this succession arrangement from his post as CPP president. Indeed, the coalition of party-state, economic, and military elites that he created will likely endure in power for some time to come.

The Politics of Coercion offers a fresh appraisal of Cambodia's political order, updated to 2024. Among the book's strengths are that it relies on valuable methodology—18 months of fieldwork,

previously unpublished internal CPP documentation, and 150 interviews. The study is also clearly written, with useful detail and comprehensible conclusions. Among the book's drawbacks are, first, that it traces the historical underpinnings of the CPP's modern-day use of coercion back to the Khmer Rouge era. Actually, coercion was common in Cambodia also under French colonialism as well as the regimes of Norodom Sihanouk and Lon Nol. Second, the author seems driven by a need in every chapter to prioritize coercion over other determinants (e.g., clientelism) of regime making in Cambodia, becoming almost coercion-deterministic. Perhaps some parts of Cambodia were affected more by other determinants. A third drawback is that the book does not grapple with the extent to which Cambodia might have ever considered a limited democracy. Since the author does discuss democracy, it would have been useful to see literature on that subject.

Nevertheless, this study represents a newly published, up-to-date, and important source for understanding the evolution of the Cambodian state and regime. It is highly informative and easy to read. I would recommend it not only for academics and journalists but also for laypeople. It is a useful addition to the literature on contemporary Cambodian and Southeast Asian politics.

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The Apathy of Empire: Cambodia in American Geopolitics

James A. Tyner
Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2024.

James A. Tyner's *The Apathy of Empire: Cambodia in American Geopolitics* is a meticulously researched study of Cambodia's importance to US policymakers after World War II. Moving beyond the highly cited cases of Richard Nixon's invasion of Cambodia in 1970 and the "secret" carpet bombings from 1969 to 1973, Tyner's study critically positions US military intervention in Cambodia within the context of the United States' shifting grand strategy and national security interests during the Cold War, as they applied to Vietnam and Indochina more broadly. Framing his project as an exercise in critical geopolitics in general—"making arguments about geopolitical conjunctures and about trying to understand those conjunctures" (p. 23)—and practical geopolitics in particular—the contingent and contextual "domain of policymaking and geopolitical reasoning whereby officials articulate national interests and rationalize concrete diplomatic overtures and military operations" (p. 2)—Tyner articulates how Cambodia as a case study unsettles the seemingly straightforward question of center and periphery that underlies the execution of US grand strategy and the constitution of a spatially conditioned American *nomos*.

Drawing from Peter Feaver and Hal Brands, Tyner defines "grand strategy" as "a plan for applying resources to achieve certain defined objectives" (p. 4) and a "conceptual framework that helps nations determine *where* they want to go and how they ought to get there" (p. 5). Drawing from the legal theorist Carl Schmitt, who defines *nomos* as a "unity of space and law, of order and orientation" (p. 5), Tyner centers a desired spatial order or *nomos* as "both the process and the project of grand strategies" (p. 5). Although by no means predetermined, US geopolitical domination emerged as a new spatial order or American *nomos* in the post-World War II era. Drawing from earlier histories of expansion, American officials "sought to construct a global economy centered on American national interests" (p. 13), a hegemonic spatial order in service of free markets, private property, and US corporate interests. Significant to Indochina in general, and Cambodia in particular, American lawmakers "were also prepared, if need be, to kill for this spatial order" (p. 13). Over the course of six chapters and an epilogue, *The Apathy of Empire* traces the shifting terrain of US foreign policy from Franklin Roosevelt to Richard Nixon in relation to Cambodia's increasing geopolitical importance to the war in Vietnam.

Chapter 1, "Into the Breach," addresses World War II as a turning point for a new American *nomos* and documents the United States' early involvement in Southeast Asia. Despite a US alliance with Ho Chi Minh and his Viet Minh army against the Axis powers and collaborationist regimes like Vichy France during the latter years of World War II, most American officials considered Europe most central to US interests. Subsequently, American president Harry Truman signaled that the United States would not be opposed to French forces mobilizing to reclaim what they continued to see as their colonial possessions. By 1947 the rhetoric of a "Soviet threat" to US interests had taken hold, and it was formally codified in a 1948 National Security Council report warning that the "ultimate objective of Soviet-directed world communism is the domination of the world" (p. 38). Attuned to Communist paranoia in the United States, the French recast their colonial war against the Viet Minh as a global war against Communism and forwarded a proposal to establish a "free" Vietnam in opposition to Ho Chi Minh's Democratic Republic of Vietnam. From here, the United States' goal became the installation and support of "a pro-Western, non-communist state as a viable alternative" (p. 40), one that would participate in the emergent US-controlled global economy.

Chapter 2, "Bracketing War," addresses US intervention in Southeast Asia under Dwight D. Eisenhower's administration. Emphasizing the significance of the region's raw materials, especially for the United States and its ally Japan, as well as its geostrategic location between East and South Asia, American officials "agreed that Indochina—and by extension, Southeast Asia—was important; left unclear was whether the region was *absolutely* important" (p. 61). With the defeat of France by the Viet Minh guerrilla army in May 1954 and the threat of an Indochina "lost to communism," the US geopolitical calculus experienced a change, and Eisenhower moved to recenter Indochina. The political response to the French defeat moved Southeast Asia geographically from periphery

to main stage of the Cold War. Subscribing to the "domino theory," Eisenhower's administration saw Indochina, and especially Vietnam, as key to Southeast Asia, believing that "if the communists gained Indochina, it was only a question of time until all of Southeast Asia fell, thus imperiling America's western defensive perimeter" (p. 70). The Geneva Accords of 1954 partitioned Vietnam into north and south, pending national elections regarding reunification in 1956. Wanting to construct a pro-Western, anti-Communist ally in Southeast Asia, the United States did not sign the accords but drafted its own proviso, which would establish the legal basis for future actions in violation of the accords. In 1961 John F. Kennedy entered the White House, and his administration heralded a change in US military doctrine. Kennedy centered unconventional military operations and counterinsurgency operations, developing a comprehensive approach to respond to the National Liberation Front's insurgency in South Vietnam, expanding the United States' role in the region. Increasingly "the security of America's vital interests was tied to the physical and territorial security of South Vietnam" (p. 82), with plans formulated to "seal off the borders" between South Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. When Lyndon Johnson took over for Kennedy, the United States was committed to its path in Vietnam. Johnson increased covert operations in North Vietnam, increased American presence in South Vietnam, and expanded programs and military operations to seal off Vietnam's borders with Cambodia and Laos through diplomacy or force.

Chapter 3, "Bordering War," details the process through which Cambodia, a sovereign and neutral state, moved from the geopolitical periphery to center stage in the US war in Indochina. Discussing US-Cambodia relations through the fraught political dynamics between Prince Norodom Sihanouk, Cambodia's head of state, and successive American presidents, the chapter illustrates the racial logic that governed US Cold War policy in Southeast Asia, one premised on the idea of Communism as globally monolithic and one that inflexibly partitioned the world into two camps. Dismissing Sihanouk's national security concerns, the United States overrode Cambodia's territorial sovereignty, with Cambodia's border with South Vietnam taking precedence over all other considerations.

Chapter 4, "Aterritorial Wars," addresses the paradoxical character of US foreign policy in South Vietnam and Cambodia. Whereas US military strategy was explicitly territorial in South Vietnam, founded upon containment of Communism, "American objectives in Cambodia were aterritorial, marked by a geopolitical logic not confined to territorial aggrandizement" (p. 136). Tyner argues that US military objectives were never about occupying or securing Cambodian territory but about securing the borders of South Vietnam.

Chapter 5, "A Widening War," and Chapter 6, "The Perfidy of Geopolitics," discuss the expansion of the Vietnam War into Cambodia's interior with the Richard Nixon presidency. In Chapter 5, Tyner's argument addresses the simultaneous process by which Cambodia became central to Nixon's foreign policy in Indochina vis-à-vis Vietnam, while Vietnam in turn paradoxically became peripheral to the United States' spatial order. Shifting the United States' grand strategy

away from the "domino theory," Nixon reframed South Vietnam as important only so far as "U.S. policy and practice in the region demonstrated America's resolve to sustain U.S. global hegemony and credibility" (p. 169). Looking to "compel" North Vietnam to accept an agreement most advantageous to US interests, the United States unleashed unrestricted warfare against Cambodia, ostensibly denying Communists sanctuary and disrupting the "Ho Chi Minh Trail" through brutal B-52 carpet bombing campaigns. As Nixon used the sustained bombardment of Cambodia to "buy time," he and Henry Kissinger gradually dissociated the United States from South Vietnam, downplaying the region's significance to national security interests. In Chapter 6, Tyner expands on the relegation of Vietnam to peripheral importance for the American *nomos* as well as the disastrous consequences of the expansion of war into Cambodia. Nixon's bid to "win a just peace" in Vietnam ignited civil war in Cambodia, as the country became more unstable from unrelenting US bombardment. For Kissinger and Nixon, the United States' prestige and credibility took precedence over the lives of men, women, and children in Cambodia, and what this required was the United States providing South Vietnam with "just enough 'breathing space' to not fall immediately . . . [T]o this end, Cambodia remained central to U.S. geopolitics" (p. 239).

The epilogue of *The Apathy of Empire* summarizes the arc of the book, reiterates the book's intervention with regard to Cambodia, and addresses US grand strategy in the post-Vietnam War era. Post-World War II, US grand strategy promoted a US-led spatial global order and capitalist economy. This required containment of what the United States perceived to be "Soviet-led communism." In Indochina, Tyner argues, US intervention "was never about the people of Cambodia, Vietnam, or Laos; the objective was never to 'save' or 'defend' the citizens of Southeast Asia from the harmful 'cancer' of communism" (p. 242). Instead, the US Cold War objectives were "always about geopolitical expansion in the abstract: to protect America's national security interests and to expand American power and prestige through the region" (p. 242). To those ends, the United States adopted a "strategic but apathetic approach to Cambodia" (p. 245). This approach required US disregard for international law and had disastrous consequences for the Cambodian people.

Tyner's *The Apathy of Empire* is an invaluable contribution to the critical study of US-Cambodia relations, Cambodian American histories of violence, and US Cold War interventions in Southeast Asia. The author's impressive inclusion of primary sources, including State Department memos, telegraphs, meeting minutes, telephone transcripts, and more, offers detailed insight into the cultural politics of statecraft and the logics of militarized security. The book could benefit, however, from an expanded engagement with the analysis Tyner leaves us with in the later sections of the book. The first reference to the "apathy" of the book's title comes in the epilogue. Although I understand the significance of Tyner's discussion of US grand strategy in relation to the making of a global spatial order, I would have also appreciated a discussion of the relationship between apathy, as an affective orientation, and the spatial order of empire. What, for instance, is the link between "the apathy of empire" and the spatialization of disposability? How/is apathy racialized

as well as spatialized? How might the militarized rhetoric of "collateral damage" reflect an apathy with the potential to unravel the peripheral/central dichotomy? How might apathy function alongside antipathy in empire's uneven distribution of injury and death? Such additional engagement could contribute to the reckoning Tyner evokes in the Acknowledgments section, a framing of the deployment of US sovereign violence in service to the spatial expansion of corporate interests and finance capital as "war crimes and other crimes against humanity" (p. 261).

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Forging the Nation: Land Struggles in Myanmar's Transition Period

SiuSue Mark
Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2023.

In *Forging the Nation*, SiuSue Mark tackles a dual transformation in Myanmar during the second decade of the twentieth-first century: the fragile democratization process and the trend toward a free-market economy, although both were short-lived. Mark reexamines and analyzes these transformations based on the literature on the political economy and ethnic politics in Myanmar as well as her extensive fieldwork with the stakeholders involved in land (re)allocation and management at the time.

Forging the Nation is organized into seven chapters in addition to an introduction and conclusion. The introduction presents the main argument, which revolves around the political economy of land tenure reform and land politics, since both represent changes in the system of property rights as well as land administration and governance (pp. 3–4). Mark argues that the democratization process did not only allow commoners to participate in the political sphere to some extent but also empowered common people in contestation over the land, as an economic asset, amid the "land rush" driven by global capitalism (pp. 16, 22). The democratization process, in particular, enabled the coexistence of "pacts between a reformist and political elites, and pressure from grassroots mobilization" that reconstituted land institutions (p. 7).

The first four chapters of *Forging the Nation* portray the dynamics of land politics at the national level. In Chapter 1, "The Context of Land Tenure Reform," and Chapter 2, "The State's Quest for Legitimacy Opens Space," Mark describes the history and reform of Myanmar's legal-political institutions and their impacts on the allocation of political power and economic resources. The author notes that Myanmar's legal system was plagued with "stacked laws," which resulted in people having to deal with different types of laws enacted by various regimes throughout the country's

history (pp. 28–32). This problem disproportionally affected commoners, whose lands were usually expropriated by the elites—both state and private—because the elites could arbitrarily rely on a set of laws that allowed them to claim landownership. Concomitantly, the changes in political institutions, especially the guarantee of commoners' rights through "official channels of negotiation and compromise," created a political space for social groups that had suffered from land appropriation to bargain with the state (p. 44).

In Chapter 3, "The Ethnic Politics of Land," and Chapter 4, "New Market Incentives Shape Norms," Mark explains the impacts on land politics of "new" politico-economic conditions: the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement signed in 2015, and the transition to a neoliberal economy promoted by international organizations. Initially, the ceasefire agreement incentivized "ethnic armed organizations" and unarmed ethnic groups to reshape institutions in order to enhance their land rights. The economic transition also motivated the previously autarkic Myanmar state to adopt international standards based on the idea of promoting competition in its regulatory framework (p. 90). Notably, the state's adoption of these standards resulted from the opportunities created by inflows of new foreign capital—apart from that coming from China—and pressure from the public for a more equitable economic system. As it turned out, the changes did not lead to a freer or fairer economy since they could not break the domination of military capital—both personnel and entities—and well-connected entrepreneurs. Due to the limited ability of the state to implement policies, these actors were able to access lands endowed with natural resources at low, if not no, cost and circumvent certain environmental and social regulations (pp. 99, 110).

The following three chapters deal with contestation over land at the subnational level. Case studies from three regions—the Ayeyarwady Region, Chin State, and Kayin State—are presented to "demonstrate how outcomes in contests over land are contingent on the specific historic, political, and geographic contexts that characterize each region" (pp. 8–9). The author focuses on these three regions to demonstrate the variety of land politics in Myanmar, where pluralism is the norm rather than the exception. The chapters do not merely describe the history and state of land politics at the subnational level but rather reexamine land conflicts in each region by analyzing specific variables: pressures on the land due to the historic, geographic, and economic conditions of each region; political opportunities created by the interaction of authorities at different levels; and responses by civil society groups (p. 111). Each variable is directly related to Myanmar's transformation. The first tackles the liberalization of the economy, while the second and third deal with democratization and the ceasefire agreement.

In Chapter 5, "Ayeyarwady Region: State-Citizen Negotiations," Mark gives an account of land governance and contestation in the predominantly Burman lowland, which is known as Myanmar's "rice bowl"—implying high pressure on the land (pp. 112–113). Thanks to the growing importance of elections, various political actors—for example, members of the ruling Union Solidarity and Development Party—were eager to assist farmers, who formed the majority in the Ayeyarwady

Delta, to regain and protect land use rights (pp. 116–117).

In the delta, civil society organizations such as farmers unions and nongovernmental organizations chose to negotiate with government agencies rather than using the courts that had hurt them (p. 126). However, some farmers movements relied on unofficial protests rather than official negotiations, due to their distrust of the ruling government (pp. 129–130). These varying strategies used by farmers groups discouraged the formation of horizontal farmers movements (p. 133).

In Chapter 6, "Chin State: Between State and Customary Institutions," Mark moves the focal point from the lowland Ayeyarwady Region to the mountainous Chin State, bordering India and Bangladesh. There were fewer conflicts over land in Chin State than in the delta due to insufficient infrastructure and poor resource endowment in the former (pp. 134–135). In Chin State, thus, people were able to maintain customary land tenures that allowed swidden farming, where farmers would move to different plots of lands annually. This situation was changed slightly by the state-led market transition. Notably, the state restricted swidden farming with the Farmland Law and the Vacant Fallow Virgin (VFV) Law in 2012. These laws defined swidden farmers as outlaws who were trespassing on government-claimed lands.

Unlike in the Ayeyarwady Region, political opportunities for progressive land politics were limited by the Chin State authorities' incentives to attract businesses to invest in VFV land. The authorities also had limited power to "challenge national land laws that did not recognize customary land" (p. 145). Furthermore, civil society movements in Chin State had insufficient human and financial resources to effectively engage in land politics (p. 146). Rather, the movement to promote customary land rights was driven by Chin political elites playing the role of intermediaries in regional and national politics (pp. 147–148). These traditional elites participated—and continue to do so—in official politics to create new sets of institutions that allowed the continuation of customary land practices.

In Chapter 7, "Kayin State or Kawthoolei: Dual Administration," the author explores a situation where there were two administrative bodies in land politics: the government and the Karen National Union (KNU). The people of Kayin State were faced with increased land pressure after the ceasefire agreement, which allowed investors to acquire lands and natural resources in this area (p. 152). The increased pressure on land worsened the lives of commoners in "mixed-control areas," where people suffered from an incoherent governance structure, multiple tax regimes, and conflicts among rival armed groups (p. 155).

Despite the suffering caused by the existence of two governing entities, people in Kayin State could rely on the KNU as an alternative to the government when they had a land dispute problem (p. 166). The KNU used the situation to cement its status as the "protector" of the Karen people. As in Chin State, civil society movements were not well developed in Kayin State; but some of them, such as the Karen Environmental and Social Action Network, provided the KNU with technical assistance in land governance (p. 168).

In the conclusion chapter, the author provides some suggestions for further study and raises questions about Myanmar's uncertain trajectory after the coup of 2021, which reversed the reforms of the country's democratization period.

This book can, to some extent, be compared to Thant Myint-U's *The Hidden History of Burma* (2019), since both reexamine the history and democratization of Myanmar. The former focuses largely on land politics as the center of Myanmar's political economy, while the latter presents a more general account of the country's political and economic liberalization during the 2010s.

Since the characteristics and patterns of capitalist development in Myanmar are not comprehensively discussed in *Forging the Nation*, the reviewer would like to mention them here. Borrowing Karl Polanyi's (2001) concept of "double movement," *Forging the Nation* shows the various ways in which Myanmar transformed into a market economy. Unlike Polanyi, who highlights the dislocation of commoners due to marketization, Mark observes that adherence to neoliberal policies, accompanied to some extent with the liberalization of politics, created contradictory conditions for commoners. On the one hand, the policies resulted in "accumulation by dispossession"—land appropriation by powerful state or private actors (see Woods 2011; and Jones 2014). On the other hand, the same policies broadened spaces for commoners to legally participate in contestation over lands as they could employ political means to reacquire their lands and voice their demands to employ customary land institutions. In other words, marketization weakened the power of the military and its partners, particularly Chinese capitals, to grab land and exploit resources in the border areas. These areas were pacified through the ceasefire agreement between the government and armed ethnic groups.

Despite its inadequate discussion of the pattern of capitalist development in Myanmar, *Forging the Nation* is worth reading for a number of reasons. First, it is a good introduction to the politics of economic development in Myanmar. Second, it is an excellent example of research involving various levels of analysis. The book seamlessly connects analysis at the national level with investigation at the subnational, particularly regional, level. Last but not least, it shows how it is possible to link analysis at the micro level (case studies) with the macro picture of politico-economic changes.

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Emplacing East Timor: Regime Change and Knowledge Production, 1860–2010

Kisho Tsuchiya

Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2024.

In *Emplacing East Timor: Regime Change and Knowledge Production, 1860–2010*, Tsuchiya Kisho examines the relationship between regime change and the production of knowledge about Timor-Leste, presenting a global intellectual history of the territory. Tsuchiya argues that this understanding must begin with a critical analysis of sources that reflect how different regimes and communities of knowledge generated categorizations that classified Timor and its people within a specific ideological order. These relationships, in turn, shaped and modeled the ways of imagining Timorese people that are still influential today. By exploring these relationships, the author reveals biases and errors, as well as the intentions behind historical narratives allowing for a more accurate representation of Timorese voices and experiences, highlighting the importance of considering both prior knowledge and contemporary discourses in constructing the history of Timor-Leste. Instead of a teleological view of history that presents Timor-Leste's independence as a completed success narrative, Tsuchiya analyzes the political and social history of the space that is now Timor-Leste based on the heuristic concept of the "cycle of violence," which consists of a recurring pattern of (1) mass violence and migration, (2) regime change, and (3) stabilization, resulting in violent regime changes.

The first chapter serves as a starting point for tracing the genesis of the dominant existing visions regarding Timor-Leste and its people. In it, Tsuchiya examines Anglophone perceptions of the history and identity of East Timor between 1975 and 2002, in a politicized context of decolonization and the Indonesian invasion. The narrative of Timorese history in English begins in 1974, relegating the precolonial past and the five hundred years of Portuguese colonialism to a "prehistory." Representations in these studies highlight three narratives: Timor-Leste as a nation separate from Indonesia, as a victim of genocide, and as a space of resistance. The author points out biases in these studies derived from a lack of diversity in sources and outdated methodologies.

The first part of the book, "Emplacing the Timorese in the Colonial Wars, from the Mid-Nineteenth Century to the 1940s," focuses on the various approaches and "emplacements" that

occurred during the implementation of "indirect rule" by Portuguese colonizers. Chapter 2 explores how ethnohistory and racial categorization of the Timorese were socially constructed during the colonial wars of the nineteenth century. Tsuchiya analyzes how Western observers interpreted Timor through various perspectives, generating definitions that reflected colonial expansion more than Timorese self-images. The terms "Malay" and "Papuan" are recurrent, and their use influenced perceptions of Timorese identity. In Chapter 3, the author evaluates the works of Portuguese and Dutch physical anthropologists in their attempt to classify the Timorese within broader racial categories. Tsuchiya emphasizes how physical anthropology of the time imagined Timorese populations through racial (Malay, Papuan, mestizo) and pseudo-ethnic (Belunese and Atoni) categories, arguing that the Timorese were reduced to rigid identities, thus highlighting the impact this had on colonial perception. The fourth and final chapter of the first part analyzes Dutch historiography regarding Timor within the context of the Indonesian archipelago, emphasizing the centrality of Java in colonial narratives and how this led to the simplification of the histories of peripheral islands like Timor. In this chapter, Tsuchiya examines how the hierarchical understanding of space (metropolis-colony), characteristic of European colonial regimes, contributed to the overrepresentation of the precolonial dominance of civilizations like Kediri and Majapahit over Timor.

Part 2 of the book, "Between Nationalism and Portuguese Multiracialism, 1941–1970s," focuses on the second cycle of violent regime change in Timor, spanning from World War II and the subsequent Portuguese reoccupation of colonial Timor. This part begins with Chapter 5, which examines how World War II altered the perception of Timor and what it meant to be Timorese. During this conflict, Japanese occupation introduced a new framework of identity that challenged Portuguese colonial structures and prompted a brief period of unification of the island of Timor (Portuguese and Dutch) under Japanese rule. This change generated growing resentment toward Portuguese colonizers, becoming a catalyst for nationalism in the region and contributing to the eventual collapse of Portuguese colonialism. Tsuchiya adds historical sources from the Japanese army, which were previously undervalued in historiography, to present a richer and more complex view of how the Timorese conducted themselves during this conflict. In Chapter 6, the focus shifts to the post-World War II period up to the early 1960s. In this context, different representations and struggles for identity emerge as the Timorese grapple with a persistent colonial legacy and aspirations for self-determination. The author shows how the official narrative of the Portuguese government, which depicted Timorese as "loyal natives," did not reflect the reality of events, classifying the participation of natives from Portuguese Timor in the Black Columns as Timorese from the Dutch part of the island. The chapter also examines how, in the 1950s, discourses on self-determination and anticolonialism emerged. Portugal sought to redefine itself as a multiracial nation, granting citizenship to Timorese considered "civilized." Tsuchiya exposes the contradiction between the government's intentions and the harsh socioeconomic reality facing East Timorese,

marked by discrimination against the majority of the population that did not meet such standards. Details of the Viqueque rebellion in 1959 are included, showcasing Portuguese authorities' concerns about Timor's relationship with Indonesia, which was emerging as a leader in the global anticolonial movement under Sukarno. The seventh chapter, the last of the second part, analyzes the work of Fernando Sylvan, a Timorese poet and essayist who presented his vision of Portugal and the Portuguese community between the 1940s and 1970s. In his childhood, Sylvan saw Timor as his "Mother Land," imagining the island as part of Portugal. However, as he moved into the 1960s, his writing fluctuated between the multiracialism of the Portuguese regime and anticolonial notions. By the late 1970s, his vision had evolved toward a more pronounced nationalism, considering Timor as an "island" rather than a mere "territory." The chapter also discusses the ideology of lusotropicalism, which attempted to present more humane relations in the colonial context in response to the exploitation experienced during the Pacific War and the growing nationalism in Asia and Africa.

The third part of the book, "Revisiting Timorese Movements and Indonesian Occupation, 1970s–1990s," explores the beginnings of the last complete "basic cycle of violence" to date, analyzing the reimagination of East Timorese in the context of decolonization, civil war, and the Indonesian invasion by various actors (Portuguese, Indonesians, and the East Timorese themselves). Tsuchiya analyzes how these actors adopted selective approaches, questioning the "placing" of Timor and its population from ethnological and historiographical knowledge. During this period, a new classificatory genealogy emerged that presented the Timorese as a "non-Indonesian other," emphasizing their linguistic, religious, and historical differences in the narrative of Timor-Leste in relation to Indonesia. The author notes that the global context of decolonization and the dynamics of the Cold War favored Indonesia, which legitimized its domination of East Timor with the notion of a "shared identity." The ninth chapter, the last of the third part, focuses on how the FRETILIN (Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor) movement conceptualized the Timorese nation and its territory between 1974 and 1975, framing its struggle within the cultural context of Timor and Southeast Asia. FRETILIN located Timor within an international anticolonial and anti-imperial struggle, defending its belonging to the South Pacific, not to Indonesia. To mobilize the rural population, movement leaders adapted their rhetoric to local cultural traditions, presenting the idea of "Timor Land" and redefining Portuguese colonizers as "colonial masters." Tsuchiya investigates how elements of local cosmology were integrated into FRETILIN's discourse, promoting a shared memory that contributed to the development of a national consciousness among Timorese people and facilitated the creation of the "imagined community" of Timor-Leste.

Finally, in the conclusion, Tsuchiya reviews some of the main underlying and recurring elements that have remained constant throughout the various cycles of violence and dynamics of emplacement-creation: (1) all cycles have exhibited comparable levels of violence in terms of total numbers (colonial wars, World War II, and the Indonesian invasion); (2) the divisions between

highland and lowland areas, as well as the challenges of territorial borders, have consistently generated tensions; and (3) the presence of an East Timorese diaspora whose liminal identity is in constant dispute has been a persistent factor that provokes ongoing tensions.

Tsuchiya's methodological approach innovatively combines various academic traditions. His analysis utilizes sources in Portuguese, Dutch, Indonesian, Chinese, Japanese, and English, representing a significant improvement over other studies (Gunn 1999; Farram 2004; Figueiredo 2004; Kammen 2015). By utilizing these sources, the author triangulates specific historical events, leading to new interpretations, including the motivations for East Timorese people's support of either side during the Pacific War, their backing of various political parties in the 1970s, and the Indonesian invasion and occupation, all viewed through the lens of how different "emplacements" affected their lives.

As I see it, one of the most notable contributions of this volume is the author's use of participant observation, which he terms "ethnographic experience." This aspect is crucial, as it recognizes the Timorese people as active subjects in history, not just passive entities, and thus successfully integrates their voices in the making and remaking of their diverse historical and come-into-being identities. Through the analysis of everyday language, social interactions, and contextualizing events within the local worldview, Tsuchiya provides a view of Timorese history that complexifies the narrative of how the people lived their historical experiences.[1)] Tsuchiya frames his work within the "decolonial" project, critically examining precolonial and colonial sources to understand the relationships between authors and Timorese people, as well as to view Timorese as a heterogeneous group of individuals and reconsider historical terms according to local social realities.

Emplacing East Timor is undoubtedly a very important read for scholars, students, and anyone interested in the intersections of history, identity, and power. The author's dedication to deconstructing entrenched narratives and emphasizing the importance of local perspectives makes a significant contribution to studies of East Timor. This book stands as a foundational text for future research, inviting deeper exploration and critical discourse on Timorese history.

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1) Elsewhere, Tsuchiya has authored a compelling account of his fieldwork experiences and intellectual journey, highlighting how many of these experiences shaped the questions that this book seeks to address (Tsuchiya 2022).

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