SUVANNABHUMI

Multi-disciplinary Journal of Southeast Asian Studies

Vol 9, No 2

December 2017

ISEAS/BUFS

SUVANNABHUMI:
Multi-disciplinary Journal of Southeast Asian Studies

EDITORIAL BOARD

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SUVANNABHUMI means "The Land of Gold" in Pali, which location implies Southeast Asia.
Cover Photo : Tongkonan, the traditional ancestral house of the Torajan people in South Sulawesi, Indonesia.

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The decentralized Austronesian polity:
Of Mandalas, Negaras, Galactics, and the South Sulawesi Kingdoms*

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[*Abstract*]

Various models have been presented to describe early Southeast Asian political formations that draw on both indigenous and imported Indic ideas. The most influential of these are the "Mandala" (Wolters 1968, 1982, 1999), "Galactic" (Tambiah 1976), "Negara" (Geertz 1980), and Anderson's 1972 "The idea of power in Javanese culture." This paper represents an initial attempt to compare the salient features of these models with historical and archaeological data from South Sulawesi where, exceptionally and importantly, societies developed independently of Indic ideas. South Sulawesi is unique in being the only region of maritime Southeast Asia where there are sufficient written and oral sources, often substantiated by archaeological data, to document the social evolution of its society from scattered, economically self-sufficient communities with ranked lineages practicing swidden agriculture to large political units (kingdoms) constructed around indigenous cultural and political concepts with economies based on wet-rice

agriculture. This wealth of data provides us with a much more detailed picture of the emergence, development and support structures of early kingdoms than found in the models, which makes South Sulawesi of fundamental importance in understanding the social and economic evolution of pre-Indic influenced Austronesian societies in Maritime Southeast Asia.

Ⅰ. Introduction

Various models have been put forward to describe early Southeast Asian political formations that draw on both indigenous and imported Indic ideas. The most influential of these, in relation to political and social structures, are the *mandala* (Wolters 1968, 1982, 1999) "Galactic" (Tambiah 1976, 1977), "Negara" (Geertz 1980), and Anderson's "The idea of power in Javanese culture" (1972). The general features that emerge from these models are that Southeast Asian political formations were decentralized rather than centralized; highly unstable and borderless; defined by their centers; and that inherited status or lineage played little or no role in the rise and position of a ruler or the cohesion of a polity but was instead dependent on an individual's level of "soul stuff," prowess, or other type of spiritual potency.

This paper represents an initial attempt to compare the salient features of these models with historical and archaeological data from South Sulawesi where large political formations, termed kingdoms, began to emerge at about 1300 CE and were fully established by at least the 16th century. About a hundred years after the kingdoms began to form, the Bugis adopted a script of ultimate Indic origin which they first applied to record the ruling elite in genealogical form.[1] Exceptionally and importantly, these societies developed essentially independently of Indic ideas (Caldwell 1991; Pelras 1996:

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[1] Caldwell (1988) provides evidence for the development of writing among the Bugis at about 1400 CE, while Miller (2016) shows that the script was based on an early Gujarati variety.

4; Druce 2009)[2] and South Sulawesi is perhaps unique in being the only region of maritime Southeast Asia where there are sufficient written and oral sources, often substantiated by archaeological data, to document the social evolution of society from scattered, economically self-sufficient communities with ranked lineages practicing swidden agriculture to large political units constructed around indigenous cultural and political concepts with economies based on wet-rice agriculture. South Sulawesi is thus of fundamental importance in understanding the social and economic evolution of pre-Indic influenced Austronesian societies in maritime Southeast Asia and pre-European-contact Austronesian societies where Indic influences did not penetrate deeply, such as the Philippines. In addition, the data from South Sulawesi can facilitate understanding of the political and economic processes taking place in early Java and Bali below the overlaying Indic influences. I begin with an overview of the various models and then turn to South Sulawesi.

Ⅱ. Mandalas, Negaras, and Galactics

Probably the most influential model for understanding early Southeast Asian political formations discussed here is that of the *mandala*, which has also found influence and favor with international relations scholars.[3] This model has a long history in the literature of Southeast Asia and elements can be traced back to Dutch scholarship on Java[4] and seen in Heine-Geldern's "Conceptions of state and kingship in southeast Asia" (1942, 1963). Here I am concerned with later highly influential examples of these ideas, namely that first posited in 1968 by Wolters, who further developed the model in later studies (1982) and in 1999 presented a

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[2] In contrast to these and other studies, Shelly Errington (1989) begins with the assumption that the South Sulawesi kingdom of Luwuq was an Indic state but provides no evidence to support this notion. Her study is an ethnological account of a particular noble environment and is heavily influenced by the ideas of Geertz and Anderson. The ideas presented in this paper are based on historical evidence. On Errington's study see Caldwell (1991) and Fox (1991).

[3] As an example see Lund's (2003) attempt to apply the *mandala* concept in modern-day Southeast Asia.

[4] See Schrieke (1955) and Moertono (1968).

commentary on this and other aspects of his work in response to research by others, although the general features of his *mandala* changed little. The *mandala* concept influenced in various ways the other models I discuss and it is useful to provide a brief account of its origins.

The term is Sanskrit, meaning "sacred circle"; a representation of the cosmos that has religious and political significance in Hindu and Buddhist thought. In relation to political formations, it is found in several Indian treatises on statecraft where it is used in reference to geopolitical inter-polity relations. The earliest and best known of these is the 4th century BCE *Arthaśāstra*, purportedly written by Kautilya, the main advisor and minister to the Mauryan Empire's first ruler.[5] The *Arthaśāstra* presents Kautilya's theory of foreign policy where the *mandala* concept is used in the sense of a "circle of kingdoms" to set out the geopolitical situation confronting his ideal king. This ideal king is encircled by other kingdoms who are his natural enemies "because they have common boundaries with him" (Olivelle 2013: 48). A further circle of kingdoms lies beyond these adjoining kingdoms. The kings in this circle share boundaries with the ideal king's enemies and are by nature both the enemy of his enemies and his natural allies against the common foe. Further circles of kingdoms extend outwards and follow the same enemy-friend pattern (Olivelle 2013: 48). While conflict is a natural state of affairs and military might important, Kautilya, noting the cost and unpredictability of warfare, presented other ways the king can achieve his objectives, such as conciliation, gifts, and dissention. However, these and other methods, such as a peace-pact, essentially represent different tactics to use at different times in order to outmaneuver an opponent and achieve the ultimate objective: the "conquest of adjoining lands" (Olivelle 2013: 49-50). Being a king thus meant that one either conquered in order to expand territory and treasury, or was conquered (Olivelle 2013: 47). Conquered lands should then be incorporated into the kingdom but at the same time, the victor should act magnanimously towards the conquered soldiers

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[5] The *Arthaśāstra* was rediscovered in the early 20th century and although attributed to Kautilya, Basham (1967: 80) is of the opinion that the text is "an elaboration" of Kautilya's work.

and subjects who can maintain their own customs.[6]

Wolters, and later some others,[7] adopted and applied the term *mandala* from ancient India because they identified similar features in early Southeast Asian political formations from various data, such as Chinese records and local inscriptions. The term was also seen as preferable to "state" as early Southeast Asian polities appeared to share few characteristics with European and Chinese states, namely political centralization, developed bureaucracies, administrative integration, clearly defined borders and dynastic succession. Wolters did not so much apply the *mandala* concept to explain geopolitical relations between polities, as had Kautilya, but used it more to denote relations within a particular polity, although the general features remain evident.[8]

Wolters envisaged early Southeast Asia as a single "cultural matrix" where various overlapping *mandala* sharing similar features were spread over the landscape. Each *mandala* consisted of an unstable "circle of kings," one of whom was the conqueror, or overlord, situated at the center of the system, who claimed personal hegemony over lesser kings whose polities made up the constituent parts. While these lesser kings acknowledged the central king's authority, they were not under his direct political or administrative control. Each remained a potentially independent ruler who could either switch their allegiance to another king or mount a challenge to become the *mandala's* dominant center. These *mandalas* were

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[6] In addition to the *Artha*ś*āstra*, it should be noted that later medieval models found in various tantric texts, such as those discussed by Ronald Davidson (2002), may have been more influential in Southeast Asia from about 500 CE to 1500 CE in relation to the transmission of Indic religious ideas and how these ideas relate to political formations. While I note their importance, I have focused on the *Artha*ś*āstra* as it is the predominant text that the models I discuss, in particular Wolters, draw upon.

[7] In particular, see Mabbet (1978).

[8] Zakharov (2009: 2-3) criticizes Wolters for using the term *mandala* in reference to Srivijaya, pointing out that in inscriptions, the kingdom never referred to itself as a *mandala* but as *kadatuan* Sriwijaya or *vanua* Sriwijaya. The term appears once in the Telaga Batu-2 inscription, where *mandala* is used in reference to the various provinces of Srivijaya, not the center or the kingdom as a whole. Reynolds (2006: 40-41) appears to consider the term more of a "heuristic device" and states that we cannot know whether early Southeast Asian rulers knew of Kautilya's concept.

easily fractured and there were no fixed borders as they "would expand and contract in concertina-like fashion" as alliances constantly shifted (Wolters 1999: 27-8). Wolters considers that they were largely individual achievements:

> The earliest Southeast Asian polities, even when Sanskrit inscriptions began to be written, were the personal and somewhat fragile achievements of men of prowess and had not been transformed by institutional innovations in the direction of more centralized government. A polity still cohered only in the sense that it was the projection of an individual's prowess. (Wolters 1999: 21).

Inherited status, or lineage, played no significant part in the achievements of these "men of prowess," which Wolters assumed was partly a consequence of the widespread practice of cognatic descent in the region (Wolters 1999: 18). Rather, it was the "abnormal amount of personal and innate soul stuff these men of prowess" had, which gave them the "spiritual and leadership resources for mobilizing settlements and *mandalas*" (Wolters 1999: 18, 112). Furthermore, this prowess was "a personal quality" and could not be "transmitted in order to perpetuate the existence of a particular *mandala*" (Wolters 1999: 112). This spiritual potency was displayed in rituals and used to expand political authority.

Wolters argues that it was the adoption and adaption of Indic ideas, or "self-Hinduization" that filled an important gap in local cultures as it presented "men of prowess" with opportunities to apply some of these ideas to local concepts. In particular, Shaivism, allowed "men of prowess" to identify themselves with divine figures and amplify "their innate soul stuff." This "heightened self-perceptions among the chieftain class and prepared the ground for an overlords' claim to universal sovereignty, based on Siva's divine authority" (Wolters 1999: 55). This enhanced the stability and durability of the mandala and helped to perpetuate their existence (Wolters 1999: 112).

In his Galactic polity, Tambiah (1976, 1977) was concerned with the Buddhist political world of Southeast Asia, focusing mainly on mainland Southeast Asia and Java. Like Wolters, his model is derived from the concept of *mandala* and it was the Indo-Tibetan

tradition of "a core (*manda*) and a container or enclosing element (la)" found in various cosmological schemes that Tambiah sees as a pattern for the "state" and prompted him to use the label "galactic" (Tambiah 1976: 102).[9] At the center of the Galactic polity was a capital under the direct control of the king. The capital itself was the symbolic representation of Mt. Meru, the pivot of the universe. Surrounding the capital was a circle of provinces ruled by princes or governors appointed by the king and beyond, another circle of "more or less "independent" tributary polities" that in theory were inferior replicas of the center, over which the king claimed personal hegemony (Tambiah 1976: 112-113). Tambiah depicts this system as "a central planet surrounded by differentiated satellites, which are more or less "autonomous" entities held in orbit and within the sphere of influence of the center" (1976: 113). The further away the satellite, the weaker the gravitational pull of the ruler. On the periphery of the state were other competing centers with their own satellites. Like the *mandala* model, Galactic polities were thus fluid and unstable as alliances often shifted. There was also considerable emphasis on individual achievement and personal relationships in line with the Buddhist idea of the *cakkavatti* king at the center of the polity who was "the pivot of the polity, and his palace and capital a microcosm of the cosmological universe" and mediator between the gods and humans (Tambiah 1976: 100).

Clifford Geertz's Negara, or "theatre state," is drawn from his work on pre-colonial Bali but presented as a model applicable to all pre-colonial Southeast Asian polities, particularly those influenced by Indic ideas. The "theatre state" shares similarities with the models of Wolters and Tambiah in that it was defined by its center, "a microcosm of the supernatural order "an image of … the universe on a smaller scale"-and the material embodiment of political order" (Geertz 1981: 13). These theatre states had a "segmental character," comprising of "dozens of independent, semi-independent, and quarter-independent rulers" and there was no defined boundaries between states just "zones of mutual interest" (Geertz 1980: 18-19,

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[9] Unlike Wolters, who was mainly concerned with the convergence of pre- and early Indic Southeast Asia until about the 14th century, Tambiah considered his model applicable to later periods in history.

24). Geertz places considerable emphasis on the role and importance of ritual in these states, which is where his model mainly departs from the *mandala* and galactic.

Geertz argues that the basis of these "theatre states" was not military, political, or even economic power, and that rulers had little interest in land or trade, which was in the hands of foreigners. Rather, it was organized spectacle, the splendor and pomp displayed by the exemplary center. The nobility did little else but occupy themselves with status differentiation through various rituals while being wholly detached from the population, who were self-organized into various plural collectives. Geertz thus rejects the notion that rituals and pageantry helped shore-up political power and authority and divorces the state from both its populace and material base: "The dramas of the theater state … were, in the end, neither illusions nor lies, neither sleight of hand nor make-believe. They were what there was" (Geertz 1981: 136).[10]

In a paper originally published in 1972 (reprinted in 1991), Anderson presents an expansive exploration of power in the Javanese context, a topic not directly addressed by the models discussed above. Here, I am concerned mainly with what Anderson says about the nature of traditional polities and their rulers and subjects. Power is central to both, and a ruler, or aspiring ruler, must have power, or be seen to have it, in order to rule. In traditional Javanese thought, there is constant and fixed amounts of this power in the universe that originate from a single source and exists independently of sources associated with power in Western thought, such as material wealth, weapons, or social status. Power is thus "concrete" and not abstract, individuals can possess it but not create it, and there are no "inherent moral implications" associated with power (Anderson 1972: 7-8).

Obtaining and accumulating such power presupposed the transformation of an ordinary person to a new and higher category

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[10] Compare this with Schulte Nordholt (1996:18, 55-6, 114), who notes the importance of ritual in Bali but argues that "ritual alone doth not make a ruler" and shows that Balinese rulers were directly involved in opening up new rice growing areas and expanding preexisting small-scale irrigation works.

of personhood. Orthodox methods used in this pursuit included yogic practices and extreme asceticism, or less commonly, sexual and alcoholic self-indulgence and ritual murder. In the case of a new dynasty, the first ruler was believed to have received the *wahyu* ("divine radiance"), a visible sign of power that was passed to him from the ruler of the "disintegrating" dynasty. Genealogy and ancestry were unimportant and the new dynasty's founder was often a "parvenu of relatively humble origins" who arose after instigating the "turmoil" that destroyed the old dynasty; proof of his power was the movement of the *wahyu* to him (Anderson 1972: 25). In the everyday setting, a ruler's power was visible in the *tejas* (radiance), which was thought "to emanate softly" from his face or person. Through the falsification of chronicles, these dynasty founders often attempted to associate themselves with powerful figures from the past. However, this was not done to try and "demonstrate legal, inherited legitimacy," but to attempt to "coopt and absorb" power from a recognized pool (Anderson 1972: 25-26). The successors of the dynasty derived power from the initial "impulse provided by the founder," but over generations this grew increasingly "diffused." If not renewed and reintegrated the dynasty will fall.

Anderson's depiction of the traditional Javanese polity also shares similarities with the other models, that of "a cone of light cast downwards by a reflector lamp" (Anderson 1972: 22). This metaphor is used to emphasize how power was heavily focused on the center, realized in the ruler, and faded at the periphery where it merged with the fading light of similar centers. However, the political or administrative units of the polity located outside the center should not be hierarchical as Javanese thought "implicitly denies…autonomy at each of its various levels," and seeks "a single, pervasive source of power and authority," which was realized in the ruler "who personifies the unity of society" (Anderson 1972: 22). In such a system, any form of social contract or mutual obligation between ruler and ruled is alien and there was no "formal reciprocity in political relationships" (Anderson 1972: 47-48). The sole obligation of a ruler or center was to himself or itself and the center's concentration of power was for the good of all.

Anderson also applies the *mandala* concept in the sense used

by Kautilya. Expansion was necessary because at the periphery of the state, the pull of a neighbor's power could diminish and weaken a ruler's control. Successful expansion was dependent on the level of power concentrated at the center. Rather than destroying a neighbor, which may result in the power being dispersed and potentially absorbed by rivals, the preferred option was assimilation into the state through voluntary submission that in theory led to the emergence of a *cakravatin* and brought all conflict to an end (Anderson 1972: 32). In stark contrast to South Sulawesi sources, Anderson also notes that "the glorification of the ruler does not mention his prowess in battle," as the use of warfare would be an admission of a ruler's weakness (Anderson 1972: 32).

Ⅲ. South Sulawesi

Perhaps the main reason for the late emergence of the South Sulawesi kingdoms was because the region was not linked directly to any major trade route before 1300 CE. This is attested by the archaeological data which shows that before this period, trade with other parts of the archipelago was small in scale, sporadic, and interspersed around a few coastal areas, mainly the southern coast of the region.[11] From 1300 CE, the archaeological record reveal a major change, documenting the advent of sustained and regular trade with other parts of the archipelago, as the region became incorporated into one or more major trade routes. This trade was not confined to a few coastal areas but incorporated much of lowland South Sulawesi and some highland communities (see, for example, Bahru Kallupa et al. 1989; Bulbeck 1992; Bougas 1998; Bulbeck and Caldwell 2000; Ali Fadilah and Irfan Mahmud 2000; Druce et al. 2006; Druce 2009).[12]

Over the last 30 years or so, historical and archaeological research has presented a wealth of data that makes it abundantly

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[11] See Druce (2009: 32-33) for a brief overview of archaeological finds relating to trade in the period before 1300 CE.

[12] Based on mainly topnymic evidence, it seems probable that the earliest of these traders were associated with the Javanese kingdoms of Majapahit and (its predecessor) Singhasari.

clear that rice was the major product the lowland South Sulawesi kingdoms exchanged with foreign traders (Macknight 1983; Bahru Kallupa et al. 1989; Bulbeck 1992; Caldwell 1995; Bulbeck and Caldwell 2000; Druce 2009). This external demand for rice appears to have stimulated a shift from swidden cultivation to more productive wet-rice agriculture, which was continually expanded over the following centuries. This set in motion a radical transformation of South Sulawesi societies from simple, scattered chiefdoms with ranked lineages to numerous larger political entities. This transformation is clearly discernible in various indigenous oral and written sources and supported by a wealth of archaeological data. The evidence clearly points to hereditary ruling elites leading major geographic expansions that are associated with the control of agriculture and agricultural land and their populations.[13] The most successful were those chiefdoms who controlled, or came to control, the most productive agricultural land, trade routes or external trade outlets. Less successful chiefdoms entered into tributary relations with the more successful ones, either through defeat in war or voluntary agreements that provided protection and economic benefits. Most were cemented by marriage alliances. The elites who led these expansions were clearly ambitious and may well have been charismatic, but they were not Wolters' "men of prowess," and any divine radiance is only associated with the recognition of the ancestors who initiated the transmission of status, not with a current ruler.[14] Their claims to power were derived from inherited status and backed up by military and economic might.

By the 16th century, various large and small kingdoms were firmly established. Trade and agricultural expansion continued on larger scales and kingdoms came into increasing conflict and alliance with each other as they competed for control of resources. Conflicts appear to have abated, at least for 60 years or so, following

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[13] In particular, see Macknight's (1983) analysis of the Boné and Wajoq chronicles which show the rulers of these kingdoms conquering agricultural settlements, directing subjects to open new rice-fields and bringing defeated hill people down to the plains to do agricultural work.

[14] Any form of radiance is associated only with founding rulers, who in various oral and written traditions are said to have either descended from the Upperworld or ascended from the Underworld (see below).

the Makasar kingdoms of Gowa and Talloq's success in defeating and Islamizing their Bugis neighbors in the early 17th century.[15]

As in other parts of Southeast Asia, as Wolters (1967) and others (Miksic 1985; Christie 1990, 1995; Hall 2011; Druce 2016b) show, trade was thus the major stimulus for the rise and progression of these kingdoms to complexity. However, their development was determined by indigenous, not imported, political and cultural precepts.

3.1. Political structures

The political structure of the South Sulawesi kingdoms that began to take shape from 1300 CE appears similar to that set out in the models, in particular the *mandala*, in that they were highly decentralized and had multiple centers (Druce 2009: 1):

> A Bugis, Makasar or Massenrempulu kingdom is a political unit occupying a defined geographic territory within which there exists one primary settlement with a paramount ruler chosen from the highest-ranking nobles of the ruling family and a varying number of secondary settlements, each with their own paramount rulers, laws and government. The name of the kingdom is derived from the primary settlement, to which are attached all other settlements through tributary relationships.

Both the central polity and each tributary had their own directly ruled lands (domains, cluster of villages) that formed the core of each constituent part, directly supervised by members of the ruling family or subordinates. Many of the tributary lands of a kingdom also had their own tributaries which were not directly linked to the kingdom (Druce 2009: 29, 256-258). The kingdom's primary settlement rarely interfered in the affairs of the tributaries and unlike the suggestion in Anderson's model, there was no concentration of power at the center, nor was the autonomy of the tributaries denied. Rather, power was fragmented between the

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[15] Makasar (with one "s") refers to the ethnic group of that name and their language; Makassar refers to the historical kingdom and the capital of South Sulawesi, formerly Ujung Pandang.

numerous tributaries that made up a kingdom with the ruler of the central polity the leader, or *primus inter pares*, of the numerous other rulers of the tributary lands. Nor did a ruler's power radiate from the center and grow dimmer in the most distant tributaries. Some tributaries were clearly less integrated than others but proximity to the center was not necessarily a factor in this.

3.2. Sources of stability: Oaths, treaties, and familial ties

Most of the models tend to conceive such a structure as being continually unstable and prone to constant fracture as rulers of constituent parts continually break off and attach to other similar formations or challenge the central ruler. In South Sulawesi, tributaries sometimes switched allegiance from one kingdom to another for various reasons, and sometimes switched back again, but these kingdoms were not the fragile and unstable "circles of kings" of the models. While clearly not unitary formations, there was far greater stability than the models suggest and, despite almost constant warfare between kingdoms, they did not fall apart or disintegrate. Those kingdoms archaeologically attested to have emerged at about 1300 CE—which for some there is reliable written information dating to 1400 CE—still existed during Indonesian independence, and in many cases their geographic extent was not radically different to the data we gathered for the 16th and 17th centuries (Druce 2014).

The relationship between a kingdom's primary polity and the lands that became tributaries were not personal relationships forged between two rulers that only lasted while those involved were still alive, as the models suggest, but always between two lands. When a land became a tributary—whether for reasons of defeat in war, protection or economic alliance—the relationship between the two lands was set out in oaths and treaties that invoked each other's ancestors and called on the living and future generations of the lands not to break the relationship. They also set out the supernatural consequences that may be unleashed if one side broke them.[16] Often these relationship transcended generations, as both

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[16] Many such examples of agreements, oaths, or treaties made between two lands,

sides appear to have remained loyal to the arrangement. Moreover, such relationships were not one sided as there was generally economic advantage for both parties, particularly through the redistribution of elite goods.

The most common reason a tributary became detached was because of warfare between kingdoms, often over fertile rice producing areas, which meant a tributary was forced to swear an oath renouncing its earlier tributary relationship and establish a new one with the victor (Druce 2009: 29). A typical example is the conflict between the expanding agricultural kingdoms of Sidénréng and Wajoq in the 16th century, who vied for control of the major rice producing lands of Otting and Bulucénrana (Druce 2009: 228-231). These lands become tributaries of Sidénreng in the latter part of the 15th century, but in the first decade of the 16th, Wajoq, in alliance with the kingdom of Luwuq, defeated Sidénreng, Otting, and Bulucénrana. After swearing a new oath of loyalty to Wajoq, which replaced the one with Sidénreng, both lands became Wajoq tributaries. About 35 years later, Sidénreng regained these tributaries after defeating both of them and Wajoq in war, with the help of the Makasar kingdom of Gowa. In both wars the two tributaries did not voluntarily break their oaths and remained loyal by fighting on the side of the kingdom to which they were attached at the time.

Oaths, treaties, and the distribution of elite goods, clearly played important stabilizing roles and fostered loyalty networks within a kingdom. Perhaps the most important factor in terms of stability was strategic marriage between a central polity's ruling family and those of its tributaries, which strengthened or initiated kinship ties and led to greater degrees of internal cohesion within a kingdom.[17] Such a marriage is recorded between the rulers of

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not individuals, can be found in the Wajoq chronicles (Noorduyn 1955; Zainal Abidin 1985). For further examples of treaties, see Andaya (1978) and Macknight (1983). In some cases, kinship terms are used to set out the relationship between lands in oaths or treaties, such as older and younger siblings, or mother and child, as in the following example from a Wajoq chronicle of an agreement between the lands of Wajoq and Timurung: "No mother (Wajoq) wishes ill-fortune on her child (Timurung) and no child plots against their mother. Whoever breaks this agreement will be cursed by the one deity. We shall tell our descendants of this so that our lands will not suffer calamity and death."

Sidénreng and Bulucénrana shortly after the defeat of Wajoq (Druce 2009: 170, 146), although most marriages appear to have been between the children of rulers. As Caldwell (1995: 397) notes, this concern with internal cohesion is specifically evident in the 15th and 16th century sections of genealogies, while marriages between kingdoms become more frequent in later periods. Offspring from such marriages could be a leading contender to succeed as the tributary land's ruler. Strategic marriage, as with warfare, was also a means of expanding political and economic power and influence, and was perhaps the preferred method of expansion, as set out in the Bugis concept of *tellu cappaq* (the three tips): tongue, blade, and penis. The tongue is first used as a means of persuasion in order to achieve or obtain something. If this does not work, then the blade (force) is used. The third tip, which the Bugis say is the preferred method of integration, is marriage (Druce 2009: 31).[18]

In an exhaustive and systematic analysis of genealogies combined with archaeological data, David Bulbeck (1992, 1996, 2016) has documented the spatial extent and influence of the Gowa and Talloq major patrilines. He demonstrates how marriage alliances, together with warfare, was used as a key strategy to expand and maintain the Makassar Empire and its political and economic bases in the 16th and 17th centuries. The maintenance of these internal marital alliances was a constant priority and the continual reassessment of ascribed status in accordance with individual achievement promoted initiative and reward. The general picture that emerges from the various genealogies is not entirely dissimilar to the argument presented by Tony Day (2002: 38-9) in relation to the emergence of Southeast Asian states, some years after Bulbeck's initial analysis, where family networks and their ideologies were central to power relations and political life and "assumed statelike form." Indeed, it is these genealogies that illuminate the internal mechanisms of a kingdom and these familial ties played a

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[17] There were also numerous marriages between the rulers of different tributary lands that are set out in various genealogies. Roll 5/7 in the Makassar Branch of the Arsip microfilm collection contains numerous such examples.

[18] Caldwell and Wellen (2016: 132-3) present evidence from the kingdoms of Wajoq and Boné to show that marriages were more common when a tributary attached itself voluntarily rather than being defeated in war.

major role in the stability, cohesion, and progressive integration of the kingdoms over generations.

This greater degree of stability in the South Sulawesi kingdoms than found in the models suggest that borders and boundaries were not as fluid as supposed, and the general statement that early and emerging polities had no fixed borders appears as an oxymoron, as a fixed border would preclude any expansion. None of the models accurately capture the situation in South Sulawesi and while one can readily appreciate that land was of less value to trade-based kingdoms such as Srivijaya and Brunei, this was not the case for those of the Bugis and Makasar and, I suspect, many other agricultural kingdoms or communities. Certainly, borders were not demarcated in the modern sense but South Sulawesi written and oral sources do show a concern for boundaries. The kingdom's core and each of its tributaries appear to have had fairly well defined boundaries, often based on geographical features, and there are a number of texts that set out these boundaries between some kingdoms, the tributaries of a kingdom, and even between villages that made up the core of a kingdom.[19] Some texts also tell of conflicts over boundaries, such as that between Bojo and Népo in the early 16th century, which were both attached to the kingdom of Suppaq. In this account, a representative of the kingdom arrives and manages to convince the two parties not to go to war over the disputed border, but to allow the matter to be decided through dialogue. Each party is then questioned, and seven days later, a decision was announced at the site of the dispute:

> This mango tree will mark the border [between you]. It aligns with those small hills to the west of Panyanyang, the great mountain going upwards and downwards to the sea south of Baki.[20]

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[19] The texts I refer to are mainly concerned with borders between the Ajattapparreng kingdoms, which formed a confederation from the 16th century, and some of their tributaries. Most are found on pages 260-279 of Roll 60/7 in the Makassar Branch of the Arsip Nasional microfilm collection. The Wajoq chronicles (Noorduyn 1955; Zainal Abidin 1985) provide examples from other areas.

[20] This text is found on pages 219-220 of Roll 40/7 in the Makassar Branch of the Arsip Nasional microfilm collection.

In the 17th century, the Makasar kingdom of Gowa played a similar role in conflict management and resolution in a border dispute between Sidénréng and Wajoq. A Bugis text tells of how a Gowa official was sent by the *karaeng* (ruler) of Gowa to set out clearly the border between the two kingdoms who were in dispute. Geographic features, the names of settlements, and compass points are used to indicate changes in direction and mark out the boundary.[21]

A concern with boundaries is also reflected in a particular category of texts termed as Tributary and Domain Lists (TDL), which can be found for all of the Bugis kingdoms and many of their tributaries, the Massenrempulu and Mandar kingdoms and a number of Makasar kingdoms. These TDL's are divided into three parts: kingdom, tributaries, and the domain of the kingdom, all of which are set out in the lists. They appear to be a record of the geographic boundaries of power and influence achieved by a kingdom.[22]

3.3. Rulers and ruled: Men and women of white blood

There was no indifference to lineage or descent in South Sulawesi and the emergence and development of the kingdoms were not the work of individual "men of prowess." Nor is there any evidence of the transference of divine favor, rulers with a common origin or ascetic practices as a route to obtaining power to rule. All the evidence points to a central concern with ascribed status, which largely determined the opportunities a person had to become a ruler or hold political office. This evidence is found primarily in numerous origin stories and elite written genealogies, the latter of which form the largest genre of Bugis and Makasar writings. Recording the elite in genealogical form appears to have been the main motive for the development of writing (Macknight 1993: 11) and the subsequent obsession with documenting elite marriages and blood relations present a

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[21] This text is found on page 267 of Roll 60/7 in the Makassar Branch of the Arsip Nasional microfilm collection.

[22] For examples of TDL's, see Caldwell and Druce (1998) and Druce (2009: 255-264; and 2014).

remarkable picture of elite political and economic history that reveals the importance of "origins and status as claims to power" in an "un-Indianised (and before 1605 un-Islamized) Austronesian society" (Caldwell and Wellen 2016: 121).

Justification for social differentiation between nobles, on the one hand, and commoners and slaves on the other, is set out at the beginning of these genealogies and origin traditions which trace the ruling elite of the numerous kingdoms and tributaries to a class of founders: typically white-blooded *tomanurung* (male) who descended from the Upperworld or *totompoq* (female) who ascended from the Underworld.[23] In theory, the elite were ranked according to their level of white-blood, which will dilute when a high ranking male took wives from commoner or slave classes, leading to a complex system of ranks that determined the status of a person based on their degree of white blood (Pelras 1996: 169-70; Druce 2009: 161-3).[24] In this system, women acted as status markers for kin groups and they were forbidden to marry below their status, which was recognized across the boundaries of kingdoms. This status was intrinsic to the individual and did not depend on control of land or wealth.

There was, however, some fluidity in the system as it was possible for lower ranking elite group members to rise based on personal achievement and qualities, which Susan Millar (1989: 29) suggests may be seen as a recognition or reevaluation of status. Political office was thus not strictly hereditary, as personal qualities played a role in attaining positions or becoming a ruler, regardless of whether one was male or female, as long as they were from the higher echelons of the group. This system ensured that claims to power remained the prerogative of the small elite class while being sufficiently flexible to ensure choice, or as Henley and Caldwell (2008: 271) put it, "the structure of the political hierarchy was always more flat-topped than pyramidal." For the Makasar, David Bulbeck (1996; 2016) applies Fox's notion of "apical demotion" to show how

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[23] In a few written and oral traditions *tomanurung* are female but such examples are rare.

[24] This system of ranks is set out in Mattulada (1985: 25-9) and Pelras (1996: 169-70).

there was a continual reassessment of ascribed status depending on achievement. Wolters' notion that in early states there had to be some kind of monitoring to "spot potential leaders" broadly fits here but his context of how his leaders emerged is quite different to the one found in South Sulawesi.

Despite their claimed origins, South Sulawesi's kings and queens were thus not absolute rulers, and the concept of divine kingship appears to have been unknown. Mostly, they appear to have been chosen for the position, often by a council, and may be removed from office or even killed without unduly disturbing the kingdom's stability. The earliest example I know of a ruler being deposed comes from Wajoq in the 15th century. La Pateqdungi was removed and later killed, for various arbitrary actions (Noorduyn 1955: 165; Zainal Abidin 1985: 99). A particularly good example is mentioned in the chronicle of Boné, which discusses the killing of a high ranking person, late 16th century ruler La Icca, because of his cruel rule (Macknight and Muhklis n.d.). A Makasar example is the late 16th century Gowa ruler Tunipasuluq, who was removed and replaced by his brother because of his despotic manner that led to a number of foreign traders leaving the kingdom (Wolhoff and Abdurrahim n.d.: 54-56; Cummings 2007: 42). In some instances, the council that selected a ruler included some of the tributary land rulers whose agreements were needed (Pelras 1996: 178; Druce 2009: 125, 251; Druce 2016a: 91).

Nor did a ruler or ruling group of the central polity necessarily have the highest status in a kingdom. In some situations, this position was held by rulers of tributary lands, based on claims to precedence that set out their earlier founding ancestry, or that the kingdom's founding rulers are descended from one or more of their elite ancestors. Some of these claims were acknowledged by a kingdom's rulers and probably emerged before the rise of the kingdoms, when the political landscape was made up of simple chiefdoms that had yet to coalesce. However, in kingdom-tributary relations, this was largely ritual seniority, and while those with precedence were always accorded respect, they acknowledged their position as tributaries of the kingdom and its political, economic and military ascendance. Such a relationship is embodied in the

phrase "*macowa* Kabelangeng *kakaq* Sawitto" (Kabelangeng is older [but] Sawitto is the elder sibling) (Druce 2009: 164). Sawitto was the kingdom and while the phrase sets out Kabelangeng's precedence, it also acknowledges Sawitto as the more powerful.[25]

As opposed to Anderson's model, mutual obligations between ruler and ruled were not alien in South Sulawesi, as recorded in numerous oral traditions and written texts purportedly made between the first ruler and the people. The example below comes from an agreement between the first ruler of Manuba, a tributary of Suppaq, and the people:

> The people of Manuba said: "We wish to make you *arung* [ruler] of this place." The person who was to be made *arung* said: "I have a condition, which must be accepted first, people of Manuba. You, people of Manuba, must have no other lord, none among you must act as a lord, I alone am your lord." The people of Manuba said: "We accept your condition, lord, but you must also accept our condition." The person who was to be made *arung* said: "What is also your condition, people of Manuba?" The people of Manuba said: "We will establish *paqbicara*, lord.[26] If the disposition of the *arung* becomes unkind towards the people then the *arung* can be removed by the council and we will take back our wealth." (Druce 2009: 162).

Ⅳ. Conclusion

Wolters surmised that the origins of his *mandalas* and their "men of prowess" were rooted in the social and political culture of all early Southeast Asian societies before they interacted with Indic culture. The data from South Sulawesi, which allows us to observe the emergence, development, and support structures of early kingdoms in much greater detail, questions the existence of such

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[25] Another example comes from the kingdom of Soppéng where its ruler could never be seated above the ruler of its tributary land, Umpungeng, and no new Soppéng ruler cold be inaugurated without his presence (Druce 1997: 43). For further examples and a discussion on origin and precedence in the South Sulawesi context, see Druce (2009: 159-199).

[26] *Paqbicara* (literally, "someone who talks") were responsible for upholding the law and administering fines in the Bugis political system.

mandalas and "men of prowess" before the impact of Indic ideas. Clearly, early polities were decentralized and lacked bureaucratic apparatus or administrative integration. However, the evidence from South Sulawesi suggests there was greater stability, mainly because of hereditary elite kinship networks, and these kingdoms were certainly not prone to fall apart.[27] In addition, one can also observe in some kingdoms, such as Gowa and Boné, the setting up of incipient administrative apparatus.

The continual emphasis on the role of the individual, whether "men of prowess," absorbers of power or accumulators of merit, in the creation of these *mandala* and their attempts to maintain fragile personal alliances, does not equate with the processes that were at work in South Sulawesi. Rulers and other members of the elite who attained high office were probably charismatic and showed achievement, but at the same time were members of a restricted hereditary elite who could be chosen or dismissed, while any potency they may have had was directly derived from ancestry. The visible signs of power were political, economic and military. Moreover, Peter Bellwood (1996) has identified the widespread occurrence of a "rank-focused ideology" in the Austronesian world, perhaps stimulated by Austronesian expansions several thousand years ago, in which there is a reverence for founders and high rank is derived from "genealogical closeness to a founder."[28]

While Wolters attempted to show the convergence between pre-Indic and Indic ideas, Tambiah's model was specifically formulated for "Indianized" societies, as were to a lesser extent those of Geertz and Anderson. It is however, notable that the general features of his model do not diverge significantly from

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[27] From the work of Heather Sutherland (1983), it is clear that the decentralized nature of the South Sulawesi kingdoms was still evident in the 19th century, despite greater integration.

[28] There is also data from historical linguistics were words such as *datu* and its various cognates formed part of the Proto-Malayo-Polynesian. In a recent exhaustive analysis of the word *datu*, which was a title used by a number of South Sulawesi rulers, Blust (2010: 48) concludes that the word minimally implies "ancestor-oriented corporate kin groups and hereditary distinctions of rank, features that persisted in some attested societies long after they had been significantly transformed by external contacts."

Wolters, and the "Galactic king" and "man of prowess" are almost interchangeable. Wolters' model has also been criticized by the Sankritist Sheldon Pollock (2006), who refers to such models as "civilizationist indigenism" (2006: 533). Pollock considers that Wolters exaggerates localisms and, noting that his model provides no evidence from "non-Indian Southeast Asia" (2006: 531), argues that many of the features Wolters considered uniquely Southeast Asian are also found in South Asia, and more likely linked to transregional Sanskrit political culture.[29]

If one were to accept that the processes that led to the emergence and development of the Bugis and Makasar kingdoms are more reflective of "state" formation in island Southeast Asia, at least among agricultural communities, then the general features of the *mandala* may appear to be more post- than pre-Indic. This emphasizes the problems historians face in attempting to understand the evolution of pre-Indic influenced societies through the application of limited sources produced by societies influenced by these very Indian ideas. Fortunately, there is no such problem for those striving to understand the political and social evolution of South Sulawesi societies.

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[29] Pollocks's main hypothesis is that elites in South and Southeast Asia were participants in a complex "Sanskrit Cosmopolis," a "transregional cultural formation" through which passed "similar claims about the nature and aesthetics of political rule" (Pollock 2006: 257).

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Adaptability and Fatalism as Southeast Asian Cultural Traits

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[*Abstract*]

This paper will concentrate on how various particular Southeast Asian conditions created a distinct Southeast Asian cultural identity despite a very challenging geographical and historical diversity in the region. The paper will argue that Southeast Asians demonstrate an ability to adapt to changes and new values but also exhibit fatalism through a very high degree of passive acceptance to political and other changes that affect their society. The paper identifies a degree of environmental and geographical uniqueness in Southeast Asia that shapes context and gives rise to very distinct cultural traits. The historical transformation in the region brought about by colonialism and nationalism, combined with this geographical and political make-up of the region, had an immense impact on Southeast Asian society as it fostered adaptability. Finally, the political transitions brought about by various conflicts and wars that continued to affect the area in rapid succession all throughout the 20th century likewise contributed immensely to a local Southeast Asian fatalistic response towards change. Historically, Southeast Asia demonstrated these socio-cultural responses to such an extent that these are argued to permeate the region forming

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a distinct aspect of Southeast Asian culture.

Keywords: colonialism, nationalism, adaptability, fatalism, Southeast Asian culture.

Ⅰ. In Search of Southeast Asian Cultural Traits

Locating cultural characteristics of Southeast Asia holistically, as attempted in May 2017 at the Institute for Southeast Asian Studies in Busan University of Foreign Studies, remains a major challenge.[1] It is a universal given that time and events continuously flow and affect, to large or lesser extent, the lives of people and their environment. Their whole living environment has numerous aspects and facets and thus both people's past and present can be analyzed, narrated, and recorded from various viewpoints: social, economical, political even environmental, natural, and spiritual to name but a few. The actual scope that is examined in any of such an analysis or narrative can also range widely: from an individual to a family, a clan, a tribe, a large ethnic group, a society, a region or country, a continent to even the whole world. Even the sentences above only provide a partial perspective on the complexity of human society and culture and how these can be studied. In the case of Southeast Asia as a whole, the focus appears to be clearly immense and seemingly inaccessible. Any cultural characteristics must however hold a historical dimension as can only be found in the body and beliefs that were inherited from earlier generations in Southeast Asia. Even if the current values and cultures of the present were at one point transmitted or adapted from other societies, they were internalized over time by Southeast Asian culture. Therefore, this paper will use the historical perspective to investigate cultural traits in Southeast Asian society. The argument in this paper is that various particular Southeast Asian conditions were present that created attitudes of adaptability and fatalism in society and thus

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[1] The paper that this article is based on was initially written for and presented in the international conference: "Locating Cultural Characteristics of Southeast Asia as a Whole" of May 2017 in the Institute for Southeast Asian Studies, Busan University of Foreign Studies, South Korea.

formed a basis for a cultural identity.

Ⅱ. The Southeast Asian Geographical Environment

Southeast Asian culture and values were shaped by the past as well as transformed and created to represent the identity of the Southeast Asian individuals today. During this historical process, there is also an environmental component to consider. Examining Southeast Asian culture holistically is to an extent a political choice within borders that have been drawn rather arbitrarily. The *Southeast Asia Command* started out originally as *East Asia Command* from the perspective of the Allied side in World War II, whereas in Japan, a sense of Southeast Asia crystalized decades earlier (Shiraishi S. and Shiraishi T. 1993: 26-27). As the Japanese Empire included Korea, Taiwan, and islands of the South Pacific after World War I, it was probably easier for Japan to see Southeast Asia as distinct compared to the Western powers that all held their own colonial possessions in Southeast Asia and therefore did not conceptualize the region as one region or entity. The events of World War II in Asia changed that thinking and created this concept of Southeast Asia.

After World War II, the concept of Southeast Asia was increasingly more widely adopted. The formation in 1967, growth, and rise of the *Association of Southeast Asian Nations* (ASEAN) as a political expression of this conceptual vision of Southeast Asia as an entity in a wider world, exemplified that even Southeast Asians had started to see themselves as such. In fact, the political group is at the moment only one country (Timor Leste) short from incorporating the whole of what geographically is now defined as Southeast Asia. The concept of Southeast Asia is as artificial as the concept of East Asia and South Asia, and one wonders if there is also such a thing as East Asian culture and South Asian culture. One specific element inherent to the region of Southeast Asia is that it is made up of more member nations than its closest neighboring areas mentioned above, and spans a very wide geographical area of diverse socio-cultural backgrounds. This unique geography and

socio-political situation distinguishes Southeast Asia from its surrounding regions. These undoubtedly shaped Southeast Asian culture as it emerged and continues to be practiced by its people.

Most areas such as South America, Europe, Africa, etc. contain land masses that are continuous and physically connect the countries in these regions. Oceania is the obvious exception. Southeast Asia however is typified by an equal maritime and mainland area. This had, of course, enormous impact in connecting and setting cultures apart. With the sheer distances in the region, this also clearly diminished a Southeast Asian identity. Historically, most human interaction and major trade connections were by way of rivers and seas. Indian influence and trade with Southeast Asia was of a tremendous impact with the 4th and 5th centuries as apex; Chinese trade with India over Southeast Asia even dated from the 1st Century (Curtin 1984: 101).This peculiar geographical environment and extensive trade in Southeast Asia created two types of states: the city port state, building wealth on trade, and the more inland situated agricultural society extracting wealth from the agrarian surplus (Van Leur 1983). This factor of a unique Southeast Asian geographical environment sets out a foundation for the conceptualization of Southeast Asian society and culture.

Ⅲ. 19th-20th Century Colonialist Determination

Trading and agricultural societies that historically surfaced in Southeast Asia were however in competition with the expanding colonial powers. They increasingly became isolated and hemmed in by the expanding colonial power. During the colonial era, the trade volumes shipped were so important and locations so specific that maritime trade interests became of paramount importance. In the 19th century, the British negotiated with Siam (later Thailand) in order to effectively bring Thai trade into the British colonial network, make it sympathetic to British colonialism, neutralize the perceived Burmese threat to British India, and strengthen their interests in the Malay Peninsula (Webster 1998: 230). The problem of course was that indigenous trade was increasingly replaced by European

networks of commercial and military power that operated on a larger scale. If Southeast Asian traders played major roles in different trade networks in the earlier era, their power began to wane in the 19th Century as Southeast Asia became more and more entangled in various colonial networks. The foundation of Singapore as hub in the region for British colonial interests was very important (Webster 1998: 83). Various other Western countries positioned their own colonial networks all engulfing Southeast Asia.

Colonialism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries strongly gripped on Southeast Asia and more territories were placed under Western colonial powers. In the early 20th century, the only country not under foreign control was Siam, though it was under influence of France and the United Kingdom. A shift of control of trade and geographical ports to hinterlands with markets and resources began between the 19th and 20th centuries. A case in point is the rapid growth of the Javanese sugar industry. Between 1880 and the outbreak of World War II, Javanese sugar industry grew exponentially based on an alliance of capital investment, government cooperation, and technological advances (Galloway 2005: 10). Colonialism and development affected Southeast Asian society in a far more penetrating way than ever before.

The peoples of Southeast Asia were forced to meet colonial goals of profit. Infrastructure and education changed Southeast Asia as the need to extract resources required these investments. Western powers continued to exploit colonies in the 20th century, and with modernization, road and rail networks began to grow in importance. In 1898, Governor-General Paul Doumer proposed the idea of connecting China with Bangkok, and by 1936, a railroad connected Hanoi with Saigon in French Indochina. (Del Testa 2002: 183). That railroad is still in use today. During the Japanese occupation, when the whole of Southeast Asia was under imperial control, the Thai-Burma Railroad project was pursued in 1943, forcing numerous locals to toil in connecting the Malayan railroad network to the Burmese network (Akashi and Yoshimura 2008: 139). It is clear that the importance of land connections increasingly began to play a role in Southeast Asia long before air connectivity we see today. Southeast Asia is however geographically unique in the sense that it

can be distinguished by way of its two different parts: Insular Southeast Asia and Mainland Southeast Asia. This created a very peculiar situation where distance remained an important factor despite the developments in modern technology of the 19th and 20th centuries. The conceptual region of Southeast Asia found itself in an environment where distances were still considerable despite the onslaught of modern technology.

Ⅳ. Southeast Asian National Reactions against Colonialism

Southeast Asia was a region that found itself colonized by many different Western countries and experienced shifts in trade from within as colonialism cleared the hinterlands through modern travel connections and technology in the 19th and 20th centuries. Its very nature as region colonially occupied by various nations made it less of a unified assembly of indigenous forces against this force compared to areas like China or India. This also constitutes a fundamentally important factor in explaining the development of Southeast Asian culture. South Asia is larger than just India today. However, British India, which included Bangladesh and Pakistan in the past, displayed a similar opposition to colonialism through a national quest for self-determination. It would be wrong to assume that there were also no regional interests and divisions in that region. However, the larger administrative unit of British India managed to absorb regional interests more easily by considering British colonial administration as a common enemy.[2] In East Asia, the situation was different yet again, here Chinese and Japanese administration accounted for the whole region of East Asia. In the case of Southeast Asia, there were more national movements opposing colonial powers: the Netherlands, in what would later become Indonesia; France in Indochina with Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam; the British in what would later be Myanmar, Malaysia, Singapore, and Brunei; and the United States of America in the Philippines, after having replaced Spain in 1898. Thailand was

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[2] On regional politics in Bombay, see Gordon Johnson. 1973. *Provincial Politics and Indian Nationalism: Bombay and the Indian National Congress 1880 to 1915.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

independent but negotiated between France and Great Britain; and Timor Leste was under the Portuguese. The national colonial borders and control were just one way to divide the different peoples of Southeast Asia, and it prevented pan-Southeast Asian feeling from surfacing in any menacing way for colonial rule.

China and India benefitted from the larger administrative entity they formed. They grew in cohesion because of the improved connectivity in the early 20th century. This is largely absent in Southeast Asia as the local areas and nations were not strong enough to claim dominance. One notable exception was the Netherlands-Indies and the larger Malay speaking world. Even today, the population of Indonesia is by itself the as big as the next three most populated Southeast Asian countries (the Philippines, Vietnam and Thailand) combined. It is however not as influential as India is in South Asia, and China or Japan in East Asia.

Indigenous opposition to colonialism started to emerge in the late 19th and the 20th centuries. This was again not unique to Southeast Asia, but here, distance and the localized nature of Southeast Asian nationalism made peoples more concerned about the interests of their immediate communities. As these societies negotiated the limitations and borders of their own areas and national power, Southeast Asia's colonial past and the very specific lay of the land prohibited the formation of a larger political entity. Conceptually, this accounts for the region's uniqueness as compared to other areas. Only the region that later became Indonesia, and to a certain extent, the whole Malay world (including arguably Malaysia, Brunei, Singapore, Timor Leste, Indonesia, and the Philippines) might have emerged to reinvent itself as an *Indonesia Raya* (Greater Indonesia) or *Melayu Raya* (Greater Malay). Yet history teaches that these two concepts never became very prominent. One manifestation of such thinking may be found in the case of the *Kesatuan Muda Melayu* (Young Malay Union) in the late 1930s, when it looked for a convergence of political nationalist forces of what will later become Indonesia and Malaysia, with all the "Malays" being united (Cheah 1983: 10-11).

It was often extremely challenging to politically oppose

colonialism. The only genuine power that successfully opposed it lies in the grouping of the local elements of a society within these colonial boundaries. Historically, and in most cases, the nations of today were the colonial possessions of yesterday. This means that Southeast Asia as a concept could not immediately gain appeal as the fight against colonialism meant fighting against various colonizers and focusing on one's own nation for the mean time. For one, Indonesia, the region's largest political entity, adapted the idea of the nation in the 1920s, perpetrated by Indonesian intellectuals and spread over the Netherlands-Indies (Dhont 2005). The Communist movement had also appealed over the population in the locality (Petrus-Blumberger 1935). Alongside Nationalism and Communism, Islam and regionalist movements were politically appealing for Indonesians (Petrus-Blumberger 1931). The educated elites used modern political thought to strive for self-determination. In areas such as Siam (Thailand), this was deliberately institutionalized by the traditional historical leadership. Despite rejecting democracy, King Chulalongkorn nevertheless embarked on a path where he instituted Western-style education and modernized the country (Somwung Pitiyanuwat and Siridej Sujiva 2005). This process of nationalism swept Southeast Asia, though it remained confined within the colonial state boundary.

Only Brunei and Thailand managed to remain more or less under local traditional authority. All the other countries yielded new local elites. The nations of Southeast Asia were significantly transformed even while they were opposing colonialism. The whole process however affected only a limited number of people in Southeast Asia. The increase in population of Southeast Asia in the 19th and early 20th centuries marked a shift into newly claimed land for agriculture (Booth 1990: 7). A large section of Southeast Asian society lived in rural areas in the 20th century. Access to education was very limited and no Southeast Asian country gained independence before the mid-20th century. Literacy in Indonesia, for instance, was extremely minor (Groeneboer 1993). The colonial powers opened access to education to a handful of local people. This created a gap between the educated and the illiterate masses. Southeast Asian adaptability to these modern conditions has to be

understood on the various national levels as choices made by the elites opposing colonial power. For the masses, life went on as new ideologies and ideas against colonialism spread in society. This resulted in the search for alternative sources of popular strength. Religion, capitalism, and socialism, as well as more indigenous ideologies, permeated Southeast Asia and added to its unique cultural identity.

The educated Southeast Asian became increasingly aware of the colonial world-system. The cry for self-determination became stronger as time went by. Independence made education accessible to the masses. The countries that underwent education inherited from the West, but the actual drive to band together with regional neighbors remained largely absent. This is an important point in the search for common cultural traits of the Southeast Asian. The specific context in which the process of self-empowerment took place made it individualistic and nationalistic. Southeast Asians adapted to new educational values but were also in no way able to practically implement and exercise these new beliefs in Southeast Asia as a whole or even in their own local national country. One problem was the presence of the colonial powers with interests and military apparatus to quell challenges to their authority. The limited number of indigenous people educated in the West during colonial times, as well as their willingness to participate in the struggle, constituted another major issue. If World War I largely left Southeast Asia in colonial grip, World War II changed everything. For all its horror and conflict, the war changed Southeast Asia and broke the colonial stronghold.

Ⅴ. The Japanese Occupation and Ensuing Cold War

The Japanese occupation may have caused hardship but it brought more and more Southeast Asians into the political scene in its recruitment of local support against the West. Many suffered the war, but it also lent a sense of local independence and self-determination. There was a single ruler in the whole of Southeast Asia to be considered a common enemy. Japanese occupation and

imperial policies transformed Southeast Asia in a very profound way creating a common experience in the region (Dhont 2016: 92-93). Colonial powers of the West were also forced to re-evaluate their colonial policies. Fighting fascism and espousing freedom and democracy in Europe did not add up to occupying Southeast Asia. Fighting alongside Southeast Asians against the Japanese only to restore former regimes was hard to justify. Most countries in Southeast Asian gained independence soon after World War II. A large number of countries remained embroiled in new conflicts as the Allied Powers from World War II split in two camps that started the Cold War.

The Cold War affected Southeast Asia. The regions of South and East Asia provided space for countries to develop into nations and achieve a degree of political direction. The diversity that characterizes Southeast Asia and the fact that the region is situated in a fault line of different spheres of political influence did not provide the ideal opportunity for nations to solidify and strengthen after the World War II. Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia became the battlegrounds for the Vietnam War and subsequent conflicts. The list of post-war coups in Thailand is long. In the British controlled territories of the Malay world local conflicts added instability to the region: the Communist insurgency in Malaysia; the Brunei Rebellion; and the *Konfrontasi* (Confrontation) of Indonesia that opposed the formation of the state of Malaysia. Myanmar, Indonesia, and the Philippines underwent very strict military rule. This gave the Southeast Asians an enhanced awareness that political participation and the struggle for freedom were not without risk of military repercussions.

When the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was created in 1967 as an expression and symbol of political will of cooperation, it was no coincidence that the countries of Indochina did not join. Originally, the countries that leaned towards Communism found themselves excluded; they regarded ASEAN negatively and as an instrument to contain Communism (Litta 2011: 35). In the late 1970s, Cambodia and Vietnam found themselves supported by the feuding powers of China and the Soviet Union. Their attitude towards ASEAN shifted as it was began to be

perceived as a regional entity worthy of attention. (Narine 2002: 41). The Soviet Union fell in 1991 and the Communist-leaning countries finally joined ASEAN. The Cold War and prolonged conflicts among key forces had until the 1990s prohibited cohesion in Southeast Asia.

Gradually ASEAN would come to represent a Southeast Asian identity as political support for the organization gradually materialized. ASEAN celebrated its 50th year in 2017, yet enthusiasm for its vision remains largely top-down with very limited genuine popular interest. Clearly, Southeast Asian identity will need more time to permeate the whole region. For the ordinary Southeast Asian however, political turmoil, rebellions, war and conflict in the 20th century created in him enormous adaptability in the changing times. Also, save for the period of struggle against the Japanese, and at those times when individual countries rose up against national dictatorships, Southeast Asian culture exhibited fatalism to politics, an easy acceptance of new political regimes after being regularly devastated by wars.

Ⅵ. Southeast Asian Adaptability and Fatalism

Historical pressures and conditions at work in Southeast Asia also affected other regions. Southeast Asia was not the only region in the world to know war, geographical distances, and colonialism. Their local particularity however, created a distinct Southeast Asian cultural experience. Southeast Asia was an area situated between two more noticeable and distinct political entities, South and East Asia. Southeast Asia did not form a continuous landmass and was also not under one regionally dominant colonial administration, except during the brief instance of World War II. The different colonial administrations created a political situation where distinct national sentiments and ideas grew each in their own way. This distinct colonial mix and the complex ethnic mix combined with the limited amount of time Southeast Asian nations historically had to mature, and the many wars that were fought out in the region created a distinctly unique cultural element for the whole region.

Southeast Asia demonstrated a very high degree of adaptability.

Southeast Asians demonstrated an ability to adapt that allowed their societies to continue despite different regimes, rulers, and wars. Yet it also led to fatalism towards politics and any political situation. This explains the lack of support for nationalism and the building of a Southeast Asian political identity building through ASEAN. Southeast Asia was, and remains therefore, a unique place in the world where the mix of political interests from outside the region; its sheer geographical vastness and diversity of the region; and its special political make-up shaped by various national struggles and conflicts, created a balanced area of diversity where the Southeast Asian can be seen to be culturally adaptable but also aloof and fatalistic in a general sense. The values of consensus and tolerance for others, as well as non-interventionism, are held paramount for both nations in Southeast Asia as well as society.

The nations of Southeast Asia know that political problems will be hard to solve, and therefore a mix of national strengthening as well as convergence in a larger world pushes regional identity. These nations have constantly shown an ability to adapt to the different contexts and political currents that sweep the continent—a strong cultural trait. Flexibility and adaptability honed them. Change is seen as constant and resistance is futile. Change has come so often and in such unexpected ways and therefore the desire to engage oneself politically is far less present. A major stumbling block for the Southeast Asian culture to grow is the absence of a dominant country in the region. This prompted non-alignment and internal opposition within Southeast Asia. One is also confronted with the reality that many Southeast Asians are still coming to terms with their own national borders and nationalism. This creates less desire to be engaged in the larger project of a cultural and political Southeast Asia.

Ⅶ. Conclusion

Southeast Asia has a rich history and is geographically composed of a mainland as well as a maritime component. Diversity, colonial influence, and nationalist reactions contributed to its emergence as

well as lack of political cohesion. Colonization in the 19th century and national independence movements in the 20th century created societies where adaptability became a cherished trait in responding to changes and challenges. The conflicts and wars of the 20th century, and the consequent political changes they brought were met with fatalism. Life in micro-level went on despite major macro-level changes. The unique geographical and socio-political context of Southeast Asia created a peculiar environment with large swaths of geographical space creating distance and connection among Southeast Asians. This, combined with the region's historical evolution in the last two centuries provided specificity and space that honed adaptability and fatalism as two Southeast Asian cultural traits.

As clearly demonstrated, seeing Southeast Asia as a culturally whole unit is challenging. There are elements of clear distinctness compared to other regions such as East Asia or South Asia. Defending cultural Southeast Asian distinctness can be maintained if one considers the geographical and socio-political climate in which the region came into being as socio-political concept. A region historically wedged between the more uniform societies of China and India, Southeast Asia was defined by these neighbors as different. Yet despite some elements of Malay or Indonesian integration in Insular Southeast Asia, the region maintained an internally rich diversity that also prevented homogenization to a large extent. Southeast Asia also formed a natural geographical environment with a maritime and mainland area where distances remained important during the 19th and 20th centuries despite technological improvements.

Southeast Asian diversity was further enhanced and accentuated when colonial powers drew administrative and political borders for the present countries. Regional modernization, the economic exploitation of resources during the late 19th and 20th centuries, as well as deep and prolonged political conflicts, all added to a growing differentiation of Southeast Asian society into nations. In that process, fatalism became the antidote to all these. The Southeast Asian learned to adapt quickly, but with a fatalist acceptance of the actual changes. The nationalistic reaction caused

a contraction of local Southeast Asian societies in the sense that the nations entrenched themselves into colonial structures and borders. The Southeast Asian was never particularly concerned about a single political Southeast Asian entity.

In Southeast Asia, political tensions between the West and the Communist-leaning countries blocked the growth of Southeast Asia as a single, stable, and self-governing entity for decades. Until the 1990s, the Cold War prevented a political coming together. Furthermore, because of the particular geography and politics of the region, there was no real possibility for any country to dominate and control the region. Only recently the ideal of a Southeast Asian society in ASEAN is gaining momentum. Southeast Asian culture today contains the markings of this particular combination of history, geography, and political turmoil. These factors and historical processes produced the distinct Southeast Asian cultural traits of adaptability and fatalism as means of coping with the changes and challenges that the 19th and especially the 20th century brought to Southeast Asia. These are also present in many other cultures, but Southeast Asia has distinctly embodied them throughout its history.

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Eclectic Sociocultural Traditions of the Baba Nyonya of George Town, Penang, Malaysia*

OOI Keat Gin**

[*Abstract*]

Strategically situated between the East-West maritime crossroads, the peoples of Southeast Asia over the centuries witnessed the comings and goings of traders from territories from East Asia, South Asia, West Asia and Europe. There were also those from North America that crossed the Pacific for commercial profits in this region. Foreign traders undoubtedly in the course of their visits and sojourns had liaisons with local women, some engaged in marriages. Offspring of these interracial miscegenation possessed rather unique characteristics. As a community, they were identified with the Malay term, peranakan, from the root word, "anak" meaning "child," hence "offspring" or "descendent". Specific terms – Baba Nyonya, Tionghoa-Selat, Chitty, Jawi Pekan, Pashu, Kristang – referred to particular groups. Although

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socially they appeared 'neither here nor there', members of mixed parentage were able to carve an especial niche in the local environment throughout Southeast Asia, conspicuously in urban, port-cities where trade and commerce predominated. Following in the footsteps of their progenitor, the Peranakan acted as intermediaries, comprador between foreign and indigenous enterprises, profiting financially and socially from trade and commerce. Tapping on the author's personal experiences and first-hand observations, complementing with oral sources, and support from secondary materials, this present essay explores, discusses, and analyzes the eclectic sociocultural practices and traditions of the Baba Nyonya of George Town, Penang. Purposeful intention is to further enlighten our understanding, and in turn, our appreciation, of these ever increasingly diminishing communities and their cultures across Southeast Asia.

Keywords: Social history, *Baba Nyonya*, George Town, Penang, Sociocultural heritage, Ethnohistory

Ⅰ. Introduction

Baba Nyonya, *Tionghoa-Selat*, *Chitty*, *Jawi Pekan*, *Pashu*, *Serani* and *Kristang* are some of the varied labels referring to descendants of offspring between foreign men and native Southeast Asian women since the fifteenth or earlier centuries. Collectively identified with the generic Malay term *Peranakan*, from the root word, "*anak*" meaning "child", hence "offspring" or "descendent". A maritime crossroads between East Asia and South and West Asia and Europe, Southeast Asia[1] witnessed the comings and goings of traders from without since earliest times. Trading sojourns inevitably led to liaisons or cohabitation with local women including bona fide marriages. Communities borne from such interracial miscegenation possessed characteristics that are proverbially neither here nor there. Nonetheless these communities of mixed parentage, hence heritage,

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[1] The term 'Southeast Asia' was borne from South-East Asia Command (SEAC), a British designated military theatre of operation during the Pacific War (1941-1945). Since then the term became common usage for the region in the post-war period.

were able to carve an especial niche in the local wider society across Southeast Asia, conspicuous in urban, port-cities where trade and commerce were the main livelihood. Like their progenitor, the Peranakan functioned as intermediaries between foreign and local enterprises and benefited financially and socially from trading and commercial activities.

This present study focuses on the unique attributes of the *Peranakan* utilizing the *Baba Nyonya* of George Town, Penang as illustration and reference. Their genesis as a community and exceptional characteristics are analyzed to enlighten our understanding and appreciation of one of these increasingly diminishing communities across Southeast Asia. It shall be argued that the inimitable characteristics of the Baba Nyonya were borne between Chinese patriarchal influence and indigenous (mainly Malay) matrilocal impact. On the one hand, the patriarchal maintenance of Chinese world of beliefs (Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism) was balanced on the other hand, with the sustainability of matrilocal bearing on the greater parts of sociocultural traits and traditions including home language, cuisine, and clothing, particularly of female attire.

Ⅱ. Terminology and Ascription

Peranakan derives from the Malay, "*anak*", denoting child, hence "born of" or offspring, but often has the implied meaning of descendent. *Peranakan* refers to the locally born, by local is meant within the Malay World, namely contemporary Malaysia and Indonesia. Singularly, *peranakan* does not ascribe to any racial or ethnic background, but with a qualifying noun of the particular descent, the patriarchal, is identified. Hence, there is Peranakan Chinese, or Baba Nyonya as in Malaysia, the Peranakan Tionghoa/Cina in Indonesia, both of Chinese heritage, or Peranakan Belanda, of Dutch descent.

The Peranakan Chinese / Baba Nyonya of modern Malaysia and Singapore are descendants of Chinese forefathers who came to port-cities of Melaka (from the fifteenth century), Penang (from late eighteenth century), and Singapore (from early nineteenth century)

who took local (Malay) wives. Owing to Penang, Melaka and Singapore comprising the British administrative creation of the Straits Settlements (1826), the Peranakan Chinese was also ascribed the term, Straits Chinese, denoting Chinese born in the Straits Settlements. But not all Straits Chinese were Baba Nyonya, unless they demonstrated Sino-Malay syncretic characteristics (Khoo 1996; Clammer 1980).

The double-barrel term of *Baba Nyonya* refers to the male and female respectively of Peranakan Chinese (Ooi 2004). *Baba*, from the Hindustani, which originated from Parsi (Farsi) or Persia (contemporary Iran) entered Malay lexicography as a term of endearment for one's male grandparent. Subsequently, in the Malay vernacular, *Baba* came to be an honorific of respect for Straits-born Chinese of standing. *Nyonya* (*nyonyah, nonya*), denotes a Straits-born Chinese female, is an honorific in the Malay World as a form of respect to a non-local (non-Malay) married woman borrowing from the Portuguese *donha*, a lady. Melaka was a Portuguese colony for 130 years, between 1511 and 1641. *Nyonya*, thus, came to be attributed to non-Malay women of standing; subsequently became exclusively for female members of Peranakan Chinese.

Ⅲ. Baba Nyonya of George Town, Penang

The thrust of this study focuses on the unique attributes of the *Peranakan* in utilizing the Baba Nyonya of George Town, Penang as illustration and point of reference. The period from the later part of the nineteenth century to the outbreak of the Pacific War (1941-1945) forms the bulk of the timeframe. The second phase comprised the post-war era between 1945 and 1970s, early 1980s. Thereafter, the 1990s to 2010s.

3.1. Ancestral Roots

During the pre-steam era, the monsoons largely dictated the schedule of traders and merchants (Cleary 2004). The northeast monsoon (November-February) brought merchants from East Asia to Penang where they traded and sojourned while awaiting the change

to the southwest monsoon (June-August) that brought traders from the West (South and West Asia, and Europe) that at the same time took those from the East home. Natural instincts ensured that they sought local female company; others opted for formal marriages for long term sustainability of their businesses under the care of their bloodline.

Like most Peranakan across Southeast Asia, Penang's Baba Nyonya families traced their progenitor's origin to Hokkien of the trading and entrepreneurial class. Trade in medicine and foodstuffs to the southern seas, *Nanyang*, were carried out by enterprising Hokkien traders and merchants from the southeast provinces of Fujian and Guangdong (Ng 2017). Exiting from ports of Guangzhou (Canton) and Xiamen (Amoy) in the pre-Qing period as early as the fifteenth century, and more cautiously during Qing rule of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries owing to imperial sanctions of venturing abroad, Hokkien traders and merchants bravely carved a commercial niche in Siam (Thailand), Burma (Myanmar), northern Sumatra, western Malay Peninsula, northern Borneo, and northern Philippines (Kong 2017). Hokkien Chinese comfortably settled in Melaka since the fifteenth century, and in southern Burma and Siam and the northeast Malay states from the late eighteenth century.

The knot of Hokkien traders, not only survived the tropical elements of disease, dangers of the erratic seas, of the dense jungle, but also of avaricious local potentates who ruled through whims and fancies. Armed only with their wit, charm, creativity, resourcefulness and large dosages of providence on their side, the early Hokkien traders cultivated networks of patronage with local rulers, notable chiefs, and local traders ensuring sustainable relations for commercial gains and protection and security of lives and property. Overall Hokkien traders sufficed on the grace and kind-heartedness of local patrons.

Unsurprisingly Hokkien traders were one of the first to join Francis Light on Penang when declared Prince of Wales Island in August 1786 and George Town lay out shortly thereafter to serve the Honorable English East India Company (EEC) in its China trade (Ooi 2017). The Hokkien Chinese seized the commercial opportunities

that the newly established port-city offered where all transactions were legally protected under British law and justice, far from the arbitrariness of native rulers.

It was these early Hokkien traders, merchants and entrepreneurs that begun to extend their sojourning period beyond the trading season and decided to carve a more permanent existence. The Hokkien men took on local women, initially as house maids and also as companions; others decided on more permanent relations in entering into formal marriages. The local women were drawn from the pool of slaves of various ethnicity notably Malay, Acehnese and Batak, also Bugis, Javanese, Balinese, and Boyanese (Nordin 2007). From these humble unions, the Baba Nyonya of Penang emerged.

Besides Hokkien Chinese, other dialect groups such as Teochew and Cantonese also migrated to Penang in this early phase. Hakka and Cantonese arrived from the mid-nineteenth century consequent of the coolie traffic for the tin mining industry in the western Malay states particularly in upper Perak (Larut and Kinta) (Lee 2013). Besides mine workers that came through the port-city of George Town whereby the majority moved on to the Malay states, there were artisans and craftsmen (mainly Cantonese), and peasant farmers (largely Hakka) as well as war refugees (Cantonese, Hakka, Hokkien, etc.).[2]

Sino-Malay miscegenation that brought forth the Baba Nyonya of Penang occurred during the late eighteenth century (opening of Penang as a trading outpost) and the early part of the nineteenth century (immigration of traders to Penang). By the second half of the nineteenth century, not only were the ethnic lines apparent between the Baba Nyonya and China-born Chinese, but also Sino-Malay marriages were increasingly rare within Penang society. Marriages amongst Baba Nyonya families seemed to be the norm rather than the exception. It was only in the post-war period (1945-1970s/1980s) that the Baba and Nyonya begin to intermarry with other Chinese (non-Baba Nyonya), across dialect groups, and

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[2] Many refugees, including Taiping rebels, fled following the failure of the Taiping Rebellion (1850-1864). Hakka war refugees settled in George Town and Balik Pulau, a settlement in the interior southwest of the island.

a small sample of the then still rare interracial marriages with non-Chinese, namely Indian and Malay. The chief barrier to the latter was, and still is, the mandatory ruling of conversion upon marriage to a Muslim, regardless of ethnicity.

Owing to the predominance of the patriarchal tradition, Chinese men who married local women insisted that the ancestral culture be retained hence Chinese beliefs and practices, viz. Confucianism, Daoism and Buddhism remained central and sustainable for *Peranakan* descendants. But for other sociocultural practices and norms such as food, clothing, and to some extent the home-language, influences from the indigenous (women/wives/mothers) were more pronounced.

3.2. Language

The Baba Nyonya of Penang is unique in retaining their Hokkien dialect to contemporary times, often complimentarily described as a sing-song rendition (Wong 2017). Their brethren in Melaka, however, had long discarded the Hokkien dialect being only conversant in Baba Malay (Tan 1988). Amongst Penang's Baba Nyonya, spoken Hokkien customarily comprised a jumble of Hokkien intermixed with Malay and English words and phrases (Teoh and Lim 1999). Unsurprisingly their rendition of Hokkien is largely unintelligible to Hokkien speakers in Taiwan or Xiamen, and vice versa (Ding 2016).

The fact that local women were taken as wives, Malay being their mother tongue, played a pivotal role in Baba Nyonya households. Offspring learnt the Hokkien dialect that was much infused with his/her mother's native tongue, namely Malay.

Moreover, owing to the tradition of English-medium schooling in government-supported Penang Free School (1816) and missionary schools such as St Xavier's Institution (1852), the Penang Baba acquired fluency in the King's English (latter Queen's English). Well-to-do Baba Nyonya families sent their sons for tertiary education in British universities notably, Oxford, Cambridge, London hence their command of English was further heightened. English words and phrases inevitably crept into the daily usage of

conversational Hokkien. When increasingly more females were sent to English-medium schools such as the various Catholic Convent schools and the premier (initially Anglican) St Georges Girls' School, the Nyonya too became conversantly adept at English infusing more loan words into daily Hokkien speech. Subsequently, the rather jumble ensemble of Penang Hokkien dialect came into being. A sample illustrates this admixture.[3]

> *Wah chee-nya suka chiak chocolate ice-cream after kari hoo-tau eh lunch.* [I very much like to eat chocolate ice-cream after having a lunch of fish-head curry.]

> *Wah chee-nya* [Hokkien] *suka* [Malay] *chiak* [Hokkien] *chocolate ice-cream after* [English] *kari* [Malay] *hoo-tau eh* [Hokkien] *lunch* [English].

In recent years, efforts have been made to codify the Hokkien dialect in Penang that is heavily influenced by the Baba Nyonya.[4]

Until the late-1990s, Baba Nyonya brand of Hokkien continued to be used both at home and in the wider community in Penang at markets, street stalls, restaurants. But consequent of the implementation of three streams on the basis of medium of instruction at government elementary schools in the 1990s, viz. Malay language (Bahasa Melayu) for national schools, and national-type schools either Mandarin or Tamil as the main medium, the use of Chinese dialects including Hokkien gave way to Mandarin. Hence by the latter half of the 1990s and from the 2000s, Chinese children and adolescents increasingly used Mandarin in daily conversations. Inevitably, the Baba Nyonya version of Hokkien gradually lost its utility even within Baba Nyonya families.

Furthermore, from the late 1970s, the nuclear family took precedence over the extended family format especially in urban settings whereby couples raised their children on their own. Youngsters of Baba Nyonya families did not, like their parents, have

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[3] Transliterated by author.

[4] In recent years, there has been a spate of interest in the Penang brand of Hokkien with at least two English-Hokkien dictionaries (Gijzel and Lee 2016; Gijzel 2009), and two other books for conversation (Tan 2008; Tan 2016).

the benefit to live with grandparents who continued to converse using the Hokkien dialect. New Zealand academic, Catherine Churchman of the School of Languages and Cultures in Victoria University of Wellington, who researched the Taiwanese and Penang Hokkien dialects, regretfully stated that "languages often die the same way, and one of the reasons is simply the existence of a generation gap" (Wong 2017). Compounding the phenomena, intermarriages between Baba Nyonya and non-Baba Nyonya are commonplace as choice or love marriages replaced arranged marriages from the 1970s. The traditional Hokkien dialect of the Baba Nyonya had lost its pivotal place within the family circle likewise in the wider public sphere where Mandarin has increasingly replaced Hokkien as the *lingua franca* amongst the Chinese in Penang (ibid.).[5]

3.3. Eclectic Sociocultural Characteristics

Owing to the admixture of interethnic heritage, the Baba Nyonya possessed eclectic sociocultural traits. Drawing on the life experiences, insights, and knowledge of respondents namely Madam Tan Ai Gek, 90, Madam Chew Chui Gek, 94, and Madam Ong Poh Choo, 84, all third generation Nyonya of Penang, the foregoing section explores, discusses and analyzes a host of characteristics, viz. religious traditions, marriage practices, first-born, attire, cuisine, livelihood, and political affinity. The oral traditions and secondary materials are complemented by the present author's first-hand observations and inquiries to various Baba Nyonya households in George Town over a span of five decades.[6]

3.3.1. Religious traditions

The dominant patriarchal system ensured that the Chinese world of beliefs, viz. Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism remained the religious tradition of the Baba Nyonya of Penang. Age-old customary practices of honoring Buddha and Daoist deities in the

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[5] Likewise, with all Chinese dialects across Malaysia. Cantonese, once the predominant dialect in Kuala Lumpur, has taken a back seat to Mandarin.
[6] The author is a fourth generation Baba Nyonya descendant and a resident of George Town since the 1950s.

household with sanctified permanent altars in the main hall or living room, the kitchen, and at the main entrance or main doorway were adhered with concomitant devotion to rituals passed on from generation to generation. The first and fifteenth day of the Chinese lunar calendar were especial for prayers. While daily prayers only comprised the mandatory three lighted joss sticks at the altars, flowers and/or fruits were served during the first and fifteenth of each month.

Household deities in most Baba Nyonya homes feature the Heavenly Jade Emperor (T'nee Kong) with an altar outside the main door. A wooden red-colored plaque with Chinese characters in gold denoting T'nee Kong is flanked by two candelabras for red candles on either side of a joss holder, and space for offerings including three small red cups of tea or water, and a tray of fruits and/or vase of flowers. Prayers to T'nee Kong preceded all others, and the customary three joss sticks are placed in the holder following obeisance.

Upon entering the household through the main entrance, one is confronted with the main altar facing the door. On the altar sits a statuette of the Buddha often of Chinese Buddhist design, and flanked by Kuan Im (Goddess of Mercy), especially popular amongst Nyonya. The altar's paraphernalia includes a centrally placed joss holder, flanked by candelabras on either side, the mandatory three red cups of tea or water, and space for plates of fruits and/or flowers. Vases for flowers on either side of the altar were commonplace decorations. In front of the altar, a small stool or miniature bench facilitates kneeling. Altars often come with drawers on either ends where prayer paraphernalia are stored.

Below the main altar is an altar devoted to the earth deity, Thay Chu Kong. The aforesaid prayer paraphernalia are replicated. Devotees need to kneel and bent down when offering prayers to Thay Chu Kong. The Cham Mu Kong or Kitchen's God altar is emplaced in a vantage position overseeing the family hearth where all daily meals are prepared. Similar altar paraphernalia are in place.

Family members conduct their daily prayers at all household altars commencing with the Heavenly Jade Emperor and concluding

at the Kitchen's God. In respondent Madam Tan's words on household prayers.

> Mah [her mother] is [a] devout [follower of] Kuan Im, and we children [herself and her cousins] had to pray every morning before meals [breakfast]. Goh Ee Poh [fifth matrilocal grand aunt] will light my joss sticks, always reminding [to place] three for each altar. We children were instructed to appeal to Kuan Im for good health of our father and mother, grandfather, grandmother, family, brothers and sisters, aunts, uncles. I [tend to] forget one aunt, sometimes, two aunts … I usually also add [sic. ask] Kuan Im to ease my headaches.[7]

Additionally, on the auspicious first and fifteenth of every month of the lunar calendar, Nyonya in particular would make an effort to pray at Kuan Im Teng, the Goddess of Mercy Temple on Pitt Street (present-day Jalan Mesjid Kapitan Keling) in downtown George Town. Kuan Im holds an especial place amongst Chinese womenfolk, and the Nyonya was no exception in her devotion (Blofeld 2009). Besides joss sticks and a variety of prayer papers, the Nyonya would also offer three variety of fruits and/or flowers. While the joss sticks and prayer papers were burnt, the fruit offerings were brought home for family members to partake.

Likewise, on commemorative days such as Chinese New Year and birthdays of deities, the entire Baba Nyonya household would offer prayers at the temples. Kuan Im, for instance, celebrates three birthdays, namely the 19th of the Second, Sixth and Ninth Lunar Moon where devotees including the Nyonya will flock to Kuan Im Teng or other temples to pay homage and ask for blessings for the entire household. "We children," Madam Tan recalls, "travel on trishaws from [our] house in Burmah Road to Pitt Street temple [Kuan Im Teng] accompanying Ee Poh [aunt] to pray."[8]

Respondent Madam Ong recollects memories of childhood visits to Kuan Im Teng.

There were many *ang-mah-mah* [beggars] at the entrance begging for

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[7] Interview, 21 July 2015.

[8] Ibid.

alms. My mother will give them coins; my Sah Ee Poh [third matrilocal grand aunt] refused [such] charity and did not give any money. It was very crowded [with] many people and burning joss sticks. It made my eyes tear, and I was frightened of the crowd. Chanting was prevalent with bells ringing, and sound of gongs. People were very loud, often shouting. I could not see [the deity] Kuan Im [at the altar], only [see] women's back.[9]

Although Kuan Im Teng is the most popular, each family patronized their preferred temple owing to traditional ties or personal relations since past generations. Some of these familial relations dates back several generations to the family progenitor.[10]

Furthermore, Chinese temples were also important for consultations, blessings, and thanksgiving for the Baba Nyonya. Thanks to their English-medium schooling, most Baba Nyonya subscribed to Western medicine, diagnosis and treatment, but spiritual assistance was concurrently sought with deities at temples. Pragmatism was the underlying principle amongst the Chinese in overcoming illnesses or other predicaments, and the Baba Nyonya were no exception. Mediums at temples were consulted for advice whether an ailment was provoked by malevolent spirits or otherwise, and the prescribed panacea to counter such adverse influence.[11] Besides, crucial decision-making relating to career moves, marriages, business ventures also sought the medium's advice and/or resolution. Bona fide mediums charged a nominal fee for consultation, and the clients' generosity ensured an *ang pow* (red packet) donation to the temple upkeep. For instance, Hor Kai Kong Temple, a Chinese temple on Cantonment Road (Jalan Cantonment), Penang has a medium session each evening (except

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[9] Interview, 24 July 2015.

[10] Madam Chew's grandmother had fostered close relations with the founder of Phor Tay Ee, a Chinese Buddhist temple-cum-school on Gottlieb Road (Jalan Gottlieb), Bagan Jermal, Penang. This relationship continued during Chew's mother's generation, hence Phor Tay Ee came to be like the family's "temple". Interview, 2 August 2015.

[11] Madam Tan is adamant that her two daughters and only son do not marry Christians or Muslims as she is worried that in the event of ailments of the grandchildren, consulting Daoist deities through mediums might be an issue with their spouses. Interview, 21 July 2015.

Saturday, and Sunday, from 12 noon) at about nine o'clock. Devotees would consult the medium on various issues, and talismans, prayers, and blessings together with advice would be given. A mere 20 sens consultation fee is mandatory; additional donations are unlimited.

Funeral rites may follow Daoist rituals or Buddhist practices but remembrance of the deceased was dictated by Confucian ancestor worship rituals. Cheng Beng (Qingming) or Chinese All Souls Day falls in the early part of the Chinese third lunar month (equivalent to the Gregorian 4th or 5th of April). Rituals could be undertaken on any day during a 20-day window (ten days prior to the date and ten days thereafter). The venues for prayers depended on where the deceased was emplaced. Traditionally, most Baba Nyonya would be buried in family plots. Hence, the tomb or grave site was where prayers were offered with cooked foods, fruits, *kuih* (Nyonya cakes), prayer papers including paper money, paper products (personal items such as clothing, shoes, radio, etc., all made of paper). Roasted pigs, chickens, ducks were mandatory food offerings. Traditional practices of ensuring that the food offerings were piping hot when served, charcoal braziers were carried to tomb sites, requiring hiking up a hill or knoll, and the warming up of the cooked dishes were undertaken prior to serving to great-great-grandfather. It was an "expedition" of sorts involving the entire extended family and household with a brigade of servants (*amah-chieh*)[12] helping with transporting all the required paraphernalia to the grave site and executing the needful. Every family member, from infant to grandpa, was required to pay respect to the honorable ancestor. The grave site often overgrown with weeds were cleared, cleaned, and additional soil was heaped on the mound of the tomb to ensure that the latter was always "full", never sunken for want of soil lest inauspicious for *kia soon* (lit. children and grandchildren, descendants).

During respondent Madam Tan's mother's lifetime (d. 1956),

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[12] The *amah-chieh* largely comprised Cantonese women who came in the late 1920s and early 1930s to work as domestic workers in European and affluent Chinese households. Owing to their customary attire of white blouse over loose black pants, they were renowned as the "black and white amahs" (Ooi 1992).

Cheng Beng was undertaken at the grave site of ancestors at Mount Erskine, Tanjong Tokong, Penang. It was a major annual undertaking involving the entire household of extended relatives comprising five families. A 40-seater bus was hired to convey the entourage, the various foods, and equipment including at least two braziers and charcoal.[13]

When cremation became more acceptable from the second half of the twentieth century partly owing to the rising cost of burial plots consequent of land scarcity and partly for convenience, ashes were interred in urns and kept at Chinese or Buddhist temples. It was at these temples that the practice and rites of ancestor worship were undertaken. For the exceptional few who wished that their ashes be scattered at sea, their *sin choo* or soul/death plaque was placed at a temple or columbarium to facilitate ancestor worship. In the case of respondent Madam Chew, who lived with her nieces, entrusted the younger niece that her ashes be scattered at sea. Her niece did undertake her wishes and her ashes were indeed taken out on a boat out to sea off Persiaran Gurney and strewn on the waves.[14] Following the mandatory 7th-, 49th-, and 100th-day rituals, the deceased would be invited for subsequent prayers – Cheng Beng, death anniversary, etc. – at the household. Prayers at home replicated all the rituals performed at the tomb, temple or columbarium.[15]

Baba Nyonya religious traditions have increasingly been eroded since the mid-1970s. The trend of nuclear families had compromised many traditional rituals as much due to ignorance as of the attitude of discarding the "old" and embracing the "new". Young couples might also turn to other faiths, for instance Christianity, hence starting new "traditions" in their family. By the third timeframe, 1990s to 2010s, few young people from Baba Nyonya heritage were neither aware, able to identify or even

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[13] Interview, 21 July 2015.

[14] Personal communication with Ann Cheah, younger niece of respondent Madam Chew.

[15] Following the passing of her mother in the mid-1950s, Madam Tan decided to carry out the Cheng Beng rituals at home for the sake of convenience. Interview, 30 July 2015.

comprehend the myriad rituals and traditions.

3.3.2. Marriage

Not until the 1970s, the norm of Baba Nyonya marriages were arranged affairs. A union of two families formed the basis of a marriage, and elders undertook this all-important pairing. Typically, when a child comes of age, a matchmaker was engaged to seek him/her a spouse. Acting like a sleuth, the matchmaker would "investigate", viz. cognizance of family history of insanity, epilepsy, retarded, and any other adverse elements; if evident, the candidate was disqualified. Equally pivotal was the socio-economic standing; fairy tales do not happen, as matchmakers have reputations to uphold, hence no farmer's son is going to marry a rubber *towkay*'s[16] daughter.

Once a match has been decided upon by both families, preparations for the engagement and the marriage itself were undertaken months prior to the auspicious occasions. A host of preparations for the wedding ceremony were time-consuming endeavors owing to elaborate rituals and ceremonies involved. The wedding costumes for the couple were tailored-made, decorations of the bridal chamber, ensuring that all wedding paraphernalia are on hand for the various ceremonies (viz. *Lap Chai*, *Cheo Thau*, *Pang The*, etc.), drawing up of the guest list, wedding invitations to be personally delivered to relatives and friends by the parents of the couple – *pang lau-hiok*, lit. "dropping leaves", extending an invitation, the *th'ng tok* (long table) lunch for wedding guests, entertainment during the wedding. The elaborate menu for the wedding's *th'ng tok* lunch or dinner was both costly and protracted in preparations. Home-cooked wedding fare to offer a traditional sumptuous meal for guests comprising relatives, business partners and acquaintances, friends and neighbors (Wong 2003).

To the Baba Nyonya, acquiring a son-in-law or a daughter-

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[16] A Hokkien Chinese term whereby *tow* (head) and kay (family) literally denotes "head of a family" or "patriarch." Also refers to a proprietor of a business, shop, mine, or commercial plantation; in large measure, the term is attributed to an individual of social standing and wealth, and commonly used as prefix to the individual's name, viz. Towkay Lim Lean Teng, a prominent philanthropist of pre-war Penang.

in-law was a coup of sorts as marriages ensured the sustainability of the family with offspring. Unlike China-born Chinese who favored the male line where having sons were gainful in bringing into the family daughters-in-law who became part of the family, the Baba Nyonya favored both male and female child. A *chin choay* (matrilocal) marriage whereby a son-in-law was welcomed into the bride's family was a common Baba Nyonya practice but shunned by the China-born. But for the Baba Nyonya, the *chin choay* marriage was a means in enriching the family gene pool with the taking in of a talented son-in-law. Other circumstance too might favour a matrilocal marriage. Madam Tan, who had an arranged marriage in the early 1950s, is an example.

> Mah [her mother] insisted with the matchmaker that the prospective bridegroom must agree to 'marry in' the [bride's] family, if not, abort the match. Being the only child, Mah needed me to care for her [often ill], and also later, to look after Pah [her father]. The first prospect's [bridegroom] family, especially the father, was not keen, hence opted for the second. The latter, a widow who then lived in a rented room in a shophouse, was agreeable.[17]

Stories told of a talented young man being supported in his education by a Baba *towkay* who subsequently marries one of his patron's daughters and taken in as a son-in-law.[18]

A traditional Baba Nyonya wedding was a protracted 12-day affair with most activities and ceremonies at the bride's residence (Cheo 1983). *Lap Chai* or the exchange of gifts between the families are carried out with much pomp, an opportunity to showcase wealth and affluence. On the eve of the wedding, the bride undergoes the *Cheo Thau*, literally hair-combing ritual that symbolically marked a coming of age. Her mother, symbolically for the *final* time, combs the bride-to-be's hair while whispering advice to her of being a good wife, mother, and daughter (in-law) in her husband's family.[19] Undoubtedly an emotional affair, both mother and daughter shed

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[17] Interview, 30 July 2015.

[18] Related to author by Madam Chew, interview, 2 August 2015.

[19] Owing to a *chin choay* marriage, Madam Tan's mother spoke to her of wifely duties and responsibilities of a mother. Interview, 30 July 2015.

tears during this solemn ceremony witnessed by family members and close relatives.

On the wedding day, by tradition the bridegroom on a horse with his entourage journeys to the bride's residence. This procession was of great pomp and fanfare accompanied by musicians playing *serunai* (a wind musical instrument), and men carrying umbrellas and lanterns. All the rituals and ceremonies were orchestrated by a Pak Chindek and a Sang Kek Um, the wedding master and mistress of ceremony respectively.

The *Chim Pang* ceremony was when the bride would lead her groom into the bridal chamber. There for the first time, he would unveil her to have the first look of his bride. Both would be served tea followed by a bowl of *kuih ee* (mini white and red dumplings in a sugared consommé), symbolically that they both share a sweet life together.

In the *Pang Teh* ceremony, literally serving tea, an introductory ritual whereby the bride and bridegroom serve tea to their respective parents, followed by elder relatives. The elders would be seated, and the couple in their knees serve them tea; prior to each serving, the proper address of the elder would be publicly announced by the Sang Kek Um, and the couple to vocalize the address, for instance, "Fifth Uncle and Fifth Aunt, kindly accept our offer of tea". Having drank the tea and in returning the cup, the elder would present the couple a gift wrapped in red packet (often of gold jewelry, cash). For junior members of the family, they would in turn serve the seated bride and bridegroom tea, and in return, received an *ang pow* from the couple. Often this ceremony might stretch between an hour or two as most Baba Nyonya families commonly comprised three or four generations.[20]

A crucial ceremony was performed on the twelfth day, hence *Dua Belas Hari* ceremony, whereby a ritual was performed to confirmed the union. The bride's parents, often her mother, would

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[20] For images of a traditional Baba Nyonya wedding and feast, for instance, see C. K. Lam, Baba-Nyonya Wedding with a Peranakan Dining Experience. October 14, 2010. http://www.what2seeonline.com/2010/10/baba-nyonya-wedding-with-a-peranakan-dining-experience/ (Accessed Dec 17, 2017).

invite the bridegroom's mother to inspect a *Bim Poah* (a white handkerchief) collected from the matrimonial bed. She would ceremoniously place the *Bim Poah* on a tray, presented to the bridegroom's mother, and invite the latter to squeeze lime juice on the handkerchief to ascertain the authenticity of the blood stain, evidence that the bride was a virgin.

Meanwhile at the bride's family residence, *nasi lemak* would be prepared. It is a common Malay fare of rice (*nasi*) cooked in coconut milk (*lemak*, meaning rich taste) served with a variety of condiments such as chicken or beef curry, fried tamarind-marinated prawns, slices of boiled eggs, fried anchovies with salted peanuts, slices of cucumber, and *sambal belacan*. No one consumes the *nasi lemak* until favorable news is received from the bridegroom's household.

But prudently and diplomatically, the bridegroom's mother would decline the invitation to perform the test, hence circumventing any untoward result that would undoubtedly forever marred relations between the two families. According to Madam Tan, her mother-in-law ruled out this twelfth day ceremony, and her own mother concurred with the decision.[21]

Up until the early 1970s, most of the aforesaid wedding ceremonies and rituals remained intact with minor modifications in respect of the changing times. Instead of a horse, for instance, the bridegroom arrives in a car. Thereafter, new trends overtook traditions. Lunch or dinner at restaurants or hotels freed the residence from the hordes of visitors, circumvent the burden of preparation and cleaning up thereafter, and the required skills and expertise needed to serve a *th'ng tok* meal. Arranged marriages made way for love matches albeit blessings from both parents. Those who had embraced other faiths, Christianity or Islam, or married other ethnic groups such as Indian-Hindu, Europeans would also dispense with Baba Nyonya wedding traditions.

Owing to a revitalization of Baba Nyonya heritage in Penang since the late 1980s and early 1990s, and the declaration in mid-2008

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[21] Interview, 30 July 2015.

of "Melaka and George Town, Historic Cities of the Straits of Malacca" as UNESCO World Heritage Sites (WHS), the traditional Baba Nyonya wedding with all the ceremonies and rituals are staged for the benefit of visitors.

3.3.3. First-Born

The Baba Nyonya prized both male and female offspring in contrast to the China-born who considered raising daughters as raising other people's child consequent of the fact that when daughters marry, they *belong* to their husband's family. A traditional Chinese saying wryly denounced a female offspring: "It is better to raise geese than daughters." The geese, when sold, at least had a commercial value rather than the losing proposition of having a female child. The Baba Nyonya, however, readily welcome a *chin choay* marriage; daughters in fact proved an asset, for marriage brought into the family a son-in-law who could enriched the family gene pool. Nonetheless, there remained partiality towards a male offspring as the continuity of the family name was assured. After having two daughters, Madam Tan had her third offspring in the hope for a son, and she was fortunate to be blessed with a boy.[22]

Gender notwithstanding, the birth of a child was indeed a celebratory occasion. Traditionally, *bidan* or mid-wives were engaged for the delivery often at home in the family residence. During the entire nine-month pregnancy, the mother-to-be adhered to a variety of *pantang* (restrictions), from dietary control to physical movements. A Nyonya heavy with child was refrained from viewing less than beautiful objects as it might adversely impact on her unborn. For instance, it was forbidden for a pregnant Nyonya to visit Penang's sprawling Botanic Gardens famed for roving bands of macaques lest the new born might resemble or behave like the primates.[23] Hence, an expectant Nyonya was kept indoors with minimal physical exertions.

As obstetrics advanced in the twentieth century coupled with English-medium education being widespread amongst the forward-

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[22] Interview, 30 July 2015.
[23] Madam Tan, interview, 21 July 2015.

looking Baba Nyonya, the traditional home birth made way for delivery at specialist maternity homes or at the Penang General Hospital. Maternity homes ranged from converted shophouses to terraced houses refurbished to accommodate between six and eight expectant women.[24] Often operated by a retired nurse or well-known *bidan*, with assistance from several housemaids (for cooking, house-keeping, caregivers), the maternity home customarily received routine visits by a medical practitioner. During the later stages of labor, a doctor was present to address complications. Respondent Madam Tan recalled her ordeal.

> Labor was much longer [than for her first-born]. [There were] problems [breech birth] during the birth of my second child. It was beyond the capabilities of Mary [the *bidan*], and Dr Khoo was called in. It was costly, almost twice the cost four years ago [when she had her first-born].[25]

Often normal deliveries were solely attended by the *bidan*. The *bidan* also specialized in post-natal care whereby specialist foods were prepared for the mother. Given that babies then were breast-fed, the diet of the mother was especially important to ensure nutrients benefitted the newborn. A must-have post-natal food was stir-fry chicken with lavish amounts of shredded ginger fried in generous doses of sesame oil; a strengthening dish for a new mother. Ginger and sesame oil are both considered "hot" foods that new mothers should consumed to regain strength, vitality, and replenish blood loss during childbirth.[26] Again, a regime of *pantang* were in place.

> 'Cold' foods such as *la-la*, *siput*, *kappa* [various types of shellfish] were forbidden. Everything consumed must be served piping hot, rice, soup, fried vegetables. Mah [her mother] was strict on *pantang*; she says if you are stubborn [disregard prohibitions], you will suffer in your old age. Heng [her husband] had to buy only big fish such

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24 Madam Tan's two daughters and a son were born at maternity homes, a commonplace practice of the 1950s. Interview, 30 July 2015.

25 Interview, 21 July 2015.

26 There is a specific section titled "Confinement Food" in Wong's *Nyonya Flavours* (2003) for post-natal care.

as *tau tay* [pomfret], *siakap* [barramundi or Asian sea bass] not small fishes … if not, Mah will be furious as the latter [small fishes] are believed to be *tok* ['toxic'].[27]

Little has changed relating to pregnancies and childbirth since the late nineteenth century to the 1960s as far as *pantang* and *bidan* were concerned. The latter's services were gradually phased out as hospitals became the preferred choice over maternity homes. Many *pantang* during the pre- and post-natal period were also disregarded and/or ignored from the mid-1970s. Education undoubtedly was a bane to tradition.

Paternal grandparents traditionally furnished a name for the new-born. Baba Nyonya tradition adhered to the generational common middle name whereby all male cousins share a similar middle name, likewise their female counterparts. If "Seng" is the chosen middle name for the male child, and the family surname is "Cheah", male cousins would all be named: Cheah <u>Seng</u> Huat,[28] Cheah <u>Seng</u> Kim, Cheah <u>Seng</u> Koon. Similarly, for females, "Poh" as a common middle name, hence Cheah <u>Poh</u> Choo, Cheah <u>Poh</u> Gek, Cheah <u>Poh</u> Eng.

By the late 1970s, many couples took on the task from grandparents in naming their offspring. Although Western names had been fashionable even before the Pacific War, the post-war period witnessed increasing adoption of Hollywood-style names such as "Mary", "Elizabeth", "Shirley", "Richard", "Robert", "Tony". Thus, "John Lim Kheng Huat" or "Anne Lee Bee Gim", and the likes became popular. Then from the late 1980s and 1990s, some parents discarded altogether the Chinese given name, simply "Marilyn Cheah" or "Joshua Khoo", "Ben Yap".

Traditionally a baby's first moon or month[29] was celebrated with especial food: *nasi kunyit* (glutinous rice with turmeric), chicken curry, red-colored hardboiled eggs, and *ang-koo* (red-colored

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[27] Madam Tan, interview, 21 July 2015.

[28] After the fashion, whereby the family name precedes personal names in direct contrast to the Western rendition.

[29] The first month of a baby is crucial; in the past, a male offspring might succumb to ailment prior to his first moon.

kuih with mung bean paste); the color red being auspicious in Chinese culture. Packed in tiffin-carriers, the father of the child assisted by a female relative would deliver the auspicious foods to relatives and friends by way of announcing the baby's first month. Recipients in turn offer ang pow as a form of felicitation to the parents and family. Although the norm, circumstances might pose exceptions as Madam Ong recollected.

> We did this *mah-guet* [commemorating the first moon] for Seng Hin [her first born] giving relatives *ang-koo* [and] *nasi kunyit*. Ah Pin [her husband] and his father did the distribution on bicycles. I was worried that the *gulai* [curry] would go bad. But not for the others [three daughters and another son] as times were hard.[30]

A male baby would be brought to the clan temple to have his name registered, and in this manner, symbolically "introduced" to the ancestors ensuring the continuity of the clan, a Confucianist filial obligation for each succeeding generation.[31]

From the late 1980s, confectionary shops designed "First Moon Package" that comprised the aforesaid mandatory foodstuff. Innovative vendors offered options of cupcakes instead of *ang-koo*, or a chocolate cheesecake in lieu of *nasi kunyit*-chicken curry ensemble. Although elders frowned on such disregard for tradition, young parents savored the twist in gifts.

3.3.4. Attire

Consistent with the female ancestor being indigenous, the Nyonya's overall attire was partial to native (meaning Malay) dressing (Cheah 2010). In the nineteenth century, the *t'ng sar* (long blouse) was the norm overlying the upper body until the knees worn with a *batik sarung* (wrapped-around, pareo) that stretched to the ankles. Inner garments or *tay sah* were loose fitting camisole in lieu of a modern brassiere. Agreeable to the tropical climate, cotton was the preferred

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[30] Interview, 24 July 2015.

[31] Neither Madam Ong or Madam Tan brought their sons to the respective clan temples. Both did not recall the reason(s) that this ritual was not undertaken. Madam Ong, interview 24 July 2015; Madam Tan, interview, 21 July 2015.

fabric. Footwear was a colorful pair of *manik* (beaded) shoes. *Sanggul* or coiffure for Penang Nyonya was traditionally worn on the top or crown of the head[32] and held in place by several *cucuk sanggul* or coiffure hairpins. Custom accessories include *anting* (earrings), *gelang tangan* (bracelet), *gelang kaki* (angklets), *cincin* (ring) all made of gold and silver (Ho 2003; Chin 1991). Malay influence was conspicuous in form and design in traditional Nyonya attire.

Thanks to English-medium schooling the Baba was Anglicized in attire. A light summer suit, a white shirt with tie, dark pants and a pair of Oxfords represented the quintessential Penang Baba of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Western-style cotton shirts were ironed stiff with starch, likewise the loose trousers with fold-up at the ankles. Madam Tan spoke of washing and ironing her father's white long-sleeved shirts and white pants, and threw in a ditty for measure.

> *Pehk sah, pehk kaw,*
> *Imsee Towkay, see chong-paow!*

> White shirt, white pants,
> If not a Towkay, obviously a cook![33]

A pair of Argyll or plain socks, paired with the black laced-up Oxford. Cotton was the preferred fabric as it could better accommodate the tropical clime.

Family portraits and wedding photographs captured during the last quarter of the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth centuries displayed in museums and/or in private collections showcase the evolution of Baba Nyonya attire. A typical wedding image at a photography studio depicts a seated Nyonya bride dressed in all finery with a standing Baba smartly in a Western suit and tie. A bridegroom in the professions – doctor, lawyer, or engineer – might opt for a bowtie.[34]

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[32] In Melaka, and thence Singapore, the sanggul settled at the lower back of the head.

[33] Interview, 2-3 January 2016.

[34] Madam Tan remembered that one of her granduncles who was a medical practitioner often wore a bowtie. Ibid.

The 1920s witnessed a fashion shift in Nyonya attire (Choong 2016). Introduced from Medan, then under Dutch colonial rule, the *Nyonya kebaya* made its debut as formal attire in Penang, Melaka, and Singapore. Apparently fashioned after the Portuguese *kobaya*, hence its name, was simply a laced blouse but the Nyonya transformed the *kebaya* into a tantalizing attire with colorful intricate patterns (Endon Mahmood 2012; Lee 2015). Devoid of buttons, the delicate *kebaya* was held in place by a set of gold *kerongsong* (brooch), with a main brooch with two secondary and smaller brooches intricately connected to one another with a fine chain (Chin 1991). Worn over the *batik sarung*, the slim-fit almost transparent *Nyonya kebaya* accentuated the feminine curves. By then the modern brassiere was worn under a camisole. *Manik* shoes continued to be the preferred footwear (Ho 2003).

Known in Penang as *Pua Th'ng Tay*, literally "half long, half short" describing the combination of the short *kebaya* with the long *batik sarung*, the *Nyonya kebaya* was synonymous with Nyonya attire to contemporary times.[35] Western-style dressing amongst Nyonya had rendered the *Pua Th'ng Tay* for auspicious occasions such as weddings, birthdays, anniversaries, Chinese New Year. Despite a revival and interest in Baba Nyonya culture and heritage, few would don a Nyonya kebaya for office wear.

Western attire of shirt and pants for daily wear, and a suit with tie for formal functions remained the mainstay for the Baba to current times. Although some donned *batik*, few took on the Chinese-collared jacket with loose dark pants.

3.3.5. Nyonya Cuisine[36]

As the forte of the Nyonya, it was not surprising that indigenous Malay influence had a major impact on foods for daily consumption

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[35] It was the preferred attire for all three respondents, viz. Madams Tan, Ong, and Chew. The *Pua Th'ng Tay* is like a 'uniform', in the words of Madam Tan, an identity marker for a Nyonya. Interview, 2-3 January 2016.

[36] In the past decade and a half due to renewed interest in the Baba Nyonya of Penang, Melaka, and Singapore, there appeared numerous publications on the community's cuisine. For a sampling, see Tan (2010) and Wong (2003) focusing on Penang, Chia (2011) and Lee (2003) on Singapore, and Liew (2010) on Malacca.

and festive occasions (Wong 2003). In both preparation and ingredients, the Nyonya borrowed much from the Malay kitchen ascertained from the various Malay terms of Nyonya cuisine: *gulai kay* (chicken curry), *assam pedas* (spicy tamarind-based curry), *otak-otak* (fish pieces in spice-paste wrapped in banana leaves, steamed or char-grilled), *Kari Kapitan* (Captain's curry), *acar* (pickles), *Inche Kabin* (deep fried chicken pieces marinated in a mixed paste of coconut milk and an assortment of *rempah* or spices). Consequent of assisting her mother in the daily preparations of meals for an extended family of fifteen, Madam Tan lamented the labour-intensive work involved.

> I particularly dislike pounding *ketumbar* (coriander), because of the large amount when cooking *gulai* [curry]. Mah [her mother] always reprimand that my *jiu hu see* (dried cuttle fish julienne) is not fine enough, an embarrassment to my future *niaeh* [mother-in-law]. Despite acquiring the various culinary skills through force of circumstances, I never [like] cooking, but to help Mah.[37]

Key and common ingredients in Nyonya cooking comprised coconut milk, *galangal* (a subtle, mustard-scented rhizome), *buah keras* (candlenuts), *pandan* (*Pandanus amaryllifolius*), *belacan* (fragrant shrimp-based condiment), *assma-ko* (tamarind), *chu'ng-mau* (lemongrass), *buah kantan* (torch ginger bud), jicama, fragrant kaffir lime (*Citrus hystrix*) leaf, *cincaluk* (sour and salty shrimp-based condiment). Both *galangal* and *buah keras* are used for their unique flavoring as well as a thickening agent. While *belacan* enhances flavours in curries, *cincalok* is often mixed with lime juice, fresh red chillies and shallots to create a side dish or condiment or dip for deep-fried fish. *Belacan* is the main composition in *sambal belacan*, a fiery hot condiment of *belacan*, *cabai burung* (fiery bird's eye chillies), *ikan bilis* (tropical anchovies) and lime juice. Penang Nyonya dishes are generous with *assam-ko* for its sour flavours drawn from the Thai kitchen.

For the wedding *th'ng tok* lunch or dinner,[38] guests savored

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[37] Interview, 13 August 2015. She, however, confessed that she 'enjoyed' preparing fried yellow Hokkien noodles and making *chai ean* (agar agar) for her children.

[38] Madam Tan participated as a member of the cooking team on at least three

the mandatory curry, either *Kari Kapitan*, *hoo gulai tumi* (fish curry) or *assam pedas hoo* (tamarind-based fish curry), also *tau-eiw bak* (belly pork in dark soy sauce), *kiam-chye too-kah th'ng* (mustard leaf and pork leg soup) or *tu thor th'ng* (pig's intestine soup), *lohbak* (pork wraps), *chap chye liow* (cabbage, glass noodles, *bok nee* or wood ear fungus stir-fry with *taujoo*, fermented bean curd) pairing fabulously with steamed white rice. *Owh th'ng chooi* (dark sugared drink) was the traditional beverage[39] besides hard liquor (generally brandy) and free-flow of Tiger beer[40] for the menfolk.

At Baba Nyonya birthday celebrations invariably of venerable elders, guests were feted to *siah-jit mee* (birthday noodles) comprising blanched yellow noodles in a pork broth topped with shrimps, slices of boiled pork belly, and shredded omelette. *Sambal belacan* was an indispensable condiment.

Jiu-hoo char was a mandatory dish for the annual Cheng Beng offerings. Shredded turnip or jicama, carrot, and cabbage are fried with thin slices of pork belly and dried cuttlefish (*jiu-hoo*) strips. *Siew-too* (roasted pig) was a mainstay for funerals together with roasted chickens and ducks presented at the prayer altar.

The signature characteristics of Nyonya dishes were the finery slicing of ingredients of both meats and vegetables reflecting the culinary skills of the Nyonya and a prized wifely attribute. Finery also extended to the colorfully glazed crockery, exquisite and delicate pieces of artworks (Choong 2005). Unlike chopsticks with the China-born, Baba Nyonya preferred the Western fork and spoon. The Malay manner of partaking food with the right hand was commonplace with first and second generation Nyonya, thereafter Western cutleries were the norm in households.

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weddings held at the *kong chu* (family home), mainly involved in the preparation section of chopping vegetables, peeling potatoes, onions, shallots, garlic, etc., and the washing-up. She recalled the "hills and mountains" of plates, cups, culinary utensils, pots, pans to wash while squatting at the washing section of the cavernous kitchen. Interview, 13 August 2015, and 2-3 January 2016.

[39] From the 1950s, bottled carbonated orange from Fraser & Neave became increasingly popular especially among children.

[40] Tiger beer was locally produced by Malayan Breweries Limited (1931), an Asian brewery. Today's Tiger beer is from Heineken Asia Pacific based in Singapore.

> My father trained [my] children on table manners and how to use fork and knives like *ang moh* [lit. red hair, Europeans], at the same time in handling chopsticks, and to eat rice with their [right] hand. I was proud to observe that at Wing Look [a restaurant on Penang Road that serves Western cuisine] my children used the fork and knife to tackle the pork chop and chicken Maryland.[41]

Nyonya cuisine has suffered setbacks adversely impacting on its sustainability. As women increasingly entered the workforce from the late 1960s, full-time Nyonya homemakers dwindled over the decades. Age-old recipes, cooking skills and techniques inherited from generations through cooking together gradually phased out. The revival and interest in Baba Nyonya culture and heritage in recent decades notwithstanding, most families opt for a meal at one of the several Nyonya restaurants in George Town. Nyonya cookbooks were bought owing to nostalgia than practical purposes.

3.3.6. Economic Livelihood

As mentioned, trade and commerce served the early Chinese sojourners. Over the decades, the Baba descendants of these pioneers expanded their commercial interests from wholesale, retail to investments in commercial agriculture (pepper, sugar, rubber) and tin-mining (Xiao 2010; Yeoh 2009; Wong 2015). The Baba *towkay* took advantage of his fluency in English, Hokkien, a smattering of other Chinese dialects (Cantonese, Teochew, Hakka, etc.), conversational Malay and Tamil to liaise with colonial authorities, European firms, Chinese businesses, Malay farmers, and Tamil workers. As *comprador* he interceded between the colonial government, Western enterprises, imported labour (Chinese, Tamil, Javanese), and local indigenous (Malay) producers. Interactions with coolies and stevedores, and plantation workers were in pidgin Malay and/or Tamil. Managers and supervisors were engaged to oversee mines and plantations located in the Malay states with occasional personal visits by the Baba *towkay* or his sons.

But traditionally the Chinese, regardless whether peasant farmer or wealthy merchant, since dynastic times had high respect

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[41] Madam Tan, interview, 2-3 January 2016.

for the scholar, a lettered person, and wished for their sons to secure an official appointment as scholar-bureaucrat in the imperial government bureaucracy (Lee 1999). In the colonial context of Penang, however, Baba Nyonya families regarded English-medium education as the social mobility tool for both sons and daughters.[42] Nonetheless, as regards female education, there appear much reservations on the part of the older generation of Baba Nyonya. On her schooling, Madam Tan recollects.

> Ang Mah [grandmother] and Ee Poh [grandmother's sister] were not at ease of us girls [Madam Tan and her female cousins] going to school. The elders reckon that c*har boh gee-nah* [young maidens] shouldn't be expose to others and in public, jumping, running [referring to Physical Exercise class on the school field]. But Tua Koo [eldest maternal uncle] insists that education is important for boys as well as for girls. I managed to complete elementary level [year six], and was looking forward to go to [year] seven [lower secondary level], the big school when the Japanese came.[43]

The affluent would send their sons, rarely daughters, to universities such as Oxford, Cambridge or London to read medicine, law, or engineering. During the 1920s the University of Hong Kong (1911) was an alternative for tertiary education, especially architecture and engineering. Baba professionals were highly respected in both British colonial society and the wider Chinese community.[44] A Baba medical doctor or architect in the eyes of both Baba and China-born was a role model for their sons to emulate.

Others, for want of funds or academic credentials but with only a Junior Cambridge certificate served as clerical staff in the

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[42] Madam Ong and her three sisters attended the Convent Light Street in downtown George Town. Interview, 24 July 2015. Madam Tan and Madam Chew on the other hand were pupils of the American Methodist School on Anson Road (Jalan Anson). The outbreak of the Pacific War (1941-1945) cut short their schooling. Interview, 30 July and 2 August 2016 respectively.

[43] Interview, 30 July 2016.

[44] Madam Tan's maternal granduncle, the youngest, was a medical practitioner while another was an engineer. The former, a confirmed bachelor, often threw parties for his European friends with ballroom dancing of which he was an enthusiast. Sadly, both her granduncles passed away in their thirties during the early 1930s.

colonial bureaucracy, European agency houses, banks, shipping lines, or insurance firms (Loh 1976; Ooi 1992). Becoming a *chai-hu* (clerk in Chinese) or *kerani* (clerk in Malay) was an enviable position during the colonial period.[45] A clerk, whether government or commercial sector, enjoyed a "respectable" standing within Baba Nyonya circles as well as in the wider Chinese community. Malays and Indians too possessed respect for clerks. During the colonial period, the literacy rate was relatively low hence for an individual, irrespective of ethnicity, to attain the Junior Cambridge, a basic qualification for clerical work, was an accomplishment. The colonial government and Western firms only recognized English-medium qualifications (Junior and Senior Cambridge certificates). Middle School Certificate from vernacular Chinese schools was not recognized for employment (Tan 1997).

Being a clerk enjoined a Baba into the middle class of Penang colonial society. Armed with spoken and written English, a Baba clerk was well-regarded even in the eyes of class-conscious Englishmen. The reasonable remuneration of a clerk afforded a family and a modest double-storey terraced house. Cycling to work on his Raleigh Made-in-England bicycle was as respectable as it gets in pre-war (before 1941) George Town. His work place was invariably in one of the offices along Beach Street (Jalan Pantai), the heart of the commercial business district (CBD) of George Town. Co-workers were Baba like himself and/or Sinhalese, Eurasian, and the occasional Malay. His immediate superior was the C.C., chief clerk,[46] a position he enviously sought. Only intermittently did the Baba clerk interact with his European manager.

A Baba with a Senior Cambridge certificate could opt to be an assistant teacher in government schools like the Penang Free School or Christian missionary schools such as St Xavier's Institution, Methodist Boys' School. He would "assist" the European master who was literally imported from Britain or Europe along with the school

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[45] Madam Tan's father and husband initially started out as clerks in commercial companies in George Town. Both had their schooling at the Penang Free School. They both ended as managers of rubber estates in Kedah.

[46] Madam Chew's cousin was a chief clerk in a German shipping line on Beach Street (Lebuh Pantai). Interview, 2 August 2015.

curriculum and textbooks. The Penang Free School, the oldest English-medium school in East and Southeast Asia, was managed and operated along the lines of British public schools like Harrow and Rugby (Hughes 2014).[47] The position of assistant schoolmaster was slightly (socially) higher than a C.C., but the highest position an "Asiatic" could aspire then.

Preferred careers for Nyonya with English-medium schooling were either as elementary schoolteachers or nurses, both seen as ideal for women then.[48] But only in the early part of the twentieth century were there Nyonya schoolteachers and nurses. Despite schooling for their daughters, even forward-looking Baba Nyonya families were reluctant to allow daughters to embark on a career. Respondent Madam Tan's mother was keen on a medical career but her aspirations were objected by her parents who adhered to the then prevalent attitude, "No decent respectable family would allow their daughters to work outside."[49] Another prevalent expression, sounding more like a reprimand or warning, told by mothers to daughters: "You won't be able to find a husband if you are so highly educated" in discouraging ambitious young Nyonya.

For the majority of educated Nyonya, they fulfilled their filial duties for arranged marriages becoming housewives who ensured that their husband was well taken care of and bringing up filial children in sustaining the family line. A typical Nyonya's existence was within the family household.

The post-*Merdeka* (1957)[50] generation enjoyed many post-schooling options. Many from Baba Nyonya families opted for tertiary education abroad; both sons and daughters being given equal opportunities. Besides Britain, the late 1960s and 1970s saw students enrolling in colleges and universities in U.S., Australia, New Zealand, or Canada, a few for studies in Germany, France,

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[47] Madam Tan's father had a brief teaching stint at the Penang Free School. One of his students was a prince of the royal house of Kedah, Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj, first prime minister of Malaya/Malaysia.

[48] One of respondent Madam Chew's spinster friend, was a nurse, who subsequently became matron at the Penang General Hospital. Interview, 2 August 2015.

[49] Interview, 2-3 January 2016.

[50] Malaya was granted independence (*merdeka*) by Britain on 31 August 1957.

Switzerland, even Sweden. Some turned to India, mainly for medicine, and Japan, for engineering and other technical studies. Meanwhile, Singapore's and Hong Kong's premier universities drew many of Penang's top students, including those from Baba Nyonya families.

Overall, the current generation of Baba Nyonya of Penang are more akin to the parent's and grandparent's choice of career paths, namely as professionals if they benefitted from tertiary schooling, rather than their pioneering forebears' involvement in trade and commerce, investments and entrepreneurship. Madam Tan's two daughters, both graduates from American universities, hold managerial positions in private companies.[51] Undoubtedly there are those with entrepreneurial spirit venturing in businesses despite a law degree from Inner Temple.

Although generally filial to their parents and grandparents, there is little semblance of the blind, unquestioned obedience of the pre-1960 generation. "It was a scandal, an embarrassment," regretted Madam Chew when she spoke of her grand nephew opting for a music career as a guitarist in a band; his parents were furious.[52]

3.3.7. Political Affinity

As comprador, the go-between of Western enterprises and local producers, and sheltering under the colonial judicial system, it was not surprising that the Baba Nyonya community possessed faith and loyalty to the British colonial government in Penang. Subsequent generations too maintained a pro-British stance.[53] Their English-medium schooling secured them professional careers (doctors, lawyers, engineers), teaching appointments and clerical positions that provided a respectable social standing and economic livelihood in colonial George Town.

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[51] Interview, 2-3 January 2016. Her only son, however, decided to venture into business after completing high school. He currently lives in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. There was reluctance on Madam Tan's part in volunteering details of her son's career path. Ibid.

[52] Interview, 2 August 2015.

[53] All three respondents – Madams Tan, Ong and Chew – spoke warmly of Queen Elizabeth II, and highly of the British colonial era in recollections.

Being groomed in the English-medium schools, it was understandable that the Penang Baba were highly Anglicized. English was the preferred language of choice amongst their circles. Moreover, the Baba, who comprised the majority of the Penang Clerical and Administrative Staff Union (PCASU) and Straits Chinese British Association (SCBA), claimed to be the "King's Chinese" subjects, and pledged loyalty to the House of Windsor (Koh and Ho 2009: 3).

Loyalty to the colonial administration was apparent and conspicuously demonstrated in the late 1940s when the British proposed the incorporation of the then British Crown Colonies of Penang and Melaka to the newly-established Federation of Malaya (1948).[54] The Penang Secessionist Movement led by a Baba petitioned Whitehall that Penang be excluded lest it compromises its hitherto advantages, notably its free port status pivotal to its entrepôt economy, politically submerged by a Malay-dominated Federation particularly of Malay special privileges relating to education (higher education), government scholarships, civil service appointments, land ownership, and business and industrial licenses (Christie 1996: 28-52). The secessionists proposed instead to maintain Penang as a Crown Colony, or to join Singapore (excluded from the Federation) in a resurrected Straits Settlements that continued to maintain ties within the British Empire. The secessionists comprised the business community and middle-class organizations such as the SCBA (Mohd. Noordin Sopiee 1973: 52).

The British government, however, in 1951 rejected the secessionist's petition of November 1949. Timing was against the secessionists. Having just resolved the largely unanticipated unparalleled Malay opposition to the Malayan Union (1946-1948), the British did not wish to risk another Malay backlash. Malay support was then pivotal in facing a Chinese-led leftist insurgency, the Emergency (1948-1960) (Ooi 2004: 1051).

In the post-*Merdeka* period, the Baba Nyonya who comprised the bulk of the middle class in Penang lent their support to the

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[54] Economically and militarily Singapore was too invaluable an asset not to be a Crown Colony hence its retention.

Alliance Party of Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj.[55] But during the 1969 General Elections, there was a vote swing to the opposition Gerakan Rakyat Malaysia or Gerakan led by Dr Lim Chong Eu (1919-2010) who was from a prominent Baba family in Penang.[56] Gerakan comprised many professionals and intellectuals with support from Penang's educated middle class hence the electoral triumph. But within two years in the opposition, Gerakan became a component party of the wider coalition of Barisan Nasional (BN, National Front) under Prime Minister Tun Abdul Razak Hussein (t. 1971-1976). Gerakan, within the ruling BN coalition at the federal government, administered Penang for nearly four decades relying mainly on middle class support.[57]

Ⅳ. CONCLUDING REMARKS

As has been shown, Baba Nyonya unique characteristics were borne from Chinese patriarchal impact and indigenous matrilocal influence. Chinese patriarchy impressed on the continuous adherence to Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism. Indigenous matrilocal input was conspicuous in language, cuisine, and women's attire.

The 1920s marked the heyday of the Baba Nyonya where family wealth derived from rubber and tin and the entrepôt economy of Penang was flourishing thereby ensuring descendants enjoyed the grandeur and comforts of resplendent *ang mor lau* (lit. "red-hair's mansion"; European mansion), evening drives in the family Rolls Royse, vacations abroad, and overseas higher education for college-age children.

But the Depression (1929-1931) adversely impacted many Baba Nyonya families. Economic recovery gradually emerged from the

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[55] The Tunku was Malayan prime minister (1957-1963), and thereafter of Malaysia (1963-1970).

[56] His father was Dr Lim Chwee Leong (1891-1957), a renowned British-trained medical practitioner of colonial George Town.

[57] The Malaysian 2008 General Elections swept the opposition Democratic Action Party (DAP) to power in Penang. DAP retained its hold on Penang in the subsequent elections of 2013.

mid-1930s, but optimism was short-lived as rumours of impending war in Europe was rife, and the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945)[58] on the Chinese mainland.

The Japanese military occupation (1941-1945) was undoubtedly hard and bitter for all quarters (Kratoska 1998). War literally wiped out family fortunes and destroyed lives. Baba Nyonya families in George Town like all townspeople endured material deprivation, and the pervasive fear of reprisals simply because of being ethnic Chinese. Whilst young men were afraid of abduction to labor gangs, young women feared rape and induction into military brothels.

Post-war recovery was gradual, and many Baba Nyonya families who had suffered reversal of fortunes barely survived into the 1970s. Many who had grown up in ten-room *ang mor lau* had to endure living in a three-bedroom terraced house in the outskirts of George Town.

The late 1980s witnessed a revival of interest in Baba Nyonya sociocultural traditions prompted by nostalgic recollections of the "good old days". By the 1990s and 2000s a rejuvenation of interest of a community in its "twilight" years was the needed antidote. An increasing curiosity and appreciation of Nyonya cuisine spurred a cottage industry in recipe books. Meanwhile a plethora of websites, blogs emerged. All the discourses in whatever media contribute in sustaining the ongoing interest of the community. Undoubtedly George Town's listing as one of the UNESCO World Heritage Sites in mid-2008 spurred further attentiveness of the eclectic Baba Nyonya.

Conceived some three decades ago, the annual Baba Nyonya Convention promoted the celebration of all things of the eclectic community. The 30th International Baba Nyonya Convention on 29 November 2017 was hosted by the State Chinese (Penang) Association.[59] Venue of this yearly gathering rotates between

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[58] Mainland Chinese scholars preferred the term, War of Japanese Aggression (1937-1945).

[59] Cavina Lim and R. Sekaran, Baba Nyonya convention aims to uphold precious heritage, *The Star*, 29 Nov 2017 https://www.thestar.com.my/metro/metro-news/2017/11/29/telling-the-peranakan-story-baba-nyonya-convention-aims-to-uphold-

Penang, Melaka, Singapore, and Phuket.[60] Seminars, sociocultural presentations, display of fashionable attires, savoury dishes and *kuih* were attractive highlights showcasing the community's exotic, eclectic, and exclusive characteristics and features.

Like Peranakan communities across Southeast Asia, the Baba Nyonya of Penang face imminent extinction if the current generation forgo their sociocultural practices, language, identity, and heritage. Efforts from within Baba Nyonya circles appear to be the engine for rejuvenation and future growth.

Respondents

Tan Ai Gek, born 1927, Hokkien Baba-Hokkien Nyonya parentage; third generation; residence in Burmah Road (presently Jalan Burma), moved to Tanjong Bungah when she was 75 years old when the family *ang mor lau* was sold off; a widow since 1989; two daughters and a son. Interviews 21 July, 30 July, and 13 August 2015; 2-3 January 2016.

Chew Chui Gek (1923-2017), Teochew Baba-Hokkien Nyonya parentage; third generation; residence in George Town; spinster who lived with her two nieces, Adeline and Ann Cheah until her passing in April 2017. Interview 2 August and 12 September 2015.

Ong Poh Choo, born 1931, Hokkien-Baba-Teochew Nyonya parentage; third generation; residence in Pulau Tikus; two sons and three daughters. Interview 24 July 2015.

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[60] Extending to Medan and Mandalay are in the pipeline.

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Change and Continuity in Traditional Timugon Rice Cultivation Beliefs and Practices

Low Kok On · Jacqueline Pugh-Kitingan · Ismail Ibrahim*

[*Abstract*]

Before the start of the North Borneo Company administration in North Borneo (now Sabah, Malaysia) in 1882, the Timugon Murut of today's interior Tenom District lived in longhouses, and practiced head-hunting during wars with other Murutic ethnic groups. Their economy revolved around swidden agriculture of hill rice, sago, and cassava. Wet rice cultivation and water buffaloes were introduced just before 1885. Wet rice was planted on the alluvial plains around the Pegalan and Padas Rivers, while dry rice was planted on hillside swiddens that had been cleared by slash-and-burn methods. Today, wet rice cultivation and cash-cropping on the plains are the main Timugon socioeconomic activities, while some families also plant dry rice on the hills as a back-up. The Timugon believe that the physical world is surrounded by the spiritual world, and everything was made by the creator Aki Kapuuno'. The focus of this field research paper is on the beliefs and ritual practices of the Timugon connected to their traditional rice agriculture. This study found that for generations, the

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Timugon believed that since animals were created by Aki Kapuuno' for the wellbeing of humans, various types of animals and birds convey omens to guide people. Thus, the older Timugon rice cultivation is strongly influenced by good and bad omens and taboos, and also involves symbolic practices and ritual offerings to guardian spirits of the rice. After the 1930s and especially since the 1960s, most Timugon became Roman Catholic Christians. Hence, this paper also examines changes in the traditional Timugon rice cultivation related beliefs and practices due to religious conversion and other factors.

Keywords: Timugon Murut, rice cultivation, omens, rituals, religious conversion

Ⅰ. Introduction

The Timugon Murut speak one of about twelve languages of the indigenous Murutic Family of Languages of Sabah, which is the east Malaysian state of northern Borneo (Spitzack [1984] 1997). Numbering a total of approximately 97,300 (*Sabah Populations Census Report* 2010), Murutic peoples are scattered across southern Sabah and parts of northern Kalimantan. They are sometimes generally distinguished as either "highland Murut" or "lowland Murut" according to whether they live in the hills, or on the plains (Rutter [1929] 1985: 34; LeBar 1972: 153). Of the lowland Murut, the Timugon have a population of around 10,000 (9,000 in 2004, Brewis 2004: 936). They are located mainly in a small area of roughly 30 km from north to south on the west bank of the Pegalan River and the east bank of the Padas River at the confluence of the rivers near Tenom Town in the northern part of Tenom District. The ethnonym "Timugon" is derived from their term *timug* or "water" that connotes their traditional location in villages along the rivers as opposed to the Paluan Murut up on the hills to the east (Brewis [1990] 1991: 15).

Several studies on Timugon culture have been produced over the years, including the report *The Timoguns*: [sic.] *A Murut Tribe*

of the Interior (1936, republished as *The Timogun* [sic.] *Muruts of Sabah*, 2004) by G.C. Woolley, who served for many years as the Resident of Interior under the North Borneo Company administration, and the Master's thesis on Timugon beliefs by Raymond Emus Gintod (1982). Linguistic research was conducted by J.D. Prentice (1971), and more recently by others including researchers with the Malaysian branch of Summer Institute of Linguistics or Institut Linguistik SIL－Cawangan Malaysia (now SIL Malaysia). The most extensive linguistic and cultural research among the Timugon, however, has been undertaken by Richard Brewis and Kielo Brewis who as SIL researchers lived in the community for around two decades, producing a proliferation of publications on the language, culture, worldview, and folklore of the people. Since leaving SIL, they have maintained their close ties with the Timugon. One of their more recent publications in Sabah is the collaborative Timugon-Malay dictionary volume with the Timugon entitled *Kamus Murut Timugon ‐ Melayu* (Brewis et.al. 2004).

Unlike most other Murutic peoples, the Timugon had relatively wide contact with outsiders dating back over centuries. They have mostly lived in single dwellings since the early 20th century, and cultivated wet rice as their staple on the plains, while also sometimes planted dry rice in swiddens on the hills. Most Timugon are devout Christians and members of the predominant Roman Catholic church. They have a rich tangible and intangible cultural heritage, and have successfully maintained their customs and traditions while adapting to change.

This paper discusses some of the traditional Timugon beliefs and practices that are connected to rice cultivation, and also looks at the impact of Christianity on these practices. Recent research on Christian conversion among indigenous Borneo societies illustrated why some Borneo peoples choose to become Christians. Among the Tahol (Tagal) Murut the largest Murutic group, for example, Hakim Abd. Mohad (2011) found that people deliberately chose to become Christians after years of dissatisfaction with harassment by evil spirits, and a desire to be free of the fear of omens. Likewise, Low and Pugh-Kitingan (2015) found that the Kimaragang ethnic group in Sabah chose to become Christians for similar reasons. A similar

dissatisfaction with the spirits and fear of omens had earlier led the Kelabit of Sarawak to become Christians. Kelabit anthropologist Poline Bala (2009) also noted that Christianity reinforced traditional Kelabit values of morality and social harmony.

Thus, in the context of the Timugon Murut this paper asks: what are the traditional beliefs and practices associated with rice cultivation among the Timugon, and how have these been maintained in the Christian context? Moreover at a deeper level, it further asks: what are the traditional Timugon beliefs and values in their worldview that have enabled them to embrace Christianity?

Ⅱ. The Timugon

2.1. Timugon history and society

The Timugon claim they have always lived in their present location. Their legends tell of a great primordial flood from which only one man survived. He was visited by an angelic being (*masundu'*) who created a wife for him from clay and spat red betel nut juice on the clay figure to give it life. This couple were the progenitors of the Timugon (Brewis 1992: 2; 1993: 4-5).Timugon history was marked by bitter headhunting wars with neighbouring groups, especially the Paluan Murut to the east. During the early 1800s, Brunei tax collectors came up the Padas from the coast, and the Timugon were for a time nominally subject to the Sultantate. In 1885, the North Borneo Company administration established Fort Birch where Tenom Town is now located. They forced a peace treaty between the Timugon and the Paluan, constructed the railway line from Jesselton (now Kota Kinabalu), and encouraged the planting of cash crops in the District. Then in 1910, Chinese settlers first came to Tenom to take up freehold land. By the 1930s, the Roman Catholic Church was already established in the area (Brewis [1990] 1991: 18-19; 2004: 936-938; Rooney 1981: 57; Woolley ([1936] 2004: 13-15).

The Timugon formerly lived in longhouses (*tulus*) each composed of private family apartments adjoining a public gallery. In

1885, the area had many large longhouses, but by 1921 only two or three remained with most families staying in separate houses. In 1992, in Kampung Pulung, the last remaining *tulus* burned down due to faulty wiring. Longhouses declined over the first part of the 20th century due to several factors including a widespread smallpox epidemic across northern Borneo from 1904 to 1905 and the issuance of land titles for individual plots by the North Borneo Company (Brewis [1990] 1991: 15, 18; 2004: 945-946; Lebar 1972: 155-156 Lebar 1972: 155-156; Pugh-Kitingan 2012a: 33).

Timugon society is non-stratified and egalitarian without hereditary positions of leadership, and has gender balance. In former times, brave men were renowned as warriors and headhunters based on their personal attributes, while certain gifted women were highly esteemed as *babalian* or priestesses in the traditional Timugon religion. Slavery as a result of warfare was a common practice in the past, but has since disappeared (Brewis [1990]1991: 15; Lebar 1972: 158).

Marriage in Timugon society is legalized by the payment of bridewealth (*mulo*) from the husband's family to that of the wife. It is a redistributive bridewealth system in which the father of the husband-to-be collects many objects of wealth from his relatives and distributes them to the father of the bride, who then redistributes the articles to his own kindred (Pugh-Kitingan 2012a: 104-105). The rule of exogamy prohibiting marriage between close relatives extends to fifth cousins, and post-nuptial residence is normally virilocal or in the village of the husband.

The *mansubak* exchange practiced among the northern Timugon in villages along the Pegalan River enables a man to maintain contact with his outmarrying distant female relative, if he did not receive any portion of her bridewealth when it was distributed by her father. *Mansubak* is an exchange between two married couples, in which the man in one couple is distantly related to the wife in the other couple. The items in the exchange, which extends over seven years, are seven sacks of rice and a water buffalo. The man sends a sack of rice each year to his female relative. At the end of seven years, he holds a feast for all his

consanguineal and affinal kin. After this, the woman's husband gives him a buffalo. In *mansuabak,* rice symbolizes women who leave their villages of their birth in marriage and also take care of the rice crops, while buffaloes represent men who normally reside permanently in their villages (Brewis [1990]1991: 27-34; 2004: 949-955).

Social solidarity through forming networks of alliances through exchanges and feasting, as in giving the *mulo* and in *mansubak,* are important in Timugon society. The consumption of rice and rice wine is the most significant element in feasting and social exchange, because rice was created by Aki Kapuuno' (the eternal Creator Spirit) as food for humans (who have eternal spirits), and it also has an eternal spirit *ambiluo ra bilor* (Brewis 1992: 7-10; 1993: 6-7; 2004: 978-984).

2.2. Timugon cosmology and worldview

There is not room here to give a full description of Timugon cosmology which has been thoroughly researched by others (Brewis 1992, 1993, 2004: 973-995; Gintod 1982). The following summary is to enhance the discussion about the Timugon, their traditional worldview and rice cultivation.

According to traditional Timugon beliefs, the universe was created by I Aki Kupuuno' (where *i* is an honorific indicating a person's name) or Aki Kapuuno', the "Grandfather of Beginnings." He created everything, including humans and rice, which has its own spirit *ambiluor ra bilor*. Aki Kapuuno' is good and kind to mankind. He longs for fellowship with humans, and sometimes appears on earth (Brewis 1992: 2, 1993: 4; 2004: 974-975).

The universe is envisaged as a multilayered sphere, that consists of the earth or *Tana',* surrounded by seven cosmic layers. Above the earth lie four layers of *Intangan* or the "Middle World," and beyond it are three layers of *Rasawat,* the "Upper World." Below the earth, lie seven layers of *Ragana* or the "Underworld." Beyond all these upper and lower worlds is the eighth layer of *Nabalu,* the "Afterworld" or the "Eighth World" from the number *walu* or eight (Brewis 1992: 3, 15; 1993: 2-3; 2004: 973-974).

The various parts of the cosmos are inhabited by different beings. Humans live on earth. *Intangan* and *Rasawat* are inhabited by benevolent angelic beings or *masundu'*. When good people die, their eternal spirits are escorted safely to *Nabalu* by the *masundu'* in each layer of *Intangan* and *Rasawat*. Life in *Nabalu* was believed to be much like life on earth, except that everything is easy without war, famine, or illness (Brewis 1992: 4, 1993: 13-14; 2004: 975-976).

Ragana, below the earth, is inhabited by demons or *riwato* that come up to earth to harass and inflict suffering on humans. They also inhabit certain places in forests and strange rock formations. When bad people die, their eternal spirits are dragged by *riwato* into the seven layers of *Ragana*. Trapped in *Ragana*, they can never escape to *Nabalu*. Thus, *Nabalu* is the abode of the spirits of good people who have died. But beyond *Nabalu* and all the other cosmic layers, lives Aki Kapuuno' who created everything (Brewis 1992: 3, 1993: 7-8; 2004: 975-976).

The human being, the most complex of all created beings, consists of six parts. The *guang* is the inmost being or true essence of personhood. Apart from the human, no other created being has a *guang*. The only other being in the universe that has a *guang* is the Creator Himself, Aki Kapuuno'. The *inan* or body is an extension of the *guang,* while the *saliguo* or earth spirit is the part of a human that stays on earth after death. The *painawo'* ("breath") or life force is attached to the *inan* by a thin thread, and wanders around while a person sleeps, thus having adventures that form dreams. The *ambiluo* is the eterenal spirit of a human that lives on after death and hopefully goes to *Nabalu*. Beyond these, each person has two names or *inggalan*. The first is used throughout life. But when someone dies, they are referred to by their second name until the mouring period is over. Formerly, it was feared that the spirit of the deceased might linger and haunt the living if it heard its name (Brewis 1992: 5-7; 1993: 5; 2004: 975).

The Timugon traditionally believed that life on earth is a struggle between good and evil. Demons, black magic, attacks by enemies, and bad omens were greatly feared. Living alone was considered dangerous, because people need other humans for

protection against enemies and evil spirits. Thus, maintaining social harmony through exchanges with feasting on rice and rice wine was essential for survival.

2.3. Creation of rice, the rice spirit and guardian spirits of the padi

Kielo Brewis notes that there are two origin myths about the creation of the rice plant among the Timugon. She recounts the first to illustrate the importance of respecting rice.

In ancient times, the Timugon ate sago as a staple and the rice plant was just grass. A *masundu'* came to earth and offered a new tasty food, explaining that they could also have this by boiling the leaves of the rice plant in a pot. They were not to open the pot until the food was cooked. An impatient young man, however, disobeyed and opened the pot only to find uncooked, unhusked rice (*bilor*) inside. From then on, people had to learn to sow, plant, weed, harvest, thresh, pound, and winnow the grain, before they could cook and eat it. Since rice has an eternal spirit or *ambiluo* like humans, it must be treated with respect. Although most of the rituals to strengthen the rice crop have disappeared, women planting rice seedlings in wet rice cultivation are careful to fill the whole section where they are working. If they leave any row empty, it will offend the *ambiluo ra bilor* who will not dwell in that section (Brewis 1992: 10-11; 1993: 12-13; 2004: 978-979).

The second myth concerning the creation of rice is recounted by Gintod (1982:164). Since Aki Kapuuno' realized that the plants he created were unsuitable as staple food for humans, he sacrificed his daughter by butchering her body. Each part of her body was then miraculously transformed into a type of padi. As a result, the Timugon consume various types of rice. This myth is akin to rice creation myths among Dusunic peoples.

Apart from the *ambiluo ra bilor* or spirit of the rice, the Timugon also traditionally believe that there are many *bambalai* or guardian spirits that care for the padi plants. Each type of rice has its own guardian spirit or *bambalai.* Respecting them will ensure a bountiful harvest. If they are offended, they will abandon the field resulting in a poor yield.

Ⅲ. Traditional Rice Planting Practices, Omens and Rituals

3.1. Timugon rice cultivation

The Timugon traditionally plant wet rice on the plains with some dry rice on the hills. It appears that their older socioeconomic activities revolved around the swidden agriculture of hill rice, with sago and cassava, at least from the 16th century. Their diet was supplemented with wild game, fish, birds, and wild vegetables and fruits. Wet rice cultivation and water buffaloes were introduced just before the coming of Europeans, probably due to trading contacts with Dusunic peoples from the Keningau and Tambunan areas to the northeast of the Timugon. With the coming of the Chinese in 1910 and the issuance of individual land titles by the North Borneo Company administration that ensured land could be handed on to future generations, wet rice agriculture on the plains became the norm. Some families, however, still continued hill rice cultivation on nearby slopes as a back-up (Brewis [1991]1990: 17; Lebar 1972; Rutter 1929; Woolley 1936).

This practice continues today. According to Justine G. Sikui, the Coordinator of the Padi Planting Development for Tenom District under the Tenom branch of the Agricultural Department (pers. comm. 10 August 2011), there are a total of 2,476.4 hectares of wet padi fields and 350 hectares of dry hill padi in the whole Tenom District. Wet and dry padi fields comprise 13% of the total agricultural planting land as compared to rubber at 48% and oil palm at 23%. Of rice planting, 95% of the padi cultivation in Tenom is wet padi, found mostly in the Melalap area among the Timugon. The remaining 5% is for dry padi cultivation which involves both Timugon and Tahol Murut farmers. Nowadays, in Tenom District, wet padi fields are planted twice in a calendar year, while dry padi fields are planted once a year. Swiddens for dry padi are still cleared with slash-and-burn techniques (Tenom District Agricultural Department, 10 August 2011).

Twelve Timugon informants were interviewed for this study. Each had more than five years padi planting experience for both dry and wet rice, and many have been farmers all their lives. Most

learned about traditional hill padi planting from their parents or grandparents. Besides being padi planters, many occasionally hunted for wild game in the forests, and hence are familiar with local fauna. In addition, some are local community leaders whose main duties involve dealing with district or village affairs. Their knowledge of rice cultivation was invaluable in this study.

All twelve informants are Roman Catholics though their grandparents, parents, or they themselves in their youth originally practiced traditional Timugon religion, characterized by rituals and presided over by *babalian*. Consequently, these senior villagers have much knowledge to impart on the impact of the Roman Catholic faith on their traditional animistic padi practices.

Both the wet and dry padi have been the main crops of the Timugon since the time of the informants' great-grand parents and beyond. Planting hill rice is termed *makatindal* whereas *mampalanau* refers to planting wet padi. In the Timugon language, the padi plant is called *puun ru bilor*, paddy grain *bilor*, unhusked padi *bagas,* and cooked rice *kaluu'*.

Before World War II, during the North Borneo Company era, and also later during the British colonial period until 1963, Timugon farmers who wished to plant dry rice were free to clear any nearby hillside as there was no ownership of that land. The first family to clear a patch of a secondary or tertiary hillside jungle had the right to use the clearing. Generally, the clearing was used once or the most twice depending on the fertility of the soil, and thereafter the farmers shifted to another site nearby. Later, the land of the first clearing could be used by other families. But this is not the case for wet padi land, which was permanently owned by individual families. Thus as among the Dusunic peoples of Sabah, rights of usage over land for hill padi swiddens constitute circulating usufruct, while rights over wet rice land are devolvable usufruct (Appell 1974, 1976: 35-56; Pugh-Kitingan 2012b: 41).

Before the 1960s, when a swidden was no longer fertile, Timugon dry padi planters would search for new sites of secondary or tertiary forest near their village. A site was chosen by examining the height and health of plants growing on the hillside, which

provided signs about the fertility of the soil. When a new site was chosen, the farmer cleared away some bushes at its perimeter creating a border. This action also signaled that the site was booked. This form of "manual booking" was possible as the hillsides were not under any ownership. That was the community's mutual agreement for generations among the Timugon.

With *makatindai*, dry hill padi is planted once in a calendar year, and farmers did not require a large land area for a swidden. Men cut down the large trees and cleared the undergrowth. Women and children cleared the small twigs. Everything was left to dry out for a few days, then the men fired the swidden, leaving the ground covered with ash. After this, men used large dibble sticks to poke holes in the ground, while the women followed behind and dropped a few rice seeds into each hole.

With *mampalanau* or wet rice cultivation, traditional rice varieties were also formerly planted once each year. Nowadays, with the introduction of rice varieties, two annual plantings are undertaken. As in wet rice cultivation among the Dusun of Tambunan and elsewhere, each family planted seeds in a traditional temporary fenced nursery not far from their house, while their nearby padi field is being prepared. When the seedlings have grown to a certain height, they are uprooted, trimmed, and transplanted into the wet padi field.

Traditionally, dry or wet rice cultivation involved various processes and was imbued with rituals to ensure a bountiful harvest. The Timugon also observed various omens, symbolic practices, and taboos in their rice cultivation.

3.2. Omens in hill rice cultivation

Some informants claimed that animals were created by Aki Kapuuno' for the wellbeing of humans. Hence, it was also believed that from time to come, various animals and birds conveyed certain good and bad omens to guide people.

When selecting the site for a swidden, meeting a *mondolon* (python) may be either a good or bad *kapio* (omen) to farmers. If

the python is found coiled while resting, it is a good omen. The farmer will start clearing a border to book the site. The sound of the noun *mondolon* somewhat resembles the adverb *sumolon* meaning "proud of." As a good omen, it meant that the farmer is going to receive a bountiful rice yield that will him and his family "proud." A snake sliding away, however, is a bad omen. The Timugon traditional burial houses built over graves are decorated with patterns that resemble a python's skin. Also, the body of the python, when straightened, looks like a corpse lying on the ground. In this case, the omen is of death. Upon seeing this, the farmer abandons the site and seeks a new planting location elsewhere. Other farmers who set foot on the same site, and who do not encounter any bad omens may consider the place acceptable for planting hill rice.

Other than snakes, the Timugon were also wary when encountering a *paus* or barking deer (*Muntiacus muntjak*), or a *sampalili* or Western tarsier (*Tarsius bancanus*) on their way to the swidden to work. They believed that the seeing a *paus* (or hearing its bark) or a *sampalili* spells misfortune. The informant Runion binti Andik explained that the noun *sampalili* sounds like the adjective *mangkailili* which in the Timugon language means "as though (one is) going to die soon," and the barks of the *paus* sound like people crying. Both the sound of the word *sampalili* and the barking sound of the dear are deemed bad omens. In terms of appearance, Gintod's (1982:121) informants reveal that the reddish color of the *paus*'s body looks like fire, which symbolizes burning. If one ignores these omens, the fields may catch fire. In addition, the brownish color of the *paus*'s body looks like the soil and its four legs look like the poles of a gravehouse. These are also death omens. Similarly, many informants in this study said that when encountering a *paus* and a *sampalili*, the best thing for them to do is to forgo a day's work and return home immediately. Runion binti Andik also added that farmers encountering these animals usually invited a *babalian* (female ritual specialist) to ward off possible misfortune by conducting rituals at the field and the chanting ritual verses.

The noise of the barking deer was also considered ominous among many other native groups in Borneo. For the Kayan in

Sarawak (the neigbouring state to Sabah), hearing the bark of the deer at work in the farm meant that they had to return home and stay for four days (Rousseau, 1998:70). Likewise, some informants from the Lundayeh, an ethnic group originally from Kalimantan, and now residing in Tenom and Sipitang Districts, said that they would call off a day's work if they hear bark of the deer.

Apart from these, the appearance of the *tambang* or Sambar deer (*Rusa unicolor*), *pantong* or bullfrog (undetermined species), and *bulukun* or pangolin (*Manis javanica*) are also omens among the Timugon. An encounter with a *tambang* was always considered a bad omen as its skin color looks like a sick padi plant, and its speed when it runs and disappears into the forest is interpreted by the Timugon as early death or passing. Hearing the calls of a *pantong* is also considered a bad omen as its low tuned calls sound like a gong being hit, typically interpreted as a signal for death. Among the Timugon, when someone has just died, a male relative hits a large deep-sounding hanging gong with a special slow beat to inform others about the sad news (Brewis 1987). In addition to that, the calls of the *pantong* are associated with rainfall. Hence it is believed that the sounds of *pantong* may cause unnecessary rainfall that destroys the padi plants.

Seeing a *bulukun,* on the other hand, can be a good or a bad omen when one comes to the swidden. If the *bulukun* is coiling itself and the coil looks big, then the Timugon believe that the rice yield will be bountiful. If the *bulukun* is walking along the ground, however, its body shape looks long like a coffin, and it is a bad omen. This case is very similar to that of the python omen.

The Timugon are also wary about the presence and behavior of certain birds which may be viewed as bad or good omens. These birds may hover or fly around while they are on their way to identify a new planting site or when they go to work in the swidden. The presence of the woodpecker known as *titik baran* (*Sasia abnormis*), commonly found in secondary forests, is very ominous for the traditional Timugon. If a farmer happens to see a *titik baran* either flying across in front of him or perching nearby, it means that someone will meet an accident. If someone sees the *titik baran*

pecking wood without making any noise, it means that he may be cursed and may die. At the sight of these bad omens, a farmer will call off a day's work.

The calls of the *titik baran*, however, can be a good or a bad omen. Upon hearing one "tik" call from the bird on their way to work, farmers will immediately stop, rest for a while, and wait for its second "tik" call. The sound of the second "tik" means that the bad omen has become a good omen, and they can continue their journey to the swidden. If they do not hear the second *titik baran* call, they will call off the day's work. The worst case, however, is when the *titik baran* calls continuously "tik, tik, tik, tik⋯" According to informants Thomas bin Lakai and Dulatip bin Guntan, such calls are known as *mantangit,* which sounds like the word *manangit*, meaning crying. When they encounter this bad omen, they immediately return home.

Besides *titik baran*, the calls of three other birds, the *sagap* or banded kingfisher (*Lacedo pulchella melanops*), the *kisi* or crested jay (*Platylophus galericulatus*), and the *manganapi* (unknown classification), were also believed by the Timugon to be both good and bad omens. The *sagap* calls "sa-a-gap" – "sa-a-gap" – "sa-a-gap," then pauses for a short while. Usually after a while, the calls are repeated. Upon hearing the first set of calls, farmers immediately stopped, rested, and waited for the second set. The sound of the second set of calls indicated that they may proceed. If it is not heard, danger is said to await, and all must return home immediately.

The cries of the *kisi* or crested jay began with "cit" – "cit" – "cit" for a couple of times, followed by "crrk" – "crrk" – "crrk," until they stopped. If farmers hear the "cit" pattern without the following "crrk" sound, it may mean smooth or rainy work. If the farmers only hear the "crrk" sound, an accident awaits one of them on their way to the swidden. The complete round of calls from the *kisi* must be heard before proceeding.

The calls of the *mangangapi* sound like "kik, kik, kik, kik – kik, kik, kik, kik" followed by "kik, kik, kik, kik – kik – kik, kik, kik – kik, kik, kik kik." As with calls of the *kisi*, farmers must hear the

complete set of *mangangpai* calls or danger will follow them (Gintod, 1982: 128).

Of all the birdcall omens, that of the *titik baran* is the most feared among the Timugon. Cautionary reminders abound. Many informants shared that this belief came from their forefathers who personally experienced or had seen village folk suffering from unwanted consequences after ignoring those omens. It is interesting to note that in these practices, the outcomes may be changed from bad to good.

When discussing this relationship between omens and events, Rousseau (1998:73) illustrated how the Kayan in Sarawak changed the outcome of certain omens. When travelers noticed an ominous bird about to cross their path as they rowed along a river, for example, they turned the boat around and hence made the encounter into a good omen. For the Timugon, when hearing a call from an ominous bird, people stopped, rested, and waited for the next call, in the hope for a good one. This gave them a chance to not waste a day's work. There were also ways to change the outcome of certain animal omens. If they encountered a *tambang* (*Rusa unicolor*), for example, they will hunt and kill it to ward off a poor harvest or early death. Since the traditional Timugon belief system indicated that various types of animals and birds may be good or bad omens, it was up to people to interpret the signs and act accordingly. Omens were not necessarily rigid warning signs. Outcomes may be changed.

3.3. Symbolic practices and taboos in rice cultivation

Apart from following omens, Timugon farmers also conducted symbolic practices to ensure successful harvest in the cultivation of both dry and wet rice. Whenever a person dies in the village, the Timugon farmers will not go to the field to work until the deceased is buried. Besides showing respect to the deceased's family, the condition of the deceased's mouth (*kabang*) is said to be *apol* or without expression, unable to produce words. Thus, they believe that if work is conducted at this time, it will also produce nothing. Abstinence from work during mourning, as a mark of respect,

continues to be observed by the Timugon and by other indigenous Sabahan cultures today.

According to several wet padi cultivators, when transferring the young plants from the nursery to the padi field, they also brought along four types of plants: the *babas,* a leafy wild plant (unknown species), a young *lumbio* or sago plant (*Metroxylon spp.*), *sagumau* or lemon grass (*Cymbopogon citratus*) and a *lupit* or bemban plant (*Donax arundastrum*). Prior to the replanting of the young padi shoots, the farmers planted these other plants as symbols near the location where water flows into the padi field. They believed that the *babas* plant prevented accidents from happening to them, in case they inadvertently disobeyed any previous omens. The young *lumbio* protected their padi plants from disease. The *sagumau* plant helped their padi shoots to grow healthily just like a bundle of lemon grass. And the small *lupit* tree symbolically cooled down the growing padi plants. For Timugon farmers, heat is not good for padi plants (see also Gintod, 1982: 168).

Woolley (2004[1936]: 55) also reported that the planting season for wet padi was determined by the *tembalang* (Malay) bamboo. When the bamboo shoots sprouted plentifully, the padi grains were planted in nurseries near the houses in the village, while the fields were prepared. When the grains sprouted into young seedlings, they were transferred from the nurseries to be replanted in the fields. For hill padi, Woolley reported that the seeds were planted when the *patai* trees, which are deciduous, were appearing in full leaf.

According to the informants in this study, when the padi plants began to produce seeds, there was a ritual prohibition against taking food, knives, and coconuts to the padi field before *Mumuk* or *Mamata* rituals were conducted (see below). Sharp objects like knives brought to the padi field at this time also offended the guardian padi spirits. It is believed that whoever broke this taboo will meet an accident or later fall sick. Also at this time, farmers were not allowed to eat white colored food like coconut flesh or white cakes in the field. This taboo is related to the *Mumuk* and *Mamata* rituals where foods offered to the guardian rice spirits were white in color. These spirits must be served first. After harvesting

the crop, everyone was prohibited from shouting, clapping, or making loud noises near the grain storage barn. It is believed that loud noises disturbed the spirit of the rice and irritated the guardian rice spirits, causing them to leave the storage barn, leaving the grains to rot or eaten by rodents.

3.4. Lunar stages and rice planting

In earlier times, the Timugon observed the stages of the moon when deciding to sow their rice seeds. According to informants, seeds should not be sown between the period of the new moon to full moon. This was observed by both wet padi farmers sowing the seeds in the nursery and hill padi farmers planting seeds in their hillside swiddens. One informant reported: "as the size of the new moon is small, I worry that the yield of my padi will be sparse later." Another reason is that the new moon is also described as *ibol,* which means "time to come out." It is feared that the rice seeds will "merely come out" with husks with no grain inside.

Timugon names for the phases of the moon symbolically influence times chosen for rice planting. When the moon appears round but is not yet full, its shape is described as *mangulor.* The Timugon avoid planting at this time, because the sound of this word is similar to *ulor* or caterpillar. Caterpillars destroy crops by eating the internal stems of rice plants. Hence, planting during this time may result in rice crops being destroyed by caterpillars. The word *mangulor* also sounds like the phrase *pangulor-gulor mato,* which means a dead person with the eyes wide open. Thus, Timugon farmers avoid planting padi when the moon is *mangulor.*

The full moon is called *salawang.* If planting occurs on this day, the Timugon believe that there are two possible outcomes: either their crops will be destroyed by the rats, as the word *salawang* sounds like the phrase *pansalawangon do kokot,* or "eaten by rats from one side to another," or the harvest will be bountiful as the moon is at its full shape. Despite the latter interpretation, most Timugon farmers avoid risking their crops being destroyed and do not plant at full moon. Before, planting rice once a year produced a sufficient yield and fed a family for a few years.

Destruction of crops by pests, however, resulted in insufficiency of supply and consequently, lack of food.

The fourth day after the full moon is known as *kundugan*. Although there is no perceived danger to the crop by planting on this day, most farmers choose not to plant then, as *kundugan* is still considered close to *salawang*. The best time to start planting is from the fifth day after the full moon onwards until before the new moon appears again. This illustrates the care taken by the Timugon to guard their staple rice crops from the beginning, as it was given by the Creator and has its own eternal spirit or *ambiluo ra bilor*.

3.5. Ritual practices in rice harvesting

There are three related rituals connected to harvesting: *Mumuk*, *Mamata,* and *Tinapaian*. Both *Mumuk* and *Mamata* are conducted when the padi grains are almost ripe just before harvest. If the padi yield in a particular year is normal, *Mumuk* will be conducted. But if the yield is bountiful, *Mamata* will be conducted instead.

Usually, the *Mumuk* and *Mamata* rituals are handled by a woman, especially the mother in the family. According to informants Runion binti Antik and Eren binti Apok, who conducted these rituals for years, *Mumuk* is simpler than *Mamata*. The purposes of both rituals are to show respect for the padi guardian spirits or *bambalai*, and to ensure the family's safety before harvesting begins. After completing the rituals, the family can bring food to the padi field to eat as the *bambalai* have already had their share.

In *Mumuk*, the mother goes to the padi field and selects about 30 healthy padi cuttings to be taken home. Once home, the padi grains are separated from their stalks and fried. After frying, the cooked rice grains are pounded to separate grains from husks. The fried grains are then sowed outside around the perimeter of the house. The *Mumuk* ritual is conducted during daytime. While sowing, she says:

> "We take the rice to make *mumuk* especially for you. After this offering, allow us to bring knives and food to work in the padi field. Please do not get angry with us as we have given you the *mumuk*."

Preparations for *Mamata* begin at night. The mother goes to the padi field to select and cut a quantity of cuttings to be taken home. The number of cuttings is more than for the *Mumuk* ritual. Upon reaching home, the grains are separated from their stalks, pounded to separate husks from the grain, then fried. After this, the grains are further pounded into fine grains. These grains are then soaked in the juice of a young coconut earlier cut in half. Before the sun rises, the coconut shell containing the soaked rice grains is closed with the other half of the shell. This is then brought to the middle of the padi field and placed on bamboo supports. As she arranges this offering, the mother says:

> "There you are—this is your share of rice which is more than our share. Please do not get angry with us and ensure us a bountiful harvest in future."

After the *Mamata* ceremony, the farmers can bring their harvesting knives and food to the padi field and harvesting may begin.

On the first day of harvesting, the farmers conduct another ritual known as *Tinapaian*. Prior to the harvest-time, they go to the field to cut enough padi for brewing *tapai* rice wine. When it is ready, the *tapai* is poured into a bamboo container and fitted with a padi stalk as a straw. This is then placed in a hut built at the padi field on the first day of harvesting. While doing so the farmer says: "Let us have a drink together." According to the informants, this ceremony aims to ensure that their day's work in the padi field will proceed smoothly as the padi guardian spirits have their share of drinks.

From the foregoing, it can be seen that the two traditional Timugon rice planting systems were influenced by omens and taboos, and included symbolic practices and rituals. These observances and practices arose from their traditional beliefs passed down over generations. The coming of Christianity to the Timugon through the Roman Catholic mission in the early 20th century transformed Timugon life for the better by directly causing the cessation of warfare and headhunting, and bringing peace and

genuine friendship with former enemies. It introduced literacy, education and medical assistance, and freed people from the deep fear of demons, curses, black magic and bad omens. But it also brought changes in ritual practices associated with rice cultivation.

Ⅳ. Impact of Christianity and other factors on Timugon rice rituals

The presence of Christian missionary activity in Borneo dates back to 1322, and there were many further developments over the centuries, especially in coastal areas (George 1981:468; Pugh-Kitingan 2015: 284-286; Rooney 1981: 3-5). It was not until the late 19th and early 20th centuries, however, that Roman Catholic missionary explorers ventured into the interior of Sabah, often at great risk to their lives. Later, other missions followed. By the 1930s, the Roman Catholic Church was already established in Tenom (Rooney 1981: 57). Missionaries established schools and medical outposts. They lived with the people and understood their culture. They also experienced suffering along with local people during World War II. Today, most Timugon are Roman Catholics and their clergy are all Sabahan, while a few are members of other Christian denominations, and some still follow traditional religion. A minority has more recently converted to Islam due to intermarriage with other ethnic groups.

All the Timugon informants interviewed in this research are Roman Catholics, but in their youth followed the old ritual practices and observances in hill and wet padi cultivation. There are various reasons why the Timugon chose to become Christians.

Firstly, there are fundamental conceptual similarities between the traditional Timugon belief system and Christian belief. The ancient Timugon concept of God named Aki Kapuuno' is very similar to the God of the Bible. His role as the Creator of everything in the universe is essentially the same with the Christian God. His benevolence towards human beings is similar to God's love for mankind. Similarly, *masundu'* are good celestial beings like angels, while *riwato* are demons who rebelled against God and are

malevolent towards mankind, as in Biblical teaching. The idea that Aki Kapuuno' has a *guang* and each human also has a *guang* is akin to the Biblical concept that mankind was created in the image of God. Similarly, the belief that Aki Kapuuno' is the eternal Creator Spirit or *Ambiluo* and that humans also have *ambiluo* or eternal spirits, is essentially the same as in Biblical teaching. Although not exactly the same, the ideas of *Nabalu'* and *Ragana* are somewhat similar to Christian concepts of Heaven and Hell.

Secondly, desired Christian behavior fits the ideal of traditional Timugon social practice. Timugon society is classless and egalitarian, and the importance of the conjugal family, kinship unity and social harmony is analogous to Christian brotherly love as enjoined in the Bible. Christian Timugon maintain their social traditions and obligations. For example, they continue to marry with *mulo* or bridewealth, which is handed over a few days before the Christian wedding ceremony, followed by feasting in the villages of the bride and then the groom. The *mansubak* exchange also continues to be practiced by Christians in the northern part of Tenom District, and see it as a means of drawing distant kin closer and promoting social harmony. It is also important for introducing children to their mothers' relatives, to avoid violating customary laws of unknowingly marrying their close cousins (Brewis [1990]1991: 34).

Apart from this, following Jesus Christ has brought freedom from the fear of omens, bad consequences and the anger of the spirits. As one of the Timugon farmers said:

> "As a Catholic, I am taught not to believe in bad omens. If I encounter one, I will make a cross sign and continue my journey to the planting field."

These words show that converts have confidence in God's protection against bad omens rooted in their old animistic beliefs. In some cases, they seek Catholic catechists to say prayers in their padi field, sprinkle holy water around the sites, and erect a cross at the edge. If the field is large, two crosses will be erected, one at each end of the padi field.

It is clear that the fear of bad omens is still there. But the

Christian way to deal with such portents is more practical and beneficial, as the farmers concerned need not call off a day's work or invite a *babalian* to conduct a cumbersome ceremony that involved lengthy ritual chanting and a sacrifice of chicken, all of which had to be paid for in rice or gifts to the ritual specialist. When confronted with bad omens nowadays, farmers make the sign of the cross, pray, and then continue working. They are confident that God is omnipotent against omens and accidents in the field.

The fear of the anger of the spirits has now been displaced as people seek God's protection and blessing in rice cultivation. Instead of the relying on symbolic practices and rituals that appease the padi guardian spirits, many Timugon nowadays bring small quantities of rice seeds to church to be blessed by the priest after Sunday mass. These blessed seeds are then brought home and mixed with other padi seeds for planting in the next season. Some people even bring young padi seedlings to be blessed in church before they are re-planted in the field. Such new practices are obviously the outcome of Christian belief that God's power is greater than that of the unseen spirits. By doing so, the Timugon are confident that God will protect their padi plants. Hence, many of the old practices and spirit rituals are no longer needed. Moreover, the Church leaders prohibit them from conducting practices and ceremonies that are against Catholicism, such as invoking or sacrificing to spirits.

Nevertheless, as discussed below, the traditional knowledge of planting according the phases of the moon, checking on the rice crops before harvesting, and also looking out on the appearance of certain birds and animals as indications of dry weather and wet spells, still continues. This is despite the contemporary use of calendars and information on modern rice varieties introduced by the Department of Agriculture. Today, many Christian mothers still go to the rice fields to check whether the rice grains have ripened for harvest, as in the practices of *Mumuk* and *Mamanta.* They pray to God in the padi field and, as discussed, the selected cut rice stalks are brought home and kept for planting the first seeds in the following season. The concept of rice as having a spiritual essence or *ambiluo ra bilor* given by the Creator, and of respect for rice and

for nature continues among Christian Timugon. The social importance of sharing rice as food or wine as a sign of solidarity also continues among Timugon Christians.

The non-Christian Timugon farmers continue to believe that padi guardian spirits protect their padi plants and ensure a bountiful harvest. But nowadays, the Timugon Catholic farmers, through in-situ prayers of a catechist and the erection of crosses, have handed over their padi plants and yields to God's care. These practices in conducting rituals for padi guardian spirits and Catholic ceremonies are psychologically and functionally similar. Both religious practices involve rituals to seek supernatural help. Psychologically speaking, the people feel safer and have the sense of security after conducting those ceremonies. And the function of both types of ceremonies ensure bountiful harvests.

Chua (2009), who studied the old and Christian practices of the Bidayuh ethnic group in the neighboring state of Sarawak, had among others, reported that in the case of the Christian Bidayuh padi planters, crosses have replaced *gawai* ritual barriers and rice stalks are blessed at special church services held around harvest time. As he suggests (Chua 2009: 336), *adat gawai* (old Bidayuh customs and practices) and Christianity are fundamentally ways of getting things done‑staying safe, encouraging a bountiful harvest, or ensuring a safe journey. We too find that the Timugon old practices as Catholic rituals are fundamentally ways of getting things done.

There are also cases of some old practices being retained by Timugon Catholic farmers, such as the timing of sowing padi seeds in the swidden or of transferring young padi plants from the nursery to wet paddy field based on the appearance of the moon. These traditional agricultural practices are not necessarily anti-Christian or un-Biblical, but reflect an older form of rice cultivation based on traditional knowledge. "It is up to us‑we may choose to follow or not to follow," said some of our informants. The Catholic farmers concerned feel that such practices do not affect their Catholic faith but some feel that following them may be wrong in Catholic teaching. Similarly, Koepping (2006: 69) in her research regarding

Anglican Christian converts in Bakas village among Sabah's Eastern Kadazan (Labuk Dusun), found that there are some farmers who although professing to be Christians, retain a deep awareness of and respect for the older practices while they feel following these is wrong in church terms.

Similarly, some of the informants felt that religious belief is a faith but traditional practices like conducting *Mumuk*, *Mamata* and *Tinapaian* ceremonies are merely cultural customs handed down over generations. These people do not feel that it is sinful to practice these, although the Church strictly prohibits such rituals. Most strong Timugon Catholics, however, have long abandoned those ceremonies. Ranti bin Surangking, Apah binti Maulur, and Majius bin Rondih, for example, said that their parents continued to conduct those ceremonies until the 1970s when they ceased. Nowadays when their padi is almost ripe, they go to the field to cut and bring home some selected padi cuttings. They call this the "first harvest." After returning home, they tie some the "first harvest" padi stalks to one of the upright poles in the house. The remainder of the "first harvest" is distributed to neighbors. By doing so, they have announced to their neighbors that their fields are ready to be harvested. To them, this symbolic practice does not go against Catholic teaching. Thus, perceptions that certain customs are not sinful, indicate how conversion does not necessarily involve a radical shift in one's belief system.

Apart from Christian conversion, there are many other modern factors that have caused a decline in the old agricultural practices of the Timugon. Nowadays, most farmers' plant cash crops like coconut, rubber, and more recently, oil palm, all of which do not involve old agriculture practices. Also, the Timugon farmers who plant wet padi, including new rice varieties, used pesticides, fertilizer and harvesting machines for decades. As a result of these modern methods and technologies of rice cultivation, many informants claimed that they receive good harvests without following the old ritual practices.

Ⅴ. Conclusions

From the foregoing, it can be seen that Timugon Murut traditional rice cultivation is not merely the production of a food product for consumption, but is actually a sacred process in which each phase is imbued with ritual, based on the belief in the Creator Aki Kapuuno'. He created everything, including the cosmos, mankind, rice that has an eternal spirit or *ambiluo ra bilor*, padi guardian spirits or *bambalai*, animals, and birds. From His benevolence towards humans, He provided rice as the staple food for mankind. Rice must be treated with respect because of its spiritual aspect that has come from the Creator, and because it is the staple crop for the survival of humans. Without rice, the staple food, humans will starve and perish. Animals were also created for the wellbeing of humans, and some birds and animals may serve to provide omens in rice cultivation. Phases of the moon were used as symbolic indicators for the opportune times when to plant and harvest rice in bygone eras before the use of modern calendars. Because of the importance of rice as food and due to the delicate balance between the complexity of its cultivation process, the natural environment and favorable conditions for crop maturation, rituals were also conducted to the *bambalai* to avert their anger and ensure a bountiful harvest.

Rice as the Timugon staple, is not merely a food to be eaten, but is important in establishing social harmony and unity. When people eat rice and drink rice wine together during feasts at social exchanges, such as in the *mansubak*, they are articulating social solidarity through kinship and through new alliances formed with non-kin. This social unity was extremely important in bygone times before the coming of Christianity, when the Timugon lived in constant fear of attacks by neighboring headhunting enemies, or from hidden personal enemies within the community who secretly practiced black magic, and especially from *riwato* the demons that harassed humans with illness, crop failure, and disasters.

With the coming of Christianity in the form of Roman Catholicism, many Timugon recognized the similarity of the God of the Bible with Aki Kapuuno', as well as the importance of traditional social cohesion as exemplified by both Christianity and folk culture,

but began to question the older beliefs in burdensome omens and ritual practices. Although some continued to follow these, many believed that the God of the Bible provided protection from the effects of bad omens and the anger of evil spirits. They substituted older ritual practices with their own symbolic practices. Others continued with the older rituals as culture, while adhering to Roman Catholicism.

Despite changes in the ritual aspects of traditional Timugon rice cultivation due to the coming of Christianity, the recent introduction of new crops and, nowadays, education, there is continuity in worldview and basic agricultural practices. As Christians, the Timugon continue to hold fast to their belief in Aki Kapuuno' who provided for them. They continue to cultivate rice as their staple, treating it with respect because it was created with a spiritual essence and is for the benefit of mankind. They also continue to participate in important social exchanges and feasts based on the consumption of rice as food and wine.

Thus, although the Timugon have experienced many technological and development changes over the past century, they have continued and adapted aspects of their culture to new situations. This cultural continuity has ensured the maintenance of their distinctive ethinic identity in the 21st century world.

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Informants:

Note: The word "bin" in the middle of the name denotes a male, while "binti" denotes a female.

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Ethnicity: Murut Timugon
Profession: District Chief of Tenom District
Venue: Kampung Entabuan, Tenom ("Kampung" means village)
Date: 08 August 2011

Note: OKK (Short form for *Orang Kaya-Kaya* in Malay. This is the former title given to the District Head in Sabah state) David Jani has had helped his decease father planting hill paddy for more than five years in the 1960s.

2) Informant: KAN Laurence Apok
Age: 55

Ethnicity: Murut Timugon
Profession: Native Chief of Tenom District
Venue: Kampung Mandalom Baru, Tenom
Date: 08 August 2011

Note: KAN (Short form for *Ketua Anak Negeri* in Malay. This is the title given to the Native Chiefs in Sabah state) Laurence Apok has had helped his decease father planting hill paddy from the period of 1968 to 1979.

3) Informant: Juking bin Kilan
Age: 68
Ethnicity: Murut Timugon
Profession: Farmer/Village Headman (1987-1997)
Venue: Kampung Bunut, Tenom
Date: 09 August 2011

Note: This informant has twenty years of experience in planting paddy.

4) Informant: Thomas bin Lakai
Age: 78
Ethnicity: Murut Timugon
Profession: Village Headman/Farmer
Venue: Kampung Sawang, Melalap, Tenom
Date: 10 August 2011

Note: This informant has started planting paddy in the 1950s and still doing so to date.

5) Informant: Dulatip bin Guntan
Age: 72
Ethnicity: Murut Timugon
Profession: Village Headman/Farmer
Venue: Kampung Kasia, Melalap, Tenom
Date: 10 August 2011

Note: This Informant has started planting paddy since the 1950s untill the present days.

6) Informant: Runion binti Antik
Age: 72
Ethnicity: Murut Timugon
Profession: Farmer
Venue: Kampung Mandalom Baru, Tenom
Date: 11 August 2011

7) Informant: Erin binti Apok
Age: 60
Ethnicity: Murut Timugon
Profession: Farmer
Venue: Kampung Mandalom Baru, Tenom
Date: 11 August 2011

8) Informant: Magillu bin Apok
Age: 63
Ethnicity: Murut Timugon
Profession: Penanam padi sawah dan padi bukit
Venue: Kampung Mandalom Baru, Tenom
Date: 11 August 2011

9) Informant: Majews @Majius bin Rondih
Age: 71
Ethnicity: Murut Timugon
 Profession: Pesara Guru/Penanam padi sawah
Venue: Kampung Simpangan, Tenom
Date: 12 August 2011

10) Informant: Ranti bin Surangking
Age: 61
Ethnicity: Murut Timugon
Profession: Retired teacher/Farmer
Venue: Kampung Langsat, Melalap, Tenom
Date: 12 August 2011

11) Informant: Apah binti Maulor
Age: 56
Ethnicity: Murut Timugon
Profession: Retired teacher/Farmer
Venue: Kampung Langsat, Melalap, Tenom

Date: 12 August 2011

12) Informant: Lucas Umbul (Ph.D)
Age: 52
Ethnicity: Murut Timugon
Profession: Lecturer in the Institute of Teacher Training, Keningau, Sabah/Ex paddy planter
Venue: Melalap, Tenom
Date: 15 August 2011

13) Informant: Justine bin G. Sikui
Age: 47
Ethnicity: Kadazan Dusun
Profession: Coordinator of Padi Development for Tenom District
Venue: Tenom town
Date: 10 August 2011

Diverse yet Distinct:
Philippine Men's Clothing in the Nineteenth Century, 1850s-1890s

Stephanie Marie R. Coo*

[*Abstract*]

The changing of clothes in Balagtas' 1860 fictional comedy *La filipina elegante y negrito amante* (The Elegant Filipina and the Amorous Negrito) is used to explore the ethnic, cultural, and sartorial diversity in 19th century colonial Philippines. But, how does plurality in men's clothing reflect the socio-economic conditions of the late Spanish colonial period? This paper focuses on the diversity in Philippine men's clothing around 1850 to 1896, taking into account the limited range of colonial archetypes in iconographic and documentary sources. Underscoring the colonial culture that shaped mentalities and tendencies, this study offers insights on how clothing was used and how it was perceived in relation to the wearer. In discussing clothing diversity, distinctiveness was articulated using the work of J.A.B. Wiselius (1875), a Dutch colonial administrator in neighboring Indonesia, who in comparing Spanish and Dutch systems of colonial governance, underscored the Filipino penchant for imitation.

Keywords: Philippine clothing, Spanish colonial period, colonial clothing, imitation, diversity

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Ⅰ. Introduction

In the 1860 comedy titled *La filipina elegante y negrito amante* (The Elegant Filipina and the Amorous Negrito) (Balagtas 1860: 161-175) by one of the most famous Filipino literary laureates, Francisco Balagtas[1] (Hernandez 1975: 56), the leading man was Capitán Toming, a loincloth-wearing, pagan Negrito[2] (Hannaford 1900: 22-23; Marche 1970 [1887]: 34; Sawyer 1900: 201-207; Hernandez 1975: 55) street cleaner, who fell in love with a pretentious lowland, Christianized woman named Menangue. In courting Menangue, Capitán Toming found himself discriminated for his dark skin, kinky hair, and lack of "civilized" clothing. As part of the unconverted tribes, he was dressed scantily in loin cloth and was looked down upon as "uncivilized." Hence, he turned to clothes to reinvent himself until he crossed the sartorial and cultural boundaries that made him feel confident enough to win the girl.

Bearing gifts, the Negrito loverboy first went to see Menangue in loincloth (*bahag*) (Sawyer 1900: 201-207).[3] After being rejected, he tried seeing her in Tagalog mestizo clothes, replete with wig to conceal his kinky, woolly hair. When that failed, he tried again by dressing himself in loose shirt and wide-legged pants commonly seen among the Chinese in the Philippines. Undeterred, he tried insinuating valor and strength through his clothing by garbing himself in Muslim (Moro) warrior's attire. Finally, much to the

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[1] Francisco Balagtas (b. 2 April 1788- d. 20 February 1862) was best known for his epic, *Florante at Laura.* He would adopt the last name Baltazar, following the 1849 Edict of Governor-General Narciso Claveria y Zaldua that natives should have Spanish last names. He was born in Bigaa, Bulacan before moving to Tondo, Manila to work as a houseboy. The children of Balagtas indicated that the first production of *La Filipina elegante y Negrito amante* was in 1860.

[2] Negritos or Aetas are the flat-nosed, thick-lipped, kinky-haired aborigines of the Philippines often discriminated for their very dark color. They were called negroid dwarfs for they were, on the average, only 4 feet 8 inches tall. There were different classes of Aetas, Itas, Igorots from Ilocos Sur to Cagayan, Nueva Viscaya, and Nueva Ecija, as well as Negritos from the mountains of Mariveles. A subgroup, the Mayoyaos, were referred to as one of the more ferocious Igorot tribes.

[3] There were some Negritos in Palawan who were scantily dressed in only one piece of garment—a loincloth made of the inner bark of a tree. It is important to note that some Negritos who frequently interacted with the lowland, Christianized Filipinos wore clothes, which they would put on before entering villages.

surprise of his fellow street sweeper-cum-friend Uban, he appeared in the main square where they worked, dressed as a Spaniard. In frock coat—a European-style, knee-length coat with back slit detail —he asked his friend, "Am I not elegant?," for which his friend replied, "you look ridiculous in that suit of yours." Capitán Toming went on by saying "Do you know why I am wearing these fine clothes? I am now Spanish in form and fashion. Spanish enough, Uban, to be loved by the beautiful Menangue" (Reyes 2008: 11-13).

Between the simple loin cloth and the layered frock coat, Capitán Toming went through three sartorial transformations, dressed as Tagalog mestizo, Chinese, and Moro. He clothed himself in the different garments that not only represented the diverse ethnic and cultural groups that inhabited the Philippines but also in garments that represented his own understanding of civilization, elegance, and modernity.

In loin cloth, with only his private parts covered, he looked uncivilized and primitive. As a pagan, he stood at the peripheries of colonial society but in fully covering[4] his body in Tagalog mestizo, Chinese, and Moro attires, he looked civilized; he even appeared "integrated" as one of the recognized subjects of Spain. As a Negrito clothing himself in the attires of the "other Filipinos," before eventually dressing up like the Spanish masters of the colony, the leading man conveyed exclusion from the rest of the converted, lowland population (Cariño 2002: 240-241).

Ultimately, more than just fully clothed, he dressed himself in layers completely inappropriate to the tropical climate. More than to convey civilization, he felt the frock coat conveyed modernity, even sophistication. All dressed up and literally overdressed, he felt he looked elegant enough to win the girl.

But, the love story did not end there. Much to his disappointment, he did not win the girl by changing his outer appearance. Even in

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[4] In addressing issues relating to nakedness or partial nakedness, the playwright understored the fact that full conquest was a challenging endeavor for Spain. Due to the fragmented nature of the islands, the highland tribes of Northern Luzon, Mindanao as well as some Muslim groups in Sulu were not subdued by Spain and were, therefore, less influenced by the West.

a coat, he was everything but a Spaniard. The more the loverboy continued to dress to impress, the more his naiveté and lack of sophistication was emphasized.

Everytime he was turned down, Capitán Toming poured his heart out in *kundiman*, the poignant love song of the Tagalog. In the end, moved by her enamored suitor's resolve and purity of intentions, Menangue accepted Capitán Toming's love. Though externally unrefined, his beauty emanated from within.

Ⅱ. Clothing Diversity

The changing of clothes in Balagtas' 1860 fictional comedy, *La filipina elegante y negrito amante* (The Elegant Filipina and the Amorous Negrito) was used to explore the ethnic, cultural and sartorial diversity in 19th century colonial Philippines. But the question this paper seeks to answer is how does plurality in men's clothing reflect the socio-economic conditions of the late Spanish colonial period?

This paper focuses on the diversity in Philippine men's clothing around 1850 to 1896, taking into account the limited range of colonial archetypes in iconographic and documentary sources. Underscoring the colonial culture that shaped mentalities and tendencies, this study offers insights on how clothing was used and how it was perceived in relation to the wearer.

In discussing clothing diversity, distinctiveness was articulated using the work of J.A.B. Wiselius (1875), a Dutch colonial administrator in neighboring Indonesia, who in comparing Spanish and Dutch systems of colonial governance, underscored the Filipino penchant for imitation.

Capitán Toming's changing of clothes was used by this *sainete's*[5] (Hernandez 1975: 56) notable playwright, Balagtas, to paint a satirical and critical portrait of Philippine society close to the end

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[5] A *sainete* was a Spanish one-act play, usually performed with music. Typically, it was performed in the vernacular style and featured scenes of common life.

of the Spanish colonial era, particularly making fun of the Filipinos' propensity for sartorial imitation and/or disguise. Although the characters were fictional, they offered insights into the ethnic, cultural and sartorial diversity in the colony and such insights could lead to discussions on social exclusion and hierarchy.

The changing of clothes showed the playwright's recognition and familiarity with (1) how typical groups dressed at that time, often in proportion to their ethnic and social status in colonial society; (2) the diverse forms of dress that men may choose from; and (3) the way by which ethnicity, clothing and class were connected. Balagtas' use of a limited range of classes and types of people was without precedent. The range of colonial archetypes were finite in 19th century iconographic and textual sources and were usually drawn along the lines of the binaries colonizer/colonized, civilized/uncivilized, clothed/partially clothed, lowland, Christianized/highland, unconverted, and by the second half of the 19th century, frocked/unfrocked. Clothing was at the center of how the main character announced and hoped to demonstrate his civilization; but, as he discovered along the way, displays of sophistication supplanted mere displays of civilization.

Earlier works (Pastor-Roces 2000; Capistrano-Baker 2007: 16-31; Moreno 1992) based 19th century Philippine fashion hierarchies on the one-dimensional race-based colonial hierarchy, which situates the peninsular Spaniards on top, followed by the insular Spaniards, Spanish mestizos, Chinese mestizos, Chinese mestizos and indios at the bottom (Table 1). However, a study of clothes must be based on a two-by-three triangular structure (Table 2), taking into account three dominant sartorial cultures (European, Philippine, and Chinese) (Cariño and Ner 2004: 74)[6] and two main social classes (upper and lower classes) (Gironière 1854; Fee 1910).[7] The 19th century Philippine elite was drawn from the wealthiest, if not the most influential people of the various races, from peninsular to

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[6] Referring to the festivities in Manila in 1825, Cariño and Ner remarked that "the paintings portray the dominance of three cultures in Manila: Chinese, Spanish and Filipino."
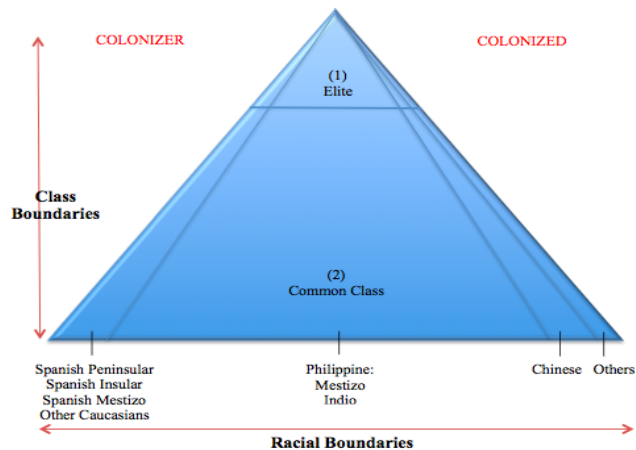
[7] Using different terms, almost all authors identified two main classes and some semblance of a third class, which was quite difficult to define.

indios to the other ethnic groups that inhabited the colony. When
it comes to clothing, what occurred was a blurring of differences
between colonizer and colonized (represented by the blurring of the
vertical lines in Table 2) and the sharpening of differences between
the upper and lower classes, which supports the theories of
Thorstein Veblen (1912) and Kristin Hoganson (2003: 266, 271) that
the "paramountcy of class helps explain why fashion subordinated
nationality."

<Table 1> Existing Colonial Structure

<Table 2> Proposed Sartorial Structure

It is apparent that the play was written during a period of change and fluctuating categories. Menangue's acceptance of the lowly, pagan Capitán Toming paralleled resolutions relating to some earlier tensions on civilization, conquest, and conversion. While in the early years of colonization, juxtapositions such as clothed and partially-clothed marked differences between civilized and uncivilized, in the second half of the 19th century, the markers changed. Frocked and unfrocked men literally distinguished the urbanized or cosmopolitan from those who were not. Clothing was a marker not so much of civilization as defined post-conquest but civilization as variably defined in the 19th century.

In the *sainete*, cultural change clearly did not parallel Capitán Toming's sartorial change. He manipulated his clothing, but he failed to display *urbanidad*, an urbanized, mestizo sartorial culture which was hybrid in nature, in the sense of being neither completely native nor completely European. From the mid-nineteenth century, upper class status also expanded to include peoples not only of wealth but a combination of talent, education, social networks, and culture. They displayed *urbanidad* by embodying sophisticated filipinized Spanish-ness/European-ness, integrating European tastes, consumption practices and education.

The above *sainete* also acknowledged that the main ethnic groups of Negritos, Tagalog mestizos, Chinese, Moros, Spaniards were, by the middle of the nineteenth century, also no longer existing in mutually exclusive, cultural, political and economic enclaves; rather, the boundaries were porous, intersecting and influencing each other by force of coexistence, interaction and observation.

2.1. Tagalog Mestizo Clothing

The typical attire of Tagalog mestizo men in the 1850s was *baro* (shirt, usually made of locally woven fabrics) and trousers in muted tones like black, white or neutral tones. The subtle use of colors digressed from men's attire in the earlier decades of the 19th century when explosions of color and mixed patterns in both the upper and lower garments were the norm. It must also be mentioned that the

baro or shirt of the Tagalog, referred to as the Barong Tagalog, was also worn untucked, similar to the Indian *kurta*.

In dressing himself specifically like a "Tagalog mestizo," Capitán Toming conformed to the conventions of the lowland Christianized community, which meant covering both the upper and lower parts of the body. Second, the inclusion of the term Tagalog to refer to the attire emphasized the dichotomy between the urbanized Tagalogs of the capital city (*taga-bayan*) and those from the countryside (*taga-bukid*) (Álvarez Guerra 1887: 76-68; Patajo-Legasto, 2008: 738).[8] Third, the mestizo[9] as a class, were known to have possessed much wealth and influence. Many of the colonial enterprises from plantations to pawnshops were in the hands of principal mestizo families (Sawyer 1900: 31; Mojares 2006: 6). The use of the term mestizo as a clothing identifier stood for the nuanced, urban style and sophistication with which the relatively good-looking and wealthier class of mestizos carried themselves and their attires. Fourth, the combined use of Tagalog and mestizo in clothing served to reflect that by the second half of the 19th century, racial or ethnic factors, in the sense of being Tagalog or mestizo, became less of an issue as the different groups were showing obvious signs of shared culture. Since the 1850s, the newfound prosperity of the islands produced a class of new rich poised to display their status and wealth through clothing, jewelry, lifestyles,

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[8] *Taga-bayan* literally means urban-dwellers; figuratively, it refers to urbanized, upper class citizens. Álvarez Guerra also talked about the *taga-tabi*, which literally means on the margins, to refer to those who aspired to belong with the *taga-bayan*.

[9] In many historical accounts and illustrations, the term mestizo was used loosely to refer to either the fair-skinned Spanish mestizos or to biracial children with no specific reference to bloodline. Although precise terms were used to distinguish Spanish or European mestizos with Chinese mestizos, the widespread use of the term mestizo as a blanket term has contributed to the problem of articulating how race might have influenced style and clothing choices in the colony. Félix Laureano, *Recuerdos de Filipinas: Álbum-Libro: Útil Para El Estudio y Conocimiento de Los Usos y Costumbres de Aquellas Islas Con Treinta y Siete Fototipias Tomadas y Copiadas Del Natural,* ed. Felice-Noelle Rodriguez and Ramon C. Sunico, trans. Renan Prado (Mandaluyong, Filipinas: Cacho Publishing House, 2001), fig. The Mestiza, pp. 157−160; "La Mestiza de Malate," *La Ilustración Del Oriente Revista Semanal,* March 21, 1878.; Paul Proust de la Gironière, *Twenty Years in the Philippines* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1854), fig. Chinese métis; José Honorato Lozano, *Gervasio Gironella Album (1847),* fig. mestiza de sangley.

and parties. This Tagalog mestizo crowd appeared to propagate the social hierarchy and establish their distance with the way they wore their clothes (Álvarez Guerra 1887: 65-68).

2.2. Chinese

The average Chinese living in the Philippines in the mid-19th century was recognizable by their distinct round-necked, collarless loose shirts with limited front or front-side opening, wide, loose drawstring pants, thick-soled Manchu shoes, and queue or pig-tail coiled into a chignon (Chu 2010: 119-120; Wickberg 2000 [1965]: 191).[10] Their heads were typically shaved in front, with the rest of their hair worn long and braided. They sometimes wore small caps with a red knot. Their loose pants in particular contrasted with the relatively narrow trousers of the natives (Rizal 1996 [1891]: 132).

Historical sources from the 19th century revealed that the Chinese living in the Philippines preserved the customs and clothing of their homeland. Although it must be emphasized that the clothing of these overseas Chinese developed not so much in conformity with the status-based hierarchical traditions back in mainland China; rather, they varied according to circumstances, fortunes, and the nature of their work in the colony. Preserving the unique clothing, hair, food, and business culture of their race, which were distinct from both the colonizing and colonized populations, they were often regarded as outsiders in Spanish colonial Philippines (Abinales and Amoroso 2005: 98).

Capitán Toming might have chosen to dress like the Chinese because they were perceived as having greater income potential than the indios. The colonial taxation system correlated ethnicity with earning potential, hence, it is known that the Chinese belonged to the highest income tax bracket (Wickberg 2000 [1965]: 140). The Chinese were recognized by Spanish colonial authorities as the highest taxpayers; thus, in Jose Rizal's 1891 novel, *El Filibusterismo*, the author quipped that by virtue of paying the highest taxes, the

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[10] According to Chu, baptized Chinese were required to cut off their queues to symbolize "their loyalty to Spain and the Catholic Church" but by the late nineteenth century, this requirement was lifted.

Chinese could even impose their own laws during church celebrations (Chu 2010: 82).

As taxes were computed according to occupation status and incomes, many Chinese were prudent about displaying wealth and status through clothing and appearance. Since the higher the income, the higher the taxes, and the more affluent they looked, the more they may attract suspicions from colonial authorities, many have learned to undermine their status by maintaining austere appearances.

Particularly interesting was how the Chinese were portrayed in 19th century travel accounts. Foreign observers linked appearances with wealth and emotional states. The general perception of the average Chinese was that they looked miserable, often "looking very ugly (Mallat 1983 [1846]: 337)" in tattered clothes, as opposed to the better off who were described as cheerful, happy and able to enjoy life (Sawyer 1900: 337).

If Capitán Toming was eager for prestige, then he might have chosen to dress like a wealthy Chinese merchant, referred to as *chino comerciante* in Spanish sources.[11]

2.3. Moros

In contrast to the semi-clothed mountain tribes, Moros from the south were fully clothed. Their elaborate, colorful attires also contrasted with the subdued colors used by lowland Christians. The clothing and material culture that developed among these coastal trading communities under the Muslim sultanates showed more of Indian, Chinese, and Southeast Asian rather than European influences. Moro chieftains of Mindanao for example were distinguished with sashes draped diagonally across their bodies. Relative to the narrow trousers worn by Christianized men, Moro men's trousers were slim-cut, even tight-fitting (Cárlos 1887: 332). The tight fit of the trousers of Mindanao chiefs (datu) was highlighted especially when viewed in relation to the loose, knee-length breeches of their retainers. The slim fit reflected the

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[11] See José Honorato Lozano, *Gervasio Gironella Album* (1847).

lives of upper class Moros as generally free from hard labor. Moros also tend to wear different types of headdresses which were described as "most likely of Mohammedan imports from neighboring Malayan countries (Cruz 1992: 3, 24)." One type of headdress is the *potong* or *pudong*, a rectangular piece of cloth, wrapped around the head, which were rarely seen among lowland Christians.

But as Capitán Toming wanted to channel the appearance of Moro warriors, whose activities generally required clothes that allowed for greater freedom in movement, then, he must have favored wearing loose trousers, not the tight-fitting ones worn by the Moro elite.

2.4. Spaniards

As Spaniards represented the highest status in Philippine colonial society, Capitán Toming ultimately dressed himself in a frock coat typical among Spaniards and upper class natives. When the Negrito —who as a pagan from a highland tribe represented not the lowliest class but a group outside the recognized lowland, Christianized subjects of Spain—donned a frock coat, it set the stage for the play to reflect both an admiration for and a disregard for boundaries. It is a riotous defiance of existing conventions of dress.

Perceptions of beauty in colonial Philippines were also strongly influenced by the notion of white supremacy, where beauty was associated with the fair skin and sharp features of the Spanish and Europeans. As the colored among the colonized may not alter skin and facial features, clothing was manipulated and employed creatively and intuitively in order to establish status. The changing of clothes by a member of an excluded tribal minority conveyed the application of clothes as a marker of status.

Acquired prejudices, however, influenced how clothes were perceived on people. The complexity of this study lies in the fact that not every well-dressed Spaniard was a person of status, not every wealthy native was well-dressed, and not every poor Negrito was poorly dressed. This supports Roche's assertion that "the most costly and abundant of clothes were not automatically found where

there was the greatest of wealth (1996: 107)."

Balagtas' Capitán Toming openly admitted his desire to be equal with the Spaniards as he was street sweeping with his friend and co-worker at the plaza mayor. At that time, projections of equal status required the inclusion of Western garments (Hoganson 2003: 3). Cultural capital was also acquired through connections with Spain or Europe. Controller with the Dutch Colonial Administration in Java, J.A.B. Wiselius, visited the Philippines in 1875 and remarked how "it should be noted that if someone can claim at least some connection with a European (through descent or work as housekeeper), they consider themselves mestizas rather than natives. They [women] will no longer wear the native *sari* to cover an underskirt…(2016 [1875]: 85)." Wiselius's observations revealed the desire of many natives to claim connections to what they perceived as the more superior, privileged white minority.

The white minority's retention of their own clothing habits in a predominantly colored milieu was a sign of cultural superiority. There was obviously a sartorial gap between a dominant white minority and an inferior colored majority—a gap, which was blurred by the emergence since the 1850s of a prosperous and educated class of natives (indios and biracial mestizos) who had the capacity to dress, accessorize, and present themselves as persons of status.

The better classes among the various races in the colony, hoping to distinguish themselves among the common *tao* (Laureano 2001 [1895]: 51-52), switched to sleek, dark Western suits. Depending on the occasion, they also wore attires that combined elements of both Philippine and Western styles. The overt expansion of male wardrobes that included native, European, and hybrid ensembles demonstrates what Finnane (2008: 35) once noted: "in dress as in other respects, a society was more commonly represented by reference to its male members."

In the Philippines, as in Europe, "the mid-nineteenth century was the high-water mark of male domination, and in such patriarchal periods, the clothes of the two sexes are as clearly differentiated as possible (Laver 2002: 184)." From a fashion perspective, Philippine women's clothing may appear to have

defined the era. For one, colorful clothing in dramatic proportions were much talked about and discussed in 19ᵗʰ century travel accounts and periodicals (Bárrantes 1876; Mallat 1846: chapters 20, 22, 23; Jagor 1917 [1875]).[12] But, it was the diversity and overt expansion of men's clothing that delivered exciting narratives about their varied activities.

The ballooning of skirts among the wealthy were restrictive, preventing women from pursuing laborious tasks (Laver 2002: 170-172). Women's impractical attires were not only marks of status but also symbols of their exclusion from the usual avenues of power —careers in law, ecclesiastics, politics, and military—which men could strive to achieve distinctions for in the colony. Women who engaged in business incorporated it with their social lives. In short, the blurring of their professional and leisure activities did not require separate types of garments. As I have argued previously (Coo 2014: 158), their clothing requirements developed differently from that of men. The same styles cut with different fabrics and adorned with varied embellishments distinguished women's ordinary, social, and professional attires. Meanwhile, men's wardrobes included native, European, and other types of hybrid ensembles, depending on their separate work, leisure, and social activities. Furthermore, Simmel (1957: 545) called to mind that the expansion of circles to include previously unfamiliar categories and the development of different groups within the same class contributed to variabilities especially in men's clothing.

Ⅲ. Imitation and Colonial Culture

Imitation are significant themes of Balagtas' *sainete*. The text revealed so much about the era and colonial culture that shaped the mentalities and tendencies of 19ᵗʰ century Filipinos. Jukka Gronow (1993: 89) pointed out that blind imitation is "the opposite of good

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[12] See also *El Bello Sexo: Semanario Ilustrado de Literatura, Bellas Artes, Ciencias y Conocimientos Útiles, Dedicado Exclusivamente a La Mujer*, Año 1, (Manila, 1891); *Ilustración Filipina Periódico Quincenal*, Año I (Manila: Imprenta y litografía de Ramírez y Giraudier, 1859); *Ilustración Filipina Periódico Quincenal*, Año II (Manila: Imprenta y litografía de Ramírez y Giraudier, 1860).

taste" while Georg Simmel (1957: 543) linked imitation with the primitive state of the wearer.

Wiselius, who as part of the colonial administration in neighboring Batavia (now Jakarta, Indonesia), was interested in comparing Dutch with Spanish approaches to managing their colonies in Southeast Asia, discussed imitation by describing it as "adoption of European customs." He noted that "the native and mestizo population of Manila is quite a bit ahead of the Javanese, Malay, or Annamite in adopting European customs (1875: 14)."

Although exhibiting great European influence, Philippine clothing also registered influences from its Southeast Asian neighbors. For example, the construction of men's shirts, replete with folded collars and long, cuffed sleeves, were European-inspired but acclimatized or reworked using local fabrics. The fact that the shirts were also loose and worn untucked—as opposed to the tucked shirts called for in Western clothing—revealed cultural links between the Philippines, India, and Southeast Asia (Torre 2000: 6). The same terms were also used in Indian, Southeast Asian, and Philippine contexts to refer to specific clothing pieces. *Salawal* or *salaual* referred to a type of loose men's trousers while *sayasaya* referred to the loose silk trousers that featured embroideries along the hemlines (Canta 2009: 123).

Apart from his observations on how Philippine clothing registered more European influences compared to its neighboring Southeast Asian countries, Wiselius also spoke of the importance natives gave to appearances:

> But one should not take this apparent civilized behavior too seriously. What one sees are the customs and behavior of emancipated children, cosseted by an unwise government that gives importance to outward appearances and spoiled by a crowd of ignorant clergymen…everywhere the influence of the church on dress and customs can be seen. This influence is stronger in the cities, weaker in the countryside…The nature of Spanish colonization explains why a Polynesian people have—at least in appearances—so radically broken with ancestral customs and practices (Wiselius 1875: 14).

First in a series of publications by Wiselius offering comparative perspectives on Spanish, French, Portuguese, and British systems of colonial governance, his views clearly reflected the European-outsider's "oriental" gaze, particularly that of a civil servant of Dutch Indonesia's representation of Spanish Philippines. Implied in his orientalist view of Spanish Philippines was the "more effective and morally responsible" Dutch approach to managing its colonial project (Muijzenberg 2016: x). Equating the colonized subjects of the "unwise government" of Spain as "emancipated children" who valued appearances spelled out his critical view of the culture that took root in the Spanish colony. He traced the culture of dress and appearances that developed and prevailed in colonial Philippines to the influence of the church and its "ignorant" representatives, which confirmed what was common knowledge on the role of friars and church institutions in the colonizing process. Wiselius' use of the word "children" to describe Spain's colonized subjects resonate with the connections Georg Simmel (1957: 543) made between children's tendency towards imitation and their stage of development. In his sociology of fashion, Simmel likened a child who repeats facts to the primitive man. This is linked to another study on fashion and style by Jukka Gronow (1993: 89) who said that "a person blindly following the whims of fashion was without style, whereas a man of style—or a gentleman— used his own power of judgement." The propensity of Filipinos to imitate may hence be viewed as signs of their primitiveness, lack of style, and colonial mental captivity.

Alongside the Filipino penchant for copying, Wiselius also observed disparities in color choices between the Philippines and its neighbors:

> Although the natives in Manila and its surroundings meet us in Spanish-looking dress, and although they receive us with a welcome in perfect Spanish, one still feels that both are out of place, and that varnish hides rotting trusses. A sense of beauty that one observes in neighboring countries (the least developed not exempted) in decoration and the use of colors is totally absent among these Spanish-speaking natives. Elsewhere one can see a sense of design even in the most common articles for daily use; here it is copying… (Wiselius 1875: 16)

Paintings of Philippine artists in the 19th century began to register how the color of men's shirt and pants evolved from colorful to monochromatic, muted tones like natural, white and black.[13] Robert Ross, in his work *Clothing: A Global History* (2008: 74), pointed out that the color black has, "since the 1840s, become universal, even in the hottest weather." While men's clothing increasingly became somber, Philippine women's clothing became more dramatic. The sleeves were amplified, the skirts ballooned, and skirt material expanded to include imported velvets and silk in celestial and floral patterns. While women's lower garments may have become more colorful and voluminous, it is important to note that their upper garments made use of natural colors. This explains why Wiselius had the sense that the use of color was absent among Filipinos.

Wiselius' descriptions of aspects of Philippine culture were mostly based on his understanding of customs in neighboring Southeast Asian colonies. For instance, in detailing women's clothing, he referred to the *tapís*, a rectangular piece of cloth wrapped over the skirt, typical among native women, as *sari* or *sarong*, terms widely used in neighboring Southeast Asia and India; the blouse of *sinamay* simply referred to as made of "white fabric or colored chintz" (the *kabaka tjita* of Malay women) (Wiselius 2016 [1875]: 14-16).

Ⅳ. Conclusion

Through Balagtas' 1860 comedy, *La filipina elegante y negrito amante*, the varied types of men's clothing styles were presented to reflect the ethnic, cultural, and sartorial diversity in colonial Philippines. There were those within the Spanish sphere of influence like the non-Spanish Europeans, Chinese, native indios, and

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[13] See the following images: José Honorato Lozano, *Nyssens-Flebus Album: Album de Manille et ses environs*, 1844 to 1846, Watercolor, 247x343mm, fig. Mestizos en traje de fiesta, Christie's London 2002; José Honorato Lozano, *Karuth Album: J.A. Karuth Album on the Philippine Islands*, September 2, 1858, Watercolor, 30x22.5 cm, September 2, 1858, fig. Mestizos in fiesta attire; Félix Martínez y Lorenzo, *Mestizo Español*, 1886, Watercolor, 1886, Museo Nacional de Antropología, Call #: CE3796.

mestizos referred to as lowland, Christianized; and those outside or in the peripheries, like the pagan, highland tribes, and the Moros.

In the final decades of the Spanish colonial era, the natives achieved socio-economic and cultural power that allowed them to traverse the boundaries set forth by the Spanish in the early days of colonial rule. As Manila opened up to world commerce, as indio and mestizo families were enriched by commercial cash cropping, and as Europe became accessible after the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, *urbanidad* (Camacho 2010: 295) became linked with the cosmopolitan, hybridized culture displayed by the wealthier, educated, and better-looking mestizos. Through clothes, mestizos and indios of similar status expressed who they were or who they wanted to be, who they wanted to be associated with, what they wanted to highlight and what they wanted to hide as a result.

Urbanidad was articulated in this paper by looking at how clothing fashioned by the wealthier or superior class and the status they embodied were perceived, received, and espoused by the wider society, which came to include groups earlier considered as "outsiders." Clothing like frock coats—originally adopted by indios and mestizos enlarged by wealth, education, and urbanized culture —worn by the common *tao*, or worse, by pagans considered "outside" of Spanish colonial rule reflected that the Spanish were losing grip on the colony and their subjects.

Critical of Spanish colonial rule were non-Spanish Europeans like J.A.B. Wiselius who was working as a Dutch civil adminstrator in neighboring Indonesia. From a foreign, external gaze, he made observations on the culture of clothing and appearances in Spanish Philippines with inter-colonial comparisons in mind. He often described clothing styles and customs relative to how clothes were worn and referred to in other European colonies in Southeast Asia.

Although Philippine men's clothing were diverse, often reflecting European, native and Southeast Asian elements, what made them distinct were (1) in certain cases, the material and the hybrid combinations; and (2) in many cases, the wearer, whose propensity to imitate exhibited inherited prejudices brought about by centuries of Spanish colonization (Memmi 2003).

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Indonesian Diplomacy in the Digital World

Ganewati Wuryandari*

[*Abstract*]

In the 21st century, the growing use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) and social media platforms has influenced our way of life, including international diplomacy. With the use of new interactive communication technologies such as WhatsApp, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, video sharing website, blogs, and other social media networks, digital diplomacy has become an active diplomatic mode in modern society and plays an increasing important role in international relations. Although Indonesia has gradually realized the pivotal role of internet diplomacy and recently put it into practice, it is still lagging far behind. This paper will examine how Indonesia conducts its diplomacy in the new era of digital world. How far and in what ways does the Indonesian government make use of digital technology to conduct its diplomacy? What opportunities and challenges are confronted to develop digital diplomacy? How does it navigate diplomacy in the digital age? Unless Indonesia embraces new channels and methods of diplomacy, its foreign policy implementation may not run optimally to support its aim of attaining its objectives in the international stage.

Keywords: Indonesia, Foreign Policy, National Interests, Digital Diplomacy

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Ⅰ. Introduction

Alfin Toffler's *Future Shock* in 1970, opened the eyes of many people to the world's immense changes shaped by the rapid development of the information and communication technologies (ICTs). The world is already experiencing the so-called "third wave of change" with the emergence of an information society (Toffler 1989: 17), which is different from an asymmetric information society of the previous era when information was mostly accessible to certain circles. Nowadays, information can be easily spread and may be accessed by everybody. This revolutionary change signifies the success of new ICTs and social media platforms, such as the internet, mobile phones, and more recently social media applications like Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, Reddit, Vine, Ask.fm, Tumblir, and Flickr. Not only has there been an increase in the speed and the efficiency of information dissemination; new digital technology also stimulated people's participation in connecting with the world. Over 2.4 billion people around the world have to access to the internet, accounting for 3.3 percent of the world's population (Jiang 2013: 1).

The emergence of internet and digital technology revolutionized human interaction, including foreign relations. States are now employing the Internet and digital electronic technologies in diplomacy. Such technology has also become pivotal to support the interests of respective states in the international stage. Many countries employ digital technology tools to engage, coordinate, and influence one another in an increasingly crowded environment of international actors. The importance of digital technology in diplomatic activities was described by Julian Borger, Jennifer Rankin and Kate Lyonas in this manner: "when the world's nations sit down to talk, for example, influence is no longer defined by special alliances, but which WhatsApp group you are invited into" (Borger et al. 2016).

Indeed, diplomacy that relies on the digital electronic devices or digital diplomacy has already significantly grown in many countries. Countries such as the United States of America, and the United Kingdom have seriously maximized the progress of modern

technology and the potential of the virtual world to promote their interests. The US leads in the application of digital technology in foreign policy. In 2002, the super power organized a task force in its State Department which specifically deals with e-Diplomacy. Similarly, the UK is also leading in digital diplomacy, as it published a digital strategy in 2012 and established a Digital Transformation Unit within its Foreign Affairs Office (Cave 2015).

Indonesia also engages in digital diplomacy, though it is yet to catch up. Its Ministry of Foreign Affairs only had its website (www.kemlu.go.id) in 1996, and its Twitter account 15 years after (Sudarma 2017). Obviously, digital diplomacy remains a challenge for Indonesia as far as foreign policy is concerned, considering that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs only has 132 representative offices in 96 foreign countries. Internet and social media are yet to be tapped to the fullest to ensure the speed of dissemination and accuracy of information between the headquarters and the representatives, with regards to foreign policy.

Moreover the age of mass information poses challenges and threats to Indonesia. For example, the active and ongoing Papuan independence campaign in the virtual world undermines Indonesian national sovereignty, a crucial concern in Indonesian foreign policy (Tantowi 2016). The vigorous virtual independence campaign needs to be immediately addressed to protect Indonesian integrity. Unless Indonesia embraces digital diplomacy, its foreign policy implementation may not run optimally to support its aim of attaining its objectives in the international stage.

Therefore, it is very important to analyze Indonesia's diplomacy in the digital world. Three key questions are raised in this essay: (1) how far and in what ways does the Indonesian government use digital technology to conduct its diplomacy?; (2) what opportunities and challenges are confronted by Indonesia to develop its digital diplomacy?; and (3) how does Indonesia navigate diplomacy in the digital age? This essay will respond to these in its three sections, which began with this introduction. The introduction is followed by a brief explanation about how diplomacy was transformed by rapid developments of digital technology. The third

section examines the digital technology in Indonesian diplomacy, concluded in the end by a synthesis.

Ⅱ. A New World: Digital Technology Transforming Diplomacy

The definition of diplomacy has considerably changed in the 20th century. At the beginning of the century, diplomacy was described as "the means by which States throughout the world conduct their affairs in ways to ensure peaceful relations" (Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affair 2008). States undertake diplomacy in order to safeguard their respective national interests in the international forum. This concerns as much the promotion of political, economic, social cultural, or scientific relations.

Its definition and practice began to change following the events of the 1920s and 1930s, especially with the immense popularity of radio. Russia and Germany propagated their revolutionary ideas to neighboring countries by intensively using the radio. Radio broadcasts communicated directly to foreign populations, which circumvented their other governments. This ushered in a new, different, and more direct approach to diplomacy, where populations were effectively persuaded to policies. This new diplomacy was later known as a public diplomacy, which according to Jan Melissen in The New Public Diplomacy: Soft Power in International Relations, is the relationship between diplomats and the foreign publics with whom they work (Melissen 2005: xix).

After the said revolutions, the practice spread around the world. For this, the US utilized the Voice of America and the UK used the British Broadcasting Corporation's World Service (Rawnsley 1996). These platforms broadcasted in a variety of languages. As the Cold War intensified, direct communication with the hostile population helped in pacification.

Digital diplomacy emerged as the 20th century came to end. It also came with other names such as eDiplomacy, Internet Diplomacy, and Cyber Diplomacy. The US calls it as 21st Century Statecraft, while Canada and the European Union call it Open Policy

and e-diplomacy (Envoy Center for Digital Diplomacy 2014). First coined in 2001, digital diplomacy loosely refers to how a country uses the information and communication technologies (ICTs) and social media platforms to achieve foreign policy goals (Global Diplomactic Forum   n.d).

The definition encapsulates two schools of thoughts regarding digital diplomacy. In the first one, digital technology is considered a new tool in the conduct of public diplomacy. Instead of addressing foreign publics via traditional means, one may do so as using Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, Instagram, Reddit, Vine, Ask.fm, Tumblir, and Flickr. In the second one, digital technology is considered more than a new tool since it increases the ability to interact and engage with foreign publics, creating avenues of dialogue that facilitate relations. Digital diplomacy then is the use of technology to deliver soft power and public policy messages, engage with wider audiences, and use the feedback loop to better understand and deliver policy.

With the growing use of ICTs and social media platforms, diplomacy is no longer for elite diplomats but expands the field to common folk (Santana n.d) who may also influence diplomatic decisions. Nowadays, the boundaries among states, groups, and individuals in diplomacy are increasingly vague. Advancements brought everyone the opportunity to relate with other cultures. The availability of the Internet and social media applications provides more opportunities for public and private partnerships in diplomacy.

Digital technology has expanded the level of playing field in international relations for the non-state actors. They have emerged as powerful, non-political, commercial, economic, cultural, or trading actors in the international sphere. They have also an increasing role in determining decisions in international relations. Individuals or groups most affected by conflict, human rights abuses, climate change, or other global issues, for example, now contribute to the negotiation process and diplomacy. They use digital technology to tell their side of the story, propelling factual and sustained discussions to influence policy makers. This revolution in diplomacy was observed by Alec Ross, a senior adviser

for Hillary Clinton during her tenure as US Secretary of State from 2009 to early 2013:

> Traditionally, diplomatic engagement consisted largely of government-to-government interactions. In some instances, it was from government to people, such as with international broadcasting in the twentieth century. With the advent of social media and the rapid increase in mobile [technology] penetration, however, this engagement now increasingly takes place from people to government and from people to people. This direct link from citizens to government allows diplomats to convene and connect with non-traditional audiences, and in turn allows citizens to influence their government in ways that were not possible ten years ago (Ross 2011: 452).

In short, rapid changes in digital technology has tightened the nexus connecting diverse levels of diplomacy. Non-state actors, whether they be individuals and groups, now engage and influence people through various social media and online platforms. This certainly creates a new set of demands for state and governing officials who make key decisions.

Advancement in digital technology also prompted other challenges to diplomats in carrying out foreign policy. Technology makes information abundant and well circulated for everyone, but also makes it difficult to screen truthfulness. Accountability for these questionable information has been challenging and affect national stability and foreign relations. As one German diplomat noted in one case, he had to "fight on both fronts [to report what really happens in negotiations and correct what is reported by social media]" (Archetti 2010: 8)

Although digital technology poses a new set of challenges in diplomacy, it also brings potential benefits. Archetti noted three of them. First, advancements offer greater access to sources of information. Volumes of information are easily and cheaply available and more quickly to be accessed, from traditional to new media. Second, diplomats now have greater ease and efficiency in communication. Third, diplomats now may concentrate on their functions as analyzing situations, managing offices, and networking

in their posts (Archetti 2010: 8).

Ⅲ. Digital Technology and Indonesia's Diplomacy:
New Opportunities and Challenges, and a Path to A Future

The new era of information technology has developed so rapidly. It has made the world a smaller, and has also made distance a non-essential as people may communicate and be informed wherever they are in real time. People now are also increasingly connected and free to get information from various sources. According to Martin and Jagla, social media is a key factor in these revolutionary movements (Martin and Jagla 2013: 8). This attracted people to engage in the Internet and social media. The enthusiasm is also stimulated by rapid infrastructure development and ease in purchasing smartphones. Based on internet world statistics, internet users around the world are estimated to be 3,731,973,423 last March 31, 2017. China is the world's top ranked internet user (731,434,547 users), followed by India (462,124,989 users), US (286,942,362 users), and Brazil (139,111,185 users). There are 132.700,000 internet users in Indonesia, five times the number of people in Australia, making it the fifth largest internet population in the world. Half or 50.3% of its total population (263,510,146) use the internet. This number a significant increase to 2014's 88.1 million (tekno.liputan6.com 24/10/2016)

Social media has also become an incredibly seductive platform throughout the globe. Through its many alluring forms of communication and entertainment, it attracts an increasing number of followers. According to eMarketer's "Worldwide Social Networks Users" report published in June 2016, active social media users registered globally is around 2.34 billion, or approximately 32% of the world's population. The 10 top social media sites in the world ranked in order are Facebook, You Tube, Instagram, Twitter, Reddit, Vine, Ask.fm, Tumblir, Flickr, and Google (Johnson 2016). In Indonesia, the most popular are Facebook, and YouTube (Asosiasi Penyelenggara Jasa Internet Indonesia 2016). Indonesia is also ranked the 5th largest Facebook user after China, USA, India, and

Brazil, with about 88,000,000 users, accounting for 33% of its population (Internet World Stats 2017). Indonesia is the world's fourth most populous nation and its citizens have taken to social media, to Twitter in particular, with such enthusiasm. Less than a year ago, Jakarta was named the number one Twitter city in the world.

<Fig. 1> The Indonesia Foreign Minister, Retno L.P. Marsudi, makes use of Insta Video to talk on "Digital for Humanity: Rakhine State." Source: www.instagram. com/kemluri/(Accessed Nov. 15, 2017).

The significant explosion of Internet and social media users both at the global and national levels has unavoidably affected the sphere of Indonesia's foreign policy and diplomacy. The most perceived impact, according to current Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Retno L.P. Marsud, may be seen in the real-time diplomacy effect that requires diplomats to adjust the way they think and work (Cave 2016).

<Fig. 2> President Jokowi's blog with the President of France, Emmanuel Marcon.
Source: www.youtube.com/watch? (Accessed Nov. 10, 2017)

<Fig. 3> Kemlu RI's Twitter.
Source: www.twitter.com/portal_kemlu_ri (Accessed Nov. 14, 2017)

On one side, diplomats need to change mindsets in embracing and rethinking how new technologies can represent Indonesia. On the other, times have changed and diplomat must always be ready to respond and direct the course of events in the fastest, most discerned manner. International events that happening thousands of miles from Jakarta must be addressed quickly and accurately if they matter to Indonesia's foreign policy (Sudarma 2017).

The rapid development of communication and information technology is also an opportunity to utilize it as an instrument to support Indonesian diplomacy. Siti Sofia Sudarma, director of Information and Media of the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, believes that speed in news technologies efficiently help cascade information to 132 embassies, high commissions, and consulates in 96 countries. It has also become an important part of public (Sudarma 2017). Dissemination of information is important in both building public trust to Indonesian foreign policy and promoting good governance. Esti Andayani, director general of Information and Public Diplomacy, also maintains that the new era of information technology helps diplomats in their duties of speedily gathering information delivering perspectives to the home base (Kementerian Luar Negeri 2016).

Many countries in the West, aside from the US and UK have prioritized digital diplomacy in supporting global communication and policy. Over the past decade, the US has adjusted its diplomacy approaches to account for technology, and called its transformational diplomacy as "21st century statecraft" in 2009. The US State Department explains this diplomacy as "the complementing of traditional foreign policy tools with newly innovated and adapted instruments of statecraft than fully leverage the networks, technologies and demographics of our interconnected world" (Martin and Jagla 2013: 13; The Office of Electronic Information, Bureau of Public Affairs n.d). The US has acknowledged the increase of popular users of ICT and the varied set of actors influencing international relations debate, such as NGOs, foundations, transnational networks, and citizens themselves. The approach encouraged US diplomats to connect with the private sectors through these new resources as a means to create public-private partnerships (Paris 2013: 2). Subsequently, the State Department also employed in promoting American statecraft. Its efforts in digital diplomacy have led to extraordinary results. It has created many digital diplomacy programs and initiatives, such as DipNote, Digital Outreach Team, Opinion Space, Democracy Dialogues, and Civil Society 2.10. Its total Twitter and Facebook followers in May 2013 was 26 million (Paris 2013: 2). This, according to Fergus Hanson, transformed the State Department into a "de facto media empire" (Hanson 2012: 5).

Similarly, the UK also leads in digital diplomacy. According to the Digital Diplomacy Review 2016 (#DDR16), which assessed 1098 digital diplomacy assets used by 210 Ministry of Foreign Affairs' worldwide, the UK was rated best in the world for digital diplomacy. It defeated France and the US, which ranked second and third, respectively. The UK ranked first, given its network (268 Embassies, High Commissions, Consulates in 168 countries) is active in digital diplomacy. Its 700 official social media profiles across the world has seven million followers (Elliott 2017). The UK also develops its digital diplomacy strategies by way of the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) Social Media Guidelines (Foreign & Commonwealth Office n.d). Going beyond the numbers, Hugh Elliot, director of

communication of the FCO UK, names three reasons for the country's success: risk-taking, innovation, and a multi-media mindset in carrying digital diplomacy (Elliott 2017).

Indonesia has also embarked on digital diplomacy, though still on a limited scale (Yahya 2016). Based on the Digital Diplomacy Review 2016, Indonesia is ranked 37th digital diplomacy (http://digital.diplomacy.live. Accessed April 10, 2017). It ranked better than some of its Southeast Asian neighbors, though there is more space for improvement.

It lags behind in digital diplomacy because internet and social media were introduced a bit late. For instance, the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has gone digital for just over a decade. It launched it website in 1996 (Sudarma 2017) and only acquired Twitter account on June 29, 2010 (https://twitter.com/Portal_ Kemlu_RI. Accessed April 20, 2017), beginning an engagement with other popular social media platforms like Facebook, YouTube and Instagram. Its Twitter account is the most followed among the social media accounts <Table 1>.

<Table 1> The Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs's Website and Social Media as of April 20, 2017

	Website	Twitter	Facebook	Instagram	YouTube
Account name	http://www.ke mlu.go.id	KEMLU RI @Portal_Kemlu_RI	Kementerian Luar Negeri/@Kemlu.RI	kemlu_ri	Kemlu TV
Followers/ Likes	-	91.672	34.681	2.094	-
Tweets	-	21.463	-	-	-
Following	-	203	-	10	-
Upload	-	-	-	-	32

Sources: Data collected by the author from various sources of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia's website, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube on April 20, 2017.

Use of internet and social media by the ministry was subsequently followed by its embassies. Most of them now have email addresses and Facebook accounts. Ambassadors have also taken to Twitter.

Furthermore, the ministry has also strengthened its presence in digital diplomacy. It improved institutional structure by forming a special unit for digital diplomacy, the Directorate of Information and Media, under the Directorate General of Information and Public Diplomacy. It also enhanced communication and information infrastructure by connecting all 132 representative offices in across 96 countries to Jakarta, thus improving coordination. In addition, in 2017, the ministry also put up a Digital Comment Center, which enables video conferencing with as much as 10 representative offices at once (Sudarma 2017). It also developed human resources capacity building by holding seminars on digital diplomacy every year since 2015.[1]

The problem however is that Indonesia still needs to improve its performance, as far as social media followers and users, format, and substance are concerned. Its Twitter and Facebook followers only number to 93,766 in April 2017, a far cry from the US State Department's. The ministry has also opted for the more traditional social media formats and usage. It needs to optimize and innovate its digital diplomacy programs and initiatives, may look, for instance at the US's platforms such as DipNote, Digital Outreach Team, Opinion Space, Democracy Dialogues and Civil Society 2.10. In DipNote blog, the State Department provides regular updates on new initiatives, including how the US uses open data and collaborative mapping to enhance diplomacy.

Digital content from the ministry is also substantially limited. Searches on the Twitter and Facebook between April 18 to March 29, 2017, yield 44 news articles, mainly self-promotion by the

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[1] Some of these include the Senior Diplomats Training (Foreign Affairs and Staffing School-Sesparlu) on the new variance of diplomacy (September 29, 2015); "Eco-Tourism: Globalizing Local Communities Without Impacting the Environment" (September 28-29, 2016) in Jakarta (Yahya 2016) where steps to promote tourism in other countries through social media were discussed; and "Digital Diplomacy on Fintech: Opportunity in Disruptivity" (March 29-30, 2017).

ministry and its diplomats. Most accounts feature international engagements (diplomatic visits and international meetings), cooperation agreements, and information related to the ministry (trainings, awards, and seminars). Indonesia's response to various international issues is also limited to a few tweets and Facebook updates. Searches also yielded only only seven international issues engaged by the ministry through Twitter and Facebook, among them, terrorism; the abolition of nuclear weapons; climate change; the European Parliamentary resolution on palm oil; the code of conduct in the South China Sea; and the right to health.

These are important, but the ministry must go beyond its marketing function to achieve diplomacy. Daniele Cave claims that communicating is not the same as influencing. Digital diplomacy is far more than diplomats communicating via social media (Cave 2015). Digital diplomacy in Indonesia must represent a shift in form and in strategy—a way to amplify traditional diplomatic efforts, develop technology-based policy solutions, and encourage cyber activism.

The ministry's digital diplomacy has subsequently attracted criticism. Tantowi Yahya, member of the Indonesian parliament, says that though the ministry has already adopted digital diplomacy, its perspective is still "business as usual," engaging with a "normal" foreign policy background. Human resource and infrastructure prepared to create and shape opinions are yet to be seen (Yahya 2016). Digital diplomacy must go beyond self-promotion, and as McClory states, must rally people for a cause (Munro 2016).

It is time for the Indonesian Government to seriously invest in digital diplomacy capabilities as the world begins to confront more complex challenges, like cyberwar, hacking, and paralyzing data systems (Falahuddin 2015).

Indonesia found itself once in a cyber war of sorts with Australia, Malaysia, and Singapore. The discovery of Australia's wiretapping of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and his close circle erupted into a crisis in 2013. This was not taken sitting down by Indonesians, and as the president tweeted his responses using his personal @SBYudhoyono account (Raeburn 2013), a group called

Anonymous Indonesia launched a counterattack and through Twitter account @anon_indonesia announced that it hacked hundreds of Australian sites, under the code war#OpAustralia (Operation Australia) (Maulana 2013).

Indonesia and Singapore are also frequently involved in cyberwar, especially triggered by the annual forest fires in Sumatra and Kalimantan. High-level government officials often find themselves in a wordwar through social media. At one time, Singapore Foreign Minister K. Shanmugam took the haze issue to his Facebook to question Indonesia's "complete disregard for our people, and their own, and without any embarrassment, or sense of responsibility" (Rashith 2015).

<Fig. 4> The Singaporean Foreign Minister's Facebook on Indonesian Haze.

Source: Rahimah Rashith, "Singapore's Ministers Are Using Facebook To Slam Indonesia For Haze," Sep. 27, 2015, https://mustsharenews.com/sg -ministers- fb-haze/, (Accessed March 15, 2017).

Indonesian Vice-President Jusuf Kalla responded with no remorse. In September 2015, in a dialogue with Indonesians in the Indonesian Consulate in New York, he asked neighboring countries to stop complaining:

> Look at how long they have enjoyed fresh air from our green environment and forests when there were no fires. Could be months. Are they grateful? But when forest fires occur, a month at the most, haze pollutes their regions. So why should there be an apology? (*The Strait Times* 25/09/2015).

Indonesia also continues to confront the onslaught of virtual campaigns by Papuan Free Movement. Current President Joko Widodo (Jokowi) has demonstrated his seriousness to build Papua as may be seen in his three visits to the region since 2014, as well as the accelerated construction of infrastructure in the region. The efforts seem to be ignored by the movement, which relentlessly launched global digital campaigns to influence international opinions and expose human rights violations (Wuryandari 2014). This campaign strategy has somewhat gained its success (Yahya 2016). In the 20th Annual Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG) Conference held in Honiara on June 24-26, 2015, the United Liberation Movement for West Papua (ULMWP) was accepted as an observer, while Indonesia a member country (Batlolone and Manulang et.al 2015). Some consider this a defeat of Indonesian diplomacy in the matter of Papua.[2] This is further hammered down by the statement of the delegates from the Pacific Island Countries (Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Nauru, Marshall Islands, Tuvalu and Tonga) to the General Assembly of the United Nations in September 2016, urging for Papauan self-determination (Kompas.com 28/09/2016).

In the context of digital diplomacy, Indonesia needs to make a serious structuring effort. Digital diplomacy must not look at platforms as merely instruments to deliver news, but also utilize

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[2] This statement is claimed by Amiruddin Al-Alrahab (Papua Resource Center). See Vidi Batlolone and James Manullang et.al, "Indonesia Kalah Diplomasi Soal Papua", Sinar Harapan, 29 Juni 2015, http://sinarharapan.co/news/read/150629071/indonesia-kalah-diplomasi-soal-papua. (Accessed April 21, 2017).

them to shape opinions, particularly in times of crisis. In an increasingly interconnected world, the global strategic environment can pose a threat to domestic life; domestic life may affect the international sphere. This condition is increasingly complex as information is freely disseminated and circulated. It is time for the government to take advantage of digital diplomacy that not merely focuses on the impact of international dynamics, but also manages the said impact for the interest of the nation. On the Papuan issue, the Indonesian government may relentlessly launch counter-diplomacy efforts through the internet and social media, explaining problems and holding the fort.

Digital diplomacy is no longer an option but a necessity for Indonesia's national interests. Indonesia needs to develop a more structured digital diplomacy strategy, a synergy among the government, non-governmental associations, the private sector, and academia, that enhances foreign policy and promote collaboration (Sudarma 2017). Social media, if employed appropriately and strategically, will become a force multiplier for the entrenched digital diplomacy campaign of Indonesia.

In order to become the world's most wide-ranging and proactive digital diplomacy in the future, the Indonesian government also needs to invest for the long-term success of infrastructure in digital diplomacy, most especially in the development of human skills and the technological capacities. There is a need to establish a dedicated team of "public communicators" responsible in defining accurately and attractively agenda contents in digital diplomacy. This must be done, since according to Roland Paris, "users of social media who do not engage in substantive, real-time exchanges are unlikely to make their voices heard" (Paris 2013:10).

However, there are always risks with internet and social media usage, as far as transparency, speed, and transformation sharing are concerned. Technology use may not be in line with traditional diplomatic culture, which values privacy. However, traditional, person-to-person diplomacy will remain as important as ever, as nothing can substitute it. The biggest risk of all if it is not engaging in this mass information age, because global diplomacy has gone

digital. As Matt Amstrong says "(in) the age of mass information and precision-guided-media, ignoring social media is surrendering the high ground in the enduring battle of influence minds around the world" (Gong n.d).

Ⅳ. Conclusion

The growing use of ICTs and social media platforms have influenced our way of life, including international diplomacy. The world is becoming smaller, while diplomats need to act more quickly. Although Indonesia has gradually realized the importance of digital diplomacy and recently put it into practice, it is still lagging behind in terms of user engagement, format, and substance. This should be addressed by the Indonesian government.

Looking into the future, the importance of social media will continuously grow, and Indonesia needs to confront problems in coordination among stakeholders. If Indonesia finally taps the full potential of social media, the inherent challenges will be addressed. A more structured digital diplomacy policy that steers clear of these challenges through a synergy among stakeholders can be a viable path to the future.

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Book Review

Spirits and Ships:
Cultural Transfers in Early Monsoon Asia

Edited by Andrea Acri, Roger Blench, and Alexandra Landmann
Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS) Yusof Ishak Institute,
2017, ix + 577 pp.

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Fernando Rosa*

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This volume follows the earlier *Esoteric Buddhism in Mediaeval Maritime Asia: Networks of Masters, Texts, Icons*, edited by Andrea Acri and published in 2016 by ISEAS. It is a breathtaking work. The range of areas, time periods, and subjects covered is overwhelming. The work, which came with an introduction, offered two key theoretical, historical, and ethnographic contributions by Robert Dentan and Andrea Acri. It ended with an equally important ethnographic chapter by Robert Wessing. That Dentan and Wessing are both anthropologists is hardly a coincidence here. The great originality of the volume lies exactly in bringing the richness of highly localized ethnographic detail in contact with a very broad and detailed historical perspective based on universal religions (in fact, varieties of Buddhism and Hinduism) encompassing diverse epochs and different oceanic regions. The result is a veritable blurring of traditional boundaries of area studies, in particular, those related to South, Southeast, and East Asia, the heart of Monsoon Asia as treated in this volume.

In a work of this magnitude, there are inevitably difficult moments. A non-specialist reader may have a hard time going through Alexandra Landmann's detail-heavy chapter on law. However, despite the difficulty, Landmann's broad theoretical and

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historical exercise related to law ended well. Her chapter, however, might have gained a good deal from a deeper engagement with Wessing's, which closed the book. He provided an ethnographic flesh, so to speak, to the imposing historical, structural bones that Landmann discussed in great detail. On the other hand, Waruno Mahdi, a scientist and scholar based in Germany, made a very intriguing and original case for the populations labelled "Negritos" in the history of cultural transfers across the Bay of Bengal and other territories. His perspective is quite important, as it helped debunk widespread civilizing myths of cultural transfers and influence, all of which traditionally situated the "tribal" as either culturally insulated or only at the receiving end of any influence.

Dentan's avowedly conjectural chapter is on angry deities of South and Southeast Asia. He made a suitably ethnographic case, being a senior anthropologist, with vast field experience in the region, particularly among a couple of "tribal" peoples in Peninsular Malaysia. Acri's contribution meanwhile focused on more historical rather than religious concerns. Both chapters jointly formed the backbone of the book–a volume where spirits are in command of the ships they board. In his chapter, Acri synthesizes the the entire volume's revolutionary point in this manner:

> My main thesis is that phenomena that are perceived by current scholarship as being either "Indic" or "local"/"indigenous" in nature were in fact already shaped by multi-directional and supra-local circulatory dynamics; therefore, a perspective transcending the current paradigm is required to make sense of their genesis and transfer over a long period of time (Acri, Blench, and Landmann 2017: 72-3).

Rather than building on the idea of a "common religious matrix" proposed by Jean Przyluski, Sylvain Lévi, and Paul Mus, Acri looked to Dentan's work, as he mentioned various deities such as Rudhra/Rudra (an ancient Vedic god) as well as Nkuu', a deity of the Semai people in Peninsular Malaysia. Both deities were related to thunder. Acri also contrasted Sheldon Pollock's famous "Sanskrit cosmopolis" in South and Southeast Asia with David White's "demonological cosmopolis," while firmly rooting his own to

Southeast Asia, without closing the doors to the possibility of a Central Asian and Iranian element or extension. In the way of Paul Mus, Acri posited that religion is the very basis of unity in the region. The centrality and importance of feminine power in both Semai and Indic religions are likewise brought to the fore. Acri managed to make a convincing case for the existence of a common religious matrix, in itself a key insight which stood out in the volume. The other key insight is that whatever the common matrix, it is certainly not Indian. Acri argued that there are far too many supposedly "peripheral" regions involved in tantrism, for instance, for it to have such a narrow geographical cradle.

Wessing's contribution–and exceedingly useful chapter in understanding some themes of the previous chapters, like the role of spirits in local cultures in Southeast Asia–echoed Dentan's and Acri's works. Quite like Acri, Dentan also brought the issue to an altogether different arena, and in considering Wessing's perspective effortlessly offered a novelty of historical and ethnographic evidence and perspectives. He convincingly proposed that it is largely pointless to drive a wedge between Indic religions and deities, on the one hand, and indigenous (read 'tribal') ones, on the other. One idea that ran throughout the book is that there was an ancient, often overlooked, common substrate between South and Southeast Asia, as well as parts of East Asia–one that is certainly pre-Indic, let alone pre-Islamic, and very likely also pre-Austronesian. Moreover, the idea of unidirectionality (that is, from the more "civilised," "universal," towards the more "primitive," "parochial") is hammered down by Dentan's truly "apotropaic" writing (which fellow anthropologist Michael Taussig described as writing that is not run-of-the-mill or "disenchanted"). In this excerpt, Dentan pulled the carpet from a good deal of historical perspectives on the movement of influences between South and Southeast Asia:

> I want to suggest, however, that, rather than thinking of the spectre huntsman or *Batara Guru* as inferior peasant versions of Śiva, it would make more sense to think of them as Indianized versions of the thunder god of the Austroasiatics and early Austronesians whom they so closely resemble (Acri et al. 2017: 55).

This is nothing short of a masterly reversal of the late colonial "Greater India" hypothesis, which include talk of "Indianized states" in Southeast Asia and even Indian colonization.

Acri duly historicized and explained in great detail the whole issue. The perspectives offered in the book were hardly novel as such; only, they were abandoned in post-Second World War nationalist-inflected histories developed from using an area studies perspective. Those histories had difficulty looking at both South and Southeast Asia together. The whole book therefore may be seen as a vast–and, to my mind, largely successful–exercise in various types of deep historical anamnesis. Nonetheless, this variegated exercise is carried out now with the benefit of the great advances in the archaeology, linguistics, history, and so forth, of Monsoon Asia at the disposal of today's scholars. This is seen in prominent linguist and scholar Alexander Adelaar's contribution, which elaborated on Srivijaya's influential reach in Africa. He also posited that the Malagasy immigration first touched East Africa proper, rather than Madagascar, though there seemed to be no trace of it in the continent. Adelaar's highly specialized linguistic exposition of Malagasy is important for its deep understanding of Austronesian and Malagasy histories in the Indian Ocean.

Blench's chapter offered the most wide-ranging exploration of the theme of the common substratum. One can learn a good deal about heterophonic music (typical of all of Southeast Asia), and musical instruments such as the mouth-organ and the gong, as well as the distribution of the crossbow. Besides, he provided discussions on the famous raised houses or *sumatraliths* (stones probably used for processing fibers), textiles, as well as languages. Blench's contribution is quite felicitous in setting all these elements side by side, while showing the intriguing contours and configuration of a common cultural area. Meanwhile, Bérénice Bellina's archaeological overview argued that maritime networks and related exchanges were in fact developed earlier than previously thought, and were therefore not the result of any unidirectional Indian influence in Southeast Asia. By going as far back as the Neolithic era, and by furthermore looking into the particular crafts and items of trade such as pottery and stone ornaments, she presented a more complex view of the

early urban maritime centers of the region. She pointed to various localized heterogeneous patterns rather than an overall common scheme, offering a nuanced pre- and proto-history of what later became the famous trade emporia of the region.

Christopher Buckley's chapter on looms, textiles, and the famous Austronesian expansion is yet another tour-de-force. His combination of archaeology with present-day ethnography turned out to be quite attractive. It also yielded important insights on the yet to be understood connections between Neolithic Mainland China and the adjacent Southeast Asian region. It came with good photographic color reproductions of some textiles, along with intricate descriptions of looms that include the famous *pua kumbu* cloth of the Iban in Sarawak, a highly valued item in the international luxury textile market today. His positing of an "*ikat*" line (i.e. a divide between *ikat*–a common kind of cloth in Maritime Southeast Asia–and non-*ikat* regions), is benchmark and intriguing in establishing "Indianization." This contributed to the book's novel ways of looking at different items as means of historical appraisal.

Following the footsteps of Jan Gonda's monumental work of the early 1950s, another Dutch scholar, Tom Hoogervorst, inventoried the Austronesian words derived from various Prakrits, or Middle-Indian Aryan languages (i.e., languages other than Sanskrit, Pali, and Tamil, or modern Indian languages). Hoogervorst proved himself worthy of Gonda's legacy. The 101 etymologies offered (mostly related to both Malay and Javanese terms) illustrated the complex and multifaceted linguistic borrowing and adaptation in Maritime Southeast Asia almost two thousand years ago.

One of the most absorbing chapters is Imran bin Tajudeen's on "Indic architectural and cultural translation" in Malayo-Polynesian societies ("Malayo-Polynesian" is a term which the book fully resuscitated, incidentally, from various perspectives). This is, to my mind, one of the most important and trailblazing chapters in the volume, which carried out a detailed, theoretically fundamental analysis of comparative architecture of a vast region, stretching well into the Pacific, as his title indicates (in fact, as far as Fiji and Tahiti).

The notion of creolization comes to mind when reading Tajudeen. Nonetheless, the term is not mentioned anywhere in this book (unsurprisingly, since it is usually employed when discussing island and coastal societies of colonial origin). Incidentally, the chapter also served as a great epitaph to the persistent, long-standing notion of "Indianization." Hermann Kulke's notion of "cultural convergence," as used by Tajudeen in his explanation of the convergence of cultural processes between South and Southeast Asia (also mentioned by Acri and Bellina), can perhaps be considered a version of the concept of creolization. At any rate, it shows that canonical written sources (not always favored in India, though ultimately of Indian origin), on the one hand, and architecture, on the other, "converse" with each other. In this way, Java's "Indic" architecture is to be seen as actually quite original, as it has no real Indian antecedents, though it "converses" with its South Asian scriptural and stone equivalents. It is therefore at best Indic rather than Indian (giving the lie yet again to the old 'Greater India' unidirectional hypothesis). Tajudeen also found the "indigenous" category inadequate because of the abundant evidence of creolization with Indic forms, such as the architectural "readings" of the relevant *śāstric* literature by the Central and East Javanese over the centuries. Quoting Robert Brown, Tajudeen also emphasized that the *dharmacakra,* a Mon Dvāravatī art motif of Indic origin, is neither "Indian" nor "indigenous," but "products of a specific culture and period that transforms constantly" (Acri et al. 2017: 473).

Tajudeen's chapter linked with Acri's, as it mentioned that esoteric/tantric Buddhist data from Java and Sumatra are not congruent with extant theorizations in India itself, and may therefore reflect a previous state of affairs. Tajudeen posited that the "production of Indic religious sanctuaries were [sic] enmeshed with Javanese structures of authority, socio-spatial organization, and mechanisms of economic redistribution..." (Acri et al. 2017: 481). This is to be observed in the terraced mound and walled compounds of the Austronesian tradition, now re-utilized in different, unique structures, such as the *perwara*, or supposedly "subsidiary" temples. There were also powerful nods to both Yayoi

Japan and Neolithic Yunnan in this chapter. Creolization also meant that Sanskrit terms were to be applied to local structures, and this was not lost on Tajudeen when he said that there was a "conscious, deliberate linguistic-cultural adoption of Sanskrit" (Acri et al. 2017: 503). In this way, one of the great hypotheses debunked in this volume, among others, is Pollock's celebrated "Sanskrit cosmopolis." Tajudeen concluded with a quote from Keith Taylor, and in effect underlined that it was the (Western) Malayo-Polynesians who went to India to obtain what they needed, being a maritime people, and quite different from the more land-bound peoples of South Asia. It is likely that no Indian "Sanskritisers" existed, but only Malayo-Polynesian ones.

This point may seem arcane and minor, but is in fact fundamental: Malayo-Polynesians were the agents of the processes of creolization here, rather than immigrant South Asians (as assumed in much specialized literature, including some recent works mentioned by Acri, Bellina, and Tajudeen, among others). Tajudeen came out strongly in favor of a Southeast Asian creolized "civilisation" rather than an "Indianized" one, an enduring theme of the volume.

In his conclusion, Blench claimed that all the material and intangible items he analyzed, such as music and language, are difficult to integrate into a "psychogeographic map," even though he managed to show how these strongly conveyed the sense of a *Kulturkreis*. This is precisely what most of the contributors achieved in their own ways.

Text and Manuscript Guideline

1. TEXT STYLE

1) Language

The manuscript should be written in English.

2) Length

The manuscript should be between 5,000 to 10,000 words in length, including references, appendices, tables and figures. (Effective from the 2017 July Issue, Book Review or Research Report submissions must be between 1,000 to 2,000 words.)

3) Format

All pieces must be encoded in a Microsoft Word file, 1.5-spaced, in Times New Roman, Font Size 12.

4) Spelling

The Journal uses US spelling, and the author should therefore follow the latest edition of the Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary.

5) Abbreviations

In general, terms should not be abbreviated unless they are used repeatedly and the abbreviation is helpful to the reader. Initially use the word in full, followed by the abbreviation in parentheses. Thereafter use the abbreviation only.

6) Sections, Tables and Figures

Sections and sub-sections should be divided by "I, 1.1., 1.1.1." And tables and figures should be numbered by <Table 1>, <Figure 1>. The Journal does not accept color figures. Figures should be submitted in black and white only.

7) References

References should be in Roman script and placed at the end of the manuscript.

2. FOOTNOTES AND CITATIONS

1) Footnotes

Notes should be kept to a minimum and numbered consecutively throughout the manuscript. Notes should be included as footnotes, and not as endnotes. Footnotes with more than 5 lines will be inserted into the text.

2) Citations in the Text

All source references are to be identified at the appropriate point in the text by the last name of the author, year of publication and pagination where needed. Identify subsequent citations of the same source in the same way as the first. Examples follow:

• If author's name is in the text, follow it with year in parentheses.
  Wong (1986)

• Pagination follows year of publication after a colon.
  James (1979: 56)

• If author's name is not in the text, insert, in parentheses, the last name and year. (Duncan 1986: 76)

• Give both last names for two authors. Give all last names on first citation in text for more than two authors; thereafter use "et al." in the text. When two authors have the same last names, use identifying initials in the text.

• Separate series of references with semi-colons and enclose them within a single pair of parentheses.
  (Edwards 1981: 43; Lee et al. 1983: 112).

• In case of daily, weekly, monthly publications and similar references, pagination follows 'dd/mm/yyyy' after a comma.
  (Korea Times 01/04/2014, 3).

• For a manuscript that is planned to be published, year of writing shall be indicated. When there is no year of writing, n.d. shall be written.
  Taylor (n.d.)

- In case of an organization as an author, information that can be identified shall be provided.
  (Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security 1992)

3. REFERENCES

Detailed information on all literature mentioned in the text and footnote shall be shown in <References> at the end of the text. Literature that was not mentioned in the text and footnote shall not be included.

1) Books

- In case of one author: for author name that is Romanized, family name and first name shall be put in order.

> Jessup, Helen I. 2004. *Art & Architecture of Cambodia.* London: Thames & Hudson.

- In case of more than 2 authors: for the text and footnote, 'et al.' shall be written, but for references, all names of co-authors shall be written. However, if 'et al.' is written on the book cover from the first, it shall be as it is.

> Freeman, Michael and Claude Jacques. 1999. *Ancient Ankor*. Bangkok: Asia Books.

- In case of an edited book, it shall be written in ed.

> Steinberg, David Joel, ed. 1987. *In Search of Southeast Asia: A Modern History.* Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

- In case of translated books, it shall be in the order of original author, year of publication of translated books, name of translated book, author and publisher.

> Coed S. G. 1928. *The Indianized States of Southeast Asia*. Susan B. Cowing, trans. Honolulu: An East-West Center Book. The University Press of Hawaii.

2) Journal Articles/ Monthly Magazine

• In case of papers such as journals, monthly magazine, etc, volume and number shall be in volume (number), and the relevant pages shall be definitely indicated.

> Egreteau, Renaud. 2008. India's Ambitions in Burma. *Asian Survey,* 48(6): 936-957.

3) Chapter in a Book

• In case of the text in a compilation, it shall be in the order of author, year of publication, compilation name, compiler, related page and publisher. If there is no compiler, then it can be omitted.

> King, Victor T. 2006. Southeast Asia: Personal Reflections on a Region. *Southeast Asian Studies: Debates and New Directions.* Cynthia Chou and Vincent Houben, eds. 23-44. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.

4) Thesis and Dissertation

• In case of a thesis or dissertation, the following form shall be followed.

> Parker, John. 1988. The Representation of Southeast Asian Art. PhD Dissertation. Harvard University.

5) Newspaper Articles

• In case of a daily newspaper, by-line story of weekly magazine and column, the following form shall be followed.

> Peterson, Thomas. 1993. The Economic Development of ASEAN. *Far Eastern Economic Review*, April 22: 23.

6) Internet Sources

• In case of the internet searching, it shall be in order of author, year of production, subject and web address (Accessed Month DD, YYYY).

> Hadar, Leon. 1998. U.S. Sanctions against Burma. *Trade Policy Analysis* no. 1. http://www.cato.org/pubs/trade/tpa-001.html. (Accessed May 07, 2008).

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Vol 9, No 2   December 2017