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BUFS KIAS
Korea Institute for ASEAN Studies

SUVANNABHUMI:
Multi-disciplinary Journal of Southeast Asian Studies

SUVANNABHUMI means "The Land of Gold" in Pali, which location implies Southeast Asia.
Cover Photo: Petronas Twin Towers, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Opened on 31 August 1999.

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Sadly, I had to write several obituaries in the past few years. I am of that generation that saw dearest friends and colleagues passing. We must record our memories of them, what they gave us, and the legacy they left. This one is a tribute to Professor Zawawi Ibrahim, simply known as "Wan," a distinguished Malaysian scholar, socio-cultural activist, and musician. *Suvannabhumi* salutes him for supporting the development of the journal as a member of the editorial board, and for making significant contributions to increasing the international scholarly reputation of the Korea Institute for ASEAN Studies, Busan University of Foreign Studies (KIAS-BUFS). We extend our sincerest condolences to his family. My wife and I became close to his wife Noorshah Mohd Salleh during her frequent sojourns with Wan in Brunei, as well as his children Rendra, Hameer, and Kaiysha, all singer-songwriters like their father. As an accomplished musician, Wan composed many memorable songs, many of them recorded by such Malaysian popular singers as Datuk Ramli Sarip and M. Nasir.

This is one of the most difficult tributes to write. I first met

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* A member of SUVANNABHUMI Editorial Board (2016-2022)

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Wan over 30 years ago in the 1990s. We have collaborated on many writing and editing projects, particularly during the last decade when we were at Universiti Brunei Darussalam (UBD) together, he as Professor in Sociology and Anthropology and myself as Professor in the Institute of Asian Studies. I do not think I can match the obituary written by Emeritus Professor Dato' Abdul Rahman Embong published in *Aliran* on July 7, 2022, which lamented how the Malaysian social science community "lost a fine leading anthropologist, meticulous researcher, prolific author and teacher," and how the arts "lost a great talent with a creative mind who hailed from academia." Professor Abdul Rahman worked closely together with Wan, particularly when they were at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia and were contributing to the development of the Malaysian Association of Social Science. Wan was the association's Vice-President from 2009 to 2014.

What struck me with my relationship with Wan? I think we had an understanding of the ways in which we both worked. He was a Malaysian intellectual. I have seen him across a table in seminar discussions at UBD, and in conferences in Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, South Korea, the UK, and the Netherlands. Wan always conceptualized and turned presentations into something more. He was a thinker, a true scholar in love with ideas and empirical evidence. He always referred to me as "the synthesizer," taking a body of work and putting it into structure and narrative.

I heard of Wan's sudden death from a heart attack on May 18, 2022. I was working in my apartment in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei, when an email came from Ismail Gareth Richards, who collaborated with Wan on a number of projects. The news came to him from Wan's sister, Datin Wan Hiyati Wan Ibrahim. I quite simply broke down in tears. In his email, Gareth

wrote: “I learned to admire his principled and progressive scholarship, his writings on the Malay working class, on indigenous peoples, on the environment, and on cultural studies, and his self-reflective, self-critical approach to knowledge creation.” He also captured Wan’s personality and considerable achievements in academic work and cultural life: “Wan was warm, loving, full of life, generous, and a fountain of knowledge—not just of the academic world he inhabited with distinction, but also of a vast cultural hinterland.”

But what struck me, in my connection with Wan, was that the debates about the divisions between East and West, between Orientalism, Western academic hegemony, and the “captive mind” of the East, while important, do not present obstacles to our collaboration across cultures, nations, and regions, nor should they. I forged a scholarly relationship with Wan; he was a free thinker; I admired his formidable intellect. This was not Western hegemony. I engaged with Wan on equal terms. Indeed, he took me to task for my omissions in the field of local research into peasantries and laborers in Malaysia. This certainly did not prevent us from working together, and fervently discussing these issues.

Wan was cosmopolitan, a devout Muslim. However, as an anthropologist with cross-cultural sensitivity, he had an expansive perspective on religious life, beliefs, and practices. Wan was also something of an academic itinerant. After secondary education at Sultan Ismail College in Kota Bharu, Terengganu, Wan’s home state, he was awarded a scholarship under the Australian Colombo Plan from 1967 to 1971. He graduated with a BA (Hons) in anthropology at Monash University, Melbourne in 1972, and then proceeded to his PhD studies at the same university. He completed his doctorate in anthropology and sociology in 1978 on “A Malay Proletariat: The Emergence of Class Relations

on a Malaysian Plantation." It was awarded in 1980. During his time in Melbourne, he worked as a tutor and then senior tutor in anthropology up until 1979. He must have decided, on his return to Malaysia, that he would lend his experience to most of the main universities in Malaysia. He adopted a nomadic lifestyle, rather like the Penan of Sarawak with whom he studied and wrote about on their storytelling as counter-narrations of Malaysian nation-state developmentalism. He was lecturer at Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), 1980-1984; his publications started to appear from 1982. He was Associate Professor at Universiti Malaya (UM) 1984-1998; Professor at Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) 1998-2003; and Professor at the Institute of the Malay World and Civilization (ATMA) at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), 2003-2008. He returned to UM in 2008-2009 as Professor. He also received an appointment at Universiti Teknologi MARA (UTM), 2010-2011. He joined Universiti Brunei Darussalam (UBD) as Professor, 2011-2020, and later on received a two-year appointment as Visiting Professor at Taylor's University.

What were my memorable times and moments with Wan? There were many, such as evenings at his house in Brunei when the family hosted university colleagues, with young Bruneian musicians serenading us. Of course, Wan also provided entertainment. He was conscious of the lack of live performances in Brunei and he provided every encouragement and opportunity for local musicians to perform.

I also remember his rather alternative taste in clothing. He was one of the most sartorial academics I ever met. There was an evening in Chiang Mai, after a conference at the university, when I went with him and his wife to the Anusarn Night Market. Wan, noted for his hats, caps, scarves, Indian and kurta blouson shirts, and imaginative trousers and suede boots,

probably visited every shop in the market, trying on clothes. We ended up in a café/bar, where he borrowed the resident singer's guitar and performed.

His combination of musical skills and academic presentations were illustrated in his introductions to conferences and seminars. Two occasions come to mind. In December 2012, we organized a conference in the ASEAN Inter-university Seminar on the theme of "Human Insecurities in Southeast Asia" at the Institute of Asian Studies (IAS/Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS) at UBD, in cooperation with the National University of Singapore. I chaired an opening session where I invited Wan to perform on his guitar, and then present a lecture on "Anthropologizing Human Insecurities" (see Carnegie et al. 2016). Meanwhile, when he retired from UBD, I had the honor to introduce Wan. At another IAS/FASS seminar, he played and sang. I treasure his performances, fortunately recorded by IAS@UBD in a YouTube video titled "Zawawi Ibrahim on Transnational Scholarship in the Periphery" (October 21, 2020).

In our last ten years together at UBD, we produced several co-edited volumes in the UBD-IAS/Springer series "Asia in Transition." Wan was always generous with his time, energy, and commitment to scholarship and publication. In addition to the book with Paul Carnegie, we published a substantial volume on Borneo Studies (King et al. 2017); and with Gareth Richards, *Discourses, Agency and Identity in Malaysia* (Zawawi Ibrahim et al. 2021).

Our collaboration goes back a long way. In a panel which I chaired in June-July 1995 at the EUROSEAS conference in Leiden on "Human-Environment Interactions in South-East Asia," Wan provided a paper which we then published in the Centre for South-East Asian Studies, University of Hull Occasional Paper series (1995). This was followed a few years later with him

writing an Epilogue to a book I edited, *Environmental Challenges in South-East Asia* (Zawawi Ibrahim 1998a). Most recently, we wrote a chapter together on local and transnational anthropologies in Borneo (King and Zawawi Ibrahim 2019), and Wan contributed a most thoughtful piece on the anthropology of remembering to another of my co-edited books; it will remain a valuable personal reminder of Wan's early childhood and his development as an anthropologist (Zawawi Ibrahim 2021). One of his very last papers with two colleagues from FASS at UBD will be published in *Suvannabhumi* this year. This is a fitting tribute to Wan's contribution to KIAS-BUFS (Ullah et al. 2022).

I will always remember my time with Wan. Memories of his music, scholarship, and friendship are for keeps. His contributions to our understanding of Malaysian society, culture, and history, and his comparative work on the wider Southeast Asia, are important. It is fitting that his most well-known book *The Malay Labourer,* first published in 1998 (1998b), was reprinted this year (2022). His research on the Malay working class and peasantries (Zawawi Ibrahim 2010) will remain with us for a long, long time. May he rest in peace.

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Special Topic on COVID-19 and Southeast Asia

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Introduction to the special section on COVID-19 and Southeast Asia

Victor T. King*

Ⅰ. Introductory thoughts and the Conference

The advent of the COVID-19 pandemic from early 2020 up to the present time (and continuing) has been one of the most significant and disastrous global events that we have had the misfortune to witness and experience during the past two years. Its effects on human communities and the contexts in which they conduct their lives have been felt in a range of dimensions: social, cultural, economic, political, psychological, demographic, physiological, and environmental. The statistics for June 2, 2022, at the time of writing this Introduction, are sombre indeed with 533,578,589 cases world-wide and 6,315,786 deaths and rising day after day (Worldometers 2022). Dashboards other than Worldometer provide a similar picture, though the World Health Organization (WHO) seems to lag in its compilation of statistics. From WHO, we have for June 1, 2022, 527,603,107 cases and 6,290,452 deaths (WHO 2022). Johns Hopkins University "COVID-19 mapping" recorded 530,723,021 cases on May 31, 2022, and 6,294,619 deaths (Johns Hopkins University 2022). Finally, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) provided statistics for June 2, 2022; 527,878,071

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cases and 6,302,819 deaths (2022). Though the statistics vary, this is a fast-moving situation in that, as I write this Introduction, cases of infection and sadly deaths, are increasing, almost by the minute.

I use the global dashboard statistics to give us some idea of the level of infection and the human suffering that it has produced, but I am wary of the official figures of many of the countries included in the Coronavirus lists. In my view, cases and deaths reported in some government statistics are significantly below the real occurrence of disease and death. This is especially the case in Southeast Asia, but also Asia more generally, Africa and Eastern Europe. I give little credence on the figures issued by Russia, China, and India, for example. Without high levels of testing, the statistics are unreliable. Aside from Singapore, Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia, and Vietnam, the testing levels per million of population in the remaining six ASEAN countries are below 400,000; the lowest levels are Lao PDR and Cambodia, which are below 200,000 per million, and it is no surprise that their recorded levels of infection and deaths are correspondingly low (Worldometers 2022). What we can say from the four major dashboards is that viral infections up to now amount to around 530 million worldwide and deaths 6.3 million.

COVID-19 has transformed our lives during the most severe periods of the pandemic, primarily in negative terms, though there are some observers who argue that there will be positive effects as well. The term coined to capture a post-COVID era is "new normal," suggesting that the virus with high levels of global infection and alarmingly high death rates, which occurred especially in the early, more virulent phases of the pandemic, has brought changes in the ways in which we behave and interact. Recently, some countries, including my own country the United Kingdom, have sought to return to a different kind of normality faster than others and have relaxed restrictions, opened national borders, dispensed with face-coverings, quarantine, and self-isolation, and permitted unlimited travel and large public gatherings within their territories. Others have continued to impose restrictions and been much more cautious in seeking a "new normality."

Out of these human tragedies, evidenced in the loss of loved ones and livelihoods, researchers like those of us represented in this issue of *Suvannabhumi* have found a whole new field of data to exercise our minds. I think that most academics are conscious of the fact that we have not been opportunistic in this endeavor in using other people's misfortune to conjure more publications. I firmly believe that we are searching for answers to a range of difficult questions. In this spirit, we organized a series of papers in panels on COVID-19 and Southeast Asia at the online conference of the Korea Institute for ASEAN Studies (KIAS), Busan University of Foreign Studies (BUFS) on 21-22 May 2020. Not all contributors to the panels eventually submitted papers for consideration for publication. We have therefore decided to include a special section on COVID-19 and Southeast Asia in this issue of the journal comprising five papers.

The theme of the KIAS-BUFS conference was "Breakthroughs of Area Studies and ASEAN in the Era of Homo Untact." The major theme was the response of research in area studies and in the Association of Southeast Asians Nations (ASEAN) to the pandemic during the past two years characterized by lockdowns, social distancing, restrictions on travel within countries and across borders, masking and wearing protective clothing, and non-face-to-face contact; the relevant word in English is "contact," which in the era of COVID-19 becomes, at least in some modern parlance, "untact" or "contactless"; during the most intense phases of the pandemic, people did not touch, rather they avoided one another. One of the most fundamental characteristics of human beings as social and cultural animals was put on hold; we were not allowed by governments to express our humanity. It is not without interest that the Latin "contactus" (contact) refers to the action of "touching," but usually with something unclean, infected, contaminated, polluted, or which promotes contagion. To avoid contagion is "not to touch," in Latin, "non [con]tactus" or "non tangere." Perhaps an English version would be "homo non-tact" rather than "untact" (hence homo non tactus).

The suggestion in our preparation for the Conference was that the "new normal" would be a situation of more considered and

limited physical interaction and a reluctance to touch. Whether face-coverings, restrictions on large gatherings, entry to public places, and precautions for travel on flights and cruises and other forms of public transport will continue to be used indefinitely is a moot point. The current experience in some countries which have relaxed restrictions suggests that, in certain areas of social, cultural and economic life, the new normal will not be so different from the pre-COVID normal. However, the increase in the use of information and communication technology (ICT) which has reached a new high during the past two years, may well continue at a pace, though perhaps tempered by the continued human desire for face-to-face encounters in business, educational, and leisure settings. I have changed my view formed during the early stages of the pandemic. The difference between "old" and "new" normal might not be so drastic as was once expected when we had to confront a large loss of life. The more recent availability of vaccinations, the increase in immunity with the continued spread of variants of the virus, and the less serious effects on health and physical well-being of subsequent, milder variants have changed how we perceive and experience the virus.

Therefore, in my view, the "new normal" will not be as "new" as we had anticipated during the early stages of the pandemic, when loss of life and serious infection were rife and before vaccinations were available. General attitudes are that, as with influenza and the vaccines available to combat it, we live with a virus that has become endemic. However, what indeed seems to have changed are our work patterns. More people work from home; there is more online communication; there is a reluctance to take up jobs which are seen as precarious, should there be another serious outbreak of the virus, as has been witnessed in Shanghai, with its recent lockdown. For these reasons various areas of the service sector, particularly tourism and the airline industry, are experiencing extreme labor shortages.

One response from governments in the Southeast Asian region has been to try to refocus the promotion of tourism much more towards the domestic rather than the international market, and to move away from over-dependence on East Asian mass tourism, especially from mainland China. Another reaction has been to

emphasize e-learning and e-commerce in the tourism industry and digital forms of entrepreneurship, business, trade, communication, leisure, and entertainment. However, this is nothing new. Over a decade ago, the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) had been in detailed discussion about the status of ICT integration in Southeast Asia in education, training, and the regional economy (SEAMEO 2010). More recently the ASEAN Secretariat has focused on "propelling the region towards a digitally integrated economy" (2020).

Ⅱ. COVID-19 and Southeast Asia

It was my contention, during the early stages of the pandemic that overall, Southeast Asian countries had managed to escape the most serious consequences of the virus. The level of infection and the number of deaths in 2020 were relatively modest in the region. Yet the effects on livelihoods, and especially on the all-important tourism industry, were devastating. The economies of the countries with a large stake in tourism were severely undermined—Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines in particular—where hotels, homestays, restaurants, bars, night-clubs, cinemas, theaters, museums, and "non-essential" retail outlets and other tourist locations such as beaches, national parks, forest and animal reserves, and heritage sites were closed. Workers in the industry lost their jobs, many of them immigrants from other parts of Asia. The Singapore tourism sector also declined dramatically, but given the country's role in the international communications sector, finance, and trade, the city republic managed to weather the storm relatively well. The fledgling tourism economies of Myanmar, Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Vietnam also suffered. Brunei Darussalam, given its small tourism sector, was least affected, and the closing of the land borders with Malaysian Sarawak and the termination of the ferry services to the duty-free island of Labuan, meant that Bruneians reoriented their leisure and shopping practices and began to spend more of their money within the state and not in Malaysia. Perhaps, Brunei was one of the few countries in Asia which benefited economically from closing its borders. On the other hand, the

Brunei-dependent tourism industries, hotels, restaurants, and retail outlets in nearby Limbang, Miri, Labuan, and Sabah have suffered immeasurably.

We posed the question during the conference whether or not COVID-19 and its impact on Southeast Asia required the development of new concepts and methodologies to address issues of social distancing and non-contact. Area studies is rooted in a concern with geography and particular histories, localization, and cultures situated in a defined space, and COVID-19 and its globalized consequences, so it is argued by some observers, has served to break down the notion of "area." But is this so? If anything, the virus has acted to construct and confirm boundaries. Though ASEAN will undoubtedly continue as a regional organization, its member states have reinforced their national boundaries, and therefore also the borders between ASEAN and those countries beyond. In Southeast Asia, the members of ASEAN have not acted as a regional body promoting a regional perspective to address the pandemic. Though their plans and policies suggest that ASEAN has acted regionally, these are much more in words rather than deeds. Instead, member states have usually acted unilaterally to secure their national borders against infection. In my own experience, nowhere is this more obvious than in Brunei. It has closed its borders with Malaysia, and it continues to do so. It has acted in its own interests, as has Malaysia, and a country where I regularly entered to undertake research, Thailand. Policies have been characterized by the securing of national borders and passage into and out of the state by land, sea, and air, to ensure infection does not enter from an overseas source, controlling movement in and out of a defined territory, and constructing and confirming categories of people within the nation-state who are given preferential treatment and those, usually migrant workers and illegal residents, who are considered to be possible carriers of contagion. Paradoxically, the strengthening of national borders, provided that the regional organization maintains its commitment to cooperation and its global presence, reinforces the concept and practice of a Southeast Asian region in relation to those countries beyond. Unfortunately, a regional view and position has not, for

understandable reasons, been demonstrated during the pandemic.

One of the major consequences of COVID-19 has been the strengthening of state intervention. Rules and regulations to monitor and police the pandemic have enabled the state to exert increasing control over its populace. COVID-19 has provided the ideal opportunity for governments, even in liberal democracies, to restrict social and physical encounters, to regulate behavior, and to monitor how citizens and those who enter a country conduct themselves. These have become mechanisms and agents of control: vaccination certificates and passports, evidence of negative lateral or antigen flow/rapid tests, registration with a health authority, enforced isolation, self-isolation, quarantine (which previously generally only applied to animals transported across national borders but has since been applied to the human species), and evidence of COVID-related travel insurance to ensure that you will not be a financial burden on the health service of the country should you succumb to the disease. I never imagined in my lifetime that entering an airport and attempting to travel to another country would become fraught with controls, health checks, and suspicion.

Finally, my overall view is that there is no need to develop a "new normal" conceptual and methodological apparatus to address a post-pandemic situation. The "new normal" with more online activity is not very different from the pre-COVID-19 era. Frankly, I am not attracted to the notion that "newness" requires different approaches, perspectives, concepts, and methods. Given that the "new normal" is not that "new" at all, I propose, certainly in sociology and anthropology, that we can analyze what has happened to our lives in the last two years with the concepts and methods that continue to be familiar to all social scientists. I have modified my perspective on these issues during the last several months.

Ⅲ. The papers on COVID-19 in this journal issue

I have to accept that this is a mixed bag of papers. When the Busan Conference organizers arrived at a COVID-19 theme in relation to Southeast Asia, I thought we might well be inundated with papers.

Unfortunately, this did not happen. But we have a collection of papers that are relevant to current COVID-19 debates and discourses. My own paper on "transitions" focuses on the ways in which the virus has been perceived, conceptualized, and defined, and the movement from a pre-COVID-19 era through a two-year period of lockdowns, restrictions on movement, testing, masking, vaccinating, and a virtual collapse of parts of the global economy, especially the airline industry, tourism and leisure activities. We are now entering a post-COVID-19 future, but debates continue on whether or not we will experience a "new normal," or simply, given the availability of vaccines (though these are unevenly accessible and poorer countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America have struggled to ensure that they have appropriate levels of supply) will require us to make only modest adjustments to the ways in which we conduct our social, cultural, and economic lives. Nevertheless, I suggest that online encounters will continue to gather pace.

It was of some interest to me that the global health community, particularly WHO, could not decide what to call the virus. Primarily, we refer to it as "Coronavirus," but then to locate it and its origin, we have defined it as the "Wuhan coronavirus," and the "Wuhan Coronavirus outbreak," At one time, it was referred to as "Wuhan pneumonia." And then we became more technical: "2019-nCoV"; "2019-nCoV, acute respiratory syndrome"; "SARS-CoV-2"; "COVID-19 virus." What we then did was to humanize the virus. We gave it a personality, a purpose, a set of tactics. It had a strategy to spread infection as widely as possible. It invaded the bodies of the weak and vulnerable. It targeted those who had little defense against infection.

There are two major tragedies that the pandemic has occasioned, and they are given emphasis in this issue of the journal. First of all, not only in my paper which traces the demise of the tourism industry in Southeast Asia and the parlous circumstances of migrant workers, under-age children, minorities, asylum seekers and illegal residents working in the service sectors in such countries as Thailand, Malaysia, and Singapore; but also in AKM Ahsan Ullah, Diotima Chattoraj and Zawawi Ibrahim's detailed documentation of the plight of migrant populations in their attempts to survive and

eke out a livelihood in the extreme conditions imposed on them by COVID restrictions. Not only have they suffered economically and socially. Many have either been stranded in the countries in which they currently work and reside, or have simply had to return to their homelands, out of work, with no income, dislocated, and displaced. The suspicion in government circles and among local populations in the countries in which migrant workers have resided and labored is that they are also possibly carriers of contagion and should be treated with caution and kept at a distance. Messages to "stayhome," "keep safe," and practice "social distancing" have little significance for migrant workers who have to travel to work and mix with others, and have no or little recourse to national health care and welfare services.

Secondly, a further significant point raised in this journal issue, is the way in which the pandemic has been politicized. In their "production of fear," Wiman Rizkidarajat and Aidatul Chusna document the responses of local communities in the Indonesian regency of Banyumas to national policies of emergency and the restriction of movement. "Strangers" or "outsiders" were warned through prominent messages ("warning visuals") at the entrances to villages and settlements, declared as "Kawasan Steril COVID-19," that they are "forbidden to enter" (*dilarang masuk*). Those denied entry also comprise debt collectors and creditors.

Vicente Angel S. Ybiernas, in his paper on the vaccine nationalism of President Rodrigo Duterte, demonstrates how the chief executive used various forms of political and diplomatic leverage in support of those countries which could supply the Philippines with vaccines. In this regard he negotiated principally with the USA, UK, Germany, China and Russia. In the case of the USA, what was put at stake was the US-Philippine Visiting Forces Agreement; with UK and Germany, the supply of Philippine nurses for their health services; with China and Russia, concessions to support their foreign policies.

Finally, Stephen Keck provides a historical context in relation to the occurrence and spread of disease in 18th and 19th century Java, particularly with regard to malaria and smallpox in Batavia

(Jakarta). He demonstrates the importance of the development of "colonial knowledge," tropical medical traditions and statistical data on disease and its causes in the writings of John Joseph Stockdale, Major William Thorn, and Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles. Examining the issue of the relationship between a site and disease, he refers to Batavia, with its Dutch-constructed canals, as the source of disease and death. It was named the "Cemetery of the East" and a "deathtrap." We might make a similar reference to the origins of the Coronavirus virus in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China, which was thought to be the "epicenter" of the pandemic. In some studies, Wuhan was defined by the virus. As in the SARS epidemic of 2002-04, animal markets where live animals were sold, and the disease then crossed the human-animal divide, were "a very important spreading location" (Nature 2022). Two-thirds of the initial case cluster identified in November-December 2019 were linked to the Huanan Seafood Wholesale Market in Wuhan. There is still dispute about the precise origins of the virus, but it is thought to have a zoonotic origin, though the animals responsible for its spread could have been bats or closely related mammals. Another study suggests raccoon dogs as the source.

Undoubtedly the pandemic has had a major negative impact on the lives of Southeast Asians in the space of around two years. The first cases appeared in the region from January 13, 2020, first in Thailand and then quickly in Vietnam, Malaysia, Cambodia, and the Philippines (Dinh-Toi Chu et al. 2022). However, up until July 2021, the region had been relatively successful in limiting its worst effects and holding the number of cases and deaths to a relatively moderate level in comparison with some other parts of the world (AKM Ahsan Ullah et al. 2021). With the spread of the highly infectious Delta variant, the situation in the region deteriorated rapidly. Lockdowns and strict restrictions on physical movements within and across borders were imposed. Yet infections spread with the long-shared territorial borders in Southeast and the ease with which these could be crossed.

Much of Southeast Asia has been reluctant to remove restrictions, in part due to the difficulties of securing vaccine supplies, pressures on health care services, and low testing levels. It

remains to see what will happen during the forthcoming year. What is clear is that the need for careful and detailed multidisciplinary research will still be urgently needed.

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Covid-19 and Transitions:
Case Material from Southeast Asia

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[*Abstract*]

During the past two decades, the Southeast Asian region has experienced a range of major crises. Service industries such as tourism and the marginal and migrant laborers who work in them have usually been at the sharp end of these testing events, from natural and environmental disasters, epidemics and pandemics, global financial slumps, terrorism, and political conflict. The latest challenge is the "Novel Coronavirus" (Covid-19/SARS-CoV-2) pandemic. It has already had serious consequences for Southeast Asia and its tourism development and these will continue for the foreseeable future. Since the SARS epidemic of 2002-2004, Southeast Asian economies have become integrated increasingly into those of East Asia (China, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong). This paper examines one of the most significant current crises, Covid-19, and its consequences for Southeast Asia, its tourism industry, and its workers, comparing experiences across the region, and the issues raised by the over-dependence of some countries on East Asia. In research on crises, the main focus has been on dramatic, unpredictable natural disasters, and

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human-generated global economic downturns. Not so much attention has been devoted to disease and contagion, which has both natural and socio-cultural dimensions in origins and effects, and which, in the case of Covid-19, evoke a pre-crisis period of normality, a liminal transition or "meantime" and a post-crisis "new normality." The transition is not straightforward; in many countries, it operates as a set of serial lockdowns and restrictions, and to predict an uncertain future remains difficult.

Keywords: Covid-19, tourism, Southeast Asia, crises, impacts, responses.

Ⅰ. Introduction

There are three problematical issues discussed here in regard to the Covid-19 pandemic. First, we have to address conceptual and definitional problems. How do we define the virus and its effects in relation to other diseases and illnesses which give rise to long-term impairment and, *in extremis*, death? Therefore, what are the discourses surrounding Covid-19, given that there are many agencies and interest groups eager to have their voices heard and the debates are often full of contradictions? How does the pandemic relate to other traumatic events which endanger human life? (Kim and King 2020a, 2020b).

Secondly, there is a problem of the reliability of the statistical data, what is being measured and on what basis in order to formulate policies and strategies to combat the virus; these statistics change rapidly as more infections and deaths are recorded; the locations of the sites where there are rapid increases in infection, both within and between countries can change quite rapidly; and the boundaries and units used for collecting statistical data are often arbitrary. The more recent spread of the Delta variant and now, at the time of writing, Omicron, illustrates the difficulties of capturing the effects of a global, fast-moving and mutating virus, though it seems to be becoming more modest on the demands it sets on humans. Governments also have different definitions of death

caused by Covid-19 in the context of other "underlying conditions," and they have dramatically different testing levels. In less developed countries where health facilities are usually more poorly developed, organized, and funded, and where many people do not have ready access to medical services, identifying the precise causes of illness and death and providing accurate statistical information on what has caused death are often difficult to determine. Moreover, Covid-19 is part of political processes. Do some governments wish to reveal the true extent of levels of infection and their ability to address these?

Thirdly, although Southeast Asian responses to the spread and effects of Covid-19 have not been coordinated to any extent across the member-states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), which has been a particular problem in economic terms, one common feature in every state has been the sharp curtailment of personal and political freedoms (Kurlantzick 2020). There have been some variations in policies and actions within the region, in that some governments and medical authorities have coped better than others. Overall, governments in ASEAN have sought to increase their control over physical movements, social and family life, leisure and tourist activities, cultural events, and other gatherings. Government support mechanisms have also served to exert increasing political and economic controls over the populace (Vatikiotis 2020). The tourism industry has suffered acutely from lockdowns and continuing restrictions, and connected to these constrained circumstances, the poor, vulnerable, marginalized migrant workers and minority groups in Southeast Asia have endured particular hardship (King 2021).

My "Concluding Remarks" also provide an indication of the dilemma and difficulties which ASEAN is experiencing in its vitally important tourism and travel sectors. Overall, it is argued that it has not addressed the pandemic-generated problems in any meaningful regional sense. Indeed, other than in "slogans" and "taglines" and policy and strategy documents, in practical terms it appears to have retreated from the concept of regional cooperation; rather, individual member-states have pursued their own programs and restrictions, often without consultation and out of harmony with

near neighbors. The grand regional plans which seemed easy to implement in the pre-pandemic period of exceptional growth in the tourism industry have been, in practice, all but abandoned since early 2020. It is suggested that ASEAN's pronouncements on tourism in Southeast Asia as "a single destination," and for unity and cooperation in tourism development, seem remote and rather difficult to realize in the near future.

Ⅱ. Conceptual and Definitional Problems

What is significant and resonant with the presentation of Covid-19 in the media is that most laypersons are confused about the discourse of medics, virologists, epidemiologists, and other scientific experts. Even the term for the virus varies: Coronavirus, or novel Coronavirus (nCoV), or Covid, or COVID-19, or SARS-CoV-2. It becomes even more confusing when we learn that Covid-19 is one of a variety of respiratory, gastro-intestinal, and neurological diseases, and is one among many of RNA (ribonucleic acid) viruses which include the common cold, influenza, SARS, MERS, Covid-19, dengue, hepatitis C and E, West Nile Fever, Ebola, rabies, polio, mumps, and measles. Consistent across numerous countries, governments insist that they are "following the science." There may indeed be "a science" supported by government, but there are "several sciences" competing one with another. Mark Honigsbaum documents these issues in his studies of "the pandemic century" (2019, 2020); it resonates with Michel Foucault's studies on the ways in which knowledge and discourse are constructed, legitimized, and given authority as "the truth" (2002). The discourse on Covid-19 fits neatly into this frame of reference. A further complication is that while some governments continue to impose restrictions on movement, others seem to have relaxed and pursued a policy of "herd immunity." Covid-19 in its latest mutations appears to be something like influenza which can be addressed year-on-year with vaccinations with acceptable levels of infection and death.

Another problem of conceptualization comprises the terms used to capture the nature of the pandemic. The term "crisis"

immediately comes to mind as distinct from disaster, catastrophe or emergency. However, the terms are closely interrelated. The term "crisis" (from the Greek *krisis*) emphasizes issues of extreme difficulty or danger requiring urgent solutions; more specifically, in its original Greek meaning, it indicates "a turning point in a disease… [which]…could get better or worse" (Vocabulary.com 2020). It marks a decisive moment in the progression of a disease, "a time of great disagreement, confusion or suffering" and "an extremely difficult or dangerous point in a situation" (Cambridge Dictionary 2020). It indicates a departure from "normal" activity and behavior.

The present "Covid time" is one of uncertainty, ambiguity, risk, and disorientation; politicians, scientists, and other experts deliver conflicting messages, and attempt to provide a structure to a virus about which we still know so little. Even its precise origin is still unknown nor its long-term effects on the human body, and thus it is the subject of scientific debate and often disagreement. To address something complex, still relatively unknown, and unpredictable in its consequences, we tend to give the virus an anthropomorphic character in the attempt to provide a degree of certainty and understanding. The virus has motivations and strategies; it "thinks" and it mainly targets the old, the vulnerable, and those with "underlying medical conditions." It is also referred to in war-like terms as "a hidden enemy"; a "destructive" and "merciless" force that has to be engaged in combat and defeated by humankind's combined strength, resilience, and spirit of survival. Thus, rather than parasitic genetic material requiring human living cells to reproduce itself, and its preparedness to die with its host, it is, in important respects, humanized.

The issues of agency, timing, and consequences may also be brought into consideration in differentiating crisis and disaster, in that a crisis is sometimes perceived as "a self-inflicted event," for example, downturns in the world economy, or political conflict, terrorist violence and public unrest, human-induced environmental impacts such as deliberate burning of vegetation and the resultant Southeast Asian haze, or, in the case of Covid-19, SARS and MERS, the human transmission of disease. There may also be a slower build up to the realization of a crisis. A disaster, on the other hand,

is viewed as a change in human affairs that is sudden, unpredictable, and drastic or catastrophic in its consequences and over which there is very little, if any possibility of exercising human control. Rather than human-generated, a disaster usually covers such natural events as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, floods, storms, tsunamis, and landslides; sometimes these are also defined as catastrophes or emergencies with sudden loss of life and property (Rindrasih et al. 2019: 95-96). In this regard, the Covid-19 pandemic could be considered primarily as a crisis, though originating in nature, and, in its tragic and unpredictable outcomes, might also be referred to as a disaster. In my view, the appropriate term to capture this momentous pandemic event in current global experience is "crisis," though I recognize the problem that, in these definitions and categorizations, there is no sharp and crisp division between crisis and disaster. It is difficult to capture these multidimensional events and dynamic processes, which partake of both the natural and the cultural, in a static classificatory framework (see Neef and Grayman 2019). We might also consider the pandemic to be a catastrophe or an emergency, but I think the notion of crisis captures what we are currently addressing.

In attempting to counter this life-threatening attack on the physical, psychological, and socio-cultural fabric of our being, we also structure our cultural behavior and social interaction. The effects of the pandemic will, in all likelihood, prevent a return to "the normal" even with the benefit of vaccines. The discourse and terminology of expert advisers are designed to structure our thinking in particular ways. In "lockdowns" we are, in effect, in a period of transition, when ordinary, everyday activities and behaviors are put on hold (apparently "lockdown" was the most popular word in use in 2020 [Collins Dictionary 2020]). There is also a range of other frequently-used, pandemic-related words and phrases: "shutdown," "self-isolation," "quarantine," "staying at home," "staycation," "awaycation," "furlough," "face-coverings"/"face-masks," "PPE [personal protective equipment]," "social [physical] distancing," "contact tracing" in order to effect "containment," "flatten the curve" and achieve a "mitigation phase" and to reduce risk and avoid "community spread," the danger of "super-spreaders" and those

who are "asymptomatic," and to protect "key workers." The alternative is to allow "herd immunity," though with a "double jab" and possibly a "booster" there might be a way forward, but not necessarily for those who are "immunosuppressed" or "compromised" (Merriam-Webster 2020). However, even with vaccinations it is unlikely we will return wholly to a pre-Covid "normal."

Indeed, it seems that "the invisible enemy" will never be completely defeated and we have to remain in an uneasy relationship with it and its mutations, fortified by vaccines for those who have access to them. We are told by governments not to expect a return to "the normal," but to anticipate something that is referred to as "the new normal." In this connection, the anthropologist Victor Turner referred to a "liminal" period, a rite of passage, and seclusion or separation, in which customary social and cultural expectations are set aside to prepare those undergoing transition to engage with a different set of norms and behavioral expectations (1969).

Turner developed these ideas in his encounter with the work of the Dutch-German-French ethnographer Arnold van Gennep (Charles-Arnold Kurr van Gennep), who analyzed rites of passage, transitions, or "in-between" rituals using the triadic template of pre-liminal rituals of separation, liminal or transition rites, and post-liminal processes of re-incorporation (1960). In a liminal period, different clothing may be worn; in the current pandemic, these are face-coverings, sometimes gloves; a whole armoury of special protective equipment worn by medical personnel. The transition is usually presided over by those in power, who control and monitor the process, advised or represented by ritual specialists, sometimes styled "magicians," or those who are thought to possess particular kinds of esoteric knowledge; in the case of Covid-19, these are usually medics, virologists, epidemiologists, modellers, and risk and disaster managers. They direct new behavioral forms and ritual expressions and new forms of interaction, often involving a separation from close kin and friends, and virtual encounters which do not permit bodily contact. Turner conceives these forms and expressions as part of a dialectical relationship between "structure" and "*communitas*" (or "anti-structure") which involves "a periodical

reclassification of reality" or "a deconstruction of the normative order" (1969: 128-129). In this regard, we are currently enduring a time of ambiguity and disorientation, when politicians give us "mixed messages" and our present circumstances are a prelude to an uncertain and potentially risk-laden future.

Recently, an intriguing keynote paper was presented by Professor Jonathan Rigg at the Borneo Studies Network online conference coordinated by Universiti Brunei Darussalam on June 30 and July 1, 2021. He was addressing his remarks in the context of climate change and presented the concept of "the meantime." Like van Gennep and Turner, he was also examining how we conceive of time (Rigg 2021). I suggest that the notion of "meantime" has parallels with the anthropological notion of "liminality." What we are engaged in is the ordering or structuring of time, with its relationship to spatial arrangements, in relation to the activities and behaviors of our fellow human beings, and the contexts within which they find themselves. In this paper I am examining Covid-19; in Rigg's paper he is examining climate change. Both are momentous global events in the current experiences of humankind. Rigg says "The meantime captures the moment in context, the intervening time between past and future, truly then, in-between time" (2021: 2). Although it cannot be mapped directly onto Rigg's concept of "meantime," the parallel of "an in-between time" can be drawn with the anthropological concept of "liminality." Yet, the notion of transition needs modification in the era of Covid-19 because with serial and sometimes extended lockdowns, we experience several transitions in a relatively short period of time, and, depending on circumstances, these might not replicate one another and they may vary in intensity and the range of "normal" activities which come under restriction.

What is more, for marginalized and migrant workers and members of ethnic minorities, the uncertainties are magnified in a period of transition when inequalities tend to increase without appropriate government support (Lee Chen Chen 2020:1). Closing national borders, imposing restrictions on physical movements, travel, and social interaction may result in people turning against each other. Crises can encourage collective responses, but in a

pandemic, there may be need for scapegoats. In efforts to cleanse and protect the nation-state, stronger identifications may be drawn between "us" (majority members of the nation-state) and "them" (migrants, temporary residents, minorities). Social distancing, restriction of movement, and the imposition of prescribed forms of behavior may result in the rejection of others perceived as different and as carriers of infection.

However, as a result of the pandemic, not only are businesses temporarily closed and customers and tourists thin on the ground, but funding and other support for those out of work or temporarily suspended may only apply to certain categories of the national population; these often excluded such groups as migrant workers, and certainly those who are illegal migrants but who nevertheless contribute to the national economy. Those employed in the public sector usually enjoy greater economic security whereas funding programs may exclude areas of the private sector, the self-employed, and the informal economy. The impact of these exclusions is magnified in Southeast Asia where labor migration, unregistered residence, refugee problems, and small-scale, daily and casual work are widespread, without long-term security. Difficulties have been especially severe in the tourism sector, with national and international travel restrictions; and when such venues as restaurants, bars, pubs, night-clubs, theaters, cinemas, museums, heritage sites and "non-essential" retail services are subject to stricter and extended prescriptions (Kim and King 2020a, 2020b). This is an issue of particular concern to the Southeast Asian tourism industry where there are many marginalized and illegal workers and migrants, not to mention stall-holders and street-hawkers. A significant proportion of those who work in tourism comprise women, teenagers, and under-age children, and those households in deprived socio-economic classes with few opportunities for receiving government support.

Even in the early months of the pandemic, World Bank warned that poverty levels and inequality would almost certainly increase, with an obvious negative effect on social and economic well-being. In April 2020, it put in place a plan to suspend the debt of the world's poorest countries to enable them to deploy measures

to combat Covid-19 (Express 14 April 2020). Within a given country, faced with a crisis on the scale of Covid-19, social inequalities, deprivations, fractures, and conflicts are exposed and often exacerbated. Migrant workers, those in the informal sector, daily workers, ethnic minorities, and certain sections of the female population are especially at risk. Lee Chen Chen says "Already the coronavirus is exposing the weak social protection for the urban poor and vulnerable communities, and this will exacerbate the growing inequality within certain ASEAN countries" (2020:1).

Ⅲ. The Problem with Statistics

A major problem we face is the reliability of the statistics in addressing the pandemic, in that many countries do not have the capacity to collect accurate statistics. The level of testing varies significantly across countries (Southeast Asia demonstrates this) and the criteria for deciding on death from Covid-19 varies as does the capacity to differentiate death from Covid-19 and that from other underlying conditions and what period medical authorities designate between diagnosis and death. The issue of those who are infected but are asymptomatic also presents major difficulties in determining an accurate level of Covid-19 cases. Regular live updates on the pandemic and its effects are posted in *ASEAN Briefing* (2020) and in such a fast-moving contagion, it is impossible to capture day-to-day events and developments, the ever-increasing record of new cases, deaths and the spread of the infection, and the measures that governments and the tourism industry are taking to address a deteriorating situation. Some countries in the region are reporting more cases and deaths than others, but it must be emphasized that, without widespread testing, tracking, tracing, diagnosis, and recording it is impossible to calculate the real extent of the pandemic.

The main Covid-19 dashboards which record global levels of infection also vary. In writing a paper on Covid-19 in early 2021, I gathered statistical data on March 11-12, 2021 (King 2021). At that time, the World Health Organization (WHO) recorded 117,799,584

cases and 2,615,018 deaths (WHO 2021). WHO data on August 26, 2021 demonstrates that infection rates and deaths almost doubled within the space of about 24 weeks: 213,050,725 cases and 4,448,352 deaths. But as with the March figures the WHO data do not map exactly onto those presented by other global statistical dashboards. For example, we have databases, updates and tracking from such other providers as Worldometer (2021a), which recorded 119,120,511 cases and 2,641,790 deaths as of March 12, 2021, and 214,975,822 cases and 4,481,143 deaths as of August 26, 2021; there is also the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) (2021) and Johns Hopkins University (JHU) (2021). The WHO statistics consistently lag behind other major organizations. Yet, political decision-makers and experts who advise them have to proceed to address the virus on the basis of inadequate knowledge and statistics.

In March-April 2021, I remarked on the specific case of Southeast Asia, that the Covid-19 pandemic appeared to have had a relatively modest impact, at least on the basis of the official statistics. On March 12, 2021, ASEAN countries recorded 2,562,842 cases, with 55,210 deaths (Worldometer 2021a). Even then, these figures were certainly underestimates, particularly in such countries as Vietnam, Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Myanmar because of the low level of testing. Only 145,858 cases had been listed (most of them in Myanmar [142,114]), with 3,237 deaths in these four countries (Cambodia recording one death and Lao PDR no deaths; Vietnam 35 and Myanmar 3,201) with an estimated total population of around 176 million in 2021 (Worldometer 2021b). The situation in Southeast Asia on September 11 shows a significant deterioration (2021c). From around 2.56 million cases in March, the figure for September 11 is 10.855 million. The death rate has more than quadrupled in just under half a year to 240,548. But I would suggest that this is still a substantial underestimate. In the order of the number of cases (and deaths), the figures for September 11, 2021 are: Indonesia 4,158,731 (138,431); Philippines 2,179,770 (34,899); Malaysia 1,940,950 (19,827); Thailand 1,368,144 (14,173); Vietnam 589,417 (14,745); Myanmar 427,516 (16,353); Cambodia 98,842 (2,028); Singapore 70,612 (58); Lao PDR 16,936 (16); and Brunei

Darussalam 3,894 (18). Apart from Singapore and Brunei, levels of testing per million population are relatively low, particularly in mainland Southeast Asia, but also in Indonesia and the Philippines. They are as follows: Singapore 3,081,660; Brunei Darussalam 608,046; and then those countries testing at well below 10% of their total population: Malaysia 726,240; Vietnam 432,165; Cambodia 135,127; Philippines 175,634; Cambodia 135,127; Thailand 131,435; Indonesia 123,987; Myanmar 63,090; and Lao PDR 49,933 (Worldometer 2021c).

The range of statistics has not changed that much. The recent infection rate for Southeast Asia as of April 27, 2022 is around 31.8 million, three times the increase from the September 2021 figures (Worldometer 2022d). Even this figure is suspect. World-wide cases have reached 510,926,690, and deaths stand at 6,249,463. The rate of infections has increased: in Vietnam, which from a modest rate has now recorded the most infections which towards the end of April 2022 were 10,620,203, and deaths 43,029; Indonesia was at 6,045,660 cases, though with many more deaths at 156,199; then came Malaysia at 4,436,912 and deaths at 35,520; Thailand has recorded 4,209,591 cases and 28,147 deaths; the Philippines 3,684,385, with 60,195 deaths; Singapore 1,187,914 and 1,333 deaths; Myanmar 612,785 cases and 19,434 deaths; Lao PDR 206,512 cases and 737 deaths; Brunei 141,531 cases and 218 deaths; and then Cambodia with 136,235 cases and 3,056 deaths. After some success at containment in 2020-21, Southeast Asia has apparently succumbed to this highly infectious virus. Therefore, infections at over 30 million have resulted in around 348,000 deaths. Again, there appears to be under-recording in some of the official figures, particularly when we examine the level of testing per one million population; for example, Indonesia, 341,758; Thailand, 246,312; Philippines, 262,580, Myanmar, 143,740, Lao PDR, 165,010; and Cambodia, 172,162. Only Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei have high levels of testing (Worldometer 2022d)

Therefore, in countries without sufficient resources, medical facilities and organizational capacities and the technology and expertise in testing, tracking and tracing, particularly where there are large and widely spread rural populations which are difficult to

access, the statistical data on which to base strategies and policies, and to deploy resources where they are needed most are inadequate.

Ⅳ. Crises, Disasters, and Tourism in Southeast Asia

The relationships between crises, disasters, tourism and marginalization in Southeast Asia are complex, but an indisputable fact is that the global tourism industry is extremely sensitive to negative changes in the level of human well-being and security. Higher levels of risk and instability in tourism sites are obviously of great concern to potential visitors. Tourism is also situated in local, regional, and global political-economic, socio-cultural and environmental contexts. However, there are two important elements in tourist decision-making on whether or not to visit a site, country, or region; these comprise the existence of a real and present danger to personal well-being, but also the perception, anxiety, even fear that the destination poses a potential threat. This is especially the case in terrorist incidents in that an attack in one location may give rise to the view that terrorists might strike again elsewhere in the country or in a neighboring country (Mansfeld and Pizam 2006; Pizam and Mansfeld 2006; and see Breda and Costa 2006).

In turn, its successes and failures have considerable impacts on nation-states, particularly in well-established tourism economies such as Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines, and increasingly in the newly-emerging tourism sites of Vietnam, Cambodia, Lao PDR and Myanmar (King 2018). Total number of visitor arrivals to ASEAN increased significantly during 2005-2018, reaching 135.3 million in 2018—or an increase of 263.7% from 2005. The highest visitor arrivals in 2018 were achieved by Thailand (38.3 million), followed by Malaysia (25.8 million), Singapore (18.5 million), Indonesia (15.8 million), and Vietnam (15.5 million). Then some way behind came the Philippines (7.1 million), Cambodia (6.2 million), Lao PDR (4.2 million) and Myanmar (3.55 million). It should be noted that Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Myanmar have developed their tourism industries from a very low base since

the 1990s. These industries have come to play an increasing role in their respective economies. Given its oil and gas wealth, tourism in Brunei Darussalam contributes a very small percentage to GDP and its arrivals only reached 278,000 in 2018. Nevertheless, this figure only includes arrivals at the international airport and not by land, ferry, or cruise ship; when all visitors are counted, the total comes to over 4 million (Tourism Development Department [Brunei], 2019). Of the overall total visitors to ASEAN, 49.7 million (36.7%) in 2018 came from within ASEAN, an increase of 212.2% from 15.9 million arrivals recorded in 2005 (The ASEAN Secretariat 2018, 2019a, 2019b: 163-179, 2020).

The more remarkable pre-Covid statistics are those which provide the country of origin of international visitor arrivals. Of the 85.6 million non-ASEAN arrivals in 2018, 47.9 million were generated in East Asia (China [29.1 million]; South Korea [9 million], Japan [5.2 million], Taiwan [2.8 million] and Hong Kong [1.8 million]). The other main markets were Europe (especially France, Germany, and UK, followed by Italy and the Netherlands), USA and Canada, and Australia and New Zealand (The ASEAN Secretariat 2019b: 168). Some ASEAN countries are more dependent than others on East Asian visitors, with Thailand receiving approximately 15.5 million visitors in 2018, two-thirds of which came from China (2019b: 178). Malaysia is less dependent but still received 4.3 million visitors from East Asia (2.9 million from China) (2019b: 174). However, dependence also varies within countries; the Malaysian state of Sabah, for example, has been much more dependent on East Asian tourists. Of 4,195,903 visitors in 2019, 2,726,428 came from other parts of Malaysia, but of 1,469,475 international visitors, East Asia provided over one million: 598,566 (China); 396,660 (South Korea), 45,550 (Taiwan), and 24,435 (Japan) (Sabah Tourism Board 2020a, 2020b).

Tourism also has a varied relationship with crises and disasters; it can generate or amplify them, suffer from their effects, or be used in post-crisis/disaster recovery. The ups-and-downs of the tourism industry require strategies for risk reduction, response, and sustainability (Neef and Grayson 2019). Covid-19 is here to stay, and, as with influenza, it necessitates a regular, continuous

vaccination program. In this connection, the tensions between "awaycation" and "staycation" are likely to continue with serious consequences for tourism, and decisions need to be taken on whether the balance between domestic and international tourism requires adjustment towards more local, domestic-oriented activities. One major factor affecting the region is the collapse in the East Asian market as a vitally important source of tourists for Southeast Asia.

Of Thailand's international tourist arrivals in 2019, for example, 30% were Chinese. The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) estimated potential losses of US$ 1.6 billion for 2020; this figure has risen, with the continuation of travel restrictions and lockdowns. The annual growth in Chinese tourist arrivals was calculated variously from 2018 through to the end of 2019 (either in October, November, or December) in selected ASEAN countries, which have become increasingly tied to the Chinese market. It ranged from 40% in Myanmar, 16.2% in Vietnam, 15.1% in the Philippines, 11.5% in Lao PDR, and 9.7% in Cambodia. The established destinations like Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, and Indonesia, which had already attracted large numbers of Chinese visitors, showed smaller percentage increases (from 2% to 4%) (The ASEAN Secretariat 2019a, 2019b). In addition, World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) data for Asia-Pacific, including ASEAN, indicates that ForwardKeys air travel bookings statistics for March-May 2020, in comparison with the same period in 2019, were down 42.4% (international inbound), 41.6% (international outbound), and 9.9% (domestic). Hotel occupancy rates for February 2020 (year-to-date) had decreased by 23.8% (WTTC 2020a, 2020b). A major element in these decreases was the decline in activity within East Asia and ASEAN, and outbound travel from East to Southeast Asia.

By definition, tourism requires travel, encounters with other places and people, and facilities in order to pursue recreation, relaxation and curiosity, new experiences and learning opportunities. Restrictions and bans on travel and on close social and cultural interaction have profound consequences for the tourism industry. The major sub-sectors of the industry, including airlines and other

forms of transport, accommodation, the providers of food and beverages, retail outlets, tour operations, sightseeing packages, and guiding and entertainment services, are placed in jeopardy. For example, WTTC projected a possible global loss of jobs at 50 million in 2020 and a recovery period of almost a year after the outbreak (WTTC 2020a, 2020b). In its 2021 report, WTTC compared the global situation in 2019 with what has happened since the pandemic in 2020, in a survey of 185 countries and 25 regions of the world (WTTC 2021). The findings are deeply depressing for the industry, and the report draws attention to the plight of women, minorities, and youth which have been disproportionately affected. In 2019, the industry comprised 10.4% of global GDP worth US$ 9.2 trillion and generated 334 million jobs. In 2020, it contributed only 5.5% to world GDP or US$ 4.5 trillion, and job losses amounted to 62 million (ibid: 4-5). Had it not been for the intervention of governments, the decreases would have been even worse. In Southeast Asia, GDP slumped by 52.7% and the Asia Pacific overall by 53.7% with a loss of 34.1 million jobs (ibid: 6). It was one of the worst affected regions and many small and medium-sized businesses have closed, and women, young people, ethnic minorities, and migrant workers have been especially badly affected (Asia Foundation 2021a, 2021b).

There is a considerable literature on crises and disasters and the consequences for the tourism industry in Southeast Asia. There are as well more general publications on managing tourism crises in the Asia Pacific region and beyond, and government responses to these (see, for example, Henderson 2004, 2007; Ritchie and Campiranon 2015). The focus of this paper is not on strategies and management issues, but rather on some of the major consequences and some of the often disparate responses from government and the tourism industry. It is very clear in the current Covid-19 pandemic that the planning for a crisis of such magnitude and extent, and the devising of measures to counter the effects of a disease that spreads with such speed and severity, are fraught with all kinds of difficulties including informed decision-making and its timing, choices between such issues as economic well-being and public health, strategy and short- medium- and long-term planning, the availability of resources

in both the public and private sector, national interest as against international cooperation, and a lack of knowledge of the virus and its mutations, and the ways in which it interacts with the human body.

In the studies of management in relation to disasters, much is made of forward-planning, the formulation of strategies, ensuring that resources and funds can be mobilized quickly and efficiently, a well-crafted communications strategy, the coordination between the private and public sectors, and close cooperation between national government bodies and transnational tourism, relief, and aid organizations (Faulkner 2001; Ritchie 2004, 2008). The literature falls within what might be referred to as normative social science; the tools of management are deployed with an emphasis on rational or operational decision-making and the ability to translate the models devised from one case to another (see, for example, Deverell 2012; Holla et al. 2018). Very often, this approach assumes the ability and capacity to use a standard template and without addressing, in sufficient measure, contextual issues and transnational cultural variation between cases. It is clear that nation-state-based responses to the Covid-19 pandemic have varied; schedules of decision-making and the decisions taken by governments and stakeholders have differed considerably in detail, though overall the strategies have been based on the restriction of movement and contact and the closing or partial closing of national borders. Furthermore, in the case of the pandemic, even the kind of measured management-science-based, forward-looking approach has proved insufficient to address the speed with which the disease has spread and mutated, and its highly infectious nature.

Ⅴ. The Marginalized, Vulnerable, and Minorities

There has been increasing attention in the media and among aid organizations, NGOs, and UN agencies to the consequences of Covid-19 for the vulnerable. Virgil and Lie (2020) investigated the responses to the pandemic of ASEAN governments and the major issues which these responses raise for those, such as migrant

workers, who have very little, if any, protection or support when they lose their jobs and income. They argue that the virus has a disproportionate impact on minorities and the vulnerable, and this is increased because of differences in healthcare capacity and access to medical services. The situation is even worse for refugees, of which there are 200,000 in Malaysia, with limited legal rights and fear of arrest, especially those who are illegally in the country (Abdul Waheed Parry 2020).

In addition, in her discussion of "pandemic politics" in Southeast Asia, Khoo Ying Hooi argues that, though the response has varied, the pandemic has offered increased opportunities for central political control (2020). With reference to the case of Cambodia, she points to the arbitrary extension of government control over assembly, press freedom and disinformation, surveillance, policing, the role of the military, and physical movement. She suggests that it violates international human rights laws; the accused can be subject to fines, arrest, or imprisonment. More generally, people's movements are tracked and their privacy invaded. Migrant workers are more likely to be arrested and detained than citizens of the state.

The *Rapid Gender Analysis* undertaken by CARE Australia is even more dispiriting in regard to the marginalized (2020). In a study in April-May 2020, during the beginning of the pandemic in mainland Southeast Asia (and the situation has clearly worsened since the study was undertaken), the research documented a wide range of concerns (2020: 5-6). With increasing unemployment or reduction in wages, the burden of managing household affairs has grown and falls particularly on women. For female migrant workers especially, loss of income has meant a drastic reduction in remittances sent home, and the consequent exodus of labor returning to home, have placed increased burdens on families there. Sex workers and other marginal groups have suffered further exclusion from decision-making spaces which provide support services, particularly healthcare. This problem is exacerbated when funds of civil society organizations, NGOs, and charitable bodies have been reduced. Restrictions on physical movements and interaction have also made it more difficult to access support

services. The report collected evidence of increased human trafficking and gender-based violence. Prejudices and discrimination against migrant workers also increased. In the Southeast Asian tourism industry, which also involves provision of sexual, escort, and massage services, women, where they retain employment, have exposed themselves to an increasing risk of contracting the virus.

In addition, minority groups involved in providing cultural experiences and ethnic arts and crafts for tourists have suffered because of the rapid decrease in tourism; including longhouse tourism among the Iban in Sarawak (Dias 2001; King 1994); hill tribe trekking among such communities as the Akha and Karen in the northern uplands of Thailand, and the sales of their ethnic products to tourists (Trupp 2014, 2015a, 2015b); souvenir selling among the Toba Batak in Sumatra (Causey 2003); elaborate funeral rituals and mortuary art and other artefacts provided by the Toraja in Sulawesi, Indonesia (Adams 2006, 2009); and the stunning rice terraces and cultural landscapes of the Ifugao of northern Luzon (Bilian 2007; Dulnuan 2014). Akha women, increasingly known for selling ethnic crafts in the main sites of international tourism in Thailand, have more or less disappeared from the streets as their customers vanished (Trupp 2016).

The International Labour Organization (ILO), in its report on migrant workers in Thailand, has reported similar problems (2020). In March, before the lockdown in Thailand and the closure of its borders, there were problems over work permits and immediate job losses. ILO estimated that around 700,000 migrant workers were made redundant from March to July 2020. With the fear of Covid-19 worsening, there was a large outflow of workers from Thailand to Cambodia, Lao PDR and Myanmar in late March and early April. In December 2019, there were 2,788,316 registered migrant workers in Thailand and an unknown but a substantial number of illegal workers. The ILO estimated that around 10% of migrants had returned to their home countries in the early months of the pandemic, in the context of an estimated 8.4 million job losses, with 2.5 million in the tourism industry. Although officially illegal, the sex industry in Thailand, partly linked to tourism, suffered a drastic and probably irretrievable decline. Significant numbers of migrant

workers, particularly prone to the disease because of crowded and poor-quality accommodation, were also coerced into working in spite of the restrictions, although they lacked protection from the virus. The Asia Foundation's survey of small businesses and workers also stated, in relation to Thailand, that the "tourism and business travel sectors have experienced unprecedented contraction" and "With each passing month, tens of thousands or more Thai workers have become at risk of sliding into poverty" (2021a).

The Foundation found a similar situation in an earlier survey of small businesses in the Cambodian tourism sector (2021b). "Many businesses have closed permanently… As the pandemic drags on, temporary losses [of small businesses] have become permanent and household incomes have plummeted."

Ⅵ. Concluding Remarks

The consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic for those who work in the Southeast Asian tourism industry, many of them migrant workers, women, young people, and minorities, have been devastating. To be sure, there have been some local imaginative and energetic responses to the predicaments which the virus poses (Vichit-Vadakan 2021). However, for the marginalized and vulnerable, there are limited options, and they may experience difficulties in accessing vaccines. In the Southeast Asian tourism industry, there appears to be no likely turnaround in prospect even in 2022. For example, Singapore is projecting a possible return to financial stability in its tourism sector by 2024 at the earliest. Thailand is looking at 2026 for a recovery in tourism, which does not seem to square with the aspirations of ASEAN Ministers and its Secretariat (ibid).

It was relatively easy to promote tourism as a regional enterprise when the industry was growing exponentially up to 2019. Before the pandemic, ASEAN tourism plans on a regional basis were expressed in two important documents: the *ASEAN Tourism Strategic Plan*, the first one operated between 2011 and 2015; the current plan runs for a ten-year period, 2016-2025 with a Mid-Term Review

in 2020 (The ASEAN Secretariat 2015a); and the *ASEAN Tourism Marketing Strategy*, launched in 2012-2015, continued from 2017 until 2020 (The ASEAN Secretariat 2017), with the current *Strategy* operating from 2021 to 2025. The ASEAN Tourism Ministers held their 24th meeting online, hosted by the Kingdom of Cambodia, on February 4, 2021 (The ASEAN Secretariat 2021a). Attention was paid to the Joint Statement of the ASEAN Tourism Ministers of April 29, 2020 titled "Strengthening Cooperation to Revitalise ASEAN Tourism" and the *Post-Covid-19 Recovery Plan* agreed in December 2020. But, as yet, "No country has found the magic formula to revive tourism" to its pre-Covid level (Vichit-Vandakan 2021).

However, the virtual meeting was organized in the sober context of 2020 during which time, and, in comparison with 2019, the Southeast Asian tourism sector had lost 75.8% in tourism receipts, 80.5% in international arrivals, "massive cancellations" in bookings, and the lowest hotel occupancy rate in recent history (Kon 2021). For example, taking it forward, a survey of hotels in Thailand in April 2021 indicated that 47% would be likely to close within three months if the restrictions imposed by the pandemic were not eased; in 2020 the average hotel occupancy rate in Thailand was 29.5% (Cusmano 2021). Vichit-Vadakan says that after the first quarter of 2020 when the pandemic was taking hold, "international travel all but dried up."

The 24th Meeting emphasized such themes as "the road to recovery," "a single destination," and "sustainable, inclusive and resilient tourism development." Predictably, the meeting expressed the importance of cooperation in strengthening the association's data and information network, "flagship projects," training, person-to-person exchanges, the digitization of tourism, and promoting "connectivity" and travel facilitation to and within ASEAN. The message was repeated in a follow-up exchange entitled "Unity for Sustainable and Responsible Tourism Recovery" organized by Brunei on February 6, 2021 (The Star 2021).

Given what has happened to tourism in Southeast Asia during the pandemic, sustainability, inclusiveness, resilience, unity, and cooperation seem distant goals. The restrictions imposed by the

separate governments of Southeast Asia have varied. Brendan Sobie, in a series of commentaries on the Channel News Asia (CNA) website, suggests that Southeast Asia is possibly going to fall further behind other regions in encouraging international visitors to return (2021). He argues this for several reasons. Other countries are increasing their vaccination levels and opening up their borders, and, in some cases, reducing, or waiving quarantine restrictions for vaccinated passengers. He suggests that Southeast Asia in general is moving in the opposite direction.

If we examine the travel restrictions imposed by ASEAN member countries, they are far from being tourism-friendly (The ASEAN Secretariat 2021b). Most continue to maintain a pre-booked, 14-day hotel-based quarantine period, the costs of which have to be borne by the visitor. Pre-departure and arrival, Covid-19 tests are required, costs again to be carried by the visitor. In some countries, specific Covid medical insurance is required to a specified level should in-country treatment be required. Some countries are quite explicit, including Indonesia, Malaysia, and Vietnam, that "Passengers are not allowed to enter…" with certain exceptions (which usually include nationals or those married to nationals and permanent residents; students with immigration approval; expatriates with employment visas or other longer-term residence or official visas; individuals in the diplomatic service; essential business travellers along with company staff, skilled workers, technicians, medical personnel; air, sea or land transport staff; Safe or Green Lane travellers [this could include tourists]). Cambodia commences its list of restrictions with "All visa exemptions, visas on arrival and e-visas are suspended…tourist visas are still on suspension" (ibid). However, ASEAN's inviting slogan or tagline remains as "Southeast Asia feel the warmth." Another tagline is "One vision, one identity, one community" (The ASEAN Secretariat 2018, 2020).

It is not surprising that, as an independent aviation consultant based in Singapore, Sobie points to a dramatic regional drop in international passenger traffic, and suggests that it shows no clear signs of increasing significantly while infection rates are currently rising in the region, in some cases quite dramatically. He also argues for a multilateral solution in ASEAN in relation to standards and

protocols for aviation, and notes that there is no mutual recognition of Covid-19 tests and vaccines. Instead, countries have usually adopted their own regulations without regional consultation and retreated into a closed border mode. The result is "a complex patchwork of rules that can be difficult to adhere to, leading to confused passengers and unusually long airport check-in times."

There has been considerable criticism of ASEAN's lack of regional cooperation in regard to the travel and tourism industry despite official pronouncements to the contrary. It is worth noting too that, ASEAN sees tourism as a vehicle for unity and connectivity. Its main objective is to promote the region as a single tourist destination. Before Covid-19, there was always competition between the association's members, and, in some cases, a complete failure to coordinate activities and policies. There have always been established players in the field (Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore), conscious of the need to maintain their advantage. In addition, in this pre-Covid competitive arena, there were those countries which were losing ground; over the recent years, Indonesia had not achieved the visitor arrival targets that it had set, particularly as a result of natural disasters; the same may be said of the Philippines, which for many years, has been beset by typhoons, floods, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions, and has also failed to keep pace with some of its neighbors. In 2018, Indonesia and the Philippines were within the top five countries in Asia Pacific which were most at risk from multiple hazards, mainly environmental (UN ESCAP 2019). Increasingly, within ASEAN in 2018, international visitors (over 29 million of them) went to the emerging markets of Vietnam, Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Myanmar, a trend which continued into 2019. Again, the proximity of mainland Southeast Asia to the East Asian markets was a factor. But the exploration of new tourist destinations, ease of access, and value for money have also played a role in tourist decision-making during the past 20 years. On the other hand, Singapore, Bangkok, and to some extent Kuala Lumpur, increasingly served as regional hubs for these newer markets and their stopover traffic increased.

We should also note that the *ASEAN Tourism Strategic Plan 2016-2025*, as it was originally formulated, in its consideration of

constraints, challenges, and threats to the tourism industry, mentions in passing, and without elaboration or any policy statements to address the issue, "possible pandemics with resultant negative travel advisories" (2015a: 26). The ASEAN Secretariat does have a Crisis Communications Manual which provides a standardized "Communications Toolkit" to address the ways in which media messages and communications strategies can be handled, devised, and delivered, reputations and images sustained and stakeholders and the general public reassured (2015b; and see Wilks and Moore, 2004). However, it is not a particularly useful aid to respond to a region-wide and global crisis such as Covid-19, in which each country has decided to impose its own solutions to address the crisis. Not only is there an information and communication problem within ASEAN at the present time, but also a need to address the operation of transnational tourism supply chains (and see Breiling 2016).

In these circumstances, the future is bleak for those working in the tourism industry and supporting service sectors in Southeast Asia, including migrant workers, small-scale retailers, and those operating in the informal sector, ethnic minority communities providing cultural performances and tours for visitors, those working in craft and souvenir production as well as a substantial number of women working in the retail sector, in bars, restaurants, night clubs, and massage parlors. Even UNESCO in the region cannot give reassurance to these categories of workers in the industry. A recent online event and debate organized by the UNESCO office in Hanoi, along with several other partners, on the future shape of tourism in Southeast Asia concludes that "the pandemic has moved most if not all regional transactions to the online space, limiting in-person contact and disabling—if not transforming—collective gatherings and such shared experiences" (UNESCO 2021). As an anthropologist, I find this deeply dispiriting. In the interest of promoting "the nexus" between sustainable tourism and cultural diplomacy, it envisioned "e-learning and e-commerce as the new normal for social transactions in the region," encouraging interaction between "young tourists, entrepreneurs and cultural enthusiasts" and developing "online tours, cultural classes and webinars" (ibid). In

this connection what has happened to the vibrancy of Southeast Asian cultural life on the ground, face-to-face, in social and cultural interaction?

The UNESCO proposals for "the new normal," with the reliance on online e-experiences and e-learning, and with the deployment of new communications technology, privileging the young, along with "entrepreneurs and cultural enthusiasts," and the ASEAN-proposed future of the improvement of data and information networks, digitization and connectivity seem far removed from the pre-Covid lives of a significant number of the marginalized and vulnerable. It suggests that those who provided a substantial dimension of the pre-Covid tourism experience in Southeast Asia will no longer have a place.

Given the uncertainties surrounding the future development of the Covid-19 pandemic and the socio-economic, political and health consequences, it is difficult to make firm predictions about the future of tourism. The seriousness of the pandemic, its rapid spread, and the lack of knowledge about the virus and its origins suggest that the repercussions on tourism will continue for a considerable and undefined period. We need to know more about the changes in travel behavior and perceptions of risk and decision-making occasioned by the pandemic. As we have seen, Erik Cohen has examined the coincidence, antecedence, interaction and dynamics of crises in the context of Thailand (2010; Cohen and Neal 2010). As a result of the Covid-19 crisis, the tourism industry will never be the same again; some businesses have already disappeared and will continue to do so; some destinations may be avoided for some time; people may continue to be wary of close contacts in airline, train, river and bus travel and on cruise liners. The time of Western tourists going in search of "the exotic" and "the mysterious East" may be largely over. In a possible post-pandemic there may be contentment with the familiar, predictable, and trusted in domestic and regional settings.

The overdependence on the East Asian market has already resulted in calls for the diversification of tourist source countries, encouraging domestic tourism, and, in certain sites, moving away

from low-revenue, less sustainable East Asian mass tourism. Nevertheless, the influence of East Asia and the revenue and employment generated in Southeast Asia may be too significant to resist and may already be too embedded in East Asian regional supply chains to encourage more radical changes in tourism strategies. An apparently attractive response on the part of several governments in the region has been to encourage more domestic tourism; it has a role, but it will never reach the level of revenue generated by high-spending international tourists from the West.

Finally, there are certain problems with the ways in which Covid-19 has been conceptualized and debated. Obviously, political elites and their senior advisers construct discourses in addressing the pandemic, and introducing policies and strategies by "following the science." However, these discourses are frequently confusing and contradictory, as we would expect in dealing with an uncertain future. Governments have to balance the need to combat the spread of infection with the negative consequences for their economies and the more general physical, social, cultural, and psychological well-being of the populace, particularly the vulnerable. Some countries have performed much better than others in guiding their countries through these difficult times, others have made serious mistakes. It remains to be seen what the world, and, in this case the tourism world, will look like into 2022 and beyond. With the availability of vaccines, there is an increasing optimism, but whether this will make much difference to the marginalized populations of Southeast Asia is a moot point.

Returning to Victor Turner and Arnold van Gennep, we are currently in a global transition expressed in the rituals which we have embraced, we are adopting behaviors that are "abnormal" and "liminal," and in doing so, we hope for a future that returns to the "normal." Unfortunately, the weight of evidence suggests that the transition will lead to something very different within which some of humankind will survive and perhaps flourish and others will suffer and succumb. The "new normal" will be with us for some considerable time to come and we have to adapt and respond to it.

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The COVID-19 Pandemic and the 'stranded' Migrant Population: An Unequal pain

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[*Abstract*]

This article aims to determine the vulnerability of migrant populations to COVID-19. Between March 2020 and November 2021, informal interviews with respondents who were stranded in various parts of the world were conducted through Skype and WhatsApp. COVID-19 endangers millions of individuals who were stranded between their homes and their destinations — and who were compelled to reside in overcrowded accommodation where the ideas of "stay home," "keep safe," and "social distancing" have little significance.

Keywords: COVID-19, migration, pandemic, lockdown, and refugee.

Ⅰ. Introduction

Millions of people have had to postpone life-cycle events, including

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weddings, anniversaries, family get-togethers, festivals, religious functions, graduations, and retirements, because of the COVID-19 pandemic (Arkin, Fichtel and Walters 2020). Coronaviruses have now infested every region of the globe. It is expected that the emergence of the COVID-19 epidemic will have a significant impact on our understanding of the early twenty-first century (Bedford et al. 2019). Not everyone experiences the infection in the same manner. Nationals and non-nationals can face vastly different outcomes as a result of this attack. Because countries that do not have universal healthcare can barely house their residents, let alone refugees and migrants, they are unable to accept these other populations (Gardini 2020). They suffer disproportionately from the social and economic effects of the COVID-19 problem since they are one of the most disadvantaged social groups (ILO 2020).

We have realized that wars do not have to be caused by large reasons (Sufian 2020). This means there will be many-sided consequences, like deteriorating global imbalances, those blamed for the virus spreading being forced to flee, and more cross-border criminality (Ullah 2016a). Italy's Matteo Salvini, for example, has said that African migrants caused the spread of disease in the country, and Viktor Orban of Hungary has blamed Iranian migrants for the spread of a virus. Meanwhile, President Trump has branded it the "China virus" (Condon 2020; Center for Migration Studies 2020; Anzai et al. 2020). The worldwide situation has been critical, with over 6.3 million people dying, over 530 million people infected, and around 507 million recovering (as of June, 8th 2022). The governments of many countries implemented lockdowns to stop the virus from spreading, leaving millions unable to leave their locations. Over a third of the world's population are at some degree of hindrance (Ullah, Nawaz and Chattoraj 2021). There are more people under lockdown today than during World War II (Ullah 2014; Ullah, Hossain and Islam 2015).

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the migrant community. Every day, during the pre-COVID-19 period, approximately one million people used to take flights. Vast mobility ceased (as about 90% of these travellers have stopped moving) (Ullah, Nawaz and Chattoraj 2021), with the vast majority of airlines

grounded and travel restrictions imposed (Johns Hopkins University 2020), and the entire global population forced to change their way of life: "stay home, stay safe" (Johns Hopkins University 2020; Kampf et al. 2020).

Most European countries implemented limits on both inbound and outbound travel during the initial wave of the pandemic, implementing universal restrictions that prevented all cross-border travel or, at the least, permitted business travellers and cross-border commuters to travel freely. During the second wave, however, the vast majority of nations restricted and regulated only inbound travel, issuing warnings for outbound travel. During the first wave of travel restrictions, governments grounded planes, suspended international train connections, and closed border crossings, whereas second-wave travel restrictions largely instructed incoming travellers to quarantine themselves or required a negative Sars-Cov-2 test either before or shortly after entry (Neumayer, Plümper and Shaikh 2021).

There is no doubt that immobility is vital in stopping or reducing the virus's spread. The issue is that migrant-receiving countries want them to leave, while their home countries appear hostile. According to Sirkeci and Yüceşahin (2020), migratory corridors increase migration volume over time. The challenges that migrants endured during the pandemic received little attention. This article looks at how the pandemic has affected the lives of migrant groups and how vaccination distribution has been politicized.

Ⅱ. Objectives and methodology

This article is based on 43 remote interviews (via Skype and WhatsApp) with respondents selected through the snowball method. They were migrants living or were confined in Singapore, Brunei, Hong Kong, Macau, Italy, Spain, Maryland, New York, Newark, Florida, Atlanta, Dusseldorf, Amsterdam, Copenhagen, France, Qatar, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia. The respondents come from the low- and semi-skilled brackets who are at most risk from COVID-19. Conducting qualitative research with labour migrants was

significantly more difficult during the pandemic. Migrant workers were difficult to reach due to a lack of internet connection, illegal status, and the possibility of facing public suspicion or even disgrace in a foreign country. The workers who took part in the research came from various segments of the unorganized sector. 55% or majority of them (55%) are low-skilled, while 18% are skilled. In general, they were all employed in the informal sector and received scant social protection. Only a few migrant workers engaged in small trades, accounting for 2% of respondents, and 8% of these respondents worked in other areas such as transportation.

Ⅲ. COVID-19 and migrant restrictions

Imposing travel restrictions is one of the oldest methods of controlling the spread of infectious diseases. According to historical accounts, restrictions were originally used in 1347, when Genoese traders were believed to have brought the plague from the Crimean harbour city of Kaffa. European port communities quarantined sailors on board ships for 40 days before allowing them to disembark. Travel restrictions throughout history have been a mechanism to limit social contact between the local population and tourists from epidemic-affected areas (Gensini, Yacoub and Conti 2004).

The migrant community is expected to be disproportionately affected by any pandemic. COVID-19 disproves the widely held belief that a pandemic knows neither racial nor social borders. Overshadowing conventional migration arguments (IOM 2020), the COVID-19 situation has made migration more difficult. Numerous studies have already shown that migrant workers are the most vulnerable occupational category (Koh 2020). Regardless of origin or destination, most of our respondents expressed concern about food scarcity, job loss, xenophobia, and overall uncertainties (Figure 1), all of which have implications for their families and the economy back home. According to research carried about by Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and International Labour Organization:

"during the second and third quarters of 2020, an estimated 17.3 and 12.1 percent of worldwide working hours (equivalent to 495 million and 345 million full-time jobs) were lost owing to the pandemic" (2020:8).

It is well recognized that border restrictions hurt population migration. In order to combat the spread of COVID-19, many governments have taken harsh measures against migrants, refugees, and other displaced people. Measures included border closures, quarantines, expulsions, and lockdowns of migrant labour settlements and refugee camps. Outraged by the situation of migrant laborers, public policy professionals referred to the COVID-19 quarantine as a "choice between virus and starvation" (Chen 2020). Between 11 March 2020 and 22 February 2021, about 105,000 movement restrictions were imposed around the world (IOM 2021). Estimates based on a zero-growth assumption in the number of migrants between 1 March and 1 July 2020 suggest a global fall of nearly two million international migrants between mid-2019 and mid-2020, compared to the previously expected estimate of 1.5 million (UN DESA 2020).

Around 1.5 billion young people, or more than 90% of the world's students, have had their education disrupted in 188 countries (United Nations 2020). Salary cuts among migrant and refugee workers reduced remittances by USD$109 billion. Remittances—a critical source of income for over 800 million people (Ullah, Nawaz and Chattoraj 2021b; Ullah 2010; 2018)—account for more than 10% of global GDP in 30 countries (Ullah and Huque 2019).

The low-skilled or unskilled migrants do not have the luxury of working from home. Their physical presence at the workplace is critical, increasing their chances of contracting COVID-19 and transmitting it to others (Ullah 2016; Ullah and Haque 2020). As a result, lockdown (Avato et al. 2020; Dustmann et al. 2010; Sanchez and Achilli 2020) has been considered a successful measure for slowing the spread of cases through human-to-human transmission. Government response to prevent migrants from going home was motivated by the worry that they might bring the Coronavirus back

to their hometowns and villages (Ullah, Haji-Othman and Daud 2021c; Chen 2020). Because of the COVID-19 outbreak (Condon 2020), majority of European Union (EU) member states prohibited all relocation, return, and resettlement plans and limited services for migrants (Bloomberg 2020). Austria, Greece, Belgium, Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic rejected immigration quotas (Roslan 2020).

Many countries adopted policies disallowing new migrant workers (Yoyboke 2020; Mashal, Timory and Rahim 2020). No new work permits for foreign workers were issued until further notice (Ullah, Kumpoh and Haji-Othman 2021a). There was rising evidence that as many as 100 million migrants preferred illegal routes to leave since regular ones were insufficient (Sohini and Jha 2020). Desperate migrants sought assistance from smugglers, traffickers, and other illicit organizations (Legrain 2020).

The COVID-19 pandemic, to some, appeared as a source of hope for many migrants. They saw rays of hope primarily because of the likely rising need of migrant workers to restart the business. The pandemic has transformed their invisibility and underlined their vital role in society. Some respondents mentioned that the pandemic helped raise awareness of migrants' contributions as "essential workers," especially in health, supply chains, and agriculture (Freier et al. 2020). Hence, as a recognition, the Portuguese government began granting citizenship to all migrants and asylum seekers awaiting a verdict on their residency petitions. France already granted citizenship to hundreds of migrant frontline workers (Willsher 2021). A genuine moment of reckoning has emerged: economies and societies cannot function without key workers. Nurses, care workers, delivery drivers, supermarket staff, etc., were considered heroes. Moreover, it is indisputably clear that migrants figure prominently amongst these workers. Globally, only 4.7% of the workforce was made up of migrants (Kumar 2021).

Some European industries, including agriculture, became concerned about potential economic losses caused by travel restrictions that prevent many refugees from arriving. Germany's farm sector, which relies heavily on migrant labourers from Bulgaria,

Poland, and Romania, was anxious that border closures would jeopardize the harvest. Other migrants could be brought in to assist with the rescue attempt. As a result, Germany's agriculture minister urged that refugees be granted temporary work permits (Taylor 2020). For example, in Luxembourg and Australia, more than half of the doctors were foreign-born. In London, two-thirds of the nurses and half of the doctors are migrants (Kumar 2021).

Ⅳ. Migrants' potential consequences

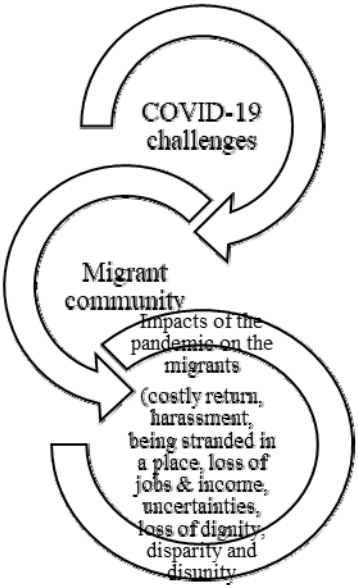
It was only in March 2020, that the world witnessed hundreds of hapless migrants anxiously trying to catch a bus back to their home countries in a three-kilometre-long wait at Delhi's Bus Terminal in India, a scene that shook the nation and the world (Singh 2020). As the days passed, additional terrible images and accounts of migrant labourers travelling hundreds of miles across states became public.

4.1 Harrowing return journey

Migrant laborers (Sainath 2020), one of society's most disadvantaged groups, have been squeezing under capitalism's weight for generations. The pandemic has exacerbated their suffering. As a result, many migrants have suffered, particularly those who are low-skilled or work in the informal economy. The majority of receiving countries hastened to implement a state-wide lockdown, and employers and intermediaries, who were the last line of defence, turned their backs on these hapless people.

Mobility restrictions (travel to and from work) have had a severe impact in a myriad of ways on migrant families, livelihoods, and food security. As a result, governments were condemned for imposing lockdowns too swiftly or too slowly, with too tight or too lax restrictions. Millions of migrants were left stranded in transit, destination, or countries of origin. Earlier studies on the economic impacts of lockdown restrictions concentrated on their impact on consumption, the supply chain, inequality, and the overall economy. The aggregate economic impact of shutdown restrictions, on the

other hand, is difficult to quantify for a variety of reasons (Smolyak et al. 2021). Migrant workers who are presently working overseas may be unable to return home, and families who are already dealing with complex immigration and visa systems may be split up for an entirely new reason (Yayboke 2020). As a result of "politically" motivated restrictions, migrants were forced to face the monumental effort of returning home on foot, despite unmet biological needs, a harsh climate, and an equally unfriendly attitude from law enforcement.



<Figure 1> COVID-19, migration and consequences. Source: Authors, 2022

4.2 Stranded

Migrant workers, who have long struggled with poverty and marginalization, were shocked to learn that the lockdown notice was the start of a lifetime of agony. As a result, the pandemic has had a devastating effect on low-skilled migrant labour and informal workers. They are fighting for their lives in areas where they work and when they arrive on their way back to their home countries. With no end to the pandemic disaster in sight, these populations are stranded.

As a result of the "lockdown" restrictions, those unable to work in their intended destination nations were stuck in economic limbo with no access to any social safety net.

"We are stuck here," "we are spending our time remaining at home watching movies and connecting with people via social media," were the most common responses from our respondents who are stranded in various parts of the world to our "how are you?" question. "Every two weeks, we go shopping for groceries." While governments in Southeast and East Asia are supposed to have

taken care of domestic helpers, some respondents (mostly domestic helpers-DH) from Hong Kong, Taiwan, Macao, and Singapore said that their employers were reluctant to discuss their health issues. Their bosses made them wait in line for hours for masks and hand sanitizers, despite the fact that the masks were only for their employers. Many governments made it clear that they would not care for foreigners in their country, meaning that foreigners would bear full financial responsibility if they succumb to COVID-19.

Measures affecting people's movement (both domestically and internationally) and the resulting labour shortages have an impact on agricultural value chains, changing food supply and market pricing globally. Simultaneously, a significant proportion of migrants work under informal or casual arrangements, leaving them unprotected, vulnerable to exploitation, poverty, and food insecurity, and frequently lacking access to healthcare, social safety nets, or government-enacted regulations (FAO 2020).

Migrants have been stranded for a variety of reasons, including, but not limited to, travel restrictions and a reduction in foreign flights. The loss of jobs and money, a lack of work, residency permits, and a lack of finances to return home have all restricted mobility. As their visas and permissions expire, migrants face deportation (IOM 2020). Hundreds of thousands of migrant workers are either on their way home or are stranded somewhere along the way (Ahmed 2020). Due to job losses, around half a million Filipinos are likely to return home in the next six months (ibid). Countries have enforced quarantines, curfews, and border closures to stop the spread of Coronavirus, detaining many refugees. According to some of our Italian, French and Spanish respondents, they could not go grocery shopping unless they had their passports. Those who lack identity have no choice but to live in poverty and famine.

The majority of people in similar situations indicated anxiety that they would perish from hunger rather than disease. To prevent the virus from spreading, drastic and sudden lockdown measures are required; nevertheless, the decision to lockdown came far too soon for the migrants whose jobs had vanished overnight. Around 90 million domestic workers, tens of millions of migrant

construction workers, and approximately 10 million street vendors migrate to work in middle-class metropolitan households in India. These people spread unchecked into rural areas. Bangladesh, the world's second-largest garment exporter, is losing orders at an alarming rate, threatening the livelihoods of millions of people. Millions of garment workers (about 1.2 million migrant labourers) are internal migrants from rural Bangladesh (Yan 2020). Because of their close proximity, overcrowding, a lack of sanitation and hygiene facilities, and a lack of access to healthcare services, the host communities are in the most perilous scenario (Chattoraj et al. 2021). The camps may become a "death trap" due to their vulnerability to the infection (IOM 2020; Ullah, Hossain and Chattoraj 2020b).

4.3 Experience of harassment

Migrant suffering has worsened as they were unable to return to their home countries or receive assistance in the countries where they are currently residing. Their native states regard immigrants as a threat when it comes to disease. A sudden surge in cases could overwhelm under-equipped and under-prepared healthcare facilities in several countries. One can see how states are reluctant to allow migrants to return home. Once the COVID-19 pandemic ends, migrants are still at risk because they have already lost their jobs and spent their meagre funds on food and transportation.

Respondents made endless complaints from many countries that landlords did not reduce rent for accommodation (Kottai 2020). Major issues in South Asian countries like Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Nepal were that after an arduous trek across multiple states, the migrant workers were humiliated by law enforcement agencies. The governments viewed workers from outside the state/country as prospective virus carriers, and the approach employed by government officials was humiliating and offended the dignity of migrants in general.

With millions of people dying as a result of the pandemic, migrant laborers have become an untouchable class in modern times. Members of the upper classes socially isolated them during

their laborious trek across states in order to reach their home states and avoid transmission. Locals have been known to bar migrant workers from accessing their own homes, and the situation was no different when they returned home.

4.4 Scary uncertainties

Due to the pandemic and its associated quarantines and travel restrictions across borders, there has been a resurgence of public discussion on poverty, susceptibility, and deprivation. For many migrants and informal workers, "if coronavirus is not lethal, hunger is," a well-known quote from a migrant worker who has personally experienced hunger (Dhillon 2020; Dhungana 2020). New research indicates that internal migrants' economic and health circumstances are deteriorating, with limited access to preventive health care and insufficient social security protections in areas such as basic income, food, and shelter (Pulla 2020; Sen et al. 2020; Sohini and Jha 2020).

The uncertainties they spoke about are their job and money loss, reassuming the job, going back to destination countries, visa renewal, the children going to school and sick people in the family. One respondent from Europe says, "our basic survival is contingent upon donations. We are cash-strapped. Please let us go." Is it feasible for you to speak with the police and explain the situation? It is disgraceful to live in this manner. This, in fact, resonates the voices of most migrants trapped overseas.

4.5 Loss of dignity

Most of the respondents said they were badly treated by immigration staff, airport staff and even airline staff. They feel they receive this treatment only because of their status. Many of them lamented that they did not deserve this treatment. It's a clear encroachment on their human dignity.

While human dignity is a contentious issue, it is inextricably linked to the liberal concept of human rights in contemporary global governance discourse. "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights," according to the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, which recognizes the interdependence of these two

concepts in the pursuit of global equality and justice (United Nations 1948). The majority of contemporary “Kantian deontology” has had an impact on our concept of human dignity. According to the deontological ethical stance, humans, as “ends in themselves,” have a moral component, which results in their dignity. The concept runs counter to the notion that utility is synonymous with dignity. Rather than that, it is envisioned that humanity as a whole has a feeling of dignity (Sensen 2016). In contemporary society, Kant's deontological worldview has shaped the current concept of human dignity.

The pandemic politicization appears to be common, resulting in stigma and exclusion. Almost all of our respondents agreed that stigmatizing and excluding migrants raises the risk of infection because migrants, for example, conceal potential symptoms rather than seeking treatment. Migrants face health risks due to their socio-economic status, living in overcrowded or otherwise unhealthy environments, being denied eligibility or access to services, such as health services, due to their [migration] status, cultural-linguistic barriers, or a lack of access to health information (IOM 2020).

Police routinely urge migrants to depart the land they are occupying, confiscating and occasionally destroying any tents, tarps, or sleeping bags they were unable to take with them. In 2020 and the first half of 2021, police evicted majority of encampments in Greece daily. The police have also been known to regularly evict residents from encampments under the guise of performing "shelter" operations. Additionally, officials undertaking mass evictions fail to appropriately identify and protect unaccompanied youngsters.

4.6 Growing disparity

Migrant views of impotence and exploitation at the hands of the privileged class were mentioned as contributing to their distress. As a result of the conviction that the system is prejudiced against the poor, they have lost faith in it and regard it as an agency that works against them rather than for them. If the economic shocks significantly disrupt migrant labour overseas, such sources of income for developing-country families would be disrupted, generating

ripple effects across their economies and, as a result, widening the gap between richer and poorer countries. When COVID-19 arrived, global inequality had already reached an all-time high. More than 160 million people have fallen into poverty as a result of reduced international trade and decreased foreign tourists (Chattoraj and Ullah 2022; Ullah, Lee, Hassan and Nawaz 2020a). Meanwhile, new multi-millionaires have been minted on a near-daily basis (BBC News 2022). The world's wealthiest 22 men have more money than Africa's whole population. In fact, the pandemic's long-term migration impacts are expected to exacerbate global inequality in the long term.

The forcibly displaced—refugees, asylum seekers, and internally displaced persons—as well as other forced migrants are already vulnerable to COVID-19. There is emerging evidence that restricting safe, orderly, and legal migration leads vulnerable people—perhaps as many as 100 million people globally—onto shady illegal pathways. Because of COVID-19, routine migration choices are fewer than they were a few months ago. When taken together, the economic, inequality, political, and displacement-related factors will exacerbate desperation at a time when migratory choices are limited (Yayboke 2020).

For example, the free economy in India has widened the divide between rich and poor, forcing the poor and excluded to seek jobs in cities. It is not merely poverty that drives people out of rural areas and into cities; poverty and caste are coupled. In India, unskilled labourers may relocate within or between states. Interstate migration accounted for 13% of India's overall population of 307 million people in 2011, including 41 million people who had migrated from their birthplace, and 140 million of the 307 million migratory workers are jobless (Misra and Gupta 2021).

4.7 Job loss

During the pandemic, immigrants in most developed, immigrant-receiving countries faced much greater job losses than native-born workers. In the early phases of the epidemic, the lower job mobility of immigrants made them more susceptible to losing their jobs.

According to the ILO, 255 million full-time jobs and $3.7 trillion in lost labour revenue were lost as a result of a reduction in working hours in 2020 compared to pre-pandemic levels (Richter 2021), with migrants bearing the brunt of the burden (Bizimungu 2020). The price of jet fuel has dropped dramatically. Major airlines around the world have cancelled flights (IATA 2020). Almost 200,000 flights were cancelled within China alone in the first several weeks after the pandemic began. Virtual modes, such as conferences and meetings, which are now held over Skype, have substituted the way we live and conduct business (Ullah and Ferdous 2022; Ullah and Chattoraj 2022). Due to trip cancellations and country-specific restrictions on international flights, the sector has lost $880 billion (WHO 2020). According to the International Air Transport Association, the airline industry lost $371 billion in revenue in 2020 compared to 2019 and is estimated to have $313-324 billion in 2021 (ICAO 2021). All this has ramifications in job loss globally.

Despite their status as cornerstones of the contemporary world and an integral component of our culture, migrants are frequently forgotten, underappreciated, and swept under the rug. An excerpt from a respondent in Europe says it all: “I work as a labourer in the construction industry. When the lockdown was declared, I lost my job. I am fully aware that if we enter lockdown, it will be impossible for me to survive”.

4.8 Disunity

The pandemic has widened political and diplomatic gaps among countries around the world. Discord over the origins of the virus was stoked by debates on vaccination effectiveness and vaccine promotion and administration, making the world more divided than ever. At the very least, within the civic community, the concept of sympathy for migrants and refugees is well-founded. As a result of this, and in accordance with the rules of social distance, direct solidarity is becoming increasingly rare, if not extinct. These tactics were frequently evolved into more official and long-term support actions as part of the welcome and integration network.

According to Italian responders, they are referred to as "the

invisibles": illegal African migrants who scraped by as day laborers, prostitutes, freelance hairdressers, and seasonal farmhands prior to the coronavirus outbreak that plunged Italy into catastrophe. Their precarious situation has deteriorated further due to a lack of income, food, and hope after being imprisoned for two months in decaying flats in a mob-infested village north of Naples.

"I am dying. Kindly assist me, someone. My children and hubby require my assistance, and hence I am requesting it." In a small apartment, a Nigerian hairdresser and mother of three. She is without milk for her six-month-old infant and is relying on a neighbour's compassion. For the "invisibles," a group of volunteers and medical professionals is ensuring that they do not go unnoticed by delivering groceries and giving health care to their quarters. Due to virus restrictions, Italy's lawful seasonal farm employees have been detained in Eastern Europe. A proposed bill would permit migrant farmworkers to pick strawberries, peaches, and melons. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have requested that all illegal immigrants be granted amnesty. However, no legislation has been enacted as a result of any suggestions. "While poverty existed, it was more humane. The way these people are treated as a satanic aura about it."

4.9 Lessons not learned

In the name of freedom, we stopped millions from getting vaccinated. We tend to forget that self-care is not self-indulgence. The world witnessed how right-wing politicians helped flare up politicizing vaccine and COVID-19. The pandemic's devastating effect on social and economic systems has elevated it to a top priority. When confronted with a pandemic, governance has become critical. Due to the virus's rapid spread and potential for harm, governments worldwide implemented precautionary measures such as banning public venues and establishing travel restrictions (Choolayil and Putran 2021).

The world's most powerful nations appear to have forgotten about the predicament of migrants and refugees. They appear to be unconscious of COVID-19's effect on them. It is unknown how a

pandemic will influence the relationship between migrants and non-migrants and the emergence of anti-immigrant sentiments and solidarity actions. This dilemma has not discouraged powerful nations from engaging in wars that create further migrants and refugees. COVID-19 developed fast during a period of the rising conflict in Asia (Afghanistan; Rohingya) and the Middle East (Syria and Yemen). Migrants congregated in and around the Mória camp on the Greek island of Lesbos, and suffered a severe deterioration in their living conditions. The rate at which individuals attempt suicide or die tragically is disturbing.

To combat the COVID-19 outbreak, public health measures and social distancing restrictions proposed for implementation in Italian jails sparked riots that killed multiple inmates. Due to prison overcrowding, where a virus breakout is likely to be disastrous, it is critical that anti-contagion precautions are rigidly implemented. A crowded site is also a detention or transit facility that houses a significant number of asylum seekers and irregular migrants worldwide. Numerous countries' solutions to the migration issue in the aftermath of the COVID-19 disaster have aimed to restrict or halt the influx of newcomers.

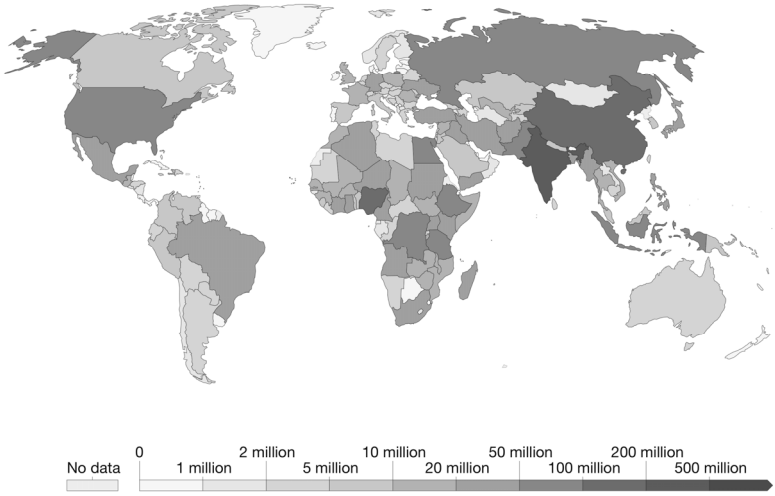
Ⅴ. Migration and vaccine diplomacy

The epidemic has undeniably devastated the worldwide healthcare system. As a result, the post-COVID geopolitical world order is projected to change. Gardini (2020) believes that a variety of conspiracy theories were produced during this time period in order to make someone a scapegoat and shift attention away from the seriousness of the issue. Individuals and countries are facing a double whammy in the geopolitical world, with the global economy already in crisis as a result of the trade war between the United States and China (Guattam et al. 2020).

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic policy debate, which took place in the industrialized world, the debate focused on crisis management, economic recovery, and the virus's origins. As of June 11, 2021, the outbreak appears to decline, with huge percentages of

their populations at least largely vaccinated (Mathieu et al. 2021; Ullah, Nawaz and Chattoraj 2021b; Ullah and Ferdous 2022). Countries in the developing world have a very different set of problems. According to official government estimates (Bhattacharya 2021), the second wave of the pandemic has killed over 200,000 people in India. The risk of a major outbreak may not be completely eradicated, as immunization rates in underdeveloped nations remain low. On the aforementioned date, 25% of Brazil, 15% of India, and 1% of Nigeria have had at least one dose of vaccines (Mathieu et al. 2021). The third epidemic has already begun. The country of Tunisia, for example, has already witnessed more than 3,000 deaths attributable to the third-wave political crisis (Dong et al. 2020) in a country with a population of just 11.8 million people.

Vaccine diplomacy refers to the use of diplomatic influence by countries to access a scarce medical resource, such as the Corona vaccine. The COVID-19 epidemic has transformed the global political scene. Health diplomacy, which had previously gotten little attention compared to political, economic, and military diplomacy, has regained significance in the last year.



<Figure 2> World's unvaccinated people
Source: Oneworldindata, 2022.

As of June 8, 2022, around 11.83 billion doses have been administered globally. However, the distribution has been uneven, as countries with the highest incomes have been vaccinated 10 times faster than those with the lowest (Bloomberg 2022). Many of our respondents said it was extremely difficult for them to register for immunization. Many people are scared that getting vaccinated would result in deportation or detention due to a lack of identity or access to vaccine database information by law authorities. Many agriculturally rich countries have been slow to make labourers eligible for vaccinations, infuriating environmentalists and lawmakers who say farmworkers and other critical food industry workers have been ignored throughout the pandemic.

Emerging powers are significant in health diplomacy. The immunization campaign comes at a critical point in the country's history. In recent years, China and India have been active in using Corona vaccinations to further their diplomatic goals. China regards its vaccines as "public goods" and has offered preferential access to Asian and African countries. While China gives immunizations to 69 countries and exports dosages to 43 others, the number of vaccines exported is 100 times greater than the number of vaccines donated (Yang 2021).

In January 2021, India unveiled the Vaccine Maitri (Vaccine Friendship) project, a huge diplomatic effort to supply made-in-India vaccinations to the rest of the world (Ullah and Chattoraj 2022). India planned to provide millions of doses of COVID-19 vaccine to South Asian countries as part of its neighbourhood-first policy, eliciting praise from neighbours and challenging China's supremacy in the region (Al Jazeera 2021). Unfortunately, India has suspended its vaccine deliveries since March 2021, with the second wave of infections and fatalities caused by the Delta variant. As a result, several Asian country's COVID immunization efforts have been significantly impeded.

Ⅵ. Discussion and Conclusion

More than any other phase of growth, migration acts as a reminder

that we all share the same environment and that impediments to movement impair our potential to progress. Pandemics like COVID-19 demonstrate how interconnected the world has become, as demonstrated by the virus's geographic expansion which quickly spread from Wuhan, China, to over 200 nations. As a result, COVID-19 has shed light on migrants' emotional relationships to their "homes." COVID-19 has brought ruptures to the forefront, where "opportunities and hazards proliferate, the spectrum of possible outcomes expands, and new structural scaffolding is produced" (Suhardiman et al. 2021).

COVID-19 has magnified existing social disparities and exacerbated vulnerability among low- and high-income countries. People who have found themselves most disadvantaged by these inequalities include refugees and migrants (particularly those in irregular situations). Some populations have an increased susceptibility to the pandemic. The vulnerability of migrant workers to COVID-19 infection has resulted in stigma, job and income loss, loss of dignity. In locations where migrants are suspected of having the virus, discrimination is common. This is also true for migrants who went home and were ostracized because they were suspected of being virus carriers. The migrant population in host countries is already vulnerable, and the pandemic and government-imposed lockdowns have worsened their situation further (Fasani and Mazza 2020; Avato et al. 2010; Dustmann 2010).

Travel restrictions enforced early and with adequate firmness changed the picture. They greatly limit disease proliferation in this case by helping governments and health authorities accomplish their goal of developing a test, trace, and isolate strategy. Straining travel restrictions works best when used in conjunction with other approaches that allow governments to use randomized, traceable, and isolating pandemic-fighting techniques (Pueyo 2020).

The pandemic is likely to change the global migratory landscape and policies. The world has changed, and so have the laws governing (im)migration. Many governments in receiving countries have been seen making significant changes to their migration policy in order to adjust to the current situation. Policy

enforcement has already begun. Many governments, for example, are extending stay permits to individuals from third countries who have already arrived in the destination country. Migrant communities, including refugees, displaced people, and asylum seekers, have been caught between health and food crises, job insecurity, a desire to return home, the need to stay at home to be safe, and the need to go out to survive. As COVID-19 cases continue to emerge in their cramped quarters, migrants living in overcrowded shelters, camps, or camp-like settings face growing health risks.

According to several respondents, respect for a lockdown has something to do with the country's political structure (Ullah 2014, 2016a). In dealing with the pandemic, leadership is crucial. New Zealand and the United States are the best examples of two extremes (Chan et al. 2020). The COVID-19 outbreak has provided nationalists with greater opportunities to use migrants as scapegoats in order to boost their anti-migration stance. This is because the vast majority of cases are found in migrant-receiving countries (such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Italy, France, and Spain) (Ullah, Hossain and Islam 2015; Ullah 2018).

The pandemic's socio-economic and societal repercussions could ultimately be curtailed by providing access to the crucial scientific know-how for vaccine manufacture. The coronavirus pandemic is both a menace and an opportunity. As a challenge, it causes disruption, misery, short- and long-term adjustment, finally, economic loss, and, tragically, human casualties. While the virus has thrown the planet into chaos, the migrating people had the opportunity to reconsider their plans. The outbreak could act as a wake-up call for policymakers. More people than ever are calling for the healthcare system to be strengthened so that it can handle future calamities of any scale.

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Production of Fear:
The Visual Analysis of Local Lockdown Warning Signs

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[*Abstract*]

During the Covid-19 pandemic's first term of April–June 2020, the general public throughout Indonesia became familiar with the slang term "local lockdown." This term emerged in response to disorderly implementation of the half-hearted government policy called Pembatasan Sosial Berskala Besar (PSBB). In villages around the country, people started to build portals to restrict "strangers" or "outsiders" from entering their village areas. These portals were also meant to publicly signal the villagers' fear of the spread of the virus. This paper will discuss two things: first, how fear was produced, using frameworks drawn from Giorgio Agamben's notable works *State of Exception* and *Homo Sacer*, and how governance reproduces it; and second, how people come to accept the state of emergency and then publicly express their acceptance of the situation. Critical discourse analysis is applied to read government policy and its reception. The research took place at Rempoah, Kedungmalang, and Pabuwaran villages in Banyumas, the southern regency of Central Java, Indonesia.

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The villagers' responses to the government's policy are visually represented through written warning signs.

Keywords: Covid-19, governance policy, lockdown, Banyumas, visual expression.

Ⅰ. Introduction

In response to the spread of Covid-19 and its categorization as a global pandemic, the Indonesian Government enacted on March 31, 2020, Law No. 2/2020 on the stipulation of Government Regulations in Lieu of Law No. 1/2020 concerning State Financial Policy and Financial System Stability for Handling the Corona Virus Pandemic Disease 2019 (COVID-19) and/or in the Context of Facing Dangerous Threats. The government has characterized this law as a concrete effort to guarantee the implementation of citizens' rights under any circumstances through implementation of a political-law package.

In the Academic Manuscript of the Law, there are two reasons for the promulgation of such an effort, each operating at different levels of analysis. The first is that implementing political-economic policies through political-law packages has become very prominent, since government, as the ruling institution, is obliged to guarantee the availability of an economic safety net through its political policies to ensure the rights of citizens under any circumstances. The second reason is that based on the Constitutional Court Verdict No. 138/PUU-VII I 2009, the conditions have met the parameters of "compelling urgency" in the context of enacting Government Regulations in Lieu of Law, including the following:

a. There is an urgent need to resolve legal problems quickly;
b. The required law does not yet exist, resulting in a legal vacuum; and
c. This problem cannot be resolved by passing a law through a normal procedure, as this would take a long time, and the situation requires immediate action.

In the context of "compelling urgency," in accordance with the provisions of Article 22 Paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, the President has the authority to stipulate a Government Regulation in Lieu of a Law.

Law No. 2/2020 provides an explanation of the role of local government as the implementer. In this case, the local government has the right to receive disaster-related management funds from the central government and is obliged to re-plan local budgets to cope with emergencies caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

As a follow-up plan, the local government of Banyumas Regency enacted Regional Regulation Number 2/2020 concerning Disease Prevention and Management in Banyumas Regency on 21 April, 2020. The promulgation of these two legal products shows that in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, Indonesia has applied the logic of a state of emergency. This logic can be interpreted in two ways. The first considers the ambiguity of the boundary between law and political will. This ambiguity manifested, for example, in the change of the name of the policy implemented in Indonesia to deal with the Covid-19 pandemic from PSBB (Large-Scale Social Restrictions) to PPKM (Enforcement of Restrictions on Community Activities). The second interpretation relates to imbalance between public law and political facts (Sudibyo 2019: 114).

States of emergency are most often associated with conditions involving political violence, including civil war, rebellion, or resistance. The Covid-19 pandemic has also triggered a state of emergency, and while its causes are not fundamentally political, the resultant state of emergency has had a similar effect on the nation-state. This effect is called *anomie*. Julius Hatschek classes *anomie* as lawlessness under his topographical dichotomy (Sudibyo 2019: 111). He further divides lawlessness into two categories, each with a distinct cause. The first is the objective emergency theory, which frames any action taken outside the law, even in the context of an emergency, as illegal. The second is a subjective emergency theory, which frames emergency power as a pre-constitutional and constitutional right of the state to defend itself, including by means of violence.

To tackle the Covid-19 pandemic, the enactment of Law No. 2/2020 and the Regional Regulation of Banyumas Regency No. 2/2020, at the central and regional levels, eliminates the pre-existing legal order in response to an emergency, which, by definition, must be handled in immediate ways. The law also constructs a new social group as its object. This object functions as a type of *homo sacer* (in Roman law, both a "sacred" and "accursed" person, someone outside or beyond the law). In the contemporary Indonesian context, the *homo sacer* is anyone who has been exposed to Covid-19 pandemic.

A *homo sacer* is a human being and a legal object, one that is excluded from the political community and becomes a mere physical presence with little to no social agency (Sudibyo 2019: 45). In exercising power, modern democratic states theoretically include all people in the body politic through representative assemblies that agree on various regulations and limitations, which are considered reasonable and acceptable by those represented. However, democratic states do sometimes exercise their power arbitrarily or violently, especially during periods of emergency. Thus, even in the most modern democratic practices, both violence and arbitrariness are appropriated into a normal order (Agamben 1998: 109).

The existing literature on the *homo sacer*'s role during a state of emergency can be invoked to make sense of events in Banyumas. In response to the technical challenges of implementing Law Number 2/2020 and the Regional Regulation of Banyumas Regency Number 2/2020, all Banyumas residents have been called upon to implement "local lockdowns." These lockdowns are intended to limit the mobility of people who are not from Banyumas. In implementing these restrictions, portals with visual warnings have been installed at each entrance to each village. These visual warnings reflect the villagers' fear of being exposed as *homo sacer*.

This paper aims to examine the workings of a law implemented in a modern democracy that has appropriated an emergency in order to produce fear and construct a new type of *homo sacer*. Specifically, it aims to describe the reflection of people's fear in Banyumas through a visual analysis of local lockdown posters

and banners in three villages of the Banyumas Regency: Rempoah, Kedungmalang, and Pabuwaran. Evidence of the deliberate production of fear can be found in both legal documents and visual warnings put up in public areas throughout the regency, which signal the potential presence of a *homo sacer*. Banyumas has been selected as the locus of the research because it is where the researchers live, yielding better access to primary data and enabling the researchers to draw upon personal observations while analyzing the emergence of a new *homo sacer*.

Ⅱ. Methods

In examining states of emergency, fear production, and *homo sacer*, this paper applies critical discourse analysis. First, this paper examines how the law has come to function, in this context, as a monolithic discourse on power, interpreted by only one party. In modern democracies, the law is typically conceptualized as a set of interacting powers. It is not centralized, but rather disparate, involving many different types of equipment, maneuvers, techniques, and mechanisms (Haryatmoko 2002: 12). This means that the law must be interpreted in two directions: by the subject or creator, the state; and by the object or target, the community. In a state of emergency, however, the law loses this disparate, decentralized, and dialectic aspect and becomes unilateral.

Second, in a state of emergency, social cognition cannot yield certainty in any form, and this absence of certainty can easily degenerate into widespread fear. In such a context, the law can no longer work as intended, as a "disciplinary order [that] is linked to a network, is not repressive…is productive, and is attached to the will to know" (Foucault 2008: 39). Third, the production and promulgation of fear establishes the conditions for three community responses to the designated *homo sacer*.

This paper examines two legal documents, Law No. 2/2020 and the Regional Regulation of Banyumas Regency No. 2/2020. The former applies nationally throughout Indonesia, whereas the latter applies only in the Banyumas Regency. Here, they are read both as

texts and as contexts and are related to the local lockdown warning signs found in the three villages. Each warning sign will also be analyzed as a symbol from a semiotic perspective. Through textual and contextual readings of legal documents, this analysis tracks the creation of fear during an emergency and the sociopolitical construction of *homo sacer*. Furthermore, the correlation of the Critical Discourse Analysis method and a semiotic reading reveals how the *homo sacers* themselves have reacted to the legal responses to the Covid-19 pandemic in Banyumas.

Data were collected by means of direct observation and documentation and then analyzed as follows. First, Law No. 2/2020 and the Regional Regulation of Banyumas Regency No. 2/2020 were examined as texts. Next, visual local lockdown warning signs were analyzed using semiotic theory. Finally, these warning signs were situated as the context of the legal texts, and the readings of text and context are synthesized.

Ⅲ. Results and Discussion

3.1. The Genesis of Fear

Indonesia has a democratic government, arguably the most sensible system by which to accommodate the ideals of the state, "To form an Indonesian State Government that protects the entire Indonesian nation and all Indonesian blood and to promote public welfare, educate the nation's life, and participate in implementing world order based on independence, eternal peace and social justice," as expressed in the philosophical foundation of the state, Pancasila, and the 1945 Constitution (Preamble to the 1945 Constitution, paragraph 4).

The ideal of the state is explicated in several articles of the 1945 Constitution, including Chapter XIV of the National Economy and Social Welfare Article 33 and Article 34, which are derivatives of Chapter III of State Government Article 4. Both articles in the 1945 Constitution emphasize that state power, in the form of government power, is made manifest by the President, and that the

exercise of state power must achieve the goal of national welfare.

Implementing national welfare starts with giving the government an active role in the socio-economic life of its people and explicitly tasking it with realizing general welfare (known as *bestuurszor*g), as well as continuing to maintain security and order (Ridwan 2013: 15). A more recently developed concept relating to the implementation of national welfare is *Freies Ermessen* (discretion to decide, act, interpret). This involves granting authority to the implementers of state administration to act on their own initiative. This constitutes a freedom that, in principle, allows the state administration to prioritize the effectiveness of some objectives over others based on changing real-world conditions, rather than rigidly adhering to static legal provisions. In other words, *Freies Ermessen* refers to the right of every government official to make decisions, take actions, and determine strategic policies to overcome urgent concrete problems that require immediate responses. Government policies implemented under the aegis of *Freies Ermessen* are protected by law, so that every government official who acts on behalf of the public interest will have legal protection (Juliani 2020: 331).

Both *bestuurszor*g and *Freies Ermessen* are understood as methods of law enforcement in normal circumstances, as opposed to *staatsnoodrecht*, or emergency constitutional law. In simple terms, *staatsnoodrecht* refers to state regulations in an emergency (Asshiddiqie 2012: 7). An emergency is defined as an extraordinary situation that requires an extraordinary law. In such situations, which could threaten public order, states can act in unusual ways outside normal legal circumstances (Hasibuan and Ashari 2020: 590). Furthermore, laws implemented during emergencies are equivalent to martial law, even when the source of the emergency is not a military conflict. To qualify as an emergency measure, a law must meet four criteria: it must be promulgated by the authority of the president, as the holder of executive power; regulations enacted during the period of emergency law must undergo judicial review; military courts must be used instead of or in addition to civilian courts; and restrictions must be placed on each individual within the society, or within the territory controlled by the state

(Asshiddiqie 2007: 124).

Despite using the phrase "urgent concrete problems that require immediate treatment," in reality, these concepts often prove maladaptive when applied to real emergencies. The debate over why this happens is fundamentally epistemological and hinges on deeper competing claims about the nature and definition of "emergency," the role of the law during periods of emergency, and the need, real or perceived, for a sovereignty that transcends all other authorities and can mobilize a coordinated, effective emergency response (Agamben 1999: 49).

Some legal theories recognize a distinction between normal laws, to be applied in normal circumstances, and extraordinary powers, to be exercised only in extraordinary circumstances. Others do not. The former conceptualize emergencies as abnormal by definition and demand that extraordinary laws be applied. The latter conceptualize emergencies as normal occurrences, insofar as emergencies of one sort or another are bound to occur sooner or later, and demand that the laws that obtain during emergencies be reconcilable with the laws that obtain during normal circumstances (Mcquillan 2010: 105). The debate over sovereignty is more relevant to the former. Sovereignty is typically conceptualized as a single, monolithic legal authority that may achieve its goals by any means, even if this requires applying laws that have not been developed through normal, juridical order, based on legal regulations, or derived from consensus (Agamben 2007: 64).

The result of real-world competition between these two types of legal theories—and, in other words, between legal and extralegal sovereignty—is that the law loses its certainty. This demands further attention, for one of the three main characteristics of the law, in addition to usefulness and justice, is certainty. Legal certainty is a form of protection for justice-seekers against arbitrary actions (Julyano and Sulistyawan 2019: 14). Legal uncertainty, by contrast, is ambiguous and illogical and may eventually lead to violence (Wadi 2020: 618). It may also create opportunities for the state to seize exceptional powers in the event of an emergency, thereby redefining its relation to the populace. In other words, during states of

emergency, the law can take on an enigmatic quality, and can even become an empty vessel waiting to be filled by some form of sovereignty (Sudibyo 2019: 128). During such times, the law's capacity to inhibit violence can be degraded, an effect that only becomes more acute the longer the emergency lasts and the more normalized it becomes (Agamben 1998, 47).

Under such conditions, the law may come to be recognized as little more than an elaborate system of codified languages that extends the power of existing authorities. These codified languages lack the potential to create and express meaning and instead function as modes of coercion in service of those who already hold power. Thus, the law becomes enigmatic and empty, leaving those who obey it in a state of "being in force without significance" (Murray and Whyte 2011: 121).

In *A Che Punto Siamo? L'epidemia Come Politica* (2020) Agamben specifically criticized the handling of the Covid-19 pandemic, arguing that the government's handling of the pandemic is based on enigmatic laws. He presents his criticism in two parts. The first characterizes the government's response to the Covid-19 pandemic as institutionalizing uncertainty. He identifies a shift in biopolitics to bare life. In other words, the government's response to the Covid-19 pandemic strips human beings of their freedoms and subjects them to constant threats from agents of power . The second part states that during the Covid-19 pandemic, governments around the world have promoted permanent states of exception. This leaves scientific institutions vulnerable to becoming mouthpieces for monarchs and will likely strip citizens of the capacity to contest the authority of empty, enigmatic laws in legitimate, protected ways (Duque Silva and Del Prado Higuera 2021: 503-6).

Agamben's criticisms of government responses to Covid-19 pandemic have drawn attention to his previously developed thoughts on the State of Exception and *Homo Sacer*. The Covid-19 pandemic has made people aware that normalizing haphazard responses to crisis and the application of enigmatic laws threaten to erode individual sovereignty. Worse, the longer such conditions are allowed to persist, the more likely they are to become a permanent

state of exception.

3.2. Production of Fear

The Covid-19 pandemic is an example of a contemporary case that forces the law to work in the realm of an emergency. In Indonesia, the pandemic has been categorized as an extraordinary event, distinct from a natural disaster. To cope with this extraordinary incident, the Indonesian government has enacted Law No. 2/2020.

The promulgation of this law is premised on the government's obligation to maintain an economic safety net and guarantee the protection of citizens' rights under any circumstances. Moreover, according to the Decision of the Constitutional Court Number 138 / PUU-VII I 2009, the conditions have met the parameter of "compelling urgency" in the framework of enacting a Government Regulation in Lieu of a Law due to an urgent need and preventing the occurrence of a legal vacuum.

In practice, however, this law is problematic for three reasons. First, the Act is constitutionally flawed. The establishment of the law should be consistent with Article 20 of the 1945 Constitution, which defines the *Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat* and *Dewan Perwakilan Daerah* (the Parliament) as the Legislature, and the President as the Executive. According to the article, all laws must be developed from drafts submitted by each chamber of power, even during emergencies (Dalimunthe 2017: 76).

Article 7 Paragraph (1) of Law No. 12/2011 on the Establishment of Legislation places Laws and Government Regulation in Lieu of Laws in the same order. However, this does not mean that Government Regulations in Lieu of Law can be upgraded to Law. Based on the Decision of the Constitutional Court No. 92/2012, even in circumstances considered an emergency, the promulgation of a law that is not included in the National Legislation Program must go through the submission of a Draft; not by raising the status of a Government Regulation in Lieu of Laws to that of a Law. The Decision of the Constitutional Court Number l38/PUU-VII I 2009, which is the basis for the promulgation of Law No. 2/2020, is not in line with the Decision of the Constitutional

Court No. 92/2012.

Second, the law triggers a lack of synchronization between the central government and regional governments. Under normal circumstances, the potential for inconsistency in the implementation of laws and policies by the central and regional governments is quite large. In a unitary state, however, the central government strives to control and coordinate all public affairs (Wijayanti 2016: 194), and the Covid-19 pandemic only increases the potential for such synchronization.

In Indonesia, synchronization has manifested itself as the territorial restriction policy known as a lockdown. Referring to Law No. 2/2020 and Government Regulation No. 21/2020 concerning Large-Scale Social Restrictions in the Context of Accelerating the Handling of Covid-19, the central government has never explicitly or implicitly implemented a lockdown policy to close regional access completely. The law mandates the temporary closure of schools and workplaces. It also places restrictions on religious activities. Only those carried out at home and attended by a limited number of family members are allowed; all places of worship must be closed to the public; and exceptions are made based on laws, regulations, and *fatwas*, or the views of official religious institutions, recognized by the government. Restrictions are also placed on activities in public places or public facilities. The most common restrictions involve limiting the number of people allowed in a space at a given time and mandating social distancing. Restrictions have been placed on social and cultural activities, too, as well as public transportation, where the number of passengers in each vehicle can be capped and physical distance must be maintained between passengers. However, none of these restrictions apply to activities undertaken with the purpose of upholding state sovereignty, maintaining territorial integrity, protecting the nation from the threat of disturbance, and maintaining security and public order (Kartono 2020: 690).

Before the Large-Scale Social Restrictions could be fully implemented, the government changed course by introducing a new policy, namely PPKM (*Pemberlakuan Pembatasan Kegiatan Masyarakat,* or Public Activity Restriction) through Minister of Home

Affairs Regulation Number 15 of 2021 (Mahadewi 2021: 1881). PPKM has been billed as a revision that will improve Large-Scale Social Restrictions. This revision arises from the claim that Large-Scale Social Restrictions are insufficiently effective in tackling the Covid-19 pandemic because they use a bottom-up logic, where local governments can submit status determinations to the Ministry of Health. Meanwhile, PPKM is considered an improvement because it relies on a top-down method, wherein the central government unilaterally determines when, where, and to what degree to apply restrictions based on differential levels of community spread. The policy change does not, in fact, improve the handling of the Covid-19 pandemic. On the contrary, it only creates more confusion due to changing terminology.

This differs markedly from the handling of the Covid-19 pandemic in several other countries in Asia. For example, South Korea has implemented several policies drafted by experts and based on research, including quarantine, isolation, social distancing, contact tracing (Anderson, et.al, 2020: 932), and lockdown (Wilder-Smith, et.al, 2020: 8). The South Korean government acted in response to calls from experts to immediately implement massive tests, searches, and isolation measures (Shim, et.al, 2020: 55).

In Singapore, massive testing helped control the Covid-19 outbreak by enabling contact tracing and, ultimately, proactive containment. Without such large-scale testing, tracing can be difficult, making the Covid-19 pandemic more difficult to control (Lee, et.al, 2020, 8). The Taiwanese government, meanwhile, drew upon lessons learned during the SARS outbreak in 2003 and underscored the importance of mass testing. These methods have been replicated to help control the Covid-19 pandemic in Taiwan (Wang, et.al, 2020: 1342).

It is worth noting that the policy in Law No. 2/2020 has an explicitly economic motive, whereas other laws that are more appropriate for dealing with pandemics, such as Law No. 6/2018 concerning Health Quarantine, have been neglected. In fact, this law clearly defines the responsibilities of the central and local governments, the rights and obligations of citizens, appropriate

methods for implementing and documenting quarantines, appropriate methods for conducting investigations, criminal provisions, and additional resources, information, guidance, and supervision (Chadijah 2020: 864).

Although not implemented simultaneously in all regions, PSBB has had a broad economic impact across Indonesia. The policy was first implemented in DKI Jakarta in April 2020 and then in several areas with high numbers of Covid-19 cases, such as West Java, Central Java, East Java, Bali, and North Sumatra. The effect of this policy has been an increase in job losses, increased cuts in workers' wages, and the collapse of almost all medium, small, and micro-enterprises in Indonesia. According to the Minister of Manpower, the policies implemented to tackle the Covid-19 pandemic have resulted in 1.7 million new cases of unemployment (Hartini and Setiawan 2021: 1429).

To solve the above problems and protect poor families from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, the government has focused on developing economic policies and delivering social assistance packages. These have included assistance from both the central government and local governments (Herdiana 2020: 90). However, a great deal of distance exists between the central government and local communities, making it difficult to deliver assistance to the people who need it most. Inconsistencies among the regulatory systems used to aid have also made it impossible to track who has received assistance and who has not (Mufida 2020: 161). Meanwhile, to make matters worse, these policies have not only worsened economic inequality, but have also had the secondary effect of relegating people infected with Covid-19 to the status of *homo sacer*.

Epistemologically, *homo sacer* refers to an imbalance in the dialectic relationship between the aspect of an individual that is free and sovereign, and the aspect of the individual that belongs to an institution. The former precedes the latter and is referred to as *zoe*. The latter emerges when the individual interacts with an institution and is known as *bios*. Both will react when dealing with sovereign power, but whereas *bios* will be recognized as a positive attribute in relation to institutional power, catalyzing the inclusion of the

individual, *zoe* will remain in a state of exclusion, as is cannot be bound by institutions. (Prozorov 2021: 11). In the context of modern life, the term *homo sacer* can refer to anyone who cannot meet the demands of their ambient institutions, and whose *zoe* aspect thus eclipses their *bios* aspect. This can include people who have mental or psychiatric illnesses, refugees, those who are comatose, and those who are in a condition between *zoe* (bare life) and *bios* (qualified life). In other words, the *homo sacer* lacks the capacity to function as a social human being in accordance with the demands of their social groups (Indrajaya 2011: 338).

When people who share a certain attribute or circumstance are systematically excluded from social activities and institutions, new categories of *homo sacer* can emerge. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the emergent categories of *homo sacer* include not only those infected with the virus, but also those who have suffered negative economic impacts, have not been able to access social assistance, and can no longer effectively participate in public life or social institutions. In some cases, human or systemic errors in data collection result in the complete erasure of the individual. In such instances, the analysis is limited, for those who are not represented in the data cannot be accurately classed either as *bios* or as *zoe*.

3.3. Reflection to Fear

When an emergency and a desynchronization at the central level lead to the construction of a new *homo sacer*, the same phenomenon can also be observed at the regional level, as proven by what has happened in Banyumas Regency. The local government responded to the Covid-19 Pandemic by drawing on Law Number 2/2020 while drafting laws and regulations at the regional level. This resulted in the Banyumas regional government promulgating the Banyumas Regional Government Regulation Number 2/2020.

Textually, the Regional Regulation does not directly make Law No. 2/2020 a preamble. Its main references are Law Number 6/2018 concerning Health Quarantine and Presidential Regulation Number 17 2018 concerning Disaster Management in Certain Circumstances. This can be seen in Article 8 paragraph (2), which states that there

are 24 infectious diseases. Twenty-three previously known direct infectious diseases are listed in the Article, and the Regional Regulation adds Covid-19.

Since Banyumas Regency Regional Regulation No. 2/ 2020 directly refers to Law No. 6/2018 concerning Health Quarantine, as opposed to Law No. 2/2020, there have been discrepancies in its implementation. These discrepancies have manifested most notably in the implementation of the restrictions outlined in Law No. 6/2018 concerning Health Quarantine. Article 1 paragraph (6) defines "quarantine" as follows:

> [T]he limitation of activities and/or separation of a person who is exposed to an infectious disease as stipulated in the laws and regulations even though he has not shown any symptoms or is in the incubation period, and/or separation of containers, means of transportation, or any items that are suspected to be contaminated from people and/or goods that contain disease-causing or other sources of contamination to prevent the possibility of spreading to people and/or goods around them.

Furthermore, in Article 1 point (10), it is stated that the area of quarantine is "the restriction of the population in an area including the entrance area and its contents that are suspected of being infected with disease and/or contaminated in such a way as to prevent the possibility of spreading disease or contamination." Meanwhile, article 1-point (11) states that Large-Scale Social Restrictions are "restrictions on certain activities of residents in an area suspected of being infected with a disease and/or contamination in such a way as to prevent the possibility of spreading disease or contamination."

These three meanings ultimately relegated the people affected by the Covid-19 pandemic to the status of *homo sacer*. The lockdowns implemented in response to Covid-19 involve the closure of access not only from outside the country, but also from one municipality to the next (Zahrotunimmah et. Al. 2020: 896). This interpretation does not lack precedent. Several regions of Indonesia preceded Banyumas Regency in imposing lockdowns in response to Covid-19 pandemic. DKI Jakarta, the capital city, has maintained a

lockdown policy since the promulgation of the Governor's Call Number 5/2020 on the Temporary Elimination of Worship and Religious Activities in Houses of Worship in Order to Prevent the Spread of the Corona virus Disease (COVID-19) Outbreak (Yunus and Rezki 2020: 231). Similar actions have also been taken in other areas, such as Tegal, Aceh, and Papua (Zahrotunimmah, et al. 2020: 897).

In addition to these policies which have been articulated in the rather confusing terminology of the PSBB and PPKM, there is also the *Jogo Tonggo* policy. This policy was first introduced by the Governor of Central Java, Ganjar Pranowo, as an effort to accelerate the response to the Covid-19 pandemic in the Central Java region. In its implementation, the policy relies on two elements: people and policy. The human element in the policy consists of 10 (ten) parties: Youth Organizations, *Dasa Wisma* ("Ten Households"), *Posyandu* (Integrated Service Post), PKH Facilitators (Family Hope Program), Agricultural PPL ("Young People Care about the Environment"), Village Facilitators, other organizations, citizens, village midwives, and *Linmas* (Civilian Neighborhood Guards). Their working principles are as follows: humanity, non-permanent work, and in the event of an emergency, mutual cooperation, transparency, and involvement of all parties (Sulistiani and Kaslam 2020: 38).

The *Jogo Tonggo* policy covers four areas: health, econonomy, social security, and entertainment. Health and economic policy are the most important, as the Covid-19 pandemic is an emergency that directly affects both areas. Regarding health, the *Jogo Tonggo* policy includes the following:

a. Recording everyone who goes in and out of the village.
b. Preventing the spread and transmission of Covid-19 by bringing people identified as PDP (patient under monitoring) to a referral hospital.
c. Ensuring and updating the data of anyone with OTG (asymptomatic people), ODP (people under supervision) and PDP (patient under monitoring) status.
d. Striving for 14-day self-quarantine for ODP (people under supervision and OTG (asymptomatic people).
e. Ensuring strategic locations are available for hand-washing, regular

spraying of disinfectants, orderly residents leaving the house wearing masks, and maintaining a distance of 1.5-2 meters between residents.

f. Providing health services: checking body temperature, checking Covid-19 symptoms, checking hand-washing facilities.
g. Encouraging clean and healthy living practices, balanced eating and drinking, exercise, regular bathing, adequate rest, and a clean environment.
h. Coordinating with village health officers for further checks in case of an emergency.

The economic policy includes:

a. Listing the basic needs of the community.
b. Registering residents who are unable to afford their basic needs.
c. Making as much effort as possible to ensure that residents are assisted.
d. Ensuring assistance is on target.
e. Ensuring that farming, gardening, and trading activities continue to be run by following health protocols.
f. Serving the daily food needs of residents who are self-quarantining.
g. Encouraging the construction of food barns (Sulistiani and Kaslam 2020: 38).

In Banyumas, the two policies were enacted differently. The health policy was implemented with the establishment of Covid-19 Task Forces in each neighborhood unit (RT) as the lowest level in the Banyumas community. Meanwhile, in the economic field, no new agencies or institutions were formed because assistance packages had been provided by the central government in the form of Direct Cash Assistance (BLT) and the regions were only the implementers.

The *Jogo Tonggo* policy faced many problems in its implementation because no clear distinction was drawn between the total lockdown, PSBB, and PPKM. This is evidenced in the implementation of curfews, school holidays, restrictions on working hours, and the closure of traditional markets. It created confusion in the community, and throughout Banyumas, people began to feel that they were living under local lockdowns. Restrictions were

implemented everywhere, even in the smallest neighborhoods (*Rukun Tetangga*), which were further subdivided by the installation of portals and road-dividers. In addition to physically blocking access, these measures also materially reflected the residents' fear of Covid-19, which has been intensified by the establishment of an emergency and the inconsistencies in central and regional regulations.

For the purposes of this study, examples of visual rhetoric reflecting the residents' fears have been drawn from three regions. The first example is a visual warning in Kedungmalang, located in the administrative area of the Sumbang District. Based on data from the *Peduli Lindungi* (tracing, tracking, and fencing) app, between April and June 2020, this region never showed a trend of entering the red zone, meaning it was not considered an area of high risk. However, this does not mean that there were no signs of local lockdown. In practice, there was a visual warning (see figure 1).

<Figure 1> local lockdown warning in Kedumgmalang (Source: Personal Documentation)

The banner depicted in the Figure announces that, in addition to people who do not have masks, debt collectors and creditors are also prohibited from entering the area *(Debt Collector and Tukang Kredit atau sejenisnya dilarang masuk).* Neither the debt collector nor the warning pertain to the spread of Covid-19 when viewed from an independent economic and health perspective. However, based on an interview conducted with Wanto (28) and Iwan (19), the residents who were on guard at the portal, the two are closely related. They argued that for the residents of district 2 Kedungmalang Village who mostly worked as daily freelance workers, Covid-19 drastically reduced their economic livelihoods. On the other hand, they have been accustomed to borrowing capital using the daily instalment method. So, when their income decreased due to Covid-19, the increased presence of debt collectors or collection agencies, which often came when collection problems arose (Rohman and Sesung 2017: 305), would raise the risk of Covid-19 transmission (interview conducted on April 18, 2020).

Rokhimah (56) and her spouse Rujito (59) were residents of Dusun 2 Kedungmalang who were directly affected by the inconsistency and lack of clarity in the implementation of the PSBB policy in Banyumas. The closure of the Kedungmalang market from 30 April 2020 to 1 June 2020 made it impossible for them to sell meatballs during that time. Consequently, they were forced to use the money they had saved from 27 years of selling. They also felt that the Direct Cash Assistance (BLT) they received from the Ministry of Social Welfare did not help much because they had only received Rp. 200,000 per month since June 2020 (interview conducted on June 5, 2021).

The second example is a visual warning in Pabuwaran Village, located in the administrative area of North Purwokerto District. Based on data taken from the *Peduli Lindungi* application, this area was categorized as a green zone (an area with no Covid-19 affected residents) in April 2020. However, it changed into a red zone in May –June 2020 when several residents in the southern area (nearest to Grendeng neighborhood) were infected by the virus.

<Figure 2> Local lockdown warning in Pabuwaran village, which is directly adjacent to the eastern area of Kedungmalang Village (Source: personal documentation)

Figure 2 depicts the entrance to a residential area completely sealed off by a portal. This contrasts with several other regions, where portals could be opened or closed depending on necessity. Nor did the warnings specifically convey fear. What was written/displayed on the warnings is the implementation of a meeting of the *Pemuda Pancasila* branch in Kedungmalang Village, the neighboring district of Pabuwaran Village *(Musyawarah Ranting Pemuda Pancasila Desa Kedungmalang Kecamatan Sumang Rabu 1 Desember 2019).*

Pemuda Pancasila is a social organization with its regional management spread throughout Indonesia. This organization often assists the unemployed "street people" in gaining access to economic niches. This organization is the official patron of the *Pemuda Pancasila* (Singarimbun et al. 2019: 1). Because of their status, they often feel entitled to make decisions and take actions with the goal of providing local residents access to economic niches. In Pabuwaran Village, *Pemuda Pancasila* essentially appointed themselves to serve as representatives of local residents.

However, they were unable to provide effective support to local residents due to issues with data collection and indexing.

Sugeng (47), the head of the *Rukun Tetangga/RT* (neighborhood unit) 04, *Rukun Warga/RW* (community unit) 06 of Pabuwaran, reported that of about 87 heads of families (KK), 59 heads should have been included in the category of beneficiaries. However some recipients received multiple aid packages due to redundancies in the data maintained by multiple pre-pandemic aid programs such as the Family Hope Program (PKH), as well as post-pandemic assistance programs from the Ministry of Social Welfare and the Ministry of Villages, whose data were mixed up and confusing. Meanwhile, other recipients who qualified for aid likely received none. As the head of the neighborhood unit, Sugeng could not resolve these problems. He only conveyed the data he received and had no authority to make corrections, even if he was aware of discrepancies (Interview conducted on 7 June, 2021).

The third example is a visual warning in Rempoah Village, in the administrative area of Baturraden District. Based on data taken from the *Peduli Lindungi* application, between April and June 2020, this area was categorized as a red zone.

<Figure 3> Local lockdown warning in Rempoah (Source: Personal Documentation)

As seen in figure 3, at one of the entry points to Rempoah Village, there is a portal and a warning. The poster also displays a photo of the village head. It can be concluded that the

implementation of the local lockdown in the village has received legitimacy from the regional leader. Edi (48), an administrative officer at the Rempoah Village office, stated that the policy to implement a local lockdown was a discretionary action taken by the Rempoah Village government as a means of implementing the PSBB. He stated that the local lockdown was necessary because the Banyumas Regency government had never explicated how the implementation of the PSBB would be implemented locally. This policy was implemented to ensure the safety of the people from Covid-19 (interview conducted on June 7, 2021).

By analyzing these three examples of visual rhetoric, it can be deduced that the *homo sacer*, a human who has been directly exposed to Covid-19, is dealing with three distinct but overlapping issues: power discourse, social cognition, and community reception (van Dijk 2008: 16). The first derives from the legal regulations stipulated in Law No. 2/2020 on The Stipulation of Government Regulations in Lieu of Law Number 1/2020 and Banyumas Regional Government Regulation Number 2/2020. Both regulations are examples of power exercised in an emergency, ostensibly to guarantee the safety of people affected by Covid-19, but which instead produced confusion due to inconsistencies between statutory regulations that come from the state and laws promulgated by the regions.

The second is social cognition. Because of the confusion, clear, accurate, and actionable knowledge is not being delivered to the community that is the object of the discourse. Ideally, discourse should encourage the creation of social cognition. The two documents promulgated by the central and local governments should provide knowledge to the public at the local level to deal with the impact of Covid-19 in a balanced manner on the economic health impacts. However, these documents have failed to produce coherent social cognition.

The third is community reception. In the absence of coherent and well-informed social cognition, people at the local level, including those who have been designated *homo sacer*, must resort to conducting their own critical discourses on the legal regulations,

which are not synchronized and do not provide them with knowledge of how to deal with Covid-19. Failure to comply with these three points confirms that legal regulations, whether promulgated in an emergency or in a normal state, have the character of making society as their object in a state of "being in force without significance" (Murray and Whyte 2011: 121).

Furthermore, the three visual warnings above indicate critical discourse patterns carried out by the community. Each is different. The first, carried out by residents of Kedungmalang, is a communal critical discourse. It does not involve any official institutions, only community members. The next category, as demonstrated by the residents of Pabuwaran, is representative critical discourse. It is not carried out directly by the community, but rather through representatives, in this case, *Pemuda Pancasila*. The third category from Rempoah is institutional critical discourse, presented by communal residents and legitimized officially by the village government.

These visual warning signs can also be interpreted through symbol analysis, or semiotics. Culturally, symbols are close to connotations (Barthes 2007: 26). When examined in a Barthesian way, the symbols in the three villages thus connote the message that the *homo sacers* who live there wish to convey. The signage posted in Kedungmalang indicates that the people who live there have been economically hit directly by the Covid-19 pandemic. Meanwhile, the signage in Pabuwaran indicates that the people who live there may not care very much about the Covid-19 pandemic per se, but trust a local authority to make decisions on their behalf. The organization has closed the roads without conveying any explicit message regarding the Covid-19 pandemic, suggesting that the they do not feel obligated to explain their reasoning to the people whom they represent. Finally, the sign in Rempoah symbolizes an understanding between the community affected by the Covid-19 pandemic and the village government.

The symbol analysis complements the discourse analysis by further elucidating the role of warning signs in these three villages in relation to the central and regional governments' handling of the

Covid-19 pandemic. This method, conveyed through warning signs, must be understood as the maximum effort of a group of *homo sacers* in overcoming the state of exception and its consequences, because only such things can be done. It is also impossible to expect a group of *homo sacers* in Banyumas to carry out, for example, a Judicial Review to the Constitutional Court on the legal regulations governing the handling of the Covid-19 pandemic in Indonesia.

Ⅳ. Conclusion

From the above discussion, two things can be concluded. First, Law Number 2 /2020 and Banyumas Regional Government Regulation Number 2/2020, promulgated in an emergency, failed in providing protection to the community affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. In fact, the disorderly promulgation of the two legal regulations, both administratively and substantively, support the creation of a state of exception through the "normalization" of an emergency. Instead of providing protection from the crisis at hand, these regulations exposed have merely succeeded in constructing a new *homo sacer*.

Second, due to these failures, the *homo sacer* of Kedungmalang, Pabuwaran and Rempoah Villages have been exposed to various threats and stressors. This is the sociological result of two legal regulations for handling the Covid-19 pandemic. As a group directly affected, the poor in Kedungmalang, Pabuwaran, and Rempoah carried out a critical discourse by implementing local lockdowns and expressing fear of emergencies through visual warning signs posted on local portals. Even though efforts have been made to deal with the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic through economic assistance this has not had much effect and has actually led to more inclusion and exclusion of people affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.

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When Disease Defines a Place:
Batavia in British Diplomatic and Military Narratives, 1775-1850

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[*Abstract*]

The full impact of COVID-19 has yet to be felt: while it may not define the new decade, it is clear that its immediate significance was to test many of the basic operating assumptions and procedures of global civilization. Even as vaccines are developed and utilized and even as it is possible to see the beginning of the end of COVID-19 as a discrete historical event, it remains unclear as to its ultimate importance. That said, it is evident that the academic exploration of Southeast Asia will also be affected by both the global and regional experiences of the pandemic. "Breakthroughs of Area Studies and ASEAN in the Era of Homo Untact" promises to help reconceptualize the study of the region by highlighting the importance of redefined spatial relationships and new potentially depersonalized modes of communication.

This paper acknowledges these issues by suggesting that the transformations caused by the pandemic should motivate scholars to raise new questions about how to understand humanity—particularly as it is defined by societies, nations and regions. Given that COVID-19 (and the response to it) has altered many of the fundamental rhythms of globalized regions, there is sufficient warrant for re-examining both the

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ways in which disease, health and their related spaces affect the perceptions of Southeast Asia. To achieve "breakthroughs" into the investigation of the region, it makes sense to have another glance at the ways in which the discourses about diseases and health may have helped to inscribe definitions of Southeast Asia—or, at the very least, the nations, societies and peoples who live within it.

In order to at least consider these larger issues, the discussion will concentrate on a formative moment in the conceptualization of Southeast Asia-British engagement with the region in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. To that end three themes will be highlighted: (1) the role that British diplomatic and military narratives played in establishing the information priorities required for the construction of colonial knowledge; (2) the importance not only of "colonial knowledge" but information making in its own right; (3) in anticipation of the use of big data, the manner in which manufactured information (related to space and disease) could function in shaping early British perceptions of Southeast Asia—particularly in Batavia and Java.

This discussion will suggest that rather than see social distancing or increased communication as the greatest outcome of COVID-19, instead it will be the use of data—that is, big, aggregated biometric data which have not only shaped responses to the pandemic, but remain likely to produce the reconceptualization of both information and knowledge about the region in a way that will be at least as great as that which took place to meet the needs of the "New Imperialism." Furthermore, the definition and articulation of Southeast Asia has often reflected political and security considerations. Yet, the experience of COVID-19 could prove that data and security are now fused into a set of interests critical to policy-makers. Given that the pandemic should accelerate many existing trends, it might be foreseen these developments will herald the triumph of *homo indicina*: an epistemic condition whereby the human subject has become a kind of index for its harvestable data. If so, the "breakthroughs" for those who study Southeast Asia will follow in due course.

Keywords: Batavia, Java, Raffles, Charleston, Malaria, Reputational Risk and Data

Ⅰ. Introduction

Over the course of the 18th century, Batavia's reputation went from one of the most impressive colonial cities in Southeast Asia to being feared as a deathtrap. The shift in perceptions about Batavia was rooted in the realities experienced by a disease outbreak in the 1730s which produced a dramatic shift in the city's mortality rate. Most of these people died from "intermittent fever," a short-hand term which frequently described the disease later known as malaria. This paper explores the representations of Batavia in a broad strand of British diplomatic writings and memoirs related to Southeast Asia in order to recover the ways in which the conceptualization of disease reflected both regional experience and colonial world views. In exploring these subjects, the aim is to speak deliberately on past to present in order to lend historical perspective to engage the multifaceted challenges which have defined the global experience of COVID-19. However, the heart of the discussion will investigate the production of information and knowledge to not only understand these practices in their own terms, but also draw upon these episodes in Southeast Asia's past to shed light on the present and possibly the future.

Two key ideas will inform this discussion: (1) In re-examining "colonial knowledge" (partly in light of COVID-19) it is worth considering the genealogy of the concept of "colonial knowledge" to better understand the ways in which it is deployed and, possibly, to see if it is as durable or useful as its frequent usage suggests. (2) This paper is written with the idea that the medical transformation of the 20th century has been decisive in the evolution of just about every feature of global civilization and, yet, it has also been significantly understudied. At its core medical civilization marginalizes the visible manifestations of disease, dying and death. In fact, medical encroachment into virtually every segment of life is possibly the biggest global transformation in the 20th century and has happened with little opposition or controversary, leading this author to think of it as the easy and gradual Revolution. That is, the establishment of medical empires into the everyday life of the 20th century has taken place slowly, but decisively. After all, it might be

possible to imagine future historians looking at the 20th Century as the "Rise of Medical Civilization."

At the same time, it should be acknowledged that academic exploration of Southeast Asia has benefited enormously from scholarship devoted to medical history. This reflects both academic interests, but also the region's history in which concepts such as "tropical medicine" and the prevalence of diseases such as malaria have been endemic challenges. But Southeast Asia has another asset: the integration of many different cultures and their often distinctive medical traditions. In fact, a question for future research might be offered here: does the region's experience with both disease and health enable it to make a unique contribution to the investigation of the ways in which medicine (and health) have shaped global developments in the last two centuries?

British authors who served as diplomats, soldiers, and administrators were quite interested in medical issues. These writers were usually committed to producing information which reflected the strong empiricist bent of the Enlightenment's intellectual culture. In practice, this means they tried to record everything that they saw, even if they little understood them, perhaps also thinking that someone later would make sense of it all. In any event, three narratives are highlighted in this paper, one of which defies normative conventions. *The Island of Java* (1811) was possibly the first substantive publication on the subject of Java in English. John Joseph Stockdale did not write it, but he compiled it from two earlier publications. Stockdale was a London publisher whose reputation would be forever soiled for his publication of Harriette Wilson's (1786-1845) *The Memoirs of Harriette Wilson: Written by Herself* (1825). Since Wilson had been an energetic and active courtesan in her youth, this sordid memoir compromised several key figures in the British court (Bastin 1995: 1). Stockdale had never traveled to Java or Southeast Asia, but he had an eye for marketing books such as *The Island of Java* (1811) and exploited the publicity opportunity which would emerge from Britain's invasion of the island, then known to be imminent. This text contains two interesting narratives, but the reason for its inclusion here is that it also offered detailed accounts of Batavia as a disease environment.

In fact, it supplied statistical analysis to document the extent of mortality in this important colonial port.

The Conquest of Java is another text which makes reference to disease in Batavia (and elsewhere). Unlike *The Island of Java*, this memoir by Major William Thorn provided detailed accounts of the British invasion of Java. While it did not treat the subject of health in quite the same way, it also reflected colonial engagement with the subject.

Lastly, Sir Stamford Raffles (1781-1826), better known as the "founder" of modern Singapore, wrote the first systematic history of Java which appeared in 1817. *The History of Java* (1817) chronicled the way a British administrator engaged the subject of Java and the issues posed by disease in Batavia.

Taken together, these writings enable us to better understand the formation of "colonial knowledge," particularly as it is applied to two parts of Southeast Asia. These authors represented both Batavia and Java, but for our purposes here, it will be clear that they did so in relation to concerns about sickness and health. They did not consciously attempt to construct a unique body of knowledge, but their effort reflected empiricist presuppositions. It may be the case that in the 19th century, colonial administrators "gathered data" to support their governance and better articulate their differences from their subject populations or the "framing of the Southeast Asian Other (both colonized and free) as the constitutive Other to Western identity" (Noor 2020: 17). However, this discussion will show that these authors drew upon data collected in the 18th century, organized to address the public health crisis in Batavia from the 1730s onward. That is, the practice of collection, classifying, and analyzing data were essential practices in the effort to solve a medical mystery and its presence in a region which was not fully understood. While they did not recognize the process by which illness develops, their experiences led them to label certain places, environments, and practices as unhealthy at best. They also described peoples, flora and fauna, religious practices, customs, and many other things that they encountered; yet, these narratives attested to the manner in which disease, and all that came with it,

can help to define a place (city, geographic feature, nation, or region). These authors wrote with the advent of public health on the horizon.

Roughly a century later, Hendrik Freek Tillema, trained as a pharmacist, wrote as an ethnographer and collected information about parts of Java and Borneo, and labored to improve public health in the Dutch East Indies (King 1987:11). Tillema, like many colonial authors, has been understudied or even relegated to the "dustbin of history," but insisted on the importance of medical statistics to reveal the impacts of disease, and therefore, to make possible improvements in healthcare (King 1987: 11). Last, it should be clear that based on this slender selection, both Thorn and Raffles were clearly attempting to keep Java from becoming misrepresented as a place of disease, an honor which Batavia already possessed.

It might be objected that these are not truly indigenous voices or even autonomous ones. However, reconstructing disease history is often challenging, particularly because the sources tend to favor those who come from more substantial backgrounds. As we will see, there is relevant information about indigenous populations because they also suffered from malaria—the disease most relevant to this discussion, even if it was normally referred to as the "intermittent fever." This discussion points to the ambiguities of "colonial knowledge" because even if it is now viewed negatively, it remains relevant, perhaps even foundational for modern medical thought.

A more interesting and related question is whether indigenous voices are those most likely to name or define a place by reference to disease. This is a complicated issue because it almost certainly involves degrees of immunity, but also normalized behaviors. In contrast, it is possible to imagine that the colonial project's capacity to manufacture information, classify, and analyze it all in the service of the state is probably the more likely candidate to devise such characterizations, and an even better one to get it badly wrong.

1.1. Places Defined by Disease

Britain's engagement with the Malay Archipelago in the 18th century was episodic, but increasingly relevant to its larger foreign policy objectives. Our attention will focus on Java, especially Batavia, as explicated by the texts assembled by Stockdale, Thorn's memoir, and Raffles' history. While these works did not focus on disease, they remain very valuable for aiming to communicate as much about their subjects. In short, it would not have been possible for these writers to engage the subject of Java without explaining that the island contained a number of places, most notably Batavia, which were dominated by disease. Not surprisingly, perhaps, by the end of the 18th century the VOC employed roughly 300 surgeons to treat their employees and garrisons. Roughly 200 were mobile: serving on ships (including travel to and from Holland) or being sent to relevant points within the East Indian Archipelago (Elyazar, et al.2011: 20).

At the beginning of the 18th Century, Batavia was still referred to as the "Queen of the Orient" (Blussé 2008: 37). Batavia's growth and transformation reflected a wide compass of history. Leonard Blussé notes that this was due to the "epochal regime changes" that China, Japan, and the Indonesian Archipelago experienced in the early 17th century (2008: x). The location of Batavia, proximate to both the worlds of Chinese and Indian Ocean commerce meant that it "sat as a spider in its web" (Blussé 2008: 5). More broadly, Blussé argued that Batavia was a "visible city," which like Nagasaki and Canton, brought to life the vibrant interactions of East and West, a result of the vast expansion of trade and cultural interactions (Blussé 2008: 5). In addition, these forces also reflected the wider influences of the French and Industrial Revolutions. With respect to Batavia's more immediate environment, the second half of the 18th century witnessed the erosion of Dutch naval dominance amidst the Malay world (Blussé 2008: 7). The Dutch had quite consciously decided to make Batavia the center of Southeast Asian operations. Jan Pieterszoon Coen had selected the site precisely to capitalize on Chinese trading networks (Blussé 2008: 18). Yet, by the end of the 18th Century, Batavia was no longer known as the "Queen of the East," but was probably better known as the "Cemetery of the East"

(Blussé 2008: 43).

This discussion focuses on Batavia because in the 18th century, it had been home to a dramatic epidemic which changed both the city and its ability to serve Dutch colonial interests. In 1733, an unknown disease outbreak suddenly shattered Batavia. Before 1733, the town had about 5,000 to 7,000 Europeans. Around 500 died every year, but in that year the mortality rate spiked, surging upwards to about 2,500. Most were Europeans who came to Batavia for the first time. The disease outbreak became endemic, with an annual mortality rate ranging from 2,000 to 3,000 every year (Van der Brug 1997: 893-894).

These developments had long range implications for Batavia. The disease would later be identified as malaria (though other diseases were present), which had long been in Batavia. However, what had changed was the prevalence of *A. sundaicus mosquitos*, which proved to be the new disease vector (Van der Brug 1997: 896). The higher mortality proved to be a disaster for the VOC. In order to make up for the labor shortage, large numbers of people were recruited, but some 75,000 extra people died not long after arriving in Batavia. By the end of the Fourth Anglo-Dutch War, the VOC fell into debt before it collapsed; it would be replaced by the Dutch East India Company (Van der Brug 1997: 901). Not surprisingly, by the end, if the not the middle of the 18th century, Batavia had the reputation as a profoundly unhealthy place.

It is useful to compare Batavia's experience with Charleston (South Carolina) which in the 18th century had become one of the crown jewels of the British Empire in the Americas. Charleston has an interesting local story to tell, but like Batavia its actual significance reflects a much larger and wider set of historical interests. Even if Charleston is remembered as the place where the American Civil War broke out (when Fort Sumter is bombarded on 12 April 1861), the city's glory days were in the 18th century, when it dominated the export of rice ("Carolina Gold" being one example) and served as a key nodal point for the robust, but still rapidly growing Atlantic economy. More famous, perhaps, Charleston acquired a reputation as being one of the key destinations for slaves

who were being transported from Africa to North America. The slave market in Charleston points to another larger reality: the city was the place where the Transatlantic slave trade met colonial society and later the US South. Consequently, like Batavia, Charleston was a city which had become prosperous because of its role in the commercial interests made possible by slavery. In addition, like Batavia it was from the outset a multi-ethnic environment and one where inhabitants brought very different immunities and epidemiological inheritances.

In his award-winning *Slavery, Disease, and Suffering in the Southern Lowcountry* (Cambridge 2011), Peter McCandless depicted an almost identical situation to the one which had come to define Batavia. Charleston, which has a subtropical climate, was also a rich disease environment: the slave trade resulted in the importation of many diseases of African origin, including yellow fever, *falciparum* malaria, guinea worm, filariasis and lesser-known afflictions (McCandless 2011: 7). Another less virulent form of malaria *vivax* was present as well, but it probably came from Britain the last decades of the 17th century (McCandless 2011: 44). Those who lived in Charleston believed that the deadly fevers originated from the swamp area. Smallpox was both present and a constant threat: for instance, at almost the same time that Batavia was battling a new form of malaria, in 1738, Charleston was becoming one of the first cities in North American to begin inoculating people against smallpox (McCandless 2011: 7). However, it was the selection of rice as the main cash crop which made Charleston (and the Lowcountry) an ideal breeding ground for the local mosquito vector for malaria (McCandless 2011: 12). Like Batavia, the city had a very high mortality rate for both slaves and women and men of European descent.

Not surprisingly, the city's leaders worried about its reputation, particularly because they wished to increase its population of freemen and women. However, racial priorities could easily govern others: many of the cities' leading citizens wanted additional immigrants from Europe because they feared being increasingly outnumbered by the slave population. Accordingly, they took great pains to underrepresent the extent of disease because they did not

want to discourage settlers from moving to Charleston, who might otherwise easily choose to settle in other colonies in North America (McCandless 2011: 123-124, 147-148).

This paper highlights the attempts to make sense of Batavia as a place that was unhealthy or insalubrious. Three colonial era texts furnish discussions about Batavia as a place defined by disease, but they also indicate that their authors were keenly aware that it was not representative of Java as a whole. In addition, the discussion will suggest that colonial knowledge, for all the criticisms thrown against it, was shaped by empirical evidence and highly nuanced. The three narratives which explored Batavia reflect a deep commitment to empiricism, here made evident in documentary evidence and statistical analysis. However simple, these depict an essential continuity for the practices associated with colonial knowledge making it. Last, connecting past to present, the paper will also suggest that it was precisely the reliance on statistics that provides at least a hint to the ways in which the years associated with COVID-19 may be remembered.

Ⅱ. The Guidebook Tradition: John Joseph Stockdale and the *Island of Java*

Island of Java was assembled from high quality travel writing and was published almost as a guide for Britons to learn about a place their forces would soon be deployed. For our purposes, this text represents the "guide" strand of colonial writing. Directing metropolitan readers was an important component of colonial discourses, particularly with the arrival of mass travel in the latter decades of the 19th century. The narratives which form Stockdale's *Island of Java* locate specific parts of Batavia as a site dangerous for disease. It might be added that the guidebook tradition—which at its very essence aims to structure encounters with unknown peoples and places—has a long history. What this paper suggests is that it may well be partly motivated by the fear of "reputational risk"—especially when the authors are writing from colonized areas for metropolitan audiences. The reputation of a place is not a mere

footnote to the story of Western cultural dominance or a haphazard manifestation of "colonial knowledge"; rather, it is likely to have been decisive in acquisition of information, selections of themes, articulation of authorities, and overall construction of narrative. In other words, managing a place's reputation was nothing less than the pre-structuring of a kind of "tourist gaze" (understood broadly).

Stockdale drew primarily from two published travel accounts: first, J.S. Stavorinus's *Voyages to the East Indies* (1797), translated from Dutch to English by S.H. Wilcocke; second, C.S. Sonnini's edition of C.F. Tombe's *Voyage aus Indes Orientales, pendant les annees 1802, 1803, 1804, 1805 et 1806,* published in Paris in 1810 (Bastin 1995: 1). A second expanded edition also included material from John Barrow's *A Voyage to Cochinchina,* published in London in 1806 (Bastin 1995: 2). The narrator (probably Stavorinus) focused on the swamps and similar environments as places where disease was omnipresent. Medical knowledge in the 18th century was not constructed on at least two assumptions which frame contemporary thinking: (1) the idea of disease as a distinct entity with its independent trajectory of development, distinctive modes of acquisition, and transmission did not yet exist. (2) contemporary authorities understood that swamps were good sources of disease, but they had yet to learn that the actual vectors were mosquitos. In other words, 18th century medical writing took place before the revolutions in medical thought associated with the Paris school of medicine, the germ theory of disease, and the discovery of the airborne vectors for malaria (and other diseases) reshaped medicine from the 19th century onwards. Above all, the texts deployed by Stockdale depicted Batavia as a special kind of unhealthy disease environment.

Accordingly, Batavia had a number of places which were deadly because of the swamp-like conditions. The author explained that it has "incontrovertibly demonstrated low swamp land, such as has been abandoned, or thrown up the waves of the sea, and countries overgrown with trees and underwood, are all extremely unhealthy, and frequently fatal to the great proportion of their inhabitants" (Stockdale 1811: 128). Batavia might be regarded as a citadel of prosperity, but, in fact, was actually "one of the most

unwholesome spots upon the globe" (Stockdale 1811: 129).

The narrator provided what might be understood as a history of how public health in Batavia declined from the 1730s. This was done with historical analysis, but backed up by writing focused on environmental considerations and detailed statistical analysis. Readers of the *Island of Java* might discover that Batavia's decline was indicated by its unusually high mortality rate, but if they followed the author's analysis in some detail, they might also glean that this situation originated from the intersection of commercial priorities and the local environment.

The beaches at Batavia exhibited the hostile climate and its disease miasmata. This miasmata was what defined Batavia's "disease environment." The author explained that "where the firm sandy beach commences, a dismal succession of stinking mud-banks, filthy bogs, and stagnant pools, announces to more senses than one the poisonous nature of this dreadful climate" (Stockdale 1811: 129). Furthermore, it is possible to see that along this "shore the sea throws up all manner of filth, slime, Mollusca, dead fish, mud, and weeds, which putrefying with the utmost rapidity by the extreme heat, load and infect the air with their offensive miasmata" (Stockdale 1811: 129). This aggregation of mud, carcasses, and putrefaction worsened during the "bad" (West) monsoon, which blows the "noxious exhalations" towards Batavia. In addition, the author also noted that to the West of Batavia there were low-lying areas often submerged under standing water. The author believed that these areas were places where disease existed. This was almost true: the reality, of course, was that standing water makes an excellent breeding ground for mosquitos.

The author also understood that malaria—a name not yet used—was easily identified by the description of the persistent problem in Batavia. The "intermittent fever" did not inevitably mean death once contracted, but in some instances continued "for many years" (Stockdale 1811:131) which tends to make women and men normalize the experience of it. Once they are "familiarized," they "scarcely think of it a disease, attending, in the intervals of its attack, to his affairs, and mixing in society" (Stockdale 1811:131).

In writing about malaria (and other fevers), the author had Europeans in mind. However, it should be remembered (and possibly studied) that outsiders with knowledge were often the ones which gave names to places—as the history of India, the Americas and Southeast Asia all can attest. However, when disease defines a place, the stakes were different because they often involved the potential for conquest, immigration, and commercial development. Largely in this context, the high mortality rate in Batavia underscored that it was a "most unwholesome place of abode" (Stockdale 1811: 132-133). Without providing evidence, the author noted that it had the highest mortality rate of all the VOC's holdings. He described how those who lived in Batavia had adapted to its disease environment.

It is supposed that of the Europeans of all classes who come to settle in Batavia, not always half the number survive the year. The place resembles, in that respect, a field of battle, or a town besieged. The frequency of deaths renders familiar mention of them, and little signs are shown of emotion and surprise, on hearing that the companion of yesterday is to-day no more." When an acquaintance is said to be dead, the common reply is, "Well, he owed me nothing;" or, "I must get my money of his executors" (Stockdale 1811: 132).

The prevalence of disease was indicative of decaying urban areas in Batavia. In fact, the descriptions in the *Island of Java* illustrate that understanding disease in the 18th century meant being alert not only to the environment, but how it was affected by its interactions with human society. The "insalubrity" of Batavia has affected not only the disease environments in and around its beaches, but in the human manufactured canals which contained stagnant water (Stockdale 1811: 133). The tradition of descriptive writing—perhaps embodied later by John Ruskin's prose which often delivered word pictures to his readers—is probably a lost art, but in the *Island of Java,* it appears to exhibit the intersection of seasonal climatic events and a disease environment. Hence, the dangers produced by this situation varied with the season:

> Two principal causes are to be met within the city, and a great part of its insalubrity is to be ascribed to them; namely, the little

> circulation of water in the canals which intersect it, and the diminution of the number of inhabitants. The former is occasioned by the river, which formally conveyed most of its water to the city, being now greatly weakened by the drain which has been dug, called the Slokhaan, which receives its water from the high land, and carries it away from the city, so that many of the canals run almost dry in the good monsoon. The stagnant canals, in the dry season, exhale an intolerable stench, and the trees planted along them impede the course of air, by which in some degree the putrid effluvia would be dissipated. In the wet season the inconvenience is equal; for then these reservoirs of corrupted water overflow their banks in the lower part of the town, and fill the lower stories of the houses, where they leave behind them an inconceivable quantity of slime and filth: yet these canals are sometimes cleaned; but the cleaning of them is so managed as to become as great a nuisance as the foulness of the water; for the black mud taken from the bottom is suffered to lie upon the banks, in the middle of the street, till it has acquired a sufficient decree of hardness to be made the lading of a boat, and carried away. As this mud consists chiefly of human odure, which is regularly thrown into the canals every morning, there scarcely being a necessary in the whole town, it poisons the air while it is drying, to a considerable extent. Even the running streams become nuisances in their turn, by the negligence of the people; for every now and then a dead hog, of a dead horse, is stranded upon the shallow parts, and it being the business of no particular person to remove the nuisance, it is negligently left to time and accident (Stockdale 1811: 133-134).

The environmental afflictions associated with Batavia may well have contributed to the decline of trade as a second principal cause. This situation was partly the result of the rebellion in 1740, but the author wrote about the city as if it was being semi-abandoned by much of the population. While it is beyond the subject of this discussion, it is useful to refer to the descriptions of the depopulated town. In fact, the buildings that remained were "uninhabited and uncleansed, speedily contract in this low, warm, and marshy place, an infectious and foul air, and contaminate even the houses adjoining; and that this both causes and augments the unhealthiness" (Stockdale 1811: 135). The mortality was higher in the north part of the town which was lower. The author speculated that if these trends did not abate, it could produce "the total

abandonment and ruin of Batavia" (Stockdale 1811: 136).

It is significant that the author took the trouble to make sure his readers grasped that the high mortality rates were not attributed to other factors such as the hot climate. It was a common misperception, especially for those who had never been to the tropics, that excessive heat was the cause of unhealthiness of Batavia (Stockdale 1811: 139); however, there were many other places as hot, but without being identified with disease. The author was very much aware that travel writing often left too much to invention and the imagination. Accordingly, he concluded his discussion by carrying out a statistical analysis of mortality to drive home his assessment. To that end, he drew upon the records from Batavia's hospitals to determine if there were definitive patterns to the city's mortality.

Stockdale's author located the development of canals, which begun in 1733, as being the decisive event in making Batavia unhealthy. He drew upon the information supplied by local hospitals to trace the impact of canals. From 1739-1743, the mortality was "not quite so great" as 5562 of the Company's servants died in hospitals; in contrast, the figures for 1733-1738 was 8,286. However, the canals now developed the mortality between 1744-1771 which spiked to 48, 036, all dying in hospital. In addition, these numbers should be augmented by about a third because many deaths were concealed to avoid making payments to funerals.

At the same time, mortality proved to be a lens into some of the basic categories of colonial information. Proving the example of the mortality statistics in 1769, the travel writer related that 6,446 had died: these included 2,434 Company Servants, 164 Burghers, 681 Native Christians, 852 Mahomedans, 1,331 slaves, and 1,003 Chinese (Stockdale 1811: 144). Information from 1768 was marshalled to further contextualize the unhealthy character of Batavia: "out of five thousand four hundred and ninety Europeans, who were present at Batavia, according to the annual muster, on the 30th of June 1768, of which number, one thousand three hundred and thirty-eight were patients in hospitals" (Stockdale 1811: 144). Out of this number 1,338 died within the next 12 months. In the statistical analysis

which followed the conclusion was that the Company lost about one-fifth of its servants.

Therefore, the *Island of Java* had illustrated the cause, the course, and the history of the rise of mortality. This had been done with the use of the records from the hospitals, speaking with Batavia's residents, and seeing and studying the landscape. For our purposes, this analysis represents an attempt to comprehend the interaction of humans, the climate and landscape of Batavia, and the ways in which they began to shape local conditions. All of this was achieved without the use of modern medical thought and analysis and, yet, it was in many ways farsighted.

It would be cholera epidemics in the 19th century which would push European researchers to try to draw comprehensive pictures of places where disease was prevalent. And, it would be in the 20th century that statistics became essential for medical science—and currently, the way in which the world has made sense of COVID-19. The analysis of Batavia was also written with a sensitivity to what would later be called public health, but it was hardly medical knowledge. However, it certainly qualifies as "colonial knowledge," particularly with its Eurocentric presuppositions. The discourses remind us that for all its faults, colonial knowledge was deeply reliant upon data (where it could be found) and information. That is, at the heart of this project, like many others, was a deep faith in empiricism. Colonial knowledge has been the subject of organized derision, but if this relatively forgotten work is in any way indicative of it, then it might be admitted that it anticipates many of the categories (and practices) of the medical knowledge, a powerful force in the 21st Century.

Ⅲ. The Memoir: Major William Thorn's *The Conquest of Java*

Thorn informed his readers that his motivations to write *The Conquest of Java* involved preserving an accurate account of the military campaigns of which he had been a part. Thorn wrote with the same kind of passion for accuracy as did Major Snodgrass writing about the First Anglo-Burmese War. Both authors wished to

preserve the memory of an epochal event which they had lived through. He was clear that he envisioned a history with a strong empirical base, "adding to the Memoir a brief statistical view of the Islands of Java and Madura, substantially compressed from personal observation" (Thorn 1815: b5). Exploring Thorn's work enables this discussion to probe the memoir as a strand of colonial writing and practice.

Like Stockdale, Thorn believed that the credibility of his account depended upon documentation and statistical information. Thorn followed Stockdale's authors in focusing on Batavia as an unhealthy place. In fact, he argued that its reputation was sufficiently established to that describing its mortality rate was unnecessary:

> The idea of unhealthiness has become so completely associated with the name Batavia, as to produce an unfavorable impression against the whole of Java. But while the truth of the first must be admitted to the fullest extent, the injustice of the latter imputation may be proved by incontrovertible facts. The cause of the unhealthiness of Batavia are so generally known, as to render any minute disquisition on the subject wholly unnecessary (Thorn 1815: 250-251).

Instead, he wrote about what it is like (for Europeans) to live in Batavia amidst the inevitability of fever:

> Death's shafts fly thickest at the breaking up of the Monsoons, which is the most sickly period of the year….in no country is the intelligence of the decease of a near friend or relation received with less surprise or concern; which indeed is naturally accounted for by the rapid succession of scenes of mortality at that sickly period, when every day presents to the view a long line of funeral processions. But the melancholy train is generally beheld with indifference, on account of its frequency; and even the sable mourners commonly smoke their segars or pipes as they move along, with all the unconcern imaginable, though they are paid to mimick sorrow (Thorn 1815: 251-252).

Such was the reputation for Batavia that Thorn related that it could be set as a trap for British invaders. He explained that the

capture of Weltervreeden was important because it secured an objective that supported the "preservation of the health and lives of our soldiers" (Thorn 1815:33). In fact, the previous French leader Herman Willem Daendals, in the instance of a British invasion, had planned to "tempt us with the possession of Batavia, well aware that the unhealthiness of the town and noxious climate of the seashore would in short time destroy our troops" (Thorn 1815: 33). *The Conquest of Java*, then, illustrates the empirical value of the memoir tradition: namely, in the effort to capture the vivid quality of an event, the writer went to great pains to record as much as possible with the highest level of precision. Thorn's text is replete with extraneous information, but reflects the historical realities as its author faithfully attempts to recount it.

Ⅳ. Establishment Expert: Sir Stamford Raffles' *The History of Java*

Sir Stamford Raffles' *The History of Java*, originally published in 1817, represents yet another strand of colonial knowledge because it reflected the point of view of an informed, engaged senior administrator. Writing from the senior administrative perspective implied something very different from those who authored "guidebooks" or "memoirs" (which Raffles might also have done) because it came with a nearly comprehensive understanding of the subject. That is, the senior colonial official (Arthur Phayre [1812-1885] in Burma would be another example) could write about the place in which they served often with almost unparalleled resources. They would have access to all the government reports, which were often the only and definitive sources on many aspects of a society—especially up to date information on trade, education, legal matters, and communities' ongoing historical and public health (which includes disease and medical practices) reconstruction. They also had census information to support their writing. These authors also wrote with intimate knowledge of the practices (good and bad) of governance as well. Of course, they knew that their publications were bound to adhere to interests of colonial governance. Many learned indigenous languages, but most were limited in their understandings of the outlook of most of their subject populations.

Yet, scholars in the early 21st centuries would surely envy the materials (including access to key personages) from which they might draw. The best works—"classics" as such—that were produced from this strand of colonial writing remain relevant to the study of Southeast Asia—even if they say as much about the colonized as they do the colonizer.

The History of Java exemplifies this strand of writing because it draws upon vast learning to situate Java in time and place. This is the "expert" discourse of the time and one which was very critical of Dutch rule and a number of extant practices, most notable of which was slavery. Readers of *The History of Java* will find now dated, but very impressive learning informing both the book's analysis and narrations. Naturally, this is the colonizer's point of view—but it is one derived from a mind which did its best to engage indigenous peoples and practices and did so with a very broad view of the subject matter. Last, Raffles' encounter with Java was that of the mature Enlightenment: his opposition to slavery, backward Dutch practices and governing corruptions would have been recognizable in the critiques which late 18th and early 19th century directed at issues in Europe.

Unlike many colonial administrators, Raffles wrote *The History of Java* after he had returned to London from the archipelago. As early as the summer of 1815, Raffles began to collect materials for his history (Glendinning 2012: 145), and in November learned that Java would soon be returned to Dutch rule (Glendinning 2012: 147). He returned to Britain in July 1816, first stopping at St. Helena to meet Napoleon (Glendinning 2012: 150-151). In London, he engaged the unofficial Orientalist establishment; that is, he engaged with many Britons who had significant experience in Southeast Asia. Notably, while Raffles wrote his history, he was frequently speaking with Joseph Banks and William Marsden. In fact, *The History of Java* might be said to have been modeled after Marden's *History of Sumatra* (Glendinning 2012: 166). More important, perhaps, Raffles wrote with the knowledge that Java would be going back to the Dutch. Hence, it is easy to imagine how much frustration guided this volume, which he wrote in a relatively short period of time. Raffles must have been profoundly unhappy with the decision to

return Java to Dutch rule and his history might be regarded as a kind of commentary on that yet to be realized prospect (Glendinning 2012: 168). In any event, *The History of Java* now reads as an impressive testament to colonial writing (Noor 2020: 30), but it is useful to point out that it was criticized by a number of contemporaries (Glendinning 2012: 167). Raffles compiled significant information, but parts of the work were undigested, with some key discussions taking place in the appendices.

For our purposes here, Raffles had to address Batavia's disease history because by the early 19th century, it formed the way that Europeans understood the city. Unlike Stockdale's authors and Thorn, Raffles did not devote prominent parts of his history to disease. However, he did so in the first appendix to *The History of Java*, which was made up of an impressive array of statistical information, his analysis, and remarks from the superintending surgeon. The ability to produce this 17-page appendix is a good example of the resources available to the senior administrator.

The categories of the statistical analysis reveal the state (and capacity) of useful information open to a colonial official in the early decades of the 19th century. Raffles understood the limitation of the information, but still found it useful. The following tables present the evidential basis for the discussion on disease in Batavia:

Table 1. Data Summary for Tables Used in Appendix 1 (*The History of Java*)

Subject	Key Data Points	Notes
Table I List of Population, Marriages, Baptisms and Death in the towns and suburbs of Batavia from 1700 to 1813	Population broken down by European and "Europeans and Natives," by years (1737-1754) and inside and outside of "the walls"; Population broken down by European and "Europeans and Natives," by years "Within the town and all suburbs" and "In the Environs" (1755-1805).	

Table II List of the Deceased and Buried in several Burial Places at Batavia, from the Year 1730 till the month of August, 1752	Number of deceased by months 1730-1752	This table was translated from Dutch from a record which was discovered in Batavia.
General Abstract of the Monthly Return of Sick on the Island of Java and its dependencies, from 1st November 1813, to 30th October, 1814.	Types of Troops (European and Natives); Admissions and discharges; Deaths from fever and dysentery; Remaining sick for more than a month; Ratios of deaths to cures; Proportion of sick.	Military Document
General Monthly Average of Sick and Casualties on the Island of Java and its dependencies, from 1st November 1813, to 31 October 1814.	Size of unit; Sick; Cured; Dead; Proportion of Sick to Well; Average proportion of Death to Cures.	Military Document Dependent on the General Abstract (above)
General Monthly Average of Fatal Diseases, From 1st November 1813, to 31 October 1814.	Fevers; Flux; Other Diseases.	Military Document
General Abstract of the Monthly Returns of Sick on the island of Java and its dependencies, from 1st November 1814 to 31st December 1815.	Types of Troops (European and Natives); Admissions and discharges; Deaths from fever and dysentery; Remaining sick for more than a month; Ratios of deaths to cures; Proportion of sick.	Military document
General Monthly Average of Sick and Casualties on the island of Java and its dependencies, from 1st November 1814 to 31 October 1815, inclusive.	Size of unit; Sick; Cured; Dead; Proportion of Sick to Well; Average proportion of Death to Cures.	Military document Dependent on General Abstract (above)

State of His Majesty's 1st Battalion 78th Regiment, Shewing the Effective Strength and Number died (including those died of wounds) killed in Action & Half Yearly, from 16th February, 1797 five days after the Regiment's landing in India, to 25th December 1815.	HQ of Regiment and Dates; Effective Strength and Dates; Casualties (including deaths and killed in action); Total Killed; Time line.	Military document. 78th Regiment

These tables provided the statistical basis for Raffles' analysis of disease in Batavia. Raffles was more than aware of the fragmentary nature of his information. He understood that history usually must be written with less than complete source material. He explained that Table 1 was incomplete because part of the papers which would have been necessary to draw information from were ''lost or destroyed, amongst them the register in which was stated the Chinese population'' (Raffles 1830: iii). In addition, he lamented the loss of hospital lists because they would have provided more precise information on "European deaths" so that it might be determined whether those who perished were "inhabitant, military persons, strangers, or sailors or marines from the ships of the different nations in Batavia Roads'' (Raffles 1830: iii).

More important, Raffles could almost be heard to answer Thorn because his deep statistical analysis refuted any idea that Java was insalubrious or unhealthy. In fact, using the data which Raffles supplied led to the more precise conclusion that it was only in the beaches, swamps, and canals that Batavia was dangerous. The statistical evidence showed that Batavia's suburbs were much less unhealthy—if they were that at all. In addition, readers of *The History of Java* might learn that the climate was not intrinsically dangerous, but rather that those at greatest risk lived or resided near the miasmata or were first arrivals. These points were reinforced by the testimony of Robertson, the Superintending Surgeon:

> Such is the melancholy instance of the noxious climate of Batavia, which came under my own observation. That it was not epidemic is

> clearly evinced, from its not extending its influence to those who attended the sick, nor to the rest of the crew, all of whom escaped its attack and remained healthy. Among the Dutch who remain in the town, fevers are, I understand, very prevalent at all seasons, notwithstanding their being, in a manner, inured to the climate, and most of them have a sallow sickly appearance. It is not uncommon, in riding through the streets, to meet three or for funerals daily… [T]he Chinese, however, who are very numerous, suffer more than any class of the people; perhaps, from the worse situations of their houses, the manner of living. The number of casualties among them, I am told, is incredible, especially during the dry season; and if one may judge from the extent of their burial ground, and the number of their tumuli, it cannot admit of a doubt. (Raffles 1830: x)

Robertson not only had detailed knowledge of the ways in which disease impacted Batavia, but he was confident that he could explain why it took place. He explained that the "baneful effects of marsh miasmata on the human system is well known''; Robertson was referred to the ''engendering intermittent and remittent fevers, dysenteries'' (Robertson in Raffles 1830: x), which were prevalent because Batavia was "built almost in a swamp, surrounded by marshes in all directions, trees and jungles, which the exhalations being carried off by a free circulation of air" (Robertson cited in Raffles 1830: x). Robertson added that the swamps' "noxious exhalations" cannot be diffused because the jungle and houses have the effect of making them more condensed and deadly. This affected the pattern of mortality:

> During the heat of the day these exhalations are more diffused and comparatively innoxious, but when the sun withdraws its influence they become more condense, and amalgamating with the descending dews form a morbid atmosphere around the houses of the inhabitants. This hypothesis will readily account for a fact well known, that people whose commercial concern require their presence in Batavia during the day, and who retire during the night into the country, escape this endemic, while any who sleep in the town, even for a night, unless those who, by a long residence, are inured to it, escape. (Robertson cited in Raffles 1830: x)

Robertson explained that the diarrhea and dysentery were a

result of the polluted water, which added to the difficulties of living in Batavia. In contrast, Weltevreden—3 miles away and not exposed to the swamp, was exempt from the "endemic fever," though diarrhea was common "especially among those newly arriving''; but these cases were rarely "serious'' or of an ''alarming nature'' (Robertson cited in Raffles 1830, x). Furthermore, Raffles was consistent with the strand of Enlightenment British historical writing about the East Indian archipelago which explained that it was a part of the world which held great potential, if only the Dutch and the indigenous population did not mismanage it (Tsao 2013: 462-467).

In addition, he directly attacked the link between Java and disease by rejecting one of the myths about it:

> The unhealthiness of the climate of Batavia is connected, in the minds of many, with the fabulous properties of the poison tree of Java, and many are so ignorant of the island as to consider the climate of Batavia as a fair example of that of Java in general. History attests that this city has been highly pernicious to the health both of Europeans and Natives, almost from its foundation, and recent experience concurs with the testimony of history (1830: viii).

The mature Enlightenment, with its rejection of slavery and openness to rethinking social inequality, was evident in Raffles' tempered judgement about what Dutch colonization had done to both Batavia and Java:

> The mines of America, when they were first discovered, did not more strongly allure the Spaniards, nor urged them to sacrifice more relentlessly the lives of the unresisting natives to their burning thirst of gold, than the monopoly of Java and the Spice Island let the Dutch Company, in the track of wealth, through danger, injustice and oppression. Though the unhealthiness of Batavia was at all time known and formidable, there were times when the mortality became extraordinary and alarming (1830: viii-ix).

Raffles explained that in the 18th century, the East India Company had already concluded that the "insalubrity" resulted largely from "the situation of the town in bay" where swamps contained exhalations of "the most noxious kind (1830: ix)" Java did

not deserve the reputation for unhealthiness and Raffles explained that including an extract from the superintending surgeon helped to demonstrate that it was Batavia which endangered health, without affecting the "general salubrity of the climate of Java" (1830: xii).

The disassociation of Java and disease was prominent in Raffles' analysis and reflected the perspective not only of someone with deep knowledge of the island (and its environs), but also of the voice of a senior administrator. In this sense, Raffles wrote about Java as an authority who like those in Charleston carefully sought to present the city and the Low Country in the best possible light; failure to do so might have significant commercial implications. N. Currie, the Surgeon of the 78th Regiment, commented in his extract that

> Java need no longer be held up as the grave of Europeans, for except in the immediate neighbourhood of salt marshes and forests, as in the city of Batavia, and two or three other places on the north coast, it may be safely affirmed that no tropical climate is superior to it in salubrity (Currie cited in Raffles 1830: xvi).

Ultimately Raffles would be disappointed by Java—not because it possessed a reputation for fever and disease, but because of its return to the Dutch at the end of the Napoleonic Wars. Nonetheless, British investment in Java continued for more than a decade. Notably, British plantation owners brought steam power to enhance the efficiency of sugar production. Merchant houses in Calcutta and London continued their operations in Java. For instance, at Bekasi, Jessen & Trail, a joint British-Danish company, built a steam-driven mill in 1820, modelled on an example taken from colonial experience in the West Indies (Bosma 2013: 89). These efforts suggest that many British commercial leaders were not only prepared to invest in Java, but like Raffles must have experienced significant disappointment with the Anglo-Dutch Treaty of 1814 which returned Java (and other possessions in the archipelago) to the Dutch.

Ⅴ. Conclusion

This paper has been written under the shadow of COVID-19. While the course of the pandemic remains before us, it is already safe to say that it is probably the world's biggest global event since World War II. COVID-19, with all its ambiguities, has been the perfect disruptor for a data driven world: it has shattered the cozy comfort of developed societies, which for nearly a century—with a few notable exceptions—had successfully banished infectious disease from being an active part of everyday life. COVID-19, without being particularly virulent, has ripped apart the modes of national, regional and global interactions, which in turn produced new forms of transregional communication and cooperation.

All of that said, this discussion has focused upon the ways in which a number of colonial writers understood disease in Java, especially Batavia. Early in the COVID-19 era, an argument—which is not likely to be settled anytime soon—broke out about its place of origins. This should not have shocked anyone: the connection (and related disputes) between diseases and places has a long history. While it is useful to recall the ways in which disease was used by external parties to define Southeast Asia, it might even be more important to situate such characterizations against a few famous counterexamples: the Ottoman Empire's "the Sick Man" of Europe, the more recent debates about the geographic origins of HIV-AIDs, and the misnomer "Spanish flu" all come to mind.

In this instance, we have seen a different type of connection: namely, that Batavia and possibly Java were inherently unhealthy. Colonial authors established that even though an endemic disease environment could be documented in Batavia, it should not be understood to characterize Java. More interesting, perhaps, it is useful to recall that the identification of a place with disease (especially when severe illness has been banished to the margins of human experience) has had sinister implications. Susan Sontag reminded us in *Illness as Metaphor* that when disease becomes a signifier, it means that the object is often massively devalued, dehumanized, and even worse (1977).

Batavia's disease environment, which bears a striking resemblance to one which developed in Charleston, South Carolina, was described in great detail by European authors who sought to understand why in their words it was so "insalubrious." Their descriptions of the swamp, beaches, and canals which produced the miasmatic exhalations reflect a sophisticated understanding of the interplay between environments and disease. When they wrote about parts of Batavia as a disease environment (our term), they were certainly describing a situation where the practice of social distancing might have made some sense. Yet, their strongest arguments came from the detailed statistical information which allowed them to assess the disease patterns and evaluate how and where it was situated. They understood the impact of the disease through statistics—even if their data now seem simple. In this sense, they anticipated one of the central realities of COVID-19, which has been the ostensible reliability of data. The widespread generation and publication of data has driven virtually every response to COVID-19 and it has been culled from virtually every segment of human experience: from regions to molecules. The world that will follow—where COVID-19 has become history and malaria will probably remain as a key global health problem—may well underscore the importance of social distancing, but *homo untact*, as such, will not have threatened the hegemony of *homo indicina*. This last concept refers to an informational and data manufactured world (followed by related conceptual practices) in which the human subject has effectively become an object. As such, humans are a kind of index to be mined and analyzed by those who will control Big Data and Artificial Intelligence. Therefore, in looking back to the discussions about Java (and Batavia) there is warrant to speak about the use of data for medical research as a recognizable continuity. Those such as Robertson who knew with proud certainty what had caused the "intermittent fever" in Batavia were in a curious way part of the development of modern medicine.

And, yet, they were wrong. In fact, it would not be until the end of the 19th century when the work of Ronald Ross (1857-1932) established mosquitos as the key vector in the transmission of malaria (Porter 1997: 468). Swamps produced ideal conditions for

mosquitos to thrive, but the air—however unpleasant to breathe—did not cause disease outbreaks. Malaria, in its many variants, was much more than the name intermittent fever would suggest: it is actually an ancient disease that has shaped global inequalities and continues to make worldwide impact in the 21st century.

To read these colonial authors' attempts to understand disease in Java (or Charleston for that matter) was to see them use all of their tools to make sense of an endemic situation—without even knowing about microbes, bacteria, mosquitos as vectors for key diseases and many other things which were to take place in the medical revolutions of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Their efforts, even with the use of statistics—an underrated tool for medicine—was actually ahead of the curve. Roy Porter has pointed out that the use of statistics—a science with its roots in European state building—was already being deployed in the last decades of the 18th century (1997: 293). He cites the example of Johann Peter Frank (1745-1821) who developed the concept of medical police. Frank began to capture statistical information from cradle to grave (Porter 1997: 293). However, this early use of statistics—like that of Raffles—was in the service of statecraft. Medical knowledge in the 19th century—particularly in wake of the cholera epidemics—would later advance by studying disease as it occurred in human populations in order to find both cures and therapeutics. For instance, in *Epidemics and Society*, Frank M. Snowden noted that the Paris School of Medicine was redefining medical study, which included observation, detailed analysis of patient symptoms and attempts to find numerical correlations, of what was observed (2019: 182).

Ironically, Raffles who had clearly understood the need to separate all of Java from disease was also ahead of his times in devoting an appendix on the subject in *A History of Java*. Unlike Stockdale's authors and Thorn, Raffles removed the subject from his narrative and isolated it with an appendix. Raffles anticipated the broader cultural norm of globalized societies to achieve medical civilization by deemphasizing the presence of death and disease. COVID-19 has reminded us that it might be best to recall the disease in history as often more than "background noise"—as

William McNeill in *Plagues and Peoples* famously labeled it nearly half a century ago (1976: 12).

Malaria would have a long and ongoing history in Indonesia. Scholars have chronicled the different approaches to controlling the disease during the colonial period, which included some of their adaptations to many of the key developments which marked the rise of both medical science and public health. Hence, little more than a decade after Raffles departed Java, the Dutch created the Civil Medical Service (1826), which would serve Java for nearly a century. In addition, medical schools were opened in Jakarta (1876) and Surabaya (1913), and in 1924 a Central Malaria Bureau (CMB) was created. The CMB would train over 100 specialists for carrying out anti-malarial measures (Elyazar et al. 2011: 21). After Indonesia achieved independence, its government took a range of measures which capitalized on scientific research. For example, the discovery that DDT provided an invaluable resource for anti-malarial procedures led to the goal of eradicating the disease in Indonesia. Following the launch of the Global Malarial Eradication Programmer (GMEP) by the World Health Assembly in 1955, the government initiated a program aimed to eradicate the disease by 1970. The attempts to eradicate the disease by first dividing the country into 66 zones and then attacking them with DDT produced mixed results (two vectors—*A. sundaicus* and *A. aconitus* quickly developed immunity towards dieldrin), with malaria cases increasing substantially in the late 1960s (Elyazar et al. 2011: 28-29). Consequently, Indonesia resumed attempting to control the disease and eventually in the 21st century came the call to "roll back" malaria (Elyazar et al 2011:20-32). In virtually every instance, the anti-malarial measures were conducted against the disease in specific geographic locations. If Batavia did not define Java in the 18th and early 19th centuries, it was nevertheless the case that the presence of malaria did define the living conditions of many places in Indonesia.

Students of Southeast Asian Studies know that the history of medical traditions, disease outbreaks, and the development of public health and "tropical medicine" are all part of its basic frame of reference. However, the opportunity for "area studies" may be to move the subject from the status of an appendix to something

which forms more of Southeast Asia's basic narratives. In 2018 ASEAN's leaders targeted malaria for elimination for a reason. Medical researchers have cautioned that the responses to the disease across the Asia-Pacific need to resist relying on lessons learned in Africa. Instead, J. Kevin Baird and others suggested that a number of factors unique to the Asia Pacific region were significant in attempting to eliminate the disease from the region by 2030 (2017: 371-377). Nonetheless, the output of malaria research which focuses on Southeast Asia lacks urgency—a reality which will not be helped by the attention given to COVID-19. (Andersen, et al. 2011)

When disease defines a place, it alters its status and impacts its peoples. Even if the disease has not been understood, the association continues to carry reputational risk. COVID-19 has not created risks for distinct geographic spaces as malaria did for Batavia and Charleston. Yet, it has already produced highly contested arguments about its place of origin, best modes of treatment and the intensification of some national rivalries. As COVID-19 moves forward, then, the opportunities for disease to provide definition to geographic spaces should not be underestimated.

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Early Access to COVID-19 Vaccines and Rodrigo Duterte-style Vaccine Diplomacy

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[*Abstract*]

Vaccine nationalism and its implications to vaccine supply were a huge concern globally when COVID-19 vaccines first became available in 2021. At the time, vaccine supply was limited and it was difficult for many countries around the world to get adequate supply of the COVID-19 vaccine to inoculate their people. At its most benign, vaccine nationalism delayed the access of poorer countries to vaccines that are widely considered as the long-term solution to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Poorer countries needed to resort to diplomacy to wrangle early access to vaccine supply from vaccine-producing countries like the United States, the United Kingdom and others. In particular, Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte leveraged his country's Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) with the United States and the need for Filipino nurses by countries like the United Kingdom and Germany to secure early access to COVID-19 vaccines.

It all seems trivial now (in 2022) because of better global vaccine supply, but in 2021 when countries scrambled for access to scarce COVID-19 vaccines, Rodrigo Duterte

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leveraged the Philippines' assets to gain early access to vaccine supply.

Keywords: COVID-19, pandemic, vaccine, diplomacy, Rodrigo Duterte

Ⅰ. Introduction

Research done by online media entity Rappler and public health research firm EpiMetrics on the Philippines' COVID-19 vaccination campaign succinctly captures the difference between the situation in 2021 and in 2022: "logistical and accessibility issues" primarily hound the national vaccination campaign in 2022, whereas in 2021 supply was the biggest problem (Tomacruz 2022). In the early part of 2021, when Covid-19 vaccines first became available, vaccine nationalism and its implications to supply were a huge concern globally. Amir Khan (2021) defines vaccine nationalism as something that "occurs when governments sign agreements with pharmaceutical manufacturers to supply their own populations with vaccines ahead of them becoming available for other countries."

Vaccine nationalism made it difficult for many countries around the world to get adequate supply of the COVID-19 vaccine to inoculate their people. According to Claire Felter (2021), manufacturing capabilities—including those of COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access or COVAX—at the onset of vaccine production in 2021 fell way short of global needs, triggering vaccine nationalism, thus leading to inequitable distribution and new COVID-19 variant outbreaks.

At its most benign, vaccine nationalism delayed the access of poorer countries to vaccines that are widely considered as the long-term solution to the COVID-19 pandemic. This delay in access to the vaccines, aside from exacting a huge cost on the global economy (Hafner et al. 2020), became a crucial domestic political issue for many countries around the world.

Some vaccine producing countries used the matter of vaccine supply during the days of vaccine scarcity as a tool to boost their

geopolitical agenda. Pratt and Levin (2021) draw attention to the "vaccine diplomacy" of China and Russia, "linking vaccine exports to policy concessions and favorable geopolitical reconfigurations." On the flipside, Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) member-states urged countries like the United States and the United Kingdom to export more of their vaccines to the region, after facing initial shortage of supply that led to "some of the lowest inoculation rates in the world" during the first few months of their vaccination campaign (Barrett 2021).

Even though there are several configurations of vaccine diplomacy at the onset of the global vaccination drive in 2021, ranging from how vaccine producing countries utilized this valuable resource to enhance their diplomatic or geopolitical position on one extreme, and countries that had to utilize various diplomatic tools to gain access to needed supply from the producing countries on the other end, in this paper, vaccine diplomacy will be viewed from the lens of countries such as the majority of the ASEAN member-states that were forced to lean on diplomatic tools in order to get their hands on much-needed COVID-19 vaccines from producing countries. In particular, the Philippines will serve as a case study of vaccine diplomacy in the context of supply-related dilemmas at the onset of the global COVID-19 vaccination drive in 2021, focusing on the peculiar diplomatic tack of President Rodrigo Duterte to secure vaccine supply from countries such as the United States (US), the United Kingdom (UK), and China.

COVID-19 vaccine supply improved particularly towards the end of 2021, but at the onset of the global COVID-19 vaccination drive during the earlier months of the year, Duterte had to leverage the country's Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) with the US to cajole Washington into making vaccines available to Manila (Strangio 2021). Duterte also played upon the need of the UK and Germany for Filipino nurses for their health care system in exchange for early access to vaccine supplies from these countries (Morales 2021). Lastly, Duterte leaned on his historic pivot to China (Business Mirror 2019) to similarly secure early access to vaccine supplies from Beijing (Calonzo 2021).

This paper will assert that vaccine diplomacy by the Philippines for the purpose of securing early access to vaccine supply from producing countries essentially reflect the unconventional leadership style and unprecedented political circumstances of President Duterte.

Ⅱ. The Political Outsider

Rodrigo Duterte was largely a political outsider when he was elected the 16th President of the Republic of the Philippines in 2016. His road to the presidency is atypical.

Born on March 28, 1945, Duterte was 71 years old when he was sworn in as president on June 30, 2016, becoming the oldest to serve in that position. Previously, Commonwealth-era President Sergio Osmeña was the oldest at 65 years old when he succeeded Manuel Quezon as chief executive of the World War II-era government-in-exile upon the latter's death in New York in 1944.

Prior to becoming president, Duterte served as the long-time mayor of Davao City in the southern island of Mindanao. Duterte became the first president to come from that area, long considered to be in the periphery of Philippine politics. Previously, Vice Presidents Teofisto Guingona Jr. (2001-2004) and Emmanuel Pelaez (1961-1965) were the highest serving executives hailing from Mindanao. However, only Pelaez was elected to the vice presidency. Guingona was a sitting senator who was appointed by President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo in accordance with law to the position she vacated after succeeding Joseph Estrada to the presidency in 2001.

Mindanao is the second largest island in the Philippines after Luzon and has a population of 26.25 million as of May 2020 (Arguillas 2021). However, Mindanao only contributes around 13 percent of the Philippines' gross domestic product (GDP), considerably lower than the National Capital Region (NCR) and the Calabarzon region composed of the provinces of Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon in the island of Luzon, which contribute about 37 percent and 15 percent respectively (Adriano 2020).

As former city mayor, Duterte followed in the footsteps of former Makati City Mayor Jejomar Binay (who became vice president in 2010) as local executives who rose to the top executive positions in the Philippines. Joseph Estrada also served as mayor of San Juan (1969-1986), but he served as senator (1987-1992) prior to becoming vice president (1992-1998) and eventually president (1998-2001). In contrast, Binay and Duterte went straight from being city mayors to the highest executive positions in the country.

Duterte briefly held a congressional seat from 1998 to 2001, after serving the constitutional limit of three consecutive terms as Davao City mayor from 1988 to 1998. He returned as city mayor for another three consecutive terms from 2001 to 2010, before sliding to the position of vice mayor from 2010 to 2013, and afterwards regaining the mayoralty position from 2013 to 2016 prior to becoming the 16th President of the Republic of the Philippines in 2016.

Majority of the occupants of the country's top executive positions beginning 1992—the first presidential elections since strongman Ferdinand Marcos was ousted from power in February 1986—come from the legislature or national level positions prior to being elected therein. In 1992, Defense Secretary Fidel Ramos was elected president and Senator Estrada became vice president. In 1998, Vice President Estrada became the president and Senator Gloria Macapagal Arroyo was elected vice president. Arroyo later succeeded Estrada in 2001, with Senator Guingona appointed vice president. Arroyo was reelected in 2004 with Senator Manuel de Castro Jr. as vice president. In 2010, Senator Benigno Aquino III became president and Mayor Binay was elected vice president. In 2016, Mayor Rodrigo Duterte was elected president and Representative Maria Leonor Robredo became vice president.

Davao City is an important regional center in the southern island of Mindanao but has never been considered a viable springboard to the presidency. Davao City is different from Makati City, described as the country's "premier financial hub" and home to "many of the country's biggest businesses and renowned multinational companies" (Remo 2019). Makati also hosts many

foreign embassies and consulates, making its mayor an important player in national (and even international) politics. In comparison to Makati, Davao does not have the same kind of prominence.

Duterte's political party affiliation history is quite checkered and reflects the tendencies of local politicians to switch from one party to another, depending on political exigencies. In the 2016 presidential elections, Duterte ran under the Partido Demokratiko ng Pilipino-Lakas ng Bayan (Filipino Democratic Party-People Power) or PDP-Laban after party elder statesman and retired Senator Aquilino Pimentel Jr. declared (as early as 2014) that the Davao City mayor was a "good prospect" for the 2016 presidential elections (Esmaquel 2015). Duterte became a viable candidate after Pimentel's son, Senator Aquilino Pimentel III, got into a squabble with party stalwart and then-Vice President Binay in 2014 (Howard 2015). Ironically, Duterte was a member of the ruling Liberal Party or LP of President Benigno Aquino III (2010-2016) from 2009 until his "re-entry" to PDP-Laban in 2015 (Espejo 2015).

Not since the days of the 1986 Snap Elections when Corazon Aquino mounted a historic challenge against Marcos carrying the PDP-Laban banner did the political party have any national-level relevance. Pimentel Jr. ran for the vice presidency in 1992 under the PDP-Laban flag (in tandem with LP's Senator Jovito Salonga) but fared very poorly. Never again did a PDP-Laban candidate figure prominently in the presidential elections until Duterte—although the party was sometimes allied with the dominant coalition. As the PDP-Laban split into factions in the lead up to the 2022 presidential elections, President Duterte retorted to the rival group headed by Pimentel III (Salverria and Gascon, 2021):

> May I just remind Koko (Pimentel III) that this party PDP(-Laban) was asleep for a hundred years. It only woke up during the (2016) election(s) and I ran for the presidency under the ticket.

Prior to Duterte's move to the LP in 2009, Duterte was with the PDP-Laban from 2001 when the party was "asleep" (Espejo, 2015). In 2011, Duterte organized the Hugpong sa Tawong Lungsod (United Citizens), a local Davao City-based political party (Tejano

2015). An early report mentioned that Duterte—in 1988 a city vice mayor officer-in-charge—was a member of a new (local) political party called Lakas ng Dabaw (Davao Power) (Manila Standard 1988). Another report stated that Duterte, then-mayor of Davao, joined the opposition Nacionalista Party. The same report also asserts that Duterte was party-less during the 1988 elections (Bigornia 1990).

Since the Philippine Constitution of 1987 ushered in a multi-party system on the heels of the authoritarian-dominant party system during the strongman rule of Marcos, party switching became a regular occurrence in Philippine politics and Duterte is a prime example, not the exception. Party switching is generally a consequence of the emergence of dominant presidential parties after 1986; members of political clans "regularly switch their affiliation from one presidential party to another in order to gain access to state resources and patronage" (Teehankee 2020: 110). In the case of Duterte, his father Vicente was a cabinet secretary of Marcos during his first term as president (1965-1969) prior to the declaration of Martial Law in 1972. The association of his father with Marcos may have been the reason why Duterte was not a member of the administration coalition after 1986. However, there are doubts about the supposed closeness of Vicente Duterte with Ferdinand Marcos (Reyes 2019). Besides, Rodrigo Duterte was appointed Davao City vice mayor officer-in-charge after all local officials in the Philippines were removed from office by the succeeding Corazon Aquino-led revolutionary government in 1986.

Nevertheless, Rodrigo Duterte remained outside the traditional ambit of national politics. However, due to his preeminence in Davao City politics for decades, he was constantly courted by the national parties to deliver votes for their candidates. He was never on the radar of national politics until the Pimentel III-Binay rift forced the PDP-Laban to look at him as a replacement standard bearer for the party in the 2016 elections.

Even as a candidate for president in 2016—and as president since then—Duterte has always been considered a political outsider. Phil Zabriskie (2002) labeled then-Mayor Rodrigo Duterte "The Punisher" for his peculiar exploits:

> Shortly after Duterte (first) took office (in the late 1980s), he heard that some kidnappers were trying to skip town with their just-collected ransom. Duterte led the pursuit, beating the cops to the scene and stationing his car on a bridge at the city line. When the kidnappers arrived, they started shooting. Duterte and his security detail returned fire, killing three of the four suspects. It was like a scene from the Philippine movies, which are replete with Dirty Harry loner-heroes. Here, it seemed, was a man who did what he promised, a man willing to die—and kill—for Davao.

The same story explains the reasons for Duterte's continued political success. Duterte became a cult figure in Davao City and simultaneously gained some notoriety at the national level but not to the extent that he was considered as an aspirant for national elective positions. Time paints Duterte as a unique politician: "Duterte suffers from none of the charges that dog most Philippine politicians: that he is beholden to vested interests, obsessed with retaining power, or bent on accumulating its spoils" (Zabriskie 2002), explaining to some extent why he continued to be a political outsider; Duterte was an unrepentant political maverick who seemed destined to be stuck in Davao City until his death or retirement.

Even Duterte's father, Vicente, seems to have been a local politician at heart. Vicente, as mentioned, was appointed to the Marcos cabinet in 1965, but he quickly left that position to run for congress in the 1967 midterm elections. Before that, Vicente served as governor of Davao province before it was divided into three provinces by an act of congress in 1967 (Reyes, 2019). The Dutertes were local politicians until Rodrigo ran for the presidency in 2016.

Retired sociologist Randy David (2016) asked, on the eve of the 2016 elections: "How does one account for the phenomenal rise to national stature of a local politician from a remote corner of Mindanao?" David's description of Duterte is quite telling:

> Equipped with an enormous capacity to tell stories and tackle issues in street language dripping with expletives, the man talks tough against criminals, drug pushers and abusive people, promising to summarily purge them from our society. He laughs at his own dirty thoughts and desires, and ridicules our foibles as a people. But he

> reserves his harshest criticism and deepest contempt for what he considers the nation's inept and corrupt public officials, and the ruling families they serve…Despite, and perhaps because of, his crude language and coarse demeanor, he comes out—to his admirers—as an endearing rogue who articulates without fear their own resentments and fantasies. That is what is interesting—and, to the rest of us, disturbing.

In sum, Duterte's career as a politician was not typical for someone who would eventually become the President of the Philippines. It is quite surprising that Duterte, a party-switching irreverent and maverick local politician from a family of local politicians in the peripheral region of Mindanao, at his advanced age, became president.

Ⅲ. Domestic Politics Shaping Foreign Relations

Political scientist Julio Teehankee (2016) rushed to explain Rodrigo Duterte's rise to the presidency in 2016 as intimately connected to the "reemergence" of "nationalist sentiment and resentment (towards the West)." However, there is little indication that nationalism was ever insignificant in the history of Philippine electoral politics. It is understandable to confuse a seemingly weak/weakening nationalist fervor with a sober appreciation of the fluctuations in the country's power relations in the context of the international system.

Philippine presidents after independence from the United States beginning with Manuel Roxas in 1946 to Corazon Aquino at the time of the historic senate rejection of the US Military Bases Agreement in 1991, as with leaders of countries all over the world, have been beholden to the might of their American counterpart or overlord, to be more accurate. However, this does not mean that the Philippine presidents during that 50-year period (and beyond) were any less nationalistic than Duterte. It is simply a matter of Manila's capability to weather Washington's punishments for insolence when the Philippine president, for instance, becomes bold enough to curse in the most crude manner the American president, as what Duterte

did to Barack Obama in 2016 (Bernal and Yan 2016).

Ever since the Philippines became independent from the United States in 1946, particularly during the Cold War era, Washington has always kept a tight leash on Manila. The Philippines was a showcase for democracy amidst the rising communist tide after the end of World War II. In 1950, official statistics showed that the Philippines was ranked second to Japan among Asian economies in terms of gross domestic product. Edsel Beja Jr. (2012) clarifies that "when the official statistics first appeared in 1950, the Philippines emerged as second to Japan only because data for the other 'economies' in East Asia had yet to be collected." Beja used the data of economic historian Angus Maddison to show that China had the largest economy in 1950, with Japan in second, Indonesia in third, and the Philippines in fourth.

Nevertheless, the superior status of the Philippine economy was important in the Western propaganda war against the communists during the Cold War: that democratic states under the umbrella of the United States were more prosperous economically and more stable politically. The Americans provided support (read: interference) not just for the Philippine economy, but also to promote domestic political stability in the country.

The United States notoriously interfered in the domestic politics of the Philippines (as with other countries in the world), most glaringly through the Central Intelligence Agency or CIA, as was the case in the rise of Ramon Magsaysay—a former mechanic and nondescript member of Congress—to the presidency in 1953. The Americans were also invested in the economic stability of the Philippines as a bulwark in Southeast Asia in the fight against communism, explaining why they continued to support the dictatorship of Marcos since the time he declared martial law in 1972 until his ouster in 1986. The Americans also played a key role in the ouster of Marcos as well as the survival of the Corazon Aquino administration during a serious coup d'etat attempt (Saguisag 2021).

Philippine presidents have always resented American interference in the country's political and economic affairs, but they

were circumspect in the importance of the United States in the country's political and economic stability. Duterte is only different in the sense that he acted on that resentment, convinced that the Philippines can survive any punishment the US meted out in exchange for this assertion of independence (Reuters 2016).

Duterte wanted to stop the interference of the United States and other external powers in Philippine domestic concerns during his administration. Duterte's "War on (illegal) Drugs" campaign has been criticized outside of the Philippines—by US President Obama in 2016—because of human rights concerns, but this was the centerpiece of the former Davao City mayor's campaign promise during the 2016 elections (Ranada 2016a) and one of the reasons why he has become a very popular president of the Philippines. According to the survey conducted by pollster *Pulse Asia*, Duterte's fight against criminality (including illegal drugs) has a 74 percent approval rating as of September 2021, although this is down from a high of 88 percent from September 2020 (Gonzales 2021).

Duterte, in fact, went as far as cursing then-US Ambassador to the Philippines Philip Goldberg, calling him "gay," and accusing him of interfering in the 2016 elections—something the Americans had gotten used to doing in the country for decades (Ranada 2016b), as seen in their role in the election of Magsaysay in 1953 among other instances. The president has also subjected the European Union to his typical expletive-laden tirades, again for supposedly interfering in the domestic affairs of the Philippines in connection with the alleged human rights violations in connection with the anti-drug campaign (Philippine Daily Inquirer 2017). Duterte initiated the Philippines' withdrawal from the Rome Statute and the International Criminal Court or ICC after prosecutor Fatou Bensouda initiated moves to investigate human rights violations in connection with the president's war on illegal drugs (Regencia 2018). He subjected then-United Nations Human Rights Council Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary, or arbitrary executions for investigating killings Agnes Callamard to a similar barrage of tirades after she issued statements critical against the Philippines' anti-illegal drugs war (Lui 2017).

The Philippine National Police has maintained there are no extrajudicial killings in relation to the anti-illegal drugs campaign (Caliwan 2018). Then-Foreign Affairs Secretary Alan Peter Cayetano claimed in 2017 that international journalists often use "wrong" data when reporting about the Philippine human rights situation.

The Duterte administration views these countries and international organizations that are critical of the war on illegal drugs as interfering on the Philippines' domestic affairs. For context, Bensouda and Callamard were viewed by the Duterte government as fraternizing with media, civil society, and other groups associated with the political opposition in the Philippines who were suspected of being engaged in an extra-constitutional plot to oust the president (Ang 2019; Castaneda 2019).

This dynamic between the Duterte government and Western countries and international institutions provides the proper context for the president's radical and unprecedented pivot to China (and Russia, to a lesser extent), for which Duterte has been criticized by the political opposition domestically and by the West internationally. Critics have pointed out that Duterte's pivot to China has not yet delivered on the economic benefits that were expected to come out of it. According to one source, "most big-ticket projects funded by China have yet to break ground or have not been approved, with only three under construction" (The Straits Times 2021). Additionally, the pivot has been attacked for failing to prevent Chinese encroachment into the Philippine exclusive economic zone and other irritants in the West Philippine Sea (Mangosing 2021a).

China has been steadily ramping up her presence in the West Philippine Sea and it has very little to do with the bilateral relations between Beijing and Manila (Huang 2021). In fact, the dispute in these waters involve multiple states, not just the Philippines and China. It is quite disingenuous to analyze Chinese actions in the West Philippine Sea solely from the perspective of bilateral relations. As regards the delays in the actualization of China-funded projects, there is no proof that it is the fault of Beijing. More importantly, an important factor in Duterte's pivot to China is to put a halt to the West's (America's) unwanted interference in the president's

domestic agenda, which China has either been supportive of, or has not interfered in (Santos 2017).

To put substance into Duterte's stance against Western interference in Philippine domestic affairs, Manila pivoted to Beijing and Moscow. Duterte famously went to China a few months after his electoral victory in 2016 and in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing with Chinese Vice Premier Zhang Gaoli in attendance, he said, "in this venue, your honors, in this venue, I announce my separation from the United States" (Blanchard 2016). Duterte likewise met with Russian leader Vladimir Putin in October 2019 after their initial meeting in 2017 was cut short by a domestic disturbance in the Philippines (South China Morning Post 2019).

Duterte prioritizes domestic affairs over everything else. Consequently, his bold statements—and actions—concerning Philippine foreign relations stem from his desire to realign foreign with domestic affairs no matter the cost.

Ⅳ. Duterte-style Vaccine Diplomacy

The minimum response to the pandemic has always been mass vaccination. During the early months of 2021, it was incredibly difficult to procure vaccines for countries in Southeast Asia and the rest of the world outside a few producing states. Vaccine nationalism held sway as powerful governments maneuvered with pharmaceutical companies to supply their own populations first before making vaccines available to the rest of the world. President Rodrigo Duterte of the Philippines complained to the United Nations General Assembly in September 2021 that "rich countries (are) hoard(ing) life-saving vaccines, while poor nations wait for trickles" (Psaledakis 2021).

From the start, vaccination has been the centerpiece of any chance the Philippines has to go back to normal. In the earlier months of the commencement of the vaccination campaign for the coronavirus, it was quite difficult for countries like the Philippines to secure vaccines because of vaccine nationalism. Sensing in late

2020 that access to vaccine supply would be difficult, Duterte in a televised address announced that he wanted the United States to deliver a minimum of 20 million doses or he would scrap the Visiting Forces Agreement or VFA between the two countries (Buan, 2020). In May 2021, Duterte was quoted by his spokesperson Harry Roque as "pondering" over the fate of the VFA since the country was, at the time, still awaiting the arrival of vaccines from the United States (Parrocha 2021). Finally, by August 2021 Duterte admitted that the arrival of vaccines donated by the US helped sway his decision to recall the termination of the VFA (CNN Philippines 2021).

United States-Philippines relations have been strained during the Duterte administration, with the Philippine president unleashing tirades against Barack Obama and the American ambassador in Manila. Duterte also publicly announced his rebuke of the United States by pivoting towards China. Under such circumstances, Duterte could not bank on goodwill from the historical and traditional ties between the two countries for early access to American COVID-19 vaccine supply. Through his own fault, Duterte needed to leverage the country's assets to secure the Philippines' share of COVID-19 vaccine supply from the United States. The United States was one of a few countries with inside track on developing the COVID-19 vaccine during the height of the pandemic.

Another tack that the Duterte government chose in the context of supply problems for the COVID-19 vaccine was to supposedly offer countries like the UK and Germany the services of Filipino nurses in exchange for vaccine supply. At the height of the pandemic, the Philippines set a limit on health professionals seeking employment overseas at 5,000 to ensure the availability of medical frontliners in the country and to keep the integrity of the lockdown policy during the battle against the pandemic. Both Germany and UK requested a lifting of that cap for nurses destined for the two countries, to provide some relief to their severely exhausted medical frontliner corps during the pandemic.

International Labor Affairs Bureau Director Alice Visperas

divulged in February 2021 that a request was made by Department of Labor and Employment Secretary Silvestre Bello III to the two countries mentioned to exchange a relaxation of the labor exporting policy for vaccine donations (Patinio 2021a). After being roundly criticized for making such a request, Bello clarified that he merely wanted to guarantee the vaccination of nurses headed to these countries, and that no such exchange was suggested. Public backlash forced the Philippines' Labor department to disavow the *quid pro quo* arrangement, but it seems to have pushed through, albeit more discreetly.

For his part, British Ambassador to the Philippines Daniel Pruce denied the existence of such an agreement but divulged that there were indeed plans for the UK to donate vaccines to the country but was a separate matter unrelated to the deployment of Filipino nurses (Mangosing 2021b). Eventually, the UK was able to secure an exemption from the deployment cap on Filipino nurses overseas and a donation of 415,040 doses of AstraZeneca vaccines arrived in Manila in August 2021 (Cudis 2021). By the end of November 2021, it was reported that the UK donated a total of 5.6 million doses of the COVID-19 vaccine to the Philippines (Rocamora 2021).

As for Germany, it was reported in March 2021 that about 4,000 Filipino nurses were expected to be deployed to that country for the year. More than 1,000 nurses were going to be processed through the government-to-government hiring program between Germany and the Philippines called Triple Win Program. The rest of the nurses, according to Philippine Labor Attache to Germany Delmer Cruz, were to be coursed through private companies (Patinio 2021b). In October 2021, the Philippines received 844,800 AstraZeneca vaccines donated by Germany through the COVAX facility. Reports say this is just the first tranche of more than 1.6 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines that Germany was donating to the Philippines (Patinio 2021c). By the end of 2021, it was reported that Germany's COVID-19 vaccine donations to the Philippines through COVAX went over 10 million doses (de la Cruz 2021). National Task Force Against Covid-19 chief implementer Secretary Carlito Galvez Jr. also reported that the European Union (EU) had

donated more or less 60 million doses to the Philippines.

In the end, the UK and Germany were able to get the nurses that they needed from the Philippines and Manila received a robust donation of COVID-19 vaccines from London and Berlin.

Finally, President Duterte has leaned heavily on his historic pivot to China in 2016 as leverage to secure ample vaccine supply from Beijing. As of October 25, 2021, the Philippines' National Task Force Against COVID-19 chief Secretary Carlito Galvez Jr. told reporters that of the 97,678,340 total jabs secured by the country almost 45 million doses were produced by China-made Sinovac Biotech Ltd. (Caliwan 2021). During his final State of the Nation Address on July 26, 2021, Duterte thanked his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping for helping the Philippines secure COVID-19 vaccines. Duterte said:

> And after election, I was a good friend of President Xi, until now… When the pandemic struck, the first country I called for help was China. President Xi, sabi ko (I said), 'Mr. President, we have no vaccination program here because we do not have the vaccines. We have not been able to invent one. We might have a hard time.' He said, 'no, it's okay. We'll send you.'… And he send (sic) us—donated about 1,500,000 of vaccines. Ganoon, kaya nga sabi ko ako, lalo na kaming mga Bisaya, mabigat sa amin iyan, for us Visayans, iyong utang na loob mabigat talaga iyan. Hindi mo mabayaran ng ano pero pag may utang na loob ako sa iyo, you can be sure that I will be your friend, a true friend and die for you" (It was like that so I said, for us Visayans, that is quite significant, that debt of gratitude is very important. That debt of gratitude cannot be repaid. But if I have a debt of gratitude, you can be sure that I will be your friend, a true friend and die for you. (Official Gazette, n.d.)

Upon witnessing the arrival of one million doses of Sinopharm vaccines donated by the Chinese government in August 2021, Duterte said:

> My deepest gratitude goes to China for the various COVID-19 assistance extended in the past, including the donation of vital medical supplies and equipment and the provision of technical support on COVID-19 response. These initiatives are indeed a

> testament of the goodwill of the Chinese government and the deep strong relations between the Philippines and China. These additional doses will definitely boost our efforts to ramp up our vaccination rollout and allow us to achieve herd immunity soon (China Daily 2021).

During a recorded message to the nation in August 2021, upon the arrival of one million Sinopharm jabs donated by the Chinese government, President Duterte heaped praises on China saying that at a time when vaccine supply was difficult, Beijing delivered for the country. He added that if he adopted a more belligerent attitude towards China in connection with the West Philippine Sea row, the country would not have access to vaccines during difficult times (Bordey 2021).

By October 23, 2021, Secretary Carlito Galvez Jr. reported that the country had been able to secure roughly 97.7 million doses of the vaccine, of which about 62% were procured by the government, about 25% were donations from the COVAX Facility, 8% were purchased by the local government units and the private sector, and about 5% came from "bilateral partners." Sinovac supplied 44.5 million doses, followed by Pfizer with 25.3 million doses, and AstraZeneca with 11.8 million doses. More than 25 million have been administered with their second doses and 55.5 million in total received at least one jab (Caliwan 2021b).

Afterwards, when the supply of COVID-19 vaccines improved, the share of the Chinese-made vaccines in the overall inventory of the Philippines went down percentage-wise as other sources began to arrive in the country with regularity. Still, in the early days of the national COVID-19 vaccination drive in 2021, when supply was difficult to secure, a large part of that supply came from the Chinese.

Ⅴ. Conclusion

When access to COVID-19 vaccine was hampered by vaccine nationalism prevalent among supplier countries, poorer countries

like the Philippines resorted to diplomatic tools to wangle supply. President Rodrigo Duterte leveraged his country's assets vis-à-vis the supplier countries to get his hands on vaccine supply. With the United States, Duterte dangled the continuation of the Visiting Forces Agreement between the two countries as leverage. With certain European countries, the Duterte administration leaned on the former's need for Filipino nurses to extract vaccine donations. Finally, Duterte took full advantage of an earlier decision to pivot the Philippines away from the United States and towards China to secure vaccines from Beijing. Almost half of the total vaccines secured by the Philippines came from the Chinese biopharmaceutical company Sinovac Biotech Ltd.

A deeper analysis of Duterte's diplomatic strategy reflects the significance of his unexpected rise to power from a long-time mayor of a peripheral city in the southern Philippines to the presidency in 2016. Duterte was carried by a wave of popular support drawing mainly on his reputation as a no-nonsense, if not bloody, crime fighter in two decades at the helm of the city of Davao in the main southern island of Mindanao.

Western criticism for Duterte's bloody anti-illegal drugs campaign forced the Philippine president to dramatically recalibrate the country's foreign relations consistent with domestic affairs, eventually necessitating his peculiar vaccine diplomacy tack during the onslaught of the coronavirus pandemic. In particular, he turned to China instead of the country's traditional Western allies for COVID-19 vaccine supply early in the national vaccination drive when supply was difficult to secure. Critics will point out that Duterte brought that to himself, with his sharp rebuke of the West in retaliation for their comments on the country's anti-illegal drugs campaign.

Still, the point remains the same: Duterte's peculiar background as a marginal politician from the peripheries of Philippine politics and his rise to power influenced the conduct and shake-up of the country's domestic politics and foreign relations. Having adopted an antagonistic stance towards the West—justified in his mind—Duterte could no longer rely on the goodwill of the

country's traditional Western allies for early access to COVID-19 vaccine supply. Hence, the president needed to leverage the country's assets in exchange for badly needed early access to COVID-19 vaccine supply when such was in scarce supply during the earlier parts of 2021. Such was no longer the case later when COVID-19 vaccine production ramped up late in 2021 and supply relatively improved.

In dealing with a problem like access to early access to COVID-19 vaccines, President Rodrigo Duterte's actions are best understood through the lens of his individual circumstances and by how he has endeavored to realign foreign relations with his domestic agenda.

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Abolition or Maintenance?

French and British Policies towards Vietnamese and Malay Traditional Education during the Last Decades of the Nineteenth Century*

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[*Abstract*]

At different times in the 19th century, the Straits Settlements and Cochinchina were both colonies that the British and the French captured the earliest in their process of invasion of Malaya and Vietnam, respectively. This study examines the transitional stage from the traditional school system to colonial school system in the Straits Settlements and Cochinchina. This could also be considered an experimental stage for building later education systems in their expanded colonies, namely British Malaya and French Indochina, from the closing decades of the 19th century to the middle of the 20th century. This study, exploiting various sources and applying the comparative approach, identifies the factors that affected the different attitudes and choices of policy towards traditional education models of indigenous communities (the Malays and Vietnamese) pursued by the British in the Straits Settlements and the French in Cochinchina.

Keywords: traditional education, colonial education policy, French Vietnam, British Malaya, 19th century

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Ⅰ. Introduction

In the capitalist system, Britain, with the most spectacular economic development and most lasting consolidated power, had become the world's leading industrial power and the greatest empire. France always followed Britain as the second imperial power. For their parts, owning special strategic positions in Southeast Asia, since the glorious time of international maritime trade, Malaya and Vietnam had been noticed and was ultimately conquered by Britain and France in the era of imperialism.

When the need to establish colonial rule in the colonies became stronger, education immediately became a decisive factor in the success or failure of colonization. On the one hand, to colonize indigenous intellect, the metropolitan powers shaped and guided educational policies in their colonies. On the other hand, pre-colonial societies of Vietnam and Malaya inherently consisted of traditional education models with different characters and levels. The transitional stage from traditional school system to colonial school system was interesting to observe, considering the debates among the French and British colonial officials and educational experts on their policies towards traditional education and the establishment of modern colonial education. There were also debates on organizing the transition of language of instruction. In French Vietnam, the French were unanimous that Confucian education needed to be abolished entirely and immediately; however, there were opposite views about Quốc ngữ (a Vietnamese writing system employing Roman alphabet letters) and the French language. Meanwhile, in British Malaya, administrators quickly reached a consensus on the maintenance of the traditional education system of the Malays in the vernacular Malay language.

It is necessary to investigate both sides, metropolitan powers and colonial countries, to examine the factors that affected and governed different policy choices for indigenous traditional education of the French in Vietnam and the British in Malaya. The fact was that despite certain similarities, colonial education policies were very diverse because they were products of different colonial powers. Similarly, Vietnam and Malaya, before the arrival of colonial

powers, were quite dissimilar in ethnic group structure, culture, and religion, especially in the traditional education model. Basing on updated data and applying the comparative approach, this article argues that the colonial goals and motives of the French and the British determined their attitudes and policies for indigenous traditional education, but the characteristics of the traditional education systems of indigenous peoples should also be considered a crucial factor.

Ⅱ. The French's determination in abolishing Vietnamese traditional education

Prior to the French intervention in Vietnam, there had long existed a traditional education system called Confucian education. Although Confucianism was disseminated to Vietnam shortly after the Christian era, and following the Chinese invasion and colonization of Vietnam during the first millennium, it was only from the 11th century onwards when Vietnamese feudal dynasties began to be seriously interested in this ideology. In 1070, Emperor Lý Thánh Tông of the Lý Dynasty (1010-1225) built the Temple of Literature (*Văn miếu*) in Thăng Long (present-day Hanoi) to promote education among the people. In 1075, the first examination was held for scholars entering mandarin bureaucracy. One year later, the Emperor set up the Imperial College (*Quốc tử giám*) to teach Confucianism to children of royal and noble families. The Imperial Academy (*Hàn lâm viện*) was established to spread Confucianism. The following dynasties maintained the Confucian educational and examination system. By the beginning of the Nguyễn Dynasty (1802-1945), Neo-Confucianism was fully adopted and became the official ideology of the dynasty. Education and examinations were widespread throughout the country. Consequently, literacy rate was higher than that in the previous dynasties, although only a tiny percentage of the candidates succeeded in their exams.

It is well-known that Vietnamese Confucian education, a field of the superstructure, contributed to making Vietnam a civilized country with many outstanding cultural scholars. But it was

Confucian education itself, by the mid-19th century, which gradually weakened the country. Highly appreciating Confucianism, the Nguyễn Emperors did nothing to prevent the harmful elements of Confucianism and Confucian education like dogmatism, frivolousness, conservativeness, and backwardness. There was no significant effort to innovate the curricula and syllabi, to modify and to improve teaching and studying methods, and to enrich the contents of education and examination, though there were appeals by some Confucian intellectuals for educational reforms, like Nguyễn Trường Tộ, Đặng Huy Trứ, and Nguyễn Lộ Trạch. Thus, upon encountering Western civilizations, Vietnamese Confucian education immediately exposed its powerlessness (Whitmore 1984; Đào Duy Anh 2014; Doumer 2015).

Meanwhile, with the establishment of the Third Republic in 1870, France focused on two crucial goals, namely colonial expansion and the civilizing mission. Unlike the Second Republic's policy which focused more on “sword” and “plow,” the Third Republic prioritized “book” and “school” (Brooks 2016: 2). Republicans desired to transform military rule to civil rule, the conquest by force to the conquest of the hearts and minds of the colonized by education. In other words, if the Third Republic used the civilizing mission to justify their colonial enterprise, education and school emerged as the most decisive factor. Based on the principle of universality, the French assimilationists strongly believed that disseminating the French language and culture through education would help France to succeed in its civilizing mission. Education and colonization, two major projects of the Third Republic, not only combined strongly but contained political conspiracies. In his speech before the French Chamber of Deputies on 28 March 1884, Jules Ferry, Prime Minister and Minister of Education, believed that the policies of colonial expansion have the duty to civilize the inferior races (Ferry 1884: 199). Generally, French colonialists, assimilationists, and educators believed that education was the vector that directed colonial subjects to the modern world and contributed to making their colonies a part of the French family (Lý Tường Vân 2020: 33-52). The problem was that the foremost French colonial conquest in West Africa—the place for experimented

projects of civilization and assimilation—was considered unsuccessful in the second half of the 19th century. The question is whether the previous failure experience of the French in West Africa was repeated in Vietnam.

While debating over educational reform in France, the French colonists also began to discuss educational policy in Vietnam. Yet, the implementation of educational policy in Vietnam depended on their military advances for conquest. After their attack on Đà Nẵng in 1858, the French completed their conquest of Cochinchina in 1874 after a treaty that recognized the full sovereignty of France over Cochinchina. The remaining parts of Vietnam were occupied and divided into Tonkin and Annam. The Harmand Treaty (1883) and the Patenôtre Treaty (1884) formed the basis for the protectorates of Annam and Tonkin and for French colonial rule in Vietnam during the next seven decades. In 1887, the French annexed Laos and Cambodia and established the so-called Indochinese Union, which at that time consisted of the colony of Cochinchina and the four protectorates of Annam, Tonkin, Cambodia, and Laos. On that basis, France established a model of governance in Vietnam, as well as the Indochinese Union, according to the French Constitutional Laws in 1875, in which the President of France was in charge of legislation over the colonies. Hence, the colony of Cochinchina would be at the forefront of the process of building the education system in French Indochina.

While pacifying Cochinchina, the French realized that they had to deal with the Confucian education system. Therefore, to make their rule effective, it was necessary to quickly develop a new regime of education for indigenous people. The pre-colonial Vietnamese society was not entirely savage, inferior, or half-civilized as the colonists often described. Vietnam was certainly an exceptional case. Governor General of Indochina J. Marie de Lanessan had to admit in 1891 that there are very few countries, including civilized ones, in which learning is highly appreciated as much as in Vietnam. It can be said that every Vietnamese village has its schools. Pierre Pasquier, with 37 years working in Vietnam and Indochina, also wrote that very few people were illiterate, and even in rural areas, the miserable people could still read and write several hundred

words (Nguyễn Xuân Thọ 2018: 541).

It is worth mentioning that, besides the official Vietnamese language, Vietnamese people possessed two writing systems, namely *chữ Hán* (Classical Chinese or Confucian script) and *chữ Nôm* (Nôm script, a native Vietnamese script deriving from Chinese characters), not to mention *Quốc ngữ* (a Romanized Vietnamese writing system created in the late 16th century). Even though Quốc ngữ was easy to learn, it was the means for missionaries to spread a new religion, so it was not widely used by the Vietnamese. According to David Marr, Vietnamese teenage students patiently memorized up to a thousand poems, a hundred or more poetic essays, and perhaps fifty dissertations or commentaries (Marr 1971: 78). Marr also states that before the French invasion, up to twenty-five percent of Vietnamese over fifteen years of age were able to decipher several hundred Chinese and Nôm characters (Marr 1981: 34). Thus, efforts to colonize or civilize the indigenous intelligentsia through the French education model would be directly and strongly challenged.

Basically, the shift from military rule to civil rule in French Cochinchina took place in 1879, when the civilizing mission became an official mission. The ideal of assimilation, more than ever before, mainly focused on the issue of language, as it was basically unresolved since the occupation was completed in 1867. Before and after 1879, the very first issue that faced most French leaders was how to *de-Sinicize* the Vietnamese language as soon as possible, in order to transfer Vietnam under Chinese cultural influence to one under French cultural influence. It was, therefore, necessary to completely cut off all connection with Confucian script and Nôm script. The issue of Gallicization of schools had to be conducted immediately with the French language as the sole medium of instruction, together with French literature and moral standards of the French Republic. In 1864, the French admirals promulgated Order No. 60 relating to the development of Quốc ngữ, as the French language could not yet be taught immediately and permitted the short-term use Quốc ngữ as a bridge to studying French.[1] That

[1] Unlike Confucian script and Nôm script, which required extensive study and practice to master, the advantage of Quốc ngữ was that it was easy to read and write. The Vietnamese people could learn their own language in a few weeks instead of years. *See:* Ordre N° 60 du 16 juillet 1864.

project, however, immediately triggered a very fierce debate in both metropolitan France and its colony (Aymonier & Roucoules 2018). Some French administrators objected to Quốc ngữ because they claimed that the development of Quốc ngữ meant the Vietnamese people would have an independent modern language and writing, not to mention that it could result in many political implications. They were persevering in using French as a primary tool of assimilation despite knowing it was a long-term and extremely difficult process.

E. F. Aymonier, a former Resident of Cochinchina, then the Director of the Colonial School in Paris from 1889, represented the anti-Quốc ngữ group. He strongly opposed the de-Sinicization by Quốc ngữ and advocated de-Sinicization by the French language. His deep concern was that the de-Sinicization by Quốc ngữ was no different from Vietnamization of a modern national language (Aymonier & Roucoules 2018: 62-63). Therefore, Aymonier had a firm faith in teaching the French language directly to the native, both intellectuals and ordinary people, because that was the most reliable, effective way to achieve the goal of de-Sinicization and turning the Vietnamese into Asian Frenchmen even if that was the difficult, long-term process. He was also aware that granting the people of the colony the French language would be very dangerous. Aymonier emphasized that in the formal education program, Confucian script, which was taught to the remotest villages, must be replaced by the French language of the conqueror. He believed that within just three generations, a New France would naturally develop in Asia (Brooks 2011: 11).

By contrast, E. Roucoules, former Principal of Chasseloup Laubat School in Saigon and Vice President of Indochina Research Association, represented the pro-Quốc ngữ group. Roucoules said that any measure, before put into effect, needs a transition. He reinforced his argument that the dissemination of French, a writing that was completely different from that of the colonized, had to get through a transitional period with Quốc ngữ, the same Latin-based script. Roucoules reiterated that the missionaries developed Quốc ngữ to serve the purpose of introducing religious texts to a broader population, including the lower class, and the advantage of Quốc

ngữ was that it was easy to learn. Quốc Ngữ, he noted, also helped to integrate into everyday language many French words that have no equivalents in Vietnamese. Hence, using Quốc ngữ, as he proposed, had the immediate advantage of not being cut off with the past of the colonies. Quốc ngữ would be a medium for the slow but firm and necessary process of introducing the French language. He finally acknowledged the dissemination of the French language and especially the expansion of French influence are our deepest wish and highest expectation. (Aymonier & Roucoules 2018: 123). Although a series of circulars and decrees was issued by the colonial government to force the elimination of the Confucian script system and its replacement with Romanized script (including the French and Quốc ngữ) in official administrative documents,[2] the reality was that not many Vietnamese mastered Quốc ngữ let alone the French language. They still spoke Vietnamese, continued to use Confucian script and Nôm script in their daily life as well as in their study at village schools. The colonial school system was still run by the French administrators who could not speak or write the local language or even Quốc ngữ.

With the motto of everything should start from school, the French authorities were very determined to abolish the traditional schools of the Vietnamese. On the one hand, they closed all of the schools that used Confucian script or Nôm scipt, and cancelled the Confucian exams in Cochinchina in 1864. However, only a few schools were newly formed, such as Collège des interprètes (Décision No 89 du 8 mai 1862), École Normale coloniale (Décision No 126 du 10 juillet 1871), and Collège des Stagiares (Arrêté No 202 du 29 août 1873). In the 1860s and 1870s, the French-style schools in Cochinchina had only a function of supplying a small number of interpreters, teachers, and junior officers for the colonial administration and civil organizations.

In November 1874, Admiral Dupré decided to reorganize the education system of Cochinchina (Décision du 17 November 1874).

[2] Successive decrees in the years of 1874, 1878 and 1880, for instance, defined the replacement of the Confucian script with *Quốc ngữ* (from 1878, especially from 1882 with the French) in all official documents; and encouraged and rewarded the mandarins at the villages if they could write official documents in *Quốc ngữ*.

This system was declared to comply with the provisions of the national education in France. The restructuring of the system of public schools in Cochinchina was aimed at directing the education in the French's orbit, ensuring the schools became the foundation for spreading the French language and culture. On that basis, assimilationists would change the Vietnamese spirit and draw the Vietnamese to follow the French way, and keep Vietnam under the sphere of French influence. The first civil Governor of Cochinchina, Le Myre de Viliers (1879-1882), was an extreme enthusiast of the Gallicization enterprise. He supported the drastic abolition of traditional schools as well as of the Confucian script and Nôm script, the establishment of Franco-Vietnamese schools that used only the French and Quốc ngữ as media of instruction, the application of French education norms to the newly-formed schools, and the further limitation of the activities of missions in education. In 1879, the Service of Public Instruction was established, which issued a decree on organizing Franco-Vietnamese education programs, following the French model but for Vietnamese students. According to this decree, the establishment of new schools required permission from the government (Part I), education and certification of teachers by the government (Part VI, VII), a government curriculum system for schools, and the exclusivity of French as language of instruction (Part V) (Arrêté No 55 du 17 mars 1879).

However, the French Government failed in recruiting local students to the Franco-Vietnamese schools. According to official statistics in 1886, out of a total of 820 schools and 27,473 students in Cochinchina, 326 Franco-Vietnamese schools enrolled 15,410 students. Attendance rate in public schools was less than 1%, considering that Cochinchina population was approximately 2 million. In contrast, the number of Confucian schools reached 426, serving 8,496 students. Confucian schools therefore accounted for more than half of the total schools and their number of students made up one third of the total.[3] While the colonial government was

[3] Public schools ranked from low to high are cantonal schools (écoles cantonnales), district schools (écoles d'arrondissement), and provincial schools (écoles provinciales). It should be noted that, although the Confucian schools were forced to close, they were still maintained in rural areas. Moreover, there were 68 religious

unable to control these schools, they turned them into private schools (together with the religious schools). Additionally, compared with the statistics of Franco-Vietnamese schools in 1902, the number of students decreased to 4,901 in the total of 172 schools.[4]

The public schools in Cochinchina for indigenes reduced rather significantly in number. This led to a sharp decline in literacy rate in Cochinchina during the first 30-50 years of the French rule, as Confucian script faded. Most Cochinchinese received no education based on the French models whatsoever. Trịnh Văn Thảo criticized the triviality of the Franco-Vietnamese schools and compared the vigorous vitality of traditional Vietnamese schools in Cochinchina to "a phoenix resurrected from the mass of ashes as the schools were strongly attacked and obstructed." In general, the presence of French schools until the early 20th century was described as follows: at least in Indochina, Jules Ferry's schools never dominated; the French educational model had always been at a disadvantage as compared with the traditional education model; the French policy of education in Indochina clearly had the intent to compete with Confucian schools as if the future of colonialism depended on it (Trịnh Văn Thảo 2009: 19-20).

After nearly half a century of rule, it became clear that the French encountered a stalemate and made no progress in spreading their language and developing the colonial schools. The goal of eliminating Vietnamese traditional education and culture in Cochinchina generally failed. Less than a generation since the end of the 1870s, the replacement of the Confucian script with the Quốc ngữ was achieved (Milton 1969: 102). More and more Vietnamese were aware of the convenience and significant benefits of Quốc ngữ. They studied and used Quốc ngữ as a medium for communication and literary composition, especially for political purposes. Although the Europeans introduced the Romanized script, the Vietnamese improved, upgraded, and perfected Quốc ngữ, which was officially adopted as a national writing system in 1909. Nowadays, Quốc ngữ

schools with 3,567 students (Annuaire de la Cochinchine pour l'annee 1886: 113).

[4] No church school nor Confucian school was on the list of statistics because these schools were classified as belonging to the private school system (Annuaire général de l'Indochine 1902).

is a standard script in Vietnam, as foreseen by Aymonier.

Until the last years of the 19th century, the French and Franco-Vietnamese schools were never the ideal options for Vietnamese students, especially those in rural areas. First, the Vietnamese people were endowed with a tradition of studiousness; more than anyone, they were aware of the importance of knowledge. On the one hand, they realized that under the French rule, education was a requisite for prestigious jobs. On the other, they recognized that the colonial education system had always been selective and elitist, especially at higher levels. That meant education only focused on a small group of people.

The other problem was that French educators were always torn between the assimilationist perspective (maximum teaching) and the colonial perspective (minimum teaching). Therefore, almost all were half-educated ones, especially the commoners; even the qualified and highly-trained Vietnamese received limited employment opportunities. Obviously, obtaining the French education was quite impractical if they, in the end, had to return to their village and continue to be a farmer. In that context, traditional Confucian schools were always available and convenient for almost all rural students. These charged much cheaper fees that continued to attract more attendance.

Finally, due to such aspects as the resistant attitude of the Vietnamese to French colonialism and loyalty to their language (Vietnamese), culture (Confucianism) and traditional education (Confucian education), it was obvious then that, in Indochina, things would never go as planned; this was while in other colonies, the cultural order followed the political order, and gradually "civilization" became the evidence of the legitimacy of the empire. In Indochina, the cultural "graft" hardly worked, and new schools developed so slowly that those who were in authority, even the superiors, had to openly question its benefits (Trịnh Văn Thảo 2009: 10).

After the failure of the extreme, hasty, and arbitrary Gallicization of schooling (Trịnh Văn Thảo 2009: 57-58), the French-style schools were adjusted to something more adequate by

many French authorities like Marie de Lanessan, Gustave Dumoutier, and Henri Gourdon. These adjustments were carried out after the establishment of the Indochinese Union, based on the cooperation with the traditional schools rather than resolutely eliminating them as their predecessors did in the South. However, these schools were still not welcomed by the Vietnamese in both Tonkin and Annam. Besides, the upsurge of nationwide anticolonial sentiments, whose vanguards were Vietnamese teachers and students in indigenous schools, together with many other political problems arising at the turn of the twentieth century, led Governor-General Paul Beau to arrive at a decision: to reform colonial education in 1906.

Ⅲ. The British adaptational approach and the maintenance of indigenous Malay traditional education

After losing its colonies in North America in 1776, the British turned their attention to Africa, Asia, and the Pacific. With the Dutch and French powers fading in both Europe and Asia, the British took on Penang in 1786, Singapore in 1819, and Malacca in 1824 with ease. The Straits Settlements was considered a prosperous commercial center that attracted many traders and laborers from Europe, China, India, the Middle East, and from neighboring countries and the Malay states. It was a melting pot of cultures.

Rapid population growth was a phenomenon that influenced the British policy of educational development in the Settlements. From being a desolate place in 1786, Penang grew a population of 58,000 in 1858; the population of Province Wellesley increased from 6,000 in 1820 to 61,000 in 1850; the population of Malacca also increased from 31,000 in 1826 to 68,000 in 1860; and Singapore grew from 10,000 in 1824 to 81,000 in 1860. Overall, by 1860, the population of the Straits Settlements was approximately 273,000 people. Another noticeable feature of the Settlements was ethnic diversity among multiple ethnic groups such as the Malays, Chinese, Indians, and others (British, Europeans, Euro-Asians, Asians, etc.) By 1860, there were approximately 136,165 Malays, 96,306 Chinese,

28,129 Indians and 7,164 Europeans (Mills 1961: 8, 23). This plural society later influenced British educational policy (Wong & Gwee 1980: 2).

In the early years, the British neglected the Straits' education. Thus, education was diverse among the immigrants. The Chinese wholeheartedly followed the traditional Confucian school model with textbooks and teachers imported from China. The Indian immigrants were educated by the plantation owners. The British later invested in English-medium schools such as the Penang Free School (1816), Malacca High School (1826), Singapore Free School (1834)[5]; and the other religious schools opened during the following decades (Chelliah 1960: 36-42).

These English schools, both secular and religious, served boys and girls of all races with low fees. The students were educated to read and write in English and do basic arithmetic. Although these religious institutions had declared, from the start, not to impose Christianity on anyone, the Malay Muslims not only denied but also strongly resisted them for fear of Christian conversion. Abdulla bin Abdul Kadir, a Malay school teacher at that time described: "Many times I was asked by the missionaries to persuade Malay children to go to school and learn reading and writing, both in Malay and in English. But because of their ignorance and their belief that they would be introduced to English ways they were reluctant to come, thinking that they would be forcibly compelled to embrace Christianity… They grew suspicious of me, believing as they did that I wished to do them harm, and in their hearts they began to hate me. Behind my back, they went to rouse my father, urging him to stop me going to learn English and saying: 'in a short while he may follow English beliefs and lose faith in his own religion.' My father was angry and stopped me, saying: 'I do not wish you to go and learn to speak and write English, for not a single Muslim does so'" (Wicks 1980: 172).

In contrast, the immigrant Chinese gave the most robust support to Western education. In the latter part of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, some of these missionary

[5] "Free" in this context means open to all races and classes without cost.

schools were closed, while others were taken over by the British government. In the context of the diverse school types of the ethnic groups, the British East India Company officials, and even British government administrators (since 1867) did not intend to establish relationships between different races in the Settlements through a standardized education system. The British point of view was that education should take into consideration each group's role in society. Therefore, maintaining the different types of schools was synonymous to each ethnic group being educated in its own language. That contributed to preserving the racial status quo and the ease in identifying the groups with their various economic activities, specifically, the Malays with field cultivation, the Chinese with the mining industry and commerce, and the Indians with real estate and plantation (Andaya 1994: 226).

The issue of education for the Malays was not as simple as imagined. Malay education was merely religious without any secular knowledge. This education model had been conducted almost simultaneously with the process of receiving and spreading Islam in the Malay Peninsula. Wilkinson noted that the foundation of the traditional Malay education was not reading, writing, arithmetic, or occupational skills, but the sacred text, the Koran (Wilkinson 1957). In the early 19th century, there was no Malay vernacular school on the Malay Peninsula, and in the early Straits Settlements, there were not any indigenous schools teaching in the Malay language either (Wicks 1980: 176-177); although in some Quranic classes, Malay children were taught a little Malay language and skills to serve daily life in the village. (Stevenson 1975: 15-18; Loh 1975: 11-12; Lý Tường Vân 2016: 371-373). The Malay Muslims rejected Western, Chinese, and Indian education to remain loyal to their Islamic teachings. In such a situation, the EIC officials became increasingly aware that providing secular education to the indigenous Malays was essential.

As early as 1830, there rose in British India a controversy between the *Orientalists*, who favored the conservation of traditional native knowledge, and those who advocated the *Anglicization* of indigenous intellect (Lynn & Martin 1999). In fact, right after the founding Singapore in 1819, Sir Stamford Raffles embarked on the development of education for its residents by establishing the Malay

College and Singapore Institution. He not only appreciated the language, literature, laws, and customs of the natives, but allowed the Malays to receive modern education in their own language; he even encouraged Europeans to learn the native language to be familiar with native culture (Raffles, 1991: 75-86). Contrary to Raffles, Thomas Macaulay, the Chairman of the Committee on Public Instruction and an Anglicist, argued in 1835 for the superiority of the English language: "English is better worth knowing than Sanskrit or Arabic… we must do our best to form Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and intellect" (Bureau of Education 1965: 107-117).[6] Reverend James Mackay, Secretary of the Penang Free School Committee, called for the English language to be promoted as a common language and a medium of instruction in schools.[7]

Despite all controversies, the EIC officials maintained that the native children read and write in their own language rather than English. As a matter of fact, in the 1850s, the issue of education for the masses began to be floated by the Court of Directors of the EIC, with the primary objective of providing elementary education in the vernacular of the indigenous population, especially in the rural areas. The Governor of the Straits Settlements, on the one hand, accepted the general principles, but on the other did his best to adapt them to local conditions (Chelliah 1960: 21-22). In 1855, a Malay school was opened in Penang, and two others were established in Singapore in 1856. In 1863, three Malay schools were started in the province of Wellesley. These schools faced the same situation as with the English-medium schools, which faced financial difficulties adverse reaction from the Malays. This tragic situation of Malay vernacular schools was commented on by Governor Cavenagh: formal educational provision in the Straits Settlements

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[6] This document led to the issuing of a resolution by the then Governor General of India, Lord Bentinck in March 1835, declaring that English literature and language be taught to the natives of India. For more information, *see*: https://archive.org/details/Minutes_201311/page/n2/mode/1up (Accessed May 15, 2020).

[7] He argued strongly that English was a "living language" as well as "the key to the treasures of modern literature and science." In February 1868, he proposed to the Colonial Office that the medium of instruction in the public educational system in the Straits be the English language (Wicks 1980: 181).

had reached a critical impasse at mid-century (Peter Wicks 1980: 180). As such, from the 1850s onwards, there existed parallel school systems in the Settlements: one teaching in the vernacular, including the Malay schools established by the British; and Chinese and Tamil schools set up by their respective communities—one teaching in English, which provided primary education for the mixed urban population.

The three-year stage from 1867 to 1870 was a critical transitional stage of education in the Settlements. For the first time, the British government in the Straits Settlements and the Colonial Office discussed many issues related to indigenous education, such as the plural society of the Settlements, the adequacy of the formal educational provision, the necessity of expanding vernacular education, the appropriate medium of instruction for primary education, and the issue of teacher training and the teacher recruitment, etc. In addition, there was an emerging factor that greatly affected the government of the Straits Settlements in making educational policies—the Elementary Education Act, passed in Britain in February 1870 and set up the network of elementary schooling for all children, whether boys and girls, especially impoverished children between the ages of 5 and 12.[8] It is worth emphasizing that in Britain, until the first three-quarters of the 19th century, there was no concept of government duty to promote mass education. Therefore, this Act, together with the previous proposal by the Court of Directors of EIC, reaffirmed the responsibility of the British government in providing education for its colonies, first and foremost the indigenous people.

It was time for the government to intervene in the education of the Malay using the British stance: the Malays were primarily agriculturists and fishermen, but the new Malay generation had to be more intelligent than their parents in order to participate more effectively in the new colonial society. In December 1870, the first Colonial Governor Harry Ord and the Straits Settlements' Legislative

[8] The Act was passed partly in response to political dynamics, such as the need for an effective education system for social control through education, as well as demands from industrialists for the educated population because they feared Britain's competitive status in world trade and manufacture was being threatened.

Council conducted a survey on the state of education in the colony. The 1870 Report, commonly known as the Woolley Report (named after the Chairman of the Committee), was considered the first official document of the British colonial government on education in the Straits Settlements (Wong & Gwee 1980: 11-14). From then on, the Malay vernacular schools came to be monitored by the government, known as Government Malay vernacular schools. To officially manage the education of the Straits Settlements, the Department of Education was established in 1872, with emphasis on the appointment to the post of a new Inspector of Schools.

According to the report, "the state of Education in the Colony has been and is in a backward state," and the progress of education has been "slow and uncertain" because of "the indifference of the different races, more particularly the Malays." Looking at the minor schools in the Settlements such as the Vernacular Schools, the Committee's opinion was that they have "hitherto done little to no good." In almost every instance, the sole object "aimed to teach the boys to read a few chapters of the Koran, supplying no general knowledge," while the education of females has been very much less satisfactory (Wicks 1980: 179-180). Therefore, the Committee's opinion was to improve existing institutions and schools through gradual efforts to place them on a more satisfactory and improved basis. The Committee supposed that any violent changes at present might tend to retard instead of promote education (Wong & Gwee 1980: 12-13). In their plan to extend Malay vernacular schools, the Committee emphasized that "whether he be Chinese or Malay, can make no real progress in Education until well grounded in his own language." They made it clearer that "it means not schools where Malay children are taught a few verses of the Koran, but schools where Malay children will be educated in their mother tongue… and in Roman character" (Wong & Gwee 1980: 14).

In December 1872, A. M. Skinner, the first inspector of schools, embarked on a new experiment by re-establishing the Malay vernacular schools "upon the basis of the Koran classes." The main features of these schools were that the Koran might be taught in the school, but the teaching of Koran was only secondary to the primary object of instructing in the Malay language. Thus, the

morning lessons were devoted to the instruction of reading, writing, and arithmetic in the Malay language, while the Koran sessions had to be conducted in the afternoon (Chelliah 1960: 62-64). Although education was free and the government provided books, it was arduous to convince the Malays about the benefits of secular education, more precisely semi-secular education. The low attendance rate of Malay children in schools forced the Government to implement the policy of compulsory education in the late 1880s and early 1890s. As a result, between 1872 and 1892, the number of Malay schools in the Settlement rose from 16 to 189 and the number of pupils measured by average attendance rate increased from 427 to 5,826. Following the success of Malay boys' schools, vernacular schools for Malay girls were first opened in 1885; there were 7 schools in 1886, and the number increased to 16 schools in 1892. The number of pupils by average attendance rate grew from 315 to 671.[9]

The British's attitude towards English-medium education for the Malays was manipulated carefully, though at that time such education seemed trivial to majority of Malays. In the late 19th century, the ongoing political instability in India made the government in the Settlements more alert. It was the lack of control in the development of English-medium education in India that formed the Indian intelligentsia who embraced western nationalism with enthusiasm. They played an important role in the nationalist struggle against the British rule. Colonial administrators regarded this as the biggest blunder in their rule in India and did not want it to be repeated in the Straits Settlements. As such, the lessons from India also reminded the British authorities to make every effort to restrain providing high-quality education for the indigenous peoples and prevent potential threats from the opposition of the new intellectual class. For instance, Lord Mayo, Viceroy of India from 1869 to 1872, argued against the provision of English-medium education for the Babus in Bengal: "the more education you give them, the more they will keep to themselves and make their

[9] "Report of the Committee appointed to enquire into the system of Vernacular Education in the Colony" (The Isemonger Report, 1894) (Wong & Gwee 1980: 20-21).

increased knowledge a means of tyranny" (Loh 1975: 3). In the meantime, a Malay nobility of Raja Chulan, openly supported the British stand by arguing: "history taught us that under-education is not so serious an evil as over-education, especially education of a kind that does not provide the means to keep its young occupied" (Maauruf 1988: 57).

The statements of Frank Swettenham, a person who had a long imperial career in the Straits Settlements and the Malay States, were perhaps the best illustration of this standpoint. He expressed his fierce opposition to the provision of English-medium education for the Malays: "the one danger to be guarded against is to teach English indiscriminately. It could not be well taught except in a few schools, and I do not think it is at all advisable to attempt to give to the children of an agricultural population an indifferent knowledge of a language that to all but the very few would only unfit them for the duties of life and make them discontented with anything like manual labour" (Stevenson 1975: 57). He added, "I am not in favour of extending the number of English schools except where there is some palpable desire that English should be taught." His later statement further identified the political reason for the provision of English-medium education: "Whilst we teach children to read and write and count in their own language, or in Malay, the *lingua franca* of the Peninsula and Archipelago, we are safe." (Stevenson 1975: 58)

That personal view later became the stance of the colonial government as F. Swettenham gradually took important positions in the colonial administration system. Beginning as a cadet in the Straits Settlements Civil Service, owing to mastering the Malay language, culture, and people, he became influential as an intermediary during the period of British intervention in the 1870s. From 1896 to 1901, he served as Resident-General of the Federated Malay States; and from 1901 until he retired in 1903, he served as High Commissioner of Federated Malay States and Governor of the Straits Settlements. More importantly, a preferable perspective of changes in the colonies, if any, would thoroughly state that changes had to take place by evolutionary processes, which would allow for the maintenance of continuity. Order and stability could only be

maintained by avoiding massive disruptions and fluctuations. The colonial education policy had to ensure this continuity. Excessive education, especially English education for the Malay masses, would be viewed as sharp breaks from their past.

Nevertheless, as the British Empire gradually expanded throughout the Malayan peninsula since the Pangkor Treaty 1874, the need for indigenous administrators working in subordinate posts of Civil Service increased. Would-be administrators were required to be able to use English. However, to avoid "teaching English indiscriminately," the British were very cautious in selecting the most appropriate candidates among the Malay community. The answer was the traditional elites. This choice was extremely judicious because it firstly served British colonial interests. The British expected to build up a class of modernized traditional rulers who would effectively cooperate with the colonial government. On the other hand, association with Malay traditional authorities would provide continuity with the past and also project to the future because British officials came and went, but the indigenous ones remained.

In this way, British influences persisted. Providing English education for and recruiting the Malay elites into the Civil Service, the British wanted to suborn them and make them believe they were an important part of the British administrative system. The British utilized the Malay traditional elites as an instrument to facilitate their colonial rule. The British tapped into traditional feudal relationships of Malay Muslims based on absolute allegiance and obedience to rulers (Swettenham 1942: 48). The British took advantage of those feudal relationships to control the Malay masses by cooperating with the Malay traditional elites. Under this approach, the British controlled the Malay indigenous communities by multiple educational means: an elitist English education for the Malay nobility to pave the way for them to participate in the British Administration; and a rudimentary primary education in vernacular Malay for the masses to maintain their statuses as agriculturalists and fishermen, without bringing them any social-economic changes. This educational policy both preserved the traditional feudal structure of the Malay society and ensured the maximum advantage

for the British (Lý Tường Vân 2019: 49-54).

That seems to be the reason Philip Loh argued that the stability of the Malay social order "required attention to both the apex and the base," and that it was "possible to trace the effects of this dual concern on the British approach to educational development in the Straits Settlements and Malay States from 1874 onwards" (Loh 1975: 7). Moreover, although the British had always maintained a pro-Malay policy, they were still unwilling to educate the Malay princes and the sons of aristocratic families. Among the Malays, even the upper class were not aware of the practical value of secular education, including English education (Andaya 1994: 227). Report of the English education system in the Colony for the year 1902 pointed out the following numbers of boys based on the principle of nationalities who attended the English Schools in 1901: of a total of 20,784 boys between the ages of 5 and 15: there were 242 Europeans; 976 Eurasians; 16,141 Chinese; and 3,422 Tamils. Although children of Malay traditional elites were privileged by the British, there were no attendance statistics. Consequently, the British encountered a problem—the Malays did not meet the requirements of even simple occupations in the British Civil Service (Wong & Hean 1980: 3).

On the whole, there was a "subtle change" in British educational policy, from "non-interference" (or "minimum interference," or "interference as little as possible") for most of the 19th century to interference in the 1890s, with the aim of "freezing the status quo" (Stevenson 1975: 55). This change was so subtle that it was hardly imperceptible. And that was why, again, the British deliberately continued to provide secondary education in the Malay vernacular.

Finally, during the last two decades of the 19th century, an effort, quite surprisingly, was made by the Department of Education in the Settlements in educational development for the Malays in a totally new direction. The Department contemplated converting the purely Vernacular schools into Anglo-Vernacular schools in 1884. Chelliah indicated that instruction activities were done in both languages, Malay and English. Ten years later, the experiment was

reported to have been successful. It was recommended to be experimented in other Malay schools also situated in important centers. However, the British colonists made strong objections based on, among others, the immense cost; the insufficient number of qualified teachers; the impractical results since knowledge of English made Malay students contemptuous to manual labor; or when deemed incapable of using this knowledge to earn a living, they would be declassed and malcontent (Chelliah 1960: 68-69). Once the masses were malcontent, they became threatening to colonial society. This experiment was only carried out at Kampong Glam School, the largest school in Singapore, and had to stop in the last years of the 19th century.

To conclude, one must admit that this new system of education, in terms of form, was an improvement over the traditional education system. However, in essence, it was still a rudimental educational model both in the vernacular and in English. At the turn of the 20th century, while the Malays were increasingly aware of the role of education in their social upward mobility opportunities, it appeared that not much had changed in the educational stance of British authorities since Sir George Maxwell stated his opinion in 1920: "the aim of Government is not to turn out a few well-educated youths, not yet numbers of less well-educated boys; rather it is to improve the bulk of the people and to make the son of the fishermen or peasant a more intelligent fishermen or peasant than his father had been, and a man whose education will enable him to understand how his own lot in life fits in with the scheme of life around him" (Wong & Gwee 1980: 2).

Ⅳ. Points of discussion: French Abolition versus English Maintenance

As we can see at different times in the 19th century, the first colonists were the generation that organized the transition from traditional schools to colonial schools. This task was difficult because it took place at a time of political and military instability. This stage could also be considered an experimental stage in which

the colonists showed different manners in dealing with traditional education systems and introducing the new education systems into colonies. In many cases, the motives for introducing a new education system determined colonists' attitudes, through either the adjustment or abolition of traditional education systems. While in French Cochinchina, there was broad consensus that Confucian education be abolished immediately, in British Straits Settlements, the colonists decided that a rudimental form of the Malay traditional education be maintained. Different attitudes of the French and the British colonizers towards the traditional education of the indigenous communities largely depended on their policies. However, the structures and features of traditional education systems of colonized peoples must also be considered. In addition, especially for the Malay Muslims, it is necessary to examine their ethnic and religious characteristics.

Vietnam in general, and Cochinchina in particular, were special cases in the French colonial Empire. Confucian education, prior to the French intervention, was a scholarly education system featuring the vibrant presence of a secular intelligentsia and the studious masses. Meanwhile, the French were very conscious of their "civilizing mission," a mission based on educational foundation together with the idea of cultural universalism and the program of assimilation. Therefore, to disseminate French thoughts and culture to the Vietnamese colony, education had to be the starting point. That was the first and foremost rationale behind the French's decision to abolish Vietnamese traditional education.

Nevertheless, assimilation of the Vietnamese proved to be forceful because, from the beginning, the Vietnamese intellectuals strongly resisted the French manner of brutal intervention into native culture and education (Mumford 1936: 98). The more strongly they were opposed, the more the French were determined to convert the Vietnamese into Frenchmen. The French even felt compelled to completely remove Vietnamese Confucian education system because Vietnamese culture was profoundly influenced by Chinese culture. In the same manner, because of the solid foundation of Confucian script and Nôm script, the French assimilators could not but eradicate these native scripts to spread

the French language in colonial primary schools. Ultimately, the success in educational reform might have met the political ambitions of the authorities in Metropolitan France. That, however, did not mean that the French colonists could export and impose the French educational model and the language on the colony. "The conquest of the spirit is the conquest of power and the edification in the colonial school is nothing other than the continuation of war by other means" (Trịnh Văn Thảo 1993: 170). The French did not win that war, in the end.

The British, unlike the French, did not visualize a so-called greater empire with one nationality made up of colonial peoples of various ethnical origins. They instead aimed for a league of nations united under the King, but each nation pursued an independent development path guided by principles of justice and freedom (Edwin 1941: 328-329). With such idea, British colonial policies, by and large, "do not require wooden uniformity" and were "not according to any doctrinaire or sealed pattern or system" but based upon the factual situation and upon the local conditions, needs and aspirations of the people of the Colony (Whitehead 1989: 268.). It even adapted them with the utmost "elasticity to local conditions" (Whitehead 2007: 161). Consequently, the British approach to colonial education policy was that education should be adapted to the mentality, aptitudes, occupations, and traditions of the various peoples (White 1996: 19). Moreover, a rational approach to education also emphasized that education should have taken in account each ethnic group, especially its role in colonial society. Therefore, in the context of "plural society" of the Straits Settlements where existed dividing lines between racial groups, the British were fully aware that they did not need to use a standardized education system to establish the relationship between different races.

Another aspect is that the Malay indigenous group was the master of their own land but also the poorest and most backward group had to bear the most rudimental education and enjoyed absolutely no presence of a secular intellectual class; whereas the Chinese and Indian were immigrant groups but became the backbone of the Straits Settlements' economy. These local facts were obviously beneficial to the colonists, so the British laissez-faire

attitude towards the education of ethnic groups was considered reasonable. There are many opinions that education in the Straits Settlements had been treated indifferently for decades of the 19th century, which in fact might have been regarded as the result of the British adaptive attitude. The real essence of the British policy of non-interference aimed at preserving the status quo as much as possible by maintaining education in the mother languages of the ethnic groups. From the 1870s onwards, the transformation of educational policy in the Straits Settlements was realized with the policy of interference basically aimed at freezing the status quo for the sake of its further consolidation. The policy of interference especially stressed the maintenance of a rudimentary model of Malay education that was restricted to four years of elementary education, while omitting secondary education, and focused on the three Rs (reading, writing, arithmetic) and basic agricultural and handicraft skills.

The success of this educational policy was highly appreciated by the British colonists since it was the least expensive policy. In addition, it contributed to social control and did restrain the development of greater political awareness among the Malay intelligentsia that would stimulate them to become radical nationalists, which was a phenomenon that many colonial countries, including French Vietnam, were later facing.

Ⅴ. Conclusion

Under the colonial regime, the metropolitan powers shaped and guided their educational policies, creating systems of colonial education that best served the purposes of the colonizers. Since those policies were products of colonialism, to some extent, the education systems shared certain common characteristics. One of the most noticeable similarities was that education in the colonial era was not only quantitatively inadequate; it also had qualitative defects. The metropolitan powers did not fully introduce formal education to their colonies. On the other hand, each educational system in each colony was the product of a specific power, either

the French or the British colonial empire. Therefore, there were fundamental differences between the educational policies of the French in Cochinchina and those of the British in the Straits Settlements.

The French colonial policies differed essentially from those of the British. The French might be classified as formulaic and dogmatic while the British were seen as more opportunistic and pragmatic. The French policies were largely direct, rigid, and violent; when forced to convert the principle of "assimilation" into the principle of "cooperation," the transformation was still fragmentary and full of contradictions. The British policies, on the other hand, were often indirect, flexible, livelier, especially always promoting "adaptability" in all circumstances in her colony.

France and Britain had two very distinct approaches to education in their colonies, depending primarily on how they have colonized their territories. It is factual that, with the approach to empire, French ideology aimed at "assimilation" and "Gallicization" through the imposition of the French education model. Therefore, the French education policy was determined to abolish Vietnamese traditional education. The British were somewhat opposite. They were supposed to have a commercial approach to colonization. The British therefore were interested in restraining the costs of their colonies, which means the costs of colonial education was as low as possible. Besides, if the situation in the Malay colony, including education, were fundamentally in conformity with British interests, it would be inexpensive to maintain the status quo. On the other hand, British educational policy, unlike the French, was not based on a particular philosophy in the style of "assimilation." Thus, the British did not preach a “civilizing mission” of education. For those reasons, the Malay traditional education system need not be abolished.

As for the colonies, in the closing decades of the 19th century, Vietnam and Malaya were different in ethnic, religious and cultural characteristics; their attitudes, as a consequence, were very different when facing colonialism. In particular, the dissimilarity in the features of Confucian education in Vietnam and Islamic religious

education in Malaya have also prescribed very separate ways of adapting to Western secular education. In general, both quickly revealed their limitations when faced with Western culture and civilization. Nevertheless, mainly because of the colonial policies of each empire, the French abolished Vietnamese traditional education, while the British maintained the traditional Malay education.

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HOME SWEET HOME IN VÕ PHIẾN'S *TUỲ BÚT**

Tran Tinh Vy**

[*Abstract*]

From being understood as a dwelling, the concept of home is extended to denote belongingness and a sense of attachment in which spiritual, ethnic, religious and historical identities shape a sense of self. Hence, home with its expanded definitions is considered as a cross-cutting and fundamental theme in works by Võ Phiến, one of the diaspora's towering minds who devoted his life to capturing the rich details of Vietnamese culture, its villages and locals. This article pays attention to the cultural space created through Võ Phiến's *tuỳ bút* written when he lived in Saigon and California. Many representations of home were argued as evidence of subtle influences of the historical and social context on the way Võ Phiến perceived and built his own homeland. By observing disruption and continuity through the expressions of the home in Võ Phiến's writing, we shed light on how Võ Phiến managed to create an indigenous cultural space towards social interactions of Western

* Since there is no equivalent term in English, *tuỳ bút* can be roughly understood as informal (narrative) essays. In the third part of this article, we will define this term more clearly. However, we intentionally name this genre in Vietnamese to appreciate the uniqueness of Võ Phiến through his creation of a literary genre.

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ideology in South Vietnam from 1964 to 1975.

Keywords: Vo Phien, tuy but, Vietnamese diasporic literature, United States, South Vietnam literature, diaspora studies

Ⅰ. Introduction

Vietnam, a country with high levels of geographical mobility, has experienced numerous periods of both domestic and international migration. The history of Vietnam witnessed the expansion of regions and the migration of people in various directions, mainly from the North to the South (Tana 2004: 11; Taylor 1993: 42-65; Li Tana (trans.) 2007: 148–156; Nguyễn (a) 1970: 25-43; Phù Lang 1970: 45-137) and from south-west to the Lower Mekong (Nguyễn (b) 1970: 3-24). From the early 17th century, the Vietnamese migrated to Cambodia. They were victims of political or religious conflicts, landless people, fishermen, cross-border smugglers, and criminals. Since the late 17th century, there have been Vietnamese Catholic villages in Cambodia.[1] In addition, the whole coastal region between the Mekong Delta estuaries and the Malay Peninsula witnessed the "frequent movements of people and exchanges of commodities and cultural practices among Viets, Siamese, Mon-Khmer, and Malays with Chinese settlers, sojourners and junk traders" (Tana 2004: 2) in the later 18th and early 19th centuries. Since the first Vietnamese appeared in Cambodia in the early 17th century, there have been five waves of Vietnamese migration abroad (Tran 2020: 2-6). Currently, it is estimated that there are 4.5 million Vietnamese who live and work in 110 countries and territories (Minh Huy 2018). In general, migration is considered as the main response of individuals to their difficulties and inadequacies or political conflicts in homeland as well as the prospects for economic and educational opportunities in host lands.

[1] Also, the establishment of military colonies in Trấn Tây (The Western protectorate) resulted in the Vietnamese migration to Cambodia. For further reference on Minh Mạng's orders to expand the state to the southwestern frontier, see further in Viện Khoa học Xã hội Việt Nam-Viện Sử học 2004, *Quốc sử quán triều Nguyễn Đại Nam thực lục Tập 4.*

In sociological research on the Vietnamese migration (Dang 1999: 381), home becomes one of the key concepts because it helps to explain the "pull" factor, destination-specific incentives, and "push" factors, those at the places of origin. However, literary studies on Vietnamese diaspora literature were likely to exploit the connotation of home rather than inquire about its denotation. By studying the origins of this concept and how it was understood in studies on human geography and diaspora studies, this paper contributes to systematizing the theory of home in the research on the Vietnamese community abroad. In addition, research on the concept of home supports multi-disciplinary studies on cultural identity and collective memory, which shed light not only on surveys, in-depth interviews, or statistical reports but also on the writings by the Vietnamese in diaspora.

While appreciating space as the indisputable locale for true awareness of life's values, the geographer Tuan (1998: 145) particularly considered home as the most intimate place, whose inhabitants tend to resent criticism of it, no matter how plain, ugly, or boring it might be. Affect rather than calculating intelligence creates the inhabitants' connections with their home place and its scents, sounds, and settings. Understanding home as a key element in the relationship between place and identity formation is the theoretical foundation for my argument about the expression of home in Võ Phiến's *tuỳ bút*. Particularly, home is analyzed not only as a geographical but also as a symbolic space through many concrete and abstract representatives. Especially, home was also shown through Võ Phiến's use of local languages in describing tiny, simple, and casual things. These subtle and lively representations of home contribute to reconstructing homeland in the diaspora's memory and turning it to be "home sweet home" forever.

Ⅱ. Home and the sense of place

As a fundamental and universal concept, home has multiple and layered meanings for different people in a great range of circumstances. Odysseus, the mythical adventure hero of Homer's

Odyssey, through his relentless journey offered the most familiar understanding of home as a place to return and fulfill, where the citizens' loyalty, pride, and love were crystallized into love for a piece of land, its heritage and origin. Despite Odysseus's unbreakable bond to his homeland of Ithaca, it is worth reminding that migration was not a prevalent phenomenon in Odysseus's era; accordingly, home remained concrete and less controversial. In this day and age, the complicated and diversified connotations of home make any attempt at simplifying this concept subjective and one-sided.

Home was used to be understood as a residence mostly attached to a locatable parcel of land. This means home is associated with a fixed asset. However, home means differently in various cultures. To some people, home is where the umbilical cord is buried, while for others, home is wherever the road leads. In Norse mythology, home is Valhalla (the palace of the dead), the abode of the sacred gods and spirits. For the livestock in the Patch of Heaven farm, home is the open space under the stars (Home on the Range); the utopia (New Jerusalem, Utopia), or even Mother Earth herself. Consequently, the formation of the occupants' identity in relation to the home depends largely on their understanding of home. There are people whose identities are intimately intertwined with home as a fixed reference point while others believe that they have no bonds to home. Similarly, some consider home as a sacred place while others encounter home anywhere, everywhere, or nowhere at all (Fox 2016: 6).

The above interpretations of home explores the primitive definition of home mostly encapsulated in the context of "a house" or "a collection of houses and related social facilities" (Easthope 2004: 134). Instead, home is understood as a socio-spatial entity (Sauders & Williams 1988), a psycho-spatial entity (Giuliani 1991; Porteous 1976), an emotional space (Giuliani 1991; Gurney 2000) or a combination of all three (Somerville 1992). While considering home as a place in a certain spatial and temporal context, all of the above approaches agree that it is not sufficient for the physical structures of a house and its surroundings, including the natural or human environment, to be called home. In other words, while home

is clearly located, location is not enough to define a place like home. Instead, it is only when the place is inscribed with meaning that it becomes home. Thus, homes are places that hold social, psychological, and emotional meanings for an individual or a community.

The above definitions also show a close relationship between the concept of home, the concept of place and the concept of identity when home plays a crucial role in shaping a person's sense of belonging to a certain place (Easthope 2004: 135). In particular, the connection with home and homeland plays a decisive role in the formation of the collective memory and cultural identity of the diaspora community. While the topic of home attracted a great deal of scholarly research, mostly focused on its connotation (Easthope 2004: 134), the application of home theory to multi-disciplinary research like diaspora studies has been scarce. Especially, since migration has been understood as both a subject condition and a state of consciousness, whereby home and the idea of returning home have been seen both literally and figuratively (Procter 2007; Kenny 2013; Davis 2018), applying knowledge of home to approach vivid expressions of home in Võ Phiến's *tuỳ bút* is expected to shed light on social and psychological experiences of the diasporic characters, thereby explaining the nature of the home.

Studies show that a sense of place was seen as an important factor in viewing a place like home (Adams 2013). In general, the sense of place is "the ability to recognize different places and different identities of a place" (Relph 1976: 63). Specifically, the sense of place emerged from people's process of making sense of the world around them (which may stem from the occupants' awareness of cultural differences). The sense of place is even a part of the politics of identity. From the above interpretations, it can be seen that the sense of place has many levels, ranging from simple recognition for orientation to a profound association with places as cornerstones of human existence and individual identity (Relph 1976: 63). However, this does not negate the fact that some individuals locate identity by reacting to their surroundings or places and creating boundaries that distinguish them from others, leading to idealizing this group and negating the "other." In addition, a

distinction should be made between the sense of place and rootedness. Rootedness implies an individual's consideration of a place as home either naturally or over time. Meanwhile, a sense of place implies a certain distance between the individual and his surroundings. It is this separation that allows the individual to perceive and appreciate the place.

Even if the sense of place is distinguished itself from rootedness by the relative distance between the individual and his surroundings, the very concept of sense of place is also divided itself into an unself-conscious sense of place and self-conscious sense of place. Generally, these two interpretations of sense of place distinguish each other through the subtle difference between the degree of distance between individuals and places: "In unself-conscious experience, places are innocently accepted for what they are, in self-conscious experience they become objects of understanding and reflection" (Relph 1976: 66). Although the union between individual and place in the latter relationship is not complete, a considerable intensity of association with places is still possible. Specifically, individuals expect to engage consciously with a new place, "an attempt to open one's senses to all the aspects of a particular place and to experience it both empathetically and sympathetically" (Relph 1976: 66). This attempt to experience all the qualities and meaning of a place is somehow a form of "geographical idealism," only be fully achieved thanks to the observers' intentions, expectations, and willingness.

Ⅲ. Home as the cross-cutting theme in Võ Phiến's *tuỳ bút*

Diasporic literature usually deals with the social contexts of both the migrant's country of origin and their arrival, their mixed experiences of these places, their sense of uprootedness and their search for identity. The tension between the self and the other, between the diaspora's safe zone, including their homelands, languages or cultures, and the foreign others' zones, could be seen as a prominent feature of diaspora literature. Through illustrations of migrant's ambivalences towards conflicting zones, diaspora writing

demonstrates how the diasporic characters affirm and restructure their new selves and identities based on the others' selves. The varied and multiple conversations and manifestation/representation of diasporic characters, which constantly revolved around their "being," as well as their "becoming" within globalized societies, are indeed the very essence of what diaspora literature is (Tran Tinh Vy 2020: 279).

The year 1975 could be seen as the time when many were uprooted, leading to the Vietnamese refugee crisis. The collapse of the Republic of Vietnam in South Vietnam caused many Vietnamese to flee to many foreign countries, forming the current overseas Vietnamese communities and Vietnamese diaspora literatures all over the world. Coming to the United States around his fifties, Võ Phiến (1925-2015, real name is Đoàn Thế Nhơn) belonged to a group of writers who sought refuge in the United States in 1975. But unlike many artists who either did not produce much writing after their arrival in the US or take up writing until they came to the US, Võ Phiến wrote productively before and after 1975. The journey to the US was not the first migration route for Võ Phiến. Born in Bình Định, a province in Central Vietnam, Võ Phiến first left Bình Định for Saigon, then for California. Through his long life of diaspora in several places, homeland became a fundamental and pervasive theme in Võ Phiến's works. Though the state of diaspora prevented him from physically returning, Võ Phiến made mental journeys back to his homeland(s) through writings.

Widely regarded as major literary figure, Võ Phiến wrote his first works in Vietnam in the 1950s, during the First Indochina War. He contributed to many major literary journals in Vietnam at that time, such as *Bách Khoa*, *Mùa Lúa Mới*, *Thời Mới*. Living in diaspora first in Saigon, then in California, Võ Phiến showed his enthusiasm and talent in writing about and for his homeland(s) in many essays, such as "Mưa đêm cuối năm" (Night Rain at Year's End), "Nhớ làng" (Remembering My Village), "Về một xóm quê" (Returning to a Country Village). Seeking refuge in California with his wife and children after the Fall of South Vietnam in 1975, Võ Phiến continued to remember Vietnam in many collections of essays such as *Ly hương* (Exile), *Thư gửi bạn* (Letters to a Friend) and *Lại*

thư gửi bạn (Again, Letters to a Friend).

Võ Phiến's *tuỳ bút* presented home not only as a geographical but also as a symbolic space. Geographically, Võ Phiến accurately described Bình Định, while mentioning many other different places in his travel. In his descriptions of home, specific places were often associated with specific people, sounds, or objects. Moreover, homeland was symbolized through many intangible images through which readers can visualize the place and regional characteristics related to these images. Võ Phiến's way of expression somehow showed his affection for the places where he lived, at the same time showed the writer's awareness of his surroundings. In short, home in Võ Phiến's tuỳ bút was both a geographical and cultural space.

Many places were mentioned in more than 20 Võ Phiến's essays. The places, consisting of where he was born, grew up, and visited, appeared emotionally in his writing. Võ Phiến highlighted the peculiarities of the places, where simplicity was praised as true beauty. For example, Bình Định was depicted with simple, rustic lines through the scenery of landscapes and people. He called this place a "trivial land" where stories of the rise and fall of history turned out to be "insignificant stuff"; he focused on the wilderness of the villagers' daily ("Về một xóm quê" (Returning to a Country Village) (Võ Phiến 2011: 7).[2] Or in "Nhớ làng" (Remembering My Village), the village was shown in its lonely, gentle and shabby appearance (Võ Phiến 1992: 9). The village was even described in its desolation and fierceness after the bombings during the wars. Remembering the lands he traveled, Võ Phiến flashed a glimpse of a dry tree on the top of a hill in a mountainous highland or "a line of a lazy smoke, as if it reminisces about hundreds of thousands of magical stories of mountain life" ("Đô thị hoang sơ" (Wild City) Võ Phiến 2011: 80). The local markets were also the favorite places he described because they displayed regional culture and specialties. Local products, or "rich variations" as called by Võ Phiến, included "rat meat at Vị Thanh market, snakes at Ca Mau market, and honey at Ban Me Thuot market" ["Gắn, gùa, gụ" (Snake, turtle and wine)

[2] The essays used in this article were collected from both printed and online materials. For works circulating online, we provided links to the works in the "References."

Võ Phiến 2011: 96]. Each locality had a specialty, and each specialty has regional characteristics. In short, homes, whether located in a particular land or generalized through many different localities, were remembered for their different features. These differences helped to distinguish one place from another, and at the same time create a mark, or meaning, for each place.

Home in its expanded sense implies a primitive homeland where people always longed to return, feeling that place as an inseparable part of themselves. In this sense, Võ Phiến revealed his understanding of home through various and subtle symbols. Home was depicted through the image of the womb, through the sound of the seller, through the moments of meeting a lover, or even through the memories of conversations.

In "Xem sách" (Viewing the book*)*, Võ Phiến built a very special home for the protagonist. Overwhelmed by the hustle and bustle of urban life, the protagonist felt safe only when he read books. Books were his shelter where he experienced the bitterness and joys that he lacked in his life. Thus, home was a place where the character "experienced a lonely time in a warm embrace" and felt safe (Võ Phiến 2011: 21).

Similarly, the memories of meeting and being close to a lover is compared to being home for the male protagonist in "Một chỗ thật tịch mịch" (A Truly Quiet Place*)*. By recalling old memories, the character re-experienced peaceful and warm feelings. Reviewing the words and feelings between him and his girlfriend, he was "like a cow chewing on his own feelings. He lived again in the nighttime, in a corner of the garden, in the passionate hours of midday." (Võ Phiến 2011: 69). Home, in this example, emphasizes the emotional element that people experience, which can create a sense of belonging that home often evokes.

Sound becomes an important trigger in evoking an occupant's sense of place. Sound is not only vibration that travels as an acoustic wave, as in human physiology and psychology, but also a reception of such waves as perceived by the human brain (Western Electrical Company 1969: 21). The examples of sound in Võ Phiến's *tuỳ bút* showed the ability to shape and create meanings of sound,

and associating it with an imagined home for the Vietnamese. For instance, the sound of the street vendor "ế ị" suddenly reminded of the main character's rural space ["Ế ị" (The Cry of a Street Peddler)]. That sound evoked the entire cultural context that the listener perceived; he even considered the vendor's selling products to be more valuable than any historical evidence displayed in a museum because "it existed alive" in the midst of modern life: "Strictly speaking, this is actually not just a relic of the past; this is an intact element of the life that remains in the present" (Võ Phiến 2011: 35). The sound of advertising re-enacted the homeland; even, the vendor's voice represented an old homeland in the past that was revived in modern times. Sounds of daily life also reappeared in other *tuỳ bút* by Võ Phiến, where sounds of casual activities played the role of restructuring geographical space in order to visually stimulate readers. The colors and images of the scenery in the rural scenery were also mentioned together with the sounds of daily life, evoking a lively feeling about the places that Võ Phiến used to travel. For example, he described "the jingling sound of chasing cows every afternoon along the banks of the Ba River," "the shade of a cloud that, in the quiet of noon, leisurely glides from one hill to the other in Gia Nghĩa City," "the sound of the Lào wind in Quảng Trị, the sound of the wind "nam cồ" in Phú Yên," or "the color of golden shower tree in highland provinces" ["Những đám khói" (Clouds of Smoke), Võ Phiến 2011: 77]. Even the image of clouds of smoke in burning grass at the midday was also reminiscent of the ancient past, playing a role as the author's flashbacks of some afternoons in the countryside. Hence, the sounds, images and colors recreated the rural scenes in the heart of the city. The way of creating homelands in the mind has also become a familiar technique in Võ Phiến's compositions, effectively supporting the process of creating homeland-in-memory in his migration later on.

Not only sounds, colors, scenes but culinary culture also contributed to creating a place called home. Võ Phiến paid special attention to depicting regional cuisines as the embodiment of local souls and cultures. Homeland, as described by Võ Phiến, was crystallized and revealed through the subtleties of preparing and

enjoying local cuisine. It was these subtleties that characterized each region, forming the cultural identity. The creation and enjoyment of tea foam in a cup of tea was an illustrative example ["Hạt bọt trà" (Bubbles in Tea)]. Võ Phiến especially treasured bubbles in tea, which cannot be drunk, can neither smelled nor tasted. The tea foam revealed the skill of the tea maker as well as the talent of the connoisseur. According to Võ Phiến, the habit of drinking tea even revealed the personality of the tea drinker in each region. For example: "The taste of Chinese tea is the delicate taste of the refined and noble class, a formal and sophisticated taste-a touch of flavor on the tip of the tongue, a little fragrance passing the nose, etc. The taste of Huê chè is rougher, more common, but it is a strong taste, appropriate to the nature of farmers and laborers" (Võ Phiến 2011: 128).[3]

The creation of tea foam showed the feat of the tea maker from keeping the fire to the appropriate use of tea utensils. In the case of Huế tea, the tea utensil was a teapot. The result of this feat of preparation was a qualified cup of tea, which "must be frothy, full of bubbles, almost covering the surface of the cup."[4] Thanks to that, tea drinkers enjoyed the "stroll" of drinking tea with soft and dense bubbles in tea. However, Võ Phiến expressed his regret at the disappearance of the tea-drinking custom in daily life, which showed the change of collective consciousness in defining local cultural imprints:

> It seems that braising tea will disappear without any trace. Substitute for tea, then there will be other things. Can't you see those who preserve national culture are using plastic pipes and sucking up the cups of Pepsi, Coca, etc.? So good, so hygienic! (Võ Phiến 2011: 134)

Võ Phiến paid special attention to building home as both a physical space and a state of consciousness that was imbued with national and cultural identity. The tangible objects in this cultural space had symbolic meanings for the country. In this sense,

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[3] This translation was taken from John Schafer's *Vo Phien and the Sadness of Exile*, 132.

[4] Ibid.

homeland can completely be represented through specific objects, as long as the objects are recognized by the community as a cultural symbol. While both the tea foam particles and the tea-drinking custom were the identifying characteristics of the regional culture, the Ao Dai was recognized by the majority as a cultural symbol of the Vietnamese people (Leshkowich 2003). Võ Phiến considered the Ao Dai to be a rare object that helped to create national consciousness and to affirm the common cultural identity (of course, Võ Phiến's concept of "nation" was likely to refer to the Kinh people's viewpoint instead of that of the remaining 53 ethnic minorities. However, this does not deny the importance and popularity of the Ao Dai in Vietnam.). In "Ao Dai", the characteristic of the Ao Dai, according to Võ Phiến, was reflected in the harmony between nature and culture: "The Vietnamese Ao Dai is a harmony between nature and culture. Its upper part emphasizes the human body, sexuality, and vulgarity; in contrast, the lower part is elegant, completely covering the human body. Looking at a woman wearing Ao Dai, after being excited by the upper part, looking down, we could only see… winds!" (Võ Phiến 2011: 87) Considered as a cultural symbol and "an attempt to transform nature" by the Vietnamese, the Ao Dai marked the development in the material and spiritual life of the Kinh community. The Ao Dai fluttering in the wind was recognized by Võ Phiến as a symbol of the nation's serenity, a worthy reward for women after their days of working hard: "When people were still busy working, Ao Dai has not appeared yet. Only when new land has been cleared, living conditions were fully equipped and people were relaxed, then the two flaps of a Vietnamese woman's clothes hung down, fluttered, and cheered with the wind" (Võ Phiến 2011: 87). Suddenly seeing the Ao Dai in a foreign land, Võ Phiến encountered a nostalgic hometown where the sense of place was not only attached to a specific place but was also associated with the imagined community.

Ⅳ. Home in transition

The concepts of imagined community and homeland came from my reading of Võ Phiến's narratives of home in his state of diaspora.

According to Safran (1991: 83-84), the diaspora is those who were dispersed from homeland to two or more foreign regions. In addition, they had collective memory of their homeland, had a belief that they would always be outrageous in their host state and idealized their putative ancestral home. Finally, members of the diaspora community were believed to commit to the maintenance or restoration of the homeland and strong ethnic group consciousness with a belief in a common fate. Although homeland was repeated frequently in Safran's definition of diaspora, the geographical territory was not the only determining factor for a dispersed community. It is not what land we live on, but rather where we belong spiritually that determines the state of being diasporic. Belonging to a diasporic community means living among many different spatial networks: the network of diasporic fellows, the spatial network of the host country, and the spatial network of the homeland. Belonging to a diasporic community means living in-between these interlaced spatial networks (Tran 2020 : 377).

Focusing on the sense of place rather than the place itself, Bruneau emphasized the role of memory in establishing a place called home:

> Through migration, diaspora members have lost their material relationship to the territory of origin, but they can still preserve their cultural or spiritual relationship through memory. Territory or, more precisely, territoriality-in the sense of adapting oneself to a place in the host country-continues to play an essential role. Memory preserves part of territoriality, whilst the trauma of uprooting creates conditions of mobilization that can play a substantial role in integrating and unifying various family, religious or community sub-networks into a real diaspora (2010 : 48).

Bruneau's interpretation also proposed a sense of place (specifically home), along with the memory of that place as important components in establishing a place called home (the memory of that place is often accompanied by psychological trauma, which is both cause and effect of the emigration of the diasporic community.) This understanding inspires me to conceptualize home not as a stable location but as a place-in-transition. Although Võ

Phiến emigrated and lived in the United States for the rest of his life, home became an enduring theme in his *tuỳ bút*. Understanding home as the state of consciousness helps us see the subtle manifestations of home through the way Võ Phiến associated things in the United States with similar objects and events in Vietnam. I argue that this association is Võ Phiến's way of creating an imagined community, thereby establishing a place called home and a sense of identity. After all, cultural identity is always a matter of becoming rather than being, said Hall (1993 : 225).

In several *tuỳ bút* composed by Võ Phiến in the US, the nature of the US, including flowers, birds and the weather at the change of seasons, were reflected in relation to the landscape in Võ Phiến's hometown. Building a home in mind was the migrant's attempt to connect foreign scenes with familiar cultural spaces, which also revealed the migrant's disintegration in the host land. Since the place is called home when it is inscribed with meaning, home in Võ Phiến's descriptions was characterized by its "transition" across many different geographical spaces. However, as long as Võ Phiến compared and contrasted the landscapes in America and those in Vietnam, he remained a longing for returning home, albeit in consciousness.

Home-in-transition was imagined in many different shapes and characteristics in Võ Phiến's *tuỳ bút*. In an effort to build home in the mind, the author's senses became sensitive to all sounds, colors, and atmospheres in the US. For example, the chirping swallows passing branches in the early morning reminded the character of his hometown's spring ["Mùa xuân, Con én" (Spring and the Swallow), Võ Phiến 2011: 139]. The rare sunshine in the early winter or the bright sunshine in the clear summer was also reminiscent of tropical weather in the hometown ["Giã biệt mùa nắng" (Saying Good-by to Summer), Võ Phiến 1977: 39]. The leaves of the lilac reminded the character of the leaves of the bougainvillea at home because they have the same colors ["Một mùa xuân an lành" (A Spring of Quiet and Peace), Võ Phiến 1977: 14]. Or a sound resounding in the street also made the character think of the sound of a child in his hometown:

> It was thought that the sound of a child in the past poured into his cottage from a hill in the village. It was thought that the sound of children playing on a street echoed into the classroom when he was a teenager... Something vibrated and shook inside him. He stirred his whole person ("Mười giờ" (Ten o'clock), Võ Phiến 2011: 164).

The expression of moving home in the mind or the character's attempt to recreate his hometown with memories may be seen in the way he compared the yellow color of the American cottonwood tree to the yellowness in his native landscape. The protagonist even wished to "move" the shiny autumn of this current place to the other ["Một mùa thu" (One autumn), Võ Phiến 1977: 52]. Or, among many diverse animals in America, the character felt the most familiar with squirrels, ducks, and sparrows because they looked like animals in his homeland: "Only the squirrels by the roadside, the sparrows in the trees, and the ducks on the lakes are familiar, which are nothing different from their tropical counterparts. I feel as if they follow me from my hometown" ("Lạnh" (Cold), Võ Phiến 1977 : 68). The more splendid the scenery in the foreign land was, the more nostalgic the character was for the old hometown. The "moving" between natures in the mind of the beholder showed the profound influence of the memory of the homeland in shaping the migrants' identity. In addition, it marked the migrant's dilemma to integrate into the foreign land.

Consider, for instance, how excited the protagonist was when he encountered the presence of zinnia in Utah, which was the same as its species in Vietnam (which was not an alternate version like the above-mentioned bougainvillea). Võ Phiến called this flower Chinese Guava like his townsmen. The protagonist's unexpected encounter with Chinese Guava was seen as an emotional reunion with the homeland because, in the protagonist's mind, this wildflower was the symbol of the homeland in a foreign land: "A little bit of my hometown was already found here" ("Ổi Tàu" (Chinese Guava), Võ Phiến: 1987: 361). The naming of a flower contributed to affirming the character's identity that was ironically the character's humiliation mixed with an implicit pride in having a special name for a flower. The presence of Chinese Guava in Utah not only embodied a piece of homeland but also embodied a part

of the character's identity: "In the guava grove I see only the image of mine" ("Ổi Tàu" (Chinese Guava), Võ Phiến: 1987: 362). Through the presence of Chinese guava, the character felt himself, an expatriate in a foreign land, become less lonely. However, because of the Chinese guava, the character questioned his minority identity as well as the ability to "re-root" in the foreign land. Unlike the character, the Chinese guava demonstrated its adaptability and integrated well in the US.:

> To be honest, since the day I left the country, many times I've felt humiliated, feeling how fragmented I was. As for guava, in that reunion in the sunset, it is sitting in the middle of a splendid flowerbed. It is solemnly standing side by side with many colorful flowers. […] Strictly speaking, it is well-nourished here: manure, water, insecticides; regular pruning and care make its leaves greener, its flowers more beautiful, its shape shinier than when it was in the wild. In short, it looked pleased. It fits the United States more than my hometown. It's very satisfying. It is very satisfying due to its lost identity ("Ổi Tàu" (Chinese Guava), Võ Phiến 1987: 361).

Thus, through the presence of a flower in the homeland, Võ Phiến raised the ontological problem of the representatives of the homeland, ranging from physical to mental objects, in the foreign land. Specifically, he touched on how these representatives acclimatized and acculturated into the new socio-cultural environment. However, even if the homeland, with its physical and spiritual representatives, is relocated to a new place, will migrants easily have a sense of belonging, an important factor determining a place as home? Another example in Võ Phiến's *tuỳ bút* showed that the problem of adapting, integrating and recreating a place called home in a new land was never easy for the immigrants.

The ill-adaptation of the immigrants can be the first sign of their being isolated, uprooted, and alienated in a new cultural environment. In the tuỳ bút "Lạnh" (Cold), the character expressed his frustration with the language and the weather in the US: "Zero degrees Celsius? The language here is not familiar to us, it sounds like it can't be... real! The way to measure here is confusing, weird, like no other. A bunch of feet, pounds, inches, miles, etc? Then 12

inches equal one foot, but 3 feet equal a yard; it just makes no sense" [("Lạnh" (Cold) Võ Phiến 1977: 67)]. In particular, his suffering to adapt to the coldness made the character feel his life as a serial day of physical and mental torment without end: "But I can't talk about the return. We still have a few decades left to struggle: waking up every day while it is still dark, taking shiveringly to the car, going to the office. At four-thirty in the afternoon, when we leave the office, it is dark again, the snow is falling heavily, the sky is sad and miserable!" [("Lạnh" (Cold) Võ Phiến 1977: 82)]. In another essay, "Một mùa xuân an lành" (A Spring of Quiet and Peace), the sense of uprooting from the homeland was felt by the diaspora character along with his own disorientation in a foreign land, which caused his life to become empty and meaningless:

> My country chose long journeys, it will continue these journeys. This spring, next spring, and many more springs, my compatriots will still worry and get crazy: uprisings, repressions, purges, corrections, diversions, emulation, leaps, and so on. Personally, I was kicked out of this circle. From now on, I only have peaceful springs. Painful peace. That realization makes life suddenly become empty. Dreadful, horrible emptiness. Suddenly, there was no future in front of me, but I stand outside of all worries. Alas, the peace of life without a future. (Võ Phiến 1977: 34)

In general, homeland is featured as an important element in restructuring the migrants' identity and culture. The longing for home by the members of diaspora communities leads to their retaining a collective memory and identity of their original homeland. Also, with the sense of shared identity, the diaspora community is likely to preserve their homeland's cultures and customs, rejecting assimilation into a new land and maintaining contacts with the homeland in various ways (Cohen 2008: 4). However, while home is a locality's lived experience, it is also a mythic place of desire in the diasporic imagination. In this sense, it is a place of no-return, even if it is possible to visit the geographical territory that is seen as the place of "origin" (Cohen 2008: 4). Without mentioning much about the causes of migration, the characters in Võ Phiến's *tuỳ bút* were portrayed more by their dualities between cultures. The consciousness of being in-between

causes the tension "between the consciousness of diaspora-dispersal and affiliation and the distinctive modern structures and modes of power orchestrated by the institutional complexity of nation-states" (Cohen 2008: 4). This consciousness of being diasporic makes homeland become a concept, the place of imagination, rather than a locale. Homeland and the idea of returning to the homeland are thereby both literal and metaphorical (Procter 2007; Kenny 2013, Davis 2018).

Ⅴ. Home in the act of writing

Writing is no longer reduced to being just a means to express reality or convey a message. To Võ Phiến, writing was seen as a journey to seek his "voice" and freedom; it was the act of self-expression and self-consciousness. Through writing, he could live with himself and capture his other at the same time, experiencing his "two-side" ego albeit in exile. In this sense, writing about the homeland is often little more than a vehicle of sentimentality in which the diaspora chose to travel to an outside place. With the sense of belonging, the region is inside the writer, and the significance of what the writer writes goes beyond this locality, which even speaks to the actual or potential loci of everyone (Relph 1976: 67).

In Võ Phiến's *tuỳ bút*, home was expressed firstly through the language of composition, and secondly through the author's thoughts about writing. It is also worth reminding that writing for Võ Phiến was much related to his migration, which also led to the shaping of his identity. In "Cái suy tưởng" (Thoughts), Võ Phiến admitted that his artistic creativity was really improved since he left Interzone V: "After 1955, I read a lot, dazzled, and enjoyed everything I saw. Writing at that time became a riot. So for a few decades, then I was thrown out of Vietnam. Everything was renewed: I am a stranger, I am lost, I live in a strange place, I think differently… What is written is even more strange" (Võ Phiến 2021).[5]

[5] For works that do not have page numbers, I will provide links in "References." The year of publication is the year I have accessed the materials.

Võ Phiến praised language as a representative of the national identity: "Each language has its own identity and aesthetic standards" ("Viết lách" (Writing), Võ Phiến 2021). He believed that even if it was possible to translate a literary work from one language to another, it was difficult to convey all the beauty of the source language into the target language. Writers should "appreciate the language they use," and Vietnamese, according to Võ Phiến, which has been in use "for thousands of years," has been made "fresh, bold and vital" [("Viết lách" (Writing), Võ Phiến 2021)]. The emphasis on the national language was shown by Võ Phiến in the way he performed a "regional Vietnamese party of language" in his *tuỳ bút*. For example, he used the word "rụp rụp" to describe a quick and passionate way of preparing a bowl of noodle by the vendor ("Rụp rụp", Võ Phiến 2011: 107). Moreover, he observed and analyzed the language used by local people. The noodle seller said "rồi" (already) to finish his preparation of a bowl of noodle soup ("Rụp rụp", Võ Phiến 2011: 108). The driver's assistant often inserted the word "luôn" when signaling the driver to move in "tới luôn." According to Võ Phiến, "luôn" was more of a cry than a voice. It sounded to urge people, it said nothing about its meaning: "It works for tone, not for meaning" ("Rụp rụp", Võ Phiến 2011: 109). In other essays, Võ Phiến also used local words to describe things and phenomena. For example, he called zinnia as Chinese Guava or intentionally mispronounce "gắn, gùa, gụ" to refer to "rắn, rùa, rượu" (snakes, turtles and wine). (Vietnamese people in Mekong Delta region prefer pronouncing /g/ to /r/.) The subtle differences in regional language reflected the personality of the natives.

The sense of home was also reflected in Võ Phiến's thoughts about writing. In the essay "Một người, một người" (One person, one person), as he commented on the expression of homeland in Tô Thùy Yên's thought, Võ Phiến burst into exclamation at the indifference of his literary friend: "Oh! Beware of Mr. Tô's composure. It's indifference. It's coldness. It's a disaster. He denied the past, forgot old years and all big and small things in his life, lost his homeland. He already forgot himself" (Võ Phiến 2021). According to Võ Phiến, the book was a carrier that reflected the author's mind: "The book is the place where the work is visible in written form.

Letters are just symbols" (Võ Phiến 2021). For writers, writing is a matter of survival. In other words, writing is the way to express identity: "The pen in my hand immediately fell off. Suddenly, I disappeared. The collective of writers and readers was bewildered for a moment." (Võ Phiến 2021).

So, what do the topics of simple, small, and familiar things in Võ Phiến's *tuỳ bút* say about Võ Phiến's identity? What is *tuỳ bút*? And why is *tuỳ bút*? According to Shafer (2006: 126), *tuỳ* meant following and *bút* meant pen or writing brush. *Tuỳ bút* meant the writers of the custom pen may follow where their pens led them. They can pursue sudden bursts of inspiration. *Tuỳ bút* is a casual, instinctive, and anti-rational genre. Its looseness and scatteredness seem to fit the writer's pursuit of memories and nostalgia for the lost homeland.

In addition, the fact that simple, small, and familiar things became the theme throughout Võ Phiến's compositions was the most noticed by Shafer and Nguyễn Hưng Quốc. Taking this from a Marxist point of view, Shafer (2006: 111) believed that Võ Phiến's interest in unimportant things stemmed from the author's origins, a "small-scale village landowner group," which "realized themselves defeated at the hands of 'progressive forces,' members of this group had no glorious topics to write about, no heroes to praise." However, in Nguyễn Hưng Quốc's view, Võ Phiến's focus on villages and villagers came from his author's distance in time and place from his homeland (Nguyễn 1996: 145), which could be explained by Võ Phiến's diasporic state. However, both Schafer and Nguyễn Hưng Quốc considered Võ Phiến's focus on details in his tuỳ bút as the author's beliefs about "concrete things" (Shafer 2006: 115). Hence, Võ Phiến's writing on simple and casual things reflected his attempt to construct his homeland. His effort to return "home" by writing simple things with new love and eyes could be seen as his way to preserve traditional values. Every little particularity of homeland in Võ Phiến's *tuỳ bút* was presented beautifully and preciously because they are flooded with his love, care and affection.

Ⅵ. Conclusion

From being understood as a place of dwelling, the concept of home is extended to denote belonging and a sense of attachment in which spiritual, ethnic, religious and historical identities have formed a sense of self. Hence, home, with its expanded definitions, is considered as an enduring and fundamental theme in works by Võ Phiến, one of Vietnamese diaspora's towering minds and who devoted his life to capturing the rich detail of Vietnamese culture, its villages, and locals. This article explored how the concept of home was applied in diaspora literature to create a cultural space for diaspora community in which Võ Phiến's essays were a case. The homelands in Võ Phiến's essays were built up through tiny but sophisticated details of people, lands, languages, and cultures, which were not colored by a collective memory of the far away land but were permeated with love, nostalgia and memories for specific places and days. Many representations of home were argued as evidence of subtle influences of the historical and social context on the way Võ Phiến perceived and built his own homeland. Diaspora literature has been usually considered as literature of minorities. Through several essays about homelands, Võ Phiến showed his effort to speak up for marginalized communities. By observing disruption and continuity through the expressions of the home in Võ Phiến's writing, we were able to shed light on how Võ Phiến managed to create an indigenous cultural space towards social interactions of Western ideology in South Vietnam from 1964 to 1975.

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Hizb Ut-Tahrir's Adaptation Strategies against the State Repression in Indonesia:

A Social Movement Perspective

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[*Abstract*]

Hizb ut-Tahrir (HT) is an Islamic social movement that struggles to change the existing political system to the Islamic system. HT argues that all problems in the Muslim world are rooted in adopting secular thought and ideology and the separation between Islam and the state. Hence, HT works to persuade Muslims to abandon that way of life and only apply Islam as the country's only ideology and constitution. HT has spread this narrative since it started in 1953 in Jordan. With this ideological and political attitude, many countries consider HT a threat to their political and community life, suppressing this movement by arresting members and banning the group to reduce or end HT activities in these countries. The Indonesian government has also carried out this repressive policy to limit the influence of Indonesian HTI since 2017. This paper aims to discuss the strategy of Hizb ut-Tahrir to continue its political activities Indonesia after being dissolved by the Indonesian government in 2017. This article used content analysis method to interpret the data collected from interview and documents from Hizb ut-Tahrir. Responding to state

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repression, HTI sought other methods of action by changing the place of resistance or activities, and by changing its identity.

Keywords: Hizb ut-Tahrir Indonesia, Indonesia, State Repression, Social Movement.

Ⅰ. Introduction

HTI, Hizb ut-Tahrir Indonesia, has existed in Indonesia for more than 20 years since 1980s, and enjoyed political freedom for more than ten years under Indonesian democracy, especially after the political reform in 1998. But, in 2017, the state decided to revoke the legal status of HTI due to rising radicalism in Indonesia and the rise of political mobilization of Islam after 2016 (Mietzner 2018).

HTI is part of the global Hizb ut-Tahrir founded in 1953 by Taqiuddin An-Nabahani. This group works to change the secular system in the Muslim world to be managed by Islamic law through the establishing of the Islamic state called khilafah (caliphate). This group has branches in more than 40 states around the world. However, in many states, this group is received negatively for its radicalism and fundamentalism (Aswar 2018). Generally, there are increasing studies on Hizb ut-Tahrir, such as the work of Tatiana V. Izluchenko, Denis N. Gergilev, and Andrei V. Bardakov (2020), which discussed Hizb ut-Tahrir's concept of political, social, administrative, and economic systems; the authors even argued that that HT's ideas are perceived as extremist, distorting religious norms, and are irrational, intolerant, and create anger against others (Izluchenko, Gergilev, and Bardakov 2020).

Another work is by Farhaan Wali (2017), who studied the process of HT's radicalization by recruiting people and building people's loyalty through the Halaqoh (private study group) process. The Halaqah process, according to Wali, is a way to convincing people of the need and obligation to establish the Khilafah state; it also assrtes that HT is the only proper party working to establish Islam (Wali 2011).

Meanwhile, the use of social movement analysis on Hizb ut-Tahrir is still limited, as there are only a few scholars working on it such as Michael Karagiannis (2006) and Muhammad Nawab bin Mohamed Osman (2018). Karagiannis (2006) primarily studied Hizb ut-Tahrir in Central Asia, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan structural-functional theory, resource mobilization theory, political opportunity theory, and framing theory (Karagiannis 2006). On the other hand, Osman (2018) analyzed HTI from three approaches of social movements: first, the theory of political opportunity structure, which explains the influence of Indonesia's political context on HTI activities; second, the resources mobilization theory which explains how HT recruits its members and mobilizes people to support its agenda; and third, is the ideological concept of HTI, which serves as a main force of the group's political activities (Osman 2018).

Another recent study was by Hasbi Aswar et al. (2020), where examined state policy was from the perspective of social movements, focusing on state policies toward Hizb ut-Tahrir Indonesia. The study described several strategies used by the state, such as stigmatization, intimidation, and special rulemaking to advocate the dissolution of the Hizb ut-Tahrir movement (Aswar, Bin Mohd Yusof, and Binti Abdul Hamid 2020).

This study aims to develop the research on Hizb ut-Tahrir using social movement analysis. Hence, this article discusses the state dissolution policy on Hizb ut-Tahrir and how the group adapts to that policy while pursuing its political programs. This article uses the qualitative method to analyze primary sources, among them Hizb ut-Tahrir documents, media reports, and interviews. State repression and its impact on social movement frame specific issues and expound on what faces this group should it be dissolved. Will it change the arena of resistance? Will it change the issue? Will it change the group`s identity? More specific categories or themes will also be explored (Bengtsson 2016).

Ⅱ. State Repression and Its Impact on Hizb ut-Tahrir

Repression is the general response of the state to all Islamic political

movements in many countries. The level of repression varies depending on the country's perception of the threat of a movement. In some places, the mechanism of repression is only through stigmatization or negative framing of the state and the media. In other places, Islamic movements face high repressive policies such as imprisonment, prosecution, or even death, as in the case of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, Hamas in Palestine, FIS (Islamic Salvation Front) in Algeria, and Hizb ut-Tahrir in many Muslim countries.

State repression is the part of measures that narrow the political opportunity of a movement. According to Davenport (2005), "state repression means that actions were taken by authorities against individuals and/or groups within their territorial jurisdiction that either restrict the behavior and/or beliefs of citizens through the imposition of negative sanctions" (Honari 2017: 3).

This state`s approach is deemed natural as a mechanism for the state to counter or eliminate domestic challenges; create specific political-economic arrangements and sustain domestic order or existing political-economic arrangement (Davenport 2010: 75). Actions may include any or a combination of the following: direct violence, public prosecutions and hearings, employment deprivation, surveillance and break-ins, Infiltration, the use of agent provocateurs, black propaganda or stigmatization, harassment and harassment arrests, extraordinary rules and laws, mass media manipulation, and mass media deprecation (Boykoff 2007).

State repression can have several impacts on social movement: First, it can end a movement`s life or demobilize it. Second, it can provoke movement to increase its action, such as peaceful to violent action. Third, social movement can change its strategy to adapt amidst repressive state policies; it can be violent or nonviolent. Modes of resistance vary depending on modes of state repression (Davenport 2015).

There are some strategies that social movement can take to adapt to state repression: first, changing the arena of resistance such as using the internet or bringing the struggle in courts, or while in prison, underground, or exile; second, changing the issue or

demands to remain engaged with the public and continue resistance; and third, changing or duplicating the group's identity, hiding under the disguise of religious, social and recreational, or intellectual and cultural groups. The goal is to survive (Honari 2017; Johnston 2003; Zwerman and Steinhoff 2003).

Hizb ut-Tahrir (HT) was founded by Sheikh Taqiuddin an-Nabahani (1909-1977). It was declared a political party in Jordan in 1953, a first step that led to its expansion in Arab countries. It reached to more than 40 countries globally, with millions of members (Malik 2004; Rodhi 2012).

As an Islamic political movement, HT intends to transform the modern and secular Muslim world to Islam. HT believes that the root cause of problems in the Muslim world today is its adoption the secular systems of democracy, liberalism, and human rights in social, economic, and political life. A return to Islamic law and ways is the answer to these problems. HT argues that the the Khilafah system is the only acceptable system, as inherited by the prophet Muhammad and his companions (Hizb ut-Tahrir 2005).

To transform the system, HT adheres to methods that do not follow other Islamists involved in the democratic process by establishing political parties, such as the Muslim Brotherhood; or in waging jihad or fighting against so-called enemies of Islam such as al-Qaeda. HT believes that to establish an Islamic state, one must follow the steps of the prophet when he succeeded in establishing the State of Medina, i.e., through intellectual and political activities, without the use of violence. HT has three methods to carry out political change. First is the culturing process; second, engaging people to win their hearts and minds and to convince them to turn their backs on the state and political system; and third, establishing a state that implements all Islamic sharia law (Hizb ut-Tahrir 1999: 34-35).

HT was brought to Indonesia in the 1980s by Abdurrahman al-Baghdadi. During the 1980s and 1990s, Hizb ut-Tahrir activists worked primarily in Indonesian universities through Islamic student organizations, which expanded the group to the wider Indonesian community. In 2000, HT began to publicly state its work and ideas

in Indonesia by holding the first International Khilafah Conference attended by about 2,000 people. HT tapped into mass media, demonstrations, and international conferences to introduce ideas of sharia and caliphate (Muhtadi 2009; Yusanto 2013). In 2004, HTI earned state recognition through a registration certification from the Indonesian Ministry of Home Affairs. In 2014, HTI obtained legal status from the Indonesian Ministry of Law and Human Rights. In addition, HTI figures were accepted as members of the Indonesian Ulema Council from 2005 to 2010 (Ilhamdi 2015; Munabari 2010; Office of Assistant to Deputy Cabinet Secretary for State Documents & Translation 2017).

In July 2017, the state revoked the legal status of HTI for several reasons: HTI was deemed not playing a positive role in national development; its programs were also considered conflicting with Indonesian ideology, Pancasila, and the 1945 NKRI Constitution; there were perceived to threaten security as well as endanger the integrity of the Republic of Indonesia.

After receiving demands from several Islamist groups, the state issued the policy to dissolve HTI. On July 19, 2017, the Indonesian Ministry of Law and Human Rights finally revoked the legal status of HTI based on an extraordinary law called *Perppu Ormas* 2017 (government replacement law on social organizations). The policy changed the course of the history of HTI (Erdianto 2017).

According to Boykoff (2007), stigmatization affects or weakens individuals' sense of collective identity to take part in collective action; complicate recruitment; and create difficulties in soliciting public support. Meanwhile, HTI's dissolution by the state is an act of intimidation that distracts and discourages public participation (Boykoff 2007).

Ⅲ. HIZB UT-TAHRIR'S ADAPTATION STRATEGIES

In responding to state repression, a social movement can choose some strategies to pursue its advocacies such as changing the arena of resistance. It may be by way of using the internet, or bringing the

struggle in courts, or even in prison, underground, or exile. It may also be changing the issue or demands to remain engaged with the public and continue its resistance to the state. It may also be changing or duplicating the group's identity, disguising its identity by using religious, social and recreational, or intellectual and cultural groups. In the following discussion, HTI changed its arena of resistance and its identity.

3.1. Changing the Arena of Resistance

HTI formally ceased activities after the state announced the revocation policy in July 2017. *Al-Islam* newsletters, *al-Wa'ie* magazine, the hizbut-tahrir.or.id, and the organization's YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter accounts ceased operations. All operations and protests were stopped (Durohman, F, and Rizal 2017). HTI adhered to state policy, instead of being reactionary. Behind the scenes, the members actively worked, even planning to question state policy.

HTI countered the narrative reiterating the following: first, HTI is a legal organization and has contributed to Indonesian life, building on the Islamic character of Muslims, and offering solutions to political and economic problems (Yusanto 2017b); second, da'wa HTI's activities follow Islamic teachings, including calls for an Islamic state that does not contradict Indonesian law; third, for more than 20 years, HTI has never created problems in Indonesia until deliberate provocations from other Islamic groups emerged (Yusanto 2017a).

After regrouping, HTI increased national and regional mobilization to oppose state policies and narratives through demonstrations, political declarations, and forums by Muslim students and preachers, including Ulama and Muslim lawyers. It also put up social media resistance by trending on Twitter the following hashtags: HTILanjutkanPerjuangan; #7MeiHTIMenang; #HTILayakMenang, #UmatBersamaHTI, #IslamSelamatkanNegeri, #AllahBersamaHTI (#GodIsWithHTI), #HTISiapBanding (#HTIReadyToAppeal), #KhilafahAjaranIslam, and #AdvokatBelaHTI (Cahya 2018; No Title 2017).

HTI soon revived its publications. *Al-Waie* was reopened, but under a new publisher, *Pusat Studi Politik and Dakwah Islam* (Center for Political Studies and Da'wa Islam). The editorial team and content remained. Meanwhile, *Al-Islam* was reformatted into *Bulletin Dakwah Kaffah* by *Lembaga Kajian Islam Kaffah* (Kaffah Islamic Studies Center). It disseminated the ideas of Hizb ut-Tahrir. The biweekly magazine *Media Umat* remained in circulation. These three outfits continued deconstructing the modern system to advocate the Islamic system.

HTI quietly expanded its platforms by frequently using YouTube. In videos were seen HTI executive members, such as current HTI leader Rokhmat S. Labib, spokesman Ismail Yusanto, Shiddiq al-Jawi, Hafidz Abdurrahman, among others. HTI maintained the Khilafah, Fokus Khilafah, and Khilafah News channels on YouTube. The internet has proven to be a blessing for this group up for an intellectual struggle (Seib and Janbek 2011).

HTI also attempted to seek legal remedies. It brought the case to the Constitutional Court and the Jakarta State Administrative Court (*PTUN*), but to no avail. The Constitutional Court denied the appeal because of the *Perppu*; meanwhile, *PTUN* ruled that the state had already taken appropriate steps of revocation (Nurhadi 2018; Pratiwi 2017). HTI also took the case to the high administrative court (*PT TUN-Pengadilan Tinggi Tata Usaha Negara*) but again failed. Finally, HTI brought the case back to the Supreme Court (*Mahkamah Agung*) but was also denied (Octaviyani 2019; Pttun-Jakarta 2018).

Even in a state of repression, HTI continued to argue that its being criminalized is unjust, and that the state cannot prove that its ideas are contrary to Indonesian law. It also maintained that even without legal status, HTI and its members were still guaranteed constitutional rights, and nothing can be done to prevent them from doing da'wa activities as an obligation to God (Yusanto 2019).

3.2. Changing the group's Identity

3.2.1 Mobilizing Traditional Scholars & Muslim Preachers

HTI's membership include scholars, intellectuals, students, and

entrepreneurs. Works for the Ulama were carried out through *Lajnah Khusus Ulama* (LKU, Special Committee for Ulama). The committee engages with Ulama and Muslim preachers in Islamic schools, forums, and mosques. Before HTI was disbanded in 2017, the committee routinely organized events such as *Mudzakarah Ulama, Daurah Ulama, Sarasehan Ulama Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jamaah, Halaqah Ulama, Dirosah Syar'iyyah Khoshshoh (DSK), Multaqo Ulama, and Liqo Syawwal Ulama*.

After the revocation, mobilization, and recruitment to Ulama went on, as documented in *shautululama.co*. Contents from *Shautul Ulama* were shared via Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and Telegram. The website reported on the agenda of "Hizb ut-Tahrir." Engagement with scholars, preachers, and Muslim figures continued through events such as *Multaqo Ulama Ahlu Sunnah Wal-Jamaah (Aswaja), Forum Ulama Aswaja, Tarhib Ramadhan Bersama Ulama Aswaja, Tabligh Akbar, Majlis Taqarrub Ilallah, Liqa Syawwal Ulama, Aswaja Ulema Communication Forum, and Ijtima Ulama* (Shautul Ulama n.d.). Through these efforts, calls for the Khilafah aggressively spread. In 2019, Multaqo Ulama Aswaja was conducted about 109 times—once in May and June, 11 times in January, 17 times in April, 25 times in May, and 24 times in October (Shautululama 2019).

In spite of the revocation, HTI was still able to organize big events calling for the establishment of the *Khilafah*. It was able to pursuade traditional scholars, most of which are members of the *Nahdlatul Ulama*, by using the term ASWAJA *(Ahl as-Sunnah Wa al-Jamaah)*. The organization was able to convey that it was not a strange movement with strange ideas; HTI is part of *Ahl as-Sunnah Wa al-Jamaah,* followed by millions of Indonesians. Through this, the organization gained broader support, not only from sympathizers but also from many Muslim scholars and *muballigh*/preachers.

3.1.2. Mobilizing Students through Cry for Freedom

HTI founded the university-*based Gema Pembebasan*-GP (Cry for Freedom) in 2001 to bring its advocacies to the academe. GP has stayed on even after the revocation and still conducts talks, seminars, and demonstrations to advance the idea of Hizb ut-Tahrir.

Recruitment continued even after the political space has been limited. At the Islamic University of Jakarta, GP actively held Dialog and Activist Training, and persued recruitment under the name Liberation Training (*Training Pembebasan*) (Gema_uinjakarta n.d.). Like *Gema Pembebasan* in Yogyakarta, it responded to various national and international issues, and even commemorated the fall of the Ottoman Caliphate in 1924 in 2019. It put up posters containing "*Tiada kemuliaan tanpa Islam, tak sempurna Islam tanpa syariah, tak akan tegak syariah tanpa daulah, daulah khilafah rasyidah*" (No glory without Islam, Islam is not perfect without sharia, there can be no sharia without *Daulah*/State, Khilafah Rashidah) (Gpyogyakarta 2019).

In May 2019, a rally was held in downtown Yogyakarta to call the government's attention to respond to the political conditions in Indonesia and advocate for the need to adopt the sharia and *Khilafah*. The rally engaged other student movements and became a platform to spread HT ideas. Meanwhile, other *Gema Pembebasan* branches in Indonesia tapped into social media to expand outreach. In 2016, GP was active in 25 provinces in Indonesia (Gema Pembebasan n.d.; Gpyogyakarta 2019b).

Indeed, GP also faced suppression inside the campus. State repression compelled some parents to discourage their children who are GP members from participating. Some members were intimidated by school administrators. Pressure intensified in 2018, when anti-radicalism was at its highest.[1] Students reconsidered their strategy and moved activities outside campuses.[2]

3.1.3. Approaching Young People: Felix Siauw and Yuk Ngaji Community

Felix Siauw is a new and famous social media. He has 3.1 million followers on Twitter, 4.5 million followers on Instagram, and 609,000 subscribers on YouTube (Hew 2018). He is very down to earth, usually sporting casual wear—batik or t-shirt and trousers—which

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[1] Member of Gema Pembebasan Yogyakarta. 2020. Interview by Hasbi Aswar, April 19, Yogyakarta, Phone Interview.

[2] Leader of Gema Pembebasan Makassar. 2020. Interview by Hasbi Aswar, June 5, Makassar. Phone Interview.

makes him engaging for young audiences. He converted to Islam after being engaged by HTI activists at university. They changed his initial perception about Islam's being crude, radical, and intolerant. Studying Islam with HTI deepened his understanding and strengthened his resolve about it stood for. In 2017 and 2018, he wrote several articles narrating his 16-year journey with HTI and condemning the revocation (Siauw 2017, 2018). He continues to be active despite the cancellation of several of his da'wa activities.

To optimize da'wa activities for young people, Siauw and his team formed in 2016 a community called *YukNgaji* (Let's learn Islam), which came with a battlecry "The Power of Ngaji." He was assisted by Husein Assadi, program production coordinator; Cahyo Ahmadiarsyad "Sutradalang," the main host of the event; Ihsanul Muttaqin, coordinator of social media agenda and activities; and Abietya Sakti Narendra, coordinator for publication design and documentation. The community sought to provide a venue for followers to engage offline. *YukNgaji* was launched in Jakarta, Bogor, Bandung, Surabaya, and Yogyakarta (Majalah Drise 2016). It expanded to 25 other Indonesian cities, and grew branches in Hong Kong and Istanbul. Around 27,000 in person participants and 15,800 online class participants benefited from the groups various activities (YukNgaji n.d.). *YukNgaji* has 505,000 followers on Instagram and 70,135 followers on Facebook. Attracting interest were some Indonesian actresses and actors who frequently join the Yuk Ngaji programs.

3.1.4. LBH Pelita Umat (Legal Aid)

HTI members also formed a LBH Pelita Umat, a legal aid desk in 2018. *Pelita* is an acronym of *Pembela Islam Terpercaya* (trusted Islamic defenders). It enjoys legal status from the Ministry of Law and Human Rights. In advocating for Kaffah Islam (total Islam) through nonviolent and wise da'wah, it defended Muslim figures, scholars, and activists suffering from prosecution (LBH Pelita Umat n.d.). Headed by Ahmad Khazinuddin, a former director of PKBH HTI (Hizb ut-Tahrir Indonesia Center for Legal Studies and Assistance), the group soon expanded into many cities in Indonesia. The legal desk periodically initiates public discussions to respond to Indonesian issues, in the form of the Islamic Lawyers Forum (ILF).

The forum invites pro-Khilafah activists and scholars.

3.1.5. Demonstrations and Marches

Hizb ut-Tahrir regularly held rallies, campaigns, or protests and mobilized its members and supporters. After the revocation, however, it mobilized movements under another name, for instance, the Alliance of Organizations & Muslims (AOMI) when it held a protest in front of the US Embassy on the Palestinian issue in in December 2017. Protesters brought banners, flags, and symbols that carried advocated the Khilafah solution (Al-Wa`ie 2018). HTI also participated in the 212 Movement and its consequent mass actions, such as The Aksi 299 in October 2017, which rejected the 2017 Mass Organization and PKI revival. It also joined demonstrations for Rohingya refugees in front of the Myanmar Embassy in September 2017, and in other Indonesian cities (Al-Wa`ie 2018; Media Umat 2017).

In 2019, HTI commemorated the Islamic New Year 1441 H with a long march and rally. The event was celebrated in 50 cities and had the theme "*Hijrah Towards Kaffah Islam*." The Jakarta leg was attended by thousands which gathered around state structures *Bundaran HI, Monas,* and *Patung Kuda*. Posters circulated containing a call to establish a Caliphate and implement the sharia.(Media Umat 2019). These were publicized in HTI`s media *Al-Wa'ie* and *Media Umat.* Several figures associated with HTI spoke during the rallies.

Ⅳ. Conclusion

The experience of state repression is nothing new to HT. It has experienced all kinds of oppression. These never stopped HT to fight for what it stood for. In Indonesia, it continued to be steadfast. Amidst being stigmatized by the state for allegedly being radical and even using the force of law to dissolve it, it persevered in performing da`wa and advocating for the implementation of the sharia and the establishment of the Islamic state/*Khilafah*. HTI sought other methods of action by changing the place of resistance or activities, and by changing its identity.

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Indigenization of Global Trade Negotiation Model:
Perspective from Southeast Asia

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[*Abstract*]

Over the last few decades, global trade activities showed a significant increase, resulting in a rise of the wider global economic growth. The achievement is partly due to the more integrated global trade system under global trade regime such as World Trade Organization (WTO) that standardized the practice of global trade. On the other hand, it could also be seen that regional trade negotiation became more important part of global trade activity. The trade negotiation itself was pushed and tailored by regional perspective, which indigenized trade agreement. This research aims to analyze the indigenization of ASEAN's trade negotiation model. How has the current trade negotiation model within the region represented indigenous needs and aspirations? This study also offers to revisit the conceptual framework in identifying the trade negotiation model to

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measure the indigeneity of Southeast Asian automotive industry's policy. This research concludes by explaining the case studies which measure the effect of indigenization to the practice of trade agreement in the region.

Keywords: indigenization, trade negotiation, trade agreement, Southeast Asia, ASEAN

Ⅰ. Introduction

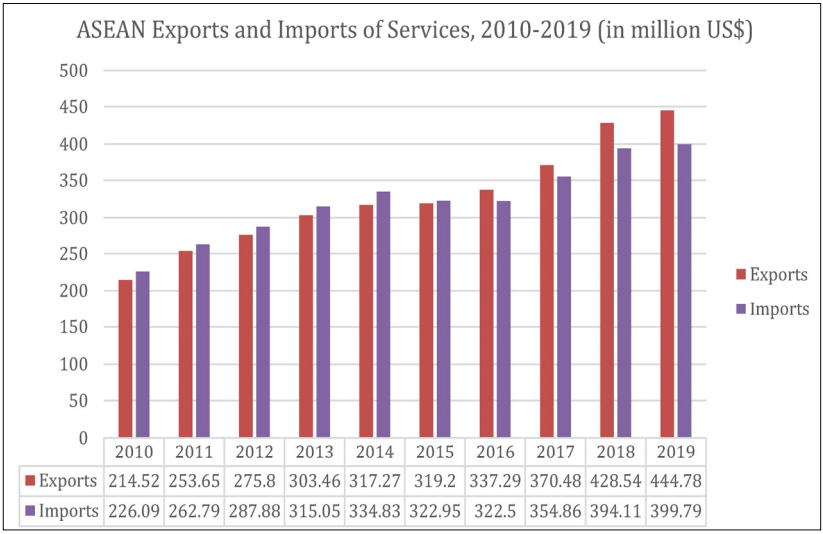
While Southeast Asia has a diversity of economic development within its region, the trends of regional trade are experiencing robust growth over the years. The ASEAN's trade in goods has increased from 6.5% to 7.2% of the global total trade in 2010-2018 (ASEAN Secretariat 2019: 18). In 2018, the trade intensity was much dominated by ASEAN's external trade, placing China, European Union (EU), United States (US), and Japan as largest trading partners. In such, trade within ASEAN's region was at 23% of the total trade, despite the establishment of ASEAN Economy Community (AEC) Blueprint in 2015.

The diversity also acts as obstacles that contribute to the slowdown of integration among ASEAN members (Salazar and Das 2007: 1–2). This challenge, also known as development gap, is explained as a situation where ASEAN encounters two speeds of development. Measured by the income, health, and education indicators, the development gap occurs between CLMV (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Vietnam) and ASEAN-6 (Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Philippines, and Thailand) (Cuyvers 2019: 2–4).

Regardless of these circumstances, the growth of trade in goods and services are perceived as key drivers of ASEAN's future economic integration, **as seen in Figure 1 and 2.** The growing trade intensity in Southeast Asia is in line with the proliferation of preferential trade agreements (PTAs) in the region, both in bilateral, plurilateral, and regional levels (Carroll et al., 2020, p. 200). Throughout the decades, ASEAN has developed PTAs with

prominent trading partners, such as Australia, New Zealand, China, Korea, and India. These networks reflect the dynamism, ingenuity, and passion of ASEAN as the central actor in the region.

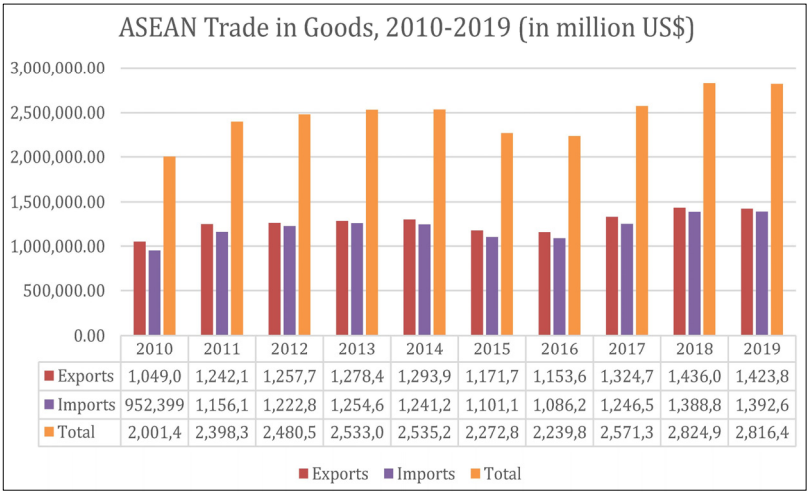
<Figure 1> ASEAN Exports and Imports of Services, 2010-2019



	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Exports	214.52	253.65	275.8	303.46	317.27	319.2	337.29	370.48	428.54	444.78
Imports	226.09	262.79	287.88	315.05	334.83	322.95	322.5	354.86	394.11	399.79

Source: ASEAN, 2019

<Figure 2> ASEAN Trade in Goods, 2010-2019 (in million US$)



	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Exports	1,049,0	1,242,1	1,257,7	1,278,4	1,293,9	1,171,7	1,153,6	1,324,7	1,436,0	1,423,8
Imports	952,399	1,156,1	1,222,8	1,254,6	1,241,2	1,101,1	1,086,2	1,246,5	1,388,8	1,392,6
Total	2,001,4	2,398,3	2,480,5	2,533,0	2,535,2	2,272,8	2,239,8	2,571,3	2,824,9	2,816,4

Source: ASEAN, 2019

Moreover, the growing trade agreements intensity attracted questions over the implementation, with particular emphasis in dealing with the technical barriers to trade (TBT). Neither the ASEAN plus trade agreements, nor ASEAN Free Trade Area itself can completely resolve the issue of TBT. As such, ASEAN has developed the approach of sectoral Mutual Recognition Arrangements (MRAs) to address this issue. Several negotiations of the MRAs have been concluded, which include electronics, cosmetics, and pharmaceutical products. Some agreements in other sectors, such as automotive, remain inconclusive.

Amid escalating numbers of PTAs and MRAs, the assumption that these arrangements suit the agenda of ASEAN economic integration have been put into question. Some argue that ASEAN must take a careful look at establishing a single market, which should be adjusted to the region's economic condition (Anwar 1996: 37–38). As market liberalization is much closely related to the Western approach, ASEAN is in a quandary of whether the current approach is suitable for economic integration. More specifically, given the existing negotiation approach such as PTAs and MRAs are copying from the global Western world, it underscores the need to assess the indigeneity of the model (O'Brien and Williams 2007: 122).

This paper aims to analyze the indigenization of ASEAN's trade negotiation model. How has the current trade negotiation model within the region represented indigenous needs and aspirations? The first section sketches the discourse of indigenization in social science. It is used as entry point to explore indigenization in the context of the study. It also alludes to the discussion over the economic and non-economic factors of free trade agreements. The rest of the paper is as follows: the second section presents the case study, analyzing the negotiation of ASEAN's MRA over automotive industry. The third section identifies the indigeneity of ASEAN's trade arrangement approach. The final section offers conclusions.

Interpretive qualitative research methods was employed in this study for data analysis method. As these methods emphasize the inclusion and dialogue with stakeholders, the paper analyzed the

data gathered from literature and field research (Creswell et al. 2006). To filter out the discourse of indigenization, the paper developed an extensive literature review and analysis. To increase the validity of the findings, in-depth interviews were also used as instrument to measure the perspective from various actors. To be more specific and systematic, these actors include Indonesia's policy makers and related stakeholders in the national automotive industry.

Ⅱ. Defining indigenization in trade politics

In the context of trade politics and the wider global political economy, indigenization means a transformation to suit local culture (Lijuan 2010). According to Lijuan, the purpose of indigenizing is to transform things to align with the local culture, from an anthropoligcal perspective. In the context of the automotive industry, and from the perspective of global politics of trade and investment, Kim (2010) elaborates on how the indigenization of trade policy influence flows of foreign investment. Further, Kim also inquires about how foreign direct investments should fit to local culture.

As far as social science is concerned, definitions of indigenization are primarily Western-oriented (Alatas 1993: 308–310). This is related to the divide of economic development in the world at large, where many terminologies depict a dichotomy, such as North and South as well as developing and developed countries. While economic development is shaped by the overall income and education level, it also conforms with the fact that the developing world is lacking in indigenous approaches to research and innovation. Thus, the clear need for it in developing countries.

Alatas outlines different levels of indigenization in the social sciences. First, in metatheoretical level, emphasizing on the role of the ontological, epistemological, and ethical assumptions in shaping social science; second, in the theoretical level, where indigenous historical contexts and cultural practices underlie the creation of new concepts in social science; third, at the empirical level where indigenization is best placed as a model to investigate pre-existing

problems in the Third World previously neglected; and fourth, at the level of applied social science, which focuses on the policy plans and priorities, as well as the collaborative works between voluntary organizations, non-governmental organizations, and the government themselves (1993: 312). This study aims to utilize the empirical level to approach the research question.

Discourse of indigenization is however often misunderstood as nativism, where the Third World countries are expected to express wholesale rejection the Western thought. This view is not applicable to the context of trade diplomacy given the interdependency among countries. As this paper pragmatically contextualizes indigenization, it is considered here as not an opposition of Western thought, but rather a selective adjustment to the indigenous aspirations and needs (Alatas 1993: 311). It is a blend of knowledge, values, and skills from foreign, traditional, and emerging practices (Yan 2013: 21–22). This pragmatic approach suits this study, where indigenization is not at odds with globalization. Instead, indigenization is the local interpretation of global values, a bridge between Western thought and local values.

The pragmatic approach of indigenization, therefore, provides a strong basis for further identifying indigenization in trade politics. It has been commonplace to assume that current global trade is predominantly shaped by the Western values and thought. Most of the best instruments of the trade liberalization, such as PTAs, MRAs, as well as dispute settlement mechanisms are admittedly evolved from Western practices, particularly the US and the EU. Throughout much of history, this approach is uncritically widespread in the practice of global trade. The proliferation of trade agreements over the decades are the evidence of Western influence (Dingwerth and Weinhardt 2018). In 2020, the number of PTAs in force has reached 305 agreements, which speeds up the trade liberalization agenda but at the same time makes the risk of the spaghetti bowl effect unavoidable (Lamy 2014: 65–66; World Trade Organization 2020).

The uncritical acceptance of global trade models from Western thought has raised some concerns. A number of previous studies identified that trade agreements only secure a suboptimal economic

outcome for some regions and encounter sociocultural challenges at the local level (Cherry 2012; Cuyvers 2014; Islam et al. 2014). More broadly, the views that the current global trade approaches need a major change also emerged from the environmental perspectives, given the inevitable adverse environmental impacts of global production chains (Ciccaglione and Strickner 2014: 151–152).

Critical views of the current global trade system have also been raised, in response to the technical aspects of the trade liberalization, such as MRAs. Pelkmans highlights the critical response from European industrial confederation towards MRAs, claiming that such arrangements is far from easy (2005: 86–88). He further argues that the mutual recognition approach is not always the answer to the needs of business groups. Trade arrangements using MRAs come with obstacles: implementation may be difficult to measure; there may be no detailed guidelines on arrangements; principles may not be understood and adopted fully; potential drawback through relatively high costs, both economically and non-economically, particularly in monitoring process of MRAs; the slow and long process of MRAs dispute settlement, as seen in cases heared at the European Court of Justice (ECJ); and the complexity of implementing MRAs, which undergo multi-interpretation of arrangements (2005: 103–105).

Moreover, as multilateral agreements, MRAs are also at risk of vested interests at the level of governments. Multilateral agreements in the economic sector are prone to being shaped by narrow political interests, as may be seen in some cases involving the EU. The agricultural subsidies, for example, was based on French and Italian interests. It was crafted to balance Germany's power over the manufacturing sector (Vaubel 2013: 242–244).

The political and technical constraints of MRAs underline the fact that such an approach is less beneficial on the diverse economic region, such as Southeast Asia. The EU, instead, employs MRAs as approach for economic integration since the region has relatively no significant gap of development among its member states. Unlike the EU, the Southeast Asian regional development gap has a potential risk to restrain MRAs from its optimum outcome.

However, ASEAN has adopted sectoral MRAs to bridge \ economic integration within the region. This approach is not only a wholesale imitation from the EU, but also welcomed by most ASEAN member states, despite the uncertainty of economic outcome.

Ⅲ. The long journey to economic integration: a case study from the automotive industry

The automotive industry is one of the most politically sensitive sectors. In the trade agreement negotiations, concessions are often made on the automotive industry at the last minute (Kim 2010). As such, it is important to note that this case study fits the picture of wider trade negotiation dynamics in the Southeast Asian region. Despite critical standpoints presented in the previous section, MRAs are received favorably by ASEAN member states. ASEAN has embraced the MRAs through the signing of the ASEAN Framework Agreement on Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs) in 1998. The association asserts that MRAs would benefit manufacturers and the wider business groups by reducing the cost; providing greater certainty on market access; increasing competition and innovation; and creating a freer flow of trade (ASEAN Secretariat 2012).

The ASEAN's endorsement of MRAs has attracted its member states to conclude negotiations on cosmetic, electronic, services, and pharmaceutical sector. Meanwhile, MRAs on service sector experienced difficulties in the level of full implementation. These arrangements have been signed from 2005 to 2014, involving engineering, nursing, architectural, dental, and medical practitioners, tourism professionals, and accountancy services. ASEAN encountered key challenges in implementing MRA for medical practitioners, given the restrictions applied in some countries that limit the practice of foreign medical doctors. For instance, the Philippines, though issuing temporary permits, enforces significant restrictions over the length of stay and the type of practice for foreign medical doctors (Mendoza and Sugiyarto 2017: 21–22).

More recently, ASEAN member states have also entered the final negotiation phase of MRAs on Type Approval for Automotive

Products (APMRA). The arrangement should have been signed by 2020. Through APMRA, technical barriers to trade in automotive sector are expected to be eliminated. However, the negotiation faltered as Vietnam adopted protective measures through the Decree of 116/2017/ND-CP regarding Requirements for Manufacturing, Assembly and Import of Motor Vehicles and Trade in Motor Vehicle Warranty and Maintenance Services. This policy prevents Vietnam's trading partners from exporting automobile products without issuing Vehicle Type Approval (VTAs) certificates. The VTAs are required to confirm that the automobile products met the specified standards on consumers protection, human health, and safety protection of environment (European Commission 2018). As a result, ASEAN member states such as Indonesia and Thailand encountered obstacles in exporting Completely Built-up (CBU) products. Similar circumstances have also been reported by European countries as Decree 116 nearly stopped CBU exports to Vietnam (VIR 2018).

To analyze the stakeholders' perspective on APMRA in Indonesia, in-depth interviews with the business groups and government official were undertaken by this study. The business groups, represented by the Association of Indonesian Automotive Industries (GAIKINDO), argued that the Decree 116 caused unforeseen impacts, including the delay on loading time, ranging from 7 to 35 days. Because of this, CBU exporters must also prepare specific units of each type for vehicle testing and road tests. In the context of APMRA, GAIKINDO is also frequently involved by the Indonesian government during the negotiation. However, the association was mum in articulating its interests, as well as their aspirations about APMRA. GAIKINDO also takes a careful approach in representing the automotive industries by underlining the non-profit intention of the association. Instead, GAIKINDO acts as hub in the automotive industries network, emphasizing the economic cost of Decree 116. APMRA is not part of their concern. GAIKINDO has adopted a soft approach in lobbying for the industry.

While GAIKINDO's gesture appears uncritical to the government approach on APMRA, the government is of the position that APMRA is best tools to eliminating technical barriers on automotive industries. Two interviews were carried out from

different portfolios, including the Indonesian Ministry of Trade and the Indonesian Embassy in Hanoi, Vietnam. The Indonesian Ministry of Trade understands that the APMRA negotiation requires extra time and effort to conclude. It also expresses no critical views on the decision to pursue the diplomatic approach through multilateral arrangements. Indonesia has specified no policy against Decree 116, and instead focused on the negotiation of APMRA, assuming that such technical measures will be scrapped once the arrangement is signed. The ministry also confirmed the collaborative work among various government departments over trade diplomacy, where the Ministry of Foreign Affairs plays an important role. The Indonesian Embassy in Hanoi, through its Trade Attaché, also pursues a diplomatic approach and acts as an extension of the Ministry of Trade. The embassy, however, takes a broader approach with rare attention to the details of the APMRA negotiation.

The findings of the stakeholders' views on APMRA highlights the fact that both government and business groups pay little attention to revisiting the existing trade diplomacy tools and strategies. While business groups somewhat hesitate to put pressure on the government, MRAs are perceived as a panacea by the government to address issues on technical barriers to trade. Multilateral agreements keep the government safe and within its comfort zone. It serves as a protective shield to counter opposition in domestic politics, as multilateral recognition projects more authority (Vaubel 2013: 245–248).

Ⅳ. Indigenization of Southeast Asian trade negotiation model: paving the way

Most of trade negotiation models, including PTAs and MRAs, adopt traditional approaches in identifying the variables. Some variables such as economic interdependence, outcome valuation, non-agreement alternatives, institutional constraints, and political support, contribute to the shape of trade negotiation model. These variables were used to analyze the negotiation of the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) between Canada and EU.

Alternative views in creating a conceptual framework for trade negotiation model also exist, emphasizing the role of marginal interdependence, outcome valuation for multilevel negotiations purpose, elasticity of political commitment regarding contested provisions, interjurisdictional constraint, and multi-stakeholder support (Duchesne and Morin 2013: 6–8). This framework, however, applies to negotiations among countries with relatively the same levels of progress on social and economic development (Devereaux et al. 2006: 72). Outcome valuation as a variable, for example, is hard to measure among countries with big development gaps. It would also be difficult to use the framework to identify the aspirations of the government, as it focuses on the identification of technical aspects of the agreement.

This study revisits the conceptual framework in identifying trade negotiation model to measure the indigeneity of Southeast Asian automotive industry's policy through APMRA. This study offers seven substantive variables to shape determining factors of the trade negotiation model, which include: values, motives, actors, interaction, strategy, process, and outcome. Each variable plays equally important roles in revealing the indigenous values of the negotiation model.

<Figure 3> Determining Factors of Indigenization on Trade Negotiation Model

First, values represent the norms underlying the element and determining the motives and standards. In the context of ASEAN, the values are reflected by mutual respect for the independence, sovereignty, equality, territorial integrity, and national identity of all nations (ASEAN Secretariat 2016). All levels of regional policy making within the association are derived from these values. It also inspires the soft approach in policy making, through which voluntarism and informal agreement play dominant role in ASEAN, unlike the formal legalism approach adopted by the EU (Wunderlich 2012: 655–657). The procedural norms in ASEAN are shaped by the principle of consultation and consensus, with informality as the main character. A consensus is made as an effort to compromise with the diverse points of views of all member states (Chew 2018: 104; Nischalke 2002: 93–94). In the APMRA context, the fact that pre-existing MRA in the services sector fail to implement consensus and one single standard demonstrates the incompatibility of MRAs in ASEAN.

Second, motives variable depicts the general attitude among policy makers. The history of ASEAN is much shaped by precautionary security approach, anticipating the rivalry of the two great powers in Asia (Bilal 2016: 172; Indorf and Suhrke 1981: 65–66). In such, the association was not prepared and necessarily ready to deal with economic integration. Over the decades, ASEAN's achievement can be seen in safeguarding political and security stability, in line with its initial *raison d'être*. The policy for economic integration, therefore, is characterized by the effort to narrow the development gap, rather than persuading the improvement of the quality of life. It can be seen from the time-consuming negotiation of APMRA which merely focuses on bridging the technical regulation gaps and neglects the broader purpose of integration.

Third, actors variable demonstrates the role of multi-stakeholders in policy making. This could be the varying levels within government or the diverse background of the actors, including government, business, and civil society. Business groups, in particular, play the main actor in society-centered approach, which shapes the direction of government policy (Oatley 2018: 277–278). In the ASEAN, the policy making process involves all levels of

government, comprising of heads of government, ministers, and committees. Involvement of non-governmental actors are also important in providing insights and technical details in policy making. It has been commonplace to find unresolved issues in the process of formal legalism over ASEAN economies, as it is characterized by complex issues on development (Austria 2012: 144–146). In the context of APMRA, the role of multi-stakeholder actors prevails. However, the findings in APMRA negotiation reveal that each actor has insufficient intention to create synergy among actors to gain optimum outcome.

Fourth, interaction variable reflects the patterns of interrelatedness among the actors. It could be within the region or the wider level. The interaction of trade negotiations in ASEAN is much shaped by the role of economic diplomats who have successfully attracted external and more powerful trading partners (Broome 2014: 88–89; Selmier II and Oh 2013: 240). However, it has always been the case when the setting of negotiations is within the region, more obstacles mount up. This variable is precisely seen in the negotiation of APMRA, as countries with emerging automotive industries such as Indonesia, Vietnam, Malaysia, and Thailand have competing interests in optimizing the Southeast Asian market access.

Fifth, strategy variable defines the initiatives of the actors to set plan of action in securing the trade deals. For ASEAN, two concurrent strategies are deployed in achieving economic integration, proposed as looking outward and looking inward. Looking inward consists of policy priorities in narrowing the gap within ASEAN, given that the region is not endowed by homogenous economic performance. Issue on CLMV remains important for ASEAN to resolve in order to create equality in economic development (Furuoka 2019: 694–695). The looking outward strategy can be seen from the concept of the ASEAN centrality, emphasizing the role of ASEAN as leader, convener, convenience, and necessity (Mueller 2019: 180–182). This concept, however, is under strong scepticism, as in fact it is inevitable to perceive the proposition of centrality as subordinate of East Asian regionalism. The strategy in the context of APMRA tends to falter on looking inward, as mutual

recognition is aimed to reduce the technical barriers among ASEAN member states.

Sixth, process variable explains the progress of trade negotiations undertaken by the actors. It focuses on how the actors attempt to assure the compliance of the rules from existing trade regimes, while at the same time also to undertake selective adaptation to their indigenous needs. The ASEAN wholesale imitation of European style of APMRA negotiation model reflect one side of this variable. However, the adjustment of the model to the needs of the ASEAN member states is far from sufficient. Interestingly, the trade approach of ASEAN are somehow less helpful in assisting the region to deal with the current shaky global structures, including the emerging regional challenges raised by China and India (Guan 2004: 77–78).

Seventh, outcome variable portrays the expected result of trade negotiation, which could possibly weigh more on economic gains or non-economic gains. It is important to include non-economic gains in the trade negotiation, as ASEAN has failed to link PTAs with tangible economic integration. More importantly, the fact that bilateral PTAs of ASEAN member states with extra-regional partners look more attractive than ASEAN's own arrangements should be treated with caution (Ravenhill, 2017: 146, 2008: 477–480). The negotiation stage of APMRA provided little interest in exploring non-economic outcome, given the EU-like style of arrangements.

The seven variables above consider current trade negotiation models in Southeast Asia to be incompatible to indigenous needs and aspirations. The case study of APMRA negotiation and the experience of Indonesia show this. There is an apparent risk in the future if the trade negotiations in Southeast Asia remain in status quo.

Ⅴ. Conclusion

Through the case study of the automotive industry, this study argued that there is an urgent need to accelerate the indigenization

of trade negotiation models that fit the needs of Southeast Asia. It has highlighted the fact that the conceptual framework of indigenization in political economy is far from enough. The study has also uncovered the need to develop indigenization theories in the field of sociology and the wider social science.

We have the following insights to offer. First, this research has set an alternative conceptual framework to identify the indigeneity of trade negotiation model. Seven variables in the framework were proposed, comprising values, motives, actors, interaction, strategy, process, and outcome. In the ASEAN context, many PTAs and MRAs negotiations oppose ASEAN values and motives. The variables from the proposed conceptual framework have also identified that APMRA negotiation represents insufficient indigenous aspirations, specifically from the context of ASEAN as regional institution.

Second, while this study does claim to represent the big picture of indigenization of trade negotiation models, it proposes an initial tool to study indigenization in light of political economy. Further examination of the conceptual framework is necessary to advance the development of indigenization.

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A Single Identity while Facing Diversity?
Exploring ASEAN Integration through Culture*

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[*Abstract*]

Since the creation of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 1967, the main objective of creating a "prosperous and peaceful community of Southeast Asian Nations" through regional integration remains slow. While the aims and purposes of the ASEAN include accelerating, promoting active collaboration and mutual assistance on matters concerning culture and cultural development, the desired ASEAN Integration through culture is still in question. As a multicultural region, the richness and diversity of cultures constitute both prospects and challenges. This paper discusses 1) the concept of integration vis-à-vis the ASEAN; 2) the ASEAN's goals, policies, and initiatives, concerning culture as stipulated in the key documents of ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community—Culture and Arts sector; and 3) the ASEAN identity and community vis-à-vis culture. In the end, this paper proposes a framework on the ASEAN integration through culture in the context of a single identity amidst cultural diversity.

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Ⅰ. ASEAN as case study

Examining goals, policies, projects, and institutional structures that contribute to regional integration in the context of culture remains a developing facet of scholarship on the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Since its formation in 1967 as an attempt to harmonize and integrate its member countries—Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam—ASEAN has become a fertile ground for such "attempts" to regional integration. In a region where plenty of cultures exist, coupled with national and transnational economic and cultural policies, such objective of integration through culture legitimizes the need to analyze ASEAN even further.

Culture alongside politics and economy is being recognized as an important foundation or pillar in building the ASEAN community. As such, ASEAN highlights the role of culture in the community's sustainable development. In fact, its ministers responsible for culture promote and raise awareness on the cultural dynamism and vibrancy of the region. While culture remains a fundamental concept, scholars have admitted that it poses a considerable challenge to integration in the ASEAN (Kim 2011; Thuzar 2014; Ma 2015; Igboanusi 2017). Its member countries in the Southeast Asia are diverse and pluralistic in many ways. See for example the ethnic differences and religious beliefs, where 661(±) million people make up the community landscape in the region. Moreover, it is in Southeast Asia where one can find the largest Muslim populated country in the world (Indonesia); a Catholic-majority country (Philippines); two Buddhism sects—Hinayana and Mahayana (Myanmar and Thailand); and a Hindu-majority Island (Bali). The mere fact that there is a diversity of cultural ancestry and history in the region, ASEAN is a legitimate case study in problematizing the topic on integration through

culture. Culture as a topic of research in the ASEAN calls for a proper and deep understanding of reductionistic and holistic manifestations of values, norms, worldviews, and ways of life vis-à-vis the region's national, international, and regional policies on culture and cultural development. By examining and understanding the appropriate application of ASEAN policies on culture, the community might attain integration.

Given these arguments, one can say that ASEAN is a fascinating case study for studying the interaction between culture and regional integration. Two reasons occur: to begin, when discussing the ASEAN concept, people often relate this to other forms of regional integration (i.e., European Union). Looking at Europe's historical context for example, one can see that culture has an underlying commonality within its peoples. It has a common set of social and economic values, and high-level growth, all of which reflect a shared culture's foundation. Meanwhile, ASEAN's great diversity: socially, religiously, culturally, historically, and even in terms of development, stands in stark contrast. Thus, forming an ASEAN identity and community is an important step towards an exceedingly ambitious ASEAN integration. Second, it is still debatable that culture should be an element of the plan for regional integration. From the mantra "unity in diversity" as aimed by the ASEAN 2015, member countries' leaders discern that a comprehensive and holistic approach, including a socio-cultural aspect to complement political and economic community building, should be implemented.

Given these arguments, this paper seeks to contribute to the scholarship of ASEAN studies by proposing a framework on ASEAN integration through culture by examining the region's policies, actions, and initiatives on culture, as embedded in some ASEAN key documents.

Ⅱ. The concept of integration

Integrate as a verb, in its simplest meaning, according to *Cambridge Dictionary* is "to combine two or more things in order to become more effective." Likewise, its meaning in *Oxford English Dictionar*y is "to combine (one thing) with another to form a whole." From these meanings, one can see key terms such as "combine," "effective, and "whole" to be salient aspects as to *why* there's a need to integrate (i.e., to form a whole), and *how* to integrate (i.e., to combine effectively). Adding *–tion* to the word integrate makes it a noun, which posits a process, or means, or state, or the specific action/result of the root verb. Moreover, integration could be identified with *uniting, unifying, organizing in a group* of two or more units. Although the different usages of the word "integration" from different disciplines may form a specific concept in context, these differences still converge at a common point: the whole as the end-result should be the most effective, most efficient, or most economical way there is.

To date, the concept of integration in the ASEAN is often related to economic, political, and cultural, particularly in the regional level. Economic integration entails agreement among nations is formulated to reduce or eliminate trade barriers and agree on fiscal policies. It benefits all economies in numerous ways since it allows countries to specialize and trade without government interference. It leads to a decrease in costs and, as a result, a rise in overall wealth. On the other hand, political integration is where states, in certain periods, delegate their sovereignty to a supranational entity, particularly in the sector of foreign affairs and other key domestic policies. It spontaneously emerges in a certain phase in the process of economic integration, because of the spill-over effect (Ilievski 2015: 12). In other words, it could be claimed that there is a relation of concrete dependence between the processes of political and economic integration. Apart from economic and political integration, there is also cultural integration that can be understood as a form of cultural exchange. It basically happens when one person or group adapts to the practices and beliefs of another group without sacrificing their own. What's

interesting with cultural integration, as it may sound simple, is linked to more complex concepts such as identity, gender, religion, language, traditions, regionalism, nationalism, to name a few; thus, making the process more difficult to achieve. In this light, one of the many things one should investigate therefore, is the possibility of integrating cultures; particularly *what* aspects of culture *can* be integrated at what cost and how.

2.1 Regional integration

The concepts of "region" and "integration" embody exclusive meanings. Region can be perceived as a manifestation of geographical proximity or a manifestation of economic cooperation. The former perspective posits an inert and passive stance, suggesting that countries or nations are recognized by their natural and physical features. Thus, a region can be understood and defined as a territory or an administrative area. Meanwhile, the latter posits a vigorous and active stance, suggesting that countries or nations are recognized how their political, economic, and institutional mechanisms are utilized to strengthen common interests while promoting national interests through negotiation, dialogue, and mutual cooperation. To harmonize these perspectives, Godehardt and Nabers propose both geographical and political criteria in defining a region: 1) *Essentialism* —sharing the same boundaries, having common natural borders and similar historical experiences; 2) *Interactionism*—defined by the level to which states interact or seek to interact and cooperate with one another; 3) *Institutionalism* —states are self-consciously creating international or regional institutions accordingly to advance their own goals; 4) *Reflectivism*—addresses the main framework for the emergence of regions; prescribes that a region should be constructed intersubjectively, thereby explaining its internal structures and criteria in determining membership (2011: 1-7). While these criteria are not absolute, pre-requisites in the make-up of a region, whether they are in proximity or not, mainly revolve around the members states' communal interaction and recognition.

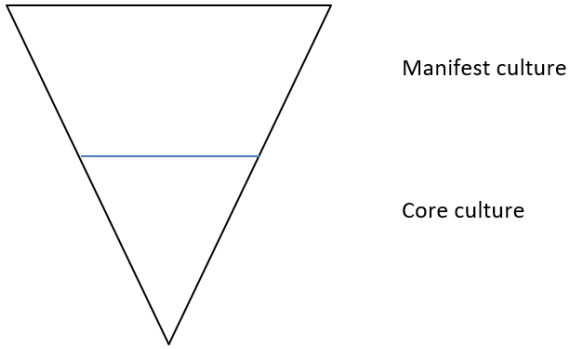
On the other hand, integration is a relationship among units in which they are mutually interdependent and jointly produce

system properties which they would separately lack (Deutsch et al 1957: 159). This conceptualization captures the basic rationale of *why* countries or nations choose and agree to join a cross-national/trans-national organization. The mere fact that each member complements one another in different aspects they might be deficient of produces a gestalt entity. In other words, by depending on each other, matters on economy, trade, culture, and politics can be enhanced in the national, international, and regional levels. Furthermore, Deutsch (1968: 192) specified four conditions needed for a supranational integration to be achieved: 1) Maintain and promote peace; 2) Ensure greater multi-purpose capabilities; 3) Achieve set tasks; 4) Carve a new identity and self-image for itself. Apart from the issues concerning security, economic, and political aspects, it can be argued that culture has a clear role embedded in the fourth condition. Moreover, objective compatibility or consonance of the major values of the participating populations should be present, thus permitting cooperation among them to be perceived as legitimate. This could be supplemented by indications of common subjective feelings of the legitimacy of the integrated community, making loyalty to it also a matter of internalized psychic compulsion (193). This assertion implies that to promote cooperation within the member countries of a region, identity and a common value system is needed. As such, one can surmise that regional integration entails the attainment of a sense of community by its members through proactive means.

2.2 Regional integration and culture

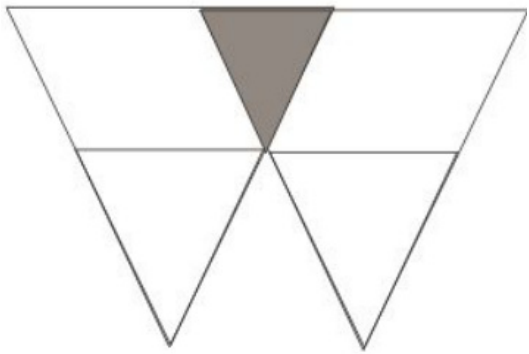
In this paper, culture is understood as the worldview and the values, rules, moral norms and actual conduct—as well as the material and immaterial products and symbols related to humans taken over from the previous generation; and try to pass over to the next generation and which in one or the other form differentiates them from human beings belonging to another culture (Gullestrup in Dosenrode 2008: 2). Culture is manifested in two levels: the basic, *core-culture* and the *manifest culture*. The former, is the fundamental worldview (e.g., nature of man as described in the Bible or the Koran), followed by the fundamental values (e.g., social responsibility), and the "not

perceivable present" (e.g., criteria of solidarity). On the other hand, the latter is the formalized morals and rules layer (e.g., practical rules for how to act or behave); the difficultly perceivable structural layer (e.g., social, and economic structures, administrative processes) and the "immediately sensible layer" (e.g., language, songs, law, rules) (77-78).



<Figure 1> Hans Gullestrup's culture model.

Furthermore, Gullestrup's model has the advantage of identifying the fundament of a culture and leaving space for a certain dynamism. It also shows that two different core-cultures may share common features of the manifest culture, although coming from different positions like democracy, which also explains why there may be different understandings of the 'same' feature. (4).



<Figure 2> Two cultures with shared manifest culture.

Apart from this concept of culture, one can see the practicality of why culture matters, and why one needs to analyze and understand cultures across cultures. Culture includes and relates to people, the foundation from which all institutions are created and organized. Even the history of economic development is fueled by culture. Moreover, Inglehart argues that culture has major social and political consequences, helping shape important phenomena from fertility rates to economic and democratic institutions (2000: 80). In other words, culture is the most important distinction among peoples where they define themselves in terms of ancestry, religion, history, values, customs, and institutions. They identify with cultural groups: tribes, ethnic groups, religious communities, nations, and at the broadest level, civilizations.

While the concept of culture is multifaceted, it is clearly a variable in the process of regional integration. For one, culture and cultural identity played a significant role in the European Union (EU) and the African Union (AU). Even in the history of Germany, Brazil, Argentina and the US, culture proved to be a unifying factor for the different provinces to be states. With this in mind, Dosenrode hypothesized the relationship between regional integration and culture: 1) A successful and formidable integration process needs to imbibe both a shared core culture and manifest culture; 2) Integration project may be prone to crisis if it shares core cultures but not the manifest cultures, but they may develop a manifest culture along the line, and thus become more stable; 3) It will also be prone to crisis if the integration project shares only common manifest culture without sharing core culture; 4) Integration projects with lesser ambitions may succeed if actors share some common manifest cultures as well; 5) Integration projects are prone to fall apart if actors do not share a common core and manifest culture (17-18).

The analysis above suggests that culture could become one framework from which regional integration can be built. Placing culture therefore at the core of this endeavor presupposes that an emergence of shared regional identity amidst the varied socio-cultural profiles of the member countries should be created, or at least, realized by its population. Therefore, the question is how can

culture provide an alternative rationale and booster for integration particularly in Southeast Asia?

Ⅲ. ASEAN and regional integration

Historically, the signing of the Bangkok Declaration in 1967 started the concept of ASEAN, a pivotal move signaling the need "to accelerate the economic growth, social progress and cultural development in an equal manner." Hund pointed out that ASEAN member countries' foremost intention is to be a forum for mutual bilateral interaction and cooperation vis-à-vis political and economic concerns as effects of European colonialism (2003: 31). On the other hand, Jönsson claimed that the idea of ASEAN was centered on economic, social, and cultural cooperation (2010: 44). While the major purpose of ASEAN was not clear in its early inception, its major thrust then was to contain disputes within the region and insulate it from superpower conflicts (Piei 2000: 3).

In the same year, the "ASEAN Way" was informally launched, a set of rules centered on the principle of non-interference and consensus decision-making, which serves as a criterion in the style of operation and guide of conduct that dictated the way member countries should act. As Katsumata sees: "It was a collection of normative principles among which the non-interference in internal affairs and the mutual respect for the individual sovereignty were the most important ones" (2003: 106-107). While ASEAN became an avenue for its member countries to "talk" and negotiate with "dialogue partners" like Australia, Canada, China, European Union, Japan, India, North and South Korea, New Zealand, Russia, USA, as well as other regional and international organizations, its very identity, economic structures, and social formations are continuously shaped by powerful external forces and influences (Beeson 2002: 186-187).

As stated in the Bangkok Declaration, ASEAN calls itself a community, implying a sense of togetherness among its member countries. With diverse purposes on matters of economic growth, social progress, cultural development, and peace and stability, ASEAN articulates co-existence and cooperation, or "caring" and

"sharing," values needed in forming a community. Only in recent years, ASEAN used Community (with a capital C) when the organization articulated its formal strategies and policies for integration as stipulated in the Declaration on the Roadmap for the ASEAN Community (Enverga 2015: 17-19) In this light, one can see that ASEAN is consciously manifesting itself not just a regional organization that binds its member countries through policies, but also as an inter-people organization sharing practices, experiences, and discourses.

To further strengthen an envisioned open, dynamic, and resilient integrated regional community with a common regional identity by the year of 2020, an initiative for ASEAN was proposed in its seventh summit meeting in Bali, Indonesia in 2003. The main purpose of this initiative was to revitalize ASEAN's development in three areas, namely economy, security, and culture. Thus, the creation of ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC), and ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC). AEC is the realization of the region's end goal of economic integration as it takes care of the economic development initiatives of ASEAN in further improving the economic relations among its member countries and consequently boost the region's economic interest. The concept of economic integration[1] in ASEAN as envisioned by AEC, pivoted from "acknowledging the strength of the interdependency between ASEAN economies by proposing an intensification of the regional integration efforts" (Cockerham 2010: 175). This paved for the development of the ASEAN Vision 2020 that outlined the original, long-term core objectives and tasks that envisioned the creation of a single market and manufacturing center. With this, components such as global integration, equitable development, and competitive economic region were helmed as regional ideologies. As a result of the integration of a single market, there is an addition of the free flow of production factors in the

[1] Although undoubtedly, ASEAN integration prioritizes the region's political-economic aspect, various problems occurred during the integration process, particularly the commitment of member countries in doing local reforms remained an issue. Moreover, local immigration laws and regulations hamper the realization of a free movement of professional workers; thus, the commitment in law reformation of the member countries poses a major problem to the integration process (Chia 2011).

region, such as products, services, capital, investments, and labor (Carpenter et al, 2013: 6-8). As seen by several scholars, ASEAN's economic goals were given more focus and much attention by its member countries (Stubbs 2000; Beeson 2005; Kim 2011; Dosch 2016). Concrete policies on regional understanding and agreement are pushed for economic stability in the region. One example is the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) that regulates the economic concerns in all member countries. As the desire to remain competitive and relevant remain a top priority, the AEC has almost become synonymous with the ASEAN Community itself. While economy is still a significant priority in all its member countries, integration will be difficult if the ASEAN people are not brought closer socially and culturally (Vejjajiva 2017: 347-348).

APSC on the other hand, ensures regional peace and a just, democratic, and harmonious environment for ASEAN. Guided by the ASEAN charter and APSC Blueprint, the member countries pledged to rely exclusively on peaceful processes in the settlement of intra-regional differences and regard their security as fundamentally linked to one another and bound by geographic location, common vision, and objectives. It has the following components: political development; shaping and sharing of norms; conflict prevention; conflict resolution; post-conflict peace building; and implementing mechanisms. While the APSC assures the existence and significance of ASEAN in the changing international political climate, its policies are more of accommodation rather than policy direction. APSC's policies are created through the interaction between countries within the Southeast Asian area, as well as actors from both inside and outside the region, thus contributing to the complexity of security concerns (Putra et al 2019: 46-47). For one, this approach prevents ASEAN from resolving some of its member countries' domestic issues, such as the Rakhine conflict and the South China Sea dispute.

Lastly, ASCC[2] aims to contribute to the creation of an ASEAN

[2] The size, scale, and breadth of the ASCC cuts through macro to micro sectors such as information and media, social welfare and development, gender, rights of women and children, rural development and poverty eradication, civil service, disaster management and humanitarian assistance, and finally, culture and arts. Following the framework of this paper, the following discussions will focus on the latter.

Community that is people-centered and socially responsible, with the goal of achieving long-term solidarity and unity among ASEAN's member countries and people by forging a common identity in the creation of a caring and sharing society that is inclusive and harmonious, and where people's well-being, livelihood, and welfare are improved. A quick overview of ASCC, in line with ASEAN Vision 2020, envisions Southeast Asia as "united in cooperation as a community of caring societies." Thus, the community will promote social development cooperation aimed at improving the standard of living of disadvantaged groups and the rural population, by encouraging active participation from all sectors of society, particularly women, youth, and local societies. Moreover, standing on fundamental premises and taking a long-term perspective, one could infer that the core of ASEAN is its socio-cultural community, conceived as a vehicle for developing a sense of what Southeast Asian identity is, creating a regional awareness, and nurturing mutual understanding among the peoples of ASEAN (Severino 2006).

Echoing Deutsch's (1957) classic definition of regional integration as "the attainment, within a territory, of a "sense of community" and of institutions and practices strong enough and widespread enough to assure, for a long time, dependable expectations of peaceful change among its population, one can perceive that ASEAN integration is complex. While there are steps to advance the realization of ASEAN integration, there remain doubts for its achievability (Kim 2011). Fauzisyah argued that "the region's distinct social, institutional, economic and political circumstances explain the theoretically unpredicted slow integration process" (2017: 23-24). Clearly, the ASEAN is still in the process of regionalization and is still not much of an integrated community. The organization remained primarily a discussion forum, with state leaders urging a shared ASEAN value and identity, but no one was willing to push for advancement by pooling their national sovereignty into a supranational body. While integration therefore remains as a core concept or ideology of the ASEAN mantra, it seems that the heterogeneity of its member countries in terms of political, economic, and socio-cultural attributes hamper this process and vision.

Ⅳ. ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community

Also known as the "third pillar," ASCC gives the impression that it is the least prioritized aspect or dimension, just behind economic and political. As discussed, this third pillar may be the most complicated since Southeast Asia is so diverse in the socio-cultural context. While economic and political communities might be argued and settled in a macro-standardized level, cultures and communities remain in the basic communities or grassroots. While being "third," there is no doubt that ASEAN recognizes the role of the socio-cultural aspect as equally important. In fact, even the AEC Blueprint 2025 supports its political-economic visions within a cultural context in terms of identity building. In other words, even the AEC envisions an encompassing participation, governance, inclusiveness, sustainability, resilience, of ASEAN's population as an identifiable whole. This is further concurred by the former ASEAN Secretary-General Dr. Surin Pitsuwan's argument that "management of ethnic, religious and identity differences in one of the world's most culturally diverse regions will be equally as important as creating economic opportunities."[3] He also called for this subject to be discussed in all forums concerning ASEAN integration, because such dialogue was critical for promoting mutual understanding, thus preventing conflict (Pimoljinda 2013: 52-65).

As a working body of ministers, ASCC's specific goals are: 1) Enhance commitment, participation and social responsibility of ASEAN peoples through an accountable and inclusive mechanism for the benefit of all; 2) Promote equal access and opportunity for all, as well as promote and protect human rights; 3) Promote balanced social development and sustainable environment that meet the current and future needs of the people, 4) Enhance capacity and capability to collectively respond and adapt to emerging trends; and 5) Strengthen ability to continuously innovate and be a proactive member of the global community. To answer the growing need to bring the ASEAN people "together," ASCC formulated the ASCC blueprint. This blueprint, implemented from 2009 to 2015, became

[3] To illustrate, Supavanich argues that although economic growth has reduced poverty in ASEAN, it has not been pro-poor and pro-women (2016: 12).

ASCC's strategy and planning mechanism, and further improved to address "new and emerging challenges." By creating ASCC blueprint 2025, it "opened a world of opportunities to collectively deliver and fully realize human development, resiliency and sustainable development." This blueprint was adopted by ASEAN Leaders during the 27th ASEAN Summit in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; and will chart the path for ASEAN integration in the next ten years. ASCC Blueprint 2025 therefore specifically aims for an ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community that is inclusive, sustainable, resilient, dynamic, and one that engages and benefits the people (Supavanich 2016: 23). Its 18 Key Result Areas and 109 strategic measures are translated to workplans of sectoral bodies which will: 1) Recognize the importance of social protection (e.g., human rights and sustainable development of the region); 2) Recognize differences among ASEAN member countries to be included in national priorities; 3) Support a multi-sectoral approach on capacity building, institutional strengthening, research and monitoring, and evaluation; 4) Complement national efforts to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (31).

From this background, one can argue that managing the indifferences/uniqueness of each member country forges a sense of shared destiny of peace and prosperity for all ASEAN peoples based on common ASEAN values with an ASEAN identity is in fact asserted in ASCC key policies. Moreover, when banking on culture, there is a need to capitalize from the region's cultural richness and diversity, thus contributing to the theoretical and practical discourse on the elusive ASEAN integration (Thuzar 2014). If the main rationale of ASCC is to bring people at the core of its regional community building, then it becomes even most significant for it aims to have a people-oriented, people-centered region/community by focusing on the individuals to the regional integration efforts.

While both ASCC and its blueprint provide much needed framework for the socio-cultural pillar, much of the progress has been due to policies and initiatives at the domestic level of member countries. This explains why several regional problems remain unsolved.[4] This also means that externally, ASEAN is not seen to be helping countries attain the goals specified in the ASSC vision. In

addition, while a consensus is present in supporting the different goals stipulated in the vision, including the initiatives and projects in the blueprint, ASSC lacks a clear image of "what kind" of a community ASEAN wants to be (Vejjajiva 2017: 349). Moreover, "culture" is only mentioned twice in the ASCC blueprint 2025: "A community that embraces tolerance and moderation, fully respects the different religions, cultures, and languages of our peoples…;" (14) and "A dynamic and harmonious community that is aware and proud of its identity, culture, and heritage…" (16). In other words, while culture is an important issue in identity and community-building or integration in the region, as stipulated together with "identity" and "heritage," ASCC blueprint 2025 is deficient in defining and advocating what it is.

As a response to this limitation, the creation of the culture and arts sector under ASCC spearheads the development of the narrative of ASEAN identity, as part of the continuing efforts to promote awareness and foster a shared identity while celebrating and strengthening cultural dynamism and vibrancy in the region. Through its key documents (e.g., Agreements and Declarations, Strategic Plans, Statements, etc.) efforts are being realized to promote and develop small and medium cultural enterprises (SMCEs) to bolster regional development of the digital and creative economy.

The culture and arts sector is driven by the ASEAN's rich cultural diversity and heritage. This is a significant rationale which attests that regional integration in Southeast Asia will not be successful if it just focuses on material aspects of integration. With this, the sector created policies to be an "engine" for economic growth and sustainable development, a "building block" for social cohesion and transformation, and an "asset" for regional pride as well as a "vehicle" for forging closer friendship and understanding. Guided by the Strategic Plan on Culture and the Arts 2016-2025, the sector's key priorities include: 1) deepening ASEAN mindset and identity to increase appreciation for the histories, cultures, arts,

[4] Recently, the case of the Rohingyas as a regional problem, brought to the attention of the international audience, did not produce any effective regional or gestalt response from ASEAN.

traditions, and values of the ASEAN region; 2) promoting ASEAN's cultural diversity to foster intercultural understanding; 3) leveraging on culture for inclusive and sustainable development; 4) harnessing the use of culture for creativity, innovation, and livelihood-creation; 5) promoting regional cooperation to raise capabilities in cultural and heritage management; and 6) promoting the role of culture for ASEAN to become a proactive member of the global community. These would-be-policies are then manifested into published agreements and declarations, strategic plans, and statements.

To realize the sector's goals and objectives, cooperation in the culture and arts sector is led by the ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Culture and Arts (AMCA) and supported by the Senior Officials' Meeting on Culture and Arts (SOMCA). SOMCA works in partnership with the ASEAN Committee on Culture and Information (ASEAN COCI) through the Sub-Committee on Culture (SCC) to implement projects and address policy issues related to the sector.

<Table 1> Major sectoral bodies/committees on culture and arts.

Name	**Description**
ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Culture and Arts (AMCA) Related meetings: ● AMCA+3 ● AMCA+China ● AMCA+Japan ● AMCA+ROK	ASEAN sectoral body tasked with developing strategic regional solutions for culture and arts cooperation, enhancing mutual understanding and solidarity among the peoples of ASEAN.
Senior Officials Meeting on Culture and Arts (SOMCA) Related meetings: ● SOMCA+3 ● SOMCA+China ● SOMCA+Japan ● SOMCA+ROK	ASEAN body comprising senior representatives of the Ministries and/or Agencies in charge of culture and arts from the ASEAN member countries. Monitors the progress of programs and recommendations of AMCA.
ASEAN Committee on Culture and Information (COCI)	Responsible for the formulation, implementation and review of culture and information projects for funding by the ASEAN Cultural Fund (ACF).
ASEAN Sub-Committee on Culture (SCC)	Tasked with promoting, intensifying, and advancing ASEAN regional cooperation in culture and arts under the direction and approval of COCI.

Efforts to mainstream the role of culture and arts in achieving peace and progress in the region are manifested in several policy and project initiatives put in place each year by playing a part in promoting a culture of peace, tolerance, and mutual understanding. The ASEAN City of Culture and the Best of ASEAN Performing Arts are two flagship initiatives. Music, literature, performing arts, contemporary arts, cuisine, and cultural festivals, and cultural policy conversations are among the other activities. Moreover, preservation and conservation of tangible and intangible heritage, support, and promotion of creative and cultural industry (SMCEs), arts exhibitions, and capacity building for museum professionals are also accomplished. Aside from these, the sector is also maximizing the digital technology by creating and continuously developing the ASEAN Cultural Heritage Digital Archive (ACHDA) website, and the virtual reality of ASEAN UNESCO heritage sites which can be enjoyed at the ASEAN Cultural House in Busan, South Korea.

The most important, and perhaps most difficult, endeavor for the sector is leading the construction of the ASEAN identity narrative. This is in part of the continuing efforts to promote awareness and foster a shared identity in the region. By collaborating with dialogue partners and various stakeholders, the sector continuously raises awareness and appreciation on the rich histories, cultures, arts, traditions, and values of the ASEAN region.

4.1 Promotion of ASEAN awareness and sense of community

ASEAN aspires to inculcate a sense of belonging as well as mutual knowledge among member countries about their culture, history, religion, and civilization through the promotion of ASEAN awareness and sense of community. To attain a truly ASEAN community, the sector is promoting an ASEAN mindset as the framework for designing and crafting regional policies, programs, projects, and promotional strategies concerning culture. This framework is intended to develop a regional (ASEAN) shared cultural discourse to strengthen the ASEAN Community.

In line with this framework, the Declaration on ASEAN Unity in Cultural Diversity: Towards Strengthening ASEAN Community

(Bali, November 17, 2011) stipulates respect, protection, promotion, and utilization of ASEAN cultural diversity. ASEAN member countries should work together to conserve and promote cultural diversity in accordance with international obligations and duties. Also, they should ensure the utilization of cultural diversity with a view to achieving the establishment of the ASEAN Community. As a caveat, while member countries expand regional collaboration, they must guarantee that commercial use of culture does not jeopardize ASEAN society's integrity, dignity, or rights.

Clearly, ASEAN member countries will rely on culture to achieve their goals. As a valuable resource, culture should be utilized as 1) component for natural disaster repair and natural disasters, as well as other emergency situations in the region; and 2) component for the improvement of well-being and welfare of the people towards the development of a caring and sharing community. As a community, ASEAN member countries will collaborate on human resource capacity building for the preservation and protection of cultural heritage and achievements through documentation, workshops, seminars, trainings, expert exchanges, grass-roots people-to-people exchanges, youth camps, cultural study tours, and the sharing of best practices to raise the level of knowledge and experience in the ASEAN region. Moreover, the convening of regular cultural dialogues bringing together intellectuals, renowned artists, and experts in the field of culture who will address issues concerning matters on culture is encouraged.

The ASEAN's policies on matter of the ASEAN community are further acknowledged and reaffirmed in the Hue Declaration on Culture for ASEAN Community's Sustainable Development (Vietnam, April 19, 2014). In this key document, cultural creativity and diversity are emphasized to guarantee the viability of the ASEAN Community. It is also stipulated in the document that necessary steps should be made towards the realization of a people-centered ASEAN Community, including developing a measurable and effective role for culture, and by harnessing the potential of culture in development and sustainability.

There are 22 action plan lines related to the promotion of ASEAN awareness and sense of community. Projects were developed to support ASEAN identity and community awareness, to improve coordination in disseminating print, broadcast, and multimedia materials on ASEAN identity, to support school activities promoting ASEAN awareness, to promote ASEAN sporting events, to support the role of the ASEAN Foundation, to encourage interfaith dialogue and media coverage, and to promote youth exchanges.

4.2 Preservation and promotion of ASEAN cultural heritage

The concept of cultural heritage is clearly explained in the ASEAN Declaration on Cultural Heritage (Bangkok, July 25, 2000). The term encompasses 1) significant cultural values and concepts; 2) structures and artifacts: dwellings, buildings for worship, utility structures, works of visual arts, tools, and implements, that are of a historical, aesthetic, or scientific significance; 3) sites and human habitats: human creations or combined human creations and nature, archaeological sites and sites of living human communities that are of outstanding value from a historical, aesthetic, anthropological or ecological viewpoint, or, because of its natural features, of considerable importance as habitat for the cultural survival and identity of particular living traditions; 4) oral or folk heritage: folkways, folklore, languages and literature, traditional arts and crafts, architecture, and the performing arts, games, indigenous knowledge systems and practices, myths, customs and beliefs, rituals and other living traditions; 5) the written heritage; 6) popular cultural heritage: popular creativity in mass cultures (i.e. industrial or commercial cultures), popular forms of expression of outstanding aesthetic, anthropological and sociological values, including the music, dance, graphic arts, fashion, games and sports, industrial design, cinema, television, music video, video arts and cyber art in technologically-oriented urbanized communities. The ASEAN Declaration on Cultural Heritage further mandates its member countries to “identify, delineate, protect, conserve, promote, develop and transmit to future generations the significant cultural heritage within its territory and to avail of regional and international assistance and cooperation, wherever necessary and appropriate.”

While completely respecting each member country's sovereignty and national property rights, ASEAN acknowledges that member countries' national cultural legacy is shared by Southeast Asia, and it is the responsibility of ASEAN to safeguard it.

Moreover, ASEAN will work together to protect antiquities and historic works of art, as well as movable and immovable cultural properties that are manifestations of national history, of great structural and architectural importance, of outstanding archaeological, anthropological, or scientific value, or associated with exceptional events, and are to be considered or declared National Treasures, Protected Buildings, or Protected Artifacts. Historic locations, cultural landscapes, scenic beauty zones, and natural monuments should be identified, acknowledged, and safeguarded. ASEAN member countries should take all necessary steps to protect cultural assets from all human and natural threats, including those posed by armed conflicts, territorial occupations, and other forms of public unrest.

In acknowledgment of people's right to their own culture, ASEAN member countries should work together to nurture and preserve living traditions and folkways while also protecting its living bearers. Given this mandate, they will develop both formal and non-formal learning programs for living traditions in both rural and urban settings, emphasizing the dignity and wisdom of these traditions while supporting creative variety and different world perspectives and values. To further strengthen and preserve local material and immaterial cultures on the other hand, member countries should recognize their local community of origin. Thus, communal intellectual property rights should be recognized and prevention of illicit transfer of cultural property should be reinforced.

Furthermore, the works of prominent sages, philosophers, artists, and writers from the past and present serve as permanent beacons of insight and illumination, wellsprings of guidance and direction for present and future ASEAN peoples. Their maintenance, recording, and promotion are considered of the utmost importance. With this, popular modes of expression in mass cultures are a

valuable aesthetic, intellectual, sociological, anthropological, scientific, and historical resource, as well as a foundation for social and intercultural understanding. The preservation of excellent "popular" traditions and heritage should be encouraged and supported by the ASEAN.

ASEAN member countries should find ways to improve the ASEAN value and cultural dignity. Systems at the local, national, and regional levels in contemporary society should be utilized in a good way to create direction and a vision for genuine human development, especially in the areas of education, media, and governance and commerce. With this, ASEAN member countries should continue to engage in cultural exchanges, networks, and collaboration, by allocation the needed resources for cultural heritage activities.

Matters on cultural heritage are further reinforced through Vientiane Declaration on Reinforcing Cultural Heritage Cooperation in ASEAN (Laos, September 6, 2016). Cultural heritage cooperation is conceptualized in this key document as a response to growing threats to cultural heritage, including illicit cultural property trafficking, natural disasters, climate change, unsustainable tourism, rapid urbanization, and threats arising from poverty and marginalization. Two main policies are presented: First, advancing tangible cultural heritage cooperation by protecting, preserving, and promoting cultural heritage. Second, strengthening intangible cultural heritage cooperation by 1) determining areas of collaboration in the field of intangible cultural heritage and use them to spread ASEAN principles and camaraderie among the people; 2) encouraging regular and long-term interpersonal interactions stressing the rich traditions and shared experiences, ASEAN ideals and cultural expressions; 3) encouraging collaborative cultural scholarship and linkages; 4) encouraging the documentation and distribution of intangible cultural heritage and traditions.

ASEAN has selected 14 action lines with 47 linked initiatives for the protection and promotion of ASEAN cultural heritage. Its action lines include developing or improving national legislation and regional instrument mechanisms to protect, preserve, and promote

ASEAN cultural heritage and living traditions in each member country by 2015; documenting the region's cultural heritage; conducting risk assessments and preparing emergency responses to threatened significant cultural heritage, capacity building in heritage management, preserving, and developing traditional handicraft villages; and developing or improving national legislation and regional instrument mechanisms to protect, preserve, and promote ASEAN cultural heritage and living traditions in each member country.

To date, the launching of the ASEAN Cultural Heritage Digital Archive website is considered as the major outcome of the ASEAN policies on cultural heritage. This is an effort to digitize the valuable historical cultural heritage of ASEAN countries. The website was made public on February 27, 2020; and to date, 267 cultural assets from Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, and Thailand are available to the public. This system supports images, audio recordings, and video data that are available on other Nippon Telegraph and Telephone (NTT) DATA digital archive systems, as well as an expanded capability to handle three-dimensional models of physical objects. In other words, all specimens of ASEAN cultural heritage can be freely “experienced” by anyone in the world.

4.3 Promotion of cultural creativity and industry

On the promotion of cultural creativity and industry, ASEAN will promote cultural creativity activities and industries towards innovations, generating livelihoods and supporting economic development in ASEAN member countries. To address such goal, regional cooperation, and partnership for wider ASEAN markets in the cultural industry are expected from member countries. In this context, ASEAN member countries’ government and private sectors are encouraged to support the development of Small and Medium-sized Cultural Enterprises (SMCEs).

To foster cultural creativity and industry, ASEAN member countries will advocate for the protection, promotion, and enforcement of intellectual property rights and community rights of cultural products, in accordance with their respective international commitments. At the same time, ASEAN member

countries will promote regional cooperation and partnership for wider ASEAN markets in the cultural industry, and creative industry (e.g., film, music, animation, etc.).

On the other hand, the ASEAN also seeks to attain economic growth and poverty alleviation by optimizing appropriate use of tangible and intangible cultural assets. In realizing such goal, one major initiative is promoting ASEAN as a hub for cultural and creative industries, human resource development, and training by fostering collaboration between educational institutions and the creative industries on knowledge exchange, technology transfer, capacity building, product and design creation, and arts curriculum development.

Moreover, partnerships with cultural institutions (e.g., inter-government institutions, foundations, academies, cultural centers, etc.) between ASEAN member countries and dialogue partners on programs and projects related to cultural conservation, cultural and arts education, cultural events and festivals, and creative industries are continuously being organized. Looking at these initiatives on culture and arts, ASEAN has consistently highlighted the cultural diversity among its member countries and has consistently maintained the primacy of state sovereignty and, as such, has favored cultural policies that allowed countries to showcase their respective national cultures (Enverga 2018).

Undoubtedly through ASCC, ASEAN is guided to be characterized by a culture of regional resilience, adherence to agreed principles, spirit of cooperation, collective responsibility, and will promote human and social development, respect for fundamental freedoms, gender equality, promotion and protection of human rights, and the promotion of social justice (ASCC Blueprint 2025: 6). Meanwhile its culture and arts sector pushes for the promotion of ASEAN identity which will be the basis of Southeast Asia's regional interests and the collective personality, norms, values, beliefs, and aspirations as one community.

Ⅴ. ASEAN identity and ASEAN community vis-à-vis culture

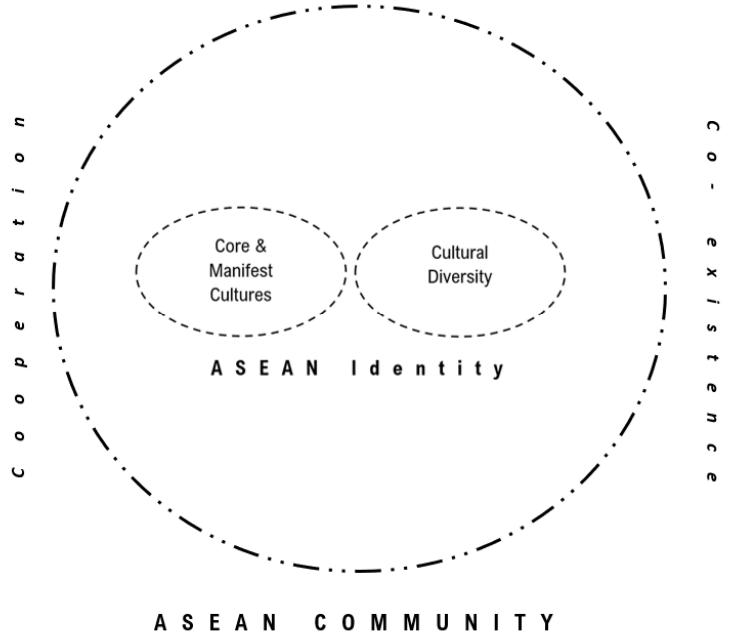
ASEAN has diverse peoples and therefore has diverse socio-cultural systems. Each member country is diverse as well as unique. Their cultural norms and traditional values are largely ingrained in both its socio-cultural practices and government institutions. It should be expected that some of these ideals and customs might make cultural encounters difficult. Thus, establishing "flexible" cultural connections at a regional level proves to be arduous. Even when such exchanges exist, there is concern that they might be affected by ethnic tensions, political preferences, or religious intolerance. In any cultural interaction, the modes and limitations should be addressed explicitly, to avoid clashes of conflicting identities.

While there are several recognized factors (e.g., language, religion, socio-cultural institutions, etc.) that pose as challenges for the ASEAN as a community, these should not be seen as an obstacle but rather an encouragement to all member countries to develop multi-faceted ways of harmonious and peaceful coexistence. The ASEAN community's cultural diversity itself provides member countries and their peoples with numerous opportunities to learn about and respect one another's assets and skills. This opportunity is considered as being largely enforced by the ASEAN as guided in the ASCC blueprint 2025, and the culture and arts sector's key documents.

If one sees that there is an absence of common identity (i.e., cultural diversity) in the region, ASEAN as a regional body may formulate new ideologies and narratives on identity based on democratic principles, respect, and tolerance. In other words, the concepts of ASEAN identity and ASEAN community is demystified through fostering a sense of belonging, strengthening unity in diversity, and developing mutual understanding among member countries regarding their culture, history, religion, and civilization. Moreover, promoting the conservation and preservation of ASEAN cultural heritage to ensure its continuity will increase people's awareness and understanding of the region's unique history and cultural similarities and differences between and among ASEAN member countries, while protecting ASEAN cultural heritage's

distinctiveness.

On the other hand, the perceived strong cultural biodiversity in ASEAN member countries is neither a strength nor a weakness but an opportunity to the region (Chia 2013: 4-5). This implies that member countries can only choose how to position themselves to gain maximum benefit from culture. Simply put, member countries that have a more stable state and efficient resources can take full advantage of it (e.g., creating strong historical and cultural links throughout Southeast Asia) and will surely be "winners" in the region. As Jetschke and Ruland argues: "they do so because developing institutional isomorphism increases their legitimacy, their access to resources and therefore their survival capabilities" (2009: 183). Thus, by highlighting the uniqueness of a member country's culture (and identity) in the ASEAN community, its culture is legitimized as asset and leverage.



<Figure 3> Culture in the core of the "imagined" ASEAN identity and community.

From the above discussion, this paper asserts that ASEAN identity and community are constructed through strong selfhood and cultural ties. While being pre-requisites for a successful regional integration; the ability of different regional actors to possess strong sense of identity with one another is also required. The implication drawn from this assertion is that having a common identity, or a cultural consistency of the regional actors will most likely reduce conflicts or misunderstanding in the region, thus allowing them to achieve common goals.

Considering the merit of such strategies, the region in its diverse cultural uniqueness and differences, highlights the most basic and fundamental question thus far: how can the ASEAN integrate with such diversity in worldviews, religions, languages, traditions, values, and beliefs of its member countries? If this diversity expresses or creates cultural identities, how then can integration through culture be possible?

Ⅵ. ASEAN integration through culture

As discussed, Deutsch's concept of integration highlights the mutual interdependency of its units. While integration refers to the importance of the whole, it also refers to the unity of the different parts; and while integration reduces cultural differences, it may lead to the diffusion of a dominant culture and dilution of local cultures. Using this as background, this paper suggests two perspectives that may become the scenario of ASEAN integration through culture. First, harmony of shared common interests amidst complexity or diversity; and second, emergence of hybrid cultures amidst complexity or diversity. Given this picture, ASEAN integration through culture should undergo coordination and cooperation of the cultural differences of peoples to promote understanding between the different member countries in the region. Also, this step can avoid the negative effects arising from the different goals and policies regarding culture.

In the periphery, integration through culture in the ASEAN context considers the region's heterogenous levels of economic

development vis-à-vis the political will of members countries. The possibility of a real integration might be in jeopardy because if state leaders themselves may not see an absolute necessity of the creation of a "shared" cultural community. Even when there is an assumption that more benefits will be reaped if all the member countries can work together to build a community, the question "who has both capability and willingness to take the first step?" should be answered. Nonetheless, this paper argues that these arguments will clearly affect how each member country prioritizes its culture and identity as an asset to the region. If taken as a premium, then, proper, and sufficient resources should be invested for the dissemination of the member country's culture and identity. With political will on the helm, appropriate policies and laws can be taken to account to boost member countries' historical and cultural linkages throughout the region. As such, language-cultural camps, workshops, immersion, tourism, regional conferences, and expositions are staple strategies and initiatives employed by "politically-motivated" member countries.

Taken to account, the issue of "identities" may hamper the ASEAN integration through culture. Conflicts are difficult to avoid with around 1,500 ethnic groups using around 1,300 languages and dialects in Southeast Asia. Considering ethnicity and religious beliefs for example, communities have forged unique beliefs, ideologies, and value systems about the many issues concerning the region. As a result, local identities still prevail over the "perceived" ASEAN identity. A holistic, inclusive, and pragmatic way of integrating cultures therefore may still be a topic for discussion. Practicality will dictate the feasibility of bilateral relations for example, instead of a homogenous relation with all the member countries. Not all plans or strategies might be deemed appropriate to each and everyone in the region.

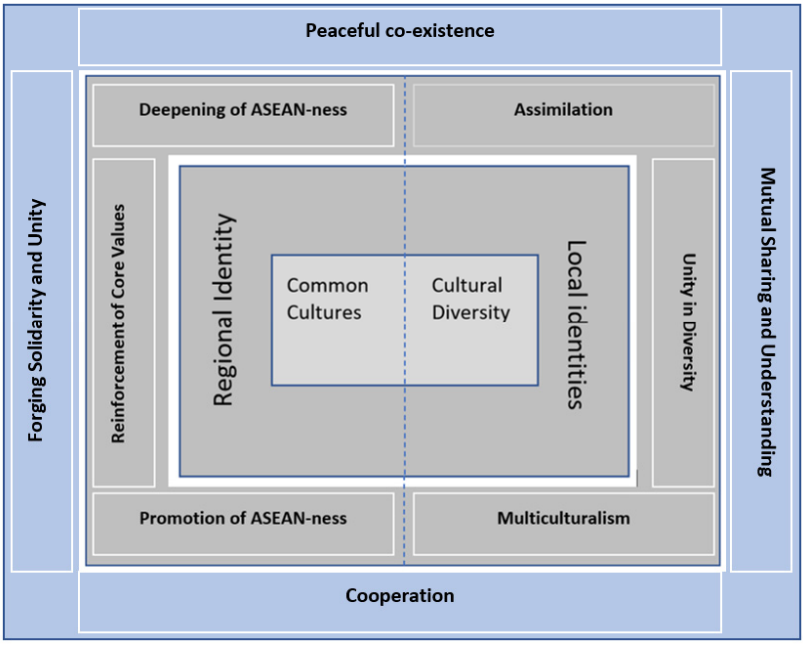
The image of ASEAN integration through culture, where ASEAN peoples have mutual respect by helping and understanding each other without leaving their own traditions, is laudable yet utopian. Using shared core and manifest cultures as framework, ASEAN integration through culture can revolve around deliberate promotion of processes and sentiments of mutual identification,

loyalties, and sense of belongingness. Local and regional machineries concerning culture should ensure peaceful coexistence (through tolerance and understanding) and cooperation within the culturally diverse region.

To capitalize the region's diversity, three approaches are suggested. First is assimilation of cultures which realizes how distinct ethnic groups grow to share a shared culture as a natural result of having the same socioeconomic opportunities as other ethnic groups. This process entails the gradual substitution of new cultural and behavioral standards for old ones. Then, once initiated, the process unavoidably and irreversibly leads to complete integration as manifested by a typology of assimilation patterns[5] (Gordon 1964). Second is multiculturalism, which realizes the lowering of barriers and borders to provide citizens with opportunities, thus ASEAN member countries can learn about each other's cultures. With this, cultures can freely intermingle and in turn could enhance respect, understanding, and tolerance within the region. There should be a "reconciliation" of cultures, rather than a mixing of cultures or a sensation of being culturally divided. To date, this is a significant attribute particularly to ASEAN migrant workers, where one's cultural heritage and lived experiences blend. This paper asserts that it is possible to integrate elements of multiple cultures and create something unique that is satisfying for each actors involved. Moreover, multiculturalism reinforces people's comfort and familiarity with both their ancestral culture and the culture of the country or region in which they have established. It applies not only to immigrants from other nations, but also to their offsprings who, despite being born and reared in the receiving community, are likely firmly rooted in their families' heritage culture at home (Portes and Rumbaut 2001). It may also apply to people

[5] 1. Acculturation: newcomers adopt language, dress, and daily customs of the host society (including values and norms). 2. Structural assimilation: large-scale entrance of minorities into cliques, clubs, and institutions in the host society. 3. Marital assimilation: widespread intermarriage. 4. Identification assimilation: the minority feels bonded to the dominant culture. 5. Attitude reception assimilation refers to the absence of prejudice. 6. Behavior reception assimilation refers to the absence of discrimination. 7. Civic assimilation occurs when there is an absence of value conflicts and power struggles.

who live in ethnic enclaves, where heritage cultures are likely to be passed down through generations, as well as people from visible minority groups who may be identified as being different from the majority ethnic group even if their families have lived in the receiving society for generations. Furthermore, as Mistry and Wu tend to argue, the ethnic component of multiculturalism is not solely a reaction to prejudice. It also symbolizes a sense of pride in one's heritage and a desire to preserve it (Umaña-Taylor 2004: 12). Third, unity in diversity which is concerned with recommendations, policies, and strategies in both local and regional level that will foster regional appreciation by putting cultural differences into practice. By this, member countries should capitalize in contributing and promoting the transmission of local knowledge, skills, arts, and information to both national and international levels. As shown, there have been innovative initiatives focused in developing a close network based on mutual understanding and joint exploration of common challenges. Engagements not only in local affairs, but



<Figure 4> Proposed framework for the ASEAN integration through culture.

rather in regional and international affairs should be a common picture particularly in the academic and intellectual exchanges. By maximizing practical ways of disseminating cultures and identities, transnational and transregional engagement and negotiation could be feasible, and respectful.

This paper places an exclusive, single ASEAN identity thrusted by the mantra "one vision, one identity, one community" in question. While the findings exhibit that the ASEAN is propelled by common economic, political, and cultural goals, its identity and community remains heterogenous at its roots. Brushing aside strong tendency to privilege "major" cultures and marginalizing or exoticizing smaller ethnic groups, the ASEAN is a plethora of unique cultural manifestations and socio-cultural negotiations. In this light, one can say that ASEAN's identity delves on the plurality of its member states. The staple food for example, is both rice and noodles; sentiments of being an "Asian" is being both "Filipino" and "Malay;" wanting to invest in the Chinese markets (China and Hongkong, Taiwan, Singapore) but consciously grappling with anti-Chinese sentiments as aggravated by maritime dispute. In other words, ASEAN identity and community is demystified, being a gestalt concept. From this point, it is clear why ASEAN aspires regional cooperation and solidarity in matters of culture as seen in actions, policies, and sustained initiatives embedded in ASCC-culture and arts sector key documents. The proposed framework for ASEAN integration serves as an alternative paradigm, and a pragmatic endeavor for its member countries to be "culturally united" with each other while being "true" and "unique" in their actuality.

Ⅶ. Limitations and unexplored vistas

This paper only explored the culture component of ASCC on the surface. Future research should consider how other factors (e.g., cultural diplomacy, state and regional politics, discrimination, regional schizophrenia, cultural dissonance, etc.) may affect the ASEAN integration through culture. Researchers are also encouraged

to embark on the issues of transcultural contact and negotiation (e.g., public health and medicine, nutrition sciences, disaster responses, environmental management, tourism, migration, digital revolution, pop culture, etc.) and the different modalities for creating a sustainable cultural landscape in the ASEAN.

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ASEAN Socio-cultural Community Blueprint 2025. https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/8.-March-2016-ASCC-Blueprint-2025.pdf (Accessed January 10, 2019)

Bandar Seri Begawan Declaration on Culture and the Arts to Promote ASEAN's Identity Towards a Dynamic and Harmonious ASEAN Community. https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Bandar-Seri-Begawan-Declaration-on-Culture-and-the-Arts-to-Promote-ASEAN%E2%80%99s-Identity-Towards-a-Dynamic-and-Harmonious-ASEAN-Community.pdf (Accessed February 1, 2019)

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Development. https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Hue-Declaration-on-Culture-for-ASEAN-Community%E2%80%99s-Sustainable-Development.pdf (Accessed March 5, 2019)

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