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En couverture : "The Syonan Sports Association- players from different soccer league teams to form the Singapore team", 1942-1945, image no. 19980005027 - 0080, negative no.NA12/30, with permission of National Archives of Singapore.

In Memoriam Mona Abaza, global scholar (1959-2021)

This summer the sad news reached us that the Egyptian sociologist Mona Abaza, to whom we owe insightful studies on interactions between the Middle East and Southeast Asia as well as important works on contemporary Egyptian culture and society, passed away after a long and painful struggle with cancer. Death arrived on July 5 in Berlin, where she had been receiving medical treatment, cutting short a flourishing scholarly career – even during the last months she had continued giving public lectures based on her latest book (2020), a kaleidoscopic set of vignettes of daily life in Cairo in the aftermath of the failed uprising of the Arab spring and the *coup d'état* by Sisi.

Mona's academic career was framed by the American University in Cairo, where she studied sociology and, after graduate studies and research fellowships in various parts of the world, returned as a lecturer in 1998 and was promoted to full professor of sociology in 2009. Several of her books

– and this includes the most personal of her works – were published by the American University in Cairo Press, strengthening her identification with that institution, reputedly the best university in the Middle East. Her association with the city of Cairo, its social and cultural life and its cosmopolitanism, has been even stronger. In many ways she embodied Cairo and nostalgia for the city's rich and diverse cultural fabric that has gradually been declining. She moved easily in the most diverse social circles; her warm interest in marginalized groups – the Jewish and Christian minorities, the urban poor, alien residents, artists – is a recurrent theme in her work.

Some of her most impressive work, published during the past fifteen years, concerns the transformation of Cairene society during her lifetime and shows she has often been in the midst of things and a close observer of aristocratic and middle class life styles as well as street politics and vernacular expressions of political protest. There is a strong autobiographical component to these works as she kept reflecting on her own class background and positionality, most overtly so in the lavishly illustrated social and economic history of a cotton plantation in the Nile Delta, which had belonged to her maternal family (2013). The book carefully documents the decline of the landholding aristocratic class, the violent means by which members of this class sought to maintain their control over land and the peasants' vote, the changing life styles of the urban upper class as well as the peasants in the village, the brutal treatment of women of both classes, the peasants' desire for education and the growing influence of Salafis who want this education to be purely religious. It also demonstrates what made the author a remarkable sociologist: due to her family background, she had easy access to many different social circles, and her personality enabled her to establish warm relations of mutual trust with people not of her own class, such as the peasants of the former plantation, whose personal lives and choices she also documents – coming full circle, as it were, to her very first study of rural women (1987).

She had written about class relations and changing life styles before in her book on consumer cultures, in which she presented a sociology of the coffee houses and shopping malls and other venues of consumption in Cairo from the 1960s onward (2006). In one chapter, titled 'Memories,' the social and historical documentation is interwoven with personal memories of the transformation of the way of life, norms and tastes of her family and their peers: television, cars, Italian films, the first cappuccino – juxtaposed with personal observations of the changing life of the popular classes.

Mona was a close observer of the 2011 uprising at Tahrir Square and the political struggles that followed. She was especially interested in the cultural expressions of protest and struggle, on which she reported in a series of short essays in *Al-Ahram Weekly* and the new e-magazines *Jadaliyya* and *Open Democracy* as well as longer articles in the British journal of sociology and cultural studies, *Theory, Culture & Society*.

In spite of the centrality of Egypt, and especially Cairo, to her intellectual and emotional interests, Mona spent a large part of her academic career abroad and made Southeast Asia her other significant area of expertise. The latter interest arose naturally from her exploration of Cairo's diverse social circles and her encounter with the large community of Indonesian and Malaysian students at al-Azhar. It gave her the subject for her PhD thesis, which she decided to pursue at Bielefeld in Germany, where there was considerable Southeast Asia expertise. Having married the German sociologist Georg Stauth (who was also a specialist of Egyptian society), she settled for a considerable time – from 1987 to 1998 – in Germany. She obtained her PhD degree in 1990 with honours (magna cum laude), with a thesis based on extensive interviews in Cairo and Indonesia with current and former Azharis, tracing the life trajectories of the returnees and their impact on religious and political discourse in Indonesia. In the following years, she continued her interviews with Indonesian Azharis in Cairo and whenever she had occasion to visit Indonesia, resulting in a stream of publications on the subject (1991, 1993, 1994, 1996, 2003, 2010a).

Besides graduates of al-Azhar, she had also developed a network of contacts among Arabs living in Southeast Asia, most of them but not all Hadramis, and their contribution to public discourse in the lands of their residence. A two-year postdoctoral visiting fellowship at ISEAS in Singapore (1990-92) allowed her to embark upon another project on the intellectual relations between the Middle East and Southeast Asia, in which Arab scholars acted as cultural brokers. She came to know the remarkable brothers Sayyid Naquib al-Attas, the Islamic thinker, and Syed Hussein Alatas, the iconoclastic sociologist, both very well and focused on their intellectual projects. Syed Hussein had, as a graduate student in Amsterdam in the 1950s, pioneered ideas about 'Progressive Islam' and published a journal of that name, in which Mona recognized a basically secular Third-Worldism. In later writings, in the 1970s, he developed a sociological style rooted in local knowledge and informed by postcolonial critique of Orientalism. Sayyid Naquib, a scholar of Malay Sufi literature and a vocal opponent of secularism, was then developing ideas about desecularization and the Islamization of knowledge. He had a large following among Malay students and was then at the zenith of his influence, due to the political fortunes of Anwar Ibrahim. Mona analysed these intellectual projects and the various local responses to them against the background of Malaysia's program of state-led Islamization under Mahathir and Anwar Ibrahim, of which Naquib was a major beneficiary and Hussein a vocal critic. A transnational network of Muslim intellectuals and activists played a major part in this program, which placed Malaysia temporarily in the vanguard of the world-wide Islamic resurgence. Naquib's project was endorsed by the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT), an organization founded in 1981 by the Palestinian-American scholar Ismail

Raji al-Faruqi and Anwar Ibrahim, which gained great influence in Malaysia but also had an active Egyptian branch. Mona's discovery of the Egyptian IIIT provided the occasion for more multi-sited fieldwork and comparative observations, reported in a series of articles (1998a, 1998c, 1999, 2005) and a major book (2002), which remains the major reference on the subject.

The third theme to which she devoted her attention concerned Arab perceptions of, and knowledge production about, Southeast Asia. Arab authors' lack of curiosity about the Far East is notorious, and her parsing a large amount of literature including travelogues confirmed how superficial most of this writing is (2007a, 2011a). She did, however, draw attention to a small number of authors who showed a more genuine interest in and knowledge of the region, notably the Egyptian Ahmad Shalaby, who had taught in Indonesia for several years. Another remarkable author she discovered was the prolific Jakarta-born Muhammad Asad Shahab, who wrote novels in Arabic that are set in Indonesia (but exclusively in Indonesian Arab circles) as well as a fiercely anti-Sukarno history of Indonesia and an account of a lengthy voyage through the southern Philippines undertaken, as he claims, on behalf of the Muslim World League (2008).

Mona Abaza established her reputation as the most prominent scholar of these three aspects of Arab-Southeast Asian relations, and she continued to pursue her interest in these themes during a string of post-doctoral appointments and fellowships, which included a half year at the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme in Paris (1994), Berlin's Free University (1994-96) and the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin (1996-1997), and the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) in Leiden (2001-2002). For readers of this journal it may be of interest that she established a long-lasting relationship with the *Archipel* group and was from 1994 to 2004 a regular contributor to its publications.

Her writing on Southeast Asia constitutes a unique body of work that has no serious competitor in international scholarship. It is a rare example of meaningful South-South relations both in the research on which it is based and in the subject matter. The work is also highly personal, as is her later writing on Egyptian society, in that it reflects the profound and lasting personal relations with the people about whom she writes, as well as her consciousness of her position as an Egyptian woman scholar of a certain class and life experience. Revisiting much of her work these last weeks, I discovered many insights that had eluded me on first reading and that once more persuaded me of the lasting relevance of her work. I am convinced that many current and future scholars of Southeast Asia will benefit from acquainting themselves with her work.

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Selected publications by Mona Abaza

— 1987, *The Changing Image of Women in Rural Egypt* [Cairo Papers in Social Science]. Cairo: The American University in Cairo.

— 1990, Cultural exchange and Muslim education: Indonesian students in Cairo. PhD thesis, University of Bielefeld.

— 1991, "Some research notes on living conditions and perceptions among Indonesian students in Cairo." *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 22, 347-360.

— 1993, "Changing images of three generations of Azharites in Indonesia." Occasional paper. Singapore: ISEAS.

— 1994, *Islamic education, perceptions and exchanges: Indonesian students in Cairo*. [*Cahiers d'Archipel*, no. 23.] Paris: Association Archipel.

— 1995, "Civil society and Islam in Egypt: the case of Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd." *Journal of Arabic, Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies* 2, no.2, 29-42.

— "A profile of an Indonesian Azhari living in Cairo." *Archipel* 52 (1996), 31-44.

— 1997, "A mosque of Arab origin in Singapore: history, functions and networks." *Archipel* 53, 61-84.

— 1998a, "Debates on Islam and knowledge in two different contexts: Egypt and Malaysia." *Journal of Arabic, Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies* 4, no. 1, 4-17.

— 1998b, "Southeast Asia and the Middle East: Al-Manar and Islamic modernity." In *From the Mediterranean to the China Sea: Miscellaneous Notes*, edited by Claude Guillot, Denys Lombard and Robert Ptak, 93-111. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.

— 1998c, "The sociology of progressive Islam between the Middle East and Southeast Asia." In *Islam - Motor or Challenge of Modernity*, edited by Georg Stauth, 129-152. Hamburg: Lit.

— 1999, "Intellectuals, power and Islam in Malaysia: S.N. al-Attas or the beacon on the crest of a hill." *Archipel* 58, 189-217.

— 2001, "Shopping malls, consumer culture and the reshaping of public space in Egypt." *Theory, Culture & Society* 18, no. 5, 97-122.

— 2002, *Debates on Islam and Knowledge in Malaysia and Egypt: Shifting Worlds*. London: RoutledgeCurzon.

— 2003, "Indonesian Azharites, fifteen years later." *Sojourn* 18, no. 1, 139-153.

— 2004, "Markets of faith: Jakartan da`wa and Islamic gentrification." *Archipel* 67, 173-202.

— 2005, "Syed Hussein Alatas and Progressive Islam between the Middle East and Southeast Asia." In *Local and Global Social Transformation in Southeast Asia: Essays in Honour of Professor Syed Hussein Alatas*, edited by Riaz Hassan, 237-60. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.

— 2006, *The Changing Consumer Cultures of Modern Egypt: Cairo's Urban Reshaping*. Leiden: Brill.

— 2007a, "More on the shifting worlds of Islam. The Middle East and Southeast Asia: a troubled relationship?" *The Muslim World* 97, no. 3, 419-436.

— 2007b, "Shifting Landscapes of Fashion in Contemporary Egypt." *Fashion Theory* 11(2-3), 281-299.

— 2008, "Mohammad Asad Shahab: An Indonesian Arabic writer." In *Southeast Asia and the Middle East: Islam, movement and the longue durée*, edited by Eric Tagliacozzo, 250-271. Stanford CA: Stanford University Press.

— 2010a, “The expanding and controversial role of al-Azhar in Southeast Asia.” In *Kindheit und Jugend in muslimischen Lebenswelten*, edited by Christine Hunner-Kreisel and Sabine Andresen, 45-59. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften.

— 2010b, “The trafficking with *tanwir* (Enlightenment).” *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 30, no. 1, 32-46.

— 2011a, “Asia imagined by the Arabs.” In *Islamic studies and Islamic education in contemporary Southeast Asia*, edited by Kamaruzzaman Bustamam-Ahmad and Patrick Jory, 1-28. Kuala Lumpur: Yayasan Ilmuwan.

— 2011b, *Twentieth Century Egyptian Art: The Private Collection of Sherwet Shafei*. Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press.

— 2013a, *The Cotton Plantation Remembered: An Egyptian Family Story*. Cairo: American University in Cairo Press.

— 2013b, “Walls, segregating downtown Cairo and the Mohammed Mahmud street graffiti.” *Theory, Culture and Society* 30, no. 1, 122-139.

— 2014a, “Post January revolution Cairo: Urban wars and the reshaping of public space.” *Theory, Culture and Society* 31, no. 7/8, 163-183.

— 2014b, “Gender representation in graffiti post-25 January.” In *Cairo: Images of Transition*, edited by Mikala Hyldig Dal, 126-133. Bielefeld: Transcript-Verlag.

— 2016a, “Violence, dramaturgical repertoires and neoliberal imaginaries in Cairo.” *Theory, Culture & Society* 33, no. 7-8, 111-135.

— 2016b, “The field of graffiti and street art in post-January 2011 Egypt.” In *Routledge Handbook of Graffiti and Street Art*, pp. 358-373. New York, etc.: Routledge.

— 2020, *Cairo Collages. Everyday Life Practices After the Event*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Mona Abaza’s columns and essays in *Al-Ahram Weekly, Jadaliyya* and *Open Democracy* can be accessed at:
https://english.ahram.org.eg/WriterArticles/Mona-Abaza/386/0.aspx,
https://www.jadaliyya.com/Author/2867,
https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/author/mona-abaza/.

Mona Lohanda (1947-2021) Remembered: Humble Gatekeeper of the Indonesian National Archives, Historian of the Batavian Chinese and True Daughter of Tangerang

Mona Lohanda (1947-2021), whom I always knew as 'Nona Mona,' was that truly rare phenomenon in the world of Indonesian archivists and historians, a person of integrity. Throughout her forty-year career as an archivist at the Indonesian National Archives (ANRI), she became the gatekeeper to the VOC (Dutch East India Company) records held in Jakarta (pre-1942, Batavia). Her role as Assistant Conservator (Deputi Pembinaan Kearsipan) at ANRI between September 2005 and December 2007, was central to the success of the TANAP (Towards A New Age of Partnership) project (1999-2007), which involved a major cooperation between the Dutch National Archives (Nationaal Archief) in the Hague, Leiden University and ANRI for the training of young researchers and curators in the seventeenth and eighteenth-century VOC archives. Mona's key position made possible the opening of the largest collection of VOC documents in the world—some two kilometres archives comprising nearly ten million pages of

documents at ANRI, one million of which are now accessible online thanks to the website established by the project head, Dr Pieter Koenders of Leiden University (http://www.tanap.net/).

During these two and a half years, when she was Assistant Conservator, nearly all these documents were re-backed with acid free paper, sorted and reboxed in one of the most fundamental reorganisations of ANRI since its inception as the colonial government archive (*Landsarchief*) in 1892 under Jacobus Anne van der Chijs (1831-1905; in office, 1892-1905), the first *landsarchivaris*. Mona's detailed knowledge of the archive, her no-nonsense approach to her work, linguistic skills and willingness to speak her mind both to her ANRI and Dutch colleagues made her an outstanding member of the TANAP team. Here she was fortunate in her good working relationship with the ANRI Head, Drs Djoko Utomo (in office, 2004-2009), who was in post in the last period of this project. Pak Djoko shared her enthusiasm and fluency in English and together they made an impressive team during their regular visits to the Netherlands to consult with their Dutch historian and archivist counterparts. It is very unlikely that the TANAP programme would have been the success that it was without Mona's presence.

As Assistant Conservator, Mona had overall control over 75 percent of the daily curatorial budget of ANRI. Her frugality and intense dislike of the ubiquitous projects (*proyek-proyekan*) with which her senior ANRI colleagues topped up their exiguous civil servant salaries made her position increasingly invidious. In December 2007, just four and a half years before her retirement in mid-2012, she decided to step away entirely from her senior management position. Instead, she secured a small private office for herself on the first floor of the conservation department and began her archival swansong, namely her painstaking transcription of the textual summaries—*marginalia*—of the 165 volumes of the "Daily Journals of the Castle of Batavia [*Daghregisters van het Casteel van Batavia*]," covering the 124 years between 1683 and 1807.[1] During the space of two years (2008-10) she developed a corpus of research which, when taken further by the Corts Foundation VOC archive digitization

1. The *Daghregisters* (Daily Journals of Batavia Castle) for the earlier period (1624-1682) were published in 31 volumes between 1887 and 1931 with the first nine volumes being funded by the Dutch Ministry of the Colonies and published in the Hague, and the remaining twenty-two being supported by the Batavian Society of Arts and Sciences (Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen, BG). The three first Directors of the *Landsarchief* (colonial government archive) in Batavia, J.A. van der Chijs (in office, 1892-1905), Frederik de Haan (in office, 1905-1922) and E.C. Godée Molsbergen (in office, 1922-1937), oversaw the transcription and editing of these final BG-sponsored volumes. Amounting to 16,175 pages of documents and 754 pages of indexes, the volumes constitute the single most important published source for the pre-1800 period and have facilitated a range of significant studies on the maritime history of Southeast Asia. They are all available online at https://sejarah-nusantara.anri.go.id/daily_journals_volumes/

project (2010-16), later formed the basis of an online 'Open Sesame' which late seventeenth and eighteenth-century historians the world over could use to unlock the day-to-day workings of the Dutch East India Company's operations in Asia. Hendrik E. Niemeijer, the lead historian for the Corts Foundation digitization project, and Mona's initial work on the *marginalia*, amounting to 5,500 pages of transcriptions, was converted into a database of 117,392 records, which were then connected to the scans of the individual pages of the original *Daghregister* volumes. Building on Mona's pioneering work, which even involved Mona recreating the *marginalia* entries for those early *Daghregister* volumes (1624-59) where they were missing, Niemeijer and his team were able to isolate all records containing information on arriving and departing vessels, and all incoming and outgoing diplomatic letters. It was the first time that a VOC archive had been made accessible with modern digitalization techniques and many international researchers have profited from this hugely important online resource now accessible at https://sejarah-nusantara.anri.go.id/marginalia/.[2]

During her four-decade career as an archivist (1972-2012), Mona became a walking dictionary of her native city knowing the exact dates of all the earthquakes, floods, local rebellions, uprisings, epidemics, pestilences and political crises which afflicted the Dutch colonial capital in the VOC period (1619-1799). This made her the 'go-to' person for Indonesian and foreign researchers alike interested in the VOC archives, and the history of Indonesia in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries more generally. By 1993, she had risen to the key position of Head of the ANRI Reading Room (*Pemimpin Ruang Baca*), a post which she held for over a decade until her promotion as Assistant Conservator in September 2005. She was thus officially the conduit through which all researchers at the Indonesian National Archives accessed ANRI's rich historical resources. During this time, she worked closely with a number of leading Dutch historians and scholars of Indonesia. These included Karel Adriaan Steenbrink (1942-2021), a specialist in comparative religion based at the Interuniversity Institute of Missiological and Ecumenical Research (IIMO) in Leiden who wrote a well-regarded trilogy on the Catholic Church in the Netherlands Indies/Indonesia from 1808 to the Reformasi Era (1998-present);[3] the Head of the Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en

2. This unique online resource was published by the Leiden VOC historian, Dr Henk E. Niemeijer, known for his book *Batavia: Een koloniale samenleving in de 17de eeuw* (Amsterdam: Balans, 2005), translated as *Batavia: Masyarakyat Kolonial Abad XVII* (Jakarta: Masup, 2012). Together with Marco Rolling, an information analyst, Niemeijer carefully checked and, where necessary, re-transcribed, the 5,500 pages of transcriptions originally compiled by Ibu Mona. Once converted to Excel, these delivered some 117,392 records which were then uploaded to ANRI's website (anri.go.id) via the MAIS-Flexis archival system in Nijmegen.

3. Steenbrink's Catholic Church in Indonesia trilogy include: (1) *Catholics in*

Volkenkunde (Royal Institute for Linguistics and Anthropology; post-2003, Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies) representative office in Jakarta, Dr. Jaap Erkelens (in post, 1977-2003), as well as with Professor Pieter J. Drooglever (1941-2017). The last briefly held the L.J. Rogier chair of Dutch-Indonesian Relations at the University of Nijmegen (in post, 1995-98) when Mona was also studying at Radboud University in the selfsame south-eastern Dutch city close to the German border.

Mona's unparalleled knowledge of the ANRI holdings of Dutch colonial archives proved invaluable for Drooglever during his multi-volume editing task (1969-2006) of the documents on the decolonisation in Indonesia between 1945 and 1950 at the Huygens Institute of Netherlands History (Huygens Instituut voor Nederlandse Geschiedenis, ING) in The Hague, particularly the final volumes covering the period 1948-50.[4] As a result of this cooperation, Mona was invited by Drooglever and his colleague, M.J.B. Schouten, to become joint editor of a guide in English to these decolonisation sources, *Guide to the Archives on relations between the Netherlands and Indonesia, 1945-1963* (The Hague/Den Haag: Institute of Netherlands History/ING). In this case, the guide took the story right through to 1963, namely President Sukarno's (in office 1945-66) successful campaign to "regain" West Irian (now Papua) on which Peter Drooglever also published a highly critical collection of documents questioning the transparency of the UN involvement.[5]

Mona's involvement with Drooglever, together with his temporary professorial appointment in Nijmegen, may have been one of the reasons that Mona decided to pursue her doctorate at Radboud University. She might have seen this as the logical conclusion of her academic career which had run parallel with her duties at ANRI in the 1990s. We know that she had been encouraged

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Indonesia,1808-1942: A documented history. Volume I: A modest recovery, 1808-1903 (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2003); (2) *Catholics in Indonesia,1808-1942: A documented history. Volume II: The spectacular growth of a self-confident minority, 1903-1942* (Leiden: KITLV Press,2007); and (3) *Catholics in Independent Indonesia, 1945-2010* (Leiden: Brill, 2015). All three volumes have been translated into Indonesian by Yosef Maria Florisan of the Sekolah Tinggi Filsafat Katolik Ladalero in Maumere, Flores, and published by Penerbit Ledalero under the title, *Orang-orang Katolik di Indonesia, 1808-1942* and *Orang-orang Katolik di Indonesia era Kemerdekaan 1945-2010* (2006, second revised ed. 2018).

4. *Officiële bescheiden betreffende de Nederlands-Indonesische betrekkingen, 1945-1950*, S.L. van der Wal, P. J. Drooglever and M.J.B. Schouten (eds). The Hague/Den Haag: Institute of Netherlands History/ING, 20 volumes. 1969-2006. Available online at http://resources.huygens.knaw.nl/retroboeken/nib/#page=0&accessor=toc&view=homePane.

5. Pieter Drooglever, *An Act of Free Choice: Decolonisation and the Right to Self-Determination in West Papua* (Oxford: OneWorld Publications, 2009). On the August 1969 "Act of Free Choice" (dubbed the "Act of No Choice" by critics) in West Papua (then West Irian), see John Saltford, *The United Nations and the Indonesian Takeover of West Papua, 1962-1969. The Anatomy of Betrayal* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003).

by Prof. Harsja Bachtiar (1934-1995), the Dean of the Fakultas Sastra at the University of Indonesia during her BA studies in history in the period 1971-1975 to develop her historical interests in the history of the Chinese community in Batavia. This resulted in her choosing to write her MA (S2) thesis at the School of Oriental & African Studies (SOAS) in London under the supervision of Dr Ian Brown, a specialist on the economic history of colonial Burma and Siam (Thailand), on the *Kapitan Cina* (Captains of the Chinese Community) in Batavia in the period 1837-1942. This became her most important scholarly publication, which remains to this day a key work of reference.[6] But her attempt to take her SOAS degree a stage further and undertake a doctorate in Nijmegen at Drooglever's urging was not a success. After a year at Radboud, her thesis proposal on the history of the Chinese community in Indonesia was rejected by her academic supervisory committee as lacking focus and academic rigour and she returned to Jakarta with the consolation prize of an MPhil degree. Her academic failure may have been the spur for her own initiative on the transcription of the *marginalia* which she did entirely of her own bat—virtually unsung and unsupported by her senior ANRI colleagues.

In the interstices of her archival duties, ongoing *marginalia* transcriptions and her teaching as a lecturer at the History program (Prodi Sejarah) at the University of Indonesia (1978-2012), where she lectured in palaeography, sharing her archival skills in seventeenth and eighteenth-century Dutch historic handwriting, Mona found time to publish the materials she had researched in Nijmegen for her aborted PhD thesis, bringing out her book on Sino-Dutch relations in the last fifty years of the Netherlands Indies under the imprint of Pastor Adolf Heuken SJ's press, *Growing Pains: The Chinese and the Dutch in Colonial Java, 1890-1942* (Jakarta: Yayasan Cipta Loka Caraka, 2002).[7] Her unwavering dedication and professionalism was recognised by the Indonesian Government with a merit award (*Satyalencana Karya Satya*) on the completion

6. Mona Lohanda, *The Kapitan Cina of Batavia 1837-1942: A History of Chinese Establishment in Colonial Society*. Jakarta: Djambatan, 1996 (reprinted in a revised edition 2001). To date, this work, Mona Lohanda's most important scholarly study, has yet to be translated into Indonesian.

7. In August 2009, plans to bring out an Indonesian translation of a section of this work entitled "Tionghoa dan Kewarganegaraan Indonesia: Kilas balik sejarah" as the second chapter of a planned Instituut Kewarganegaraan Indonesia (IKI) volume on the history of Indonesian citizenship were not realised. But, in 2017, Mona was invited to serve with Indradi Kusuma as co-editor of a volume written by Eddy Setiawan *et al.* and entitled *Mengabdi tak kenal henti: Perjuangan mewujudkan WNI tunggal* [To Serve Knows No End: The Struggle to create a single Indonesian Citizenship] (Jakarta: Institut Kewarganegaraan Indonesia/IKI), in which some of her work from her unpublished 2009 chapter was used in the book's second chapter, 'Sejarah Kewarganegaraan Indonesia [The History of Indonesian Citizenship].' I would like to thank Pak Didi Kwartanada for this information, electronic communication, 30 March 2021.

of her twenty years of service as a senior ANRI archivist on 16 August 2001,[8] and by Eddie Lembong's Yayasan Nation Building which gave her a Nabil Award in October 2010 for her contribution to Indonesian nation-building.[9] At the same time, the quality of her historical research, academic publications and allied scholarly activities, such as her pioneering work on the VOC archives, also garnered her other prestigious accolades. These included a "Cendekiawan Berdedikasi [Dedicated Intellectuals]" Award as part of the newspaper's 47th anniversary celebrations on 27 June 2012, which coincidentally marked her retirement from her archival duties at ANRI,[10] an honour followed four years later by the equally prestigious Achmad Bakrie prize (19 August 2016) in recognition of her lifetime contribution (*sumbangsih*) and dedication to raising up the historiographical value of the Indonesian national archives for international scholarship.[11]

Mona was a proud Cinbeng (*Cina Benteng*), a Chinese-Indonesian *peranakan* from Tangerang, descendant of those *peranakan* families moved from Batavia to the area around the fort on the Kali Cisadane which marked the boundary between the Batavian environs (*ommelanden*) and the sultanate of Banten following the Chinese massacre in the colonial capital on 9 October 1740. Immediately recognisable by her booming voice, she did not suffer fools gladly, commenting once that one of the prominent historians who was honoured with her in 2010 by Eddie Lembong's Yayasan Nation Building (Yayasan Nabil) only wrote "books about books" and had never done any serious archival research. She also hated flying abroad for conferences, having a particular dislike of Singapore where she said even the most fleeting visit made her feel unwell given its remorseless and driven quality. Shades here of Muhammad Hatta (1902-1980), who vowed never to set foot in the island republic after the two Indonesian marines (Korps Komando Operasi, KKO), Sergeant Usman Janatin (1943-1968) and Corporal Harun Thohir bin Mandar (1943-1968), were hung by the Singaporean authorities after multiple appeals for clemency had been rejected.

A devout Catholic and close to the great Jesuit historian of colonial Batavia, Pastor Adolph J. Heuken SJ (1929-2020), Mona spent most of her retirement years sorting through the disordered archive of the Jakarta Catholic archbishopric (*Keuskupan Agung*) and the Indonesian Catholic bishops' conference (*Konferensi Waligereja Indonesia*, KWI). She just loved helping people she liked while understandably bearing a grudge against people she

8. SK [Surat Keputusan] Presiden RI no: 087/TK/tahun 2001, 16 August 2001, which awarded her a Piagam [Certificate] Tanda Kehormatan Satyalencana Karya Satya.

9. "Tiga Sejarawan Terima Nabil Award," *Kompas*, 14 October 2010; Didi Kwartanada, *Nabil Award 2010: Memahami sejarah, membangun bangsa* (Jakarta: Yayasan Nabil, 2010).

10. "'Kompas' Anugerahi 5 Cendekiawan Berdedikasi," *Kompas*, 27 June 2012.

11. "Penghargaan Achmad Bakrie XIV 2016," YouTube, tvOne News, 25 October 2016.

felt were time wasters. I felt from our brief encounters at the launch of my *Kuasa Ramalan* (*Power of Prophecy*) biography of Prince Diponegoro (1785-1855) at the National Library at Salemba on 12 April 2012[12] and the 23-25 November 2018 Borobodur Writers and Cultural Festival that I fell into the first category. But, since I had completed my doctoral research in ANRI in the early to mid-1970s (1971, 1976-77, 1978) before Mona's archival career really took off, I did not have the benefit of her encyclopaedic knowledge of the Dutch colonial archives, and never really knew what she thought of me! My last meeting with her was at Bethesda Hospital in Gading Serpong on 6 June 2020 when she was being treated for high blood pressure a result of her underlying diabetic condition which would later cause her fatal heart attack on 16 January 2021. Sadly, she is irreplaceable as she was one of a kind. Rarely does one find people of her dedication and integrity in the contemporary world of Indonesian academia and archives. But her life *oeuvre* will live on through her selfless work on the VOC archives and in the memories of the countless scholars she has helped the world over through her unstinting sharing. Where indeed would the Indonesian National Archives have been without her?

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*PETER CAREY**

On His Netherlands Majesty's Service: The Remarkable Journeys of the Dutch Corvette-of-war *Pollux* in the Indies/Indonesia and Around the World, 1824-1838

Introduction

Visitors to Amsterdam interested in a different dining experience could until recently take their meal on board a former Dutch maritime training vessel, the three-masted sailing bark (*barkschip*) *Pollux*. For long (1940-84) anchored at Prins Hendrikkade (Oosterdok) and then (1984-99) near the Maritime Museum (*Het Scheepvaartmuseum*) on the Kattenburgerplein,[1] this sailing ship, built at the Rederij Verschure in Amsterdam and launched on 9 September 1940, is the successor to a line of Dutch warships and training vessels bearing this name which have served in the Dutch Navy since at least the mid-eighteenth century.[2] After the Dutch restoration to their East Indies colony on 19 August 1816 following the Napoleonic Wars (1803-15), at least three naval vessels named the *Pollux* have served in the Dutch East Indies fleet: a schooner/yacht, a bark (*barkschip*), and, most famous of all, a corvette-of-war (Dutch: *oorlogskorvet*) (1824-38). It is with the last that this essay is concerned.

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1. Originally called 'Pollux Eten en Drinken' (2006-2014), this restaurant located at Pier 6 of the NSDM Wharf in Amsterdam-Noord, closed in October 2014 and reopened in May 2015 as the Pollux-Pacific restaurant specialising in Indo-Asian food, see https://www.dutch-amsterdam.nl/205-pollux.

2. The earliest reference to a warship in the Dutch navy with the name *Pollux* can be traced to the Seven Years War (1756-63) when the frigate *Pollux* (Captain Jan Jacob van Hoey) helped to guard Dutch neutrality and freedom of navigation for its merchant marine, see *Amsterdamse Courant*, 22-09-1759; and *Middelburgse Courant*, 25-09-1759.

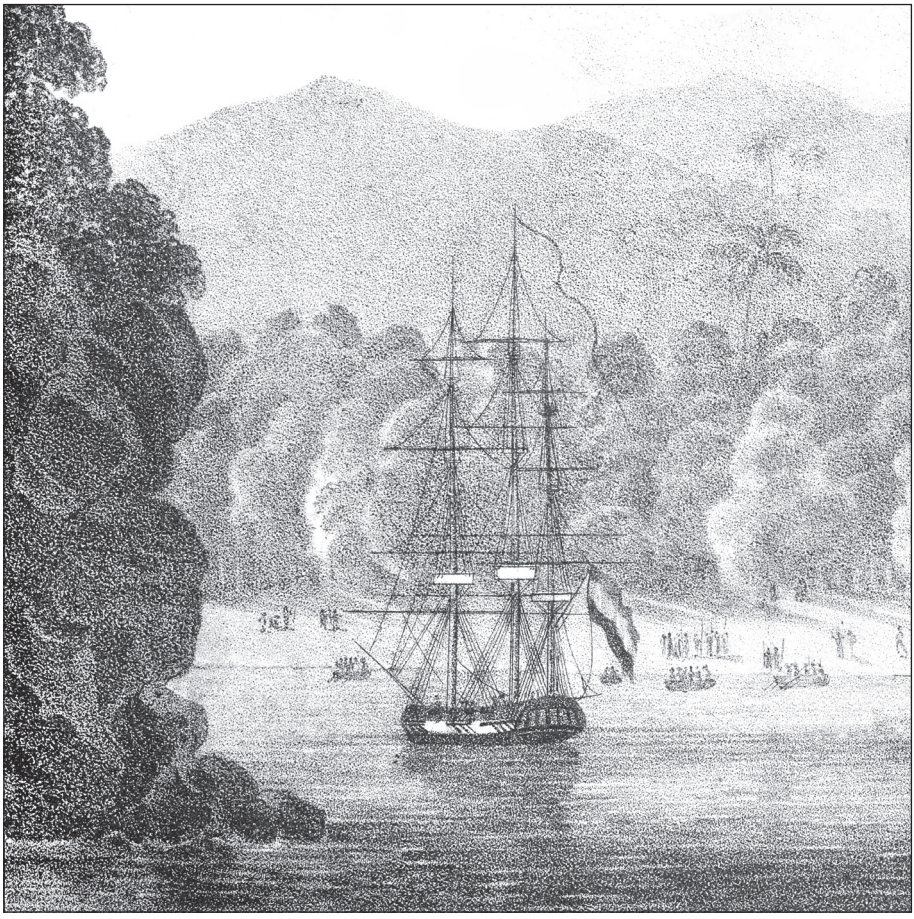

Plate 1 – The *Pollux* at anchor in Nuku Hiva Island in the Marquesas Islands (post-1880, French Polynesia) in late May 1825 during its maiden voyage around the world with the frigate *Maria Reigersbergen* from Texel to Java via Cape Horn (23 August 1824-30 August 1825) and then back to Texel (1 April-30 November 1827). Image taken from Pieter Troost Gzn, *Aanteekeningen gehouden op eene reis om de wereld; met het Fregat de Maria Reigersberg* [sic] *en de Korvet Pollux, in de Jaren 1824, 1825, en 1826* (Rotterdam: De Weduwe J. Allart, 1829), p.172 facing.

The Corvette, its Captain and its Maiden Voyage: Halfway Round the World, 1824-25

This corvette *Pollux* was laid down at the state shipyard—Rijkswerf— in Rotterdam in November 1822 and constructed by the Rotterdam shipbuilder, Pieter Glavimans (c.1720-87). Launched two years later on 13 March 1824 (Plates 1 and 2), it entered Dutch naval service on 16 May 1824. With a length of 36 meters and a beam of 10 meters, it carried 28 guns (two six-pounder bow

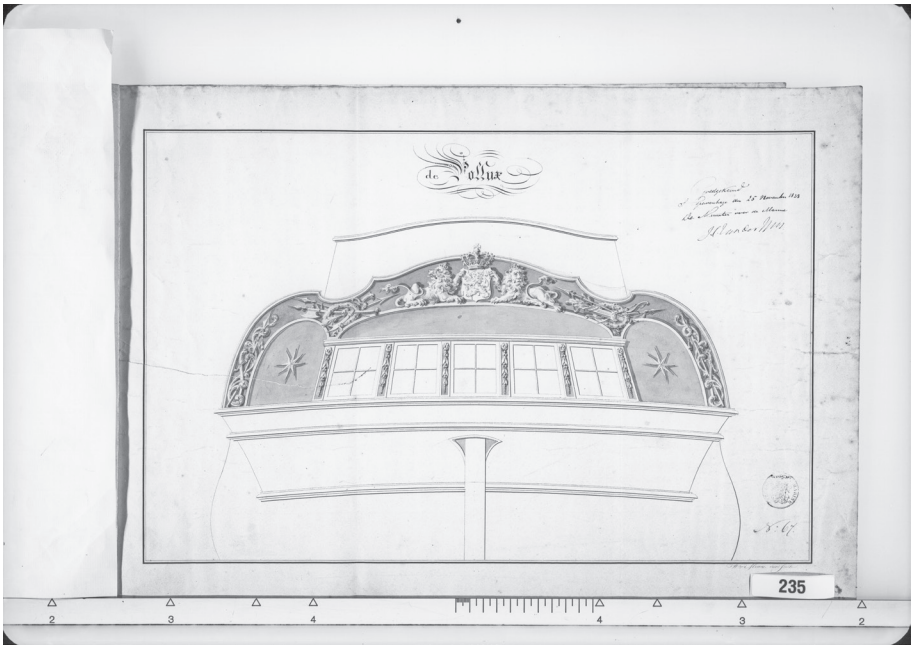

Plate 2 – One of a set of three designs for the *Pollux* signed by the then 81-year-old Dutch Minister of the Marine, Joan Cornelis van der Hoop (1742-1825; in office 1781-95, 1813-25), in the Dutch Navy Ministry in The Hague on 23 November 1823, NL-HaNA_4_MST_235_002.

guns, and 26 32-pounder carronades), although after 1832, only ten remained, as we will see shortly.[3] It had a crew complement of 150 officers and men. Its first commanding officer, Christiaan Eeg (1774-1832), appointed on 16 April 1824, was a Dutchman of Danish descent—his father, a Dane, also named Christiaan (1736-1811), born in Copenhagen, listed his profession as 'pirate hunter' (*coureur des mers*), was close family with the shipbuilder, Pieter Glavimans (c. 1720-87), whose daughter, Elisabeth Glavimans (1746-1805), he married. Pieter's other children, Katharina (born 1749) and Jannetje (born 1747), served as his grandson, the future Captain (*kapitein-ter-zee*'s), godparents when he was baptised in the Remonstrant Church in Rotterdam on 22 August 1774.[4]

After joining the Dutch navy in September 1808, Eeg rose rapidly becoming a First Lieutenant (*luitenant-ter-zee eerste klasse*) on 11 July 1814 and *kapitein-ter-zee* fifteen years later (1 July 1829).[5] Together with Flag Captain Fredrik (sic)

3. http://warshipsresearch.weblog.nl/warships/2009/2008/dutch-warships-1.html, accessed 1-08-2011.

4. http://www.genealogieonline.nl/stamboom-hajenius/1230.php, accessed 10-08-2011.

5. NL-HaNA 2.12.14_5_0047 and 4_14_0071 (*Register* and *Staat van Dienst* Christiaan Eeg).

Coertzen (1771-1832) of the frigate, *Maria Reigersbergen* (Plate 3), he achieved almost immediate fame when he was selected to make a 30,000 nautical mile round-the-world voyage via the Guinea Coast (St George Del Mina, also spelt Elmina), Uruguay (Montevideo) and Argentina (Buenos Aires), Cape Horn, Chile (Valparaíso), Peru (Lima) and the South Pacific (Nuku Hiva, Marquesas, post -1880 French Polynesia) in 1824-26 in his newly launched vessel. This epic voyage, which resulted in the discovery by the *Pollux* on 14 June 1825 of a previously unknown island in the South Pacific, Fenua Tapu (*Nederlandsch Eiland* / Netherlands Island), an islet of the Nui atoll in the current Pacific Ocean State of Tuvalu,[6] became the subject of a best-selling account by the naval officer, First Lieutenant Pieter Troost (1791-1846), who accompanied the voyage. Entitled, *Aanteekeningen gehouden op eene reis om de wereld; met het Fregat de Maria Reigersberg* [sic] *en de Korvet Pollux, in de Jaren 1824, 1825, en 1826* [Notes made during a voyage around the world with the Frigate *Maria Reigersberg* [sic] and the Corvette *Pollux* in the Years 1824, 1825 and 1826], it was published by De Weduwe J. Allart in Rotterdam in 1829, and was widely advertised in the Dutch press, its sales boosted by its many fine line drawings and illustrations. These included an oil painting of the two ships under sail in stormy weather on 10 February 1825 after rounding Cape Horn by the Maltese-born artist, Nicolas Cammillieri (c. 1762-1860), and sketches and maps drawn by Troost himself. The book made both the *Maria Reigersbergen* and the *Pollux* household names in the Netherlands in the late 1820s.

Arrival in Wartime Java: Floating Prison and Coastal Patrols, 1825-27

But the romantic image portrayed in Troost's travel account was very different from the reality which confronted the officers and crew of the two warships when they eventually reached Surabaya on 30 August 1825.[7] There they learnt that the Java War (1825-30) had just broken out (20 July 1825) and the Dutch were in disarray: Yogyakarta was under close siege by Diponegoro's forces, the ruler of Surakarta, Pakubuwono VI (r. 1823-30), was not dependable, and Diponegoro's ally on the north coast, Pangeran Serang II (c. 1794-1852), and his much-feared mother, Raden Ayu Serang (c.1766-1855), were threatening Semarang. With an estimated force of 10-12,000 men and women fighters they had briefly (24-26 August) cut the vital trans-Java posting road (*postweg*) linking Batavia (post-1945, Jakarta) and Surabaya between Kandal and Pekalongan, a development which caused the Dutch to seek urgent help from the Sultans of Madura

6. On the discovery of Fenua Tapu (*Nederlandsch Eiland*), see Acda 1983:296-99. Contemporary press reports in *Utrechtse Volksblad*, 10-02-1826; and *The Australian*, 25-11-1826. Troost's sketches of the island and map can be found in Troost 1829:Plates VI-VIII. The last stage of the return voyage from Batavia to Texel (5 June-19 September 1826) only involved the *Maria Reigersbergen,* see *Bataviasche Courant,* 5-06-1826, 14-2-1827; *Middelburgse Courant*, 28-09-1826.

7. *Bataviasche Courant*, 7-09-1825.

Plate 3 – The Frigate *Maria Reigersbergen* and Corvette *Pollux* in stormy weather west of Cape Horn on 10 February 1825, beating upwind toward Valparaíso in Chile where they docked on 27-28 February, painting by Nicolas Cammillieri (c.1762-1860) in Pieter Troost Gzn, *Aanteekeningen gehouden op eene reis om de wereld* (1829), p.178, Image II.

(Pamekasan) and Sumenep. 3,600 Madurese pikemen (1,600 from Sumenep along with 350 infantry) were rushed to Semarang arriving on the very day (3 September) that a 400-strong force under command of Captain Hendrik Frederik Buschkens (1795-1869) was cut to pieces by Raden Ayu Serang's forces at the village of Dombo to the south of Demak (3 September). In their panicked flight back to Semarang, Buschkens' column lost nearly half its men, including 50 European sailors from the frigate, *Javaan,*[8] anchored in Semarang, and a similar number of European infantry and local (*pribumi*) cavalry, along with twelve of the fifteen volunteers (*vrijwilligers*) from European agency houses in Semarang. On the night of 3-4 September 1825, Serang's forces encamped just two leagues

8. Launched in 1824 at Rembang on the north coast of Java, *Javaan* was built as an experiment with locally produced teak. Armed with 44 guns, it was commissioned into the Dutch navy on 15 October 1824, and saw service in Semarang at the beginning of the Java War (August-September 1825). It was then sent to the Netherlands in 1826 where it was dispatched to the Mediterranean (1827). After three years naval service in European waters, it returned to the Netherlands in September 1830 for refit and repair. But the costs were deemed to exceed *Javaan*'s continued value as a naval asset and it was scrapped sometime before 1 January 1834 when it is no longer listed on the Dutch Navy lists. Vermeulen 1966:7.

(three kilometers) from the centre of Semarang. If they had pressed home their attack, the principal Dutch city in Central Java might have fallen.[9]

The arrival of the *Maria Reigersbergen* and *Pollux* thus came at a very opportune moment for the hard-pressed Dutch commanders. Their arrival was celebrated in the Dutch press,[10] the *Nederlandse Staatscourant* (4-02-1826) editorialising that:

> "The unexpected arrival of this considerable force in Surabaya will provide the opportunity to temporarily base all other troops away from [that place] and therefore comes in very useful indeed [*Deze onverwacht aanzienlijke magt op Soerabaija aankomende zal gelegenheid geven om van daar tijdelijk alle andere troepen te kunnen ligten en komt dus uitnemend te pas*]."

The warships' first task was to transport the remaining 171 troops from the Surabaya garrison to Semarang, where they arrived on 8 September 1825 in time to repulse the last of Serang's forces from the environs of the city and later (17 November) to take part in the Dutch attack on his base in Purwodadi in the regency (*kabupaten*) of Grobogan.[11] At the same time, once in Semarang, they were also both immediately given a more sinister role—namely acting as floating prisons to house the former Regent (*bupati*) of Semarang, Kiai Adipati Suroadimenggolo V (c. 1775-1826; in office 1809-22) (Plate 4), and his eldest son, Raden Mas Saleh (post-1815, Raden Tumenggung Ario Notodiningrat, c. 1800-72), who had previously served as *bupati* of Probolinggo in the Eastern Salient (Oosthoek) of Java (1817-c.1821) and Lasem (c.1821-24).[12] After receiving two and a half years (1812-15) of high school education in Calcutta (Kolkata) on the initiative of the former British Lieutenant-Governor, Thomas Stamford Raffles (in office 1811-16), where he became fluent in English, Raden Mas Saleh (Notodiningrat) seemed to have a bright career before him. But his prospects were blighted both by his outspoken anglophile sentiments and the pull of his younger brother, Raden Mas Sukur (c. 1802-pre-March 1856; post-1825, Raden Hasan Mahmud's),

9. The desperate situation in Central Java in August and early September 1825 is described in detail in Infantry Captain Johannes (Jan) Baptiste Nicolaus van Theunissen's (1794-1827), 'Memorie over de Java Oorlog [Memorial on the Java War],' a wartime diary 1825-27 written by a Surabaya-based infantry officer covering the first two years of the war, kept in the De Stuers Private Archive (Folder 68 no.337) in the Landgoed De Wiersse, Gelderland. I wish to record my gratitude to Peter and Laura Gatacre of Landgoed De Wiersse for permission to consult this archive in July 2017.

10. *Bataviasche Courant*, 7-09-1825, 14-09-1825, 28-09-1825; *Nederlandse Staatscourant*, 4-02-1826.

11. *Bataviasche Courant*, 14-09-1825. NL-HaNA 2.12.03_3601_0122 (Logbook *Pollux*) mentions that in the attack on Purwodadi on 17 November a corporal, two marines and a sailor died. On the location of Purwodadi, see Schoel 1931:6.

12. *Nederlandse Staatscourant*, 4-02-1826. Kraus 2018:xxii.

identity as a Javanese Muslim. With the Java War raging in Central Java, Sukur had joined Pangeran Serang's forces to the south of Semarang in late August, his decision bringing immediate degradation, imprisonment and shame on the rest of his family.[13] This was especially the case for his father and elder brother, who were thought—rightly—by the Dutch authorities to have been privy to his actions.[14] Arrested in early September 1825 for being "privy to the rioting in Java" by the Resident of Semarang, Hendrik Jacob Domis (1782-1842; in office 1822-27), Suroadimenggolo and his eldest son were embarked on 9 September on the newly arrived warships where they were held separately, the first on the *Maria Reigersbergen* and the second on the *Pollux*. These vessels were now tasked as guardships (*wachtschepen*) in Semarang harbour where they remained at anchor for the next three months until December 1825, their elite Javanese prisoners having to endure the vicissitudes of shipboard arrest on a pitching and heaving sailing ship. As the gales of the oncoming West monsoon battered the north coast of Java with the *Pollux* losing her anchor on 4 November in the surging seas,[15] Raden Mas Saleh (Notodiningrat) wrote in perfect English to Governor-General G.A.G.Ph. van der Capellen (1778-1848; in office 1816-26) from the *Pollux* on 15 December:

> "I beg leave to address Your Excellency with these few lines, earnestly requesting of Your Excellency's goodness and generosity to take into consideration [...] the hard and unpleasant situation I am in by being on board ship in the present disagreeable Rainy or West Monsoon, which for these last three days [12-15 December] has blown so hard that I could scarcely stir out of my bed. And yet I am given to understand that it will still blow harder in the course of a few days more. Then, really, I know not how I shall endure it. May I beg, therefore, Your Excellency's kindness and humanity to remove me (before that dreadful time arrives) on shore, whether at Semarang, Pekalongan or Sumenep, or at the Fort of Orange [either Benteng Prins Oranje in the Poncol District of Semarang or Fort Prins van Oranje in Surabaya] should Your Excellency still deem it necessary to continue my imprisonment there."[16]

On 23 December, eight days after this missive was sent,[17] Raden Mas Saleh (Notodiningrat) was transferred to the frigate *Maria Reigersbergen*, which would transport both himself and his father to Surabaya on 1 February 1826.[18]

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13. Carey 2008:364, 616.

14. NL-HaNA 2.12.03_3601_0121 (Logbook *Pollux*) states that '*beiden waaren als verdagt van met de samenrottingen op Java bekend te zijn* [both were suspected of being familiar with the rioting in Java]'.

15. NL-HaNA 2.12.03_3601_0121 (Logbook *Pollux*).

16. Soekanto, *Dua Raden Saleh, dua nasionalis dalam abad ke-19; Suatu halaman dari sejarah nasional Indonesia* (Djakarta: Poesaka Aseli, 1951), pp.23-24.

17. NL-HaNA 2.12.03_3601_0123 (Logbook *Pollux*).

18. *Bataviasche Courant,* 8-02-1826 (refers to *Maria Reigersbergen*'s departure); 15-

Plate 4 – "Javanese Grandee and a Servant", possibly a painting of Kiai Adipati Suroadimenggolo, *bupati* of Semarang (c.1775-1826; in office, 1809-22), at his official residence in Torboyo (Semarang) circa 1811/12 by the young British artist, John Newman (c. 1795-1818), who was active in Java from 1811 to 1813. Watercolour on paper 18.3 x 32.7 cm. Photo courtesy of the British Library, London.

There they arrived on 4 February and were held for a further three weeks until 27 February when they were transferred to another guardship (*wachtschip*), the frigate (1808-24), *Dageraad,* before being released back to Semarang. There Suroadimenggolo went to an early grave (15 November 1826),[19] after what was described in his obituary notice, written by Resident Domis, as 'a lengthy decline' (*eene langdurige sukkeling*), a condition hastened by his long months as a seaborne detainee on successive Dutch warships.

With the transfer of Suroadimenggolo and his eldest son to the *Dageraad* on 27 February 1826, the *Maria Reigersbergen* stayed on in Surabaya until the end of March 1826,[20] when it parted company with the *Pollux*, sailing west to Semarang and Batavia. On 5 June 1826, it eventually departed for the final leg of its round-the-world tour back to the naval dockyard at Den Helder, a journey of 11,354 nautical miles which it would complete in record time (108 days, 5 June-20 September 1826), an average of 105 nautical miles a day.[21] The *Pollux*, meanwhile, remained in Surabaya, which would be its main base

02-1826 (refers to its arrival in Surabaya).

19. *Bataviasche Courant,* 6-12-1826.

20. *Bataviasche Courant*, 22-03-1826.

21. *Bataviasche Courant*, 7-06-1826, reported the *Maria Reigersbergen*'s departure from Batavia on 5 June 1826; while the *Middelburgse Courant*, 28-09-1826, reported that it had sailed past Dover heading for Texel on 19 September.

for the coming nine months until 29 September 1826, when it was tasked with undertaking an expedition to Pacitan with a detachment of 50 Madurese troops under Second Lieutenant François Auguste Schnorbusch (1796-1830) sent to quell a long-running uprising under Diponegoro's designated local commander, Amat Daris.[22] In those nine months, the *Pollux* undertook regular sweeps along Java's north coast to the west—referred to as "*kruistochten* [cruises/patrols]" in the press reports—presumably designed to 'show the flag' and deter would-be arms smugglers, particularly British and Americans, seeking for ways to sell weapons to Diponegoro's forces.[23] It also transported troops between Surabaya and Semarang.[24]

The drill when the *Pollux* encountered a vessel deemed potentially hostile or suspicious was described by the German army officer, Second Lieutenant Julius Heinrich Knoerle (1795-1833), tasked with accompanying Diponegoro to Manado on board the *Pollux* on his voyage into exile in May-June 1830. In his shipboard diary (Knoerle 1835:149-50, 156), Knoerle described how, when the corvette had just cleared the point of Ujung Pangkah near Gresik and was sailing along the north coast of Madura on 18 May 1830, "we saw a barque [three-masted trading vessel/schooner] a quarter of a mile in front of us heading westward. Our commander [Christiaan Eeg] ordered six guns in the battery to be loaded with shot," The second occurred nine days later on 27 May 1830 when *Pollux* was crossing the Banda Sea from Flores towards the Wakatobi Islands off Southeastern Sulawesi. This time instead of just loading the battery, Eeg sent out an investigation party to inspect the ship's log and question its British captain:

22. See Christopher Reinhart (ed.), *Antara Lawu dan Wilis: Arkeologi, Sejarah dan Legenda Madiun Raya Berdasarkan Catatan Lucien Adam (Residen Madiun 1934-38)* (Jakarta: Kepustakaan Populer Gramedia, 2021), pp.302-5. Captain Eeg's instructions and the 29 September 1826 departure from Surabaya through the Bali Straits for the Bay of Pacitan are mentioned in *Bataviasche Courant*, 11-10-1826. The *Pollux*'s ship's log, NL-HaNA 2.12.03_3601_0150-0153, gives a detailed description of the corvette's 9-day stay in Pacitan Bay (14-23 October) where extraordinary precautions were initially undertaken, including flying the flag of a neutral country (? Denmark), when it entered the Bay on 14 October to avoid inciting the insurgents, only to find that the local *bupati*, Kiai Tumenggung Jogokaryo (in office 1819-26), working with the Dutch cash-crop estates overseer (*opziener*), Frederik Hartmann van Vlissingen (in office, 1825-circa 1830), had managed to clear Diponegoro's forces from Pacitan before the *Pollux*'s arrival. See further footnote 125.

23. On Dutch fears of foreign arms smuggling by the British and American traders, particular along Java's remote south coast, see *Journal* 1853-54:81; *Javasche Courant*, 21-08-1828; Carey 2019:285-6 note 166; 2021, Bagian II catatan 124.

24. See *Bataviasche Courant*, 22-03-1826, for a reference to the *Pollux* as a troop transport.

> "A barque hoved into view. Colonel[25] Eeg sent a sloop with an officer on board to this vessel. Diponegoro went up on the foredeck and asked me to accompany him. The speedy passage of our sloop which as it were cleft flying through the glassy mirror-like surface of the sea, caught the attention of the [Prince] and he laughed at the picturesquely fine view of the crew dressed in white, transmitting his joy to all of us. The ship before us was the *Regret* under the command of Captain [John] Kerr which had sailed from Banda on the 13th [sic. 15th] of May and was bound for Batavia [where it docked on 5 June] with a cargo of spices."

These inspection patrols resumed for the *Pollux* following a brief stopover in Batavia (29 October-3 November 1826) after the completion of its Pacitan expedition (14-23 October).[26] By 16 November, the corvette was back at its Surabaya base.[27] There it remained until early March 1827 when it was directed to the shipyard repair facilities on Pulau Onrust in the Bay of Batavia. By now, three years had elapsed since its 24 March 1824 launch from the Rijkswerf (Dutch state shipyard) in Rotterdam and it had sailed nearly 30,000 nautical miles.[28] It was time for a refit. But Onrust did not have the facilities required to overhaul such a state-of-the-art vessel. In the same press report, which mentioned its presence at Onrust, came the news (13 March 1827) that it was being immediately ordered to return to the Netherlands.[29] Only the Dutch naval dockyard at Den Helder could provide the services required for a complete refit. But, given its less than prime condition, would it survive the return journey?

Homeward Bound: Surviving a Hurricane, April-November 1827

On 1 April 1827, *Pollux* weighed anchor and sailed out of Batavia Bay to begin its long journey back to the motherland.[30] It was carrying two senior naval officers from other commands as passengers,[31] along with seven civilians and scores of troops from the Netherlands returning home. With its 150-strong crew complement, the small corvette had nearly 200 people aboard

25. 'Colonel' is how naval officers of *kapitein-ter-zee* rank are addressed in the Dutch navy.

26. The *Pollux*'s presence in Batavia on 1 November 1826 is mentioned in the *Journal de la Province de Limburg*, 16-03-1826; and its departure for Surabaya on 3 November 1826 in *Bataviasche Courant*, 8-11-1826.

27. *Bataviasche Courant*, 29-11-1826.

28. These included in nautical miles: (1) Texel to Elmina (3,915); (2) Elmina to Valparaíso (6,462); (3) Valparaíso to French Polynesia (4,256); (4) French Polynesia to Semarang via Ambon (5,869). Thus 20,502 nautical miles before *Pollux* even began its duties in the Indies/Indonesia from 30 August 1825 to 13 March 1827.

29. *Bataviasche Courant*, 14-03-1827.

30. *Bataviasche Courant*, 3-04-1827.

31. These were *kapitein-ter-zee* (later Vice-Admiral) Jean-Daniel Musquetier (1766-1831) and *luitenant-ter-zee eerste klasse*, G.H.C. Lutkens (died 1842), see *Bataviasche Courant*, 3-04-1827.

when it made its way through the Sunda Straits in the first week of April 1827. Little did the assembled company know what awaited them. It would be nine months before they set foot on Dutch soil, an epic voyage which almost ended in disaster. On 4/5 June, when it was just east of Cape Agulhas, the southernmost point of Africa, the *Pollux* ran into a violent westerly storm which blew at hurricane force,[32] the sort which had sent both Admiral Sir Thomas Trowbridge's (1760-1807; East Indies Squadron commander, 1805-1807) flagship, HMS *Blenheim*, and his lead escort vessel, a recently captured Dutch frigate, H.M.S. *Java* (Captain The Honourable George Pigot), to the bottom with all hands just two decades previously (February 1807) (Plate 5).[33] The corvette survived—by dint of good seamanship—losing its foremast, bowsprit and rudder. But the ship's helmsman (*stuurman*) strongly urged Eeg that the exhausted ship's crew should be allowed to recuperate while emergency repairs were carried out at a convenient port.[34] As the westerly gale made it impossible to make Cape Town, and since Madagascar lacked suitable repair facilities, the *Pollux*'s commanding officer decided to head for Mauritius, a distance of 2,231 nautical miles. The journey, undertaken with a jury-rigged foremast and temporary rudder, took three weeks (6-30 June), and the *Pollux* eventually entered Port Louis on 1 July. It would spend the next five weeks (1 July–3 August) in the Mauritius capital undergoing repairs, which cost the Dutch Ministry of Marine and Colonies 34,575 guilders (US$367,000 in today's [2021] money), with a further 15,000 guilders (US$150,000) for revictualling.[35] By 3 August everything was complete. The corvette sailed the following day.[36] The home journey, which *Pollux*'s sister ship on the round-the-world tour, *Maria Reigersbergen,* had completed in just 108 days, would take more than twice as long (244 days), an average of just 46.5 nautical miles a day, and it would only dock at the naval dockyard of Nieuwediep in Den

32. NL-HaNA 2.12.03_3601_0186-0187 (Logbook *Pollux*) described as '*een vliegende storm*' with huge seas.

33. On the storm which struck the *Pollux*, see *Dagblad van 's-Gravenhage*, 3-12-1827; and *L'éclaireur politique; Journal de la province de Limbourg* (Maastricht), 5-12-1827 (*Pollux* [...] *a essuyé une grande tempête*'). On the loss of HMS *Blenheim* with all hands in early February 1807 to the west of Rodrigues Island, see Gossett 1986:58.

34. NL-HaNA 2.12.03_3601_0187-0188 (Logbook *Pollux*).

35. NL-HaNA 2.12.03_3601_0193-0194 (Logbook *Pollux*). All currency conversions use the historical currency conversion website "Measuring Worth" (Purchasing Power of British Pounds from 1270 to [the] Present- Measuring Worth), which can be found at: https://www.measuring worth.com/calculators/ppoweruk/.

36. *Opregte Haarlemsche Courant*, 6-10-1827; *Leydse Courant*, 9-11-1827; *Rotterdamsche Courant*, 17-11-1827; NL-HaNA 2.12.03_3601_0196 (Logbook *Pollux*).

Plate 5 – "The Loss of H.M.S. *Blenheim* and H.M.S. *Java* in a Hurricane off Rodriguez [sic Rodrigues Island 500 nautical miles east of Mauritius], the Brig *Harrier* Escaping, February 1807" by Thomas Buttersworth (1768-1842), c.1820. Oil on canvas, 31.8 x 44.5 cm. Photograph courtesy of Christies, London.

Helder on 30 November 1827.[37] By then, the hardships endured on the home journey had sent one of its youngest officer cadets, the seventeen-year-old midshipman (*Adelborst der eerste klasse*) Tengnagel, to an early grave.[38]

Return to the Indies and Diponegoro's Exile Journey, 16 November 1829-19 June 1830

The rigours of three years at the helm as the ship's commanding officer were now mitigated for Eeg when he was given a 20-month (5 December 1827-29 July 1829) leave of absence while his ship was put out of commission pending repairs. During this time *Pollux* was given a complete overhaul at the Nieuwediep naval shipyard in Den Helder, the work only being completed in late August 1829.[39] Gazetted as Captain (*kapitein-ter-zee*) on 1 July 1829, Eeg was now (29 July

37. *Opregte Haarlemsche Courant*, 4-12-1827.

38. *Opregte Haarlemsche Courant*, 11-12-1827 (obituary notice for Henri Louis Marguerite Baron Gansneb, genaamd Tengnagel [1810-27], who died four days out of Port Louis, Mauritius, on 8 August 1827).

39. *Middelburgse Courant*, 25-08-1829. The naval shipyard proper at Den Helder was known post-1822 as Willemsoord. It replaced the former Nieuwe Werk alias Kielplaats.

Plate 6 – The six-week voyage of the *Pollux* with Diponegoro from Batavia to Manado from 3 May-12 June 1830, and his subsequent voyage to Makassar on the three-masted schooner *Circe* from 20 June-11 July 1833. Map drawn by J. Wilbur Wright, Oxford.

1829) tasked with sailing his corvette back to the Indies—the *Pollux* departed Den Helder on 16 November 1829[40]—with the commander of the Dutch Indies fleet (*Commandant en chef Zijner Majesteits Zeemagt in Oostindiën*), kapitein-luitenant-ter-zee (Commander) Johan Friederich Christiaan Wardenburg (1776-1839), as his principal passenger.[41] Little did the Rotterdam-born Eeg know that just over a month after his arrival in Batavia on 22 March 1830,[42] he would be given an even more extraordinary assignment, namely the transport of the principal leader of the recently ended (28 March 1830) Java War, Prince Diponegoro (1785-1855) (Plate 7), and his 19-strong party, into exile in Manado in North Sulawesi.

The *Pollux*'s presence in Indies waters was reported on 20 March 1830 when it was seen passing through the Sunda Straits and two days later it had anchored in Batavia roads.[43] Following its return, the *Pollux* undertook one sortie—most likely for training purposes for its sea cadets—through the Sunda Strait between 5-11 April 1830.[44] By the time it returned, Diponegoro and his party had already arrived in the colonial capital from Semarang (8 April)

40. *Opregte Haarlemsche Courant*, 19-11-1829 and *Leydse Courant*, 20-11-1829, reported *Pollux*'s sailing past Texel on 16 November 1829 having departed Den Helder.

41. *Dagblad van 's-Gravenhage*, 20-11-1829.

42. *Javasche Courant*, 25-03-1830.

43. *Javasche Courant*, 23-03-1830, 25-03-1830.

44. *Javasche Courant*, 10-04-1830 (reporting departure of *Pollux* on 5 April 1830 and its passage through the Sunda Strait); and *Javasche Courant*, 15-04-1830 (reporting return of *Pollux* to Batavia roads on 11 April 1830).

Plate 7 – Pencil sketch of Diponegoro by Adrianus Johannes (Jan) Bik. It shows him dressed in the 'priestly' garments which he wore during the Java War, namely a turban, an open-necked *kabaya* (cotton shirt) and a *jubah* (loose outer robe). A sash hangs over his right shoulder and his *pusaka kris* (heirloom dagger), Kanjeng Kiai Bondoyudo (Sir Duelling Without Weapons), is stuck in his flowered silk waist band. The slightly sunken cheeks, which accentuate the prince's high cheek bones, were the result of successive bouts of malaria from which he had been suffering since his wanderings in the jungles of Bagelen and Banyumas at the end of the war. Photograph courtesy of the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

on the steamship, SS *Van der Capellen,* captained by the young Scotsman, Andrew Davidson (c.1809-31), whose brother, George Frank, would pen a vivid account of the prince's landing in the colonial capital.[45] For the next three and a half weeks (8 April-3 May), Diponegoro was held in the Town Hall (*Stadhuis*). There he was under the supervision of the Batavia magistrate (*baljuw*), Adrianus Johannes (Jan) Bik (1790-1872), an accomplished artist who made a fine pencil sketch of his prisoner during his period of detention.

The prince's extended stay in the colonial capital was due to the temporary illness of the newly arrived Governor-General, Johannes van den Bosch (in office, 1830-34). Since a formal decision (*besluit*) regarding Diponegoro's exile destination and the conditions in which he would be held needed to be formalised, this could only be accomplished on 30 April 1830, when Van den Bosch had sufficiently recovered to review and sign the document.[46] Even before that decision had been taken, however, the *Pollux* had already been designated as the warship tasked with transporting Diponegoro and his party during their exile journey, its choice being made on the basis of its recent

45. Davidson 1846:9. "What a joyous place Batavia was in those days," Davidson wrote, "with everybody thriving and the place alive and bustling with an active set of merchants from all parts of the world," Bosma 2007:283.

46. Carey 2008:706-7, referencing *Besluit van den Gouverneur-Generaal buiten rade* [Decision of the Governor-General without the Council of the Indies], 30-04-1830 no.1.

refit in Nieuwediep (Den Helder), and the fact that it had very appropriate accommodation for Diponegoro, his three family members (wife, sister and brother-in-law) and thirteen followers. These were the '*Voorkajuit* [Fore Cabin],' recently used by Commander Wardenburg, and its two directly adjoining cabins, the first able to house the prince's immediate family, and the second, a long berth with multiple bunks, all his followers.[47]

On the morning of 27 April, the Governor-General's military adjutant, Second-Lieutenant Knoerle (in office, 1829-31), had received his secret orders directly from Van den Bosch. These related to his mission as officer escort during the prince's voyage to Manado.[48] Knoerle's selection for this politically important mission was because of his supposed knowledge of Javanese, the Dutch military translator whom Diponegoro greatly respected, Captain Johan Jacob Roeps (1805-40), not being available because of his imminent home leave (early July 1830).[49] At the same time, the prince had been insistent to the Dutch authorities that he should be accompanied by an officer who could converse with him in his mother tongue rather than in Malay which he spoke poorly and which he found deeply distasteful.[50]

On the afternoon of that same Tuesday, 27 April 1830, just a week before the corvette sailed for Manado, Knoerle came on board to inspect the facilities and to meet with Captain Eeg to discuss the details of the forthcoming journey as well as its political implications. By this time, a special allowance of 400 Indies guilders in silver money (US$ 5,000 in present-day [2021] money) had been made available by the Director-General of Finances to defray the costs of the prince's six-week voyage to Manado.[51] Three days later, on 30 April, with the Governor-General's official *besluit* (decision) in his pocket, Knoerle went to the *Stadhuis* to meet with Diponegoro and brief him about their forthcoming journey. By the following morning (1 May), the German officer had embarked permanently on the corvette to put everything in readiness. Although it had originally been envisaged that the prince would also embark with his party on the same day, there was a delay due to the need to prepare the *Voorkajuit* and its two adjoining cabins for the exiled leader and his party.[52]

47. Knoerle 1835:166-67.

48. Carey 2008:711.

49. Carey 2008:711 note 160; Louw and De Klerck 1894-1908, II:283 note 2.

50. Carey 2008:106-7, 109, 711 note 161.

51. Carey 2008:710.

52. Carey 2008:716-7 note 176.

The *Pollux* also had to take on six weeks' supply of fresh water and food, no stopovers being envisaged because of the political sensitivities surrounding the corvette's principal passenger.[53] Eventually, at eight o'clock on the morning of Monday, 3 May, Diponegoro and his 19 followers came on board, accompanied by Roeps and the same Batavian city administration officials who had greeted the prince on his arrival from Semarang. They were met by Captain Eeg, his junior officers and the ship's doctor, Surgeon Major Hermanus Schillet (1794-1861), an expert on cholera,[54] whom the prince took an instant liking to because his face reminded him of the former British Resident, John Crawfurd (1783-1868; in office, 1811-14/1816), whom the prince greatly admired because of his fluency in Javanese.[55]

Once the prince's luggage had been loaded, the city officials took their leave. Knoerle then saw to the furnishing of Diponegoro's cabin and repeated again the assurances given to him at the *Stadhuis* regarding the respect which would be paid to the women in his party. The prince had apparently shown particular anxiety that his two "*raden ayu* [noblewomen]" – namely his wife, Raden Ayu Retnoningsih (c. 1810-85) and younger sister, Raden Ayu Dipowiyono (born c.1806) – might be insulted or otherwise taken advantage of by the Dutch crew.[56] There being no wind the corvette rode at anchor for almost a day and a night (3-4 May), much to Diponegoro's annoyance. But, at five o'clock the following morning, 4 May, a light breeze began to blow off the land and the corvette set sail as the first streaks of dawn stole over the Bay of Batavia. A new chapter in the prince's life had begun. He would never set foot on the island of his birth again. A quarter of a century of exile and imprisonment lay before him.

Although the *Pollux*'s departure with Diponegoro and his party was reported in the official Indies government newspaper, *De Javasche Courant,* of 6 May 1830, no mention was made of its destination (Manado). The only information given was that Captain Eeg had 'set a northerly course [*koersstellende om de noord*]'.[57] At the same time, the Netherlands press seemed to be giving out intentionally misleading information. Thus, the Limburg provincial journal, *L'éclaireur politique*, wrote that "Diponegoro has been embarked on the ship

53. Carey 2008:712 note 166.

54. Schillet 1832.

55. Carey 2008:109, 375-6, 713.

56. Carey 2008:713, quoting Knoerle who may have had the officers rather than the crew in mind here, as the latter recruited from the dregs of Dutch society, would have been flogged if they had interfered with—or so much as looked at—Diponegoro's womenfolk, whereas the officers might have felt that since these '*raden ayu*' were just 'native women [*inlandsch vrouwen*],' anything might be permitted with them.

57. *Javasche Courant*, 6-05-1830.

Pollux to be transported to the Molucca [Maluku] Islands."[58] Other Dutch newspapers followed suit.[59] It was only a full year later, seemingly as a result of a report from one of the officers on the *Pollux*, that the full story of what had actually happened to Diponegoro began to break. The politically well-connected French-language newspaper, *Journal de la Haye* (Journal of The Hague), relayed this officer's information on 31 May 1831 as follows:[60]

> "Diponegoro was taken on board the corvette *Pollux* to be transported from [sic] the Celebes [Sulawesi] to Manado. He is accompanied by the Adjutant to the Governor General, Mr. [Julius Heinrich] Knoerle. An officer belonging to the crew of this corvette tells us that this adjutant has gained the entire confidence of Diponegoro, that he spent whole days with him and that we can expect that this officer will have gathered several unknown details and made important discoveries regarding the events which preceded and accompanied the last war. At least this officer [Knoerle] has always been distinguished by an extraordinary aptitude for dealing with the natives and for gaining their confidence. Diponegoro is now in the fort of Manado [Fort Nieuw Amsterdam] where Mr. [Daniel François Willem] Pietermaat is Resident [in office 1827-31]. Kiai Mojo [circa 1792-1849; Diponegoro's chief religious adviser during the Java War], along with 62 other people in his retinue, has been relegated to the interior of the island [North Sulawesi], to Tondano."

Even then, the earlier Dutch colonial government concocted story, which pretended that Diponegoro had been transported to the Moluccas (Maluku) to live out his exile in a small Dutch fort there,[61] persisted. Thus, in January 1848,

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58. *L'éclaireur politique, journal de la province de Limbourg*, 21-09-1830, "*Diepo-Negoro a été embarqué sur le vaisseau le Pollux pour être transporté aux îles des Moluques*." Similar misinformation can be found in the *Rotterdamsche Courant*, 18-09-1830; *Binnenlandse Berigten*, 20-09-1830; *Middelburgse Courant*, 21-09-1830 and *Overrijsselsche Courant*, 21-09-1830.

59. *Rotterdamsche Courant*, 18-09-1830, *Binnenlandsche Berigten*, 20-09-1830; *Middelburgse Courant*, 21-09-1830; and *Overijsselsche Courant,* 21-09-1830.

60. *Journal de la Haye*, 31-05-1831, "*Diepo Negoro a été embarqué sur la corvette* Pollux *pour être transporté de Célèbes à Menado. Il est accompagné de l'adjudant du gouverneur-général, M. Knaele [Knoerle]. Un officier appartenant à l'équipage de cette corvette nous mande que cet adjudant a gagné toute la confiance de Diepo Negoro [Diponegoro], qu'il passait avec lui des journées entières et qu'on peut s'attendre que cet officier aura recueilli plusieurs particularités inconnues et fait des découvertes importantes sur les évènemens qui ont précédé et accompagné la dernière guerre. Du moins cet officier s'est toujours distingué par une aptitude extraordinaire pour se conduire avec les indigènes et pour gagner leur confiance. Diepo Negoro se trouve maintenant au fort de Menado où M. Pietermaat est Résident. Kyai Modjo [Kiai Mojo], avec 62 autres personnes de sa suite a été rélégué dans l'intérieur de l'île à Tandano [Tondano]*." The Dutch provincial press, *Groninger Courant* and *Leydse Courant*, 3-06-1831, ran with the same story, as did the *Curaçoasche Courant* (Willemstad), 3-12-1831, seven months later.

61. On the Dutch forts in Maluku at this time, see *Forts in Indonesia* (Jakarta: Mendikbud, 2012), p.12 ('Distribution Map of forts'), which lists Fort Oranje

just before the outbreak of the February 1848 Revolution in Paris, an article appeared in the French press fiercely critical of the way in which the prince was being treated in exile. It spoke of him being held "in the Moluccas [Maluku]":[62]

> "[Enclosed] between the four walls in a little fort, separated from his family, closely watched, denied the means of writing either to the governor-general or to whoever else, treated over the past eighteen years with a harshness and a cruel severity little worthy of the government of this country [the Netherlands].

Until the late Dutch colonial period (1816-42), knowledge of what had actually happened to Diponegoro following his transport to his *oubliette* in the eastern seas of the Dutch East Indies on the *Pollux* on 3 May 1830 remained garbled. Even someone as well informed as the nationalist leader and educator, Ki Hadjar Dewantoro (Suwardi Suryaningrat, 1889-1959), could still get the date of the prince's death in 1855 wrong by a month (8 February not 8 January), when he called for it to be remembered nationwide as a day of national commemoration in March 1923.[63]

(Ternate), Fort Nieuw Victoria and Fort Amsterdam (Ambon), Fort Nassau and Fort Belgica (Banda), and Fort Duurstede (Saparua).

62. Carey 1982:3, [(*Enfermé*) *dans un petit fort entre quatre murs, séparé de tous les siens, gardé à vue, privé des moyens d'écrire au gouverneur-général ou à qui que ce soit, traité depuis dix-huit ans avec une dureté et une sévérité peu digne et peu honorable pour le gouvernement de ce pays*]."See further Carey 2008:741. In 1982, the present writer speculated that the article may have come from the pen of Raden Mas Saleh (Notodiningrat's) cousin, the famous nineteenth-century painter, Raden Saleh Syarif Bustaman (c. 1811-80), then a part-time resident in Paris (1845-50). But there is no evidence for this. In fact, the painter was in Dresden at the time the article appeared in early January 1848 staying with his friend Major Friedrich Anton Serre (1789-1863) and it would have been political folly for him to attack the Dutch authorities in this way. Instead, it seems more likely that it may have been written by the radical publicist / journalist, Adrien Jean Eliza Engelbert van Bevervoorde tot Oldemeule (1819-51), who wrote in French, was involved in a number of radical dailies (*Le Courrier Batave*, *De Hydra* and *De Burger*), and had a father, Hendricus Johannes (born 1791), who had served in the Java War (1825-30) and had witnessed Diponegoro's arrest. He was also close to Jonkheer Regnerus Livius van Andringa de Kempenaer (1804-54), who had written to the Dutch king, Willem II (r. 1840-49) on 16 January 1848 about Diponegoro being treated in exile in 'a cruel and ruthless manner [*op eene wreede en onmeedogende wijze wordt behandeld*],' see Hugenholtz 2008:287.

63. *Het Nieuws van het Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië,* 12 March 1923:'Honorable Brothers! For us all the 8 February is of the utmost importance. It is a day of commemoration, that is to say a day of sadness for a son of this country. In particular for the Javanese. Why? Because on the 8 February the great Prince Diponegoro died. On 8 February 1855, our hero died in the town of Makassar where he was exiled. Let us all remember this day with emotion—and let us halt our businesses temporarily—such as schools. And tell all our friends about the importance of this day [*Geëerde broeders! — Voor ons allen is de achtste Februari van hoog belang. Die dag is een herdenkingsdag, dat wil zeggen een dag van droefenis voor het kind*

What then of Diponegoro and his journey on the *Pollux*? Nearly six weeks at sea—much of it becalmed—would not be a pleasant experience. The prince's reference to this purgatorial odyssey in his autobiographical chronicle (*babad*) is suitably laconic:[64]

> XLIII.308. The sails were set and [we] left / Batavia for Manado, / but there was no wind / and the boat was exceedingly slow. 309 […] many of the accursed [Dutch crew and soldiers] were sick / and died / on board ship. / The sultan was troubled at heart. 310. Maybe we will all be damned and not reach / Manado? / We speak no further of this. / They arrived in Manado. 311. Two and a half months long [sic] / was the sultan [Diponegoro's] journey / from Batavia to Manado / because there was no wind

Knoerle's own shipboard diary closely echoes the spirit of Diponegoro's account. At seven in the morning of the first day (4 May), for example, the prince summoned his German officer escort to his cabin and requested he be taken on deck, one of only six occasions, according to Knoerle, during the whole forty-day voyage when the exiled leader came up from his cabin.[65] "The compass, the ship with sails set on high (Plate 8) and the motion of the vessel" caught the prince's delighted attention, and he would later express particular interest in the sea chart of Makassar and the navigational methods used by the ship's officers to plot and steer the *Pollux*'s course as they sailed towards their final destination along the southeastern coast of Sulawesi (Plate 6).[66]

But death, which stalked the ship daily, had already shown its grim face:

> "The detachment of [50] troops had one dead who at that moment was sent overboard. The burial ceremony caused the prince to ask whether the deceased had been a captain. On [my] answer that he was an ordinary soldier, Diponegoro asked why we paid more attention to a dead than a living person?"[67]

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des lands. Vooral voor den Javaan. Waarom? Omdat den achtsten Februari de groote Pangeran Diponegoro overleed. Op den 8sten Februari 1855 is onze held overleden in de stad Makassar, waarheen hij was verbannen. Laat ons allen dien dag gedenken in ontroering — laat ons de bedrijven tijdelijk doen rusten — zooals de scholen. En vertelt het belang van dezen dag aan al onze vrienden],"

64. LOr 6545d (G.A.J. Hazeu private collection, *Babad Dipanagara*, autobiography written in Manado, 1831-32), IV:425, XLIII (Maskumambang) 308-11. *nulya babar layar mangkat sing Betawi / mring Menadhu ika / mapan datan angsal angin / langkung remben kang baita*. 309. *lawan laknat mapan kathah ingkang sakit / myang kang modar / sajroning baita sami / susah kang tyasing sri naléndra*. 310. *bokmenawa telas jidhèt* tan dumugi / ing Menadhu ika / mangkana wus tan winarni / ing Menadhu sampun prapta*. 311. *mapan ngantos kalih tengah wulan iki / lampahnya naléndra / Menadhu saking Betawi / sabab tan wonten anginnya.* * Rusche 1908-09, II:266 has "*pejah*," I have followed the sense of that correction in the translation.

65. Knoerle 1835:167-8.

66. Knoerle 1835:156-7.

67. Carey 2008:716.

Plate 8 – A view of the deck of the Corvette *Triton*, the sister ship of the *Pollux* launched at the *Marinewerf* (naval dockyard) in Amsterdam a year later in 1825, during its voyage to Timor and West Papua in 1828, by the Utrecht-born artist, Pieter van Oort (1804-34). Van Oort has drawn himself into his painting sitting to the right with a black hat and crossed legs. Watercolour on paper 36 x 41 cm. Photograph courtesy of the Dutch Navy Museum, Den Helder.

In the first five days alone, four died, the ceremonies for the burials – the slow march of the honour guard of soldiers and the muffled drums – being heard distinctly by the prince in his cabin below the quarter (poop) deck. Contemplating this daily toll in mortality, a result of the shocking shipboard conditions for ordinary seamen and soldiers alike, Diponegoro burst out in bitter contempt at the supposed superiority of Western medicine and medical practitioners which Knoerle had tried to impress on him:[68]

> "How can you speak to me about your Dutch doctors and medicines […] [when] every day we have dead men on board this vessel who are thrown into the sea? How suspicious [you] Europeans are about [your] doctors!"

Eschewing the ministrations of the ship's doctor, Surgeon-Major Schillet, for his periodic malarial fevers, the prince continued to treat himself throughout the sea voyage to Manado with Javanese herbal potions (*jamu*) such as *beras-*

68. Carey 2008:117.

kencur and *kedawung*[69] and restricted his diet on some days to dry sweet potato (*ubi kering*) to counteract the effects of sea sickness.[70] Given what happened to the *Pollux*'s crew on the corvette's final return journey to the Netherlands in May-October 1832, when nearly a third of the ship's officers and crew died of scurvy, Diponegoro's scepticism regarding the efficacy of early 19th century European doctors and their medical techniques would seem to have been prescient. Indeed, when it came to a high-protein diet and knowledge of how to maintain physical health through the consumption of stem and root tubers (sweet potatoes, potatoes, yams and cassava), rhizomes (bamboos, ginger and turmeric), fruits, herbal remedies, and personal hygiene, Javanese culture was more advanced than that of the West at this time. Indeed, it would have been hard to imagine Diponegoro succumbing to scurvy, even on board a Dutch warship! His addiction to *sirih* (betelnut) alone would have ensured that he would have had a sufficiently large daily intake of Vitamin C through his mastication of *sirih* leaves to avoid contracting the disease.[71]

Another aspect of life on board the *Pollux* which particularly shocked Diponegoro was the extreme brutality of the treatment of ordinary seamen by the officers and quartermasters, especially when it came to punishing them for minor infractions:[72]

> "At 10 o'clock in the morning. On board the corvette a sailor had to be punished, because people said he had been insolent. The man wished to assert his innocence, and then two quartermasters were called, to execute the punishment with blows from a rope. The sailor thereupon drew a knife from his satchel and with the exclamation, "I am innocent, so help me God!" he gave himself two gashes in the neck. Diponegoro learnt of this occurrence and asked how it was possible to punish a man of whose guilt people were not convinced. In everything that [he] expressed during the course of our conversation about this matter, [he] gave evidence of deep religious feelings. He steadfastly pitied the sailor whom he said must be a pure man (*ingkang manah wonten suci*), and who could certainly reckon on God's mercy.
>
> He spoke about the way he and his father at Jogja had always tried to bestow justice on the Javanese and that they had always started on the principle that no-one should be punished who was not clearly convicted of committing a crime. Diponegoro called the two young Javanese (intimate retainers /*panakawan*), Roto and Bantengwareng, amongst his following into his cabin and asked me; "Would you consign one of these to a punishment when you did not have the firm proof that a crime had been committed?"

69. *Kedawung* is the Javanese name for the tree *Barkia roxburghii G.*, the seeds and leaves of which are used as a well-known Javanese remedy for colic and other stomach ailments, see Sastroamidjojo 1967:196 no. 160, illustration 51.

70. Carey 2008:117 note 71.

71. On Diponegoro's addiction to betelnut chewing (*sirih*), see Carey 2008:122. A discussion of the medicinal properties of Indonesian plants and dietary intake can be found in Sastroamidjojo 1967.

72. Knoerle 1835:154-5.

According to Tico Onderwater, a specialist on Dutch naval history, "it is true that extreme brutality was everyday practice on board men-of-war at this time. The Royal Netherlands Navy had great difficulties manning these ships and only the lowest tiers of society could be persuaded to join the service as ordinary seamen. As a result, officers felt that they had to rely on extreme measures to maintain order. The Dutch navy only abolished corporal punishment in 1879, whereas the army and civil justice systems had got rid of such practices decades earlier."[73] This attitude recalls what the Duke of Wellington (1769-1852) is supposed to have said of his men during the Napoleonic Wars, "I don't know if they frighten the enemy, but they certainly scare the hell out of me!"

Although the clash of cultures was stark, Diponegoro did enter into contact with a number of the ship's officers through Knoerle. This resulted in the prince being lent books and provided with bottles of vintage wine paid for by his officer escort. Although he did not read the books lent him, but only looked at the illustrations, one of the second lieutenants (*luitenant-ter-zee der tweede klasse)*, Barend van den Broek (1802-30), who would die seven months later (12 December 1830) in the assault on the fortified stronghold of Narras (Pariaman) during the Padri War (1803-37) in West Sumatra, lent the prince a richly illustrated romance by Torquato Tasso (1544-95) *Gerusalemme Liberata* ("The Liberated Jerusalem") (Parma & Ferrara, 1581). Describing the 1099 siege of Jerusalem, it recounted in high-flown language an imaginative account of the Christian conquest of the holy city from its Muslim defenders at the end of the First Crusade (1095-99).[74]

Another of the *Pollux*'s officer cadets, then still a nineteen-year-old midshipman (*Adelborst der eerste klasse*), who had dealings with Diponegoro, was Adriaan David van der Gon Netscher (1811-97) (Plate 9).[75] In later life an anti-slavery campaigner (with special focus on the Dutch West Indies) and a much-admired water-colour painter (aquarellist) and travel-writer, Netscher provided the prince with two bottles of the sweet Constantia white wine from South Africa which he liked so much (Plate 10[76]). Alone of all the *Pollux*'s officers on this voyage to

73. Electronic communication, T.A. Onderwater, 5 July 2021. I wish to record my thanks here to Tico Onderwater for his unstinting help with this article.

74. Carey 2008:110.

75. Knoerle 1835:169-70.

76. The prince had seemingly developed his own highly personal interpretation of Quranic teachings regarding alcohol consumption, as Knoerle (1835:169) explains:

> "Pangeran Diponegoro mentioned that [he] was very willing to fortify himself by the use of sweet wine. [...] [He] continued on this subject, arguing that the Prophet's prohibition against the consumption of wine was applied [only] to those wines which possess an intoxicating effect, as is the case with Madeira and red wine. But that in the Prophet's prohibition, those wines whose salutary and curative effects are well known, such as the sweet wines, are absolutely not included."

Professor Azyumardi Azra has commented on Diponegoro's arguments in support

Plate 9 – Adriaan David van der Gon Netscher (1811-97), naval officer, Dutch anti-slavery campaigner, travel-writer and aquarellist, who served as a midshipman on the *Pollux* during Diponegoro's voyage to Manado in May-June 1830. Photograph courtesy of the RKD Netherlands Institute for Art History, Den Haag.

Manado, the teenage midshipman would achieve fame in his lifetime and merit a substantial entry in the Dutch Dictionary of National Biography.[77]

Netscher was also the beneficiary of a curious stroke of luck related in part to the culture of violence and physical punishment meted out to officers and men in the Dutch Navy at this time. After serving on the *Pollux* since 22 August 1829 in preparation for its 16 November 1829 sailing to the Indies/Indonesia, Netscher was accused of a disciplinary offence—not specified in his Service

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of selected wine drinking (ie involving sweet white wine) as follows (personal communication, Jakarta, 15-10-2021):

> "There are three Qur'anic verses (*al-Baqarah* 219, *al-Nisa*' 43, and *al-Maidah* 90) on discouraging, though not completely banning, the drinking of *khamr* (intoxicating drink, equivalent to *arak* [rice wine] in present-day Indonesia). But ulama are divided as to whether 'wine' is included in *khamr*. In fact, most do not include it. Secondly, they are also divided on whether or not Muslims can drink wine; some say that it is licit for Muslims to drink wine or any kind of alcohol as long as one does not get drunk. Others maintain that it is absolutely *haram* to drink alcohol even so much as a drop. But it is quite common among Sufi circles and those, like Diponegoro, who belonged to one of the mystical brotherhoods (*tariqah*) [in his case the Shaṭṭārīyya] to consume wine or some other kind of alcoholic drink in order to achieve ecstasy in their Sufistic practices. So, I think Pangeran Diponegoro followed this [custom]. It is quite common also among Indonesian Muslims to consume *arak* made from 'air beras' or 'gula aren' etc."

For a discussion of wine-drinking amongst Indian Muslims, see Ahmed 2016.

77. Molhuysen & Blok 1911-37, I:363.

Record (*Stamboek*)—and ordered to undergo a physical punishment. Described as a 'debasing penalty' (*vernederende straf*), he petitioned the newly arrived director of the Indies Marine, Captain-commander Wardenburg, to be allowed to escape such public humiliation by moving from his midshipman's assignment on the *Pollux* to a new post on another corvette, the *De Leije* (Commander Aart J.J. van Lutsenburg).[78] This was sanctioned by Wardenburg and Netscher moved to the *De Leije* on 15 August 1830.[79] His departure from the *Pollux* at this time meant that he escaped the corvette's bloody assault on the Padris in West Sumatra (Padang-Pariaman) in December 1830, which claimed the life of his brother officer Van den Broek, and still more pertinently, removed him from participating in the *Pollux*'s disastrous 23 May-23 October 1832 final return voyage to the Netherlands, when 40 of the ship's crew, including the captain (Christiaan Eeg), the first officer (Frederik Jacob Anthonie Hugenholtz, 1792-1832)[80] and a young Second Lieutenant (Willem August Spengler, 1803-32)[81] died of scurvy, the last almost within sight of the Netherlands coast.

Not all the *Pollux*'s officers were as generous and accommodating as Van den Broek and Netscher when it came to providing reading material and the product of the grape to Diponegoro. The prince's favourite wine was without doubt *vin de Constance*—the same wine provided by Netscher—from the world-famous Groot and Klein Constantia vineyards in the Western Cape (South Africa). A wine of kings, said to be the favourite of Frederick the Great of Prussia (r.1740-88), Willem I of the Netherlands (r. 1813-40) and the Emperor Napoleon (1769-1821; r. 1804-14), who had it supplied to him in his St. Helena exile (1815-21), it was also celebrated in the novels of Jane Austen (1775-1817) set in the era of the Napoleonic Wars. Diponegoro had acquired a taste for it during his visits to the Yogyakarta Resident's retreat at Bedoyo on the slopes of Mount Merapi just before the Java War, during the incumbency of Anthonie Hendrik Smissaert, whose wife, Clara Elisabeth (*née* Von Liebeherr, 1785–1869), always served it when the prince was present.[82] He regarded this wine as a form of medicine (*tomboh*) and fortifier to restore his strength following his recurrent bouts of malarial fever. The *Pollux*'s first officer, First Lieutenant Hugenholtz, initially provided just one bottle of Constantia. When pressed by Knoerle to provide a whole case (12 bottles) in return for payment in money, kind or gifts, Hugenholtz demurred even though, according to Knoerle, the *Pollux*'s First Officer had two

78. NL-HaNA 2.12.14_5_0367, 22_0094 (*Register* and *Staat van Dienst* Van der Gon Netscher).

79. *Besluit Commandant-en-chef ZM Zeemagt in Oostindiën*, 24 November 1830 no.22, cited in NL-HaNA 2.12.14_22_0094 (*Staat van Dienst* Netscher).

80. NL-HaNA 2.12.14_17_0198, 12_14_0199, 12_14_2000 (*Register* and *Staat van Dienst* Hugenholtz).

81. NL-HaNA 2.12.14_26-1723 (*Staat van Dienst* Spengler).

82. Louw and De Klerck, 1894-1909, V:743; Carey 2008:718 note 186.

Plate 10 – Vintage *vin de Constance* (Constantia) which Diponegoro drank on board the Corvette *Pollux* en route from Batavia to Manado, 3 May – 12 June 2020. The Prince's liking for this 'wine of emperors and kings' was shared by a number of prominent contemporaries (or near contemporaries) including the Emperor Napoleon, Frederick the Great of Prussia, King Willem I of the Netherlands, and the writers, Jane Austen, Charles Dickens and Charles Baudelaire (1821-67). The prince clearly had very good taste in wine as in so many other things.

"anchors [*anker*]" (one 'anchor' = 9.25 imperial gallons) of *vin de Constance* in his cabin,[83] amounting to some 74 liters, of which he was being asked to spare just under ten liters if one includes the bottle already provided! [84] The mind boggles at such quantities and such mean-mindedness.

Buoyed by wine but not much else—all other rations were running dangerously low and the *Pollux*'s passengers and crew forced to survive on potatoes (many of which were rotting by the time the ship reached Manado) with little additional meat and no fresh vegetables—the corvette eventually cast anchor in the Bay of Manado on Saturday, 12 June 1830. The epic six-week passage from Batavia to Manado was at an end. At ten o'clock the following morning Diponegoro and his nineteen-strong party were transferred to Fort Nieuw Amsterdam (Plate 11). There they would remain for the next three years (13 June-20 June 1833) until their secret transfer to Makassar on board the Dutch navy schooner, *Circe* (Plate 6). During these three years, confined in four-room house in the Dutch fort and rarely going out into the surrounding town, the prince would create a masterpiece—his autobiographical chronicle, the *Babad Dipanagara*. Written in just nine months (20 May 1831-3 February 1832), the first third of its 43 cantos would tell the history of Java from the fall of Majapahit (circa 1527) to the prince's birth in Yogyakarta (11 November 1785) and then the detailed story of his life up to his arrival in Manado. Covering some 1,150 folio pages in Javanese *macapat* verse

83. This stash of wine was apparently shared between Hugenholtz and his brother officer, Barend van den Broek, according to Knoerle, 'Aantekeningen' (for full citation see footnote 90), entry for 1 June 1830.

84. Knoerle 1835:169-70; Carey (forthcoming).

Plate 11 – 'Fort Nieuw Amsterdam,' Manado (completed in 1705) where Diponegoro was kept between June 1830 and June 1833. The Resident's house in which he had his accommodation can be seen through the open gateway. The fort was later destroyed by an earthquake in 1932 followed by US/Allied bombing on 7 December 1944. Photograph probably taken in the 1910s, courtesy of Leiden University Library (UBL).

written in Arabic script (*pégon*), it would be recognised 181 years later (18 June 2013) by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) as a Memory of the World manuscript.[85]

On 19 June 1830, just a week after the arrival of the *Pollux*, the corvette's commanding officer and ship's officers came to the fort in their white dress uniforms to take their formal leave of Diponegoro. They were returning the next day to Batavia via Surabaya, a journey which would be completed in just nineteen days (20 June–9 July 1830). Some fifty-three soldiers, under the command of Second-Lieutenant Cornelis Bosman (born Leiden 1796)[86] remained behind to guard the prince. Unfortunately, this junior officer, unlike Roeps and Knoerle, lacked the diplomatic and linguistic skills needed to handle the prince. Within weeks, his "rough and inconsiderate" behaviour had caused the Resident of Manado, Pietermaat (in office 1827-31), to arrange his transfer to Ternate where the 40-strong garrison was in need of an additional officer. In his autobiographical *babad*, Diponegoro mentions this courtesy

85. Carey 2019:xi, xxvi-xxviii.

86. NL-HaNA_2_1.13.04_387_0076 (*Staat van Dienst* Cornelis Bosman).

visit and the conversation which took place between himself and Knoerle and Captain Eeg. After confirming his monthly stipend of 600 guilders (US$6,500 in present-day [2021] money), the commander of the *Pollux* suggested that the prince might have a personal message for the Governor-General. Perhaps he would like to send a letter back to Java which he could take for him? "No", Diponegoro replied, "I have no desire to send a letter for I cannot write […] just send my regards to General Van den Bosch!"[87]

Mission Accomplished and War against the Padris, July 1830-December 1831

The relief on board the *Pollux* amongst the officers and crew after the completion of their six-week non-stop marathon and the successful discharge of their task of transporting the Java War leader into exile must have been palpable. Now revictualled and with a strong following wind, the corvette completed the 1,253 nautical mile journey from Manado to Surabaya in just 19 days (20 June-9 July), an average of 66 nautical miles a day, a much swifter passage than the modest 45 nautical miles a day it had achieved on the longer—1,800 nautical mile—outward journey. After its swift return journey to Java, the *Pollux* remained five days in Surabaya (9-14 July 1830)[88] before returning to Batavia where it entered port on 19 July.[89] By then Knoerle's secret report of his day-to-day interactions with Diponegoro was in the hands of the Governor-General whose heavy blue pencil markings can be seen on the original in his private collection in the Dutch National Archives.[90] The German officer had sensibly used the 19-day return journey from Manado to finish his shipboard diary and dispatch it to the Governor-General by express post with a covering letter dated the same day (9 July) as the *Pollux*'s arrival in the East Javanese port. By this time, he had received news of his promotion to the rank of First Lieutenant, a style he now gave himself when he signed off on his covering letter to his superior.[91]

For the next four months until early December 1830, when Eeg received orders to deploy *Pollux* as a naval support vessel for the Dutch assault on Padri fortified positions in the interior of Padang-Pariaman on the West Coast of Sumatra, the corvette remained in Batavia as a guardship (wachtschip) with

87. Carey 2008:724.

88. *Javasche Courant*, 20-07-1830, 24-07-1830.

89. *Javasche Courant*, 22-07-1830.

90. Knoerle, Julius Heinrich. 'Aanteekeningen gehouden door den 2e Luit Knoerle betreffende de dagelyksche verkeering van dien officier met den Prins van Djocjakarta, Diepo Negoro, gedurende eene reis van Batavia naar Menado, het exil van den genoemden Prins,' Manado, 20-6-1830. NL-HaNA, Bosch, J. van den, 2.21.028, inv. nr. 391, 1830.

91. Knoerle 1835:175. See also *Binnenlandsche Berigten*, 17-09-1830 on the appointment of First Lieutenant Albert Hendrik Wendelin de Kock (1808-91) and Julius Heinrich Knoerle as Military Adjutants to Governor-General van den Bosch.

occasional sorties through the Sunda Strait and points west and north.[92] As we have seen, during the operations in West Sumatra involving members of the *Pollux*'s crew, forty of whom (nearly a third of the ship's complement) perished, one of Eeg's brother officers died. The captain immediately wrote an obituary notice which was published in the *Javasche Courant* on 8 February 1831:

> "On the 12th of this month [December 1830], during the storming of the fortified kampung of Narras [near Pariaman], on the west coast of Sumatra, the highly meritorious Second Lieutenant B[arend] van den Broek, was [killed] under the front gate of the fort (*benteng*). [He was shot] with a rifle bullet above the left breast plate, which immediately struck him down dead. I regret, along with his comrades [brother officers], a good and courageous officer, whose value I have learnt to appreciate over the past 11 years when he served at intervals under my orders and whom I have got to know well. He leaves behind a mother and sister, whose considerable support he was and who will mourn [his passing] inconsolably.
>
> *Pollux*, in the roads of Pariaman, 15 December 1831.

Following the disaster at Narras the decision was taken not to pursue the campaign and the *Pollux* was back in Batavia by 3 February 1831, only to leave 17 days later (20 February-1 March) to transport further troop reinforcements for the Dutch war against the Padris in West Sumatra.[93] It then returned briefly to Batavia (1-6 March) before moving on to Surabaya where it arrived on 10 March.[94] There it remained for the best part of the next three months (10 March-18 May 1831), surviving a local epidemic, probably cholera, which it did by cancelling all shore leave for its crew and moving further out to sea in the Madura Strait while the epidemic raged in the East Javanese port. According the *Javasche Courant*, some 15 percent (48,217) of the 311,192-strong Surabaya population contracted the disease and just over 100 lives (0.002 percent of those infected) lost—distinctly mild compared to the previous cholera epidemic a decade earlier in April-November 1821 when seven percent of the population of the city together with Madura and the Oosthoek (Java's Eastern Salient) had succumbed.[95]

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92. *Javasche Courant*, 26-07-1830 and 9-09-1830 (refer to the *Pollux* leaving Batavia in a westerly direction on 26-07-1830; and heading north on 8-09-1830). Both sorties were of short duration.

93. *Javasche Courant*, 5-02-1831 (reference to *Pollux*'s return to Batavia); 22-02-1831 (reference to *Pollux* leaving for West with troops:'*koerstellende om de West met Z.M. troepen*').

94. *Javasche Courant*,19-03-1831.

95. *Javasche Courant*, 19-05-1831. On the mortality figures in Surabaya for the 1821 cholera epidemic where 76 people were reported dying every day in mid-June 1821. The seven percent mortality figure for Surabaya, Madura and the Oosthoek is given in Muller 1832:3; and Carey 1986:133 note 288; 2008:494-5.

On 18 May, *Pollux* left Surabaya for Batavia once again where it remained between 23 May and mid-July, making just one sortie to the West, possibly either another training exercise for its cadets through the Sunda Strait or the beginning of its survey operations in Merak Bay (2-6 June 1831).[96] In mid-July, the corvette was briefly tasked with transporting the Commandant-Director of the Netherlands Indies Marine, Captain-commander Wardenburg, from Rembang (23 July), where he may have been inspecting the local shipbuilding industry, the north coast port being one of the places where teakwood three-masted schooners and frigates had been laid down, most recently the frigate *Javaan* (footnote 8), which had seen service in Semarang in August-September 1825.[97] *Pollux* brought him first to Semarang (25-29 July), where he spent four days inspecting the naval facilities in Tanjung Mas and Torboyo, and then on to Batavia (1 August), where he resumed his naval command functions.[98]

There followed another two and a half month period (1 August-19 October) where the *Pollux* hardly stirred from its Batavia anchorage, apart from one rather longer sortie to the West (30 August-21 September) probably linked with its ongoing survey of Merak Bay. It may also have carried out further troop transport duties and naval support operations for the Dutch war effort against the Padris in West Sumatra.[99] Again between 19 October and early January 1831, the corvette was involved in the same naval back-up roles, and assisted during the Dutch assault on the Padri rock redoubt at Ujung Raja near Katiagan in West Pasaman (Pasaman Barat) Regency (*kabupaten*) in December 1831:[100]

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96. *Javasche Courant*, 26-05-1831 (reports *Pollux* entering Batavia on 23-05-1831). Then all numbers of the *Javasche Courant* from 31-05-1831 to 9-07-1831 which refer to *Pollux* at anchor in Batavia roads with the exception of the period 2-6 June 1831 when it was on its 'cruise to the West' (*kruistogt naar het West*), see *Javasche Courant*, 4-06-1831 and 9-06-1831. For a reference to Pollux's survey operations in Merak Bay in 1831, see Vermeulen 1966:412.

97. Carey 1984:9; 2008:164 note 18. Another example of such a three-masted schooner was the 14-gun *Circe* which the Dutch Indies navy used to transport Diponegoro from Manado to Makassar on 20 June-11 July 1833. It served from circa 1825 to 1852, see Vermeulen 1966:336.

98. *Javasche Courant*, 2-08-1831 (reports 25 July arrival of *Pollux* in Semarang from Rembang with Wardenburg); *Javasche Courant*, 4-08-1831, 6-08-1831 (reports departure of *Pollux* from Semarang with Wardenburg on 29 July and arrival in Batavia on 1 August 1831).

99. *Javasche Courant*, 1-09-1831 (refers to *Pollu*x leaving Batavia and sailing West); and *Javasche Courant*, 22-09-1831 (refers to *Pollux* at anchor again in Batavia).

100. *Journal de la Haye*, 20-06-1832: "*Le 4 décembre il était parti de Padang, une escadrille composée de la corvette de* S. M. Pollux, *capitaine Eeg et de quelques autres bâtimens de guerre de moindre grandeur. Cette expédition était dirigée contre Katiagan, et avait principalement pour but de punir les Padries d'avoir fait des incursions dans nos districts, et de réprimer la contrebande. Cette expédition a été couronnée du plus brillant succès par la prise du rocher d'Oedjong Radja près de*

> "On 4 December a squadron left Padang made up of the corvette [...] *Pollux*, [commanded by] Captain Eeg, and a few other smaller warships. This expedition was directed against Katiagan [Pasaman Barat], and its main object was to punish the Padris for having made incursions into our districts, and to suppress smuggling. This expedition was crowned with the most brilliant success with the capture of the rock of Ujung Raja near Katiagan, on which the enemy had mainly entrenched himself. Fortunately, the ships had already returned to Padang on 17 December [1831]. It was the Resident [and Military Commander of Sumatra's West Coast], Lieutenant-Colonel [Cornelis Pieter Jacob] Elout [1795-1843; in office, 1830-35] who was in charge of the expedition. [Our] troops were made up of Dutch and Ambonese soldiers under the command of Major [Andreas Victor] Michiels [1797-1849]. It was he who, after having silenced the enemy cannon by the fire of our ships, set out to storm the entrenchments which had been raised on the rock [outcrop] and which art and nature had also made very strong. After the capture of Ujung Raja, the Padris fled into the woods, so that our people did not have much difficulty destroying their *bentengs* [forts]. In seizing the artillery which was there, he set fire to their canoes (*praauw*), which were under construction."

On 12 January 1832, after an absence of three months *Pollux* was back in Batavia.[101] By this time, Eeg's contribution to the Dutch war effort in West Sumatra had been recognised by his investiture with the Order of the Netherlands Lion (*Ridderorde der Nederlandsche Leeuw*) given personally by the Dutch monarch, Willem I, on 7 October 1831.[102]

The Belgian Revolt and the Voyage of Death, 1831-32

Pollux appears to have remained at anchor in the colonial capital on duties as a guardship (*wachtship*) for the next four months without any further sorties. In early May, however, it was recalled back to the Netherlands as a matter of urgency to present itself to the Dutch naval base in Vlissingen (Flushing) in Zeeland and assist in the blockade of the Scheldt. Unbeknownst to the officers and men of the *Pollux*, half a world away in the United Kingdom of the Netherlands (1815-30) events had taken place which had radically altered

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Katiagan, sur lequel l'ennemi s'était principalement retranché. Déjà le 17 décembre les vaisseaux étaient heureusement retournés à Padang. C'est le lieutenant-colonel et résident Elout qui commandait en chef l'expédition. Les troupes de débarquement composées de Néerlandais et de soldats d'Amboine étaient sous les ordres du major Michiels. C'est lui qui, après avoir fait taire le canon ennemi par le feu de nos vaisseaux fit prendre d'assaut les retranchements qu'on avait élevés sur le rocher et que l'art et la nature rendaient également très forts. Après la prise d'Oedjong-Radja, les Padries s'étaient enfuis dans les bois, de manière que les nôtres n'avaient pas eu beaucoup de peine à détruire leurs bentengs, à s'emparer de l'artillerie qui s'y trouvait et à mettre le feu à leurs pirogues (praauwen), qui étaient en construction."

101. *Javasche Courant*, 20-10-1831 (refers to *Pollux* leaving Batavia in a northerly direction with troops aboard); *Javasche Courant*, 12-01-1832, reports *Pollux* arriving back in Batavia after a 12-week absence).

102. NL-HaNA 2.12.14_5_0047 and 4_14_0071 (*Register* and *Staat van Dienst* Eeg).

the balance of power in the Low Countries. Exasperated by the same Dutch quest for immediate profit which had led to such suffering in south-central Java before the Java War, the inhabitants of the Southern Netherlands had risen in revolt after an insurrection in Brussels on 24 August 1830 and Belgian independence had been proclaimed (4 October 1830). Despite the pressures from the great powers and the elevation of Leopold of Saxe-Coburg as the new Belgian monarch (21 July 1831, reigned 1831-1865), the Dutch king, Willem I, steadfastly refused to disarm. A series of military engagements had ensued culminating in the "Ten Days' Campaign" (2-12 August 1831) by the Dutch Army which led to a French expeditionary force entering Belgium to support the nationalists. The great citadel of Antwerp was bombarded, and a Dutch garrison under General David Hendrik Chassé (1765-1849)—nicknamed *Général Baionette* (General Bayonet) by Napoleon because of his predilection for that weapon in close combat—forced to endure a heroic two-year siege (December 1830-December 1832). It even seemed for a time, following Antwerp's fall in December 1832, that the French might cross the Dutch-Belgian border into Zeeland. With a European war looming, all available military assets now had to be withdrawn from the Indies/Indonesia for the defence of the motherland.

Thus, it was that on the morning of 23 May 1832, *Pollux* weighed anchor from Batavia for the last time heading for the Sunda Strait. As had been the case in 1827, a number of returning Dutch troops were on board making the ship's tight quarters seem even more cramped.[103] Whereas, the corvette's previous return journey (1 April-30 November 1827) had nearly ended in disaster, an even grimmer fate now awaited the officers and men of the corvette's last homeward voyage. On the final leg of the journey from the South Atlantic to Vlissingen from 23 August to 23 October 1832 a third of its crew (40 sailors and NCOs) along with its captain, First Officer and a young Second Lieutenant succumbed to scurvy (Plate 12). Indeed, the remaining sailors were so weakened by scurvy that they had severe difficulty entering the navigation channel at the mouth of the Scheldt and bringing the ship into port in Vlissingen. A day before the *Pollux* docked, it hit a sandbank—the Banjaard—at the entrance to the Scheldt and could only be refloated by throwing 18 out of its 28 cannons overboard.[104]

How did this tragedy happen? Unlike July 1827, when *Pollux* had been hit by a hurricane, scurvy was not an Act of God. In fact, the Scots doctor, James Lind (1716-94), a pioneer of naval hygiene in the Royal Navy, had already developed the theory that citrus fruits cured scurvy by the third quarter of the eighteenth century. And his methods were largely adopted in the British

103. *Javasche Courant*, 24-05-1832 reports *Pollux*'s final departure from Batavia for the Netherlands with an undisclosed number of troops (*Zijn Majesteits Troepen*).

104. *Rotterdamsche Courant*, 25-10-1832.

senior service with lemon (and later lime) juice being mixed with the daily Rum ration by the early nineteenth century—hence the American epithet for British sailors as 'limeys'. Although other navies, like the Dutch, seem to have forgotten and reinvented this cure more than once, its implementation still depended on the medical knowledge of individual ship's doctors.[105] In *Pollux*'s case this was Surgeon-Major Schillet. A specialist in cholera not diet, it was his duty to insist on administering citrus fruits. But the attitude of the commander and the possibilities of obtaining such fruit also mattered. And here the tense international situation may have played a part in the tragedy. Whereas, on previous homeward bound voyages, before the Belgian crisis broke in late August 1830, Dutch warships and troop transports had taken advantage of the repair and revictualling facilities at a number of British-controlled ports, including St. Helena[106] conveniently situated at a near halfway point between Batavia and the Netherlands,[107] Mauritius, where *Pollux* underwent emergency repairs in July-August 1827, and Cape Town and Simonstown in South Africa, the last an important naval base, the threat of imminent war with Britain over Belgian independence now dictated caution. Captain Eeg may have calculated that the *Pollux* ran the risk of being impounded by the British authorities if war broke out while the corvette was in a British port.

Sadly, the *Pollux*'s ship's log only exists for its first four years of service between 1824 and 1827, possibly because of the fire which destroyed many of the records kept in the Dutch Navy Ministry in the Lange Voorhout, The Hague, in 1844[108] so there is no way we can check this against the official record, but it seems almost certain that the corvette did not stop over and revictual at St. Helena as it passed through the South Atlantic in late August 1832. Taking an average daily distance of 73.7 nautical miles a day for the 11,354 nautical mile voyage which the *Pollux* covered in 154 days, this would mean that it arrived at the latitude of St Helena (15.9650° South) around 23 August 1832. Once it had sailed past this point, there remained another 61 days of sailing to cover the remaining 4,497 nautical miles to Vlissingen. It was precisely on this final leg of the voyage that the disease began to take

105. According to Dutch naval historian, Tico Onderwater, "scurvy often appeared as secondary disease, occurring next to diseases as dysentery, diarrhoea and beriberi. Only with the passage from sail to steam power, scurvy became a rarity, since travel time became much shorter", Electronic communication, T.A. Onderwater, 5 July 2021.

106. See Carey 2021:58, referencing Errembault de Dudzeele et d'Orroir's (1789-1830) stopover on his final home voyage on the transport *Maria* from Batavia to Hellevoetsluis (17 May-15 September 1830).

107. Batavia to St Helena is 6,857 nautical miles; St Helena to Vlissingen is 4,497 nautical miles, making a total of 11,354 nautical miles for the total sea journey from Batavia to Vlissingen.

108. NL-HaNA 2.12.03_3601. It can be downloaded at: https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/2.12.03/invnr/3601/file.

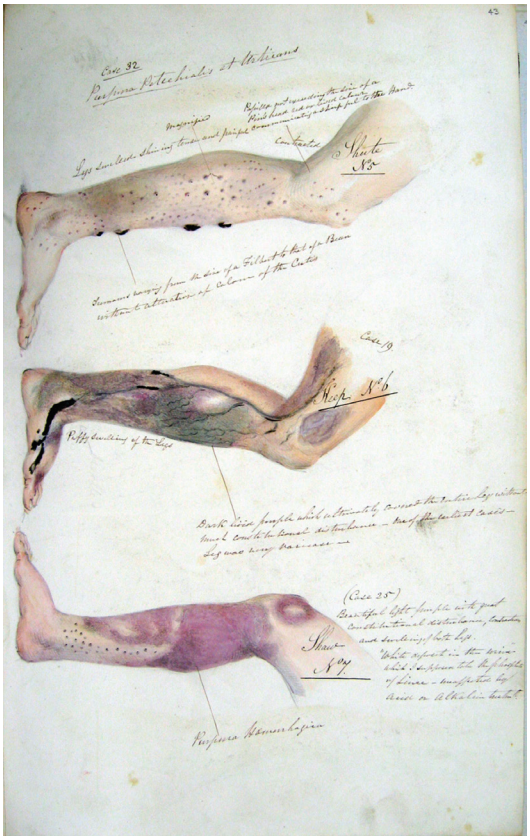

Plate 12 – Page from the journal of the Royal Navy Surgeon, Henry Walsh Mahon (1809-78), showing the effects of scurvy, from his time aboard HM Convict Ship *Barrosa*. Photograph courtesy of the National Archives UK.

hold. Captain Eeg died first on 7 September, followed by his First Officer, Hugenholtz, five days later, on 12 September.[109] This suggests that it was precisely the failure to revictual in St Helena around 23 August which sealed the fate of the ship's crew. If new supplies, particularly of citrus fruit, had been brought on board at that time, then the tragedy which overwhelmed *Pollux* on its last homeward voyage could almost certainly have been avoided.

The tortures endured by the corvette's crew as they struggled through the last eight weeks of their five-month voyage can only be imagined. In those desperate days, as hideously disfigured bodies were thrown overboard almost every day, the emaciated survivors might have recalled the scenes of horror and death depicted in Théodore Géricault's *Le radeau de la Méduse* [The Raft of the Medusa] (1818-19). A vitamin C deficiency, scurvy leads to anaemia,

109. NL-HaNA 2.12.14_5_0047, 4_14_0071 (*Register* and *Staat van Dienst* Eeg); NL-HaNA 2.12.14_17_0198, 12_14_0199, 12_14_2000 (*Register* and *Staat van Dienst* Hugenholtz).

debility, exhaustion, spontaneous bleeding, pain in the limbs—especially the legs—swelling in some parts of the body, and often ulceration of the gums and loss of teeth. Death usually follows within three weeks after the onset of the first symptoms. Given the agonising pains of the disease, extinction of the life force could be seen as a merciful release. Believers in fate might also surmise a certain *Schadenfreude* on the part of the *Pollux*'s former elite Javanese prisoners, Raden Mas Saleh (Notodiningrat) and Diponegoro, not to speak of those done to death in the naval bombardments and attacks on the Padri strongholds of Narras (12 December 1830) and Ujung Raja (Katiagan) (mid-December 1831) in West Sumatra, as the corvette, now a ship of death, limped into port in Vlissingen (Plate 13) on 23 October 1832.

Pollux's third officer, Second Lieutenant (post-1849, *kapitein-luitenant-ter-zee*) Jonkheer Constantin George van Hoogenhouck Tulleken (1802-59), was now in temporary command.[110] The son of a Vice-Admiral,[111] Tulleken appears to have risen to the challenge of taking over command of the *Pollux* following the deaths in quick succession of the ship's captain and First Officer. But his severely weakened and depleted crew faced multiple challenges, not least when they eventually reached the mouth of the Scheldt on 22 October. There they noted the unmistakable presence of a British warship blockading the navigation canal[112] and received a warning from an American ship that hostilities between the Netherlands and Britain over Belgian independence might already have broken out:[113]

> "Concerning the corvette *Pollux*, which arrived at Vlissingen on this day [23 October 1832], the following detail has been related, which again testifies to the heroic spirit which animates Dutch sailors. Approaching the [navigation] channel [of the Scheldt], the *Pollux* encountered an American ship, [...] whose

110. NL-HaNA2.12.14_27-1787 (*Staat van Dienst* Tulleken). See also Van der Aa 1852-78, 8.2:1125.

111. This was Vice-Admiral Jan Hoogenhouck Tulleken (1762-1851), who participated in the battle of Doggersbank (1781) during the Fourth Anglo-Dutch War (1780-84), see Van der Aa 1867, VIII.2:1125.

112. *Leeuwaarder Courant*, 13-11-1832, refers to the presence of the British warship.

113. *Utrechtsche Courant*, 3-11-1832, "*Dezer* [23 October 1832] *te Vlissingen binnengekomen korvet de Pollux, verneemt men de navolgende bijzonderheid, welke opnieuw getuigt van den heldhaftigen geest, die Neêrlands zeelieden bezielt: het kanaal naderende, ontmoette de Pollux één Amerikaanse schip, en door den kapitein van dat schip gewaarschuwd zijnde om op zijne hoede te zijn, uithoorend gelijk die kapitein meende, de vijandelijkheden tusschen Engeland en Holland reeds moesten zijn uitgebarsten, zoo liet de luitenant Tulleken, de Pollux kommanderende, zijne overhebbende meestal zieke manschap op het dek zamentekomen, deelde hen mede, wat hij vernomen had, en stelde hen voor om, daar te zwak waren om zich te kunnen verdedigen, in geval zij door eenig vijandelijk schip mogten aangetast worden, dadelijk op zoodanig schip aan te loopen en zich met hetzelve in de lucht te laten vliegen; welk voorstel dadelijk door allen met geestdrift werd goedgekeurd*!"

> captain [...] warned [Tulleken] to be on his guard, [...] as [he] believed, hostilities between England and Holland must have already broken out. So, [...] Tulleken, commanding the *Pollux*, [summoned] his mostly sick crew on deck. When they had assembled, he told them what he had heard, and suggested that, since they were too weak ever to defend themselves, should they be attacked by an enemy ship, they should immediately go up to it [...] and take it upon themselves [...] to send everyone sky high [by firing the *Pollux*'s powder magazine], which proposal was approved with enthusiasm by all!"

The plight of the *Pollux* and Tulleken's bravery caught the public imagination in the Netherlands. Indeed, it came hard on the heels of Second Lieutenant Jan Carel Josephus ('Itz') van Speyk's (1802-31) heroic action twenty months earlier on 5 February 1831 when he had blown up his gunboat (*kanoneerboot* no.2) with all its crew and a large number of the attacking mob in Antwerp rather than allow it to fall into Belgian hands.[114] Tulleken would have been well aware of Van Speyk's heroic action when he summoned his sick crew on the *Pollux* to prepare for a similar act of self-immolation against the British. Dutch well-wishers of the gallant lieutenant probably made the connection too: those in Haarlem even clubbed together to send him letters of support and monetary gifts – discretely referred to as *extra oorlam* ('extra rum / jenever / gin rations')—sailor's wages at this time being paid partly in drink. These Tulleken politely refused. He informed the *Opregte Haarlemsche Courant* readership on 8 November that he had just been doing his duty and could not accept any monetary gifts.[115] Bringing the *Pollux* home after both his superiors had been struck down by scurvy was what was expected of him as a serving officer in the Dutch navy. But heroics were not the only emotion on display in the Dutch press that day. In the same number of the Haarlem newspaper in which Tulleken's statement had appeared, the human impact of the losses endured by the *Pollux* was also starkly evidenced: in the Family News (*Familiebericht*) section, First Lieutenant Hugenholtz's widow, Alberta Stoffelina Geertruida Bruinier (1798-1857), took out an obituary notice to mourn her husband's passing.[116] Although she did not mention this, she was now left with three young children, two sons aged seven and four years respectively, and a very young daughter, born on 1 April 1830, Jacoba Stoffelina Anthonia, then still a toddler of thirty-one months, whom her late husband had never even met.[117] Other obituary notices followed from the grieving parents of Second Lieutenant

114. Van der Aa 1852-78, 17.2:900-901; Molhuysen and Blok 1911-37, V:786.

115. *Opregte Haarlemsche Courant*, 8-11-1832.

116. Ibid.

117. *Opregte Haarlemsche Courant*, 8-04-1830; 10-04-1830 (refers to the birth of Hugenholtz's youngest child, a girl, Jacoba). He also had two sons, Jan Albert Hendrik (1825-74) and Petrus Conradus Arnoldus (1828-1903), the first of whom served in the Dutch navy, rising to the rank of Captain-commander (*kapitein-luitenant-ter-zee*) and serving as ad interim Governor of the Dutch Gold Coast between 8 June and 17 September 1871.

Willem August Spengler (1803-32), their beloved second son, and the Amsterdam-based widow of Captain Christiaan Eeg, Catharina Margaretha Amesz (1778-1836), whose only son, Christian Jan (1802-68), had already followed his father into the navy and would end his career as a captain (*kapitein-ter-zee*) in command of the armed brig *Mercur* (Mercury) in 1851.[118]

Last Years as a Floating Battery, 1832-38

The *Pollux*'s days were now numbered. After docking in Vlissingen on 23 October 1832, the corvette would scarcely move from the Dutch naval base for the remaining six years of her life while it served as a blockade ship (*blokschip*). A new commanding officer seemingly of Swiss origin, First Lieutenant E.F. du Fés (also spelt Dufez), who was immediately promoted to Commander (*Kapitein-luitenant-ter-zee*), was appointed in late February 1833, taking up his command on 1 March and serving for nineteen months until 1 December 1834.[119] On 25 March, it was towed into position at the mouth of the Scheldt by the steam tug *De Beurs van Amsterdam* to take part in the Dutch blockade of the strategic waterway as negotiations continued over the status of the newly independent Belgium. By this time, it had become little more than a floating battery with its fire power diminished—its ordnance still only numbered ten 32-pounder cannon, the battery guns flung overboard to refloat the corvette as it entered the Scheldt on 22 October 1832 never being restored.

Throughout the rest of 1833 and 1834, *Pollux* continued the same blockade duties with other Dutch warships on the Scheldt,[120] usually being towed into position by steam barges or tugs rather than required to manoeuvre under its own sail.[121] Four years later, on 15 April 1838, it was still listed as part of His Netherlands Majesty's Navy (*Koninklijke Nederlandsche Marine*).[122] But by then it had become surplus to requirements. The age of sail had been overtaken by the age of steam. A warship which could not manoeuvre under its own power in a narrow waterway like the Scheldt was now a liability. At the same time, the political tensions over Belgian independence, which had required the *Pollux*'s

118. *Opregte Haarlemsche Courant*, 30-10-1832 (Spengler obituary); 3-11-1832 (Eeg obituary). See also *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 30-10-1832, 3-11-1832, 6-11-1832; and *Nederlandse Staatscourant*, 17-07-1833 (Eeg obituary notices).

119. *Overijsselsche Courant,* 26-02-1833 (refers to Dufez's appointment on or around 22 February 1833).

120. On the *Pollux*'s movements on the Scheldt in 1833-34, see *Middelburgse Courant*, 7-03-1833, 25-03-1834, 18-1-1834, 27-11-1834; *Opregte Haarlemsche Courant,* 26-03-1833, *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 22-03-1833, *Overijsselsche Courant*, 20-12-1833; *Leeuwaarder Courant*, 31-12-1833; *Bredasche Courant*, 3-01-1834*; Journal de la Haye,* 13-04-1833.

121. See *Middelburgse Courant*, 18-11-1834, 27-11-1834, reference the Corvettes *Pollux* and *Comet* being towed out from Vlissingen by the steam barge (*stoompaket*), *Surinam*.

122. *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 15-04-1838.

Plate 13 – 'View of Vlissingen from the sea, 1662 [*Zicht op Vlissingen vanuit zee,* 1662]' by Petrus Segars. Photograph courtesy of the Zeeuws Maritiem MuZEEum [sic], Vlissingen.

urgent presence on the Scheldt in 1832, were now a thing of the past. In late 1838, negotiations had begun in London between the principal powers of the Concert of Europe (Austria, France, Russia and the United Kingdom) and the two parties in dispute (the Netherlands and Belgium), which would result on 19 April 1839, in the Treaty of London, also known as the Treaty of Separation. Signed by the Dutch king, Willem I, and the recently installed Belgian monarch, Leopold I, this formally recognised Belgian independence with the newly established kingdom's neutrality and sovereignty being guaranteed by the Concert of Europe powers, a guarantee which would remain in place until 4 August 1914, when the German invasion of Belgium and Luxemburg triggered World War I (1914-18).

As the negotiations for Belgian independence commenced in London, quietly and without fanfare, *Pollux* was decommissioned. The ship was broken at the Naval Dockyard at Vlissingen, only its name continuing to have a resonance until the present era.[123] The corvette's fourteen-year service in the Dutch navy had come to an end. So too did a ship whose short life had spanned

123. On the break-up of the *Pollux*, see http://warshipresearch.weblog.nl/warships/2009/2008/dutch-warships-1.html, accessed 1 August 2011; and Vermeulen 1966:16.

the violent beginnings of the high colonial era in the Dutch East Indies. Silent witness to drama and tragedy in equal measure, its ship's log was stuff of a novel or at least a naval version of *Servitude et Grandeur Militaires* [Glory and Submission: Aspects of Military Life, 1835], Alfred de Vigny's (1797-1863) meditation on that "almost barbaric profession of warfare" which caused him to "love the majesty of human suffering,"

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Appendix

The Corvette-of-war (*kuilkorvet*) *Pollux*, 1824-38: Key Dates

27 May 1822 – *Besluit* (Official Decision) 27-05-1822 no.7 of Dutch Navy Minister, Joan Cornelis van der Hoop (in office, 1781-95, 1813-25), orders the building of the *kuilkorvet* (corvette-of-war) *Pollux* with an armament of 28 guns at the Dutch state shipyard, Rijkswerf, in Rotterdam

November 1822 – laid down at the Rijkswerf in Rotterdam under the supervision of the Rotterdam shipbuilder, Pieter Glavimans (c. 1720-87)

13 March 1824 – launched in Rotterdam

16 May 1824 – enters Dutch naval service with Lieutenant-Commander (*kapitein-luitenant-ter-zee*) Christiaan Eeg as its first captain. He serves two terms (16 May 1824 to 15 December 1827; and 16 August 1829 to 7 September 1832, when he dies at sea)

29 July 1824 – leaves Hellevoetsluis for the Nieuwediep naval dockyard at Den Helder for its final fitting out before its voyage to the Netherlands-Indies via Tenerife, Elmina (Dutch Guinea Coast, West Africa), Uruguay (Montevideo), Argentina (Buenos Aires), Cape Horn, Chile (Valparaíso), Venezuela (now Peru) (Cherillos). Nuku Hiva (Islas Marquesas), Ambon, Surabaya and Semarang

31 July 1824 – arrives in Nieuwediep, Den Helder

23 August 1824 – leaves Nieuwediep, Den Helder, with the frigate *Maria Reigersbergen* (Captain Fredrik [sic] Coertzen, 1771-1832) (Plate 3) for a voyage around the world, which has a dual purpose (1) showing the Dutch flag in South American ports; and (2) establishing trade relations with countries around Cape Horn (Uruguay, Argentina, Chile and Peru)

mid-September 1824 – arrives Santa Cruz (Tenerife)

13 October 1824 – arrives St George d'Elmina (Kust van Guinea, Guinea Coast)

24 October 1824 – departs St George d'Elmina

6 December 1824 – arrives Montevideo (Uruguay)

10 December 1824 – arrives Buenos Aires (Argentina)

early January 1825 – departs Buenos Aires

3 February 1825 – rounds Cape Horn

10 February 1825 – encounters heavy storm West of Cape Horn (Plate 3)

28 February 1825 – arrives Valparaíso (Chile) where *Pollux* joins *Maria Reigersbergen* which has arrived some days earlier

21 March 1825 – departs Valparaíso

early April 1825 – arrives Chorrillos (Lima), then part of Venezuela, now the capital of Peru. The *Pollux'*s First Officer, First Lieutenant (*luitenant-ter-zee-der-eerste-klasse*), H.F. Tengbergen goes into Lima to meet Simón Bolívar (1783-1830), alias 'The Liberator (*El Libertador*)', the first President of Gran Colombia (in office, 1819-1830) and sixth President of Peru (in office, 1824-27), to pay a courtesy visit and open trade negotiations, but he is unavailable.

10 April 1825 – leaves Chorrillos (Lima)

15 May 1825 – arrives Bay of Anna Maria on the island of Nuku Hiva in the Marquesas, then known as the Washington Islands (post-1880, French Polynesia) (Plate 1)

late May 1825 – departs Nuku Hiva

13 June 1825 – crosses the Equator

14 June 1825 – discovers Fenua Tapu, which Captain Eeg renames *Nederlandsch Eiland* (Netherlands Island), an islet of the Nui atoll in the current Pacific Ocean State of Tuvalu

2 August 1825 – arrives Ambon with many sick sailors on board

10 August 1825 – leaves Ambon

30 August 1825 – arrives Surabaya and becomes part of the auxiliary Dutch naval squadron (*auxiliair eskader)* in the Netherlands Indies under Rear-Admiral (*schout-bij-nacht*) James John Melvill van Carnbée (1776-1837; in office, 1825-27)

5 September 1825 – departs Surabaya with the *Maria Reigersbergen* and a detachment of 171 Dutch infantry from the expeditionary force (*divisie*) sent from South Sulawesi (Makassar) on transports (frigates and corvettes) arranged by Captain (*kapitein-ter-zee*) Pieter Pietersen of the Sulawesi (Makassar) squadron,[124] of which 64 sail with the *Pollux*

124. See Nahuys van Burgst 1835-36, II:9.

8 September 1825 – arrives Semarang and serves for three months as a *wachtship* (guardship) and floating prison

9 September 1825 – the eldest son of the former *bupati* of Semarang, Kiai Tumenggung Suroadimenggolo V (in office, 1809-22) (Plate 4), Raden Ario Notodiningrat, the former *bupati* of Probolinggo (1817-c.1821) and Lasem (c.1821-24), is brought on board as a state prisoner (*staatsgevangene*). His father is held on the *Maria Reigersbergen*, which also serves as a *wachtschip* and floating prison. Notodiningrat is transferred to the *Maria Reigersbergen* to join his father on 23 December

26 December 1825 – leaves Semarang

28 December 1825 – arrives Surabaya and once more becomes part of the auxiliary naval squadron (*auxiliair eskader*) under the command of Rear-Admiral J.J. Melvill von Carnbée, where it performs patrol and search (*kruistochten*) operations along the north coast and in the eastern approaches to Java

19 April 1826 – death of Midshipman First Class (*adelborst-ter-eerste-klasse*), L.K van Groin

29 September 1826 – leaves Surabaya for military support and survey operations in Pacitan

14-23 October 1826 – ten-day mission in Pacitan[125]

16 November 1826 – returns to Surabaya after a six-day stop-over in Batavia (29 October – 3 November)

early March 1827 – leaves Surabaya for Batavia

13 March 1827 – arrives naval dockyard at Pulau Onrust (Bay of Batavia) for repairs but because too extensive ordered back to the Netherlands (Den Helder)

1 April 1827 – leaves Batavia for Den Helder

5-6 June 1827 – caught in a violent storm east of Cape Agulhas (South Africa) (Plate 5), sustains extensive damage to rigging, bowsprit and rudder and sails back to Mauritius

1 July/3 August 1827 – in Port Louis (Mauritius) for emergency repairs

125. A translation of the relevant pages of the ship's log in Indonesian can be found in Karsono Hardjoseputro 2021:245-59.

4 August 1827 – leaves Port Louis to resume return journey to the Netherlands

8 August 1827 – Midshipman First Class (*adelborst-der-eerste-klasse*) H.L.M. baron Gansneb genaamd Tengnagel (1810-27) dies at sea

30 November 1827 – arrives at the naval dockyard at Nieuwediep, Den Helder, for repairs and refit (5 December 1827 - end August 1829)

16 August 1829 – Captain (*kapitein-ter-zee*) Chrstiaan Egg re-appointed as the *Pollux*'s commander for a second and last time (16 August 1829 – 7 September 1832)

17 November 1829 – sails from Nieuwediep (Den Helder) for Batavia with newly appointed captain-commander of auxiliary Dutch naval squadron in East Indies, J.F.C. Wardenburg (1776-1839, in office 1830-?)

22 March 1830 – arrives Batavia and placed in the auxiliary naval squadron (*auxiliair eskader*) of Captain-commander Anthon Willem de Man (1773-1861, in office 1827-30) and post-31 March 1830 under Captain-commander Wardenburg

4 May 1830 – leaves Batavia with Prince Diponegoro (1785-1855) and 19 family and followers bound for exile in Manado

12 June 1830 – arrival in Manado

20 June 1830 – leaves Manado for Surabaya

9 July 1830 – arrives Surabaya

14 July 1830 – leaves Surabaya for Batavia

19 July 1830 – arrives Batavia where it serves as a guardship (*wachtship*) with intermissions until 5 May 1832

early December 1830 – leaves Batavia for Padang-Pariaman (West Coast Sumatra) to participate in the war against the Padris (1803-37)

12 December 1830 – 40 of the *Pollux'*s crew and one officer, Second Lieutenant Barend van den Broek, die in attack on fortified Padri kampung of Narras near Pariaman

3 February 1831 – arrives in Batavia

20 February/1 March 1831 – on troop transport duties to Padang-Pariaman

1 March 1831 – returns to Batavia

6 March 1831 – leaves for Surabaya

10 March 1831 – arrives Surabaya

10 March/18 May 1831 – as *wachtschip* (guardship) in Surabaya

18 May 1831 – leaves Surabaya

23 May 1831 – arrives Batavia

23 May/mid-July 1831 – as *wachtschip* (guardship) in Batavia

2-6 June 1831 – on training operations in Sunda Strait, possibly start of Merak Bay survey

mid-July 1831 – leaves Batavia for Rembang to collect commander of Indies auxiliary squadron (*auxiliair eskader*). J.F.C. Wardenburg

23 July 1831 – leaves Rembang with Captain-commander J.F.C. Wardenburg

25-29 July 1831 – in Semarang (Tanjung Mas harbour) on inspection duties with Captain-commander J.F.C. Wardenburg

29 July 1831 – leaves Semarang

1 August 1831 – arrives Batavia

1 August/19 October 1831 – as *wachtschip* (guardship) in Batavia

30 August/21 September 1831 – survey of Merak Bay in Sunda Strait

19 October 1831 – leaves Batavia for Padang-Pariaman

19 October 1831/early Jan 1832 on naval support duties in West Sumatra

4-31 December 1831 – participates in assault on fortified Padri position at Ujung Raja (Katiagan), Pasaman Barat regency

4 January 1832 – leaves Padang-Pariaman

12 January 1832 – arrives Batavia

12 January/22 May 1832 – as *wachtschip* (guardship) Batavia

23 May 1832 – leaves Batavia for Vlissingen

late August/23 October 1832 – forty members of the ship's crew succumb to scurvy

7 September 1832 – Captain Eeg dies of scurvy in the South Atlantic and Second Lieutenant (*luitenant-ter-zee-der-tweede-klasse*) Constantin George van Hoogenhouck Tulleken (1802-59), takes temporary command (see footnote 114)

12 September 1832 – First Officer Frederik Jacob Anthony Hugenholtz (1792-1832) dies of scurvy in the South Atlantic

18 October 1832 – Second Lieutenant (*luitenant-ter-zee-der-tweede-klasse*) Willem August Spengler (1803-32) dies of scurvy in the English Channel just as the *Pollux* is five days sailing from Vlissingen

22 October 1832 – arrives at the mouth of the Scheldt and finds the entrance to the navigation channel blockaded by a British warship. While trying to sail round the British vessel, the *Pollux* hits the Banjaard sandbank and has to jettison 18 of its 28 naval guns to refloat itself

23 October 1832 – arrives in Vlissingen and undergoes repairs in the naval dockyard

1 March 1833/1 December 1834 – First Lieutenant E.F. du Fés (also spelt Dufez) is appointed as the *Pollux*'s captain with the rank of captain-commander (*kapitein-luitenant-ter-zee*)

1 March 1833/1838 – assigned as a blockade ship (*blokschip*) on the Scheldt

late 1838 – decommissioned and broken up in the naval dockyard at Vlissingen

Edgar Bolun Liao *

Creating and Mobilizing "Syonan" Youth: Youth and the Japanese Occupation of Singapore, 1942-1945

The history of modern Singapore began on 30 January 1819 when British East India Company official Thomas Stamford Raffles signed a treaty with a local Malay noble to establish a trading settlement on the island. Within five years, Singapore grew into a bustling entrepot with a population of more than ten thousand. Its rapid growth was due to a combination of reasons – its free port status, its strategic position in the Straits of Malacca at the crossroads between trading networks and maritime traffic between Europe, the Arab World, India, Southeast Asia and China, and global developments such as the advancement in steamship and communications technologies and the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869. Singapore attracted large amounts of British investment and Chinese immigration and became the headquarters of British colonial influence in Southeast Asia, which included Britain's other interests in the Malay states in the Malay Peninsula and the island of Borneo.[1] When the British announced the construction of a naval base in Singapore in 1923 (completed in 1938), this only added more lustre to the island-city's position as the heart of the British Empire in the region.

The ambitions of another imperial power dramatically interrupted British rule in Singapore in 1942. On 8 December 1941, the Japanese 25th Imperial

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1. Wong Lin Ken, "Commercial Growth Before the Second World War," in *A History of Singapore*, eds. Ernest C.T. Chew and Edwin Lee (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1991), 42.

Army under the command of Lieutenant-General Yamashita Tomoyuki invaded British Malaya.[2] They used landing and staging areas in northeastern Malaya and southern Thailand to launch swift incursions southwards. Starved of air and naval cover and reinforcements from Britain, itself beleaguered in Europe, British defences crumbled. On February 15, 1942, the besieged British forces surrendered in what British Prime Minister Winston Churchill termed "Britain's Worst Defeat."[3] For the next three years and eight months, the Japanese imperial army made Singapore the capital of the *Nampo* (the "Southern Regions") of Japan's own pan-Asian empire, known as the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere or the *Dai Toa Kyoeiken*. This pan-Asian empire comprised Japan's territorial gains in Korea, Taiwan, Manchuria and northern China, Malaya (renamed "Malai"), Singapore, Burma, Thailand, Indochina, the Philippines and Indonesia.[4] Singapore itself was renamed *Syonan-to* ("Light of the South") and designated the Syonan Special Municipality (*Syonan Tokubetu-si*) to begin the colony's transformation into a Japanese imperial city.[5] Singapore became, in Gregg and Gillian Huff's words, a "nerve centre for Japanese military operations" in Southeast Asia. The island-city possessed a natural harbour and four airports, advanced port, military, industrial, and naval facilities, and telegraph links to all large cities and some towns in Southeast Asia.[6] The one vital resource the new Japanese masters of the island-city lacked was a loyal and industrious population to serve as imperial subjects and docile labour.

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2. Paul Kratoska, *The Japanese Occupation of Malaya and Singapore, 1941-45: A Social and Economic History*, 2nd edition (Singapore: NUS Press, 2018), 3. The origins of the invasion laid in the rise of tensions between Western powers and Japan in the 1930s. The British, Dutch, and US colonial administrations restricted exports of vital oil and metals from their Southeast Asian colonies to Japan and limited the import of Japanese goods. The economic pressures on Japan allowed right-wing ultra-nationalistic military officers, intellectuals, and politicians to pursue a military build-up.

3. There is a substantial amount of literature devoted to explaining the British's quick defeat. The explanations range from incompetent leadership from, and in-fighting among, the military commanders, to larger strategic explanations such as the German advances in Europe and Japan's raid on Pearl Harbor, which hindered the arrival of British or American reinforcements. See Brian Farrell's *The Defense and Fall of Singapore* (Stroud: Tempus, c2005) for a magisterial account.

4. Eunice Thio, "The Syonan Years, 1942-1945," in *A History of Singapore*, eds. Ernest C.T. Chew and Edwin Lee (Singapore: Oxford University Press 1991), 95.

5. Vivian Blaxell, "New Syonan and Asianism in Japanese-era Singapore," *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, Jan 1, 2008, Vol. 6 Issue 1. Accessed at https://apjjf.org/-Vivian-Blaxell/2644/article.html.

6. Gregg Huff and Gillian Huff, "The Second World War Japanese Occupation of Singapore," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 51, 1-2 (2020), 256.

Present-day Singaporean state-authored histories and commemorations valorized the Japanese occupation as a traumatic moment in Singapore history that awoken Singaporeans to the importance of self-reliance and perpetual vigilance against foreign aggressors. As Kevin Blackburn and Karl Hack noted in their book on the period's remembrance in Singapore and Malaysia, the Singapore state has configured the collective memory of the period into a "single unifying myth of all races suffering together" for the purposes of stimulating national consciousness among Singaporeans.[7]

Academic scholarship on the Occupation has been more nuanced. The bulk of this scholarship focused on the military aspects of the British forces' capitulation. In the 1990s, Singapore-based historian Paul Kratoska and Japanese scholar Yoji Akashi led a group of researchers to produce seminal studies of the Occupation's social and economic aspects. Akashi, in particular, has used the *Syonan Shinbum*, oral testimonies, memoirs, and previously un-utilized Japanese-language sources to study Japan's cultural and social policies in substantial depth and detail.[8] Most recently, Gregg Huff and Gillian Huff built on this existing scholarship to produce even more comprehensive and illuminating studies of Japanese Occupation's economic and social impact on Southeast Asia.[9] Gregg Huff and Shinobu Majima also translated and compiled another important volume of research studies by Japanese academics and civil servants during the war. These empirically-rich reports were important sources, as Huff notes, as most Japanese-language records of wartime *Syonan* were destroyed near the end or just after the war.[10]

Within the above-mentioned existing studies, the Japanese administrators' efforts to mobilize and discipline children and youth are usually submerged within the broader examination of Japanese social policies. Recently, a Japanese scholar Masakazu Matsuoka has produced interesting new research using magazines and cartoons produced for children and youth in Singapore to show how Japanese musicians, artists, and intellectuals participated in

7. See Kevin Blackburn and Karl Hack, *War Memory and the Making of Modern Malaysia and Singapore* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2012), 336.

8. Yoji Akashi, "Japanese Cultural Policy in Malaya and Singapore, 1942-1945," in *Japanese Cultural Policies in Southeast Asia during World War 2*, ed. Grant K. Goodman (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991). See also Yoji Akashi, "Colonel Watanabe Wataru: The Architect of the Malayan Military Administration, December 1941- March 1943," in *New Perspectives on the Japanese Occupation in Malaya and Singapore, 1941-1945*, eds. Yoji Akashi and Yoshimura Mako (Singapore: National University of Singapore Press, 2008), 33-64.

9. Gregg Huff, *World War II and Southeast Asia: Economy and Society under Japanese occupation* (Cambridge, UK; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press 2020).

10. Gregg Huff and Shinobu Majima (eds), *World War II Singapore: The Chōsabu Reports on Syonan* (Singapore: NUS Press, National University of Singapore, 2018), 5.

the enterprise to "Nipponize" local children and youth.[11] From these extant works, we know that the cultural politics of youth in Singapore did not begin with the returning British colonial administration, or the subsequent Labour Front and People's Action Party governments. This article examines these different efforts of Japanese military officers and civil administrators to school and mobilize youth in Singapore during this period. It argues that these Japanese imperialists, animated by the fantasy of moulding ideal new subjects for an envisioned new Japanese imperial city, created associations between the disciplining of the young and the creation of a new society and polity in Singapore, one that looked towards Japan as regional hegemon. These military and civilian administrators needed to address the problems of dislocated and rebellious youth in the territories they occupied. They also saw the young as the answer to the challenges of acquiring local manpower, support, and legitimacy for Japan's empire. These needs and interests fuelled their efforts to create new subjects out of Singapore's children and youth and to discipline their bodies for incorporation into a new pan-Asian Japanese empire. Even though these attempts failed, they paved the way for the subsequent social policies and disciplinary projects of the British colonial and local nationalist governments after the end of the war.

So doing, this article brings modern Singapore history into productive conversation with the emerging history of childhood and youth and building on the work already done by David Pomfret, Christina Jialin Wu, and Rachel Leow.[12] The article shows that the Japanese Occupation was impactful for

11. Masakazu Matsuoka, " 'Shonantou' ni okeru 'bunkajin': Kodomo muke shinbun kara no kousatsu ('Intellectuals' in Singapore under Japanese Occupation: A Consideration of Their Involvement in a Newspaper for School Children)," *Annual Review of Historical Studies of Colonial Education* 14 (2012): 141–159; Masakazu Matsuoka, "Nihon senryou ka singaporu ni okeru kodomo muke puropaganda no shishou teki kigen: Doushinshugi to nanpou muke nihongo kyoiku no renzokusei ni kansuru kousatsu (Comprehensive Study on the School Textbooks and New Education Movement in Japanese Colonies and Japanese-Occupied Areas)," Research Report of the JSPS Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research (B) 22330207 (2010-2012)," March 2013: 297-309; Masakazu Matsuoka, "Nihon gunsei ka Singaporu ni okeru kodomo muke ongaku kousaku (Japanese Propaganda through Music toward School Children during Japanese Occupation of Singapore)," *Researches of Educational History in Asia* 18 (March 2009): 48–64. My gratitude to Tomoharu Hirota for his assistance in translating these articles for my comprehension.

12. Christina Wu Jialin, "A Malayan Girlhood on Parade: Colonial Femininities, Transnational Mobilities and the Girl Guide Movement in British Malaya," in *Transnational Histories of Youth in the Twentieth Century*, eds. Richard Ivan Jobs and David Martin Pomfret (London: Palgrave Macmillan 2015); Christina Wu Jialin, "A Life of Make-Believe: Being Boy Scouts and 'Playing Indian' in British Malaya (1910—1942)," *Gender & History* 26, no. 3 (November 2014), 589-619; Rachel Leow, "Age as a Category of Gender Analysis: Servant Girls, Modern Girls, and Gender in Southeast Asia," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 71, no. 4 (2014), 975-990; David M.

Singapore's post-1945 nation-building and state-building in a less-acknowledged way – it heralded the intersection of state-society relations and age relations in Singapore. Japanese policies and propaganda paved the way for the greater consciousness of youth by naturalizing the socialization and mobilization of youth as a domain of state concern, and by normalizing the fulfillment of young people's aspirations as a source of political legitimacy. In addition, the lens of age relations allows us to go beyond the narrow national frame with which the Singapore government and Singapore's national histories has construed the Japanese Occupation. Instead, the article connects Japanese efforts to socialize, mobilize, and police children and youth in Singapore to a longer history of youth in the new imperial metropole of Japan dating from the end of the 19th-century.[13] A Japanese Youth Corps, the equivalent of the British Boys' Scouts, was established in Singapore in March 1925 with an inaugural group of thirty-one members, to which a Junior troop with 90 members was added in August 1933. More research, which may be hindered by scarcity of sources, is warranted for the pre-war activities of Japanese youths and youth movements in Singapore. That the Japanese Scouts reportedly held "a last camp" in February 1940, sometime before the actual Japanese invasion of Malaya, suggest that the increasing tensions between the British authorities and Japan affected the ability or freedom of Japanese youth movements to function in Singapore.[14] There does not appear to be a direct connection between the existence of Japanese youth movements and the Japanese military authorities' programs for the socialization and mobilization of youth during the Occupation period. Nonetheless, the Japanese Youth Corps' existence was another signpost of the Japanese state's strong beliefs about disciplining and mobilizing of youth for its modernization programs and imperial enterprises, as the above-mentioned seminal works by Ambaras, Chatani, and Frühstück have shown. Singapore thus presents an exceptional case where the history of the making of youth was connected to not one, but two different imperial metropoles.

Pomfret, "'Child Slavery' in French and British Far-Eastern Colonies, 1880-1945," *Past and Present* 201, no. 1 (2008): 175-213; David M. Pomfret, "'Raising Eurasia': Race, Class and Age in Hong Kong and Indochina," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 51, no. 2 (2009): 314-343.

13. David R. Ambaras, *Bad Youth: Juvenile Delinquency and the Politics of Everyday Life in Modern Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006); Sabine Frühstück, *Playing War: Children and the Paradoxes of Modern Militarism in Japan* (Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2017); Sayaka Chatani, *Nation-empire: Ideology and Rural Youth Mobilization in Japan and Its Colonies* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2018).

14. Shingaporu Nihonjinkai (The Japanese Association, Singapore), 戦前シンガポールの日本人社会 : 写真と記録 *(Prewar Japanese community in Singapore: Picture and Record),* (Singapore: Shingaporu Nihonjinkai, 1998), 156-158, 230-232.

Fig. 1– "The Tsubame Team (volunteers of the Japanese Youth Club) marching at the stadium", c. 1930s image no. 19990002629 - 0092, negative no. T2000,0429, photo accession no. 178690, with permission of National Archives of Singapore.

The paper uses *the Syonan Shimbun*, the English-language newspaper in Singapore that the Japanese Military Administration (JMA) turned into its principal propaganda vehicle, to discuss how the bodies and minds of children and youth became sites of Japanese attempts to inscribe a new modernity under Japanese hegemony. As a propaganda broadsheet, the *Syonan Shimbun* is a problematic source to reconstruct and examine Japanese social and cultural policies. Yet, its purpose also means that the newspaper is useful to illuminate the images of ideal youth and children that the Japanese military officers and civilian administrators tried to construct and promote, as well as the significances and meanings they endowed upon successfully socialized and mobilized *Syonan* children and youth. The newspaper also allows us to examine how Japanese officials attempted to instrumentalize and mobilize the bodies of the young in gendered ways. On the one hand, Japanese military officers and civilian administrators valorized young male bodies as valuable labourers and auxiliary combatants. On the other hand, they deployed female bodies in subordinated roles as symbols of progress under Japanese dominance or as replacement for male youth in roles deemed auxiliary or secondary to the wartime economy and war effort. Though there were other pre-war Japanese-language newspapers, and other language-editions of the *Syonan Shimbun*,

these have not been consulted for this study due to my lack of accessibility.[15] At the same time, the fact that the Japanese Propaganda Department exercised close supervision over all media content suggests that these publications would closely reflect the same information about Japanese policies towards children and youth during the Occupation era.

An Imperialist Administrator

One of the earliest researchers to study Japanese social policies in Singapore during the occupation was a PhD. candidate from the University of British Columbia's Department of History. Between 1972 and 1973, Harold E. Wilson, carried out research for his dissertation in Singapore. This became an early classic of Singapore's educational history: *Social Engineering in Singapore*.[16] In this comprehensive study of educational policies between 1819 and 1972, Wilson incorporated interviews with witnesses of the occupation. Among his interviewees was a Japanese individual, Mamoru Shinozaki.

Shinozaki was no ordinary eyewitness. He was working in Singapore as a press attaché of the Consulate-General of Japan when the British imprisoned him for suspected espionage just before the Japanese invasion of Malaya in December 1941. By then, there were already a sizable Japanese community on the island. According to the Japanese Association of Singapore, the community grew from fewer than 1,000 before 1900, to about 3,200 in 1930.[17] After the Japanese army freed him, Shinozaki became the principal advisor to the Japanese Military Administration (JMA) in Singapore, its Chief Education Officer, and subsequently its *Ko-sei Cho* (head of the Welfare Department). Hence, he was the key civilian official in charge of education, welfare, and other social policies. When he was placed on trial for war crimes after the Japanese surrender in August 1945, local community leaders, like Chinese businessman

15. See an undergraduate graduating thesis for a survey of pre-war Japanese newspapers, Ophelia Ooi, "Inquiry into the Political Activities of the Japanese in Singapore, 1930-1942," unpublished academic exercise, Department of History, University of Singapore, 1980, 15-23. During the Japanese Occupation, the Japanese Propaganda Department also supervised the publication of a Japanese edition of the *Syonan Times,* a Chinese edition (*the Cheow Nam Jit Pao* or *Syonan Daily)*, and a Malay version (*Berita Malai* or *Malaya News)*.

16. Harold E. Wilson, *Social Engineering in Singapore: Educational Policies and Social Change, 1819-1972* (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1978). He also produced a working paper on education policies under the Japanese administration. Harold E. Wilson, "Educational Policy and Performance in Singapore, 1942-1945," ISEAS Occasional Paper No. 16 (Singapore: Institute for Southeast Asian Studies, 1973).

17. Shingaporu Nihonjinkai (The Japanese Association, Singapore), 戦前シンガポールの日本人社会：写真と記録 *(Prewar Japanese community in Singapore: Picture and Record)*, 1; Shingaporu Nihonjinkai (The Japanese Association, Singapore), シンガポール日本人社会百年史：星月夜の耀 *(100 Year History Of Japanese Community In Singapore (1915 ~ 2015))*, (Singapore: Shingaporu Nihonjinkai, 2016), 5.

and philanthropist Yap Pheng Geck, intervened and vouched for Shinozaki as someone to whom they were indebted for shielding them from the full brunt of Japanese persecution.[18] Historians of the occupation have used Shinozaki's memoirs to study Japanese actions. These included the infamous *Sook Ching* massacre in February 1942. Three days after Singapore's surrender, Japanese military officers ordered all Chinese males between the ages of eighteen and fifty to report to various checkpoints for inspection and registration. There, they singled out those suspected of being anti-Japanese elements and ferried them to areas in the east of Singapore for execution. Historian Constance M. Turnbull, who wrote the standard textbook of modern Singapore history still in use today, estimated that these *Sook Ching* (Chinese for "Purification") massacres killed about close to 25,000 Chinese.[19]

While Singapore's community leaders then hailed Shinozaki as a hero, Vivian Blaxell reminds us in a recent essay that Shinozaki was very much an "imperial bureaucrat" driven by the fundamental beliefs that inspired Japanese imperialism in Asia.[20] Even if he disagreed with his more belligerent military colleagues' harsh methods, Shinozaki did not question "the "rightness" of Japanese imperialism. A thorough examination of the *Syonan Shimbun* shows that Shinozaki was clearly a committed imperialist involved in Japan's efforts to produce new ideal subjects in Singapore out of its children and youth. That Japanese military and civilian administrators endeavoured to socialize and mobilize the young in Singapore was no surprise. As Sabine Frühstück has shown, by the 1930s and early 1940s, Japan's imperialist government "came to tightly embrace children." They sought to transform Japanese children and youth "into little (militarized) adults (*shokumin*)" and mobilize them as labour and as combatants to support the Japanese war effort.[21] Chatani's recent study dates the Japanese state's attempts at mobilizing youth in Japan and in its colonies of Taiwan and Korea even earlier, to the turn of the 20th century.[22] These efforts to mobilize and militarize children and youth had parallels throughout Japan's short-lived empire in Asia during the Second World War. For instance, Japanese officers and administrators set up youth organizations and paramilitary units in many occupied territories for the purpose of training

18. Mamoru Shinozaki's memoirs, *Syonan – My Story: The Japanese Occupation of Singapore* (Singapore: Asia Pacific Press, 1975), included a testimony from Yap Pheng Geck and a foreword by Wilson.

19. C.M. Turnbull, *A History of Modern Singapore, 1819-2005* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2009), 197.

20. Blaxell, "New Syonan and Asianism in Japanese-era Singapore."

21. Frühstück, *Playing War: Children and the Paradoxes of Modern Militarism in Japan*, 7.

22. Chatani, *Nation-empire: Ideology and Rural Youth Mobilization in Japan and Its Colonies*.

local youth. Joyce Lebra has contributed pioneering research on this.[23] Well-known examples of these nationalist youth movements and military organizations include the Indian National Army, Burmese Independence Army, PETA ("Tentara Sukarela Pembela Tanah Air," or the "Volonteer Army of Defenders of the Homeland") in Indonesia, and the *Kesatuan Melayu Muda* (The "Young Malays Union") in Malaya. Therefore, Japanese imperialism in Southeast Asia was an integral part of the history of youth mobilization in Southeast Asia. This was notwithstanding the well-known stories of the Japanese's cultivation of young nationalists, for instance the *Thakins* (mostly students of Rangoon University and young labour organizers) in Burma, to collaborate with Japan against the British.[24]

In Singapore, the hardline policies of the commander of the *Gunsei-bu* (Military Administration), Colonel Watanabe Wataru, characterized the early JMA administration period between February 1942 and March 1943. Watanabe believed that the local communities had learnt a "hedonistic and wasteful way of life" from the British and had to "account for their past mistakes" and be subjected to "spiritual cleansing" before they could return to their everyday lives.[25] He forced Chinese community leaders to contribute of 50 million yen towards Japan's war efforts, closed Chinese schools, and prohibited of the use of the Chinese language in schools.

Wataru also believed in "Nipponizing" the local population. This meant acculturating them in the Japanese language and culture and instilling in them beliefs about Japan's cultural and moral superiority. Before he became *Syonan-to*'s chief administrator, Wataru authored two Japanese Total War Institute studies on cultural and educational policies in Japan's occupied territories. He also sent out a memorandum "Principles for Reforming School Education" to governors of Japanese-occupied areas on 6 October 1942. In these writings, he argued for the vigorous implementation of "Nipponization" programs. He emphasized that the core curriculum used in local schools "ought to be centered on the Emperor system with the understanding that the indigenous people of Malaya were to be citizens of Imperial Japan in the future."[26] He made no pretence, therefore, that the Japanese military was preparing the local

23. Joyce C. Lebra, *Japanese-Trained Armies in Southeast Asia: Independence and Volunteer Forces in World War II* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977).

24. Christopher Bayly and Tim Harper, *Forgotten Armies: Britain's Asian Empire and the War with Japan* (London: Penguin Books, 2005), 9.

25. Yoji Akashi, "Colonel Watanabe Wataru: The Architect of the Malayan Military Administration, December 1941- March 1943," 34.

26. Yoji Akashi, "Japanese Cultural Policy in Malaya and Singapore, 1942-1945," in *Japanese Cultural Policies in Southeast Asia during World War 2*, ed. Grant K. Goodman (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991), 120.

population for independence. Instead, the people of Malaya were to be guided into a new Asiatic modernity under Japanese overlordship.

Though Japan fought under the banner of liberating Southeast Asia from Western colonialism, its imperialist government and expansionist-minded military coveted the rich natural resources in the regions. Vivian Blaxell has written an excellent article summarizing the complex set of ideas that animated Japanese imperialism.[27] These ideas are explored more comprehensively in the work of Eri Hotta, and more recently, Jeremy Yellen.[28] The Japanese "Dai Toa" ideology promoted a vision of a Great East New Order led and dominated by Japan, where Asian peoples progressed and prospered under Japanese tutelage. The Asian countries Japan liberated would enjoy autonomy but remain dependent on Japan's hegemony – a patently paradoxical fantasy.[29] Japanese politicians, intellectuals, and military officers invoked the concept of *Hakkoichiu* ("Eight Corners of the World Under One Roof" or "the rule of all peoples under one sovereign") to encapsulate this vision. They advanced the idea of *Nihonshugi* ("Japanism"), a brand of Japanese exceptionalism that emphasized "the uniqueness and superiority of Japan's social, political and cultural heritage" and the ideals of self-sacrifice and loyalty to the family and the state.[30] These ideologies undergirded Japanese practices and methods in molding new imperial subjects in the territories they occupied. The minds and bodies of children and youth were the site where the Japanese tried to imprint these ideologies. As Blaxell points out, "Japanese brutality coexisted with a different operation of power, one that aimed to be constructive rather than destructive in the effort to constitute the Japanese Empire."[31]

In Singapore, the *Syonan Times* (later renamed *the Syonan Shimbun*) became the main media platform to promote the ideals of *Hakko Ichiu* and *Dai Toa*-ism.[32] In the early months of the Occupation, the JMA made a futile attempt

27. Blaxell, "New Syonan and Asianism in Japanese-era Singapore."

28. See Eri Hotta, *Pan-Asianism and Japan's War, 1931-1945* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Jeremy Yellen, *The Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere: When Total Empire Met Total War* (U.S.A.: Cornell University Press, 2019).

29. Turnbull, *A History of Modern Singapore*, 199.

30. Ivan Morris, ed., *Japan 1931-1945: Militarism, Fascism, Japanism?* (Lexington: D.C. Heath and Company, 1963), xi-xii.

31. Blaxell, "New Syonan and Asianism in Japanese-era Singapore."

32. When the Japanese military forces conquered Singapore, they took over all existing newspapers and media companies. The most popular English-language newspaper, *The Straits Times*, which is still the main English-language newspaper today, was renamed the *Shonan Times* on 20 February 1942. The name was changed to the *Syonan Times* the following day. The newspaper became the *Syonan Shinbun* on 8 December 1942, and then the *Syonan Shimbun* on 8 December 1943. The Japanese used the Japanese calendar based on the reign name of Emperor Hirohito. Hence, the Japanese used these dates 2602 (Syowa 16) to 2605 (Syowa 20) to refer to the years of the Japanese Occupation

to reach out to a younger audience through the newspaper. Its very first issue featured a new section known as "the Children's Corner," where the fictional 'Uncle Ahnah' wrote letters to "his dear Nephews and Nieces."[33] Over the next few issues, 'Uncle Ahnah' disseminated knowledge about the Japanese language and Japan's geography and history to children and exhorted local children to play their part in establishing a New Order in Asia.[34] They "must work for the common good, or in other words, for the benefit of all," even as the Japanese were now "masters of this island."[35] The column existed only for a short period of time. 'Uncle Ahnah''s very last letter on 2 May 1942 gave a clue as to why the column ceased – he wrote that "one nephew complained that my letter written to you on April 1, 2602, was too difficult for children in the lower classes. Therefore today I shall tell you a little story in a simple way."[36]

The admission that the intended audience found the information inaccessible and uninteresting was an early sign that Japanese propaganda efforts were based on ambitious wishful thinking. Nevertheless, the *Syonan Shinbum* continued to feature propaganda, such as illustrations of student learning and school activities in Japan, to extol the strengths of the Japanese educational system. On occasion, the newspaper featured accounts of local children from the different ethnic communities learning Japanese enthusiastically. Six-year-old Eurasian Maureen Aeria told her mother that she wanted to go to school and learn about Japan like other children. Eleven-year-old Arab schoolboy Syed Mohamed bin Abu-bakar bin Yahya declared that "Nippon has not only freed us from the bondage of the white people, but has taught us to be clever, diligent and self-respecting."[37] Given the newspaper's nature as a propaganda broadsheet, it is unlikely that these children were sincere in their adulation, or that they even existed at all. We can infer, nonetheless, that the JMA and their propagandists were keen to demonstrate strong support for Japanese learning among children of all ethnic communities. This desire is especially evident in how the JMA and Shinozaki mobilized school children to participate in public rallies or commemorations. Frühstück observed that Japanese propaganda frequently urged Japanese children, as well as colonized and enemy children, to be grateful to the "protectors of Japan" – Japanese soldiers. These propaganda efforts often portrayed the Japanese Imperial Army soldier as "an object of affection by children on both sides."[38] Indeed,

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between 1942 and 1945. The newspaper issues were dated accordingly.

33. "The Children's Corner," *The Syonan Times*, April 1, Koki 2602 Syowa 17 (1942), 3.

34. "The Children's Corner," *The Syonan Times*, April 25, Koki 2602 Syowa 17 (1942), II.

35. "The Children's Corner," *The Syonan Times*, April 1, Koki 2602 Syowa 17 (1942), 3.

36. *The Syonan Shimbun Saturday Supplement* May 2, Koki 2602 Syowa 17 (1942), III.

37. *The Syonan Shimbun,* February 18, Koki 2604 Showa 19 (1944), 2.

38. Frühstück, *Playing War*, 127.

the *Syonan Shimbun* occasionally published depictions of Japanese soldiers and local children demonstrating affection for each other.

The mobilization of local children and youth to pay homage to symbols of the Japanese state also became a frequent practice. For instance, on the morning of 8 December 1942, Shinozaki led a parade of youth from the major communities to a Japanese war shrine in the central area of Bukit Timah to celebrate the anniversary of Japan's invasion of Southeast Asia.[39] Such displays were also meant to exhibit spectacles showing local children and youth's support for the Japanese military – the engine of Japan's imperial ambitions. Eight months earlier, children and youth took center-stage within the commemoration of the Japanese Emperor's birthday on 29 April 1942. Shinozaki's Education Department organized a march comprising thousands of local schoolchildren.[40] The parade of children, carrying flags and singing a Japanese patriotic song, *Aikoku Koshin*, joined hordes of assembled locals gathered at the Padang, a prominent field in front of the Singapore City Hall. Together, the assembly of adults, children and youth bowed in the direction of the Imperial Palace, shouted *Banzai!* (Long Live the Emperor!) three times and sang the *Kimigayo* (Japan's National Anthem).[41] According to Shinozaki, the spectacle moved General Yamashita, the commander of the 25th Imperial Army, to tears. The Tiger of Malaya, as Yamashita was dubbed for his leadership in the swift conquest of Malaya and Singapore, turned to Shinozaki and whispered, "Just like Japanese children, aren't they?"[42] For Yamashita, the bodies of local children became emotive metonyms of the pan-Asian Japanese empire he envisioned.

Japanese military officers and civilian administrators agreed that education was a powerful institution to reproduce Japanese values and beliefs in local children and youth. Harold Wilson argued that the Japanese authorities tried to promote education in Singapore to "serve the twin purposes of cultural absorption and technical/industrial development."[43] This was not unique to Singapore but part of Japanese policy empire wide. Modern Japanese education legislation, in Frühstück's words, "conceptualized children as yet-to-be-formed individuals primarily designed to realize adult goals for the nation."[44] In March 1942, the Japanese government adopted an educational policy "to unite the cultures of the indigenous peoples of the southern region

39. *The Syonan Shimbun,* December 1, Koki 2602 Syowa 17 (1942), 4.

40. Turnbull, *A History of Modern Singapore*, 205.

41. Shinozaki, *Syonan – My Story*, 40. See also *The Syonan Times*, April 29, Koki 2602 Syowa 17 (1942), III.

42. Shinozaki, *Syonan – My Story*, 43.

43. Wilson, "Educational Policy and Performance in Singapore, 1942-1945," 2.

44. Frühstück, *Playing War*, 27.

with Japanese culture under the spirit of *Hakko Ichiu* (universal brotherhood), to teach industrial technologies and the Japanese language as the lingua franca of the Co-Prosperity Sphere and to promote the spirit of labour."[45] In the same month, the JMA started the "Nipponization" programs in Singapore. They gave Shinozaki the role of re-opening the schools in Syonan-to and transforming them into institutions to teach a Japanese-style curriculum to Singapore's children and youth. The JMA was the first to attempt to create an integrated educational system to produce new subjects with a common language and outlook, and common values and identities in Singapore – based on Japan as the cultural model and exemplar. Their efforts pre-date the subsequent policies of the British colonial and local nationalist governments. Beneath the rhetoric of cultural liberation and progress, Japanese cultural and educational policies were, as Yoji Akashi has emphasized, "paternalistic if not undisguisedly racist."[46] The military officials, instructors, teachers and officials involved in propagandizing Japanese culture took it for granted that the local population they liberated from Western colonial yoke had not "developed their cultural sophistication to a level deemed worthy of independence and nationhood." Hence, they felt justified in subjecting their new subject peoples to a cultural and educational policy of *kominka kyoiku* (education for transforming citizens into the Emperor's subjects) based on learning the Japanese Imperial Way, the Japanese Emperor cult, the Japanese language, the Japanese culture, and the Japanese *seishin* (spirit).[47] They wanted to replace the previous segregated landscape of English-medium schools and vernacular schools in Singapore with a system based on the Japanese model: common public schools that provided compulsory, universal primary schooling.[48]

The pedagogical programs and methods used in Singapore followed those used in Japan, where administrators emphasized physical education and character development to develop healthy, disciplined, loyal and vigorous children.[49] Each morning, schoolchildren stood in the direction of Japan and sang the Japanese national anthem and other patriotic songs. Schools were required or encouraged to teach in Japanese, though for practical reasons, instruction was given in Malay and English until students could attain proficiency in Japanese.[50] The curriculum included more physical activities

45. Akashi, "Colonel Watanabe Wataru: The Architect of the Malayan Military Administration," 48.

46. Aksahi, "Japanese Cultural Policy in Malaya and Singapore, 1942-1945," 148.

47. Ibid., 117-118.

48. Wilson, "Educational Policy and Performance in Singapore, 1942-1945," 28.

49. See Frühstück, *Playing War*, 28-30 for a succinct account of the impact of Japanese militarism on schools as educators tried to play their part in producing healthy, disciplined, physically fit Japanese children, especially boys, for the Japanese nation.

50. Turnbull, *A History of Modern Singapore*, 209.

like mass drills and training in fencing, judo, and other martial arts, and moral education. Clearly, Nipponization meant more than learning the Japanese language and pledging loyalty to the Japanese Emperor and state. It also entailed the disciplining of the young in a new physical culture, moral purity, and patriotic conduct. The young body became an index of British debauchery and Japanese civilizational superiority, where Japanese officers and educators frequently juxtaposed the products of their educational program with the indolent, undisciplined bodies of local children and youth under British rule.

Beyond this idealistic rhetoric, the revival of the local education system was also meant to address the problem of restless youth on the streets by enclosing them in institutions where they could be trained into docile imperial subjects. Historians Christopher Bayly and Tim Harper noted that "the main target of Japanese policies of social engineering was youth." Japanese officers associated young people "roaming uncontrolled on the streets" with petty crimes and civil disorder and even with "the delinquent Western culture of the towns."[51] Mamoru Shinozaki recounted that the JMA appointed him as Chief Education Officer – even though he had no experience or training in education – and asked him to re-open schools quickly so as to get the large number of youths "off the streets and under control."[52] In his next appointment as head of the Welfare Department, Shinozaki was also tasked "to reduce and eventually eliminate the large number of boy vagrants and idle youths who have infested the streets of the city since the fall of Singapore."[53] One measure was the re-opening of the Boys' Reformatory to occupy the time of about two hundred boys by training them in tailoring, carpentering, and Japanese. The Salvation Army's Boys' Home was converted into the Syonan Home to provide a refuge and reforming institution for fifty-two wayward or orphaned youths between the ages of eight to sixteen.[54] The Home's small capacity meant that its impact was negligible in the face of the large numbers of displaced youth in the island-city. Nevertheless, Japanese propagandists exploited its existence to underline how Japanese disciplining methods helped to convert these boys "to a correct way of life…through clean and wholesome living."[55] The Welfare Department also reopened the *Poh Leung Kok* (an agency set up by the colonial government to protect girls and women from prostitution or involuntary servitude) and the various orphanages and institutions for the poor managed by the Roman Catholic Church. The urgent need to provide social welfare for children and youth thus posed another set of

51. Christopher Bayly and Tim Harper. *Forgotten Armies*, 228.

52. Wilson's interview with Shinozaki on 4 November 1972, cited in Wilson "Educational Policy and Performance in Singapore," 5.

53. *The Syonan Times*, November 28, Koki 2603 Syowa 18 (1943), 4.

54. *The Syonan Times*, September 27, Koki 2602 Syowa 17 (1942), 4.

55. *The Syonan Times*, September 27, Koki 2602 Syowa 17 (1942), 4.

difficulties for the JMA's disciplinary fantasies – before they could even produce ideal Japanese citizens, they had to first address the socio-economic impact of wartime dislocation and devastation on the young.

Japanese efforts to Nippon-ize local youth also extended to sending selected students from its occupied territories to Tokyo to study so as "to assist in the establishment of the New Order in East Asia based on new Asiatic ideals, under the leadership of Nippon."[56] Beyond the increased provision of mass education modelled along Japanese lines, Colonel Watanabe Wataru wanted to train selected local male youth to become leaders.[57] He established the *Syonan Koa Kunrenjo* (Asia Development Training Institute) on 15 May 1942 to train selected young men between seventeen and twenty-five years old to become leaders "for the construction of a new born Malaya."[58] These trainees underwent rigorous physical and spiritual training, along with Japanese language study, for three months; the curriculum was modelled after the Japanese military system. The *Syonan Koa Kunrenjo* trained about 1,000 graduates in Singapore and Malaya before its closure in July 1943, many of whom, according to Yoji Akashi, became prominent people in post-war Malaya.[59] Outstanding trainee graduates were also given the opportunity to study in Japan through "the Southern Special Students (*Nanpo Tokubetsu Ryugakusei*)*"* program. The objective, unsurprisingly, was to produce a future leadership friendly to the Japanese.[60]

Beyond these embryonic efforts to nurture pro-Japan youth leaders, the JMA tried to enlist local male youth in paramilitary organizations to support their regular military forces. This was especially after the Japanese forces began to buckle under the Allied armies' counterattack from mid-1942. With this turning of the tide of war, the JMA urgently mobilized local manpower for its labour-starved military facilities and for its local defence needs. In early 1943, they began recruiting *Heiho* or "auxiliary servicemen" in Malaya, Singapore, and Burma. These were non-combatants who joined the army's auxiliary services, wore uniforms, lived beside Japanese forces, and performed light work and manual labour.[61] This policy was touted as another solution to the problem of youth unemployment and delinquency. In December that year, units of *Giyu-gun* (Volunteer Army) and *Giyu-tai* (Volunteer Corps) were formed in the various regions under Japanese military control. The *Giyu-Gun* was a military force consisting of approximately 2,000 young men armed with machine guns

56. The *Syonan Sinbun*, January 19, Koki 2603, Syowa 18 (1943), 1.

57. Akashi, "Colonel Watanabe Wataru," 48.

58. *The Syonan Times*, May 22, Koki 2062 Syowa 17 (1942), 4.

59. Akashi, "Colonel Watanabe Wataru," 49.

60. Kratoska, *The Japanese Occupation of Malaya and Singapore*, 61.

61. Ibid., 86.

and rifles. Its purpose was to defend the coastline and help preserve public peace and order.[62] In particular, the Japanese authorities sought to recruit "male youths between the ages of 16 to (sic) 30, who [were] brave and strong of physique."[63] The *Giyu-Tai* was a volunteer troop of semi-soldiers and semi-farmers organized into small units to man local defence posts, serve as air raid wardens or police post sentries, and help maintain peace and order.[64] There is already substantial discussion of these three units in the above-mentioned existing literature and there is no need to dwell on their activities.

Nonetheless, it is important to observe that these Japanese efforts to mobilize local youth to serve in these units increased consciousness of male youth as agents. The *Syonan Shinbum* regularly exhorted local youth, especially Malay youth, to join these organizations, valorizing service in these units as the "Duty of Youth of [the] Country." Malay officers attached in the *Giyu-gun*, added their own exhortations, invoking association between military training and service with nationalism and citizenship, —training in the *Giyu-gun* would make the enlistees "new youths of Malai and worthy sons of the soil, to help in the country's reconstruction."[65] Beneath this nationalist rhetoric, however, the JMA resorted to more practical strategies of bolstering recruitment. Spokespersons like Shinozaki regularly reiterated that the volunteer units were given ranks, allowances and pay like that of Japanese soldiers.[66] Shinozaki also tried to assure prospective enlistees that their religious customs would be respected.[67] His labours in this regard suggest substantial resistance to the JMA's efforts to mobilize youth. The author of a *Syonan Shinbum* editorial on 9 January 1945 admitted the public had been misled by "idle and often malicious talk" about the *Heiho* and that "parents have also shown an indisposition to allow their sons to join up."[68] These disciplinary projects were not foisted onto an agentic vacuum but onto populations that already possessed their own vested interests; they resisted Japanese attempts to mobilize their bodies in service of the new imperial master.

Accounts by interviewees who had been forcibly recruited into these units attested that volunteers were not really forthcoming and the Japanese authorities had to use "subterfuge and pressure" to recruit enlistees.[69] According to Isa

62. Lebra, *Japanese-Trained Armies in Southeast Asia*, 116.

63. *Syonan Shimbun*, January 21, Koki 2604 Syowa 19 (1944).

64. Kratoska, *The Japanese Occupation of Malaya and Singapore*, 87.

65. Tan, Tik Loong Stanley. *Syonan Years, 1942-1945: Living Beneath the Rising Sun* (Singapore: The National Archives of Singapore, 2009), 75.

66. *The Syonan Shimbun*, July 1, Koki 2605 Syowa 20 (1945), 2.

67. Lebra, *Japanese-Trained Armies in Southeast Asia,* 117.

68. *The Syonan Shimbun*, January 9, Koki 2605 Syowa 20 (1945), 1.

69. Lee Geok Boi, *Syonan: Singapore Under the Japanese, 1942-1945* (Singapore:

Ibrahim, a Malay youth the Japanese authorities tried to recruit into the *Giyu-gun* during the war, the former encouraged Malay youth who were good at learning Japanese and who were already sportsmen to join the *Giyu-gun* or the *Giyu-tai*. He and his friends got out of the unit by lying that they had tuberculosis or week knees.[70] At the same time, other oral history accounts suggest that the *Heiho* was able to recruit more volunteers than the other two units, probably because service with the *Giyu-gun* and *Giyu-tai* entailed a harsher life at the frontline than the *Heiho*, which took up local sentry and patrol roles. Witnesses and volunteers who joined the *Heiho* attested that the *Heiho* was made up of a substantial number of young Chinese men, and good number of Malay, Indians, and Eurasians, usually between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five. Many of these joined because of the pay and rations, and because *Heiho* members had the "privilege to move around."[71] A Malay enlistee Alias bin Osman even testified that the Japanese military motivated the enlistees through promises of Japanese girls as wives after the war.[72]

Despite the JMA's rhetoric about creating a united and disciplined population loyal to Japan out of Singapore's diverse communities, their efforts at youth mobilization were ultimately racialized. They employed "divide and rule" strategies, which sought to play one ethnic community against another to keep them in check. They also treated the different major ethnic communities in Singapore and Malaya differently, due to differing beliefs about each group's political loyalties and reliability. They considered the Indians that joined the Indian Independence Army and the Malays as pro-Japanese and regarded the Chinese and Eurasians with great suspicion and hostility.[73]

Accordingly, the JMA treated the youth of these communities differently. As Isa Ibrahim's above-mentioned account suggests, the Japanese mainly targeted Malay youth for recruitment into the para-military units. This was a continuation of Japanese policy in Malaya where they actively courted the support of the Malays and tried to channel Malay nationalism against their enemies. This resulted in Malay youth being more ready to join Japanese mobilization programmes than youth from other ethnic communities. Eric Paglar, an Eurasian youth who was trained to be a military interpreter for the

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Singapore Heritage Society: Landmark Books, 2017), 145.

70. National Archives of Singapore (NAS), Oral History Centre, Isa Ibrahim, "The Public Service," Accession Number 000242, Reel 16.

71. NAS, Ng Jack Kim Boon, "Japanese Occupation of Singapore," Accession Number 000362, Reel 7; NAS, Soh Guan Bee, "Japanese Occupation of Singapore," Accession Number 000310, Reel 6; NAS, Lee Kip Lin, "Japanese Occupation of Singapore," Accession Number 000016, Reel 7.

72. NAS, Alias bin Osman, "Japanese Occupation of Singapore," Accession Number 000498, Reel 3.

73. Tan, *Syonan Years, 1942-1945: Living Beneath the Rising Sun*, 44-47.

Japanese, attested that there were only one or two Chinese in the *Giyu-gun* and *Giyu-tai* and the rest were mostly Malays.[74] The JMA encouraged Malay nationalism throughout the war and gave many Malay youth opportunities to receive military education and training in the above-mentioned paramilitary units. Many Malay-Muslim leaders, intellectuals, and young radicals cooperated with the Japanese for a few of reasons, including fear, a sense of patriotism, and the misplaced belief that the Japanese would help the Malays achieve Malayan independence within a larger Indonesia Raya.[75] This was notwithstanding the significant number of Malays who were loyal to the British empire and took part in the fight against the Japanese.

For Indians, the JMA encouraged nationalist activity directed at winning independence for India from British rule. Singapore became a base for the Japanese to stir up the nationalist sentiments of Indian youths in India and Southeast Asia. They did not, however, recruit Indians into the *Giyu-gun* or *Giyu-tai*. Instead, they supported the formation of the Indian National Army and the Indian Independence League soon after the fall of Singapore as the primary organizations for Indian males. Indian women and girls were recruited into the Rani of Jhansi Regiment. The officers of first Indian National Army became suspicious of Japanese intentions, however, and resisted the latter's attempts to use the INA to invade other locations like New Guinea. This led to the arrest and detention of key INA officers and the dissolution of this first INA in late 1942. The INA and the Indian nationalist movement in Singapore were revived subsequently when another Indian nationalist Subhas Chandra Bose arrived in Singapore in July 1943 to re-organize these.[76] In April 1944, the Japanese opened the Azad School, a training institute for Indian youth volunteers, at Gilstead Road in Singapore, and supported the formation of an Indian Youth Section of the Indian Independence League for Indian youth between the ages of 12 and 17.[77] Throughout the rest of Occupation, they encouraged Indian youths to hold large rallies and recruitment drives for the anti-colonial effort in India. Hence, Indian nationalist youth mobilization increased during the Japanese Occupation. However, this interest in encouraging Indian nationalism among Indian youth clearly undercut the efforts of other military educators and officers in instilling a new loyalty towards Japan.

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74. NAS, Eric Charles Pemberton Paglar, "Japanese Occupation of Singapore," Accession Number 000299, Reel 9.

75. Abu Talib Ahmad, "The Impact of the Japanese Occupation on the Malay-Muslim Population," in *Malaya and Singapore during the Japanese Occupation*, ed. Paul Kratoska (Singapore: National University of Singapore, 1995), 17.

76. Lee, *Syonan: Singapore Under the Japanese, 1942-1945*, 97-99.

77. *The Syonan Times*, April 10, Koki 2604 Syowa 19 (1944); *The Syonan Shimbun*, August 30, Koki 2604 Syowa 19 (1944), 4.

Conversely, the Occupation was especially traumatic for the Chinese who made up three-quarters of Singapore's population. The Japanese military authorities remained hostile to the Chinese. This was even as Shinozaki believed that it was necessary to acquire their support for Japan's imperial rule through a softer approach. The demographic significance of the Chinese in Singapore posed one of the greatest challenges to Japanese imperial rule, especially when they were already heavily politicized against the invaders before the Occupation. In Christopher Bayly and Tim Harper's words, General Yamashita "faced a sullen, hostile population," and was convinced that the "entire Chinese population of Singapore was a security threat to the Japanese Empire."[78] More recently, Gregg Huff also underlined that one of the formidable difficulties the Japanese faced in managing Singapore was "its predominantly Chinese population and overwhelmingly Chinese character."[79]

The Japanese military's hostility towards the Chinese community was largely due to the latter's hefty contributions to the defense of China against Japanese aggression across the 1930s and 1940s. Following the Japanese military's aggressive actions in China in the 1920s and 1930s, the overseas Chinese in Singapore and Malaya actively participated in fund-raising for the defence efforts in China and in anti-war or anti-Japanese activities. Notably, they formed a large-scale Overseas Chinese National Salvation Movement to coordinate fund-raising and volunteer recruitment efforts for anti-Japanese resistance after the Marco Polo Bridge incident in China in 1937. Within a year, the half a million Chinese in Singapore raised $5.7 million Chinese dollars, the largest amount of funds raised among the different overseas Chinese communities in Southeast Asia.[80]

As the many studies and accounts of the Chinese community in Singapore's experience of the Second World War consulted for this article shown, many Chinese school-going children and young men, whether they were ideologically or politically aligned with the British empire, the Kuomintang, or the Malayan Communist Party, were active in the anti-Japanese resistance before and during the Japanese invasion. Boys and girls in the Chinese secondary school made and sold flowers and "Anti-Japan cookies and cakes" to raise funds to support the anti-Japanese resistance efforts in China; schoolgirls also sew winter clothing for frontline soldiers and refugees.[81] The

78. Bayly and Harper, *Forgotten Armies*, 210.

79. Huff and Shinobu Majima, *World War II Singapore: The Chōsabu Reports on Syonan*, 3.

80. Koh, Ernest. *Diaspora at War: The Chinese of Singapore Between Empire and Nation, 1937-1945*. Leiden: Brill, c2013, 65.

81. Foong Choon Hon (ed.), *The Price of Peace: True Accounts of the Japanese Occupation*. Translated by Clara Show (Singapore: Asiapac Books, c1997), 226-229; Hsu Yun Tsiao & Chua Ser Koon eds., *Malayan Chinese Resistance to Japan 1937-*

editors of a seminal compilation of source materials belonging to Colonel Chuang Hui Tsuan, Deputy Regional Chief of Force 136, commentaries, and personal collections, added that Chinese youth were encouraged to go back to China to bear arms, to be drivers or medics to support the anti-Japanese resistance.[82] When the Japanese 25th Imperial Army invaded Malaya, young Chinese men in their twenties or younger readily responded to calls to help defend the island. Many joined the Overseas Chinese Volunteer army or other local defence units such as Dalforce.[83] Even after the fall of Singapore, many young Chinese "entered the jungles and risked their lives to take up arms against the enemy."[84] Japanese brutality towards the Chinese community only drove more Chinese youth into a variety of covert anti-Japanese movements organized by the British, the Communists, and the Chinese Kuomintang, such as the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army and Force 136. The existence of these resistance movements increased the Japanese administration's anxieties about the loyalty of the Chinese youth.

Hence, the Japanese efforts to engineer new "Dai Toa" youth out of Singapore's children and youth had to contend with the reality that a substantial majority of these were not blank slates but politicized subjects, who already possessed a strong sense of antipathy towards Japan and were not easily receptive to Japanese propaganda or disciplinary efforts. In all, the Japanese military administration's different approaches to different groups of youth in Singapore, necessitated by broader Japanese strategic goals and by practical realities on the ground, fuelled ethnic-based nationalism among Malay, Chinese and Indian youth. This situation of divided loyalties undermined Japanese efforts to discipline local youth and their rhetoric and images of united "Syonan" or "Dai Toa" youth. It was impossible to instill a new consciousness and identity oriented towards Japan, the Japanese Emperor, or an unfamiliar concept of "Dai Toa," when the Japanese administration was also promoting nationalist sentiments among the Indian and Malay youth on the one hand, and alienating and persecuting Chinese and Eurasian youth on the other.

1945 - Selected Source Materials. Singapore: Cultural & Historical Publishing House Pte. Ltd., 1984 许云樵 & 蔡史君（编）。新马华人抗日史料，*1937-1947*. 新加坡 ： 文史出版私人公司, 1984, 4

82. Hsu & Chua, *Malayan Chinese Resistance to Japan 1937-1945 - Selected Source Materials*. Singapore: Cultural & Historical Publishing House Pte. Ltd., 1984 许云樵 & 蔡史君（编）。新马华人抗日史料，1937-1947. 新加坡 ： 文史出版私人公司, 1984, p. 5

83. Foong Choon Hon (ed.). *The Price of Peace: True Accounts of the Japanese Occupation*. Translated by Clara Show (Singapore: Asiapac Books, c1997), 56.

84. Foong Choon Hon (ed.). *The Price of Peace: True Accounts of the Japanese Occupation*. Translated by Clara Show (Singapore: Asiapac Books, c1997), 60-61.

Fig. 2 – "The Syonan Sports Association- players from different soccer league teams to form the Singapore team", 1942-1945, image no. 19980005027 - 0080, negative no.NA12/30, with permission of National Archives of Singapore.

The Valorization of the Young Male Body

The needs of the wartime economy soon caused the JMA to mobilize both local young men and women in gendered ways that privileged male bodies over female ones. Japanese propaganda and recruitment practices valorized the disciplined, physically fit, youthful male body. Japanese military commanders in charge of youth training conceived of themselves as fathers cultivating a disciplined masculinity. In the words of Iwaki, a former educator and agricultural expert turned training commander of a *Heiho* camp, it was his "sincere desire" to see his trainees "return to their respective kampungs as new men with an outlook upon life completely new, and fully qualified to be the leaders of future Malaya."[85] The *Syonan Shinbum* regularly highlighted interviews with local recruits of the *Giyu-gun*, the *Giyu-tai*, and the *Heiho*, and their parents. The latter lavished effusive praise on how the young recruits developed their physique, character, and abilities through military training. One letter-writer encouraged parents to send their sons to join the *Heiho* so that they would "grow up into men in every sense of the word – real he-men, healthy in body and sound in mind; proud and independent yet dependable and considerate, loyal and trustworthy

85. *The Syonan Shimbun*, January 8, Koki 2604 Syowa 19 (1944), 2.

masters of their households and faithful citizens of a country."[86] Another letter-writer repeated the trope of "boys becoming men" through military service. English education had turned his two boys into "absolute 'wasters'" but their enlistment in the *Heiho* turned them into "men."[87] Japanese propagandists frequently employed this image of desirable maturity and discipline to coax the public to support their children's enlistment in military service. In March 1945, a press party purportedly visited the *Giyu-tai*'s training camp. They waxed lyrical about finding hundreds of "sturdy, bronzed young men with an upright bearing and that disciplined smartness born of constant military training."[88] The well-trained, well-disciplined bodies of local male youth became embodied indexes of the new "Dai Toa" modernity and of the superiority of Japanese methods of disciplining youth.

From late 1943 onwards, male bodies became more than just symbols of Japanese cultural superiority. The turning of the war's momentum forced the JMA to compel Singapore residents to change their occupations and contribute their labour to the war effort. Two Japanese researchers who studied the labour situation in Japanese-managed factories and in the *Syonan-to* municipality emphasized the great shortage of labour and the need for direct and indirect countermeasures. These countermeasures included training and improving labour sources "by encouraging young people and women to work," by encouraging male workers to leave "inessential occupations" for essential ones and replacing them with females, older workers, and children. The report, in fact, highlighted the attitudinal shift in the minds of employers that was required to address the troubling labour shortages in the city: "businesses must abandon the view that females cannot be employed, and actively consider how to mobilize the female labour force."[89]

Accordingly, Shinozaki began to appeal to young men between sixteen and thirty-five to "undertake more responsible and essential work to be worthy citizens." This meant working in jobs that served Japanese military and industrial needs, volunteering for local defence, or taking up agricultural work to produce more food.[90] In December 1944, the JMA introduced regulations requiring men between the ages of 15 and 40 to abandon jobs "not having any bearing towards the war effort" such as clerks, porters, hawkers, salesmen, telephone operators, lift operators, bellboys, ushers, and sweepers.[91] The

86. *The Syonan Shimbun*, January 10, Koki 2605 Syowa 20 (1945), 2.

87. *The Syonan Shimbun*, January 29, Koki 2605 Syowa 20 (1945), 2.

88. *The Syonan Shimbun*, March 6, Koki 2605 Syowa 20 (1945), 2.

89. Huff and Shinobu Majima, *World War II Singapore: The Chōsabu Reports on Syonan*, 294-295.

90. *The Syonan Shimbun*, January 7, Koki 2604 Syowa 19 (1944), 1.

91. Kratoska, *The Japanese Occupation of Malaya and Singapore, 1941-45*, 193.

next month, the JMA passed a Male Employment Restriction Ordinance that prohibited any local man between these ages from working in occupations deemed "light and easy." Only youth with a "deformity" or "disability" were exempted from this requirement.

The JMA's labour needs converged with Japanese beliefs about labour as a powerful pedagogical technique for disciplining youth bodies. The effort to train bodies served the goal of extracting productive service from these bodies. Japanese propaganda focused on getting male children and youth to participate in labour service to toughen their bodies for their future civic responsibilities. In December 1943, the JMA began encouraging community organizations to create special labour units to meet the demand for labour. In response, the Malai Welfare Association (Malay Welfare Association) established a Free Labour Service Corps (*Kinro Hoshi Dan*) in January 1945 to rally Malay youth to spend their weekends in voluntary labour work.[92] Various Islamic religious instruction centres in Singapore also formed the Syonan Muslim Students' Welfare Service Volunteer Corps to mobilize boys studying with them to render volunteer service to the country during their after-school hours.[93] Altogether these efforts valorized male youth bodies as a source of vital labour, which needed to be extracted and developed for Japan's benefit. They also elevated voluntary labour as a vital act to both discipline the body as well as to demonstrate the individual's participation in the support of the community and the state.

The sacralization of young male bodies bore mixed implications for the place of local young women within Japanese propaganda and policies. Japan highlighted increasing educational and employment opportunities for girls as evidence of the social progress locals enjoyed under Japanese rule. Like its educational policies, the Japanese imperial administration's policies towards women in Singapore were based on changing gender norms and ideas from the imperial metropole. In April 1943, the *Syonan Shinbum* highlighted a special course on "domestic science and mothercraft" started at the Victoria Street Girls' School organized for seventy senior girls from all the public girls' school in the city. The subjects the students were taught *Nippon-Go* (Japanese), cooking, needlework, and art, housework, nursing, singing, physical training, arithmetic, hygiene, nature study, general and domestic science. Local Catholic nuns started a similar class at the Ceylon Road Girls' School. The *Syonan Shinbum* lauded the course as a course that prepared Singapore school girls for "their future responsibilities as mothers and wives… in a strong and virile New Malai."[94] The new Malaya and Singapore was clearly one defined in

92. *The Syonan Shimbun*, February 1, Koki 2604 Syowa 19 (1944), 2.

93. *The Syonan Shimbun*, February 3, Koki 2604 Syowa 19 (1944), 2; *The Syonan Shimbun*, March 28, Koki 2604 Syowa 19 (1944).

94. *The Syonan Shimbun*, 2 April, Koki 2603 Syowa 18 (1943).

masculine tropes of physical prowess and manly vitality, which subordinated girls as auxiliary to men in the new envisioned Dai Toa modernity.[95] This constructed ideal of Japanese women, restricting them to the roles of familial caretakers and dutiful partners, can be traced back to the Meiji era during the turn of the 20th century, when the modernizing Japanese state endeavoured to prepare girls and women to become "good wives and wise mothers" to advance the Japanese nation's strength, prosperity, and moral well-being.[96] It was only after the First World War that Japanese officials, inspired by the examples of European and American women's groups that assisted the European and American forces in the war at the home front, that they began to promote the patriotic public roles of women during war beyond the confines of the "good wife and wise mother" paradigm.[97] The changing norms and ideas in Japan could have themselves been influenced by Western gendered ideas of education since English schools and British youth movements for girls like the Girl Guides also emphasized the above-mentioned subjects in the schooling of ideal girls.[98] What remains important to highlight is how Japanese propaganda also valorized these images of ideal girls and women as part of the new modernity that Japan was bringing to the Asian countries it liberated.

In the early years of the Occupation, the *Syonan Shimbun* occasionally featured articles praising the examples of young Chinese girls who took up employment as petrol pump attendants, or as telephone operators for the military administration.[99] Beyond these examples, there did not appear to be much concerted effort to encourage girls or young women then. However, prolonged labour shortages forced the Japanese to pay greater attention to female labour. In 1944, they began to call on women to take over jobs vacated by males, but in a manner that subordinated the value of female labour to male labour. In February, the Japanese set up the Syonan Women's Employment Bureau to help find employment for female workers in Singapore. The organization found positions for a small number of women and girls and reported about 83 clerks, typists, nurses, and telephone operators, 19 waitresses, 228 *amahs* and domestic servants, 243 factory workers registered with the bureau.[100] These small numbers suggested that Japanese efforts achieved only symbolic impact. The Japanese administration did not advance equality for women,

95. The *Syonan Shimbun*, April 2, Koki 2603, Syowa 18 (1943), 1.

96. Sheldon Garon, *Molding Japanese Minds: The State in Everyday Life* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997), 115.

97. Ibid. 126.

98. My thanks to one anonymous reviewer of this paper for reminding me of this connection.

99. *The Syonan Times*, August 2, Syowa 17 (1942), 4; *The Syonan Shimbun*, January 19, Syowa 18 (1943), 2.

100. *The Syonan Shimbun*, May 30, Koki 2604 Syowa 19 (1944), 2.

even as it envisioned a new public role for girls. Instead, Shinozaki and the JMA focused on young male bodies on the basis that these were needed for essential wartime labour, while other forms of work were deemed non-essential and to be left to females or older adults.[101] A Japanese official, in explaining Japanese educational policies in 1943, avowed that the increased provision of technical education in the various trade and technical schools in Syonan for boys was meant to give them more opportunities to find employment as skilled mechanics and artisans to earn good salaries as Singapore's industries developed. Conversely, the official said, "their sisters could fill their places in offices where the work was not so strenuous."[102] Throughout 1944 and 1945, Shinozaki and his colleagues appealed to various welfare associations established by the different ethnic communities to rally their women to volunteer for work on the home front.[103] These appeals continued to reproduce essentialized images of women as mothers and housewives, but also began to call on them to play greater roles as nurses or in the auxilliary services.[104] Yet, the premise remained that "their object should be to relieve men where possible so that the men may engage in essential tasks of a more important nature."[105] In October 1944, the JMA closed all cabarets and dance halls on the island and encouraged the female cabaret employees and "glamour girls" to register themselves for work to free men for more important work. In mid-1945, the *Syonan Shimbun* also reported the formation of a women's arm of the Auxiliary Police, the *Joshi Tai* (Women's Corps), and a Special Forward Service Corps to mobilize mostly Chinese young women and girls to assist in passive defence efforts by rendering humanitarian services, taking care of children, administering first aid, and fire-fighting.[106] The belatedness of this wartime mobilization, as the Japanese occupation government became desperate for manpower, again underlines that the Japanese colonial disciplinary state was primarily focused on incorporating men into the state.

Even as Japanese administrators imposed a new paternity on young female bodies, they had to contend with older paternities that prevailed despite the JMA's efforts. Shinozaki was soon forced to publicly qualify the JMA's exhortation to women to come out to work. After announcing the Male Employment Restriction Ordinance, he issued a public clarification in the *Syonan Shimbun* that the legislation only applied to young men. He emphasized, in block letters, that

101. *The Syonan Shimbun*, January 10, Koki 2605 Syowa 20 (1945), 2; *The Syonan Shimbun*, January 13, Koki 2605 Syowa 20 (1945), 2.

102. *The Syonan Shimbun*, April 2, Koki 2603 Syowa 18 (1943).

103. *The Syonan Shimbun*, July 28, Koki 2604 Syowa 19 (1944), 1.

104. Ibid.

105. Ibid.

106. *Syonan Shimbun Fortnightly* 1, no. 5 (August 5), Koki 2605 Syowa 20 (1945), 5 & 14.

> "THE AUTHORITIES WISH IT TO BE CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD, HOWEVER, THAT THEY ARE NOT COMPELLING WOMEN TO WORK, OR PUTTING INTO EFFECT ANY ORDINANCE FOR MOBILIZATION OF FEMALE LABOUR POWER. THE AUTHORITIES RESPECT THE MANY RELIGIOUS AND RACIAL CUSTOMS PREVAILING IN THIS CITY AND WILL NOT COMPEL WOMEN TO WORK UNLESS THEY VOLUNTARILY WISH TO DO SO."[107]

Evidently, the JMA's efforts to rally women to join the labour force met with fierce opposition from the conservative social groups in Singapore, which could not be alienated at a crucial moment in the war effort. Disciplinary projects are easier conceived than achieved in the face of existing subjectivities that resist these attempts to assert power over bodies.

Nonetheless, Japanese propagandists and officials also deployed the bodies of young women as embodied metaphors of the "Dai Toa" ideal. In this case, they did not only instrumentalize their femininity and youthfulness, but also racialized their bodies to paint a mythical image of multicultural unity under Japanese hegemony. The "Daughters of Dai Toa" first appeared as a feature series of interviews during the anniversary week of Singapore's surrender. Each day, the *Syonan Shinbum* featured an interview with a different "Daughter of Dai Toa," i.e., a young woman representing each major ethnic community in Singapore and Malaya. In these interviews, each "Daughter of Dai Toa" expressed reverence for Japan, affirmed their adherence to the imperial cause, and presented themselves as role models of female "Dai Toa" youth. The first "Daughter of Dai Toa" featured was Rene Paglar, the 14-year-old daughter of Dr. C.J. Paglar, a leader of the Eurasian community in Singapore. The article depicted her as a bright and civic-minded girl who spoke five languages and who, as a member of the Medical Auxiliary Services, helped her father as a nurse after her day's studies. Her love for learning the Japanese language and her sense of selfless duty, the article exclaimed, meant that she was behaving in every way a "Nippon-Fujin" (i.e., a mature Japanese woman). Rene Paglar "looked a typical maiden of Dai Toa" in her "striking purple kimono, complete with a red obe and clogs." Again, beneath the grand rhetoric of pan-Asian autonomy and independence, the Japanese concept of "Dai Toa" was based on local veneration and embrace of Japanese culture.[108] Paglar, the article claimed, longed to travel to Japan to see the flowers of Japan and further her studies there. After Rene Paglar, the "Daughters of Dai Toa" included young women representing the other ethnic communities in Singapore: Sheum Yu Kwei, a Chinese saw-dust artiste; Patricia Piol, a Singapore-born Filipino student of the Victoria Street Girls' School, 15 year-old Sima Binte Noorlim, and lastly, Janaki Davar, a platoon commander in the Rani of Jhansi Regiment of the Indian

107. *The Syonan Shimbun*, February 12, Koki 2605 Syowa 20 (1945), 2.
108. *The Syonan Shimbun*, February 11, Koki 2604 Syowa 19 (1944), 2.

National Army.[109] The last clearly had words put in her mouth where she called on all "Asiatics" to create co-prosperity and develop "Dai Toa-mindedness" – this was an unlikely position as a nationalist oriented towards India.

The "Daughters of Dai Toa" subsequently appeared in "comfort shows" in other settings and occasions, such as for patients in military hospitals and members of the *Giyu-gun* in late April 1944 to commemorate the Japanese Emperor's birthday.[110] This time, the "Dai Toa Revue Party" had expanded to include representatives from all of Japan's occupied territories - Miss Philippines, Miss India, Miss Manshukoku (Manchuria), Miss Malai (Malaya), Miss Thailand, Miss Burma, and Miss China. Rene Paglar was identified not by a geographical location but as "Miss Aojin" (European). The JMA's agenda once again was to use the bodies of eight young women from different cultural backgrounds to stage the Japanese's "Dai Toa" ideal. In his oral history account, Eric Paglar, the brother of Rene Paglar, speculated that the purposes of this "cultural troupe" were to show that the populace "appreciated the Japanese's liberation" and to boost the morale of wounded Japanese troops.[111] There was no "Miss Japan" joining these other young women on the stage.[112] Only Japan's new colonies, and not the metropole itself, could be femininized and objectified for the gaze of the foot-soldiers of Japanese imperialism in Southeast Asia.

The End of a Beginning

Japan surrendered on 15 August 1945. In the end, this is more a story of what might have been, of unfulfilled Japanese fantasies about the moulding and mobilization of youth in Singapore. The Japanese Occupation delivered little of the promised "co-prosperity" in Singapore. The scholars who had studied the Japanese failure to win hearts and minds and Nipponize the population agreed on the few explanations.[113] Severe food shortages resulted in malnutrition, which exacerbated the spread of diseases. For all Japanese claims about the benefits of Japanese hegemony for children and youth, the inability to ensure adequate food supplies and agricultural production meant that "between about two-fifths and two-thirds of Singapore school children

109. *The Syonan Shimbun*, February 12, Koki 2604 Syowa 19 (1944), 2; *The Syonan Shimbun*, February 14, Koki 2604 Syowa 19 (1944), 2; *The Syonan Shimbun*, February 16, Koki 2604 Syowa 19 (1944), 2.

110. *The Syonan Shimbun*, April 26, K2604, Syowa 19 (1944), p. 2

111. NAS, Eric Charles Pemberton Paglar, "Japanese Occupation of Singapore," Accession Number 000299, Reel 43.

112. *The Syonan Shimbun*, April 22, Koki 2604 Syowa 19 (1944); *The Syonan Shimbun*, April 26, Koki 2604 Syowa 19 (1944).

113. Huff, *World War II and Southeast Asia: Economy and Society under Japanese Occupation*, 70.

were malnourished by pre-war standards.[114] This was notwithstanding Japanese brutalities and racism towards the locals. Even though Japanese propaganda attempted to paint a rosy picture of social progress for women, the reality was that most girls and women experienced deprivation, starvation, trauma, and ill-fortune. The epitome of this reality, as Geoff Huff outlined, were the many women conscripted as 'comfort women' for Japanese troops, the female children who were sold into prostitution, and the many girls who had to be treated for venereal disease in 1946.[115]

The scholars who have studied Japanese social and economic policies have agreed that the efforts to "Nipponize" youths were far too impracticable given the wartime situation and the realities in Singapore. Eri Hotta points out that the task of administering the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere "quickly proved a task far beyond Japan's capacity."[116] The historical records show that the JMA was more focused on immediate short-term war aims – the consolidation of political control, the revival of the economy, and the expansion of industry to feed Japan's military and industrial needs. By the end of 1943, the Japanese war machine was struggling to repel the Allied counter-invasion, especially after the United States entered the war following the bombing of Pearl Harbor. As the tide of war turned against them, the exigency of mobilizing the young for the Japanese war engine and economy overrode all other cultural or social plans or policies.

The shortcomings in the implementation of the policies stymied the efforts to create a new consciousness and identity as youth united under Japanese rule. Paul Kratoska has made a damning assessment: "The educational and propaganda undertakings of the Japanese seem both audacious and naïve: audacious in the scope of the changes they hoped to achieve, and naïve in underestimating the tenacity with which the people of Malaya would cling to their values and way of life."[117] The Nipponization program was easier to conceive than to materialize. The need to retain the support of the Malays and Indians made it impossible for Japanese administrators to be too forceful in imposing Japanese culture. Many Chinese parents were reluctant to send their children to school, in part because of their animosity towards the Japanese. According to Turnbull, never more than 7,000 children were in school and by 1945, the number "had dwindled to a few hundred."[118] Circumstances like the need to return dislocated youth to school forced the JMA to allow Shinozaki to

114. Huff and Huff, "The Second World War Japanese Occupation of Singapore," 265.

115. Huff, *World War II and Southeast Asia: Economy and Society under Japanese Occupation*, 390-391.

116. Hotta, *Pan-Asianism and Japan's War,* 199.

117. Kratoska, *The Japanese Occupation of Malaya and Singapore,* 125.

118. Turnbull, *A History of Modern Singapore*, 210.

re-open existing schools, including the Chinese-medium schools and English-medium schools. From April 1942, vernacular primary schools re-opened. Shinozaki also allowed the teaching of English in English-medium schools, annoying the anti-Western military officers like Wataru, due to the shortage of Japanese teachers and Japanese textbooks to teach Japanese.[119] Hence, for all of Shinozaki and the Japanese military officers' desires to create a new consciousness through schooling local children and youth, wartime exigencies caused the re-emergence of the pre-war system of vernacular schools and the amplification of ethnic consciousness among the local communities.[120] Clearly, disciplinary intent did not guarantee disciplinary outcomes or effects, especially if would-be subjects evaded and avoided these disciplinary institutions and programs altogether due to a lack of interest and investment, or worse, adopted an attitude of resistance.

Yet, the Japanese's application of biopolitical power was productive. Even though the outcomes fell short of the Japanese officers and officials' intentions, their efforts stimulated the nascent nationalist movements in Singapore and gave many young people the chance to receive education, leadership training, and military training. Some testified after the war that participation in Japanese training programs gave them qualities, such as physical and mental discipline, that enabled them to function as leaders.[121] In the words of Haji Rahmat bin Kenap, a teenager who joined the *Heiho*, "they taught us how to fight, and later on, how to farm."[122] Another Malay individual who joined the *Heiho* attested that he felt treated like trusted equals by the Japanese army, and as "the little brothers, their right hand man."[123] Scholar Abu Talib Ahmad reminds us that the Occupation had some positive aspects for the Malays in Malaya and Singapore – it germinated new political awareness among Malay youth, involved Malay women in political and social organizations and increased "the ability of the Malay people to break out of their parochial environment."[124] This heightened ethnic awareness and nationalistic pride infected post-World War Two political debates and struggles.

There was another significant legacy of the short-lived Japanese Occupation. Japanese policies and propaganda normalized the idea that the welfare, education, and development of the young was part of everyday social policy and

119. Shinozaki, *Syonan-to: My Story*, 34.

120. Wilson, "Educational Policy and Performance in Singapore, 1942-1945," 7.

121. Kratoska, *The Japanese Occupation of Malaya and Singapore, 1941-45*, 159.

122. Cited in Tan, Tik Loong Stanley. *Syonan Years, 1942-1945: Living Beneath the Rising Sun*. Singapore: The National Archives of Singapore, 2009, 76.

123. Alias bin Osman, "Japanese Occupation of Singapore," Accession Number 000498, Reel 10.

124. Abu Talib Ahmad, "The Impact of the Japanese Occupation on the Malay-Muslim Population," 1.

governance. Japanese administrators substantially increased the opportunities for education for local children and youth in their pursuit of their disciplinary and political goals. In 1943, the authorities announced that free education would be provided to all 17,000 school children attending the *Syonan Tokubetu-si Futso Ko Gakko* (common public schools).[125] Japanese propaganda waxed lyrical about the "remarkable progress made in education in Syonan."[126] This was even though wartime conditions and the hostility of the different communities towards the Japanese administration kept the numbers of students in school substantially lower than the level of enrolment in the schools in the colony before the war. As Hsu and Chua have shown, the number of Chinese, English, and Indians schools that were opened, and the number of pupils that attended school during the Syonan era, were substantially lower than the numbers before the war.[127]

Between 1942 and 1945, the Japanese also set up numerous sorts of technical schools to train *Syonan* youth as technicians, mechanics, electricians, engineers as part of their measures to mobilize labour and to increase labour productivity. For instance, the *Koku Kogyo Gakki*, an aviation and technical school, was opened in mid-1942 to train boys aged thirteen to twenty as technicians for military aircraft and equipment. These schools gave more local youth the opportunities to pursue vocational and technical education. Mohd Harris bin Abdul Karim was one of those who became an aircraft technician after receiving such training. He attested that the education the Japanese gave" was better than what we received in the trade schools during the pre-war years."[128]

Opportunities for education and training went together with the provision of more opportunities for jobs and leadership training. For all their unrequited imperial fantasies about the moulding and mobilization of *Syonan* youth, the various programs Shinozaki, Wataru, and the JMA started had made it impossible for the returning colonial authorities to ignore the interests and welfare of the young once again - the provision of education, jobs, developmental opportunities became tied to the politics of youth representation and imperial legitimacy. Biopower, unleashed, produced its own momentum. As Geoff Huff writes, the "single unambiguous Japanese success in Southeast Asia was the destruction of Western colonialism" by removing colonial forces and promoting local nationalism and upending the colonial order irrevocably.[129] One can add that, for the case of Singapore, Japanese rule accelerated the process by thrusting many young people into agentic roles. They acquired

125. *The Syonan Shimbun*, December 3, Koki 2603 Syowa 18 (1943), 2.

126. Tan, *Syonan Years, 1942-1945: Living Beneath the Rising Sun*, 107.

127. Hsu & Chua, *Malayan Chinese Resistance to Japan 1937-1945 - Selected Source Materials*, 52.

128. Tan, *Syonan Years, 1942-1945: Living Beneath the Rising Sun*, 177.

129. Huff, *World War II and Southeast Asia: Economy and Society under Japanese Occupation*, 378.

educational and leadership opportunities at an unprecedented level, setting the stage for the ascendancy of youth activism and mobilization after the war, shaping post-war developments.

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Gilles Forlot *

"I'm a child of Lee Kuan Yew, cannot help it": Students' narratives on language and ethnic planning in Singapore

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This article examines the perceptions of young educated Singaporeans on their country's language policies and their own linguistic practices. The overall fieldwork[1] the research is based on comprises 630 on-line-administered questionnaires, a series of 31 semi-structured students' interviews carried out between 2016 and 2018 as well as a thirteen interviews of local teachers, university scholars and cultural and community figures in Singapore.

This contribution focuses on the student population of our[2] research, which constitues the ethnographic and qualitative part of the project. The central objective of this text is to analyze the somewhat ambivalent discourses that these social actors engage in when it comes to discussing the language policies implemented by their elders. In Singapore, language issues are intrinsically intertwined with social and political issues. Increased criticism has risen towards language policies that were premised on simplistic ethnocultural views, the necessity of common, homogeneous languages, and a quest for an even greater recognition of

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1. I am grateful to the Sorbonne Paris Cité Consortium and the National University of Singapore for co-financing two research grants (LASIPA 2015 and CoLaSeA 2017) which made this fieldwork possible.

2. The choice between 'I/my' and 'we/our' in this article has to do with the fact that a large part of the fieldwork was organized and carried out with the collaboration of my colleague Daniel Kwang Guan Chan of the National University of Singapore. I am indebted not only to his help, but also to his fine knowledge of the sociolinguistic situation of the city-state and to the many discussions we continue to have on Singapore's social life.

ethnolinguistic diversity in Singapore has emerged (Jain & Wee 2018). The choice of English for everyone and of Mandarin for the Chinese community were clearly linked to prestige planning (Curdt-Christiansen 2014). Prestige planning is the process whereby each language is positioned in a given society according to its status, its image and the self-perception of its speakers (Ager 2005).

After providing an overview of Singapore language policies in the past sixty years, I will present the corpus at hand and show how it can contribute to understanding the complexity of discourses on language diversity in the Southeast Asian city-state. The article shows that these elite Singaporean students harbour feelings that range from acceptance and legitimization of the choices made by their elders to resentment for creating artificial and essentialist categories which led to language loss, language shift and communicative barriers. Furthermore, these youths' discourses reveal that they are well aware of the ways languages and ethnicities have been commodified and instrumentalized towards both the manufacturing of the state and its national narrative. I will also show how some of these elite students of Chinese extraction position themselves critically vis-à-vis the homogeneous Chineseness that was engineered through the post-independence Mandarin-only policy known as the "Speak Mandarin Campaign."

One of the decisive elements in the aftermath of the birth of the Republic of Singapore was the management of its survival via its social and ethnic cohesiveness as well as its economic development. The first governments developed a sort of dual ideology, whereby preserving the city-state's ancestral Asian identity and fostering the link to globalization and the market economy had to be undergirded in a policy of official bilingualism. Listening to those youths' narratives unveils to what extent they are aware that languages have always been instrumentalized (Wee 2003) as means towards the building and survival of the state, and therefore as tools of social control in this late authoritarian form of governmentality (George 2007; Liew 2015).

Introductory remarks

Survival as an independent nation in late modernity

Modernity is the historical period marked by industrialization and the stabilization of nation-states, mostly in the 19th century. With the rise of more fluid social structures, increased mobility, and the advent of globalization, the subsequent period is often referred to as late or high modernity (Giddens 1990). Singapore is an interesting case insofar as its constitution as an independent republic also coincides with the rise of late modernity, and the establishment of a nation-state that had to cope with an already existing high diversity. As Heller et al. (2016: 3) note, "we are now emerging from a long period where the nation-state has been presumed to be the only normal way to organize ourselves as populations and territories."

Within this late-modern framework, languages play a key role, as they are now being revalued as skills and commodities (Da Silva et al. 2007). Late modernity has created the conditions of a disentanglement of languages and identities seen as essential and authentic attributes of people themselves (Stroud & Wee 2012: 38-39), or at least the possibility for challenging such modernist views in acts and discourses and conceiving languages and identities as products, resources and consumption goods.

In 1965, following their separation from the Federation of Malaysia after several years of tensions with Kuala Lumpur (Turnbull 2009: 287-293), the People's Action Party leaders of the newly proclaimed republic set about the difficult task of bringing independent Singapore to life. The task was daunting, given the lack of natural resources and infrastructure. Founding Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew's first goals for survival were to modernize the island, to provide it with a viable industry, a deterrent defence force, social and educational progress, and international recognition.

The ruling party thus adhered to "a vigorous economic development orientation" ideology (Chua 1995: 59) and set out another strong priority: that of social cohesion on this multicultural island, whose population comprised various groups, mostly the Chinese, the Malays, and the Indians, as well as a minority of Eurasians and other residents.[3] This cohesiveness therefore required both the development of a national education system, access to employment and the massive construction of social housing from the 1970s on.

Foundational languages policies

In terms of language management, the leaders of the Singaporean state opted for a policy of bilingual learning, later conceptualized by Pakir (1992) as "English-knowing bilingualism." English, as the language of Western economic development, became the medium of instruction, and the maintenance of Asian identities was engineered by imposing the learning of one of the three official languages other than English on the citizenry. This Bilingualism Policy (1966) derived from the formal education introduced in the late 1950s on the island at the time of its emancipation from the British colonial rule (Bolton & Ng 2014). Two years after independence, in 1967, the Singaporean government closed Malay, Chinese and Tamil language schools under the pretext of declining attendance (Tan 2007) to generalize English as the language of schooling.

Bolton and Ng (2014: 309) point out how radical this change was, insofar as the use of English, in accordance with the British colonial tradition, had until

3. The ethnic composition of Singapore has been fairly stable since the 1950s. In 1957, the Chinese, the Malays, the Indians and the residents in the 'Others' category respectively made up 75.4%, 13.6%, 8.6% and 2.4% of the total population. In 2015, the figures were 74.3%, 13.3%, 9.1% and 3.3%. These figures are those of the Singapore Departement of Statistics, cited in Ng & Cavallaro (2019).

then been mostly restricted to the administration. On a daily basis, vernacular – and sometimes hybrid – languages, such as Bazaar Malay and Hokkien, served as inter-ethnic lingua francas. Within the various communities and districts of the island, residents spoke their ethnic languages and many had advanced skills in several extra/inter-community languages (Platt et al. 1980).

It is virtually impossible to speak about Singapore's languages without describing the place of English in the island's postcolonial history and appreciating how the fate of this language has interacted with those of the local communities. Singapore was a British territory from 1819 to 1955 and English was the administrative language of the colonial rulers, but locally, each community language remained dominant, and their members were often multilingual. The figures from the 1957 census are telling. Only 1.8% of the island's inhabitants spoke English and 0.1% of the Chinese inhabitants were native Mandarin speakers, while Malay – in various forms, including the local Peranakan Malay and Bazaar Malay – was spoken by 48% of the total population. It is worth noting that in those times, a third of the Chinese population and some 88% of the Indian population were proficient in Malay as well (Bolton & Ng 2014: 308). The reality of colonial Singapore was therefore that of multilingual practices.

Soon after independence, the Singapore government actively addressed the issue of languages, opting for four official ones: English, the language of the colonizer, Chinese (labeled as Mandarin), Tamil and Malay. One of the initial ideas of the Singaporean leaders was to create a crossroads between the East and the West, and Lee Kuan Yew championed the essentialist idea that its citizens must learn both English, the language of growing globalization, while maintaining the link to their Asian roots, in particular by learning the language of their presumed homogeneous community (Jain and Wee 2018), i.e. Mandarin for the Chinese, Malay for the Malays and, in the first decades after independence, Tamil for the Indians. Thus, the authorities opted for a "simplified, multiracial CMIO (Chinese, Malay, Indian, Others) quadranomy" (Siddique 1990: 36). In 1990, acknowledging the diversity of the Indian community, the Government opened the door for more South Asian languages officially taught as Mother Tongues, i.e. Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Punjabi and Urdu (see Jain & Wee 2017; Jain 2021 for details on the Indian community).

English thus became the mainstream language of instruction until university, but all citizens – with the exception of Eurasians and Permanent Residents – were commanded to learn the Asian language of their identified communities. When decreeing the official and mandatory learning of English, the Government set out two main objectives. The first one was to reach out to the world of developed, industrialized nations, already dominated by the Anglo-American capitalist model, with English assuming the role of the language of trade and mobility of people and resources. The second objective was to promote English as the

neutral language, thus forstering both the internal cohesion of the country and the emerging economic globalization where business was now conducted in English.

Malay, Mandarin and Indian languages for their part took on the status of ethnic, cultural, and family languages, with the purpose of reinforcing Asianness, even if in the case of Mandarin, the Government was well aware that standard Chinese was to become an instrument of development as well. Ever since this policy was implemented and to make it function equitably and ensure neutrality, Singaporean policy makers have always contended that English could not become a "Mother Tongue" (Wee 2002; Lim et al. 2010: 6; Tan 2014).

The state sought to create a division of labour between languages, assigning to each language its roles and functions (Stroud & Wee 2012: 28-32). A double division of labour, as it were: English was restricted to interethnic communication and became the tool of economic competitiveness on a global scale, while heritage languages were kept within their respective communities to foster intra-ethnic solidarity and to enhance a supposed link to Asian values and ethnicity. But since each heritage language was expected to be catering to its assigned ethnicity, a neat separation – and strict recognition of equal status – between the communities was reinforced. The Government therefore embraced an ideologically monolingual stance (ibid.), as each language was meant to assume specific, compartmentalized functions.

Since its advent as an official language in Singapore, English has been performing functions that prevent it from becoming a "Mother Tongue", as mentioned supra. As a commodified instrument of inter-ethnic communication, it is meant to secure the unity of the nation. However, English is also a class language, since its standard version and the popular, colloquial variety known as Singlish do not fulfill the same functions or enjoy the same prestige (Stroud & Wee 2007). Nor do all Singaporeans have access to the more prestigious forms (Wee 2018) that are supposed to turn them into legitimate, authorized speakers on a competitive job market (Bourdieu 1991). All these questions contribute to feeding the often heated debate and controversies about the status of Singlish in Singapore (Cavallaro & Ng 2009; Tan 2017; Wee 2018).

Revamping language policy and practice: prestige planning for a new nation

As expounded above, becoming an independent state required some re-organisation of the local language practices and ethnic distribution, a sort of re-landscaping, as it were. Three campaigns are important in understanding language policies in Singapore. The first one, described above, is the Bilingualism Policy of 1966.

Another significant moment came in 1979. So as to foster the teaching and learning of Mandarin and engineer the conversion of the Singapore majority population of Chinese descent, the Government initiated a yearly campaign for the promotion of Mandarin at all stages of society (and not only at school,

where it had been compulsory for more than a decade): the Speak Mandarin Campaign (Lee 2011; Ng 2017), hereafter referred to as SMC. The objectives of the SMC, as officially expounded by the Government, were educational, communicative, and cultural (Bokhorst-Heng 1998; 1999). It was believed that the learning of Mandarin could be sped up if Chinese dialects[4], i.e. Hokkien, Cantonese, Teochew, Hainanese, Hakka and several others, were set aside in the public space, banned from the media, evacuated from the educational sphere and if their use was discouraged in family interactions.

The insistance on standard linguistic practices in English and Mandarin brings to light the state's obsession with prestige planning (Lim 2009). In a letter published in the national daily newspaper *The Straits Times* on March 7, 2009, Chee Hong Tat, the Principal Secretary of Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew provided the following explanation for this move:

> "This is why we have discouraged the use of dialects. It interferes with the learning of Mandarin and English. Singaporeans have to master English. It is our common working language and the language which connects us with the world. We also emphasised the learning of Mandarin, to make it the mother tongue for all Chinese Singaporeans, regardless of their dialect groups. This is the common language of the 1.3 billion people in China. To engage China, overseas Chinese and foreigners are learning Mandarin and not the dialects of the different Chinese provinces. (...) That was the reason the Government stopped all dialect programmes on radio and television after 1979. Not to give conflicting signals, then Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew also stopped making speeches in Hokkien, which he had become fluent in after frequent use since 1961."[5]

The educational argument was based on the assumption that vernaculars were a hindrance to the development of Mandarin, which as pointed out by several scholars (Gupta 2008; Chew 2013) was seldom a home or ancestral language of the Chinese community when the country became independent. Recent demographic surveys (Wong 2011; Leimgruber 2013: 6-8) and research on language use and practices (Vaish et al. 2009; Siemund et al. 2014; Leimgruber et al. 2018; Forlot & Chan 2017) show that some of these – mostly Southern – Chinese vernaculars are still in use, albeit on the decline, and ethnographic research on the field (Ng 2017) or online (Tan 2012) also demonstrates an explicit attachment to these family languages, as I will show below.

The major argument of the SMC was that the number of vernaculars still in use in 1979 was seen as a barrier to Chinese intra-ethnic intelligibility and sense of belonging. Mandarin was then to be adopted as a common language,

4. I chose to retain the term 'dialect' in this article, along with the term 'vernacular.' Leimgruber (2013: 3) reminds us that the word 'dialect' is used both by scholars in the field and Singaporeans themselves to refer to the different varieties of Chinese.

5. https://www.asiaone.com/News/Education/Story/A1Story20090311-127699.html; originally published in the *Straits Times*, March 7, 2009. Last accessed February 18, 2021.

thus addressing as well the cultural argument of the SMC: promoting the preservation and development of Asian values, which were viewed as endangered in light of the increasing Westernization of the country (Ho & Alsagoff 1998). Mandarin was expected to serve both as a tool of unification and as a cultural ballast (Tan 2007: 81) against a perceptibly bad effect of Westernization. So were the other Mother Tongues, as retired, founding Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew clearly expressed in 2012:

> "I stressed the importance of Mandarin to Chinese Singaporeans. Not only was using dialects an obstacle to learning Mandarin and English in schools, it would displace Mandarin and strengthen the position of English. (…) Mandarin is emotionally acceptable as our mother tongue (and Malay and Tamil for the other ethnic groups)" (Lee 2012: 150)

Understanding the recent sociolinguistic history of Singapore requires to look at the bigger picture. The elements of the language debate – as shown in the fieldwork I will present infra – include both local, colonial and international languages. In most multicultural and multilingual spaces, whether colonized or not, human contacts have the effect of transforming language practices and adapting them to local realities. Singapore is no exception.

Before the inception of colonial rule (1819), the islanders already exchanged in linguistic forms that they hybridized according to their needs, mostly in Bazaar Malay or in a local, indigenous form of English which still reflects the contacts of the people who speak it (Chew 2013; Leimgruber 2013). Singapore English, and in particular its colloquial forms (popularized under the name of Singlish) can be identified through some features, such as an English-based grammar, a lexical contribution and some morphosyntactic characteristics deriving from Malay and Chinese vernaculars like Hokkien, Cantonese and Teochew. These flexible linguistic forms adapt to circumstances, evolve in history and constitute a continuum between a so-called standard English and strongly hybridized forms of speech.

In 2000, an annual campaign of normative and prescriptive promotion was launched for English – the Speak Good English Movement (henceforth SGEM). The purpose was to promote the learning and practice of a British-inspired international English. Right from the outset, the SGEM campaign also aimed at ostracizing the linguistic forms associated with Singlish, reinforcing the image of language impurity and incorrectness it already had (Rubdy 2001). Former Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew even branded it as "a handicap we must not wish on Singaporeans" (see quotation below).

The two campaigns are well described by the man who was at the source of their engineering, Lee Kuan Yew. Note how he takes personal responsability in these foundational language policies by resorting not only to a collective "we" (i.e. Singapore as a society, led by the ruling People's Action Party), but also to the "I" personal pronoun in this excerpt:

> "Let me tell you what we did about Mandarin. Twenty five years ago, we decided that we would not speak a special Singapore Mandarin, pronounced with Hokkien, Teochew or Cantonese accents, and with Malay words thrown in. To set the standard, I had our announcers on radio and television and school teachers retrained by teachers from Taiwan who spoke standard Mandarin. We also hired a few announcers for TV and radio from Taiwan to set the pace. Because we used standard Mandarin on TV, radio, and with teachers in schools, we now have a generation of young Singaporeans able to speak more of a standard Mandarin. The Chinese-speaking world outside Singapore can understand us.
>
> We must take the same approach with English. Get our teachers retrained. Do not popularise Singlish. Do not use Singlish in our TV sitcoms, except for humorous bits, and in a way that makes people want to speak standard English. We will see a difference in another one generation. The people who will benefit most are those who can only master one kind of English. Singlish is a handicap we must not wish on Singaporeans."[6]

Analyzing language practices, attitudes and discourses

The contribution of quantitative investigations

Studying attitudes towards languages has a long scholarly tradition in sociolinguistics and psycholinguistics. Labov's pioneering research on the social stratification of English resorted mostly to methodological tools involving language perceptions. In the 1970s and 1980s, a number of research led by social psychologists of language sought to study the linguistic and communicative features of intergroup relations, the linguistic dimensions of identity constructions. Most of this scholarly research has tapped on the notion of attitudes, focusing "on a variety of groups and intergroup processes, including gender, age, ethnicity, and institutional role" (Weatherall et al. 2007: 2-3). These approaches have relied on quantitative and/or experimental methodological instruments such as questionnaires, surveys and verbal guise and matched-guised techniques uncovering the way people perceive the speech of others or the way they think people perceive their own way of speaking.

Probably because of its multicultural and multilingual fabric, Singapore has attracted language scholars both from within and from around the world, be they formal linguists, language educationists, sociolinguists, anthropologists or psycholinguists. It is easy nowadays to have access to a large body of scholarly literature on language practices, policies and attitudes, most of which is published in English. Research on attitudes and beliefs gained popularity in the 2000s, aiming at describing attitudes towards standard English and Singlish (Cavallaro & Ng 2009; Tan 2017, amongst others), towards varieties of Mandarin Chinese (Wong & Tan 2017a) or towards the accent production of

6. Speech by Senior Minister Lee Kuan Yew at the 34th National Day Celebration, August 14, 1999, Tanjong Pagar Community Club. Source: https://www.nas.gov.sg/archivesonline/data/pdfdoc/1999081404.htm. Last accessed on February 10, 2021.

speakers and their possible ethnic identification (see Cavallaro & Serwe 2010 or Sim 2019 on the Singapore Malay population). Some of these publications show the attachment of speakers to their family languages, including Singlish. What is also highlighted is the fact that the two language promotion campaigns (SMC and SGEM) have taken their toll, as English is spreading in daily use and generally produces positive attitudes.

A number of these quantitative investigations deal with the issues of the Mandarinization of the Chinese community and the slow language shift towards English which all communities experience in the city-state. What is often studied is the attitudes and feelings of the respondents towards their assigned languages and/or their ethnic communities. Kamwangamalu (1992) for instance showed that almost all of his participants felt that Chinese was "their" language (as in native language), but that less that half (38%) felt that their feelings for it was very high, thus demonstrating a growing sense of Singaporeanness and a detachment of the language from the ethnic affilation it is supposed to convey. Wong and Tan (2017a), partially drawing on drawing on Kamwangamalu (1992)'s interpretations, come to the conclusion that what is valued mostly by Chinese Singaporeans is the instrumental value of mandarin, and not (or no longer) the ethnicity the authorities have been trying to sustain. These results concur with Wee (2003)'s or Tupas (2015)'s analysis of how language policy in Singapore has been hinged on a high level of pragmatism (Wong & Tan 2017a: 40).

In terms of status and solidarity, various investigations were carried out to uncover the attitudes of Singaporeans towards their community languages. For instance, Xu et al. (1998) concluded that while English was identified by the respondents as a powerful and prestigious language, Mandarin was rated as high in solidarity. In light of these studies and with regard to the steady increase of Mainland Chinese migration to Singapore between 1990 and 2015, Cavallaro et al. (2018) studied attitudes towards the different Mandarin varieties within a group of Singaporean Chinese and a group of Mainland Chinese nationals living in Singapore. Their study demonstrates that both groups assign a higher status to the variety of Chinese spoken in mainland China, and that Singaporean participants favoured the standard variety – probably a by-product of the school education – while PRC nationals preferred the colloquial variety of the language.

What some studies have confirmed statistically as well is the impact of the Speak Mandarin Campaign not only on daily use, but also on the attitudes of social actors. For instance, Wong and Tan's (2017a & 2017b) quantitative results show that though considered important for identity construction, Chinese dialects in Singapore have been clearly marginalized, with low rates of daily use, except maybe in the family domain and mostly with the elders. Therefore, in instrumental terms, these dialects are perceived as becoming less and less important. This also confirms that Mandarin and English have long taken on the role of the language of reference of the Chinese community in Singapore.

Ng (2017) studied the attitudes of Singaporean Chinese dialect speakers towards the Speak Mandarin Campaign. His quantitative results (as well as his interview-based ones) allowed him to assert that most respondents have a positive attitude towards Mandarin, not only in term of usefulness, but also because it helps the Chinese community preserve its Chinese culture (Ng 2017: 62). His results led him to conclude that his participants hoped the SMC would continue. These results are interesting as they do not entirely corroborate our own results, missing out contradictory ideologies (Curdt-Christiansen 2016) and the possible criticisms and mixed feelings that some young Singaporeans feel nowadays. The objective of this article is precisely to investigate that point.

In two large scale studies investigating language maintenance and shift amongst university and polytechnic students (Siemund et al. 2014) as well as vocational training students (Leimgruber et al. 2018), language backgrounds, practices and attitudes were examined and analyzed. What was sought was the identification of the attitudes which students in those institutions displayed towards English, Singlish and their respective mother tongues. Positing that young postsecondary students are tomorrow's "social trendsetters" (Siemund at al. 2014: 360) in Singapore, Siemund et al. (2014) brought to light significant differences between the practices and attitudes of polytechnic students and their university counterparts. In conformity with the local normative pattern, the latter displayed more bilingual than multilingual practices, with English considered as a key language of Singapore.

In the same study, polytechnic students from Chinese backgrounds exhibited a greater tendency than university students for trilingualism, with English, their mother tongue and another Chinese vernacular being maintained and regularly spoken. Another remarkable result is the fact that contrary to these polytechnic students, university – i.e. elite – students also tended to regard Singlish as one of the fundamental traits of Singaporean identity (Siemund et al 2014: 357). In a follow-up on the previous study, Leimgruber et al. (2018) challenged the idea that the typical Singaporean is multilingual but rather that most repertoires are bilingual and trilingual. Their research led to similar results concerning the English-Mandarin bilingual proficiency of university students as compared with polytechnic and vocational schools students, especially in the Singaporean Chinese community. The relevance of these two studies also lie in the fact that national censuses never go into such detailed information on language practices and attitudes. This kind of statistical enquiries therefore enables the sociolinguistic community to obtain a more accurate picture of local language dynamics.

The study and its population

While acknowledging the relevance of current and previous investigations based on statistical data and attitudinal research, this article proposes a different kind of approach, although part of its inspiration draws upon its quantitative

data, as our results confirm that both Singlish and Chinese dialects are important repertoires in the lives of the group of youths we investigated on (Forlot & Chan 2017; Forlot 2018). Language policy perceptions are not construed here as socio-psychological categories, but as discursive ones. What it means is that in the analysis that follows, I have resorted to elicitation as one of the material traces (Heller et al. 2018) that was collected throughout the research. Elements of the interviews collected here are considered as discursive items of social actors who may feel free or constrained to speak out their minds, who may contradict themselves in the course of the conversations, or who might answer in ways converse to the stances they adopted in the questionnaires they filled out at an earlier stage of the research.

One of the perceived drawbacks of interviews is probably that the researcher has access mostly to what Silverstein (2003) called a reportive type of meta-linguistic activity. This reportive type, as S. Tan (2012) puts it, corresponds to the explicit-evaluative content of given sociolinguistic discussions, which our research interviews actually purpoted to be. But preconscious language ideologies are also at play here, which means that the reportive type of metalinguistic activity, explicitly accessible via interviews, is inter-related to a reflexive one, itself articulated to some background knowledge activity shaping language-ideological presuppositions (Silverstein 1993). Interviews can then be looked upon as a site for the reproduction of language ideologies (Kroskrity 2000).

Overall, the ethnographic part of the research comprised 44 semi-structured interviews, of which 31 were done with undergraduate and graduate university students enrolled in various departments. Four interviews of primary and secondary teachers in their twenties or thirties were also organized, as well as seven interviews of university scholars involved in teaching and research in linguistics, Chinese studies, and Malay studies. Finally, two cultural figures of the Singapore Chinese community were interviewed as well.

Adopting a critical sociolinguistic stance (Heller et al. 2016; 2018), my goal in this article is to unveil young Singaporean adults' positionings vis-à-vis language practices and policies. Therefore, I will focus more specifically here on students' discourses, collected in 2016 and 2017 on the campus of a prestigious Singapore university. For the sake of space, I selected excerpts from eleven of these interviews.

Instrumentalizing and commodifying Singapore's languages

In a present-day globalized economy, language has grown as a significant commodity. Heller (2010) describes the commodifying effect created by late capitalism on language, which has become not only a merchandize, but a resource with exchange value. Late modernity has created the possibility for the command of a language to be redefined from a talent or an inherent feature of a group to a measureable skill. The following sections will expand on this notion of language as a commodity in the case of Singapore's nation building.

Language for political stability

One of the topics we discussed during our encounters with these young Singaporean students was how they perceived the political choices of their elders to opt for a policy of bilingualism and to maintain forms of racial assignation mostly inherited from British colonial rule. All of our participants expressed a clear understanding of the manners and the reasons the first rulers of independent Singapore managed diversity, and the reasons for these choices. For these youths, there was a necessity to stick to a system of racial divisions, not for segregation purposes but because it ensured equality and developed multiculturalism, if only a partitioned form of multiculturalism. In saying so, they are endorsing the decisions made by the founding fathers of the Republic.

Ahmad, a young Singaporean Malay, asserts that electing English as a common language was a good move for diplomatic reasons. To him, the overriding goal was to respect the balance between the ethnic groups in the territory. Note that he interestingly associates these ethnic groups with their languages, somewhat reifying the actual dynamics at play when Singapore became independent. This reminds us that in the narrative of the separation between Malaysia and Singapore in 1965, the issue of language and racial balance was one of the major bones of contention, the Singaporean leaders opposing Kuala Lumpur's planned policy of Malay racial precedence.

Except 1: Ahmad (S-M)[7]

> I think definitely a good move because I think that's one language that don't take priority and not a single mother tongue would take priority over the rest of the languages.

The argument developed above by Ahmad is also shared by all the Singaporean Chinese we interviewed. Two main reasons come up that justify supporting the decisions made by the elder leaders: the first one has to do with ethnic equality and neutrality of the state, an issue often construed as responsible for the divorce between Singapore and Malaysia in their short-lived merger, as evoked supra. The second reason is the rationality of the choice of English as a common language, for the same neutrality purposes but also for socioeconomic reasons.

7. All names have been changed. Some biographical elements on the eleven students quoted in this article are provided in the appendix. Respondents with Christian names were given replacement Christian names, and the same rule went for Chinese and Malay names. Apart for excerpt 1 (Ahmad is a Singaporean Malay, hence the acronym S-M) and although the corpus comprises informants from Malay, Indian and Mainland Chinese backgrounds, all the other excerpts come from the majority group of our study, i.e. Singaporean Chinese students (S-Ch). In the transcribed interviews, commas refer to short pauses. Unless mentioned otherwise, all interviews were led by me.

To the question of whether it was a good move to opt for English as a common language when Singapore became independent in 1965, Christy and Dingdang reply the following:

Excerpt 2: Christy (S-Ch)

> English, yeah definitely because it doesn't give any one race, ethnicity an advantage over the other. So everyone had to learn it. So it's like better I guess

Excerpt 3: Dingdang (S-Ch)

> Well I think it's hard to say but probably it makes sense during that period of time since if they chose Chinese as a common language, it might cause some unhappiness among the Malays. If they chose Malay and the same thing goes for Chinese. English wise, I think it's also due to colonial history, that's why English was actually used. But ultimately I think it's okay, I mean English itself is a way to communicate. So well it's alright to use English as a common language to unify Singapore

The apparent oratory precautions they are taking when using "I guess", "it's hard to say" and "I think" are counterbalanced by more affirmative stances, as in "yeah definitely" or "so well it's alright." This fairly confident discourse on the fact that Singaporean leaders made the right decisions is hardly ever contradicted in our corpus of interviews when it comes to English. The acknowledgement of the place of this language in the world as early as the 1960s probably accounts for this position:

Excerpt 4: Carol (S-Ch)

> I think it definitely was a good move [to choose English], because um, other than China, I think, most of the world would communicate in English even though it's not their inherent mother tongue but I think that it has slowly become like an international language (…) And just comparing to our neighbouring countries who chose to stick with, like, their mother tongues, like, our most neighbouring countries like Malaysia, I think that, um, English speaking, like comparing it, both countries, it was more economical because um business wise and everything (…) I don't know maybe I'm wrong but just comparing the two countries, I would think that it's the right move definitely because if we were to speak Chinese and our neighbouring countries were like Malay and everything we would have missed a lot of opportunities with them

Carol's reply is interesting inamuch as she resorts to the institutional term "mother tongue" twice in the excerpt, and if in the first instance, we can wonder whether she is speaking of the official Mother Tongues of the Singapore education system, the second instance confirms that she is using the term as a synomym for "native language" or "first language spoken in the family." This polysemic blurring of the terminology signals that in reflexive discourse and the language-ideological presuppositions it is backgrounded on,

some official terms have made their way through commonsense understanding of the language dynamics at play.

One could then hypothesize that Carol perceives language learning as a clear-cut institutional process, with on the one hand a Mother Tongue and on the other hand additional languages, the former corresponding to the strict definition given by the state. This is somehow confirmed in her mentioning Chinese (i.e. Mandarin) as a plausible – but dismissed – choice of the common language for Singapore, despite the fact that three quarters of the Singaporean population are categorized as ethnically Chinese.

As in many other discourses collected along our fieldwork, the rationale for Singapore's language policies given by those young students reproduces the pragmatic vision of multilingualism as promoted by the first leaders, i.e. English for political and economic stability. Some participants are however keen on underlining the extent to which English and linguistic diversity seemed to be both assets and dangers for political stability in the early years of independence.

In excerpt 5, Amanda considers various reasons for opting for such a policy, including the political climate in the 1960s, as well as the social inequalities that were hindering development. In an echo to Rubdy's reflexions on Singapore's ideology of meritocracy and the risks linked to the reproduction of inequality (Rubdy 2005: 66-70), Amanda also alludes to the difficulties of implementing such a policy and to the fact that some ethnic groups had a hard time abiding by it at first:

Except 5: Amanda (S-Ch, Yr.3)

> I know why they chose English so like, it had to do with the kind of international climate at that time. They were really scared of communism. And then we were a colony, so it made a lot of sense to choose English (…) I mean I do think it was a good thing because I think after the initial period, like the fact that we speak English, as Singaporeans, in terms of just being able to find jobs (…) initially it was really, how do I say, it really divided people according to how educated they were, because that's why for example Indians were initially far more successful than the other races because they were mostly English-educated and they benefitted from this policy.

However, the neat distinction between English for unity and progress and the Mother Tongues for cultural maintenance and ethnic affiliation sometimes barely holds water in the opinions of these youths, as the following sections will show.

Language homogeneization and survival at all costs

Throughout the interviews, I tried to understand to what extent our respondents were aware of the risks induced by language and cultural homogeneization. An interesting outcome of these conversations is that none of these young students seemed to voice the hierarchizing, derogatory

images post-independence Singaporean language engineering discourses have conveyed about the relations between Chinese Mandarin and Chinese dialects.

Ya Li explains below that besides the institutionalized languages she had access to in the education system (English, Mandarin, Japanese and French), she has been seeking to appropriate what she regards as her genuine family language, Cantonese, whose teaching was long banned in Singapore and is now available in scarce private or association classes.

Excerpt 6: Ya Li (S-Ch – Interviewer 1: D. K. G. Chan. Int. 2: G. Forlot)

> Interviewer 1: You did Higher Chinese? *[Higher Chinese = Mandarin for advanced students]*
> Ya Li: I did higher Chinese, then I did Japanese in secondary school.
> Interviewer 2: At the Ministry of Education Language Centre?
> Ya Li: Yeah for 4 years I did o-levels. But I never went for the proficiency test. Yeah it's one of the things that I want to go back and like get the proficiency test but I've never found the time to properly study for it. And also recently I'm trying to pick up Cantonese yeah because, my family's actually Cantonese. My father is Cantonese but my mother is Teochew, and, but I didn't grow up knowing Cantonese because you know of the, my father said because Lee Kuan Yew said that, yeah, dialects weren't useful so I never grow up learning Cantonese but recently I've been trying to pick it up yeah

Ya Li's testimony clearly shows the impact former Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew's public opinions and instructions concerning the necessity to cast aside Chinese dialects had on her own family. It illustrates how some Singaporeans of her parents' generation complied with the no-dialect rule.

This does not mean that the youths we interviewed necessarily champion the idea that dialects should be taught or sustained publicly, but rather that those languages are part of their heritage as Chinese Singaporeans, that they belonged to their parents or grand-parents, and therefore that to some extent they form a part of these young Singaporeans' identities too. In fact, most respondents do not share the rather brutally diglossic policy of phasing out dialects in favour of Mandarin, even though they understand that for pragmatic reasons, something had to be done for the unity of the Chinese community. For instance, in the following extract, Maya expresses sadness that dialects have been declining, but explains that it had to be done for the sake of the country's survival:

Excerpt 7: Maya (S-Ch)

> Singapore sort of like, just, um, assimilates people, like okay if they're Chinese, it doesn't matter like what dialect group you're from, you learn Mandarin, you know? Yeah so it's like the loss of dialects but, mmm, sociologically and culturally probably that, there are definitely losses like in terms of culture and now, because we're so economically developed already, then I think that, because we have these like comforts, that's why we can look back and say that, oh, um, our culture was lost at that time,

> but if we project ourselves like into the past right, I think if I don't even have enough like, food or like economic stability, I wouldn't be complaining about what language I speak, I'll just want to like survive.

Language for economic growth

I will not dwell on what was developed above on the obvious economic value of English as a commodity in the globalized economy on which Singapore vigourously embarked in the years following independence. Wee (2003; 2006) aptly reminds us that languages in Singapore have since then been the object of instrumentalism and this is particularly true in the case of the opposition between Chinese Mandarin and dialects.

If Asian values and familial bond had been at the centre of the PAP leaders' concern, then adopting Mandarin as an ethnic language probably made little sense, as the vast majority of Chinese Singaporeans had ancestral ties with Southern Chinese regions. In fact, opting for Mandarin also had to do with setting store by the economic growth of China's market economy, and Mandarin soon became "intertwined with, rather than separate from, economic gains" (Wee 2006: 353). A language such as Mandarin, besides its ethnocultural, besides their ethnocultural (the link to Chineseness) and political (the necessity for stability within the Chinese community) motivations, was ranked favourably "based on a criteria of utility, in this case, perceived economic value" (Tan 2012: 345).

The Government actually never tried to conceal this, as the excerpts from Lee Kuan Yew and Chee Hong Tat quoted above are witness of. Public state discourse has always foregrounded the virtue of Mandarin in order to connect with the outside Chinese world and to connect with China itself for more than just patrimonial reasons. This argument seems to have hit home for Chinese Singaporeans, as Amanda reports her experience as a pupil and listener of Singapore's official discourse:

Excerpt 8: Amanda (S-Ch)

> I think with Mandarin or with Chinese dialects, it gets a bit more complicated because there is the whole question of practicality which the government has repeated over and over again (…) with Mandarin, there is the idea of heritage, and that there's the additional really strong idea that this is going to be really useful and you should, just learn it because of China.

Amanda recalls the point hammered home by the state that Mandarin should serve both as patrimonial marker as well as a potential to reach out to the Mandarin-speaking business world. In a context of late modernity which foregrounds the economy as one of the driving forces of state policies, with languages being part and parcel of the latter, the business value of practicing or learning a language has to make do with – and sometimes clashes with – the

ethnic or cultural construals politicians and citizens in general have of languages as homogeneous and impermeable entities (Blackledge & Creese 2008).

A good example of this is to be found within the Indian community of Singapore. Faced with a more flexible Mother Tongue policy initiated in the 1990s allowing Indian pupils to chose a non-Tamil Indian language in school, families have nevertheless had the tendency to favour Hindi as a Mother Tongue over the Indian languages of their ancestral groups, as the national language of India is often valued as a more certain asset in a transnational and transmigrant perspective (Jain & Wee 2017; Jain 2021).

(Dis)connecting language and ethnic identity

Language and political control

One the objectives of the present research was to investigate the extent to which young educated Singaporeans would engage in a non-essentialist discourse as far as languages are concerned in a country which built a great part of its stability on a primordialist form of ethno-linguistic equilibrium. We did not ask the question explicitly, as we knew that our participants were likely to try to accommodate to the assertions or questions of the interviewers. Therefore, as expected, most of the initial answers related, described and most of the time justified the classical CMIO ethnocultural division system (cf. supra), somehow reproducing the official discourse that generated the contemporary Singapore national narrative.

A few of the students nevertheless demonstrated some awareness of the ideological foundations of their own discourse, acquired throughout their education. Here is what Florence ('*okay I'm not sure it's because we were taught this but…*') and Amanda (*I think it's also part of like, control ?*) had to say when they were asked to comment on the ways languages were chosen and assigned to different groups by the first rulers of the city-state:

Excerpt 9: Florence (S-Ch)

> Yeah I mean like I think honestly, okay, I'm not sure it's because we were taught this but like, I think it was good, because it did, it was necessary, because otherwise it was going to have like a very difficult like, three separate cultures and then you're going to have to like, the communication won't be there, it won't be as efficient so English was like the most, like something that none of them had in common so just make one the center and then to keep your ethnicity, you had your mother tongue for that.

Excerpt 10: Amanda (S-Ch)

> I don't think it's as simple or as straightforward as Chinese is your heritage. I think it's also part of, like control? Like they think that certain categories of people, like, well they split us up into races right. So then you have Chinese people who

should speak Chinese just because, and you have Tamils who should speak Tamil and then you have other Indians who should speak um or whatever. So I don't know, I think, because I mean otherwise, a lot of people would be able to learn the language any way I think within the house, or with relatives or going for external classes. I don't know actually.

In addition to the political awareness that emerges in some of these narratives, let us note that the question of justifying the choice of Mandarin as a mother tongue for all Chinese students made some respondents hesitate, or express some level of unease. The repetition of "I don't know" in Amanda's response (excerpt 10) illustrates this hesitation. Maya's answer in excerpt 11 also betrays well this discursive phenomenon, as she wavers a while before mentioning the issue of the state's political control:

Excerpt 11: Maya (S-Ch)

Maya: so we just don't speak Chinese [in my family], Mandarin, and my grandmother speaks like dialect, Canto, Cantonese. So, like, instead of speaking Mandarin we speak Cantonese more. Yeah, so Mandarin just doesn't really like, I don't feel that there's a need to speak in Mandarin. But neither do I feel like, I cannot. Like if I want to, I can, they understand me. It's just that they're probably not a very good at like the technical aspects of it.
Interviewer: Mmm yes, so isn't that kind of weird that your Mother Tongue should actually not be, the language you're really speaking in your heritage? You see what I mean? That is to say they told you your language which is supposed to be, what, Mandarin, which was supposed to be the language of your, cultural background but in fact your cultural background was not in Mandarin. So what do you think of that?
Maya: Um (silence)
Interviewer: As in fact you spoke two versions, two Chinese languages, Cantonese right? And
Maya: Mandarin yeah.
Interviewer: And Mandarin.
Maya: I, okay, this like goes back into state instruments of political control.

As noted so far, a number of respondents are conscious that the choice of Mandarin for the Singapore Chinese communities was probably as much a political and economic move as a merely cultural enterprise. This sometimes raises the double issue, for some of the participants, of Chineseness in present-day, globalized Singapore and of Mandarin as a legitimate vehicle of Chineseness.

Mandarin, dialects and Chineseness in Singapore

The issue of Chineseness has attracted some scholarly attention in the past decades, although little research has specifically focused on the role of language in the development and shift of ethnicities and identities in the Chinese diasporas in Asia. Wong & Tan (2017b), whose investigation compares attitudes among the Chinese communities of Singapore, Malaysia and the PRC, do mention some research carried out earlier in Malaysia (Low et al. 2010) or Singapore with

regard to specific dialect groups (Gupta & Yeok 1995) (Gupta & Yeok 1995). Some work on the way Chinese Singaporeans perceive language in relation to their identity and to the construction of their Chineseness has been published in recent years as well (Tan 2012 and Ang 2017).

It comes as little surprise that most studies of overseas Chinese communities attest to a tendency of language shift towards the local languages. In the case of Singapore and Malaysia, the complexity comes from the presence of English and/or Malay as national or official languages, the dominance of Mandarin as a common language and the gradual decline of Chinese vernaculars traditionally used by the older generations. As most of our interviewees were Chinese (i.e. from Chinese descent or for three of them, migrated from Mainland China or Malaysia when they were younger), we attempted to capture what sense it made for them, in a globalized timespace, to be assigned and to adopt or assert an identity as Chinese. We wanted to understand what language(s) entailed being Chinese, and how connected Chineseness was with Singaporeanness.

As developed above, the phasing out of dialects has created the expected effect of propelling Mandarin as the major Chinese language in Singapore nowadays. Our respondents are cognizant of this fact and of the professional asset it procures those who have a good command of standard Chinese. But for them, this situation has generated if not language loss – as elderly Singaporeans continue speaking Hokkien, Cantonese and Teochew mostly[8] – but language shift within their own families. William's and John's testimonies are significant illustrations of this:

Excerpt 12: William (S-Ch.)

> Now I can barely speak to my grandmother because she speaks Cantonese, I think it's a bit isolating for her, and for me (…) I don't recall the time when I could step out of my house and you'd hear all sorts of dialects, the kind of fluency my grandparents had, I don't get that when I'm outside.

Excerpt 13: John (S-Ch. – Interviewer 1: D. K. G. Chan – Int. 2: G. Forlot)

> Interviewer 1: How do you feel about yourself mastering Teochew?
> John: Myself not speaking it.
> Int. 2: Yeah you speak Teochew to your grandmother, but you're not so comfortable compared with Mandarin?
> John: No as in like I'm not comfortable speaking to my parents in Teochew when they try.
> Int. 1: Yeah so how do you feel about that, dialects being, disappearing from the scene?

8. This has of course not gone unnoticed by the Singapore Government and Chinese dialects regularly resurface during electoral campaigns or health crises in order to reach out to the elderly (Lim 2015). For instance, Hokkien, Cantonese and Teochew were unrelunctantly used in the media during the 2002 SARS epidemic and the 2020-2021 COVID-19 pandemic.

John: I think it's a pity but other than that I think like, it's just, because of the Government policy and things, one must speak Mandarin, just, I find it a bit of a pity.

What the latter extract shares with William's is the issue of language shift and the intergenerational disruption it has created within families. These two young men now have difficulty interacting with their own grandmothers. A rescaling of Mandarin in Singapore's linguistic landscape has gradually taken shape. Originally engineered, like Tamil and Malay, as the language imposed for the maintenance of Chineseness and more generally Asian values, Mandarin has conversely generated a different kind of attachment, quite remote from authenticity and familial Asian values: those of Chinese globalization, socioeconomic success and international business.

Meanwhile, Mandarin as a collective language of Chinese Singaporeans, only accessible via Mother Tongue education and therefore unattainable by the elderly, has created a breach in intrafamilial communication, with grandchildren unable to interact easily with their grandparents or elderly people in general, while the latter are paradoxically often seen as the custodians of Chinese traditions. This is why the rise of Mandarin as the flagship of Singaporean Chineseness is met with some wariness by our participants.

All this may account for the wavering discourses on Chinese identity among the youths we interviewed. Let us remember however that they are considered as elite students, anglo-dominant for almost all of them. As revealed in Siemund et al. (2014), Leimgruber et al. (2018) and other parts of our own research (Forlot & Chan 2017; Forlot 2018), university students tend to value English and Singlish within their language repertoires. When asked to position themselves with regard to language practice and their feeling of Chineseness, all of them take for granted that they are ethnically Chinese, but the very fact that English and Singlish are the dominant language forms they use on a daily basis bears witness to their Singaporean specificity, as Jessica points out in the following excerpt:

Excerpt 14: Jessica (S-Ch)

Interviewer: how do you feel about being of Chinese extraction and not being so comfortable in the Chinese language or a Chinese dialect?

Jessica: I think when I was younger I didn't really mind, because like I don't really feel very Chinese in any way. I mean we're Singaporean Chinese, but typically in Singapore like, we're known as multiracial but really it's like kind of like it isn't a strong factor because it's not a divisive factor. Like you don't identify with it as much or at least that's how I feel. So it didn't really matter because English is, kind of like the most widely used language anyway. I guess now, I do feel it's a bit more important because, I mean, like there's the older generation like, you speak to your random aunties on the street or like, to your grandparents and you can't connect with them, so that's also quite a big part of the heritage I think. So, I'm not sure about the Chinese part as separate from the Singaporean part though, I don't think that Singaporean Chinese come together like there's no separate Chinese identity.

Interestingly enough, Jessica points to the fact that the "generation gap" she mentions is created by a missing language link, which she identifies as the Chinese language (be it Mandarin or a dialect). She also sees her Chineseness as part of her identity, but not specifically Mandarin as a foundational part of it, as she mentions earlier in her interview that Mandarin as an imposed school and home language "was an experiment that failed on [her]."

The family failure brought forward by Jessica is also certainly that of the Singapore education system in which Mandarin as a Mother Tongue was imposed in ways most of our participants disapprove of as dull, monotonous, tedious or even "tyrannical" (in our interviewee William's own words). This education-related aspect of the elaboration of Singapore Chineseness, though beyond the scope of this article, is probably of paramount importance in grasping how Singaporean Chineseness has redefined itself differently from other kinds of overseas communities and along the lines of Singapore's multicultural and English-knowing (Pakir 1992) fabric. Irresolute as to what it is to be Chinese, Amanda expresses it in uncertain terms:

Excerpt 15: Amanda (S-Ch)

> I do think that actually the place we live, to me that's like home, it isn't to me really about your ethnic background but just kind of, environmental culture you grew up in. But despite knowing that in my brain, like I guess I do feel emotionally that, like I would like to have that link to my ethnic background even though I would never want to work in China, you know, or I would, like in many ways, I don't feel affiliated to being a Chinese person, but, yeah I want to speak Cantonese, I want to speak Mandarin.

Conclusion

This article contended to bring to light several aspects of language-in-identity issues. Our fieldwork also gave an opportunity to these university students, who are thought to be the country's future elite, to reflect upon the foundation of Singapore as a late modern society and as a strong economic actor in the region. The interviews evince the extent to which those youths understand language(s) as practices, policies and therefore ideologies, and consequently as tools or means for political stability and social control.

Furthermore, while mostly focussing on the Chinese population amidst our interviewees, the research shows that their stands on Chineseness are much more complex than what the state has tried to concretize as an ethnolinguistic sense of belonging. Though the interviews reveal that the participants conceive the state policies as essentialist and possibly unfit for a late modern, globalized society, they overall justify their elders' opting for strong-willed measures regarding language and ethnic balance. Although this appears to bring unchallenged grist to the mill of the early leaders of Singapore, what

the narratives really show is that the young elite students we interviewed are aware that promoting state stability and economic success was done thanks to the imposition of English and homogeneously construed Mother Tongues, and that these policies were implemented at the expense of local vernaculars, thus creating regrettable cultural loss and language shifts within their families. What still needs to be identified regarding the above-mentioned issues is whether they are sociologically determined, in other words whether other discourses would emerge among different age or class groups, as some quantitative investigations seem to indicate (Siemund et al. 2014; Leimgruber et al. 2018).

What this research shows after all is that with its multicultural and multilingual fabric, Singaporean society cannot but be analyzed in complex terms, with all historical, linguistic, educational, economic and identificational ideologies at play. For instance, school is the locus in which social and linguistic norms are instilled, and as such, the place where children interact and develop – despite normative pressure – the two kinds of Englishes which are spoken at all levels of society: Standard English and its local, nativized colloquial and often controversial counterpart, Singlish. How all this contributes to the molding of Singaporean identities – and ethnicities if one decides to retain this concept – still deserves further research and analysis.

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Appendix 1:

Notes on the acronyms and on some terms:

- SAP school: Also called "Higher Chinese", the Special Assistance Plan caters to students whose results in Mandarin are the highest.

- MOELC: The Ministry of Education Language Centre, a two-campus special centre for the learning of foreign languages (i.e third languages, including Japanese, German, French, Arabic, Indonesian and Spanish). Courses take place after regular classes and are theoretically reserved for the top students of each school.

- Chinese: When it refers to the language, Chinese has the same meaning as Mandarin in this article.

- Mother Tongue: this term is to be understood here as the Asian language which pupils are to take at school in Singapore, based of the ethnic affiliation indicated on the identity card. Chinese Singaporeans learn Mandarin, Malay Singaporeans learn Malay, and Indian Singaporeans learn an Indian language (either Tamil or a non-Tamil language – i.e. Hindi, Bengali, Punjabi, Urdu or Gujarati).

Appendix 2:

Biographical elements on the interviewees
(in alphabetical order):

Ahmad: Second year male student, Malay Singaporean. Studies Political Science.

Ahmad was born in Singapore in a Malay-speaking family. He and most of his relatives still speak Malay at home and in the community. His Mother Tongue was Malay. He thinks that English is his stronger language for formal situations, but that his proficiency in Malay is high as well. He learned Mandarin for a couple of years at school, and started French at university. He would like to take German and Spanish in the future.

Amanda: Fourth year female student, Chinese Singaporean. Started in computer science in year 1 but switched to a major in European studies, with a minor in sociology.

Amanda was born in Singapore of Cantonese-speaking Malaysian parents. Her parents spoke only Cantonese at home, had some fluency in Malay and also spoke some English at home. She only interacted with them and her siblings in English. Her mother tongue was Mandarin, but she disliked it very much and hardly uses it now. She studied Korean for a couple of years at school, as well as a bit of Malay which she would like to learn more now, in particular with her father. She took three years of French at university. She says that she uses Singlish daily.

Carol: Second year female student, Chinese Singaporean. Studies biology.

Carol says that she was brought up entirely in English, although Cantonese was used at her grandparents' or great aunts' houses. No one at home was proficient in Mandarin, and she herself had low results at school in her Mandarin Mother Tongue classes. She indicates that she ought to study Chinese, but that she has never really liked it. She has taken French at university for two semesters and intends to continue studying it. She says she uses Singlish daily, which she claims is her most "natural" language.

Christy: Third year female student, Chinese Singaporean. Majoring in Global Studies, with a specialty in international communication.

At home, she speaks both English and Chinese, and her mother also interacts in Cantonese and Hokkien. She is quite fluent in Mandarin as she took the SAP school programme. She briefly studied Japanese in high school, and French at university. She spent a year abroad in Reims, France. She is interested in languages and likes to find the connections between them (eg. Chinese and Japanese writing systems or French and English grammars). She says that she uses Singlish on a daily basis.

Dingdang: Second year female student, Chinese Singaporean. Majoring in Global Studies, with a specialty in business and transnational culture.

After high school, she enrolled in a polytechnic before being admitted into university. She was born in Singapore in a Hainanese and Teochew family. Her paternal grandparents spoke Hainanese and she developed some limited comprehension skills of it. Outside her mother, her maternal relatives live in Malaysia and they speak Teochew and some Malay. She herself declares that she knows some Teochew, but that she is more fluent in Mandarin, which was her school Mother Tongue and which she speaks at home with her Chinese-educated mother. She says that her favorite language is Mandarin, but that overall her skills are higher in English, in particular when it comes to writing. In informal situations, she indicates that she speaks Singlish, but in her opinion, it is not a language, but just a variety with elements from other languages in it. In addition, she studied

some Japanese and has been taking French at university.

Florence: Third year female student, Chinese Singaporean. Majoring in Psychology.

Her main language is English. Both her Singapore-born parents speak Mandarin, but her mother has some basic knowledge of Cantonese. Her paternal grandparents are Teochew and Hakka and speak both languages. However family interactions are most of the time in Mandarin. She learned Chinese as a mother tongue but considers herself very westernized, claiming that English is her strongest language. She indicates that she often speaks Singlish, which she regards as a creole. She learned French for two years at university.

Jessica: Third year female student, Chinese Singaporean. Studies English Literature.

She was born in Singapore of a Teochew mother and a Hokkien father, both born and raised in Singapore. The language of communication at home has mostly been English, but dialects are generally used with the grandparents. She says that she does not speak much to her grandparents because of the language barrier. She indicates that her proficiency in Mandarin is basic, although she took Higher Chinese as a mother tongue at school. She is currently learning French, and says she uses Singlish in all informal situations. Due to her studies, she has a good metalinguistic and theoretical knowledge of the ways languages work.

John: Fourth year male student, Chinese Singaporean. Majoring in Geography.

He was raised in Singapore from a Singapore-born Teochew father and a Malaysia-born Teochew mother who both spoke Mandarin at home with their children. He has some limited knowledge of Teochew but feels much more comfortable in Mandarin (which was his Mother Tongue) and English. He feels quite insecure with his Mandarin if compared to that of Mainland Chinese students. He learned Korean in a private school, and basic Malay and French in the first two years of university. He indicates that he speaks Singlish on a daily basis, but considers it as nothing more than an informal dialect of English.

Maya: First year female student, Chinese Singaporean. Majoring in Political Science.

She was raised in a mainly English-speaking Singaporean Cantonese and Teochew family where Cantonese was spoken with the paternal

grandparents. She says she used Mandarin to communicate with her Teochew-speaking mother's relatives. She considers herself bilingual in English and Chinese, as she learned Mandarin as a mother tongue in a SAP school, but thinks that Malay should be a requirement for all Singaporeans. She attended MOELC classes in Japanese and has been taking French at university. She however indicates that her main language in daily life, except in formal situations, is Singlish.

William: Master's degree male student, Chinese Singaporean. Studies philosophy.

Born in Singapore in a Cantonese-speaking family, William indicates that English is by far his strongest language and that he took Chinese as a Mother Tongue at school. He says he disliked it and that he would have liked to be proficient in Cantonese to be able to interact with his grandparents. He has been learning French and also took some German in the past. He speaks Singlish on a daily basis, which he considers is the informal language of most Singaporeans.

Ya Li: First year female student, Chinese Singaporean. Studies at the Faculty of Science.

Raised in a Cantonese-Teochew family, she says that only Mandarin and English were spoken at home. She took Higher Chinese as a Mother Tongue in one of Singapore's most prestigious secondary schools. She now mainly speaks English and says she has forgotten most of her Mandarin. She has studied other languages such as French, Japanese and Thai. She indicates that she uses Singlish on a daily basis.

Christina Wu *

Legislating the Women's "Bill of Rights": Examining Singapore's Civil Society Through the Origins of the Women's Charter (1961)

On the 24th of May 1961, the State of Singapore's Legislative, Assembly passed Ordinance No. 18. Upon this decision, Singapore's *Yang di-Pertuan Negara* (Head of State), Yusof bin Ishak (1910 – 1970), assented to the following:

> An Ordinance to provide for monogamous marriages and for the solemnization and registration of such marriages; to amend and consolidate the law leading to divorce, the rights and duties of married persons, the maintenance of wives and children and the punishment of offences against women and girls; and to provide for matters incidental thereto.[1]

Better known as the "Women's Charter," this Bill was instantly heralded by the government and the press as a "revolutionary" step in advancing women's social rights and securing their welfare in the city-state.[2] This accolade was echoed by members of the public such as Mrs Judy Lee. When interviewed for her opinion of the Women's Charter by *The Straits Times*, Singapore's "largest and most influential newspaper"[3], the stenographer affirmed: "I feel

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1. *Ordinance No. 18 of 1961, The Women's Charter* (Singapore: Government Printer, 1961), p. 1

2. "The Women's Charter," *The Straits Times*, 20 May 1961, p. 8.

3. C.M. Turnbull, *Dateline Singapore: 150 Years of The Straits Times* (Singapore, SPH, 1995), pp. 171 – 174; Francis Seow, *The Media Enthralled: Singapore Revisited* (London: Lynne Rienner, 1998), p. 7.

the Government is at last doing something to protect our many unfortunate women and girls. […] every woman can now sense a feeling of security."[4] Similarly, an unnamed first wife of a Singapore *towkay* (businessman or boss) lauded the government for "this law [which] will keep my husband out of more mischief. […] I never thought a day would come when the Government will help me to control that husband of mine."[5] Amidst the praise of the government, however, were the pleas of Singapore's Muslim women who urged their political leaders to safeguard their welfare by other legislation.[6] In "respect of Malay custom and the Islamic faith,"[7] Muslim women in Singapore had been excluded from the provisions of the newly minted Women's Charter. Nonetheless, these women, such as a "first wife of a Muslim man" married to six other wives, insisted that "the Government should take steps to see that divorced wives get maintenance." She entreated: "Look at me. I am like a beggar. I hardly have enough money to keep myself alive because my husband has stopped paying maintenance."[8]

Despite the government's conspicuous exclusion of Muslim women as equal beneficiaries of the provisions of the Women's Charter, it is significant that even opposition politicians acknowledged this piece of legislation as "a great step forward in the protection of women."[9] Furthermore, as the voices of the women cited above reveal, it is noteworthy that it was the government – rather than any other organisation – which was largely credited with the conception and introduction of this "Women's Bill of Rights" in 1961.[10] To all intents and purposes, the government, formed by the People's Action Party (henceforth PAP) upon its landslide victory of 43 out of 51 seats during the 1959 Singapore General Elections, thus established itself as a protector and advocate for women's rights and welfare. Indeed, the emancipation of women

4. "All Hail Women's Charter of Rights: 'At Long Last – Protection and Security'," *The Straits Times*, 20 October 1959, p. 2.

5. "Wives Hail Marriage Charter," *The Straits Times*, 2 March 1960, p. 14. The word "towkay" is derived from the hokkien expression for "boss" (头家).

6. "The Winds of Change are Blowing: Opinion," *The Singapore Free Press*, 5 March 1960, p. 6.

7. "One Man, One Wife," *The Straits Times*, 3 March 1960, p. 6. Also see *Ordinance No 18*.

8. "Muslim Wives in Singapore Ask for Legislation to Protect Their Welfare," *The Straits Times*, 4 March 1960, p. 15.

9. "Wives Hail Marriage Charter," *The Straits Times*, 2 March 1960, p. 14. This comment was provided by a spokesman for the Liberal Socialist Party.

10. This expression was used by Dr. Lee Siew Choh (1917 – 2002), a PAP politician who later led its breakaway faction, the Barisan Sosialis, in 1961. See "Women's Charter Bill" (Session No. 1), Singapore Parliamentary Debates, Vol. 12, Sitting No. 7, Sitting Date 6 April 1960. https://sprs.parl.gov.sg/search/topic?reportid=024_19600406_S0003 _T0019. (Last consulted 12 June 2021).

had been featured as one of its major goals during its electoral campaign.[11] In this regard, the legislation of the Women's Charter was thus a fulfilment of the PAP's electoral promises. It was also a decision which, in the words of Finance Minister Goh Keng Swee (1918 – 2010), was inspired by the PAP government's "deep conviction as to how a good society should be regulated."[12] This emphasis on the initiative and determination of the PAP government "to give the weaker sex a higher degree of moral justice" remains dominant in the narratives of the origin and the development of the Women's Charter in Singapore today.[13] As case in point, Constance Singam (1936 –), the three-term President of AWARE, Singapore's foremost independent women's rights and gender equality advocacy group, accredits the PAP with the foresight of having "recognised the power of the women's vote and made a commitment to a policy of equal rights and opportunities for women."[14] Echoing these views, Leong Wai Kum, the doyenne of Singapore Family Law, has demonstrated that it was "mainly with the political agenda of the leaders of the People's Action Party that the fate of the Women's Charter lay."[15]

Other social activists, however, have been quick to offer an alternative viewpoint concerning the successful implementation of such a pioneering Bill. Shortly after the introduction of the proposed Women's Charter during its first reading in parliament, Shirin Fozdar (1905 – 1992), the energetic and outspoken founder of the Singapore Council of Women (henceforth SCW), wrote an editorial for *The Straits Times* to remind the public that the SCW had been "the original fighters" who had paved the path to the Women's Charter.[16] Remarking

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11. People's Action Party Central Executive Committee, *The Tasks Ahead. PAP's Five-Year-Plan, 1959 – 1964* (Singapore: Organ of the People's Action Party, 1959).

12. Goh's parliamentary remarks were reported in the following article: "One-Man-One-Wife: Big Debate," *The Straits Times*, 7 April 1960, p. 2.

13. "Register That Marriage – By Melvin Chan," *The Singapore Free Press*, 1 March 1960, p. 12.

14. Constance Singam, "Looking Back," in Tisa Ng (ed.), *Her Story. SCWO (Singapore Council of Women's Organisations) 25th Anniversary – Celebrating Womanhood* (Singapore: World Scientific, 2005), p. 7. AWARE stands for Association of Women for Action and Research. For more information, see Mandakini Arora, *Small Steps, Giant Leaps: A History of AWARE and the Women's Movement in Singapore* (Singapore: AWARE, 2007).

15. Leong Wai Kum, "Fifty Years and More of the Women's Charter of Singapore," *Singapore Journal of Legal Studies*, 2008, p. 2.

16. "Women's Charter: The Original Fighters – By Shirin Fozdar," *The Straits Times*, 29 March 1961, p. 8. For more information on SCW's (now defunct) early years, see Jenny Lam Lin et al., *Voices & Choices: The Women's Movement in Singapore* (Singapore: Singapore Council of Women's Organisations and Singapore Baha'i Women's Committee, 1993). Shirin Fozdar's life and work has also been the subject of the following work: Rose Ong, *Shirin Fozdar: Asia's Foremost Feminist* (Singapore: Rose Ong, 2000).

that politicians had "tried to take credit for having been responsible for the change in marriage laws and for the protection of women," Fozdar attempted to set the record straight by insisting that women's rights activists had in reality created "an awakening among the people of Singapore" – even at the expense of receiving death threats.[17] To be certain, Fozdar did recognise that the PAP was "the only party [which accepted] to take up the women's cause" as "the others shied off when asked to by us." Still, as her words reveal, she was certain that the PAP did so because the SCW had initiated and prepared the terrain.

Fozdar's perspective has received the support of researchers such as the literary scholar Phyllis Chew. Drawing upon extensive archival research and oral interviews with former members of the SCW, Chew has argued that "the part played by women in laying much of the preliminary ground-work" for the Bill has "been neglected in historical accounts and often, their contribution has been excluded altogether."[18] In line with Chew's argument emphasising the key role played by the SCW, Fozdar has further asserted that it was the SCW's determination in effecting change which led to Singapore's burgeoning civil society in 1961, for:

> Women's organisations, political and otherwise, are now sprouting like mushrooms, and the founders of these mushroom organisations find it easy going now that the whole atmosphere has been changed by the Singapore Council of Women. They have suddenly awakened and being leaders, when the fight has already been done by others. […] Credit must therefore be given to the selfless women who voluntarily spent their time, money, and energy to create an awakening and clear the path for the *unexpected smooth acceptance* in Singapore of such a revolutionary reform.[19] (Emphasis mine)

In hindsight, given the significance of the Women's Charter in Singapore – on the very cusp of its independence from the British, no less – it is perhaps unsurprising that political leaders and social activists alike have sought to claim responsibility for this landmark Bill. From the perspective of social activists of the SCW, who "had no political or other ambitions except to redress the wrongs done to women,"[20] the recognition of their efforts was certainly to be expected. Indeed, they had notably succeeded in ending polygamy (or more accurately polygyny) – the one item on the SCW's agenda whose suppression was anything but a foregone conclusion in a "polygamous society" such as

17. Ibid. Also see "Freedom For Men Only – Mrs F.: Women too Have Rights," *The Straits Times*, 4 April 1956, p. 4.

18. Phyllis Ghim Lian Chew, "The Singapore Council of Women and the Women's Movement," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies,* 25, 1, 1994, p. 112.

19. "Women's Charter: The Original Fighters – By Shirin Fozdar," *The Straits Times*, 29 March 1961, p. 8.

20. Ibid.

Singapore[21]. From the point of view of Singapore's politicians, however, the passing of the Bill simultaneously represented a social, economic – as well as political – advancement for their people. Indeed, as mentioned prior, they believed that women's emancipation was necessary for Singapore to emerge from "the binds of feudalism." They were also convinced of the urgent need to mobilise "nearly half of our population" to contribute towards the economic development of Singapore and the "gigantic task of nation building."[22] Finally, on the political level, the benefits of being able to legitimately lay claim to spearheading this Bill were also considerable. Apart from the possibility of reaping the votes of women, who represented 50% of registered voters,[23] the newly elected PAP government could also meaningfully mark their rise to power by introducing a Bill as pathbreaking as the Women's Charter. As contemporaneous sources have pointed out, this decision was all the more symbolic as the British colonial government had not done so despite Britain's ratification of the United Nations' Charter of Human Rights in 1948[24]. This consideration might also allow us to better understand the subtle political message embedded within the declaration of locally-elected politicians such as the Minister for Labour and Law, K. M. Byrne (1913 – 1990), who emphasised in 1961 that the Bill "marks a complete break from the past and it is a big step forward."[25]

Whilst much of scholarly attention has focused on the architects or the "original fighters" (to use Fozdar's expression) of the Women's Charter, far less has been said about the astonishing facility with which this revolutionary Bill came to be passed. Indeed, at the moment of its successful (and uneventful) enactment in parliament, even the veteran activist Shirin Fozdar had been surprised by its "unexpected smooth acceptance" by Singapore's

21. "The Multiple Marriage and the Law (It's Getting Rarer Every Day) – By Jack Newby," *The Straits Times*, 17 October 1965, p. 8.

22. *The Tasks Ahead, op. cit.* Also see "Announcement by PAP Chairman at Special Party Congress on 25th April 1959," cited in Leong, "Fifty Years and More of the Women's Charter of Singapore," *art. cit.,* pp. 7 – 11. "Women's Charter Bill" (Session No. 1), Singapore Parliamentary Debates, Vol. 12, Sitting No. 7, Sitting Date 6 April 1960. https://sprs. parl.gov.sg/search/topic?reportid=024_19600406_S0003 T0019. (Last consulted 12 June 2021).

23. "Lessons For the Vital Voters," *The Straits Times*, 10 April 1959, p. 7. Women obtained the vote in 1948 but voter turnout was low until the 1959 General Elections, when voting was rendered compulsory for the first time.

24. "Too Many Marriage 'Injustices' So – 1,000 Women Start a Drive for Equal Rights With Men," *The Straits Times*, 16 May 1953, p. 4. The SCW was quick to point out this "inconsistency" on the part of the British authorities.

25. "Women's Charter Bill" (Session No. 1), Singapore Parliamentary Debates, Vol. 12, Sitting No. 7, Sitting Date 6 April 1960. https://sprs. parl.gov.sg/search/topic?reportid=024_19600406_S0003 T0019. (Last consulted 12 June 2021).

population.[26] Similarly, newspaper sources of the era reveal that journalists and social commentators alike were astounded that "there have been no very vocal protests" despite the "real social revolution" which the Women's Charter represented for the lives of men and women in Singapore. "Indeed," observed *The Straits Times*, "not the least remarkable feature of a Charter first published fifteen months ago is the relatively modest public interest it has aroused."[27] This lack of dissent to the Women's Charter remains a point of curiosity. Almost fifty years after its introduction, the legal scholar Leong Wai Kum noted: "The momentous change of imposing monogamy on all non-Muslims was achieved remarkably smoothly. There was hardly any opposition despite this seemingly removing a privilege that Chinese and Hindu men had grown accustomed to. Little opposition was raised to its proposal."[28] In order to explain the "successful implementation" of the Bill, Leong cited "the happy confluence of the economic pragmatism that was the driving motivation of the ruling party, the influence of Westernisation and modernisation on the local population as well as the fact that this modernisation had also taken hold in China and India."[29] However, current historiography has not sufficiently accounted for the manner in which this "Westernisation" or "modernisation" took root in Singapore. For instance, examples of earlier developments in social reform in 1950s Singapore, such as C.R. Dasaradha Raj's attempt in introducing a "Hindu Monogamous Bill" in 1954, have not received as much scholarly attention. Similarly, the roles which Chinese-educated women and Chinese community leaders played in the development of the emancipation of women both before and after World War II have also remained overlooked in the historiographical record.[30] Indeed, as this article aims to demonstrate, the roots of this "modernisation" process stretched far deeper in time – well before the founding of the SCW in 1952. Seen in this light, "Westernisation" had perhaps less of an influence as compared to the lobbying efforts of earlier social activists such as the members of the Malay Women's Welfare Association (henceforth MWWA).[31] Their pioneering role in battling for reform in Muslim

26. "Women's Charter: The Original Fighters – By Shirin Fozdar," *The Straits Times*, 29 March 1961, p. 8.

27. "The Women's Charter," *The Straits Times*, 20 May 1961, p. 8.

28. Leong, "Fifty Years and More of the Women's Charter of Singapore," *art. cit.,* p. 8.

29. Ibid., p. 9.

30. More recently, new scholarship has enabled researchers a better understanding of this topic. See, for instance, Karen M. Teoh's *Schooling Diaspora: Women, Education and the Overseas Chinese in British Malaya and Singapore* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018). Also see Yang Wei-An, "Female Emancipation in a Colonial Context: The Chinese Community in Singapore 1900-1942" (Unpublished Academic Exercise, The University of Sheffield, 2014).

31. Syed Muhd Khairudin Aljunied has contributed towards our knowledge of the

marriages since the establishment of their association in 1947 remains largely overlooked in extant literature.[32]

This consideration of the contribution of Malay women towards social reform in Singapore further raises two other points of interest. First, if Malay women were pioneers in lobbying for change in Muslim marriages since 1947, how can we explain their exclusion from a Bill which had an impact on the marriages of every other community in Singapore? Furthermore, what were their reactions to this omission? Did they support the "smooth acceptance" of this Bill? Second, the argument that a wider cross-section of women had battled hard to effect social change also challenges the long-standing assumption that Singapore was "a man's country" and that "[p]olitically, Malayan woman have only a still, small voice in the conduct of affairs."[33] As case in point, a journalist from *The Singapore Free Press* had opined in 1957: "Never has there been a worse city than Singapore for lack of interest in the political scene on the part of women." Questioning the capacity of women, this writer ventured: "I doubt if any given woman could even discuss intelligently, any of the facets of our Governmental setup."[34] It also raises questions on the extent to which Fozdar is accurate in claiming that "the women here were not vocal at all […] It took a long time to drag them in."[35]

In light of the above, this article proposes an analysis of the introduction of the Women's Charter, with a particular focus on the perspectives of the Malay community since this community was excluded from the provisions of the Charter. It begins by tracing the civic debates and developments which led to the Bill since the founding of the SCW in 1952. In doing so, it seeks to illustrate that Singapore possessed a dynamic – rather than a placid – civil society in the 1950s and 1960s. Building upon this analysis, it argues for the need to take into consideration

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MWWA. See Syed Muhd Khairudin Aljunied, *Radicals: Resistance and Protest in Colonial Malaya* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2015). Also see Muhammad Aidil bin Ali, "Saving the Family: Changing Attitudes Towards Marriage and Divorce in the Muslim Community in the 1950s and 1960s," M.A. Thesis, National University of Singapore, 2012.

32. See Constance Singam, "The Coming Out of the Political Singaporean," in K. Kanwaljit Soin and Margaret Thomas (eds.), *Our Lives to Live: Putting a Woman's Face to Change in Singapore* (Singapore: World Scientific Publishing Co. Pte. Ltd., 2015), pp. 51-52; Jialin Christina Wu, "Private Lives, Public Spheres: Contesting Child Marriage at the Age of Independence in British Malaya, 1950," *Gender & History*, Vol. 29, No. 3 November 2017: pp. 658-674.

33. "Weaker Sex," *The Singapore Free Press*, 10 March 1952, p. 4; "Women May Form New Body," *The Singapore Free Press*, 4 March 1952, p. 5; "Rights of Women are 'Meagre'," *The Straits Times*, 22 November 1951, p. 7.

34. "It's Time to Fight For Our Rights!," *The Singapore Free Press*, 5 March 1957, p. 1.

35. "Grand Dame of Women's Rights – By Lim Soon Neo," *Business Times*, 16 May 1987, p. 8.

precedents such as the work of the MWWA. To do so, it turns next to the case of Laycock's Bill (1950), which aimed at increasing the age of marriage to sixteen in the Colony of Singapore. Whilst this attempt at reform by locally elected Singapore politicians was ultimately unsuccessful, this article seeks to show that civil society was ready to engage with social reform well before the introduction of the Charter. In this endeavour, it also seeks to contribute a concrete case study in support of the argument of Goh Li Sian, Edwina Shaddick and Isabella Oh, who have critiqued "the teleological and even celebratory narrative implicit in many accounts of women's history in Singapore."[36]

The Birth of the Women's Charter (1952 – 1961): From the Singapore Council of Women to the People's Action Party

At the occasion of the First Asian Woman's Seminar at Bangkok in 1957, Mary Lobo, the Vice-President of the SCW, opined: "I must be honest and say our men are wonderful. We never had to fight for our rights. They are just given to us."[37] Her statements provoked a burst of reactions from the Singapore public. One commentator, Rose Minnie, wrote to *The Straits Times* expressing her surprise. She insisted: "Women in Singapore are nowhere. It is only through gradual pressure that we are gaining our rights.[38] Lobo's fellow delegates from the SCW were quick to clarify that her opinion was personal and that it did not represent their association. In a bid to distance themselves from her comments, the SCW explained that Lobo had been appointed by the government and that their Council had not submitted her participation in the first place.[39] Furthermore, in response to Lobo's suggestions that Asian women should use "gentle persuasion" to bring about social reforms as "the phrase 'fighting for women's rights' […] sounds so harsh. It isn't Asian,"[40] Fozdar evoked the plight of the wives of Tengku Mohamed Ariffin bin Tengku Ahmad, whose 70th marriage had been reported in the Malay daily, *Berita Harian*.[41] Condemning the "frivolity" with which the 63-year-old "marathon

36. Goh Li Sian, Edwina Shaddick and Isabella Oh, "Against a Teleological Reading of the Advancement of Women's Rights in Singapore," in Jiyoung Song (ed.), *A History of Human Rights Society in Singapore 1965 – 2015* (New York: Routledge, 2017): p. 132.

37. "Wonderful," *The Straits Times*, 6 August 1957, "'Sangat Ajaib'," *Berita Harian*, 6 August 1957, p. 1.

38. "Wonderful Men? Oh No, Say Women," *The Straits Times*, 7 August 1957, p. 4.

39. For more information, see: "Mrs. Lobo: The Men Still 'Wonderful'. She Spoke of Political Rights," *The Straits Times*, 10 August 1957, p. 4, "Mrs. Lobo Satisfies Women," *The Singapore Free Press*, 30 August 1957, p. 2.

40. "Singapore's 'Wonderful Men' – A Protest Cable to Mrs. Lobo," *The Straits Times*, 8 August 1957, p. 7.

41. "Tidak akan kahwin lagi sa-telah berbini 70 kali," *Berita Harian*, 1 August 1957, p. 5.

marital record" holder had abandoned his wives, Fozdar argued: "This is what our men are REALLY like […] Political rights have been given to women by the charity of Western men – not by Asians."[42] It bears reminding that these comments were also first published in *Berita Harian*, which broadcasted these critiques of Muslim marital practices to Malay audiences.[43]

As the volume of forum letters contesting Lobo's assertion indicates,[44] many men and women felt strongly about women's rights in Singapore. Between the 1950s and 1960s, discussions of the need to introduce reform in favour of equality between men and women were rife in the print media and public forums.[45] Issues such as equal pay, job discrimination, and women's political representation dominated these public debates. The significance of these discussions over the equality of the sexes, however, stretched far beyond the subject of granting women rights. As contemporaneous sources indicate, the emancipation of women in Singapore was intimately associated with the attainment of its political independence.[46] This correlation was articulated by women activists such as Fozdar, who, as early as in 1951, had declared:

> The men of Malaya do not deserve independence while they enslave their own women-folk. […] Men here talk of their rights, but never of their own responsibilities, and many women here are so illiterate that they don't even know what their rights are. […] Britain is showing us the way to the emancipation of our womenfolk and for that we owe her a debt of gratitude.[47]

This perspective received a stamp of approval from women's rights activists in the region, such as the Indonesian activist Mrs Sutan Sharir. In a meeting with 70 Malay women and 10 men in 1951, she recounted how Indonesian women had obtained equal rights with men upon the establishment

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42. "This is What Our Men Are REALLY Like," Talks Told," *The Straits Times*, 13 August 1957, p. 4; "Queen to Hear of 'Bomoh?' Anti-Monogamy Bid," *The Singapore Free Pree*, 3 August 1957, p. 2.

43. Fozdar's original comments are as follows: "Inilah perkara yang kami sedang lawan. Tiap2 hari yang berjalan empat perempuan Melayu di-cheraikan dan di-buang ka-jalan. Tengku Ariffin tentu-lah tiada membayar wang saraan atau pun membela anak2-nya - ia tentu jadi papa kalau ia berbuat demikian." See "Saya Akan Maalum Queen Hal 'Bomoh Pengaseh': Fozdar," *Berita Harian*, 2 August 1957, p. 5.

44. See the above articles, as well as: "Mrs. Lobo Stands Firm," *The Singapore Standard*, 10 August 1957, p. 4.

45. According to some observers, "the whole of Singapore has been discussing equality for women" in the early 1950s. See "Equal Rights For Male Readers – By Feminism," *The Straits Times*, 21 June 1951, p. 6.

46. See the debates on women as jurors: "The Place of Women," *The Singapore Free Press*, 3 February 1950, p. 4; "Women Will Serve With Men: Colony Jury System Revised," *The Straits Times*, 17 December 1950, p. 3.

47. "Independence? You Don't Deserve It, Mrs Fozdar Tells the Men," *The Straits Times*, 21 September 1951, p. 4.

of the Indonesian Republic.[48] Mrs Sharir thus asserted: "The progress of any society can be judged by the position of its women. I hope the broad-minded men in Malaya will give wholehearted support to women's welfare movements."[49] Inspired by these words and the necessity of effecting change, some of the attendees proposed the idea of uniting women through a common organisation.[50] In April 1952, the SCW, boasting a multiracial executive committee of "seven Chinese, four Indians, two Malays, one Indonesian and one Briton,"[51] was thus officially formed to promote women's rights. As Phyllis Chew has shown, the Council swiftly focused their attention upon the eradication of the practice of polygamy, which "could be made into an issue which would be symbolic of the injustices faced by women in Singapore."[52] Reforms in marriage practices thus remained the primary agenda of the SCW till the introduction of the Women's Charter in 1961.

One of the first steps taken by the SCW in this direction was to harness public support through the media for their petitions to the colonial government. In 1953, the Council succeeded in galvanising 1,000 women in support of their request for reforms in Singapore's marriage and divorce laws.[53] It bears reminding that the divorce rate then was, as Fozdar put it, "higher than in Hollywood."[54] For instance, there were six divorces recorded for every ten Muslim marriages registered in 1950.[55] Undeterred by the government's reluctance to effect change, the SCW next proposed a "Prevention of Bigamous Marriage Ordinance" in 1954, demanding for such marriages to be made void, and for the minimum age of marriage to be raised to sixteen. Through their publicity, the SCW were able to swiftly boost their ranks to 2,000 women

48. Chew, "The Singapore Council of Women and the Women's Movement," *op. cit.*, p. 114.

49. "Education the Only Remedy – Mrs. Sharir," *The Straits Times*, 13 October 1951, p. 4.

50. "Women Plan to Change 'Cave-Men': Male Critics get a Reply," *The Straits Times*, 20 November 1951, p. 7; "Women to Fight 'Selfish' Males – They Want Men to Change Attitudes. Equal Rights is Their Aim," *The Straits Times,* 17 November 1951, p. 7.

51. Chew, "The Singapore Council of Women and the Women's Movement," *op. cit.*, p. 116.

52. Ibid,, p. 116.

53. "Too Many Marriage 'Injustices', So – 1,000 Women Start a Drive For Equal Rights With Men," *The Straits Times*, 16 May 1953, p. 4.

54. "Divorce Rate Here is Higher Than in Hollywood, Says Mrs Fozdar," *The Straits Times*, 29 January 1954, p. 1.

55. Judith Djamour, *The Muslim Matrimonial Court in Singapore* (London: The Athlone Press, 1966): p. 129. I have cited Muslim divorces as an example as no other statistics are available on non-Muslim divorces for the period studied. See the work of Saw Swee-Hock, *The Population of Singapore* (Third Edition), (Singapore: ISEAS Publishing, 2012).

members. However, as Fozdar recalls, Malay and Arab women "supported us anonymously for fear of trouble from their husbands and fathers."[56]

The volume and diversity of public reactions to the SCW's propositions reveal both the pertinence and the difficulty of introducing marital reforms in Singapore during the 1950s. Indeed, comments from the public vehiculated in the press illustrate that many women supported such marital reforms. In response to the SCW's resolution to render all marriages monogamous, one anonymous Malay woman admitted that "few Malay women would dare to give open support to so radical a petition, but if the Government made it compulsory for all marriages to be registered, Malay women would feel more secure."[57] Similarly, one Chinese woman who insisted on the necessity of such reforms disclosed that her Chinese husband had abandoned her and her child after their customary (or non-civil) marriage which had been unregistered. She had since married a European through civil law. Reflecting on her own experiences, she affirmed: "I feel completely safe now. […] I know that if my husband deserted me, or treated me cruelly or went with other women, I could obtain a divorce and alimony to safeguard myself and our children. It makes me feel a real human being to know I have rights under the law exactly the same as he has."[58] These comments also indicate that women were actively reflecting and articulating their personal experiences and opinions of such reforms.

Concurrently, as alluded to prior, comments from a mainly male standpoint show the difficulty of introducing reforms in marriage practices. As case in point, when *The Singapore Free Press* sought the view of "the man in the street," it highlighted the ambivalent reactions of the men interviewed. Whilst some considered the SCW's resolution "a sensible move," other men reportedly remarked "there should be freedom in love" and that they "would appreciate less interference." One bachelor, Louie Tan, criticised the "one man, one wife" proposition as being "a silly resolution." In his view, "one man with one wife is Monotony [sic]." Echoing these views, another bachelor, Boon Yoon Chan, "strongly protest[ed]" the SCW's move. "If a man has a lot of money, why shouldn't he get himself five wives if he can afford it?" demanded Boon. "After all," he reasoned, "there are more women than men in Singapore. It's better that they get married than go round leading a roaming life."[59] Others also cited religious reasons to justify their disapproval of enforcing monogamous marriages. As case in point, *Berita Harian* published a letter submitted by

56. "How S'pore Women Won Their Rights," *The Straits Times*, 26 October 1975, p. 5.

57. "Too Many Marriage 'Injustices', So – 1,000 Women Start a Drive For Equal Rights With Men," *The Straits Times*, 16 May 1953, p. 4.

58. Ibid.

59. "Men Sharply Divided on Number of Wives," *The Singapore Free Press*, 8 August 1953, p. 3.

a concerned member of the public, Mohamed bin Tarman, who argued that Muslim law, which permits divorce and polygamy, could not be challenged. In his opinion, it was "essentially unnecessary to suggest amendments to Islamic legislation motivated merely to suit the whims and fancies of a faithless few."[60]

Considering the extent of societal, religious, and political obstacles to marital reforms in the 1950s, it is arguably more accurate to interpret women's activism in this era as being exceptional, rather than expected. Indeed, these insights concerning the conservative attitudes prevalent in Singapore society allows us to better understand why women might not have been as outspoken or assertive as activists such as Fozdar had hoped for. Contrary to most of the women she sought to represent, Fozdar had extensive experience in women's activism as she had lobbied for Hari Singh Gour's "Age of Consent" Bill in her home country of India since 1925.[61] As an Indian Baha'i, Fozdar had also been raised in an intellectual and spiritual environment which promoted gender equality. Nevertheless, women did speak out promptly on the need for marital reforms, especially when it concerned their ethnic or religious community. For instance, the SCW's proposition, which eventually led to the establishment of a Syariah Court through the trailblazing Muslim Ordinance (1957), encouraged Malay and Muslim women to articulate their opinions and seek for more ambitious reforms. The Syariah Court was touted as a "big step for equal rights" for Muslim women since marriages and divorces would be better regulated,[62] but the Ordinance had remained silent on polygamy. In justifying the necessity of women's emancipation, the SCW had correlated their aim with that of political independence for Singapore in 1955. This was a critical year for the Colony in its path to independence, as most of the seats in its parliament were to be elected (and not appointed by colonial authorities). Fozdar seized the occasion to declare in the press: "It is my experience that a country can get independence only when its men have learnt to part with their self-appropriated rights and give independence first to the exploited sex – the women."[63] Her words resonated with women such as Wan Faridah of Teluk Anson, who demanded: "What is political emancipation when women's

60. "Cherai: Ikut-lah pengajaran Quran," *Berita Harian*, 18 July 1957, p. 4. A translation was published in English; see "Islamic Law Needs No Amendment," *The Straits Times*, 24 July 1957, p. 6.

61. Interview of Shirin Fozdar, A/N: 000336, 30 September 1983, National Archives of Singapore.

62. "Shariah 'Big Step' For Equal Rights: Divorce Will Be Harder Now," *The Straits Times*, 11 September 1957, p. 9.

63. "Independence Should First Go to the Women," *The Straits Times*, 31 March 1955, p. 12.

rights as equal partners in marriage are denied? Without proper legislation to protect Malay women and the repeal of obsolete Mohamedan laws affecting marriages, we shall never emerge from our bondage."[64]

In this regard, the heated public debates between Muslim men and women in the press reveal the sensitivity of reforms in marital matters. In reaction to Wan Faridah's letter to *The Straits Times*, Hasan bin Mohamed of Kuala Lumpur challenged her assertions by calling into question her "little knowledge of Mohammedan laws."[65] Wan Faridah fired back by drawing upon her knowledge of the Quran, clarifying that she had "no quarrel" with its provisions but "the interpretations of local origin which adhere to the dual principle of 'sharat' and 'adat'." Explaining that local customs and practices had led to "a denial of justice" for women, she insisted that "[i]n no modern country can we find a procedure such as prevails here […] The evil is so widespread and docilely accepted that wives are in fact, discarded rather than divorced."[66] In a subsequent letter, Wan Faridah maintained: "we are merely attempting to put right certain injustices suffered by women silently for some time, and we never ask for more than is equitably due to us as wives and mothers." For her, the reforms were a question of "fairness" and the necessity of being "consistent with humanity and justice."[67]

These words appear to have achieved their desired effect amongst some Muslim men. M. Said of Singapore wrote to the press to support Wan Faridah's views, noting that "the pernicious custom or practice of facile divorces is infinitely more humiliating to Malay womanhood […] The manner in which women are taken in lawful wedlock and then divorced and discarded like mere chattels is really much more scandalous and revolting." In conclusion, he argued in favour of introducing a "long overdue reform" in Muslim marriages.[68] Whilst some men such as Cassim Rowther opined that Muslim women should not "adopt 'exotic ways'" or imitate "dangerous western ways of life" in demanding for such reforms,[69] others, such as Mohamed Isa bin Yunos commended women for having identified this "disreputable flaw in our religious law." "As a male," he added, "I suggest that we redeem ourselves by concrete action in changing the law."[70] However, some men, such as Megat Osman, attacked Mohamed Isa's statement by asserting that "it is un-Islamic

64. "Denial of Rights', *The Straits Times*, 18 February 1955, p. 6.

65. "Protection of Women," *The Straits Times*, 22 February 1955, p. 6.

66. "Muslim Women Not Divorced But 'Discarded'," *The Straits Times*, 1 March 1955, p. 6.

67. "Muslim Women Ask Only For Their Rights," *The Straits Times*, 28 May 1955, p. 10.

68. "'China-Buta Marriage is Only a Rare Event," *The Straits Times*, 1 July 1957, p. 6.

69. "Western Ways Not For Muslim Women," *The Straits Times*, 27 June 1955, p. 12. "Muslim Women and the Ways of the West," *The Straits Times*, 8 July 1955, p. 6.

70. "Change Muslim Law Plea," *The Straits Times*, 21 June 1957, p. 6.

even to call it [Muslim law] 'disreputable' or 'degrading'."[71] The reactions of women to such challenges indicate that they sought recourse in the argument that reforms and "modern" principles were essential for Singapore's next step towards independence. For instance, one woman, Siti Arpah, demanded: "It is time we rectified matters […] in order to usher in sex equality based on modern human values befitting an independent nation."[72] Wan Faridah agreed with her views, contending that "religious reform is essentially an expediency were we to forge ahead and progress side by side with the rest of the Malayan racial and religious groups."[73] In one of her letters to the press, she added: "I hope I have touched sympathetic chords somewhere. If I have achieved nothing by going to the Press, I have at least made some men commit themselves to the legitimacy of our cause."[74] As her words and this debate shows, Malay women and men were not as silent or docile as previously imagined.

In the political arena, these civic debates on marital reform were increasingly seizing the attention of politicians. The public's opinion on the incongruency of women's "outdated" or "servile" status with the project of independence from the British did resonate with some politicians, but activists suggest that they did not openly take concrete actions for fear of losing votes.[75] In hindsight, it is also possible that the "radical" or provocative stand of the SCW's members, such as Fozdar, might have discouraged some politicians from openly supporting their Council. Indeed, as Ann Wee, the "founding mother of social work" in Singapore explained, "in terms of radical political awareness," she [Fozdar] was virtually "an Atlantic salmon landing among rather small riverine trout."[76] For instance, Fozdar's incendiary comment in 1958 that "Singapore is one big brothel" due to the lack of tighter marriage regularisation provoked a public backlash which even distanced her from some members from her own organisation.[77]

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71. "Any Reform Now Might Transform Islam," *The Straits Times*, 28 June 1957, p. 6.

72. "Degrading to the Malays," *The Straits Times*, 19 June 1957, p. 6.

73. "Muslim Codes Must Suit Merdeka Social Order," *The Straits Times,* 12 July 1957, p. 8.

74. "Legitimacy of Malay Women's Cause," *The Straits Times*, 24 July 1957, p. 6.

75. "'Assemblymen Are So Frightened' – Women Fight a Lone War on Polygamy, Says Fozdar.," *The Singapore Free Press*, 25 April 1957, p. 16.

76. Ann Wee, "The Women's Charter, 1961: Where We Were Coming From and How We Got There," in Theresa W. Devasahayam (ed.), *Singapore Women's Charter. Roles, Responsibilities and Rights in Marriage* (Singapore: ISEAS Publishing, 2011), p. 62.

77. "'Big Brothel': Mrs Fozdar Explains – By Nan Hall," *The Straits Times*, 7 March 1958, p. 1; "That 'Big Brothel' Charge Going to Assembly," *The Straits Times*, 23 February 1958, p. 8; "Colony a Brothel? Yes, Says Delegate," *The Straits Times*, 8 March 1958, p. 2.

The 1959 General Elections proved to be a turning point in the SCW's bid to advocate for marriage reforms in Singapore. Voting was rendered compulsory for the first time. Faced with the prospect of winning the votes of women, whose voter turnout had been low in previous elections, different political parties started to consider the possibility of marital reforms.[78] Yet, as Manisah Parbury, a SCW member observed, only the PAP had boldly included the principle of "One Man, One Wife" in their political manifesto. Speaking of the fact that the PAP had been "the only political party" to openly campaign for this reform, she remarked: "It seemed that not one of them [the other parties] had the courage to take up this question, no doubt fearing public opposition. It has been left to the PAP to champion the rights of women. They seem to have both the courage and the intelligence to recognise the value of women's votes."[79] According to the PAP's leader, Lee Kuan Yew (1923 – 2015), his party had done so because of their conviction that the backwardness of Asia was due to women not having achieved emancipation. In order to show his party's serious commitment to their policy on women's rights, Lee agreed to have his wife, Kwa Geok Choo (1920 – 2010) deliver a radio broadcast on this topic.[80] Prominent PAP women activists such as Oh Su Chen, Ho Puay Choo and Chan Choy Siong also played important roles in calling for women's legal protection to be included in their party's manifesto.[81] Upon their election victory in 1959, one of the PAP's first decision was thus to propose the Women's Charter in order to fulfil their campaign promises.

In hindsight, Singapore's civil society and associations such as the SCW were thus a driving force in the introduction of the Women's Charter. As Malathi Das has suggested, this Bill indeed "owes its existence more to work done by women in the background rather than the foreground."[82] The novel provisions of the Charter, such as "the right of a married woman to a social life of her own, a wife's right to continue to use her maiden name, and the equal rights of husband and wife in the ownership and the running of the matrimonial household,"[83] led contemporary observers to claim that Singapore was "a

78. 200,000 (as opposed to 75,000 in previous years) women were to vote for the first time in the 1959 elections. See "Tun Lim Opens Seminar With Calls to Women… 'Those in Singapore Must Overcome the Assumption that Affairs of the State Should Be Left to Men'," *The Straits Times*, 16 January 1959, p. 2.

79. "Hard and Bitter Fight For Women's Rights," *The Straits Times*, 11 July 1959, p. s8.

80. "Equal Pay: PAP Will Go Easy, Says Mrs. Lee," *The Straits Times*, 9 May 1959, p. 7. Lee Kuan Yew, *The Singapore Story: Memoirs of Lee Kuan Yew* (Singapore: Marshall Cavendish Editions, 1998): pp. 325 – 326.

81. Chew, "The Singapore Council of Women and the Women's Movement," *op. cit.*, pp. 132-134.

82. Das, "Singapore's Women's Charter: Revolution or Evolution?," *op. cit.,* p. 162.

83. One Man, One Wife," *The Straits Times*, 3 March 1960, p. 6.

leader among Asian countries in many matters relating to women's status."[84]

However, as alluded to previously, it bears reminding that Muslim women were excluded from the provisions of the Bill. Indeed, whilst local commentators acknowledged that "the Government has gone quite as far as could be expected" in terms of marriage reform, they were quick to underline that Muslims had not been provided for in the Bill since Singapore could "not move ahead of the Federation Government [of Malaya] in respect of Malay custom and the Islamic faith."[85] Political and religious reasons thus explained the government's decision not to extend the Bill's provisions to Muslims. As such, even though archival sources and the civic debates mentioned above illustrate that "Muslim women have not been slow to press for some of the safeguards that are promised their non-Muslim sisters by the Women's Charter,"[86] their community, which represented 13.6% of Singapore's population in the late 1957, were to be excluded.[87] However, political and religious factors were not the only reasons for this exclusion. Indeed, contextual developments and earlier attempts at Muslim marital reform before the SCW's efforts proved to be obstacles as well. Whilst these developments have been left out of the historiographical record since they were unsuccessful in bringing about the expected reforms, this article argues that it is important to adopt a broader perspective in order to better understand the history of women's rights in Singapore. To do so, this article turns our attention towards Laycock Bill – a piece of legislation which aimed at raising the age of marriage to sixteen in Singapore in 1950.

"A Social Reform Long Overdue in the Colony": Colonial Civil Society and the Laycock Bill (1950)

In 1950, John Laycock (1887 – 1960), a British legislator and founder of the Singapore Progressive Party, sought to introduce an "Age of Marriage Bill" in the Colony of Singapore. In his appeal to the Legislative Council, he declared that "such a social reform was long overdue in the Colony." Explaining that a recent event had drawn "the attention of the public to the undesirability of girls being allowed to marry at the age of twelve or thirteen," he argued that

84. "Women's Rights: Singapore Leads Asia – By Alexandra Lee," *The Straits Times*, 3 June 1962, p. 14, "Singapore Leads in Asia in Many Aspects of Status of Women," *The Straits Times*, 26 May 1962, p. 9.

85. "One Man, One Wife," *The Straits Times*, 3 March 1960, p. 6.

86. "The Winds of Change are Blowing: Opinion," *The Singapore Free Press*, 5 March 1960, p 6.

87. These statistics are drawn from the census of 1957, which indicate that the total resident population in Singapore was 1,445,929. The distribution of population by race in 1957 is as follows: 1,090,596 Chinese, 197,059 Malays, 129.510 Indians, and 28,764 Others. For more information, see Saw Swee Hock, *The Population of Singapore, op. cit.*, p. 29.

the "considerable volume of public opinion" on this issue was proof that the Colony was ready for a Bill which would raise the age of marriage to sixteen.[88] Although he underlined that "Muslim opinion has expressed itself strongly in favour of this Bill," he was ready to introduce an amendment excluding Muslims from the Bill due to the protests of "a die-hard minority of the Mohammedans." Furthermore, asserted Laycock, "religious toleration as well as the non-communal point of view" was to be respected. However, Laycock's Bill faced opposition from Muslim members of the Council, who challenged the fact that the Bill would "make void and of no effect what is permitted in Islam and is therefore repugnant to Muslim sentiment." Despite Laycock's insistence that Muslims would be excluded, and that their community had "no business to dictate their marriage laws to those Europeans and Chinese," Laycock's Bill was eventually referred to a Select Committee and shelved.

The event which Laycock referred to concerned the marriage of a thirteen-year-old Muslim-Dutch girl, Bertha Maria Hertogh (Nadra), to a 22-year-old Malay, Mansoor Adabi, in Singapore on 1st August 1950. Prior to her marriage, Hertogh had already piqued the interest of both the local and international press. The rights to her legal custody were being bitterly contested between her Dutch parents and her Malay-Muslim adoptive mother, who had raised her as a Muslim since the age of five during World War II. As the press eagerly covered the development of this legal dispute, her unexpected marriage during the period of court proceedings caused a scandal and generated greater attention on her case.[89] More importantly, the media spotlight on this inter-racial "child marriage" placed Muslim marriage practices under intense public scrutiny and opened them to critique. These public discussions thus encouraged Laycock to propose his Bill in late August 1950.[90]

Laycock's proposition was heartily welcomed by women's rights activists and social workers who had been battling hard to introduce reforms in Muslim marriages since the late 1940s. One of the most important figures was Che Zahara binte Noor Mohammad (1907 – 1962), nicknamed "*Kaum Ibu.*" Moved by the plight of destitute women during the hardships of post-war Singapore, she had created the Malay Women's Welfare Association (henceforth MWWA) in 1947.[91] One of the main goals of the MWWA was to assist Malay women

88. "Age of Marriage Bill (Second Reading), 16 October 1950," *Proceedings of the First Legislative Council, Colony of Singapore, Third Session, 1950* (Singapore: Government Printing Office, 1950): pp. B381-B390.

89. "Case of Maria Huberdena Hartogh [sic]," FO 371/84676, National Archives, Kew, United Kingdom.

90. "'Ban Child Marriages' Move in Council – Law Necessary For Colony," *The Straits Times*, 28 August 1950, p. 4.

91. "Malay Women to Tackle Own Welfare Problems," *Malaya Tribune*, 9 October 1947, p. 1; "Malay Women to Fight Desertion," *The Straits Times*, 19 October 1947, p. 7;

with problems related to marriages. Issues such as forced marriages, child marriages, and the guarantee of alimony and child support to Malay women thus occupied the MWWA's agenda. Above all, the high divorce rate of the Muslim community, which stood at 53% for the period 1946 – 1950, preoccupied the MWWA. Recognising that this situation was due in part to the prevalence of child marriages, Che Zahara thus lobbied actively in favour of Laycock's Bill. Indeed, it bears reminding that the median age of marriage for Singapore Muslims was 16.1 years at the time of its first post-war census in 1947.[92]

In hindsight, considering the "murmurs of disapproval" from men in regard to the establishment of the MWWA,[93] the advocacy of the Association and like-minded social workers of this era was indeed remarkable. On top of this hostile reception from men, these early activists also had to face obstacles from the colonial government, which "did not want to interfere with the local customs and the local law" due to a longstanding policy of non-interference concluded with Malays.[94] Their determination to effect reform, however, remained resolute. As the Muslim women's rights activist Khatijun Nissa Siraj (1925 –) recalled, she had insisted in pushing "our way to the Government, to ask them to see to the law, of marriage and divorce," as the situation of women was "like hanging women without using a rope: *gantung tak bertali*." [95] These activists' resolve was also exemplified by women such as Sharifah Alwah Alsagoff, who, despite not being able to "speak English well," had appealed to the British government: "*Kita bukan minta apa, kita nak keadilan, keadilan untuk perempuan*" (We do not ask for much, we want justice, justice for women).[96]

The rise of women's advocacy groups such as the MWWA and the interest in the welfare of women as a whole was closely linked to the social changes experienced in Malaya during the post-war era. In particular, social and political observers drew attention to the changes in young Asian women in the post-war period, remarking that they had "none of the courteous but tightly shut passivity

"N. Mamat Replies to – The Challenge of Malay Women," *Malaya Tribune*, 1 November 1947, p. 4. The article included a comprehensive list of the aims of the MWWA.

92. Gavin Jones, *Marriage and Divorce in Islamic South-East Asia* (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 64.

93. "The Progress of Malaya's Women – By K. Jalleh," *The Singapore Free Press*, 27 October 1947, p. 4.

94. Interview of Shirin Fozdar, A/N: 000336, 30 September 1983, National Archives of Singapore. As regards the policy of non-interference, see Thomas Newbold, *Political and Statistical Account of the British Settlements in the Straits of Malacca* (London: John Murray, 1839): p. 489.

95. Interview of Khatijun Nissa Siraj, A/N: 001663, 14 December 1995, National Archives of Singapore.

96. Ibid.

of an older generation of women of the Orient."[97] Furthermore, as the *Malaya Tribune* noted in 1947, "Women's Associations of the different races have sprung up all over the country." On the political front, the *Tribune* remarked: "Women are writing to the press; women are on the platform at every political meeting that is held. Malaya is changing from the inside, revolting against conservatism, and freeing itself from the remnants of suppressive colonialism."[98] Above all, the transformation in Malay women formed a talking point for commentators in the 1940s. As early as in 1946, the weekly paper *Comrade* had underlined the "perceptible awakening" of Malay women in particular. Noting that women were articulating their views in public through the papers and radio broadcasts, the journal thus underscored: "The time has now come for us to reconsider our attitude toward our womenfolk […] in our present struggle for national liberation."[99] Such observations were similarly reported by colonial officers such as Captain Gammans, who informed the Colonial Office in 1946:

> [By] far the most remarkable thing of all – was the part the women were playing in this great national movement. In the fourteen years I have lived in Malaya, I scarcely ever spoke to a Malay woman. But today, they go up on political platforms and make speeches; unmarried girls make speeches through microphones that would not disgrace anybody in this committee. That has all happened in the short space of six months.[100]

This remarkable change in Malay women can be attributed to the rapid growth in female education in the 1940s. By 1947, more than 3,000 Malay women were enrolled in English medium schools, with four times as many attending vernacular and religious schools.[101] As such, increasing numbers of Malay women had equipped themselves with the tools to effect change for their community. As the *Tribune* observed in 1947, they were frequently contributing to the radio and press, harnessing arguments which were judged as being "commensurate with the teachings of Islam on the subject of women's duties, obligations and responsibilities and their rights and privileges."[102]

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97. "Asians Have Lost Their Shyness – By Mary Heathcott," *The Straits Times*, 3 December 1950, p. 10.

98. "New Malaya as Teacher Sees It – By Chin Kee Onn," *Morning Tribune* (*Malaya Tribune*), 11 June 1947, p. 4.

99. "Awakening of Malay Women," *Comrade*, 15 December 1946, p. 5.

100. Captain Gammans, cited in Yusof bin Ngah, "Malay Nationalism: 1945-1957," (M.A. Thesis), *University of Otago*, 1967, pp. 76 – 77; Aljunied, *Radicals: Resistance and Protest in Colonial Malaya*, *op. cit.,* p. 140.

101. Ibid., p. 139.

102. "Women Must Have More Than Mere Beauty," *Malaya Tribune*, 10 June 1947, p. 4.

In the midst of these social transformations in Singapore and Malaya at-large, Laycock's Bill was greeted with a warm reception from Malay women in 1950. In support of Laycock's proposition, Che Zahara organised a mass meeting and succeeded in rallying 300 Malay women and 100 men to protest against child marriages.[103] According to *The Singapore Standard*, "the strongest support for the marriage Bill has come from Malay women,"[104] and the MWWA intended to "move heaven and earth" to appeal to the Governor of Singapore for Muslims to be included under the provisions of Laycock's Bill.[105] At the same time, Laycock's Bill was also enthusiastically welcomed by other leaders representing their respective ethnic communities. For instance, the Hindu Advisory Board approved of a ban on marriages for those below the age of sixteen, drawing on the fact that similar reforms had "already been adopted in India."[106] Echoing these views, Singapore Chinese women leaders such as Loh Poon Lip of the Young Women's Christian Association and Goh Kok Kee of the Family Planning Association, argued that "such a Bill should have been introduced a long time ago."[107] The Chinese-language press, such as the *Nanyang Siang Pau*, also expressed the opinion that Laycock's Bill was timely as men had "treated their wives as clothing [to be changed regularly at their whim]."[108] Furthermore, observed the paper, the People's Republic of China had passed a radical "New Marriage Law" on 1st May 1950, which had raised the age of marriage to twenty for males and eighteen for females, amongst other provisions.[109] As such, the Chinese Advisory Board had already

103. "Women Say: Abolish Child-Marriage," *The Straits Times*, 16 October 1950, p. 7; "Include Mulims in Laycock's Bill, Say Malay Women. Child Mother Relates Evil," *Malaya Tribune*, 16 October 1950, p. 2.

104. "Our Child Mothers," *Singapore Standard*, 5 September 1950, p. 6.

105. "Asks Muslims Included In Marriage Bill," *Singapore Standard*, 16 October. p. 1.

106. "Uncle John Laycock," *The Straits Times*, 16 September 1950, p. 6; "Hindus Also Draft Bill," *The Straits Times*, 2 September 1950, p. 7.

107. "Women Support Marriage Bill," *The Singapore Free Press*, 31 August 1950, p. 5.

108. See "妻子如衣服," *Nanyang Siang Pau* 南洋商报, 28 January 1950, p. 9. It is noteworthy that the Chinese language press also followed subsequent discussions about the SCW. For instance, see: "婦女協會致書總督要求制定一夫一妻制該會秘書希望華人社會予以支持," *Nanyang Siang Pau* 南洋商报, 26 May 1953, p. 5, "婦女協會昨開曾員大會 要求婚姻平等," *Sin Chew Jit Poh* 星洲日報, 7 August 1953, p. 5. The fact that the People's Republic of China had adopted a Marriage Law in 1950 promoting monogamy was similarly reported in the press. See "談一夫一妻制," *Sin Chew Jit Poh* 星洲日報, 18 July 1953, p. 11.

109. "罪惡的多妻制度將到何時才能廢除?," *Nanyang Siang Pau* 南洋商报, 30 June 1935, p. 14; "當地司法當局對於華人婚姻依舊婚姻法判斷關於新中國一夫一妻婚姻法尚未被正式承認總領事館發言人談我現行婚姻法," *Nanyang Siang Pau* 南洋商报, 2 June 1947, p. 6. Also see Lisa Tran, "The ABCs of Monogamy in Republican China: Adultery, Bigamy, and Conjugal Fidelity," *Twentieth-Century China*, Vol.36, No.2, July 2011, pp. 99-118.

been engaged in discussion on the application of these new laws for their community since May.[110] Given these circumstances, Laycock's Bill thus faced little resistance from members of both the Chinese and Hindu communities.

However, Laycock's Bill faced strong opposition and open hostility from many Muslim men and leading members of their community. The President of the Singapore Muslim Welfare Association, M.A. Majid, criticised the Bill as "a challenge to the very existence of Muslim religious principles." He cautioned that the Bill would widen "the gulf of religious differences and constitute the prelude to communal strife."[111] In his warning to the public that "Islam will not be mocked," he concluded: "Islam is in danger, and the battle-cry that swept across the continent of Europe will be heard again throughout this ancient peninsula." Echoing these views, Singapore's Chief Kadi (religious judge), Tuan Haji Ali, also denounced the Bill as being "against the Islamic religion."[112] Another indicator of their opposition was the number of protest rallies organised to counter Laycock's Bill. As case in point, in less than a week after Laycock had proposed his Bill, a total of 1,000 Muslim men had manifested their disapproval by attending a rally against Laycock's Bill at the Sultan Mosque.[113] Following suit, the All-Malaya Muslim Missionary Society (henceforth AMMMS) sponsored two other anti-Laycock Bill meetings in November. These meetings, however, were criticised by Che Zahara as "farcical."[114] Concurrently, comments issued in the press, such as the admonishment by "Father-of-Four" that "Muslims should not raise such a hue and cry over Mr Laycock's Bill,"[115] further contributed towards a climate of tension in the Colony. In response to Che Zahara and other Muslim women who sought to include their community under the provisions of the Bill, Wanjur bin Abu Bakar, secretary of the AMMMS, "accused Che Zahara of being un-Islamic for supporting the Laycock Bill."[116] On a similar note, Tuan Syed Abdullah bin Idrus, the editor and publisher of the Malay periodical *Qalam*, also attacked Che Zahara's "ignorance of the teachings of Islam."[117] As these developments illustrate, it is noteworthy that Muslim men harnessed their understanding of religion and customs in order to justify their arguments.

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110. "Less Polygamy Among Chinese," *The Straits Times*, 28 May 1950, p. 8.

111. "Islam Is In Danger," *Malaya Tribune*, 6 September 1950, p. 2.

112. "Bill on Marriage 'Against Islam'," *The Straits Times*, 1950, p. 8; "Kathi Against Marriage Bill," *The Singapore Free Press*, 30 August 1950, p. 7.

113. "1,000 Malays Mass-Meet on Laycock Motion," *Malaya Tribune,* 1 September 1950, p. 1.

114. "Public Debate Demand," *The Straits Times*, 13 November 1950, p. 4.

115. "An Elderly Bridegroom," *The Straits Times*, 20 September 1950, p. 6.

116. "I'm Not Un-Islamic, Says Che Zaharah," *The Straits Times*, 13 November 1950, p. 4.s.

117. "Fresh Challenge to Zahara," *The Straits Times*, 21 November 1950, p. 7.

Furthermore, they also drew upon their authority as gatekeepers of their religion to censure women supporting the Bill. In this respect, it of interest that in 1952, the AMMMS declared that women "should not engage anymore in politics, as politics would lead to excessive mixing of the sexes which of course would be un-Islam."[118]

Whilst religion and customs were cited as arguments by Muslim men against Laycock's Bill, those in favour of the Bill advanced reasons based on science and "civilisation." One writer in *The Straits Times*, for instance, felt moved to "intervene" and to comment on Muslim marriages because child marriage was "a shocking relic of the past" which had proved that "Malaya is sadly behind most countries of the civilised world."[119] Che Zahara also drew upon this rationale to justify her support. In one of her protest rallies, she declared: "In these modern times, we have to follow the trend of present-day society and today our girls are being educated and advancing. It is not right that they should be forced into child marriage."[120] In her opinion, this practice had been "largely responsible for keeping the Malays in the backwaters of social, economic and political advancement of this country."[121] Such views were also articulated by medical doctors who claimed that Malays were committing "race suicide" by practicing child marriages. In the words of a "Woman Doctor," those who persisted in marrying young were "letting down their community and hastening the time when they will all be trodden underfoot by more virile races who do not marry until they have finished growing."[122] Another writer argued that the Bill was a step towards Malayan independence: "No one can seriously suggest that a nation eagerly looking forwards to self-government can perpetuate a custom which allows its 'citizens-to-be' to be born of 14-year-old mothers."[123]

As these debates simmered in the Colony, Maria Hertogh's case came before the Court for a third time.[124] Under the glare of the media spotlight, her Dutch parents' counsel, E.D. Shearn, argued that their child had been manoeuvred into marriage. Emphasising that Muslim marriages "need not be of a very lasting nature," Shearn underlined the facility with which Muslim men could "dissolve [their marriages] almost at will." He thus inquired of the Judge: "What future is there for this child if she continued to remain the wife of Mansoor Adabi?" On deliberation, the Judge declared the marriage invalid

118. Cited in Asiah binti Abu Samah, "Emancipation of Malay Women, 1945-1957," p. 46. B.A. Thesis, Department of History, University of Malaya, 1960.

119. "The Child Bride," *The Straits Times*, 15 August 1950, p. 6.

120. "Child Mother Relates Evil," *Malaya Tribune*, 16 October 1950, p. 2.

121. "Women Say: Abolish Child-Marriage," *The Straits Times*, 16 October 1950, p. 7.

122. "Warning to the Malay Race," *The Straits Times,* 9 September 1950, p. 9.

123. "A Foregone Conclusion," *The Straits Times*, 10 September 1950, p. 10.

124. The citations in this paragraph are derived from: "Originating Summons No.248 of 1950," 2 December 1950.

and clarified that Maria was "not in the eyes of this Court a Mohammedan." He affirmed that her Malay mother was "unfit any longer to have custody," ordering that Maria be "repatriated" to Holland. Muslims were gravely offended at the invalidation of a religious marriage in a British Civil Court. Public disturbances broke out, resulting in eighteen dead and 173 injured.

Thus far, these public disturbances have dominated the historiographical record of the events of 1950. Known as "The Maria Hertogh Riots," they have taken centre-stage at the detriment of other developments in 1950, such as the civic discussions of child-marriage, or the lobbying efforts of women who supported Laycock's Bill. The trauma of the riots has also remained a stern reminder of the sensitivity of "interfering" in religious affairs. Yet, as this article has shown, this chapter of history is an integral element of the development of women's rights in Singapore. Indeed, activists had already been heavily involved in fighting for reforms since the 1940s. In hindsight, this insight also allows us to understand why some activists, such as Constance Singam, have asserted that the 1940s were "perhaps the most dynamic phase of women's activism in Singapore."[125] Furthermore, it is essential to adopt a broader historical perspective in studying the women's movement and the advent of the Women's Charter in Singapore. Doing so allows the historian to better trace the continuities, changes, and adaptations undertaken by activists in their pursuit of reform. It also allows us to understand that civil society was engaged well before 1952, and that local women were far from silent bystanders in their own history.

Reconsidering Social Reform and Activism in Singapore: Some Concluding Remarks

During his speech at the National Trades Union Congress' (NTUC) «International Women's Year Seminar" held on 1st September 1975, Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew reflected upon the trajectory of the transformation of women's status, roles and position in Singapore. Whilst acknowledging that "a quiet revolution has been taking place" in the country, he nonetheless observed that "there has been no vociferous women's liberation movement in Singapore. It has been government policy to encourage the education of women to their fullest ability and their employment commensurate with their abilities."[126] As his words suggest, Lee was confident that his government's policies had granted women the power to achieve themselves – to such a degree that Singaporeans saw no need for a "vociferous women's liberation movement." Whilst Lee is justified in claiming credit for the wisdom of his

125. Singam, "The Coming Out of the Political Singaporean," *art. cit.*, p. 48.

126. "Speech by the Prime Minister, Mr Lee Kuan Yew, at the NTUC's International Women's Year Seminar Cum Exhibition at the DBS Auditorium on Monday, 1st September 1975," A/N: lky19750901, Ministry of Culture, National Archives of Singapore. (Last consulted 13 June 2021).

government's policies concerning women's rights, this article has demonstrated that women themselves have played a key role in obtaining their hard-earned rights since the late 1940s.

Concurrently, Lee's words further raise another point of consideration. As mentioned previously, scholarly work and political discourses in contemporary Singapore have tended to emphasise on the fact that the Charter was "one of the new Government's first moves" upon seizing power in 1959.[127] This Bill, in turn, has been touted as having "played its part in transforming Singapore from a sleepy trading port to the vital financial centre it is today."[128] In more ways than one, the historiographical record has thus reinforced the notion of a clear break between the colonial/post-colonial divide since the moment Singapore obtained internal self-governance in 1959. However, the history of the women's movement in Singapore does not necessarily adhere with the political periodisation of the nation's history. Indeed, by including an earlier chapter of women's activism in the broader narrative of the women's rights movement till the enactment of the Charter in 1962, it is hoped that this article has illustrated how the wider historical context had also been pivotal in bringing about reforms in 1962. By extrapolation, it bears reminding that a broader perspective is essential in tracing historical evolution, instead of adopting politically pertinent dates as historical turning-points.

Beyond these historiographical approaches and concerns, it is noteworthy that the Syariah Court in contemporary Singapore has jurisdiction over Muslim marriages (in which both parties are Muslims and where both parties were married under Muslim law).[129] As such, while the Women's Charter governs the law on civil marriage and its dissolution for all persons in Singapore, Muslims have access to their religious courts for the settlement of marital issues.

In conclusion, this article further wishes to draw attention to other reform societies which were active in the period studied. As mentioned prior, other developments, such as the Tamil Reform Association's activities in resisting Dasaradha Raj's "Hindu Monogamous Marriage Bill" in 1954, were not included due to the constrains of this short article. A study of these other reform societies could thus open new horizons for research.[130] Furthermore, the activities of the *Angkatan Wanita Sedar* (Generation of Conscious Women) or AWAS, which had mobilised Malays till their ban in 1948,"[131] might yield other perspectives.

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127. "Women's Decade of Uneven Gains," *The Straits Times*, 23 June 1985, p. 19.

128. Leong, "Fifty Years and More of the Women's Charter of Singapore," *art. cit.,* p. 9.

129. See Part IX of Leong Wai Kum, *The Singapore Women's Charter: 50 Questions* (Singapore: ISEAS Publishing, 2011).

130. See: Interview of Pakriswamy Naidu, A/N: 000827, 22 October 1987, National Archives of Singapore; Interview of K.P. Murthi, A/N: 000849, 27 January 1988, National Archives of Singapore.

131. Khairudin, *Radicals: Resistance and Protest in Colonial Malaya*, *op. cit.,* p.138.

Whilst these issues lay far beyond the scope of this article, an examination of the inter-communal interest in women's rights during this era might also provide scholars with a Singapore example to what Elizabeth Armstrong has termed "a solidarity of commonalty for women's shared human rights."[132] In this respect, such an investigation might also allow scholars to develop other non-Euro-American approaches and case studies in the study of global feminisms.

132. Elizabeth Armstrong, "Before Bandung: The Anti-Imperialist Women's Movement in Asia and the Women's International Democratic Federation," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, Vol. 31, No. 2 (Winter 2016), p. 305.

Nurul Huda Mohd. Razif *

Chasing Fate & Fortune in the Borderland: Cross-Border Marriage & Migration at the Malaysian-Thai Frontier

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The Malays of the northern states of Malaysia and the southern provinces of Thailand share a long history of royal intrigues and intermarriages in the past. Today, they continue to maintain strong familial, cultural, ethnic, and religious affinities, fostered in part by cross-border marriages between Malay men of Malaysian nationality and Malay women of Thai nationality in the present. Some of these unions are arranged between distant cousins by parents hoping to reunite families scattered across both sides of the border. Many also, as this article will explore, are the result of "fated encounters" (*jodoh*)[1] that occur when women of Thai nationality – of both Malay and Thai ethnicities – migrate in search of "fortune" (*rezeki*) to Malaysia, where they meet Malaysian Malay men whom they eventually marry – including as second wives in a polygynous marriage.[2]

Although these encounters are regularly described as "destined" by my Thai and Malaysian interlocutors, in this article I argue that they are in fact engineered by

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1. All vernacular terms in brackets are taken from standard Malay, except where alternative origins of the term including from Kelantanese Malay (Kel.) or Arabic (Ar.) are indicated.

2. Polygyny is a type of polygamy (multiple marriage), in which one man has multiple wives. In Malaysia, polygyny is permitted for Muslim men up to four wives at a time under Malaysian Syariah (Islamic) law, but must first be approved by a Syariah judge upon the fulfillment of certain financial conditions.

various historical and contemporary developments unique to this region that have precipitated the migration of Malays of Thai nationality (henceforth, "Malay-Thai")[3] to Malaysia – namely, the socio-political and economic instability in Thailand's "Deep South," and the shared cultural and religious history between ethnic Malays who inhabit both sides of the border. What is furthermore distinctive about the migration occurring at the Malaysian-Thai border is the statistical domination of women driving this phenomenon: while the overwhelming majority of migrant laborers officially registered in Malaysia are male, Thai women migrating to Malaysia outnumber men, contributing to what scholars have called "the feminization of migration" (Hwang, 2009; Kim, 2012).

This article examines the feminization of migration at the Malaysian-Thai frontier through the lens of cross-border marriages between Malaysian men and Thai women, both of whom share a similar ethnoreligious identity as Malay-Muslim. First (Points II to V), I will analyze the migration of Malay-Thai women to Malaysia as an endeavor in seeking "fortune" in several senses of the word: as employment and economic prospects (*rezeki*), and as opportunities for marriage and intimacy (*jodoh*). Second (Points VI to VII), I unpack the local impact of this influx of Malay-Thai women in Malaysia from the perspective of Malays living in the border city of Kota Bharu, who report having been targeted with sorcery by Malay-Thai female migrants. This emphasis on the community impact of migration shows how local lives and livelihoods have been directly impacted by the arrival of Malay-Thai women over the years, illustrating how the aspirations and everyday realities of both migrants and the host society are entangled in one another's.

This paper is based on 15 months of long-term, multi-sited ethnographic fieldwork at the Malaysian-Thai border conducted between 2014 to 2015 (with regular return visits since). My research was largely concentrated in the cities of Songkhla and Hat Yai, located in Songkhla province in Southern Thailand, and the city of Kota Bharu, situated in the northern Malaysian state of Kelantan. In these cities, I interviewed around a dozen Thai female migrants who had worked or were working in Malaysia, aged in their early 20s to early 40s, predominantly of Malay ethnicity. Of these, two were ethnically Thai, but had converted to Islam to marry Malay-Malaysian men, showing that the desire for the female Thai Other is not exclusive to women of Malay ethnicity. To understand the impact of female migration from Thailand in Kelantan, I have also interviewed Kelantanese[4] (ethnically Malay) women aged between 30 to 55 who had employed, traded with Malay-Thai women, or whose marriages had been threatened by these migrants.

3. For uniformity's sake, the rest of the article will refer to ethnic Malays of Thai nationality as "Malay-Thai". Malays of Malaysian nationality will be referred to as "Malay-Malaysian".

4. As Kelantan is predominantly Malay, my usage of the term "Kelantanese" thus refers specifically to Malays from Kelantan, not other ethnic groups.

I. Southern Thailand: Past & Present

To appreciate the conditions germinal for the proliferation of marriage and migration across the Malaysian-Thai border in recent years, we must first step back in time: Kelantan and Southern Thailand are not only connected by the border in the present, but also by centuries of shared political, religious, and cultural history. Historian Stefan Amirell's study on female rule in Patani[5] in the 17th century illustrates that during this period, the Malay Kingdom of Patani succeeded in incorporating the Sultanate of Kelantan under its rule, before succumbing to the latter in 1651 during a period of political and economic decline (Amirell, 2011: 313-8). But the Kingdom of Patani was, "for most of her history… in a loose suzerain relationship with the Thai state" – a state of affairs that lasted until the late 19th century, when Siam began to enforce greater control over its vassal state in the south (Koch, 1977: 70). The Anglo-Siamese Treaty between the British and Siam in 1909 finally abolished the Kingdom of Patani and resulted in the "definitive absorption of the territories of the former sultanate into the Thai state" (Jory, 2007: 259). It also established the Malaysian-Thai border as we know it today, and safeguarded the Kelantan and Terengganu Sultanates – then under British rule – from Siamese influence (Koch, 1977: 88; Lamey, 2013: 1). It was through this tense and tumultuous historical trajectory that the Kingdom of Patani became one of the five provinces of Southern Thailand as we know it today, which include Narathiwat, Yala, Satun, and Songkhla.

Historical sources suggest that the Kingdom of Patani converted to Islam sometime in the mid- or second half of the 15th century (Bougas, 1990: 115).[6]Tamara Loos, a historian of Siam (as Thailand was historically known), describes Patani as "ethnically Malay and religiously Muslim" and "the center of Islamic teachings and Malay culture in the northern Malay Peninsula" (Loos, 2006: 77). Islam played a significant role in the educational, social, and spiritual life of Patani: between the 15th to 19th centuries, the proliferation of Islamic institutions such as mosques and *pondok* (Islamic schools) in Patani gave it the reputation as the "cradle of Islam in Southeast Asia" (Che Man, 1990: 255; Liow, 2010b: 19) and "Mecca's verandah" (*serambi Mekah*) (Johnson, 2013). Indeed, Patani was known as a "much-heralded intellectual center of Islam in Southeast Asia," producing several prominent *Shafi'e* scholars who also taught at study circles in Masjidil Haram in Makkah in the 19th century (Liow 2011: 1387). This phase of Islamization in the Kingdom of Patani mirrored similar projects of Islamic expansion

5. Following Liow (2010a: 29, footnote 1), I have used "Patani" to refer to the ancient Malay-Muslim kingdom, and "Pattani" in reference to the administrative province it is known as today.

6. A historical study of Patani's oldest mosque, Surau Aur, suggests that Patani could have been "one of the first, if not the first, Malay kingdom on the peninsula to convert to Islam" (Bougas, 1992: 89).

occurring in the neighboring Malay sultanates of Kedah, Kelantan, and Terengganu under the British around the same period (Liow, 2010b: 13). These parallel religious developments between the northern Malayan states and Patani contribute to a sense of religious affiliation and familiarity between Malaysian and Thai Muslims today, and further reinforce the common ground they already share based on Malay language and culture.[7]

The vibrant Muslim intellectual life in Patani at this time provided a fertile context for a form of Islamic law in Patani that, according to Loos, "entailed an admixture of Quranic law and local adat law that varied over time and place" (2006: 79). Though there is limited comprehensive study of the scope and scale of the implementation of Islamic law in Patani before the 20th century, scholars have indicated that Islam certainly held a juridical force in Muslim family matters such as marriage and inheritance (Che Man, 1990: 256; Samah, Abdullah & Ferdousi, 2017: 357). These were governed by an Islamic family law that was legally recognized by the Siamese state, which gave special dispensation to the Muslim community to apply religious and customary laws in family life (Loos, 2006: 79; Samah, Abdullah & Ferdousi, 2017: 360-1).

The Kingdom of Patani's incorporation into Thai rule in 1902 marked the beginning of what scholars have referred to as the "Thai-izing" of the people, language, culture and religion of Southern Thailand (Che Man, 1990: 255-6; Chalk, 2001: 243). In 1921 for example, the Thai state enforced the Primary Education Act, which made it obligatory for Malay-Muslim children to attend Thai primary schools where Malay and Jawi (also known as Yawi) language and headscarves for girls were forbidden. Thai civil law became the dominant rule of the land, reducing the scope of Islamic law to only Muslim marriage and inheritance (Che Man, 1990: 255-6; Loos, 2006: 79; Liow, 2010b: 21). These efforts were intended to create more uniformity between the Malay Muslims in Southern Thailand and the rest of the Thai population. However, Malay Muslims regarded these reforms as suspicious attempts to "stamp out" their religion and language – both important cornerstones of their Malay identity (Che Man, 1990: 257).

These integration policies, designed to eradicate cultural difference and to assimilate Malay-Muslims into the Thai nation-state, only served to further alienate them from the Thai majority in the following decades. The political tension in the region reached a turning point in January 2004, when "suspected militants" raided an army camp in the southern province of Narathiwat, which has since resulted in daily acts of violence and political instability between Thai authorities and Muslim separatist groups in the South (Liow, 2010b: 36).

7. For more information on how this religious affiliation strengthened into bureaucratic cooperation between the Malaysian and Thai Islamic bureaucracies in recent years, see my study of Malaysian cross-border marriages and elopements to Southern Thailand (Nurul Huda, 2021).

Since 2004, these violent attacks have cost the lives of nearly 7,000 people, two thirds of whom were civilians, with 60% of the victims being Muslim (Girard, 2018: 72).

The escalation of violence in Southern Thailand in recent decades has exacerbated economic pressures in a region already struggling with economic depression and high poverty rates. A project document from United Nations Development Program's Southern Thailand Empowerment and Participation (STEP) Project, for example, reveals that Yala, Pattani, and especially Narathiwat "had markedly lower average household income than the national level"; furthermore, nearly a third of the households in these provinces are below the national poverty line – a much higher rate compared to 9.5% nationally (UNDP, 2010).

A recent World Bank Group (2016) report illustrates even grimmer prospects with its findings on the economic situation in the South, where slow and stagnating economic growth in modern sectors trailed far behind the rest of the country. Poverty levels in the South have resulted in poor educational outcomes, largely due to the lack of teachers and educational resources in schools. Moreover, 18.54% of the population between the ages of 18 to 65 were inactive – meaning neither engaging in work, skills training, or educational pursuits that could improve their future employability (World Bank Group, 2016: 145). This reflects their detachment from the labor market, which exacerbates their disenfranchisement from Thai society at large where their status as an ethnic minority and *khaek* ("dark-skinned visitors" in colloquial Thai) invite discrimination (Liow, 2010b: 12).

Both reports moreover indicate that violence and poverty in the South have taken a particularly heavy toll on women. For example, in 2003, nearly 11% of women in the south were widows (though not all lost their husbands to violence), meaning that since the violence exacerbated in 2004, even more women would have lost their husbands, and had to seek employment to support their families (UNDP, 2010: 6). At the same time, labor force inactivity among the female working age population in the South – "among the highest in Thailand" – also means that Malay-Muslim women from this region are excluded from the formal job market in Thailand (World Bank Group, 2016: 145). However, this data must be interpreted with caution, since it does not explain whether this high rate of unemployment for women is due to the lack of employment opportunities or other factors. It is furthermore likely that women take up casual jobs in the informal sector where their income or employment status are not officially recognized. Nevertheless, considering the high rates of unemployment in this region, it is unsurprising that poverty levels among women in Thailand were found to be high in Pattani, and the highest in all of Thailand in Narathiwat.

The Southern provinces also demonstrate very poor health outcomes for women: Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat, for example, have among the highest maternal and female infant mortality rates in the country (UNDP, 2010: 6). These

Fig. 1 – Street sign in Kota Bharu written in Jawi (Malay in Arabic script), saying "Kota Bharu Bandaraya Islam" (Kota Bharu Islamic City); picture: Nurul Huda Mohd. Razif, 2020.

indicators thus point to a poor quality of life for Malay-Muslims in the South, and for women in particular, who are more likely to end up poor, unemployed, widowed, and less likely to survive child labor or to see their female infant child survive after birth compared to their compatriots. The dire living conditions in the South constitute strong reasons for Malay-Thai migrants to seek refuge in Kelantan, where the porous border between Malaysia and Thailand and the demand for labor fuel migration in the region.

II. Migration at the Malaysian-Thai Border

Malaysia's population of 32.7 million people (as of 2021) is predominantly Malay-Muslim (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2021). The Bumiputra[8] – comprising of Malays and indigenous groups – make up 69.8% of the population (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2021)[9], while 61.3% of its people profess the religion of Islam (Department of Statistics Malaysia,

8. Bumiputra (meaning "the sons of the soil") is an official ethnic category introduced by the British colonial government. It includes groups considered "native" to what was then Malaya – primarily Malays and indigenous groups (*orang asli*) Now it includes indigenous populations of East Malaysia too and is still used to this day.

9. Malaysia's other ethnic groups include the Chinese (22.4%), Indians (6.8%), Others (1%), and non-citizens (10%, largely made up of migrant workers) (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2021).

2011).[10] Kelantan has a higher concentration of Malays and Muslims in its demographic make-up than any other state in Malaysia: its population consists of 96% Bumiputra, and only 3.1% Chinese, 0.3% Indian, and 0.6% Others (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2020: 62). As every Malay in Malaysia is constitutionally recognized as a Muslim, this Malay-majority also translates to the presence of an overwhelmingly Muslim community in Kelantan.[11]

Kota Bharu is the administrative, commercial, and spiritual capital of Kelantan. With a population of 608,600, this city is home to about a third of Kelantan's population of 1.88 million (as of 2019) (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2020: 45). It is also home to the Islamist opposition party PAS (*Parti se-Islam Malaysia*, or the Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party), that runs the state under a style of religious governance known as "*ulama* leadership" (*kepimpinan ulama*).[12] Under *ulama* leadership in Kelantan, the spiritual and the political go hand in hand: its previous leader, Nik Aziz Nik Mat, was a revered *Mursyidul Am* (a localized term from Arabic meaning "Spiritual Leader") for PAS from 1990 to 2013. He also, more notably, served as the Chief Minister of Kelantan from 1991 until his death in 2015. From upholding of the Islamic principle of "enjoining the good, forbidding the evil" (Ar. *amar ma'aruf, nahi mungkar*) in its public policies, Kelantan has acquired the reputation of being the most Islamically "conservative" state in all of Malaysia. This is, for example, the only state where cinemas and entertainment centers such as nightclubs are banned, and whose ruling government attempted to enforce *hudud* (predetermined crimes and punishments listed in the principal texts) through the Syariah Criminal Code (II) Bill in 1993, and yet again in 2015 (Nurul Huda, 2020). The restrictive climate for entertainment in Kelantan feeds into fantasies among Malaysian men of neighboring Thailand as a "Las Vegas" of sorts, where one may be free to indulge in alcohol, prostitution, and drugs away from the prying eyes of the Vice Prevention Unit (mal. *Unit Pencegah Maksiat*).[13]

Kota Bharu is situated only 45 kilometers (about a half hour's drive) from the Malaysian-Thai border. Stretching across the width of the Malay Peninsula for more than 500 kilometers, from the coast of the South China Sea to the east and where the Strait of Malacca meets the Andaman Sea to the west, the

10. Other religions practiced in Malaysia include Buddhism (19%), Christianity (9%), Hinduism (6%), and others (5%) (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2011).

11. Article 3 of the Malaysian Constitution defines a "Malay" as an individual who "speaks the Malay language", "practices Malay adat", and "professes the religion of Islam".

12. The Malay term "ulama," imported from Arabic, refers to a religious scholar. It is used in Malay in the singular sense, even though in Arabic, it is the plural form of "'alim."

13. The Vice Prevention Unit operates under the Department of Islamic Affairs (Jabatan Hal Ehwal Agama Islam Kelantan, JAHEAIK), and is responsible for arresting Muslims who have committed offences under the Syariah Criminal Act such as alcohol consumption, gambling, and pre- or extra-marital sexual offences.

Malaysian-Thai border has long been a place of exchange and opportunities. Here people, ideas, and goods move with relative fluidity and ease. Both Malaysia and Thailand mutually profit from the porous border in different ways: Thailand economically depends on Buddhist pilgrims, tourists, and eloping couples from Malaysia to create jobs and economic opportunities in a largely rural and agricultural region of the country. Malaysia, in turn, benefits tremendously from the cheap labor of Malay-Thai migrant workers who come to the border states (Perlis, Kedah, and Kelantan) to work in the construction and service sectors (especially in restaurants and retail), small and medium enterprises (SME), and in factories.

Traffic of labor and goods are much heavier on both coastal sides of the border (in Kelantan to the east, and Kedah and Perlis to the west) than inland (see fig. 3). This is because the inland border, where the Malaysian state of Perak meets the Thai province of Yala, forms part of the mountainous backbone of the Malay Peninsula, known as *Banjaran Titiwangsa* (Titiwangsa Mountains). The heavily-forested terrain makes movement difficult, though this provides ideal conditions for smuggling drugs and contraband items, as well trafficking human beings (especially refugees) across the border into Malaysia (Sharifah Mahsinah, 2021).

Crossing the border legally is not a difficult feat: Thai border residents can enter the Malaysian border states with just a border pass, which makes it possible to work in the informal economy without a legal work permit and stay for months – even years – at a time. Border passes do not substitute as a legal work permit, but they offer a period of stay of up to three months at a time, and only cost RM10 (€2) to renew every year. The practicality and affordability of border passes allows many Malay-Thai labor migrants to find employment in the border cities in the Malaysian side without being tied to an employment contract or spending a fortune in obtaining a legal work permit. Such loose working arrangements also leave these migrants free to return to Thailand should work conditions in Malaysia prove unfavorable.

The porous border between Malaysia and Thailand is one of the main factors contributing to illegal migration between the two countries. It is reported that there are "considerably more irregular border crossings than regular ones" along the Malaysian-Thai frontier, rendered convenient and even preferable by the traversable nature of the shallow Sungai Kolok River in the Kelantan side (Weigand, 2020: 32). Due to this, it is difficult to provide reliable numerical data to illustrate the scale of migration occurring across the Malaysian-Thai border – the number of illegal migrants who did not register with Thailand's Department of Employment Services, or with Malaysia's immigration authorities far exceeds those who do. During the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, since the Malaysian government ordered migrants with expired social passes to leave the country in April 2021, Thailand's Consul General in Kota Bharu, Mongkol Sinsomboon, anticipated that around 30,000 Thais were to return home, "including those

Fig. 2 – Kelantan and Southern Thailand from a regional perspective

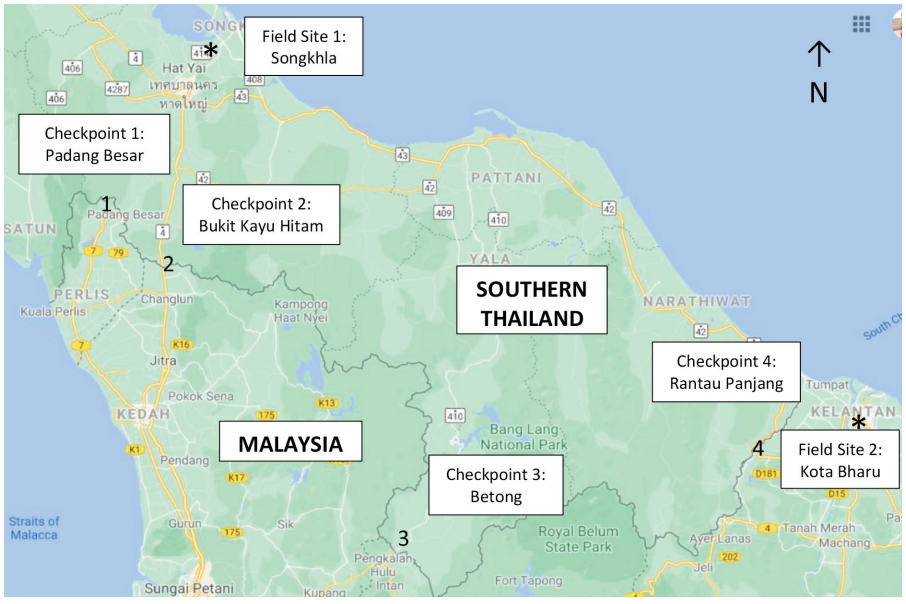

Fig. 3 – Field Sites and Main Land Checkpoints at the Malaysian-Thai Border

working illegally in Malaysia" (Bernama, 2021). This may be a conservative estimate: indeed, reliable numerical data on Thai migrants is scarce: the only available official statistics obtained from the Office of Labor Affairs at the Royal Thai Embassy in Kuala Lumpur from 2007 suggests that there were 18,456 Thai workers legally registered in Malaysia (Klanarong, 2013: 10). However, it estimated that the number of unregistered Thais working entering Malaysia using a border pass for employment could in fact be as high as 100,000 (Klanarong, 2013: 10). The overwhelming majority of these migrants – 84% – work in the service sector, with the rest employed in agriculture, fishery, and construction; most originated from the Southern provinces, and arrived in Malaysia without the help of employment agents, relying instead on their extensive social network to find unskilled jobs in the service sector that pays much higher wages than in Thailand (Klanarong, 2013: 10-11).

Certain estimations indicate that as of 2009, as much as 20% of the working-age population in the Southern Thai provinces reside or work in Malaysia (Girard, 2018: 72). Among the factors facilitating this, besides the logistical ease of crossing the border, are the cultural, ethnic, and familial ties that bind the Malays of Southern Thailand and Malaysia. The four southernmost provinces of Thailand – Narathiwat, Satun, Yala, and Pattani – are home to Thailand's largest religious minority: Muslims that are largely ethnically Malay, who number between 4 to 8% of Thailand's population of 65 millions (Liow, 2010b: 12). Unlike in Thailand, where they constitute the marginalized minority, Malay-Thai migrants can easily blend in with the Malay-Muslim majority in Malaysia. They speak a similar dialect of Malay spoken in Kelantan known as the "East Coast" (*pantai timur*) dialect and dress similarly, which makes it difficult to distinguish a Malay-Thai woman from a native Kelantanese. Most important are the strong familial connections between Malays in Southern Thailand and those in the northern Malaysian states of Perlis, Kedah, and Kelantan that go back centuries. These kinship ties have been maintained to this day through inter-marriages between Malay families and "ethnic kin" from both sides of the border (Haemindra, 1976: 198; Klanarong & Ishii, 2016: 8).

It is important to note that despite being a primary destination for employment for many Malay-Thai migrants, especially from the provinces of Narathiwat and Pattani, Kelantan is actually one of the least economically developed states of Malaysia (Lafaye de Micheaux, 2019). As of 2010, it has the lowest urbanization rate at only 42.4%; in 2019, it also held the lowest rate of mean household gross income (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2011; Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2020). Yet this is rapidly changing, with Kelantan recording an economic growth rate of 5.3% in 2019, double that of the previous year (2.6% in 2018) (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2020: 39). Its economy is primarily powered by the service sector, which employs

64.9% of Kelantan's workforce (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2020: 73). This is followed by agriculture and fishing, manufacturing, construction, and mining (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2020: 48). Up to a third (33.5%) of the state's revenues from the service sector derive from the retail, food and beverages, and hotel industries (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2020: 53).

Kelantan is home to a large number of restaurants serving Thai cuisine. These are typically owned by Malay-Thai nationals who are long-term residents (*pemastautin*) in Malaysia, and employ many Malay-Thai migrants seeking casual work. According to a recent estimation, there were about 50 Thai restaurants operating in Kota Bharu alone in 2020, many of which were forced to cease operations when their Malay-Thai owners had to repatriate to Thailand during the pandemic (Sharifah Mahsinah, 2020). Given that one can easily find food stalls serving Thai cuisine in the streets of Kota Bharu however, it is very likely that this number is much higher.

Kelantan does not have an established fishing industry that absorbs many Malay-Thai migrants as its neighbor on the west coast, Kedah, does (Klanarong, 2003; Horstmann, 2006). By contrast, it does have a thriving handicraft industry that produces, sells, and distributes hand-painted silk known as *batik*, typically worn with a cotton veil hand-embroidered in great detail by Malay-Thai craftswomen. Retail is another sector that commonly employs Malay-Thai migrants, while some seasonal day laborers work in fruit orchards, rubber plantations, and agricultural land closer to the border.

The porous frontier between Malaysia and Thailand, the cultural and linguistic similarities in the border region, and Malaysia's demand for a flexible workforce in the service sector have created employment opportunities in the Malaysian side of the border. As I show next, this employment market particularly favors a female workforce, thus fostering the "feminization of migration" from Southern Thailand to Malaysia.

III. The Feminization of Migration to Malaysia

Southeast Asia is a productive site for studying the feminization of migration, given that, according to a UN Women report, "Women comprise nearly 50% of total migrants globally, and nearly 48% in the ASEAN region" (UN Women, 2017: 33). To address the gendered impact of migration – and the impact of gender on migration – various scholars have sought to explore the local and transnational forces that give rise to various structural and social precarities female migrants are subjected to (Piper, 2003, 2006; Williams & Yu, 2006; Piper & Lee, 2016; Constable, 2005, 2020). These scholars recognize that migration is a specifically gendered phenomenon, because men and women are differently affected by social and structural factors that govern migration. For example, even though women account for nearly half of migrants globally, they – and the economic gains they make through migratory labor – are considered as

secondary to men, who often migrate through more official migration channels in larger groups, and are protected by unions and regulatory frameworks of the state (Williams & Yu, 2006: 59; Piper, 2006: 144).

Men and women also follow different legal pathways to migration, which are often determined by the gender-specific labor markets they attempt to penetrate: while male migrants tend to go into the industrial or construction sector, women tend to gravitate towards the service sector or the domestic sphere, where there is a different kind of labor – usually emotional, reproductive, domestic, or sexual – involved (Constable, 2014; Le Bail, 2017). While male migrants are usually protected by unions and state regulatory frameworks, and valued by host societies as "essential labor," women's work in the domestic sphere or as providers of pleasure is considered as not "serious" enough to deserve equal protection.

To the contrary, the migration application process typically disadvantages women, and upon arrival in host countries such as Singapore, female migrant workers are subjected to strict corporal surveillance that attempts to control their sexuality (Constable, 2020). As a result, many scholars have argued that the "feminization of migration" is in fact far from a neutral phenomenon, but rather one that engenders a serious "violation of human, women's, labor, and social rights" (Piper, 2006: 151). Indeed, as a UN Women report on the study of women's migration in Southeast Asia concludes, "while trade liberalization may increase migration of women because of the economic opportunity it presents, without adequate protections women are unlikely to benefit from these opportunities and will remain vulnerable to informal employment and exploitation" (UN Women, 2017: 34).

Thailand provides a productive ground for examining the feminization of migration, as it has the highest percentage of female emigrating workforce among the ten member-states that make up the Association of Southeast Asian Nation (ASEAN) region. Statistics from the UN Department of Economics and Social Affairs (UN DESA) as of 2020 show that 61% of emigrants from Thailand are female – much higher than the global average of female international migrants at 48% (Migration Data Portal, 2021). It is difficult to determine how many of these nationally-Thai female emigrants make their way to Malaysia due to the fact that there are no transparent data-keeping from either Thailand or Malaysia. In fact, female migrants typically migrate to Malaysia through "irregular and/or unsafe" channels, leaving the bulk of them uncounted by the authorities (UN Women, 2017: 46). Nevertheless, what we do know from data gathered by UN Women confirms that "irregular migration has been a structural component of ASEAN workers' movements to Malaysia," and that "a large share of the undocumented workers are women migrants" (UN Women, 2017: 45). And due to their unregularized status, many female migrants in Malaysia are forced to take up vulnerable employment in

the informal sector, especially in domestic and care work, which rarely come with labor and social protections (UN Women, 2015: 3).

Existing studies on labor migration at the Malaysian-Thai border have noted that this phenomenon is driven by an increasingly young and female workforce, especially since the late 1980s (Klanarong, 2013; Klanarong & Ishii, 2016; Tsuneda, 2009). The anthropologist Michiko Tsuneda (2009), for example, illustrates how the struggling local economy in Southern Thailand and the growing industrial and service sector in Malaysia have created new economic opportunities across the border that transform existing migration patterns. In her study of Malay migrants from Southern Thailand in the early 2000s, she shows that there is a significant shift towards more young, unmarried women migrating to work in Malaysia's service sector, becoming the important "builders of the cross-border network" (Tsuneda, 2009: 6). This, she notes, is remarkably different from the "largely seasonal, agricultural, and largely male labor migration of the past" (Tsuneda, 2009: 6).

Tsuneda analyzes migration at the Malaysian-Thai border through a gendered lens, arguing that the experience of migration is preferable for women than for men, due to their access to different opportunities in the employment market: although men traditionally enjoy more mobility and can earn more than women in Malaysia, the limited scope of work allowed for them as an undocumented migrant meant that much of their freedom has been curtailed by the need to live cautiously (Tsuneda, 2009: 264). Their limited freedom exacerbates their feeling of exclusion from the host society (which they call "*tanoh dio*," or "their land") and a longing for "our home" ("*tanoh kito*"). Women, by contrast, are very much in-demand in low-skilled jobs where their performance of femininity sells. This includes working in the service sector in restaurants and coffeeshops, where their supposedly "gentle" nature (*lemah lembut*) – and the exoticism of Thai women (of Malay and other ethnicities) in the Malaysian imagination, elaborated further below – is suited for attracting and serving customers (Tsuneda, 2009: 269).

As discussed, the porous border between Malaysia and Thailand has ushered in a new phase of migration dominated by a young, female, and unmarried population of migrants who fulfill Malaysia's need for cheap, unskilled labor in its growing service and industrial sectors. While these studies have focused extensively on Malay-Thai migrants' navigation of the labor market in Malaysia as a means of pursuing a better life, little emphasis has been given on the non-material aspirations behind their migration, explored next.

IV. Malaysian-Thai Cross-Border Marriage

Marriage and migration are two intricately connected phenomena that have prompted the question, "Does one migrate to marry or marry to migrate?" (Williams & Yu, 2006: 59). This question is rendered even more

complex when we add employment into the equation. Scholars recognize the multiplicity of female migrants' identity as "wife or worker" (Piper, 2003), arguing that is not always clear which precedes which, but the general trend seems to show that when one door opens, so does the other: marriage paves the way to employment, and can also present a way to break out of the migration circuit between the home and host societies (Piper, 2003; Williams & Yu, 2006). Others are driven by personal aspirations and ambitions such as love, or the desire to seek more cosmopolitan experiences abroad with foreign men (Constable, 2003). Women's motivations furthermore change over time in response to the circumstances and constraints that they encounter, as is the case at the Malaysian-Thai border, where looser migration laws allow Thai women to pursue a multitude of desires simultaneously.

Malaysian-Thai cross-border marriages I describe here form part of a wider transfer of brides across Asia, usually from poorer Southeast Asian countries to wealthier nations in East Asia. These unions typically involve couples of different nationalities, and are thus often referred to interchangeably with "transnational marriage" or "international marriage." Although they emerge from different political, economic, and demographic circumstances compared to other Asian regions, Malaysian-Thai cross-border marriages nevertheless emerge from similar aspirations for economic prosperity, the desire to pursue a better life, and a job market that profits from women's mobile, usually informal, and unskilled labor.

Cross-border marriages first grew in demand and popularity during East Asia's period of rapid industrialization in the 1970s. During this time, women were choosing to postpone their marriage or to not marry at all to work in the cities (Lee, 2012: 180). Despite women's increased participation in the labor force, the responsibilities of producing, raising, and caring for children and the elderly remained, unchangingly, a female duty, thus creating a crisis of social reproduction that threatened the preservation of the family unit. This shortage in domestic and care labor paved the way for the "globalization of reproduction" in countries such as Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea, where imported brides "[take] on roles such as housekeeping; car[ing] for children, the elderly, and the ill; moral and social cultivations of children; and sex and reproduction" (Liaw et al., 2010: 50).

There are also "supply and demand" factors that fuel the international marriage migration trend in Asia (Jones & Shen, 2008: 15). Foreign brides from the "supply" side usually engage in cross-border marriage for the opportunity to find higher-paid employment opportunities to bring their natal family out of poverty (Kim, 2012: 553; Thai, 2012: 216). Furthermore, marriage is perhaps one of the few legal avenues for women to settle in these developed countries as a long-term resident and acquire citizenship. This demonstrates a specific "cultural logic" in their marriage to foreigners, as Suzuki (2005: 128) suggests, which is considered an "easy and secure entry to wealth, stability, and mobility."

On the "demand" side, cross-border marriages provide marriage opportunities for lower middle-class men of rural background, with limited education and income-earning capacity. During this period of intense industrialization, rural areas in particular experienced a severe "marriage squeeze," in which rural-urban internal female migration led to an excess of marriageable men but insufficient potential brides (Lee, 2012: 182; Lu &Yang, 2010: 17). These men would otherwise have limited chances of succeeding in the local marriage market, forcing them to seek foreign brides who are "not in a position to be as 'choosy' as local women" (Jones & Shen, 2008: 15). In Japan, this social crisis of what the anthropologist John Knight calls "involuntary bachelorhood" was considered to be a national problem when rural male celibacy reached over 25% in 1990 (1995: 9). This prompted local municipal governments to intervene through various programs such as establishing municipal marriage consultants, meeting clubs, marriage awards to young couples, and go-between reward schemes that offer financial incentives to prospective couples and matchmakers (Knight, 1995: 12).

In East Asia, cross-border marriage is thus a way of solving a national crisis through transnational means. Female marriage migrants fulfil a clear reproductive need to prevent the demographic decline of the host society, which allows the patriarchal family institution to endure through the contribution of migrant wives' (economic) production and (social) reproduction. This is very much in contrast to Southeast Asia, specifically in Malaysia, where marriage and migration are driven by a tumultuous political climate and a pressing economic need, not a demographic demand for wives in the bride-receiving country. In fact, transnational marriages between Malay-Malaysian citizens and foreigners in Malaysia in recent years have been perceived as disruptive and suspicious, even as a matter of national security requiring the response of the Department of Immigration, the Department of National Registration, local state and federal governments, and religious authorities nationwide.

In an article published by the Malay-language newspaper *Harian Metro* in April 2019, the Director of the state of Selangor's Department of Islamic Affairs, Haris Kasim, announced that there has been a marked increase in transnational marriages between Muslim (predominantly Malay) citizens and foreign nationals. In 2014, there were 983 of such marriages recorded in Selangor, involving 635 brides and 348 grooms who were Malaysians. A large majority of these married spouses originating from Indonesia (617 in total, 148 male and 469 female), followed by Thailand (94; 20 male, 74 female) (Idris & Yusmizal, 2019). In 2015, the number of transnational marriages increased to 1,066, with Malaysian grooms (570) exceeding the number of brides (496) this time. The origins of foreign spouses also differed: the leading country of origin continued to be Indonesia (581; 236 male and 345 female), followed by Pakistan (106; 97 male, 6 female), and Thailand (62; 23 male, 39 female) (Idris & Yusmizal, 2019). This statistical rise in marriages with foreign nationals – particularly the

uptick in male citizens marrying foreign brides – is a sign that, according to Haris Kasim, "love transgresses racial boundaries and national frontiers" (*cinta melampaui batas ras dan sempadan negara*) (Idris & Yusmizal, 2019).

Kelantan's Department of Islamic Affairs has not issued similar statistics on transnational marriages in recent years, but the number of Kelantanese women marrying Pakistani men has been a cause of great concern among the local and national public. This issue was brought to light in January 2019, when the Department of Immigration announced that, as reported in another local newspaper, *Malaysia Kini*, "there exists a trend [in which] Pakistani citizens have been marrying Kelantanese women on the grounds that they want to stay longer in this country" (N Faizal Ghazali, 2019). As of 2019, more than 400 marriages involving Pakistani men and Malay-Malaysian women were recorded by the Malaysian authorities (N Faizal Ghazali, 2019). Some of these unions were suspected of having questionable motives: local business owners in particular have been complaining of Pakistani migrants running businesses in Malaysia using their Malaysian wives' business permit and privileges as a Malaysian citizen (Khairil Ashraf, 2019).

This prompted public pressure on the state government to put an end to these scams. The then-Deputy Chief Minister of Kelantan, Mohd Amar Nik Abdullah, argued that state governments do not have the authority "to obstruct people from marrying because this [concerns] individual rights" (*tidak ada alasan untuk kerajaan negeri mengawal atau menyekat rakyat berkahwin kerana ini hak masing-masing*) (N Faizal Ghazali, 2019). The response from the federal government, however, was more encouraging: to ensure that Malaysian women do not end up used by Pakistani (and other foreign) men as a ticket for long-term residence and economic prosperity, a deputy minister in the Prime Minister's Department, Fuziah Salleh, promised to establish a "Standard Operating Procedure" (SOP) requiring every Malaysian and foreign citizen intending to engage in such a marriage to be "interviewed and vetted, mentally and psychologically" (Khairil Ashraf, 2019).

The rising sense of national crisis concerning transnational marriages between Malay-Malaysian women and Pakistani men illustrates how marriage, migration, and money intertwine and impinge on the economic interests of local Malays. Malay-Thai women's presence in Kelantan similarly proves disruptive to the local marriage market, particularly as legal polygyny allows the possibility of marrying to Malay-Malaysian men as second wives. Malay-Thai cross-border marriages, as I discuss further below, are amplified by two other important factors unique to this region: first, a reciprocal vision of exoticism and affluence of the Other; and second, the ease of contracting polygamous marriages in Southern Thailand.

V. Chasing Fate & Fortune: Polygamy, *Jodoh* & *Rezeki*

The cultural and linguistic overlap between Malays of Southern Thailand and Malays of Kelantan mean that they also share key conceptual understandings

for making sense of the world, such as *jodoh* (fated match) and *rezeki* (fortune or sustenance). The Malay concept of predestination is an amalgamation of both their ancient Hindu tradition and their contemporary Islamic faith. *Jodoh* ("twin soul," "affinity," or "second self"), for example, traces its etymological origins to Tamil (*jōḍu*), in which the word similarly means "a pair, match, couple" (Hoogervorst, 2015). Both my Kelantanese and Malay-Thai interlocutors have described *jodoh* as "a meeting between two individuals who then marry" (*pertemuan antara dua insan yang kemudiannya berkahwin*). But *jodoh* could also simply refer to that moment of encounter itself (*jodoh pertemuan*, or "fated encounter"), which is believed to have been divinely ordained to occur at that particular moment, at that particular time, with that particular individual.

In my discussions with my Malay informants from both the Malaysian and Thai sides of the border, I also frequently heard of *jodoh* being classified as a form of *rezeki* – a term localized into Malay from the Arabic *rizq*, meaning "sustenance" (Van Dam, 2010: 230). The anthropologist Michael Swift (1965: 91) defines *rezeki* for Malays as being "a person's divinely inspired economic lot." *Rezeki* must be sought through one's own endeavors; at the same time, *rezeki* can also be understood as "riches" or "good fortune" (Catafago, 1975: 160) obtained through "chance," "luck," or "divine beneficence," independent of one's efforts or labor (Lont, 2000: 49; Fessler, 2002: 41). Both *jodoh* and *rezeki* are categorized as a subset of "fate" (*takdir* in Malay), which comes from the Arabic *taqdīr,* meaning "predestination" or "decreeing." In Islamic belief, one's destiny has already been decided when the soul is infused into the body before one is born into this world. Nevertheless, an unlived future means that there is much that one can do to change its course to a more favorable outcome.

Alice Elliot (2016), writing on young university women looking for marriage in a migrant town in the Atlas Mountains of Morocco, shows how women deal with this complex relationship between action and theological imagination. In the town of Zafiah, these young women engage in beauty practices such as using makeup to attract the gaze of their male peers, in the hope of attracting a promising man who can offer marriage and a migratory future in Europe or elsewhere. The paradox lies in attempting to steer the male gaze and possibly engage in premarital romance – both of which are hardly socially or religiously appropriate for an unmarried Muslim woman – in order to fulfil a destiny they believe is Islamically determined by God.

Elliot thus asks: "How does one live a life that has already been determined by non-negotiable forces, but that nevertheless requires action, choice, and alert anticipation?" (2016: 496). The answer to this dilemma is to recognize that "everyday actions" in the present are what set the wheels of predestination into motion, which then catalyse very tangible consequences in the here and now. In this way, she argues, "destiny triggers a complex "labor of hope" wherein one feels compelled to act in the human world in specific, hopeful ways, in view of a future that is already written" (Elliot, 2016: 497).

In this section, I examine how Thai women's migration to Malaysia can be seen as an undertaking of this "labor of hope" to change their fate and fortune and to secure their *rezeki* and *jodoh*. *Rezeki* as recorded in the literature is more widely used and understood in the Malay world in economic terms (Swift, 1965; Lont, 2000; Fessler, 2002). Yet my Malay-Thai and Kelantanese interlocutors frequently interpreted *rezeki* to encompass one's fate in love and marriage as well, such that whom one marries is also considered to be part of one's "fortune" in life. Thus, finding *rezeki* is, for many of these women, a pathway towards finding *jodoh*, and both courses of destiny are usually entangled in one another.

This seems to be in accordance with dominant discourse on Malaysian-Thai cross-border marriages circulating in the western side of the border in the state of Perlis. In 2016, a local Malaysian news website highlighted the growing desirability of middle-aged Malay-Malaysian men by women from Southern Thailand, who seek economic security in a spouse. The piece, published by the online Malay-language news outlet *ProjekMM*, was tellingly titled "Southern Thai ladies crazy for Malaysian husbands in their 40s" ("*Suami Malaysia, umur 40-an jadi kegilaan gadis selatan Thai*") (ProjekMM, 2016). Based on interviews with Malay-Malaysian men registering their polygamous marriage in Perlis, the article reports that many Southern Thai women (whose ethnicity was not specified) were willing to be married polygamously to men between the ages of 50 to 60. These men would be in a much more stable financial position, having paid off their mortgages, car and study loans by then, often with some savings built up on the side. In fact, the article further suggests, men in this age group are particularly attractive to Thai women because if they were employed in the private sector, they would be able to make a large cash withdrawal from their Employees' Pensioners Fund (EPF) when they reach the age of 50; if they were civil servants, they would have a comfortable lifelong pension after retirement. For all these reasons, the article says, "Thai Muslim women are less attracted to young men in Malaysia because they are just about to set up their lives, besides not having their own assets" (ProjekMM, 2016).

Despite Malay-Malaysian middle-aged husbands being in "high demand," the rate of polygamy officially recorded by the Islamic authorities in the state of Perlis remains low at only 3% (ProjekMM, 2016). However, it is very likely that the incidence of polygamy is severely under-reported, considering the fact that the rate of Malaysian couples eloping to Thailand to contract eloped marriages[14] (*kahwin lari,* legally known as "cross-border marriages" as well) far exceed the number of applications for legal polygyny – a rising

14. The legal and technical term for eloped marriages also translates as "cross-border marriages" (*perkahwinan rentasan sempadan*). However, to avoid confusion with cross-border marriages that are akin to transnational marriages, I will refer to these simply as "eloped marriages" or "elopements."

Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Total
Registration of cross-border polygyny	886	746	750	622	209	470	440	**4,123**
Polygyny applications lodged	141	131	105	81	90	168	178	**894**

Table 1 – Registration of cross-border polygyny (Kes Mal 012) and polygyny applications (Kes Mal 011) received by the Syariah Court of Kota Bharu, Kelantan, between 2012 to 2018. Source: Syariah Court of Kota Bharu, Kelantan.

phenomenon I have addressed elsewhere (Nurul Huda, 2021). As the statistics in the table above from the Syariah Court of Kota Bharu, Kelantan, indicates, the registration of eloped polygamy contracted without permission of the judge (*pendaftaran poligami tanpa kebenaran*) is about 4.6 times higher than the number of applications for polygamy (*permohonan poligami*).

The ease of eloping across the border to marry in Thailand gives little incentive for Malay-Malaysian men to become polygamous the legal way. This usually entails a lengthy bureaucratic process that would involve applying for permission from the Syariah judge in court, who can only approve the application if the husband can prove his financial eligibility and his ability to be "just" between his wives (among several other conditions). More importantly, as part of this process, the court will send an official "notice" to the first wife (and all existing wives), informing them that their husband has applied to marry another woman. This procedure would inevitably foil the husband's plans to keep his polygamous marriage a secret from his existing families, thus discouraging him even further from pursuing legal and transparent polygamy. The alternative – that is, to elope to Southern Thailand – allows the polygamous couple to marry under Islamic rites (*mengikut hukum Syarak*); but only marriages contracted at the recognized offices of the Provincial Council of Islamic Affairs in Southern Thai provinces (specifically, in Satun, Yala, Narathiwat, Songkhla, and Pattani) can be legalized in Malaysia by a Syariah judge, upon the payment of a fine.

The majority of eloped marriages contracted in Thailand are between Malay couples who are both Malaysian citizens, but a minority do involve Malay-Malaysian men marrying foreign wives (usually Thai, Indonesian, or Cambodian), or Malay-Malaysian women marrying foreign husbands (usually Pakistani). Based on my analysis of 100 case files of registration of illegal polygyny (Kes Mal 012) between 2012 to 2014, ten of these were between Malaysian men (aged between 32 to 68) and women of Thai nationality (aged between 16 to 46). From this, we may surmise that on average, about 10% of registered polygamy were Malaysian-Thai cross-border marriages.

Statistically, this number might seem minimal, but what may be even more significant is the discourse on desire for the Other circulating in the media and also in everyday banter among Malay-Malaysian men.

The *Malay Mail* article described above gives a revealing insight into how reciprocal fantasies of affluence and exoticism are conducive to Malaysian-Thai cross-border marriages by enhancing the perceived desirability of the Other. Malay-Thai women's attraction to Malay-Malaysian men is reciprocated by the prevalent stereotype in Malaysia that Malay-Thai women are, according to my male Kelantanese interlocutors, "cute" (Kel. *comey*), "beautiful" (Kel. *muko molek*), and "gentle" (*lemah lembut*). Men "melt" (*cair*) in their presence, particularly as they are known for "sweet-talking" (Kel. *kecek manis*). While conducting research in Kota Bharu, I encountered several taxi drivers who reported having regular Malay male clients from all over Malaysia who frequently ventured to the Thai side of the border town of Sungai Golok for alcohol and prostitution – largely catered by non-Muslim, non-Malay Thai sex workers. Malay-Malaysian men's engagement in sex tourism at the border perpetuates stereotypical representations of women from neighboring Thailand – whatever their nationality – as sexualized, seductive, and skilled in charming men. In his study of migration and citizenship at the western part of the Malaysian-Thai border, the anthropologist Alexander Horstmann (2006: 161) also found that Malay-Malaysian men in Kedah and Perlis often project a sort of "male fantasy" in which the daughters of Thai-speaking Muslims are seen — and desired — as "submissive housewives." This makes Malay-Thai women desirable as second wives to men who seek in polygamy the love and sexual fulfillment they cannot find in their first marriage.

But this exoticism and desire for Thai women is not exclusive to those of Malay ethnicity, but also those who are ethnically Thai. One Malaysian-Thai couple I met in the Central Mosque of Songkhla while conducting research in Southern Thailand in December 2014 shows how these two fantasies of the Other, and the ease of contracting polygamy in Thailand, facilitates cross-border marriages. At the time of our meeting, the couple had just completed their solemnization (*nikah*) ceremony and were waiting for their documentation to be prepared, which was more than enough time to conduct an interview. The husband, Ahmad, was a retired Malay teacher from Perlis in his late 60s. He had decided to marry in Songkhla because he did not want to officially apply for polygamy in court, which would mean having to declare his polygamy to his existing wife. He was already married to a Malay-Malaysian wife of similar age, with whom he not only shared children, but also grandchildren: when asked why he resorted to marrying a second wife from Thailand, he complained that his first wife "was always busy with the grandkids" (*asyik sibuk dengan cucu*), that he felt rather lonely and abandoned.

But Ahmad found a remedy for this in his ethnic Thai second wife, Ariza, who was in her late 30s and had lived and worked at the border town of Padang

Besar in Perlis for a few years. She was, in fact, a divorcée and a single mother who had left behind her children in Thailand to pursue work opportunities in Malaysia. At the time of our meeting, she was working in a hair salon, where she was able to earn a much more decent income than in Thailand. Ahmad claimed to have found in Ariza a new source of affection and fulfillment that was emotional, and perhaps also sexual: "She treats me well" (*dia layan saya baik*), he said, and when justifying his decision to become polygamous, he asserted that Islam allows polygamy for men because they supposedly have "stronger sexual desires" (*nafsu kuat*) than women. Ariza, on the other hand, said she would welcome the opportunity to stay on longer in Malaysia so she could earn comfortably to support her growing children in Thailand. Though this was not mentioned explicitly, her marriage to a Malaysian man with a pension may also help to alleviate the heavy economic burden she bore as a single mother attempting to survive in a foreign land. For this, she was willing to even convert from Buddhism to Islam the day they solemnized their marriage, and at the same mosque.

From this Malaysian-Thai cross-border marriage, we see that the possibility of contracting a quick and discreet polygamous marriage in Thailand is advantageous on many levels for the couple: the husband may preserve appearances of monogamy to his first wife by keeping his second marriage a secret, thereby preventing any unpleasant conflict or confrontation; the wife of Thai nationality may marry a Malaysian spouse with less bureaucracy involved. Furthermore, it is clear that Ahmad was projecting the Malaysian male fantasy of Thai women as sexually desirable. This forms one of the main motivations behind this union, alongside the promise of economic prosperity in Malaysia Ariza expressed. For Ariza, migrating to Malaysia for work enabled her to meet and eventually marry Ahmad. This allowed her to carve a new path forward from her past divorce in Thailand and to build a new life in Malaysia, from where she could remotely fulfil her current responsibilities to her children as a single mother through regular money remittances. Ariza's circumstances, like those of other Thai female migrants of Malay ethnicity I met in Kota Bharu, showed how life "back home" in Thailand could be "*susoh*" (mal. "*susah*") – a Kelantanese word meaning "difficult," which encompasses a multitude of hardships with making a living and surviving; but despite the job precarities in Malaysia, it was nevertheless possible to find both their *rezeki* and *jodoh* there.

VI. Risks of Abuse

Some Malay-Malaysian men, however, may harbor their own reservations about marrying Thai women, including those of Malay ethnicity, despite the ethnoreligious similarities they share. This was explicitly expressed by my taxi driver in Kota Bharu, Rizal, whose chauffeuring services I regularly engaged while conducting fieldwork in Kelantan in 2015. Rizal was a young Malay man of 28 years old from the town of Bachok (24 kilometers from

Kota Bharu), who was – rather unusually for a Kelantanese man of his age – still unmarried. Having been a taxi driver in the Kota Bharu area for some time, with regular trips to the Thai border, Rizal's clientele had grown to include Malay-Thai businessmen and businesswomen who frequently came to Kota Bharu to trade and deliver their merchandise. One wealthy Malay-Thai businesswoman, he told me, had recently offered him her daughter's hand in marriage. He politely refused this proposal (Kel. "*tokseh*"), which puzzled me, considering the prevalent stereotypes of Malay-Thai women as prime wifely material I had heard from other Malay-Malaysian men. He explained to me that even though "she [the daughter] was pretty" (Kel. *muko meme molek*), marrying her would be "too risky":

> "If your [Malay-] Thai wife returns to her parents' home all battered and bruised [*berbekas*, literally meaning "with traces"], her father and brothers may come and hunt you down with a rifle."

Reflecting on this, he was convinced that he had made the right decision for his *jodoh*. But Rizal's response was revealing in several ways: first, it was a self-admission of Kelantanese husbands' tendency to be physically abusive in marriage, which was confirmed by my interviews with many Kelantanese wives seeking a divorce in court. This adds another layer of risk – both physical and psychological – for Malay-Thai women considering to marry Malay-Malaysian husbands. Second, it shows the continuity in the social and familial connection that Malay-Thai women maintain with their natal families, even after marrying Malay-Malaysian husbands. This connection offers a safety net in the form of refuge and retribution: should things go awry in the marriage, they have a family to return to in Thailand; more importantly, their male kin would not let unjust treatment of their daughters and sisters go unpunished. The image of gun-wielding Malay-Thai men seeking revenge that Rizal evoked is also noteworthy and indicative of how Malays perceive neighboring Thailand with fear and suspicion, as a lawless place where violence reigns.

Some Malay-Thai women do indeed find themselves trapped in an abusive marriage with no way out. Divorce is particularly difficult if the marriage was officially registered in Malaysia and the husband refuses to make a verbal proclamation of divorce (*talak*), which would mean having to initiate a lengthy divorce process that could consume a lot of time and money. If the marriage was contracted in Thailand and was never legally registered in Malaysia, the bureaucratic process of obtaining a divorce would be even lengthier, as the *nikah* would have to be legalized in a Malaysian Syariah court first before any divorce procedures could be initiated.

One afternoon on my way home after a day of research at Kota Bharu's Syariah Court in 2015, I happened to share Rizal's taxi with Fatin – a Malay-Thai woman in her late 20s, originally from Narathiwat. Fatin was married to a Malay-Malaysian man from Rantau Panjang, whom she knew "through

friends." Unlike many other Malay-Thai women I encountered, Fatin did not migrate to Malaysia for work specifically; she had only moved to Kota Bharu after her marriage, and had since been a housewife. Fatin was in court that day because her Kelantanese husband had been having money problems, and had begun resorting to domestic violence, prompting her to seek legal solutions for a divorce at the Syariah Court. She had taken Rizal's taxi out of desperation – she needed to make her way back to Kota Bharu to find a lawyer's office urgently, but with the new Syariah court complex located in a developing area in the outskirts of Kota Bharu, eight kilometers away from the city center, there were few taxis available.

At the point of our meeting, Fatin was accompanied by her elderly mother and her two children – a baby and a toddler. Fatin's mother had come to Kota Bharu from Thailand specifically to answer her daughter's call of distress after the beating began. She was fully supportive of Fatin's decision to seek a divorce for her own safety and that of her children, having seen her daughter being hit by her son-in-law with her own eyes. In Thai-accented Malay, Fatin's mother said in the taxi that she would endeavor to get Fatin to return to Thailand as soon as possible, where she and children may be safe with her natal family.

Though I was unable to follow up on whether Fatin eventually succeeded in obtaining her divorce, her ordeal corresponds to the risks faced by other cross-border wives across Asia. Studies examining the well-being of marriage migrants in East Asia have found that this move for many cross-border brides has been anything *but* easy, primarily due to the typical patrilocal marital and kinship pattern. In other words, the bride, like Fatin, typically joins the husband's family in his country, creating social and cultural adjustment issues, social isolation, and discrimination – all of which make assimilation in their host societies difficult (Oh, 2018; Li & Yang, 2020). Furthermore, female migrants' dependency on their husband for economic support, as well as for the legal right to stay in the host society create unequal power dynamics in the marriage that leave them vulnerable to psychological abuse and domestic violence (Williams & Yu, 2006).

Fatin's cross-border confirms the risks above, and also affirms Rizal's remark that marriage to a Kelantanese man presents the threat of domestic violence. This is but one of the many more precarities Malay-Thai women must face when seeking a Malay-Malaysian husband, whose proclivity for polygamy and reputation for being unfaithful additionally means that such exogamous marriages are a dangerous gamble that could lead to abandonment (Horstmann, 2006: 162).

VII. Love Magic & Sorcery

Although *jodoh* and *rezeki* are both considered to be a predestined affair, navigating the marriage market in Malaysia brings new sets of precarities

for Malay-Thai women that add to their undocumented status and fragile economic situation. These precarities emerge from a gendered form of intra-ethnic tension that emanates from Malay-Malaysian women's suspicions that Malay-Thai women engage in powerful love magic (*ilmu pengasih*) and sorcery (*sihir*) to secure a spouse – especially a married man. As such, Malay-Thai women's presence in Kelantan – like that of Pakistani men in Malaysia – is perceived as undesirable, disruptive, and dangerous.

In his study of settlement of migrants from Java in the southern Malaysian state of Johor, Koji Miyazaki suggests that the Javanese used stereotypical images of being "magical" and "mystical" as "a 'cultural resource' for gaining a certain position in Malay society" (2000: 77). According to Miyazaki, Javanese migrants are seen with contempt by Malays in the host society due to their immigrant, economically marginalized, and outsider status. At the same time, their Malay hosts perceive them as possessing great physical strength and mystical knowledge, capable of executing impressive feats such as opening virgin forests for new rubber plantations (Miyazaki, 2000: 84). This creates an interesting asymmetrical relationship in which the Javanese migrants are socially marginalized but feared for being "magically powerful," while the Malays are the dominant group, but not dangerous to the Javanese settlers (Miyazaki, 2000: 92).

Malay-Thai women are seen as occupying a comparable position in Kelantan's socio-cultural landscape. These women are held at the margins of society for being migrants (*pendatang*), poor (*miskin*), and as seeking from a refuge from a hard life (*orang susah*); for all these reasons, they may be susceptible to criminal behaviors that make employers distrustful towards them. For instance, some business owners I knew in Kelantan explicitly mentioned that they refused to hire Malay-Thai migrants to work in their shops, because they feared that Malay-Thai employees would steal their money and run off to Thailand, never to return. At the same time, my Kelantanese interlocutors suspect that they did not come to this side of the border "empty-handed" (*tangan kosong*); rather, they bring with them practices and knowledge of sorcery (*ilmu sihir*) that would enhance their chances of securing *jodoh* and *rezeki* in Malaysia.

This practice of sorcery includes, for example, using certain charms to make their businesses prosper or to beautify themselves. Some of the most popular practices of sorcery I heard about in Kelantan was of Malay-Thai waitresses in coffeeshops and restaurants applying love potions into food and drinks to attract clients. This is an act described with fear and suspicion by my Kelantanese interlocutors as "putting things" (*taruk benda*) – usually an enchanted concoction that has been prepared by an ethnic-Thai sorcerer (*bomoh*) – into food and beverages consumed by the object of affection. These "things" are intended to arouse intense attraction and infatuation in the targeted recipient. Love magic and potions prepared by a Thai sorcerer (*bomoh Siam*)

are considered especially potent, capable of swaying the targeted person's temperament and behaviours, often in inexplicable and drastic ways. Such love potions are rumored to contain "unclean things" (*benda kotor*) such as the woman's menstrual blood (*darah haid*), but their presence are carefully concealed when added into beverages with a strong taste or a dark appearance, such as black coffee (*kopi o*). Malay-Thai waitresses' reputation for engaging supernatural means for securing a husband makes Kelantanese women wary of their husbands spending too much time in coffeeshops with their male peers, for fear that they will end up being seduced by such women.

Fatimah was one such woman who believed that her husband had been ensorcelled by a Malay-Thai woman, and that she too had been a victim of sorcery.[15] I met Fatimah in Kota Bharu's Syariah Court in 2015, where she was fighting a messy battle for her share of matrimonial assets from her ex-husband. Originally from Kota Bharu, and in her late 50s at the time of our interview, Fatimah began telling me her story very calmly at first, before being overtaken by emotion when she recounted her divorce. Fatimah and her husband had been married for more than three decades and were running a business together selling the hand-painted silk known as *batik*. This all changed when her husband began frequenting a restaurant selling *mi celup* – a popular dish of noodle served in a tasty broth, considered a specialty of the Malay-Thai community. Fatimah noticed that her husband was particularly infatuated by the Malay-Thai waitress who often served him at the restaurant. Soon she began to observe drastic behavioral changes in her husband – his increasing propensity for violence (which caused her to be hospitalized and to lodge a police report a few times); the disappearance of large sums of money from their *batik* business; extended absences from home; and an intense aversion to spending time with her and their children at home, especially during mealtimes.

At the same time, she began to feel physically ill, and described having sexual relations with her husband as particularly "painful" (*sakit*) and "burning" (*panas*). This obstructed any possibility of being physically intimate with her husband, which Fatimah believed compounded his desire to pursue the other woman. Indeed, as the affair grew increasingly serious, Fatimah and

15. It is important to note that accounts of Malay-Thai women's skills in love magic and sorcery that I gathered in my research nearly always came from Kelantanese women who claimed to have been victims of such supernatural aggression. This is because sorcery is a serious sin and forbidden (*haram*) in Islam; any individual who confesses to having visited a sorcerer (*ahli sihir*) for a favor thus also avows to having committed a serious act of *syirik* (betrayal of the oneness of God), thus diminishing his or her own status and religiosity as a "good Muslim." For this reason, none of the Malay-Thai women I interviewed ever admitted to using sorcery. Added to this, such an admission would also reinforce an already negative perception of Malay-Thai women as being spiritually dangerous, which would exclude them even further from their host society.

her children made shocking and scandalous discoveries such as finding "the other woman's" lingerie and other personal items in her husband's car, which convinced Fatimah that a sexual liaison had occurred.

Fatimah believed the sorcery instigating changes in her husband's behavior was aimed at a single purpose: to monopolize access to her husband's time, affections, and money, all of which Fatimah was receiving less and less as his affair progressed. Fatimah eventually succeeded in obtaining a divorce, after enduring much physical abuse, a failed business, and slandering from her friends, family, and business partners. Had she not divorced, she suspected that the couple would have married polygamously anyway – but it later came to light that the Malay-Thai woman was actually still legally married to her husband in Thailand, where she had also left behind her two children.

Fatimah's story shows how Malay-Thai women are feared by Kelantanese women for their ability to seize and subdue their husbands with love magic and sorcery. As an employee of a restaurant her husband frequented, Fatimah suspected that she could have easily slipped love potion into the meals she served her customers, including her husband. In the end, Fatimah had no choice but to leave the abusive marriage, particularly as her husband remained firmly under the other woman's spell. Indeed, most sorcery victims are said to have no hope of recovery, except if healed by an equally powerful *bomoh Siam* in Thailand.

It also tells us that sorcery (including love magic) in Malay society are, in the words of the anthropologist Michael Peletz, "very real – and quite common," even though more than 30 years have passed since he had written on sorcery in a Malay village in the state of Negeri Sembilan (1988: 144). Sorcery is still applied today for the same reasons – to inflict spiritual and physical harm on an enemy; to enact revenge when one's romantic advances have been rejected; or to sway the heart of a desired person towards marriage. Sorcery has become the preferred method for dealing with anti-social feelings like "envy, jealousy, frustrated love, personal rejection, loss of face, or some combination of these factors," because

> "these acts are relatively private and secretive, and can thus be accomplished without any public or direct displays of aggression, or of emotions of any kind" (Peletz, 1988: 144-5).

Sorcery's stealthy nature makes it a particularly apt form of defying the ethnic, structural, and power hierarchies Malay-Thai migrants are subjected to in Kelantan. First, the particular "brand" of Siamese sorcery imported by Malay-Thai migrants is seen by my Kelantanese interlocutors as more powerful and dangerous than other types of sorcery practiced by indigenous or Indonesian sorcerers. This perception affirms the continued relevance of Miyazaki's observation that Thai sorcerers are considered to be "skilled in supernatural cults," which intensifies "the association of marginality and 'supernatural power'" in how Malays view people from Thailand (2000: 91). Malay-Thai

migrants – especially the young, female, and unmarried ones – are especially feared, as they may be "on the hunt" for a husband, whatever the means. As a result, this fearful reputation commands respect from the local Kelantanese population, who would be very cautious not to offend their neighbors from Thailand – ethnically Malay or otherwise – in any social interaction.

Second, Malay-Thai migrants' practice of sorcery could be read as an attempt to bolster the inferior position and unjust treatment in the workplace they are subjected to as a Malay of Thai nationality in Malaysia. As Tsuneda notes, their employment in low-earning jobs in the service sector will likely reproduce such social hierarchies and expose them to discriminatory treatment towards Thai migrants, who are seen as people from an "underdeveloped" and war-torn country (2009: 28). The lack of an employment contract or labor laws and unions that would protect their rights as a worker moreover all contribute to the utility of sorcery as a response to precarious work conditions as undocumented migrants. For example, Fatimah told me that she once employed a Malay-Thai employee in her *batik* business who, after a disagreement with her, had used sorcery to inflict illness upon her daughter in revenge. The unpredictability of Malay-Thai migrant workers forces Kelantanese employers to be more cautious – and conscient – of their treatment towards their Malay-Thai employees.

And thirdly, Malay-Thai female migrants draw on sorcery and love magic as a rich cultural resource from "home" to facilitate their search for courtship and marital possibilities across the border. Both constitute important means for dealing with precarity in securing emotional and economic resources, particularly in potentially polygamous situations where they might be competing with any existing wives. I would argue that the potency of their love magic and their skills for seduction subvert the gendered power imbalance characteristic of cross-border marriages across Asia (Williams & Yu, 2006; Piper & Lee, 2016): here, Malay-Thai women demonstrate a dominating tendency to make Malay men fall under their spell, leaving behind a trail of marital discord, destruction, and divorce in their wake. In this sense, Malay-Thai women are not as "submissive" as imagined by Malay men; to the contrary, they use (appearances of) their submission to subjugate men, whose time, resources, and affections are diverted to the women who now command their heart.

Peletz, as mentioned above, situates sorcery in Malay society as an important means of dealing with interpersonal conflict without disturbing external appearances of harmony – essential for keeping the fabric of Malay society together (1988: 144). Cross-border marriage adds another inter-communal dimension to the study of this phenomenon in Malaysia today that shows how the mystical intersects with contemporary developments on migration, social hierarchies, ethnic identity, as well as gendered power relations. But most importantly, the prevalence of love magic is reflective of the depth of the emotional and economic precarities Malay-Thai female

migrants experience in life at the border. Here, realizing their everyday personal aspirations for love, marriage, and economic stability is an endeavor that requires extraordinary means.

Conclusion

This paper's focus on Malaysian-Thai cross-border marriages illustrates how socio-economic, cultural, and political conditions unique to this region present new sets of precarities – and also opportunities – for Malay-Thai female migrants who seek their fate and fortune in Malaysia. As past studies have shown, migration between Thailand and Malaysia is far from a nascent phenomenon. What has changed, however, is the increasing tension with which Malays receive Malay-Thai migrants in recent years, whose presence is, among others, considered by Malays as dangerous and disruptive: they are an economic necessity to the local economy, but also a romantic competition for Malay women, who fear losing their husbands in the hands of a Thai woman who may have ulterior motives for migrating to Malaysia besides employment.

But this insight into the feminization of migration at the Malaysian-Thai border illustrates how life on the other side for Malay-Thai women may not be all that it is promised to be. In their search for *rezeki* and *jodoh*, Malay-Thai migrants discover that the marriage market in Malaysia is a contentious and competitive landscape fraught with uncertainties and discrimination. Suspicious stereotypes of the Other further emphasize the intra-ethnic division between local Malays and their neighbors from Thailand, giving marriage the potential to further alienate rather than incorporate Malay-Thais into wider society. Failed conjugal experiences may even prompt a return migration to Thailand, where despite economic hardship, familial and social networks nevertheless remain intact.

Although much has been expounded in the literature on how migrant wives endure precarious conditions in their host countries, in Kelantan we see that Thai migrant women too can be perceived as a perpetrator of violence through sorcery. This fear is compounded during this pandemic: while visiting Kota Bharu on a brief fieldwork trip in September 2020, some of my Kelantanese interlocutors expressed their relief that most Thai migrants had returned to Thailand before the borders closed, so that they wouldn't be able to bring the Coronavirus into Malaysia (even though during the critical period in the pandemic in mid-2020, Thailand actually had one of the lowest infection rates in all of Southeast Asia).

One *batik* seller I knew in Kota Bharu – a Kelantanese woman in her late 60s, who had divorced also on account of her husband's infidelity – expressed her relief that the border between Malaysia and Thailand would remain closed for some time. She questioned how could "outsiders" (Kel. *oghe luar*) such as Malay-Thai women inspire fear among Malays in their own country, and then exclaimed, "It should be the other way around, as they are the ones who are

coming to our country!" (Kel. *Sepatutnya terbalik, sebab dio ye maghi tempak kito!*). Her frustration shows how the changing gender and power relations catalyzed by Malaysian-Thai cross-border marriages have turned guests into hosts, and hosts into hostages in their own homes.

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Ai Fatimah Nur Fuad *

Female Religious Authority among Tarbiyah Communities in Contemporary Indonesia

Introduction[1]

Religious authority within Islamic contexts is usually understood as *ulama*[2] or religious leaders who have in-depth understanding and expertise in religious learning, especially in law and legal judgment. The traditional recognition of their authority lies, therefore, primarily on their knowledge of Islamic law. They have received religious training in interpreting Islamic law as laid out in the *Qur'an* (Islamic scripture) and *Hadith* (traditions of the Prophet) (Abou El-Fadl 2001a; 2001b; Hallaq 2001; Zaman 2002). Mandaville (2007:307) defined the holders of religious authority as "a class of scholars with privileged access to texts, methods, and traditions of knowledge that create their capacity to speak authoritatively on religious issues." They are trained scholars in key sources of Islamic knowledge such as *Tafsir* (exegesis), *Fiqh* (jurisprudence),

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1. I am grateful to Dr. Kevin Fogg (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill) for providing critical, direct and detailed comments on this manuscript. I would also like to thank the AIFIS and RISTEK BRIN for a very insightful and impactful academic writing workshop in November 2020, and two anonymous reviewers whose comments helped me in revising and developing the content of the article.

2. This Arabic word (*ulama*: plural and *alim:* singular) is widely used by Muslims in the Middle East, Indonesia, and beyond to refer to religious scholars who have an important role in conducting *da'wa* and educating Muslims on Islamic discourses.

Arabic/linguistics and other related Islamic sciences as the foundation of the discourse of Islam. These religious scholars, according to Sonn (2018), have served as "custodians of religious discourse," building on Zaman (2002:143)'s terminology, who refers to the *ulama* as "custodians of change."

In contemporary Indonesia, the understanding and practice of religious authority has shifted. This shift has transformed other aspects of religious discourses and practices. This transformation can be seen from the answer of the core query "who can speak authoritatively about Islam?" Indonesian Muslims used to look to *ulama* or religious figures who have a comprehensive Islamic knowledge. Currently in Indonesia, religious authority can be claimed by everyone: experts and laypeople. It has shifted and opened up primarily by transnational Islamist movements. This shift has indeed changed the nature of religious authority and undermined its traditional forms. Previous works have highlighted this changing nature of authority and the challenges faced by the more established religious authorities, such as the mass organizations Muhammadiyah and Nahdhatul Ulama (NU) (Azra, van Dijk, and Kaptein (eds.) 2010; Abdullah 2017; Arifianto 2019; Akmaliyah 2020; Wahid 2012). The shifting of religious authority is related to the emergence of new transnational Islamist movements that led to competition and contestation between old local Islamic organizations and new transnational movements. Various authors have also extended these works in regard to various Islamic movements or religious groups of individuals that actively construct their authority within their community (Burhani 2020; Sunarwoto 2016; Rijal 2020).

This article approaches the question of authority by focusing on women *liqo* activity in the Tarbiyah movement. *Liqo* (Arabic, meaning "gathering") is a religious gathering activity attended by a small group of trainees and their mentor. The *liqo* has been designed and developed for the purpose of training and teaching the religious knowledge and ideology of the Tarbiyah movement. The Tarbiyah movement (*Gerakan Tarbiyah* or *Jama'ah Tarbiyah*) was founded in 1983 by Hilmy Aminuddin, Salim Segaf al-Jufri, Abdullah Baharmus, and Encep Abdusyukur (sometimes spelled Acep Abdussyukur). It is influenced ideologically by a transnational *da'wa* movement in Egypt called the Muslim Brotherhood or *Ikhwanul Muslimin*. The *liqo* is used by the Tarbiyah movement as a mean to strengthen members' religious authority and to connect the *da'wa* of the Tarbiyah movement with the public goals of the movement's political vehicle, the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS). PKS is an Islamist party that emerged out of the Indonesian democratization process in 1998 and was established by the founders and cadres of the Tarbiyah movement to expand their *da'wa* audience and to achieve their *da'wa* goals through politics. It has consistently won around 7% of the national vote in recent elections and is regarded as the most ideological party in Indonesia (Permata 2013).

This paper seeks to answer the question of how the female members at the lower levels of the organizational hierarchy perceive and practice religious authority in terms of the relationship between the *liqo*, the Tarbiyah movement

and the PKS. This paper unpacks the overall structure, ideology, and hierarchy of the *liqo*, especially as related to female members' religious authority within the Tarbiyah movement. The main objective of this paper is to examine the role of weekly *liqo* trainings of the Tarbiyah movement in shaping female religious authority within the Tarbiyah movement and broader society. I argue that although the highest level of religious authority within the Tarbiyah movement remains dominated by men, nevertheless female members have found an avenue to build and maintain their religious authority through the weekly *liqo* sessions.

This article builds on much research on religious authority in Indonesian Islam (Bruinessen 2013; Chaplin 2015; Machasin, 2010; Meuleman 2011) as well as research on Islam and gender relations in Indonesia and female Islamic authority in different contexts (Blackburn et al. 2008; Robinson 2012; Smith-Hefner 2017; 2013; Smith and Woodward 2016; Kalmbach, 2011; Kloos 2016; Kloos and Künkler 2016; Hefner 2016; Ismah 2016; van-Doorn Harder, 2011). However, none of these works relate to women religious authority in the Indonesian Tarbiyah movement. There are also works on various aspects of the Tarbiyah movement (Afrianty 2019; Arimbi 2017; Asyari and Abid 2016; Miichi, 2020; Rinaldo 2019; Woodward et al. 2013), but they have not specifically analyzed the religious authority among women members of the *liqo*. Thus, gender aspects within the *liqo* of the Tarbiyah movement and a focus particularly on women's religious authority still need further exploration. This article begins with an overview of the origin and nature of the *liqo* of the Tarbiyah movement, how it functioned as the main vehicle of their *da'wa* ideology and religious authority. This is followed by a section highlighting the multiple layers of authority within the *liqo*: structure, ideology and hierarchy.

Using an ethnographic approach, the data were collected through interviews and observations.[3] The initial data is based on my fieldwork conducted in Jakarta in 2012 and updated with additional data in 2016 and 2017. The fieldwork included in-depth interviews with 10 participants consisted of 7 female and 3 male participants from diverse positions of members of the Tarbiyah movement. The 7 females consisted of 1 leader (top level), 4 mentors (middle level) and 2 trainees (lower level). The 3 males were interviewed because of their roles as the leaders of the Tarbiyah movement. They are part of the top *liqo* hierarchy, the ideologues and the decision makers of the movement, and it is important to understand their ideological views and the implementation of those views vis-à-vis female religious authority within the movement. The female mentors and trainees were within an age range of 28-38 years old, and the female leader was 42 years old during the time of major fieldwork. They were all married with children and came from a similar milieu. The majority of them are neo-urban educated professionals who

3. Ethics approval for this research was from the University of Leeds, received in July 2012. All names of interviewees in this article are pseudonyms.

migrated from small villages in Central or East Java. They moved to Jakarta to achieve their higher education or to work as young professionals. This profile of young, working mothers, educated and professional characterizes those who are most interested to actively join the weekly *liqo* training sessions and other activities of the Tarbiyah movement. They want to receive Islamic knowledge because all these female *liqo* mentors and trainees have no Islamic educational background before joining the *liqo*.

These women differed in terms of how long they had been in this *liqo* at the time I interviewed them. Their length in the *liqo* group ranged from 2 years to more than 10 years. Apart from interviews, the data were also collected through participant observation of their *liqo* trainings to understanding the structure, ideology and hierarchy of the *liqo* in relation to the construction of their religious authority. Fifteen observations of their *liqo* sessions took place in Jakarta and Tangerang, two big cities that border each other. During my observations, I saw, listened and wrote on how the *liqo* sessions were managed, designed, and conducted for each session of two to four hours, depending on the agreement among the mentor-trainees in each *liqo* group. I also observed how many lessons and what subjects were delivered by the mentor, how they were received and understood by the trainees, and to what extent these lessons shaped the religious authority among female trainees. Beside these 'formal' observations, many 'informal' observations outside the *liqo* sessions were also conducted daily through following other varieties of *da'wa*-based activities such as during their charity or philanthropy events and their social and health services for their neighbours and their local community. Qualitative analysis of interviews of the female members and observations of their *liqo* sessions then provided data for investigating how religious authority is perceived, understood, and practiced by the female members of this Islamist movement.

The Origin and Nature of *Liqo*

Liqo is the key feature of the *da'wa* of the Tarbiyah movement to develop members' ideology and religious authority. One of the key founders and ideologues of the movement, Hilmy Aminuddin, has explained in the official text published by the movement, 'The *liqo* is the main characteristic of a *tandzim nukhbawi* (cadre organisation)' [i.e., the Tarbiyah movement] (DPP PKS 2007a:7). It is the main religious training of all cadres of the Tarbiyah movement, both male and female. However, the *liqo* groups are designed exclusively for a single gender, with groups for men only and groups for women only.[4] A *liqo* group is composed of a mentor and a limited number of

4. Men and women have separate *liqo*, and the Tarbiyah movement as a whole is non-transparent—even secretive—about total numbers of followers. However, based on years of fieldwork and also popular understanding of the Tarbiyah movement, the number of female followers (and thus, the number of female *liqo*) is understood to be

6-10 permanent trainees. The *liqo* was called *usrah* (Arabic means "family") in the beginning of their emergence because the Tarbiyah movement applies the family system (*nizam al-usrah*), in which one person is chosen to be the leader of the group or head of the family. A male trainee of the *liqo* is called *mutarabbi* and female trainee *mutarabbiyah*, while the male mentor is called a *murabbi* and a female mentor *murabbiyah.* There are three levels of cadre groups in the *liqo*: *Pemula* and *Muda* (beginner), *Madya* (intermediate) and *Dewasa* (advanced) (DPP PKS 2005). These *liqo* levels are related to the progress of each trainee during and after joining the *liqo* and the length of their involvement as *liqo* members. They are connected to each other from the highest to the lowest level of cadres through their mentors.

From the Tarbiyah movement's emergence in 1983 until 1998, the *liqo* sessions were organised by a supreme leader (*muraqib 'am*), holding both religious and organisational authority. This leadership, however, changed after the establishment of the PKS political party in 1998. As a political party, the PKS follows the party's president under the guidance of the *Shura* Council (*Majlis Shura*). In the beginning of the Tarbiyah movement, the *liqo* was conducted in the corners of university mosques or trainees' houses. In the repressive period of the authoritarian regime of the early 1980s, the movement used covert *da'wa* approaches to prevent the movement from being shut down by the regime, which was hostile to political Islam. They hid the structure of the organisation including the trainers or mentors of the *liqo* and coordinators of the Tarbiyah movement. During this early period of the *liqo*, they held that 'the structural organisation [of the movement] is secret and the *da'wa* is open' (*sirriyah al-tanzim wa 'alamiyah al-da'wa)* (DPP-PKS 2003:27). A senior mentor of the Tarbiyah movement explained that this secret nature of the organisation led to a secret process for recruiting new cadres in the past. He said that the recruitment of new members for the weekly *liqo* was only undertaken among people close to existing members, and not openly among the wider society.[5] As a result, at the very beginning of the 1980s this *liqo* had a very limited number of trainees and mentors.

According to leaders of the Tarbiyah movement, there were no well-structured or well-organised materials and methods used in the *liqo* or *da'wa* training during this early phase. The unstructured beginnings of the *liqo* of the Tarbiyah movement meant that the teaching materials at that point were taken from various sources that accommodated many different strands of Islamic thought. Neither were there any standard nor enforced methods for delivering their religious messages, which were largely left to the expertise of each individual mentor. These initial cadres obtained their religious knowledge and

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significantly larger than male followers. Thus, the majority of the Tarbiyah movement is female.

5. Interview with Machmudi (40s, mentor, male) conducted in Jakarta, 18 August 2012.

skills from their interactions with people and books that have links with the *da'wa* ideologies of Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. The *liqo* weekly trainings were later gradually developed by key leaders of the Tarbiyah movement.

A more overt *da'wa* approach started to be practised from the end of the 1980s, when the Suharto regime began to become more accommodating of political Islam. Through the *liqo*, the Tarbiyah movement started to reach wider audiences and to convey its *da'wa* messages by conducting a variety of more formal activities in bigger public spaces, for example, through giving lectures, sermons, running a variety of religious classes, and building publishing companies, educational and social centres. Through these programmes, the Tarbiyah movement attempted to attract new potential audiences to improve their religious knowledge and religiosity through the *liqo*. With the fall of the authoritarian government in 1998 and the subsequent rise of the post-New Order government, the Tarbiyah community took the opportunity to establish an Islamic political party; after some minor transformations in response to political upheaval in the democratic transition, this stabilized into the current PKS in 2003. The Tarbiyah leaders argued that the party would be utilised as their means for spreading their *da'wa* messages.

The Ideology of *Liqo*

The *liqo* is the Tarbiyah movement's most powerful religious activity for disseminating and strengthening the *da'wa* ideology of its cadres. The early 1980s was the period in which the reforming of individual religiosity was emphasised as the Tarbiyah movement's *da'wa* ideology. As written in one of the movement's official books, the development of individual religiosity was the main goal of the Tarbiyah movement in this period.

> After joining the *liqo* or other *da'wa* activities, trainees are expected [by the Tarbiyah movement] to be able to develop their individual religiosity, which includes: 1) having an understanding of the basics of Islam; 2) having good *akhlaq* (morals); 3) having no influence from any idolatry or polytheism (*kemusyrikan*); and 4) having no relationships with enemies of Islam [individuals or institutions] (DPP-PKS 2003:5).

Moreover, the leaders and senior activists of the Tarbiyah that I interviewed emphasised that their goal was to create individuals with certain Tarbiyah-aligned characteristics known as *al-muwashafat al-tarbawiyah* (meaning "characteristics of Tarbiyah cadres") (DPP PKS 2003:5-9). Tarbiyah-based individual religiosity was created and developed through weekly *liqo* training. The training was intentionally directed by the Tarbiyah activists in a way that aims to develop *syakhsiyah Islamiyah* (Islamic personality), which covers beliefs (*akidah*), rituals (*ibadah*) and morals (*akhlaq*) of Muslims. In order to strengthen the formation of individual religiosity, the weekly training during the early phases of the *liqo* primarily discussed the issue of Islamic character. Subjects of *tafsir* (exegesis, interpretation, commentary, especially relating

to the Qur'an), *hadith* (a record of the sayings and doings of the prophet Muhammad and his companions) and *fiqh* (jurisprudence) were taught to Tarbiyah activists with the aim not only of making them better Muslims in their daily lives but also to have more authority to share Islamic knowledge to their society and, in turn, to influence public religious discourses.

The Tarbiyah movement's emphasis on individual religiosity in their *da'wa* movement was driven by their strong belief that to turn inwards towards the self is the best solution for Muslims' problems. This idea of individual religiosity endeavoured to establish a better religious understanding within Muslim individuals and the skills to apply this understanding to their daily lives (DPP PKS 2003: 1-3). One of the important lessons of individual piety preached by the Tarbiyah movement leaders is to encourage all of their members to be individuals who are closely 'connected with mosques' and leading religious activities in mosques in their daily lives. One of the leaders explained that the male Tarbiyah activists' regular attendance of public mosques for leading prayer and delivering sermons is part of the requirement relating to personal character-building that must be fulfilled by all Tarbiyah cadres:

> [If they follow this guidance to come to the mosques frequently], they should be ready and active to offer any help in mosques, for instance for becoming a leader of prayer (*imam*); delivering religious sermons (*khutbah* or *da'wa*); or assisting other religious and social services at the mosques, such as giving alms (*sadaqah*). The Tarbiyah movement's doctrine that we really emphasised to the activists is that they work – just work with feelings of *ikhlas* (sincerity) and *itqan* (being well-structured and professional), as has been taught by Islam.[6]

Ahmad believed that these activities represent the basis for building many other aspects of a pious Muslim man's character and activism. Male members in the movement have many choices to establish their religious authorities as an *imam, ustadz, khotib, muballigh* and *da'i*. They are strongly encouraged for leading religious activities in public places.[7] As Noura explained:

> The Tarbiyah (male) activists entered the mosques and religious institutions and most of them were known as *ustadz* [religious teacher] or *muballigh* [preachers]. *Ustadz* or *muballigh* have trained not only the younger activists in [the *liqo*] groups, but also gave Islamic lectures at various public places overtly, such as campuses, offices, and mosques.[8]

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6. Interview with Ahmad (60, leader, male), conducted twice in Jakarta, 27 August 2012 and 17 October 2012.

7. During the early development of the *liqo* in the 1980s and the early and middle part of the 1990s, this movement had numerous *liqo* figures well known among the *liqo* community. They are widely referred to using the title '*ustadz*', which means teachers of religious knowledge or Islamic subjects. The title '*ustadz*' was not because of a formal education or official appointment, but established through an informal process of recognition developed over years of interactions between the *liqo* and the Tarbiyah community.

8. Interview with Noura (50s, leader, female), conducted in Jakarta, 08 October 2012.

Different spiritual roles beyond the *liqo* are options for men. However, many of these avenues are unavailable for women. Women's leadership roles in religious activities are restricted by the movement's theology to become a *murabbiyah* (mentor) inside the *liqo*. The *liqo* is the only opportunity for them to prove their religious authority. Although women in the Tarbiyah movement can have various opportunities and roles to prove their political leadership in parliament and other public appointments, still their spiritual leadership is manifested only in the *liqo*. From the interviews with both the senior activists and leaders of the Tarbiyah movement, it is shown that although this movement is run and dominated organizationally by women, still the religious authority emanates from men. Muslim women are still left out of positions of spiritual leadership in Islamic institutions or *da'wa* movements in the Muslim world. This article confirms that access to positions of female religious leadership is difficult, though not impossible. It also known from previous literatures on Islamist movements, that gender equality and women's right are often neglected from this movement (Afrianty 2019; Arimbi 2017; el-Husseini 2016; Robinson 2019). Because the *liqo* is the only opportunity in the Tarbiyah movement for building and maintaining religious authority as women, it is important to study the dynamics of this one path toward (albeit limited) leadership.

The ideology of the *liqo* was heavily influenced by the ideology of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. The overall *da'wa* ideology of the Tarbiyah movement that attracted many members' interest in attending the *liqo* was driven by the same motives as the Muslim Brotherhood itself (Mitchell 1993). They worried about the attitudes of their government towards political Islam and the global political tendency that has led to the absence of Islam in the public sphere. They felt the need to improve their religiosity and to Islamise individuals, family, the society, and the state through their involvement in the *liqo*. In general, the *liqo* ideology approaches the question of authority by frequently linking it to the construction of a single or global religious community or movement. For a more specific example, the Tarbiyah movement often focused on trying to link the local movement to the global Islamist movement, and on the tendency to emphasize the global *ummah* (an Arabic word meaning community) over the local.

The Structure and Hierarchy in *Liqo*

Barker's study of new religious movements defines 'authority structure' as an 'organizational structure' that relates to a 'patterned structure of relationship which consist of a charismatic leader at the apex, transmitting information, ideology and command to trusted and limited lieutenants, who in turn pass the information down a hierarchy chain of command to grass-root level' (2005:70). Barker's analysis is also true in the case of the chain of

hierarchy within the *liqo* of the Tarbiyah movement. The structure focuses on systems of community practice, mainly on how the community passes along organizational and ideological information and stays connected. The *liqo* is a multilevel organism, connecting, growing, and constantly building a network from its highest levels to its lowest. The highest levels are composed of those who have the longest experience in attending the *liqo*, and the lowest ones consist of those who have just joined. The mentors play an important role in connecting one level to another through their double position as both mentors of a lower *liqo* group and trainees in a higher group. Given that the majority of the *liqo* trainees belong to two *liqo* groups at the same time – as a mentor of one group and a trainee in another – the *liqo* network will continuously grow, because *liqo* trainees become mentors who share the same belief systems as new recruits. As a result, the transmission of *liqo* ideology from the top leaders of the Tarbiyah movement will be easily passed down to all *liqo* trainees at the grass-root level. In turn, the lowest level produces more *liqo* groups, because each trainee is encouraged by their mentors to invite new trainees as part of their *da'wa* responsibility.

The trainee-mentor relationship is the most important tie in the *liqo* community since it connects *liqo* groups to one another and perpetuates not only the Tarbiyah movement, but also the PKS. The restrictions in the number of members of *liqo* groups aim for establishing a close connection between members of the *liqo* community – a 'familial relationship' that crosses beyond the kinship boundary. A female mentor explained: 'this condition creates a very close relationship between the mentors and their trainees, and among the trainees.'[9] This is why, in the past, the *liqo* was called *usrah* (family). A small family is established through the *liqo* groups, within which a sense of belonging, solidarity, and togetherness is built. My interviews with female trainees revealed that the weekly mentoring group is regarded by them as their 'second family.' This is one of the reasons why trainees stay in one *liqo* group for many years and are often not keen to move to the next *liqo* group level, which provides more advanced Islamic subjects. As one female mentor put it:

> I have been mentoring one group of the *liqo*. Most of the trainees do not want to move to other groups, although I asked them to do so. They already feel comfortable with this group, so they rejected [placement] to other groups. I advised them to move to other *liqo* levels, considering that different female mentor will have different expertise, so that moving into other groups will be good for enriching their insight on Islam.[10]

9. Interview with Rahima (30s, mentor, female), conducted in Jakarta, 4 September 2012.

10. Interview with Athya (40s, mentor, female), conducted in Tangerang Banten, 22 October 2012.

The mentors play the role of 'heads of families', being perceived as the teachers, educators, parents and role models for the trainees of each group. As my female interviewees (Rania, Rifa, Rahima, and Tania) argued and attested to, when *liqo* members get married, their mentors even play a significant role in the marriage process (Asyari and Abid 2016). According to Nancy Smith-Hefner (2019), this practice is a form of Islamisation of intimacies, romances, and marriages among young Muslims. She explains that there are shifted perceptions and practices of young Muslims' marriages, and this is one of the biggest transformations experienced by Indonesian Muslims. She points out that the traditions and practices among Javanese culture are regarded by Muslim youth as incompatible with the authentic Islamic norms. Thus, they want to be more active in practicing their 'pure and pristine' Islam as they believe. The Islamists generally hold the notion of active *da'wa* in responding to the dynamics of modern daily lives (Fuad 2019). During an interview, a young female mentor told me about her female mentor (*murabbiyah)* when she was an ordinary trainee:

> Personally, I felt respect to my *murabbiyah*, due to her position as my teacher. Of course, I felt that the figure of *murabbiyah* is different to that of ordinary trainees. She is a role model for me. I preferred to consult and ask advice from my *murabbiyah* rather than from other *liqo* trainees or my [birth] family.[11]

Her statement also supports the idea that religious authority among the female *liqo* community is mainly invested at the local level amongst the trainees – that is, with the mentor rather than the organisation *per se*.

The *liqo* group I participated in clearly acted as one 'family', sharing their own life experiences and problems. Furthermore, they also asked and told each other about difficulties and problems concerning their families and daily activities. During my participation in the *liqo*, one of the trainees told the group about her child's sicknesses and overactive behaviour, and the other trainees then shared their personal experiences of dealing with such problems.[12] In another case, one of the *liqo* trainees became severely ill and required hospitalisation.[13] In the following *liqo* meeting, the trainees and the mentor all discussed how to help her. We then agreed to visit her in her house after she was back from the hospital and to give her a donation that we gathered between us. Such relationships facilitate the development of close and firm bonds among trainees, between the trainees and the mentor, and between the trainees, the mentor, and the movement. For these trainees, who are mostly migrants and live away from their close families, the *liqo* provides many benefits, especially in terms of therapy, support, and local community.

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11. Interview with Rifa (30s, mentor, female), conducted in Jakarta, 5 September 2012.

12. Interview with Mona (30s, trainee, female), conducted in Tangerang Banten, 16 December 2012.

13. Interview with Saida (30s, trainee, female), conducted in Jakarta, 03 October 2012.

Through their roles as teachers, parents, and role models, every mentor attempts to encourage their *liqo* trainees to be more committed to Islamic teachings, both during and outside the *liqo* sessions. They motivate the trainees to conduct prayers (both obligatory and recommended optional prayers). The mentors also give the trainees tasks, such as reciting more than ten verses of the Qur'an every day. Moreover, as heads of the 'families', the *murabbiyah* arrange other activities outside of *liqo* time. One *murabbiyah* commented:

> We (*murabbiyah*) must think how to make the trainees of our group not to feel bored. We offer to arrange activities [for them] that can make them fresh. Therefore, the programme of gathering, eating together, and travelling were sometimes conducted. These are some of the cultural as well as personal approaches that are important to be done.[14]

When selecting a trainee to become a female mentor (*murabbiyah*), the mentor of a group will consider the capacity of the trainees in her group, and their familiarity with the *liqo* belief system. The *murabbiyah* thus emerge from the bottom of the *liqo* group – they are ordinary but experienced trainees, appointed by their own mentors. A commitment to behaving in an Islamic way and significant experience in the *liqo* are two of the main requirements to be selected as a *murabbiyah*. These requirements were explicitly mentioned by a few respondents, and most *murabbiyah* have been involved in the *liqo* longer than regular trainees (*mutarabbiyah*). There is an assumption among the *liqo* community that the longer they participate in the *liqo*, the more they will come to know about Islam. Consequently, those who have been in the *liqo* for a long period will be likely to be appointed as new *murabbiyah*.

The *Liqo* and Religious Authority

Max Weber in his *Economy and Society* (1968) explained three forms of legitimacy, namely, tradition, charisma, and legal-rational norms of authority. Traditional authority is founded on customary ideas, structures, and practices, while charismatic authority relies on personal magnetism, and legal-rational depends on institutionalized rules and practices (for more on these forms in connection with female religious authority in Islam, cf. Kalmbach, 2011). This concept, however, does not precisely or accurately represent the emerging new forms of authority within the Islamist movement. The *liqo* community is not traditional and makes no claim to traditional legitimacy. This community is also not charismatic because it cannot be legitimized by a single person. The forms of authority within this community are also not (fully) legal-rational. Although the religious teachings within the *liqo* are the product of the hierarchical organization that spread and disseminate through a linear chain

14. Interview with Athya (40s, mentor, female), conducted in Tangerang Banten, 22 October 2012.

of *liqo*, still the highest to the lowest levels of the hierarchy are not experts on religious judgment and knowledge.

The *liqo* population is mainly comprised of individuals with non-Islamic educational backgrounds (*non-shar'i*). Members of the Tarbiyah movement are mostly the products of secular institutions of higher education. They are well-educated neo-urban members of Indonesian society and thus most mentors are university graduates. However, only a few of these mentors have been educated in Islamic studies.[15] Based on my reflections on what I saw during my fieldwork, a formal educational background in Islamic studies is not regarded as a key requirement for being appointed as a mentor. Instead, those who have more Islamic knowledge and have a strong sense of and connection to the ideology of the movement will be more likely to be seen as potential mentors.

This indicates that knowing the principles of Islam and *da'wa* ideology of the Tarbiyah movement as taught in the *liqo* is one of the important requirements for becoming a *murabbiyah*, as one of the female mentors explained:

> I believe that when someone is selected to be a *murabbiyah*, she must be competent and capable in that position. It is not possible that she will be selected as a *murabbiyah* if she does not know much about Islamic subjects. As far as I am aware, there are certain criteria required, such as those who are competent and capable in terms of their knowledge in Islamic subjects. It is possible for anyone to be a *murabbiyah*, regardless of their educational background. A *murabbiyah* is an obligatory responsibility in a group of *liqo*. I mean that everyone has the same chance and task to be a *murabbiyah*. However, they are required to meet certain criteria.[16]

Within the *liqo*, anyone with any educational background can build and prove their religious authority through their role as *liqo* mentor. The mentors also always encouraged their trainees to speak up about Islamic knowledge they got from the *liqo* weekly sessions and to share it to their closest community and to give *fatawa* (plural and *fatwa* singular, meaning legal opinions, religious guidance or instructions), even without sufficient Islamic qualifications.[17] *Fatawa* in the contexts of female *liqo* members are limited to providing religious advice and explaining religious practices

15. Previous researchers (see Abdullah, 2020, Arifianto, 2019) highlighted that this Islamist movement is part of the new authority emerging in Indonesian Islam. The 'old' authority is challenged by this new authority. This *liqo* community is replacing religious authority of previous *ulama* and traditional Islamic authorities who trained in Islamic discourses through serious, long and in-depth training.

16. Interview with Rahima (30s, mentor, female), conducted in Jakarta, 4 September 2012.

17. Kalmbach (2011: 4) highlights that this phenomenon reflects 'the proliferation of religious knowledge and actors.' She reinforces that this is a new trend in Islamic thought and practice. She argues that there are changes in Islamic authority including in legitimacy, knowledge, and performance.

by giving examples or drawing analogies from the *sirah* (stories about the Prophet Muhammad and his companions) or simple examples from Islamic jurisprudence relating to their everyday lives and situations.

As part of their *da'wa* missions and orientations, they were actively involved in responding to public religious issues within their society, especially their closest family, friends, neighbours and colleagues. According to van Doorn-Harder (2011: 414), these '*shari'ah*-minded female activists eagerly want to transmit their religious knowledge to influence public debates.'[18] These female *liqo* activists will share their religious opinion based on their *liqo* teachings and ideologies through their informal activities.

Thus, religious authority and recognition from their 'inner circle' grow gradually through this personal relationships and informal activities. This 'inner circle' is regarded by Machasin (2010) as part of the closest individuals in their own community who are very loyal to them. Thus, they maintain their religious authority first and foremost among their local community. In most cases, the religious advice is provided orally and in a direct way of communication with *liqo* trainees and their close associates who are seeking advice. In contrast with the informal mechanisms of the *liqo*, *fatawa* in traditional Islamic discourses constitute formally issued recommendations on Islamic law based on Islamic legal sources, responding to Muslims' questions on various practices of Islamic law within their daily life. Thus, the primary qualification of granting *fatawa* has traditionally been an ability to interpret Islamic law, often premised on a formal Islamic education (Abou El-Fadl 2001a; 2001b; Hallaq 2001).

For these mentors, to be a *murabbiyah* gives them the opportunity to deepen and strengthen their knowledge of Islam. The higher the level in the *liqo*, the more advanced the subjects will be, and every time a topic is delivered in the weekly activity, the mentor must prepare it. As a result, they might learn additional information that was not imparted to them previously by their own mentors. Furthermore, by delivering the topic, they strengthen their understanding of the subject:

> When my position was as a trainee, I enjoyed receiving as many lessons as possible. It is not the case when my role is a mentor like now. I have to obtain the Islamic subjects by reading as much as I can from many sources. This role supports me to get a deeper and wider understanding on Islam.[19]

18. Nelly van Doorn-Harder (2011) classified the Indonesian female activists into two namely pro-*shari'ah* agenda and anti-*shari'ah* agenda because they have different responses on a particular religious topic such as on the issue of polygamy.

19. Interview with Aliyah (40s, mentor, female), conducted in Jakarta, 23 September 2012.

This 'cell' model of the *liqo*, and the *mutarabbiyah-murabbiyah* relationship it involves, are effective in spreading the *da'wa* ideology and authority among the female *liqo* community because they connect the groups to each other. Because the *liqo* is multi-layered, when members are appointed as mentors this does not mean that they cannot continue their learning within the *liqo*. Rather, they move to a *liqo* group with other mentors who are at the same level in terms of their participation and experience within the *liqo* and are then taught by a more senior mentor. The same pattern also runs among senior mentors at the next level, and this pattern continues until the highest *liqo* level is reached. Each *liqo* member learns about the *liqo* belief system through a more informed and experienced mentor, and the Tarbiyah network continues to grow. A common ideological orientation and its practice thus connect all *liqo* individuals and has led to a high level of unity in the *liqo* community. However, it has also produced segmentation among the internal community. The differences in personal views and religious interpretations, together with the *liqo*'s development strategies sometimes cause divisions within the movement.

Lower Level Female Authority in a Male Dominated Movement

To understand the *liqo* at the lower level, we need to understand the broader Tarbiyah movement that is currently dominated by the PKS. Research conducted by Permata (2013) explains the internal dynamics of the Tarbiyah community and the PKS, which are caused by the different nature of the two institutions. He contends that the Tarbiyah movement is a secretive religious movement, managed informally under a supreme leader. The PKS, however, is a political party, managed under a party president who follows the formal political regulations and dynamics of the Indonesian system. Given that there are multiple levels within the *liqo*'s hierarchy, there are also multiple levels of religious authority within the *liqo* community, and a chain of ideological authority for *liqo* trainees. The *liqo* hierarchy centered on the roles of top leaders or key figures of the movement in relation to their positions as the ideologues of the Tarbiyah movement/the PKS and interpreters of religious knowledge and practice within their *da'wa* ideological framework.

Apart from the cadre's division of the Party Central Board (Dewan Pusat Partai, DPP), the *Shari'ah* Council (Dewan Shari'ah Partai, DSP) plays a significant role in giving religious advice to both *liqo* and PKS cadres. The DSP provides useful considerations for the political policies of the party through interpreting how to apply Islam to various issues. The DSP's role is not just to provide a religious reference point for the *liqo* community and the wider society, but also to maintain the religiosity of all *liqo* and PKS cadres, from the elite to the grassroots members. One of the PKS leaders emphasized this point as follows:

> The major role of DSP-PKS is to put *shari'ah* as the foundation of the party. The DSP has a responsibility to control and to maintain the obedience and compliance to *shari'ah* for both the party and its individuals. The individuals include elites and cadres from the highest to the lowest level of the party's membership. All leaders and activists [of the *liqo*] are required to have commitment to use *shari'ah* as the way of guiding their lives. For the party, the DSP needs to give guidance so that all policies or strategies do not deviate from the principles of *shari'ah*.[20]

The fact that the DSP requires the full obedience of all the different structures of the party, including the *liqo* cadres, suggests that the PKS/Tarbiyah movement is an 'authoritarian' religious movement (see Abou El Fadl 2001a). The DSP is the central body of the *da'wa* party that is responsible for its *shari'ah* compliance and it frequently gives *shari'ah* rulings under various names, such as *fatawa* (legal opinion; religious guidance and instruction), *bayanat* (explanation), *tadzkirah* (reminder), *qadla* (decision), *taushiyah* (religious advice) and *ittijah fiqh* (jurisprudential guidance). These *shari'ah* or religious recommendations or religious rulings are issued to respond to the discourses or phenomena that occur within the Tarbiyah movement or the party.

In order to make appropriate legal opinions and decisions, 'the key figures of DSP should be experts on *shari'ah* who have graduated from a faculty of *Shari'ah* of any Islamic institution following postgraduate studies.'[21] For example, Ahmad (60s) was among the traditionally trained religious authorities because he had received the religious training in the Faculty of Islamic Law during his Bachelor, Master and Doctoral degrees at the premier Islamic institution of the University of Al-Azhar in Cairo, Egypt. Other members of the DSP are also graduates in *shari'ah* from Middle Eastern universities. However, as a female national leader admitted, the Tarbiyah movement/PKS has a very limited number of female members with a background in *shari'ah* (*shar'i* activists). This is in line with the typical background of the *liqo* community, who are mostly 'lay' people rather than Islamically educated members or leaders. A senior *shar'i* activist of the PKS who graduated from Al-Azhar University confirmed this:

> The most dominant activists of the *liqo* are non-*shar'i* background. There are some members with a *shar'i* background from Medina or Al-Azhar University. However, it is very rare to find activists from the universities in Medina or Egypt. The most dominant and very active in mentoring new trainees are those who graduated from LIPIA (Islamic and Arabic College of Indonesia).[22] When Medina or Egypt graduates return to Indonesia, it is very difficult for them to be

20. Interview with Ahmad (60s, leader, male), conducted in Jakarta, 27 August 2012.

21. Interview with Noura (50s, leader, female), conducted in Jakarta, 18 October 2012.

22. LIPIA is a Saudi Arabia educational institution based in Jakarta, established in 1980. It is founded and coordinated by the Islamic University of Imam Muhammad bin Saud in Riyadh.

> 're-educated' through the *liqo/halaqah* system and to join this *da'wa* community, as they may feel their superiority over others in terms of religious knowledge.[23]

The *shari'ah* rulings issued by the DSP thus provide guidance on how to live for all the *liqo* and PKS cadres. The DSP also fully supports and strengthens the *Majlis Shura* (Consultative Council) as the highest organisational structure in the PKS hierarchy. Although the *Majlis Shura* is above the DSP in the chain of command, and thus the latter has the responsibility of reporting its religious activities and decisions to the *Majlis Shura*, the DSP is regarded as the key 'think tank' of the *Majlis Shura*.[24] The purpose of the DSP's involvement in the *Majlis Shura* is to maintain and fit together all the political and *da'wa* policies and ideologies with the *shari'ah* system.[25] The *Majlis Shura* is the highest religious authority within the *liqo* community, including the female *liqo* community, as it is the highest religious and political entity in the PKS hierarchy. It has the power to control both the leadership and the ideology of the PKS, and is responsible for constructing ideological (theological) views. The *Majlis Shura* frequently issues rulings or advice related to the position of the party on the national stage, in terms of the party's theological and political views.

Despite the existence of such an extensive and authoritative hierarchy of experts at the top of the movement, the religious authority that is most frequently referred to by female *liqo* trainees is that of their *liqo* mentor. These *murabbiyah* also have their religious references in their *liqo* groups (the mentors of these mentors), and the same pattern of authority works its way up to the highest level of authority in the hierarchy. Given that a female mentor (*murabbiyah*) at one level is subordinate to mentors at the next level up, they should ask their *murabbiyah* if they do not understand issues concerning Islamic ritual *('Ibadah*) or Islamic jurisprudence (*Fiqh*). Thus, each *murabbiyah*'s interpretation of Islam is expected to have an ideological coherence with higher-level *murabbiyah*.

In order to make higher level *murabbi*'s interpretations of Islam available, and thus enable this ideological coherence, the ideas of senior *murabbi* or key figures in the *liqo-Tarbiyah* such as Hilmy Aminuddin, Tiffatul Sembiring, and Anis Matta are disseminated and published on their official WhatsApp groups, websites, and in their books and pamphlets.[26] The overall leadership of the

23. Interview with Arif (40s, leader, male), conducted in Tambun Bekasi, 18 October 2012.

24. Constitution and Bylaws of the PKS (Anggaran Dasar/Anggaran Rumah Tangga), MPP- PKS, 2008b.

25. Interview with Ahmad (60s, leader, male), conducted in Jakarta, 27 August 2012.

26. Books on the ideas of the top figures of the *liqo/*PKS community such as Anis Matta and others were published in 2007 by DPP PKS (see References). Although religious knowledge and advice are also disseminated through official website and WhatsApp groups and published though books and pamphlets, the *liqo* remains the primary way and most effective activity to pass down the leaders' ideas layer by layer

liqo movement is, therefore, centralised by 'unity' on religious doctrines and practices. However, disagreements on particular issues regarding doctrines, practices, or the tactics to be used to achieve *liqo* goals can also be identified within the female *liqo* community at any level of the hierarchy. For instance, different *liqo* take various approaches to mobilizing cadres for political campaigns, even while following the general guidelines of the movement.

Conclusion

This article extends our understanding of female Islamic authority in contemporary Asia. It provides an investigation of female Islamic authority within the *liqo* of an Indonesian Islamist movement, called the Tarbiyah movement. The women members are encouraged by the Tarbiyah movement to develop their Islamic knowledge, religiosity and religious authority through joining the weekly *liqo* trainings. However, more public manifestations of authority such as leading prayer, preaching and providing religious counseling, are exclusive to male members of the Tarbiyah movement. Even though it remains difficult for women to enter and influence the internal religious spheres that are fully controlled by men, their weekly *liqo* sessions and other *da'wa* activities are arranged and conducted by women. The only religious authority that these female members have comes from the structure of the Tarbiyah movement and the PKS (bureaucratic authority) through becoming a mentor (*murabbiyah*) in the *liqo*. Although the women in the *liqo* lack traditional educational credentials, as they are mostly graduates from non-Islamic educational backgrounds, they still actively maintain religious authority through their position as mentor (*murabbiyah*) of the *liqo* trainings. This practice suggests that the *liqo* of the Tarbiyah movement in Indonesia has shifted the religious authority as traditionally understood in Islamic history.

The *liqo* is the only powerful means for transferring the *da'wa* ideologies from the highest to the lowest level of *liqo* memberships. Remembering that the majority of the Tarbiyah movement is female, the primary way for members to get information from their top leaders is through the female mentors going down from level to level through the weekly *liqo*. Just as there are multiple levels within the *liqo*'s hierarchy, there are also multiple levels of religious authority within the *liqo* community, and a chain of ideological authority for *liqo* trainees. However, I argue that although its leadership and authority exist on multiple levels, in which the *Shura* Council (*Majlis Shura*) of the PKS is the highest authority, the female mentors (*murabbiyah*) are regarded as the main reference point for the female *liqo* trainees (*mutarabbiyah*), especially at the *liqo*'s lower levels. Religious decisions made by *Shura* Council (*Majlis Shura*) reach the members at a lower level and pass down layer by layer

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to all *liqo* members until the lowest level of the movement.

through the *liqo*. As a result, religious authority among the female members of the *liqo* of the Tarbiyah movement is reinforced because the female mentors are the ones bringing the decisions of the *Shura* Council (*Majlis Shura*) to the masses of the movement.

Although this research has shown how women in a conservative Islamic movement in Indonesia can accumulate religious authority, many questions remain about the broader position of women vis-à-vis Islamic authority in Indonesia. More research is needed to connect this finding to the ways women achieve other forms of authority (including, for example, prominent political positions) in conservative movements. We also need more research to compare and contrast female authority in this conservative movement with women in non-conservative movements in Indonesia, where the lack of the *liqo* structure means that this avenue is not available to female Muslims to build up authority. Finally, this case study in Indonesia should be compared with women in conservative movements in other parts of the world and their relationships to authority.

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Linda S. McIntosh and Yulianti A. Peni ***

Alorese Textiles, specifically *Tenapi*, and their Production of Ternate Island, Alor Regency, NTT, Indonesia

Research and publications on the material culture of the Alorese of Alor Regency, NTT, Indonesia, is scarce, and a study of their textile production is absent from the field of Indonesian textiles. Ernst Vatter (1932: 241-244) described some weaving of the Alor Archipelago in his publication describing the cultures of this region but gave little detail, especially concerning the warp ikat textiles produced in the islands of present-day Alor Regency. Cora DuBois (1944) studied the Abui culture of Central Alor and remarked that this group made bark cloth since a "prohibition" against weaving in the hinterland existed and affluent Abui acquired woven materials from various textile-producing coastal settlements of the archipelago. Khan Majis (1991: 213) wrote in an exhibition catalogue that "textiles from the islands of Pantar Alor were virtually unknown until now." Roy W. Hamilton (2010: 304) remarked on the "almost total absence" of textiles from the island of Alor in publications about Indonesian textiles and suggested that handwoven fabrics originated from other islands or were produced by people who came from afar if made in the archipelago. Books devoted to Indonesian and Southeast Asian weavings briefly mention the textiles from the Alor Archipelago. For example, Michael C. Howard (2010: 63) devoted two paragraphs to some examples produced in the Alor Archipelago in his survey of ikat-decorated cloth of Southeast Asia. Howard (2008: 45) also remarked about the lack of documentation on the textiles from this area in his survey of warp float-decorated textiles.

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◀ Fig. 1

◀ Fig. 2

Figs. 1-2 – Localization and maps of Ternate Island (Alor Regency, Nusa Tenggara Timur Province, Indonesia) and Uma Pura Hamlet (Ternate Selatan or South Ternate village, Alor Barat Laut or Northwest Alor district).(Google Earth, https://earth.google.com/web/)

Fig. 3 – Arriving in Uma Pura Village, Ternate Island, by boat from Alor Island (Photography: Linda S. McIntosh).

Emilie Wellfelt (2014) explored the use of milkweed fibre as a thread by the Alorese and the trade relations between the Alorese villagers of Uma Pura

Hamlet in Desa (village) Ternate Selatan on Ternate Island (a small island between Pantar island and Alor island) and other ethnic groups in the Solor and Alor archipelagos. Two publications highlighting a private collection of Indonesian ikat textiles feature some Alorese examples. The first was an exhibit catalogue that featured two tubular garments to illustrate Alor Regency's warp ikat traditions (ten Hoopen 2014: 33-34). The number of textiles representing this regency increased to three in the second book on the Pusaka Collection (ten Hoopen 2018: 381-384). The information about these published textiles was not acquired during field research but via third parties. Recently, We (2020) published an article on the characteristics of ceremonial garments of Uma Pura, Alor Regency. We also produced an e-book, *Textiles of Alor*, as an introduction to the different textile traditions of the regency, including Alorese textiles, and a website, www.alortextiles.org, since the central government funding to print the book was used instead as emergency assistance during the 2020 pandemic (McIntosh and Peni 2020). Another website, asiantextilestudies.com, authored by David and Sue Richardson who are textile tour guides and textile collectors describes Alorese textiles of Buaya island and natural dyeing of Ternate island of Alor Regency.

Research concerning the people from Alor Regency, including the Alorese, has focused on history, linguistics, and kinship or other alliances. Recent studies on the languages of the Alor Archipelago, such as the Reconstructing the Past through Languages of the Present: The Lesser Sunda Islands Project (2014-2019) of Leiden University led by linguist Marian Klamer, have provided a clearer understanding of the Alorese, or the sole Austronesian language to have evolved in this group of islands and its relation to the Lamaholot languages and non-Austronesian Alor-Pantar languages (Kaiping, Edwards, and Klamer 2019). Both Alorese and Lamaholot belong to the same sub-branch in the Austronesian ethnolinguistic family, but they are distinct languages with 50-60 per cent mutual intelligibility (Klamer, 2011: 24). Alorese is the sole indigenous Austronesian language spoken in the Alor Archipelago. The remaining two dozen languages and dialects belong to the Alor-Pantar branch of the Trans-New Guinea ethnolinguistic family (Klamer 2012: 74-75).

This article explores *tenapi*, a ceremonial tubular garment used to differentiate members of one patrilineal clan from another and textile production, including natural dyeing, of the Alorese people of Uma Pura, Desa (Village) Ternate Selatan, Kecamatan (District) Alor Barat Laut, Kabupaten (Regency) Alor, Nusa Tenggara Timur, Indonesia (fig. 1-2). It also addresses changes in contemporary production due to external factors such as various government programs seeking to promote handweaving. A decline in the number of weavers that can produce such garments has occurred since many women have focused their efforts on creating other types of textiles that meet the demands of an expanded and diverse market. The changes will be discussed later in the article.

Alorese *tenapi* or tubular skirts resemble garments produced by other cultures found in eastern Indonesia, including those made by Lamaholot weavers in the neighbouring island of Lembata. Similarities include cotton as the primary material and warp ikat resist dye technique as the main decorative technique. Contact due to proximity, trade, and intermarriage occurred between these communities, and exposure to the textiles of the two related cultures likely occurred. Cloth serving as bridewealth in Lamalera, Lembata Regency, consists of three panels with the midsection decorated with patterning inspired by Indian *patola* are similar to the *tenapi* representing the ruling lineage of Uma Pura (Barnes 1989: 51, 60). However, the precise design formats of these tubular garments of the two cultures differ, and the symbolism of the motifs diverge. Also, no prohibition in Uma Pura exists against the use of synthetic dyed thread purchased in the market for ceremonial garments in contrast with Lamaholot communities of Lamalera, Lembata Regency (Barnes 1989: 46-47).

Indigo, morinda, turmeric, and sappan wood are some of the dyes used by the Alorese and other ethnic groups in Indonesia. Alorese weavers of Uma Pura also apply marine life ingredients to colour threads, a distinct characteristic of their textile production. The Alorese have developed distinctive markers of ethnic affiliation and patrilineal clan membership by using a combination of plant and marine life dyes, motifs, different-coloured stripes, and design formats consisting of various-sized warp ikat rows to differentiate their textiles from other cultural groups in the Alor Archipelago and other regions of Indonesia. Cloth woven by non-Austronesian Alor-Pantar groups of the Alor Archipelago is not decorated with warp ikat but with different techniques such as complementary and supplementary warp and slit-tapestry (McIntosh and Peni 2020).

Alorese textiles and the steps involved in their production are significant and worthy of preservation before the information is lost as textile production changes to meet non-traditional consumer demand. The quality of the warp ikat patterning and design format and the colours of Alorese textiles are modified as new markets such as Indonesian fashion designers in Jakarta, domestic and international tourists, and students and government officials of the regency demand different colour schemes and rapid output. The colours and design format of ceremonial attire worn to represent membership in a specific clan have not altered. However, the future of these adat or ritual garments is under threat since the diversification and commercialisation of textile production results in less time available to focus on weaving *tenapi* for ritual use. Documenting the textiles of Uma Pura will also hopefully contribute to a better understanding of Indonesian textiles and material culture. The field research occurred from 2018 until 2021 for a cumulative total of four months. It consisted of non-formal interviews, non-participant observation including witnessing different steps of the dyeing and weaving processes and festivals, the examination of textiles, and virtual meetings. Co-author Peni is in regular contact with the weavers of Uma Pura in her capacity as a curator of the

Museum 1000 Moko of Kalabahi, the capital of Alor Regency, from 2014 until the present, and documentation by both authors is ongoing.

Background

Alorese (or Alurung) comprise the population of Uma Pura, Desa Ternate Selatan, Northwest Alor District of Alor Regency. Members of this group also live in the coastal areas of Buaya, Pantar and Alor islands. Fricke and Klamer (2018) conclude that the ancestors of the Alorese people migrated west from Lembata to Adonara and Solor, or islands composing the Solor Archipelago, before moving east and settling in the coastal areas of West and North Pantar and Northwest Alor islands by the beginning of the fourteenth century. The people of Uma Pura Village on Ternate island state their ancestors originated from neighbouring Pura Island. McIntosh and Peni summarise Uma Pura's origin story described by Wellfelt (2007: 39) as follows:

> A war between two villages on Pura led to the razing of their homes. The Bungabali ruler offered them refuge, and they resettled in Northwest Alor and, later, in present-day Sebanjar Village on the coast. They established Uma Pura or "House of Pura" when they moved from Sebanjar to present-day Ternate that the settlers called the Nuha Being or "Big Island."

Uma Pura is on the northeast coast of Pulau Ternate or Ternate island located in the Pantar Strait off the southwest coast of the Bird's Head Peninsula of Alor Island (fig. 3). Uma Pura is the sole Alorese settlement on the island, and the island's other communities speak a non-Austronesian language called Reta from the Alor-Pantar branch of the Trans-New Guinea ethnolinguistic family. Uma Pura is part of Desa Ternate Selatan, and the population of Ternate Selatan in 2019 was 861 (Central Bureau of Statistics of Alor Regency 2020:15).

Uma Pura society organises into the patrilineal clans or *suku*. *Suku* clans are also referred to as *uma* or "houses." Members of a *uma* or *suku* identify with the same founding father of a patrilineage. Wellfelt (2007: 19-20) stresses that membership in one of these lineages or houses is essential to individual and group social identity. Some of Uma Pura's population moved to nearby Buaya island in the 1930s because of a disagreement regarding which sect of Islam to follow (Gomang 1993: 114). The eight patrilineal lineages of Uma Pura and Buaya are: Suku Uma Kakang; Suku Uma Tukang; Suku Uma Aring; Suku Uma Wilawalu Atas; Suku Uma Wilawalu Bawah; Suku Uma Denwahi; Suku Uma Folang Klelang; and Suku Uma Biatabang.

Affiliation in one of these patrilineal clans is reflected in the design format, the combination of different-coloured stripes, and motifs of specific types of tubular skirts or *tenapi* that women of Uma Pura continue to weave. *Kafate* is the word used for a tubular garment in general, and *tenap*i refers to specific types of skirts, according to the weaver informants, and Wellfelt (2014: 4) recorded that these terms are interchangeable but uses *tenapi* when naming a specific type of

tubular garment. *Kafate* is similar to *kewatek*, or the name for a tubular garment in some Lamaholot dialects. Ruth Barnes (2004) recorded the terms for this garment as *kafatek* or *kefatek* in Lamalera, South Lembata, as *kafatek* or *kefatek* and *kewatek* in Lerek, Southeast Lembata. The consonant "w" in the Western Alorese dialect spoken by the Alorese residing in West Pantar is replaced by "f" in the Eastern Alorese dialect spoken in Northwest Alor District, including Uma Pura. Some Alorese vocabulary ends with an open syllable or vowel, and thus, *kafatek* becomes *kafate* or *kefate* in East Alorese dialect and *kewate* in West Alorese dialect (Fricke and Klamer 2018: 6; Klamer 2011: 25-32). Most Uma Pura villagers continue to wear *tenapi* (or *kafate*) symbolising their membership in one of the eight patrilineal lineages for important ceremonies. These garments also serve as shrouds or covers of the deceased.

Textile Production

Women from all Uma Pura's patrilineal clans are responsible for all the steps of textile production and dyeing. Weaver informants describe that they previously cultivated cotton and some natural dyestuffs, including morinda and indigo, but the shortage of fresh water and arable land on Ternate Island of Alor Regency made it challenging to grow sufficient quantities. The lack of arable land for farming also led women of Uma Pura to specialise in weaving for trade. The cultivation of cotton and some natural dyestuffs primarily occurs near the hamlet of Sebanjar, Northwest District, Alor Island. The weavers state that indigo also grew wild on Ternate in the past, and other dyestuffs, such as milkweed and some types of trees, continue to grow freely in Ternate and Alor. They also acquire dyestuff ingredients from other islands via trade. Sappan wood is available from Southwest Alor and Pantar, while alum-rich symplocos leaves come from Pantar Island. The islands of Lembata, Flores and Timor were the source of additional cotton (Gomang 1993: 107). Some weavers described growing cotton as sufficient for just one garment in a year in the past, but the annual supply of cotton was often not enough for a single garment leading to buying cotton from other communities in Alor or other islands. Weavers or sailors exchanged earthenware pots from Northwest Alor for the raw material, and the price of a vessel was equal to the amount of unspun cotton that could fill it (Barnes 1989: 253).

Weavers also spin the floss of the milkweed pod (*Calotropis gigantea*) to create a silk-like yarn when spun with cotton. As stated previously, the process rarely occurs today since the process is difficult and less handspun is produced in the area (Wellfelt 2014: 8-9) (fig. 4). A variety of synthetic, silk-like yarns is available in the local market, and weavers prefer to use these threads rather than spinning cotton or milkweed floss with cotton presently.

The cultivation of cotton, hand spinning, and natural dyeing continue in Uma Pura. The creation of handspun cotton thread in Uma Pura resembles the process carried out in other parts of Indonesia. Women clean the raw material

before ginning the seeds from the bolls. Then, they beat or card the ginned cotton to remove dust and even out the cotton fibres. The next step is to roll the carded cotton into rolags. Weavers stated they use both the spinning wheel and drop spindle for producing thread. The authors observed weavers spinning on a wheel but did not see a drop spindle in use for cotton (fig. 5), but women rely on the drop spindle to combine milkweed fibre and raw cotton into a yarn (see fig. 4). One oral story describes a spinning wheel as one of the gifts the imams or teachers of Islam brought to the Alor Archipelago, and some interpret the spinning wheel as the introduction of the knowledge of weaving to the region and as one of the "civilising" effects of the religion (Rodemeier 2010: 33).

Textile production occurs on a backstrap or body-tension looms using a circular warp, which is widespread in eastern Indonesia (fig. 6). Warp ikat or resist dye is the primary decorative technique, another trait that Alorese textiles share with weavings produced in other areas of this region (fig. 7). Uma Pura weavers also utilise complementary warp, a technique preferred by members of different ethnic groups living along the south and east coasts of Alor Island, to decorate textiles to sell in the local markets (McIntosh and Peni, 2020). Alorese women supplied their non-weaving neighbours with cloth in the past and continue this activity in the twenty-first century.

Mama Sahari Kamarin of the Pante Laut Weaver's Cooperative recounted a story about the symbolism of spinning cotton in the Indonesian language on May 22, 2018, and October 24, 2019, in Uma Pura: The act of spinning cotton on a spinning wheel re-enacts pro-creation and the establishment of Uma Pura's eight clans. The two posts holding the wheel are the founding father and mother of Uma Pura (these posts are compared to house pillars). The act of winding a spinning wheel's handle and the movement of the driver band or thread around the wheel, *tenu'e tale*, to the *pisi* or flyer whorl symbolizes reproduction. As a weaver turns the wheel to spin raw cotton into thread, the ball of cotton thread winding onto the spool swells like a woman's belly during pregnancy. The community considers fabric woven from this handspun cotton thread as the offspring of the founding parents of Uma Pura's eight patrilineal lineages. Cotton fabric is a product of the earth and the weaver who is female, signifying fertility. Spinning cotton, thus, represents the act of reproduction.

Tenapi of Uma Pura

Warp ikat is one of the defining characteristics of the handwoven cloth of Uma Pura. Both men and women wear the tubular garment or *tenapi*. Men generally use this article of clothing for ceremonial occasions in the same method as women do or as a tubular garment (figs. 8 and 9), but some males wear it as a hip wrapper over trousers or another lower tubular garment. A tubular garment serves other roles such as a shroud of a deceased person, as a cover of new roof components just before being installed on a clan house, and as a blanket or accessory to keep warm in cool weather (fig. 10). Handwoven cloth

Suku or Patrilineage Name	Name of the *Tenapi*
Suku Uma Kakang	Tenapi Fatola (Patola) Baololong
Suku Uma Tukang	Tenapi Belang Tenapi Fadang
Suku Uma Aring	Tenapi Matang Karing Tenapi Fadang
Suku Uma Wiluwalu Bawah	Tenapi Builihing (Bui'lihing) Lanzia
Suku Uma Wiluwalu Atas	Tenapi Builihing (Bui'lihing) Baololong
Suku Uma Dengwahi	Tenapi Muko Tahakang
Suku Uma Folang Klaelang	Tenapi Leor Manis
Suku Uma Biatabang	Tenapi Sinta Gala

Table 1 – Tenapi or Ceremonial Tubular Garments of the Eight Suku or Patrilineages of Uma Pura Village, Desa Ternate Selatan, Alor Regency, NTT, Indonesia.

is also exchanged during marital rites. Examples of *tenapi* serve as payment to make amends for wrongdoing or to compensate persons who have helped to dig a grave or contributed items for funeral rites (Hägerdal 2011: 57-60).

A tubular garment is generally composed of two panels of cloth with the same patterning and design format, forming a mirror reflection in the horizontal axis. Other types of tubular garments consist of three panels in which the middle section of a three-panelled skirt contains a different format and patterning compared to outer parts. Mirror symmetry in the horizontal axis is maintained in a three-panelled cloth. A shawl composed of two pieces of fabric was also used in the past, but both men and women generally wear a single-panelled shoulder cloth presently. This narrow fabric also serves as a head covering or sash.

Specific types of *tenapi* represent the different patrilineal lineages of Uma Pura (Peni and McIntosh 2020) (see table 1). The weaver informants informed the authors that each garment type possesses a name that serves as the identifier of a specific tubular skirt and that the name does not symbolize anything. Other types of *tenapi* are clan neutral or do not designate affiliation in a patrilineage. These lower garments are also named to indicate the design format and motifs that decorate it.

The *tenapi patola bao lolong* signifies membership in the ruling patrilineage or Suku Uma Kakang (fig. 11). The different communities of Alor and Pantar islands placed a high value on imported *patola* or double ikat silk textiles woven in India that other cultures of present-day Indonesia also coveted (Gomang 1993: 107-108; Hägerdal 2010: 227). Members of the ruling clans held the prerogative to own these prestige goods that became sacred heirlooms. The lattice designs adorning some types of *patola* are echoed in the motifs filling the central panel of the three-panelled *tenapi patola bao lolong* worn by members of the Suku

Uma Kakang or ruling patrilineage of Uma Pura. This motif also decorates the primary design row of each outer section of a *tenapi patola bao lolong* and is called *bao lolong sambung* (fig. 20b).

Members of the Suku Uma Tukang wear *tenapi belang* and *tenapi fadang*. Bold white and orange stripes identify the two-panelled *tenapi belang,* and the largest warp ikat row is located near the top and bottom ends of a garment (fig. 12). The distinguishing markers of the two-panelled *tenapi fadang* are the presence of green and blue stripes flanking rows of narrow warp ikat dashes that are found between the primary bands of warp ikat patterning (fig. 13). Suku Uma Aring members utilise *tenapi matang karing* and *tenapi fadang* as lineage markers (fig. 14). The *tenapi matang karing,* or "skirt of small eyes," is adorned with numerous rows of warp ikat dashes called broken fruit of the Piper betel vine (*Piper betle*, Alorese *malu gilu*). These dashes are also called *peku-peku*. Bright stripes, especially purple and pink, separate the warp ikat bands of a *tenapi matang karing*.

The *tenapi bui'lihing lanzia* represents the Wilawalu Bawah patrilineal lineage (fig. 15). A *bui'lihing*, also spelt *builihing*, consists of a middle section of solid stripes, narrow rows of warp ikat dashes, or a combination of both. A *tenapi bui'lihing lanzia* may be composed of two or three panels, and its peripheral sections each contain three different-sized warp ikat bands. The largest warp ikat row of the outer panels flanks the garment's middle section rather than its ends. A bold white stripe adorns one peripheral section of a *tenapi bui'lihing lanzia*, and a pink stripe decorates the other. Members of the clan called Suku Uma Wilawalu Atas utilise the *tenapi bui'lihing bao lolong* as a symbol of membership to this lineage (fig. 16). This *tenapi* type also contains stripes and narrow rows of warp ikat in its middle part, and the largest bands of warp ikat patterning decorating the outer panels contain the *bao lolong* or banyan tree leaf motif.

The *tenapi muko tahakang* of the Suku Uma Denwahi translates as "ripe banana skirt," named after the bright yellow stripe at each end and the groupings of yellow, orange, and green bands in the centre section (fig. 17). The *tenapi leor manis* represents the Folang Klelang patrilineage, while members of the Suku Uma Biatabang use the *tenapi sinta gala* as a marker of clan membership. Green stripes abut narrow bands of white warp ikat dashes in the middle of a *tenapi leor manis*, and this pattern refers to watermelon seeds (fig. 18). The *tenapi sinta gala* consists of a group of six orange stripes flanked by lighter-coloured stripes in between the largest bands of warp ikat designs (fig. 19).

Warp Ikat Motifs

The warp motifs symbolise items in the social and natural environment. Plants, sea life, and imported goods such as Chinese ceramics and Indian trade textiles inspired the motifs that decorate Alorese weavings (fig. 20). Informants state that a diamond shape represents the leaf of the banyan tree (Alorese *bao* – banyan;

lolong – leaf) (fig. 20a), and a lattice composed of numerous diamond shapes is called *bao lolong sambung* or connecting banyan tree leaves (fig. 20b). The ritual centre (Alorese *dolu*) of a village consists of a mound of compacted earth and stones and generally with a banyan tree in its centre (fig. 21). Stone megaliths were also previously erected in some ritual circles (Gomang 1993: 20, 79; Rema and Prihatmoko 2016: 103-116). The government of the Alor Regency understood the importance of the *dolu* and a banyan tree in the cultures of the Alor Archipelago, and both symbols are part of the regency's emblem (Official Website of Alor Regency, accessed March 1, 2020). *Baololong* was the name of some rulers of Bungabali or Alor Besar, and an oral story describes the founder of Alor Kecil's ruling lineage sitting under a banyan tree (Gomang 1993: 29).

Designs based on the natural environment include the *plinta* or bursting kapok buds that signify the end of the dry season and the beginning of the rainy or farming season (fig. 20c). Chewing areca nut is a social activity in Alor, and dashes symbolise one of the ingredients for chewing areca nut or the broken piper betel vine fruit (Alorese *malu gilu*) (fig. 20d). Triangular shapes with a pair of radiating appendages represent the sea hare (Alorese *ufe kotong*) (fig. 20e). This motif is generally found at the end of the primary pattern row. A boat or *nura* (fig. 20f), coconut frond or *tapo lolong* (fig. 20g), tropical almond or *utam pei* (fig. 20h), and intertwining bodies or *kago no-eking* (fig. 20i) are other motifs adorning *adat* or traditional lower garments. Some weavers interpret the last design, *kago no-eking* as multiple bodies becoming one leading to harmony or solidarity in society.

Weavers create warp ikat designs of the mythical snake or *ula naga* that resemble dragon motifs decorating some Chinese ceramics that arrived in the Alor Archipelago as were trade items. These imported goods arrived in the archipelago directly via Chinese traders or indirectly via regional Indonesian sailors (Gomang 1993: 107; Hägerdal 2010: 233). Patterns of other snake motifs adorn some *moko* bronze or brass kettle drums that became sacred heirlooms and a traditional currency of the cultures of Alor (Andaya 2016: 66-89).

Beliefs in extraordinary serpents exist in some cultures of Alor such as the Adang and Alorese peoples. The *ula naga*, rulers of the forest, are part of some creation myths. For example, the first man and *naga* emerged from a hole in a creation story of the Adang group living alongside the Alorese. The Adang and Alurung continue to give offerings and ask the *ula naga* for advice and assistance at the Fet Lakatuil ceremonial house of the *raja tanah* or ruler of the land (Wellfelt 2016: 233-236). Images of these snakelike creatures occur as wood carvings and sculptures in Alorese settlements, such as the statues of *ula naga* guarding the entrance to the ruling lineage's ceremonial house and *dolu* of Alor Besar. A pair adorns Alor Kecil's ruling lineage's ceremonial meeting hall called Kokoro Labanhanji. The emblem of the ruling clan of Alor Besar or Bunga Bali consists of the *bao lolong sambung* and *ula naga* (Gomang 1993: 130). Variations of *ula naga* warp ikat designs occur on *tenapi* woven in Uma Pura.

Natural Dyeing

Many weavers in Uma Pura Village continue to use natural dyestuffs. Morinda (*morinda citrifolia,* Alorese *bota*), joins indigo (*Indigofera tinctoria* and other varieties, Alorese *taum*) as the primary dyes. Turmeric (*Curcuma longa*, Alorese *kumo*) and cockspur thorn (*Maclura cochinchinensis,* Alorese *akar*) produce yellow shades. Sappan wood (*Caesalpinia sappan,* Alorese *hong*, *song*, or *pen*) creates a range of pinks and purples. Women use tannin-containing bark and heartwood from various trees such as Borneo teak (*Intsia palembanica*, Alorese *ipi*), Indian ash (*Lannea coromandelica*, Alorese *bula*), and jujube (*Ziziphus mauritiana*, Alorese *kebuka*) for an assortment of brown colours. Plants that grow profusely in Ternate, Buaya, and Alor, such as milkweed (*Calotropis gigantea*, Alorese *keroko puho*) and bellyache bush (*Jatropha gossypiifolia*, Alorese *jarak merah*), are other natural dyestuffs (fig. 22). The former creates light yellow to light green colours depending on the part of the plant used as the main ingredient, while the latter produces a beige to greenish-yellow dye.

Women used to cultivate some dye ingredients on Ternate Island, but they presently grow some dyestuffs and cotton on farmland opposite their villages on the island of Alor in the hamlet of Sabanjar. Some dyestuffs, such as sappan wood, are sourced and purchased from Southwest Alor and Pantar Island. Other ingredients that weavers purchase include alum-rich *symplocos* leaves (*Symplocos cochinchinensis,* Alorese *loba lolong*) from Pantar and candlenut (*Aleurites moluccana*, Alorese *kamie*) from both islands. Candlenut contains the oil mordant essential for forming a red-brown colour with morinda. Other additives used in Uma Pura Village are slaked lime powder or calcium hydroxide created from burning seashells, salt, and lime juice.

Weavers evaluate the intensity of a dye bath by the colour of the solution and the results when threads are dyed. They measure ingredients like a pinch, handful, heaping spoonful, or half a coconut shell-full. A batch of threads is repeatedly dyed until the desired shade of colour is achieved. Weavers wash the yarns with a small amount of detergent before immersing them in a dye vat and repeat this action before every subsequent round of dyeing. Some dye vats are heated, but cool water is used when dyeing with indigo, morinda, and marine life.

Additional colours are created by over-dyeing or sequentially dyeing threads in different vats or submerging materials in one type of dyebath and then in another. For example, indigo-dyed cotton fibres are later dyed with sappan wood to create a purple colour, and threads first dyed with turmeric and then dyed with indigo turns the yarns green. Some weavers use the remains of several vats together to create a mixed (Alorese, *gau fe'ki*) dye.

Fig. 4 – Weavers carry out the steps of combining milkweed floss and cotton, outskirts of Uma Pura. These steps are performed in a cave to prevent wind from blowing the milkweed floss, a light material, away. The raw cotton and milkweed fibres are carded together before spun into thread using a drop spindle. Photo by Gayle Roehm.

Fig. 5 – A weaver using a spinning wheel to form cotton thread in Uma Pura (Photo by Linda S. McIntosh).

Fig. 6 – An Alorese woman weaves a warp ikat-decorated textile on a backstrap loom, Uma Pura (Photo by Linda S. McIntosh).

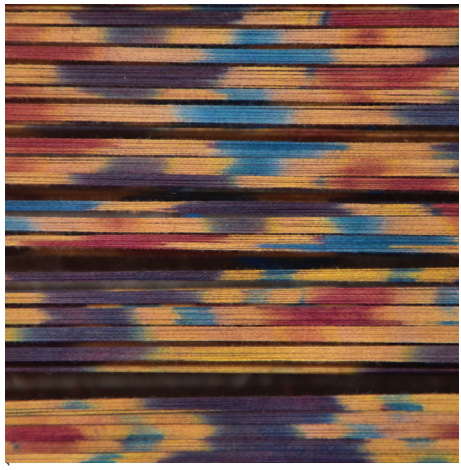

Fig. 7 – Warp ikat-decorated cotton threads before being woven into cloth, Uma Pura(Photo by Linda S. McIntosh).

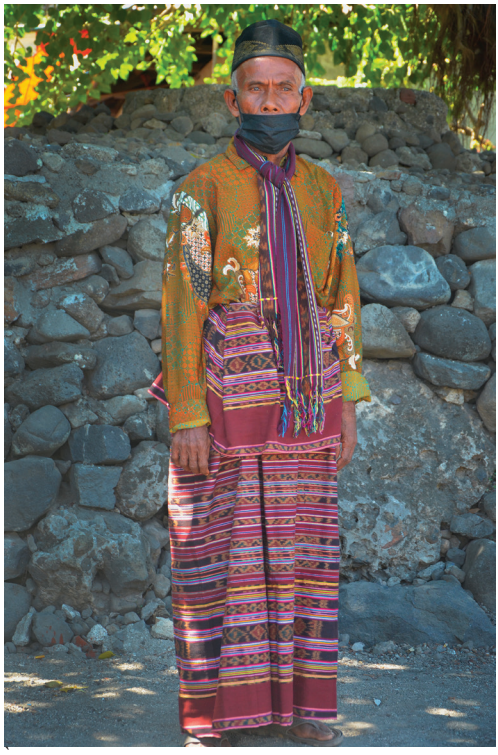

Fig. 8 – An Alorese male in a *tenapi* tubular garment, Northwest Alor Subdistrict (Photo by Yulianti Peni).

Fig. 9 – Women wearing tubular garments signifying patrilineal membership. The women standing on the left and far right are wearing *tenapi patola bao lolong sambung* (Photo by Yulianti Peni).

Fig 10 – A young woman utilises a warp ikat-decorated tubular garment as a cover to stay warm in the early morning hours. Baolong weekly market on coastal Northwest Alor Island opposite Uma Pura (Photo by Linda S. McIntosh).

Fig 11 – *Tenapi Patola Bao Lolong* of the Suku Uma Kakang, Uma Pura (Photo by Linda S. McIntosh).

Fig 12 – *Tenapi Belang* of the Suku Uma Tukang, Uma Pura (Photo by Linda S. McIntosh).

Fig 13 – *Tenapi Fadang* of the Suku Uma Tukang and Suku Uma Aring, Uma Pura. Collection of Aja Bordeville (Photo by Aja Bordeville).

Fig. 14 – *Tenapi Matang Karing* of the Suku Uma Aring, Uma Pura (Photo by Linda S. McIntosh).

Fig 15 – *Tenapi Bui'lihing Lanzia* of the Suku Uma Wiluwalu Bawah, Uma Pura (Photo by Linda S. McIntosh).

Fig. 16 – *Tenapi Bui'lihing* or *Builihing Bao Lolong* of the Suku Uma Wiluwalu Atas, Uma Pura (Photo by Linda S. McIntosh).

Fig. 17 – *Tenapi Muko Tahakang* of the Suku Uma Dengwahi, Uma Pura (Photo by Linda S. McIntosh).

Fig. 18 – *Tenapi Leor Manis* of the Suku Uma Folang Klaelang, Uma Pura (Photo by Linda S. McIntosh).

Fig. 19 – Tenapi Sinta Gala of the Suku Uma Biatabang, Uma Pura. A reproduction was produced since an old example could not be found (Photo by Linda S. McIntosh).

Fig. 20 – Some traditional motifs decorating ceremonial *tenapi* and other Alorese textiles (Photo by Linda S. McIntosh)..

Fig 20a – *Bao lolong* or banyan tree leaf motif. A banyan tree is often found in a *dolu,* an elevated area in a settlement composed of rocks and rammed earth where rituals are held.

Fig 20b – *Bao lolong sambung* or connecting banyan tree leaves motif. This lattice design was inspired by patterning decorating the central field of *patola*.

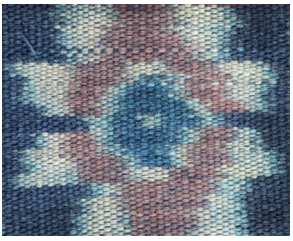

Fig 20c – *Plinta* or bursting kapok motif. When ripe kapok buds burst open, it signals the onset of the rainy season and farming in the agricultural cycle.

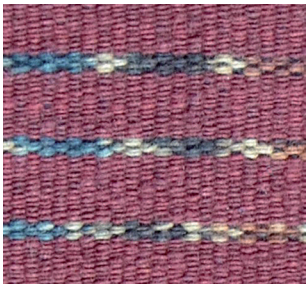

Fig 20d – *Malu gilu* or broken piper betel fruit motif. (The design is also called *peku peku*.)

Fig 20e – *Ufe kotong* or sea hare motif. Collecting marine life such as sea hares and sea cucumbers is a traditional occupation of women from Uma Pura.

Fig 20f – *Nura* or a local type of boat motif.

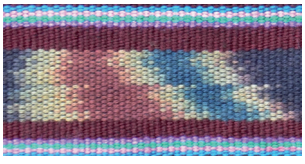

Fig 20g – *Tapo lolong* or coconut frond motif.

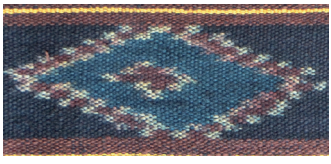

Fig 20h – *Utam pei* or tropical almond motif.

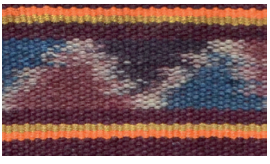

Fig 20i – *Kago no-eking* or intertwining bodies that is sometimes interpreted as an unified group or entity.

Plant Dyes in Alorese Language

Yellow Dyes

Akar (*Maclura cochinchinensis*) - Cockspur thorn combined with alum produces a yellow dye.

Jarak merah (*Jatropha gossypiifolia*) - The leaves and stalks of the bellyache bush, also called physic nut, combined with hot water create a beige to light yellow-green colour. The weaver informants likened the colour to golden bamboo (Alorese *kumanena*) (figs. 23-24).

Kumo (*Curcuma longa*) - Chopped, fresh turmeric combined with fresh lime juice and rinds in simmering water forms a bright yellow dye (fig. 25). The addition of the juice of the kaffir lime (*Citrus hystrix*, Alorese *muda keraking*) creates a bright yellow colour, while regular or smooth-skinned limes (*Citrus latifola* or *Citrus aurantifolia*, Alorese *muda mantalukung*) produce a cloudy yellow colour (fig. 26). Fresh turmeric is preferred over dried roots. The addition of slaked lime powder or calcium hydroxide (Alorese *apu*) changes the turmeric/lime juice dye bath to an orange colour (fig. 27).

Kewera or **nangka** depending on the Alorese dialect (*Antocarpus heterophyllus*) - Jackfruit tree heartwood creates a muddy yellow colour.

Red Dyes

Bota (*Morinda citrifolia*) – The weavers grow morinda in Alor Island. Finely ground, fresh roots combined with slaked lime powder or calcium hydroxide in room-temperature water produce different shades of pink and red (fig. 28). Weavers also use the dried outer bark of morinda roots to make a brown dye (fig. 29). Oil from candlenut (*Aleurites moluccana*) and ground *symplocos* leaves (*Symplocos cochinchinensis*, Alorese *loba lolong*) are required to create a colourfast dye. Resembling morinda dyeing in other parts of Indonesia, threads are soaked in candlenut oil and dried in the sun repeatedly before mordanting them with *symplocos* leaves. Some weaver informants such as Mama Sahari and Mama Admina of the Pante Laut Weaver's Cooperative stated that threads dyed with morinda must be dried in sunlight and not be exposed to moonlight. The yarns are covered at night because moonlight affects the uniformity of the dye adhering to the fibres. A few weavers experimented and placed morinda-dyed threads in the moonlight and attest that the exposure to moonlight results in unevenly dyed materials.

Ufang (*Areca catechu*) - Areca nut creates a red colour.

Pink and Purple Dyes

Kayu pen/hong/song (*Caesalpinia sappan*) - The supply of sappan wood originates from Matap, Southwest Alor, and Pantar Island. A handful of salt

and fresh or dried wood shavings are combined in simmering water to produce a colourfast dye (fig. 30). Threads are dyed 3-5 times, depending on the desired shade of pink (fig. 31).

Blue dye

Taum (*Indigofera tinctoria* and other varieties) – In common with other parts of the world, indigo is dyed using a multi-stage process that begins with fermentation to produce the soluble, reduced form of indigo. Indigo grown on Alor Island is a seasonal dye (fig. 32). Weavers soak fresh leaves in water for approximately 24 hours and then remove the plant debris. A reducing agent, such as local palm alcohol, is combined with the solution to remove oxygen and allow the indigo molecule to become soluble in water. Then, weavers add slaked lime or calcium hydroxide powder (Alorese *apu*) to the mixture, changing its pH to be more alkaline. The vat is ready to dye threads when it becomes yellowish-green colour. The yarns turn blue once they are removed from the vat and exposed to air, or when oxidation occurs. A light blue is a result if the threads are dyed once or twice. Multiple submersions are required to achieve a dark blue (fig. 33). Weavers dye and dry yarns repeatedly until reaching the desired shade.

Weavers in Uma Pura described on October 24, 2019, that when weavers create an indigo dye vat, men should not be present since the Alorese consider the power of indigo to colour threads can also weaken a man's potency. If a male touches the indigo dye or wet indigo-dyed yarns, he will lose his virility. If a woman is menstruating, she may assist in collecting and chopping indigo branches to make the dye vat, but she should not handle the mixing of the indigo dye or attempt to dye threads. Otherwise, the dye mixture will be weak, unable to produce a dark colour. Despite these taboos, indigo dyeing is carried out within the village rather than outside its borders.

Tan and Brown Dyes

Kebuka (*Ziziphus mauritiana*) - Jujube tree wood is used as a dye to create pinkish-tan to brown shades (figs. 34-35).

Bula (*Lannea coromandelica*) - The heartwood of the Indian ash tree is used to form a cinnamon brown colour (fig. 36). The addition of slaked lime powder to the simmering vat produces a lavender-pink shade (fig. 37).

Ipi (*Intsia palembanica*) - Borneo teak, is a dyestuff purchased by the weavers. The dye bath consists of simmering water and ground *kayu ipi* beginning with 4-5 tablespoons, to create a dark chocolate brown colour (fig 38). Threads are dyed 4-5 times to intensify the colour.

Tongke or **bakau** (*Rhizophora mucronata*) - Mangrove root bark (fig. 39) is combined with slaked lime or calcium hydroxide powder in simmering water to produce a red-orange to reddish-brown shade (fig. 40).

Fig. 21 – The *dolu* or ritual centre of Alor Besar, Northwest Alor District, Alor Regency. A banyan grows from its centre (Photo by Linda S. McIntosh).

Fig. 22 – Some natural dyestuffs commonly used in Uma Pura: leaves and stalks of giant milkweed plants, left, and bellyache bush (*Jatropha gossypiifolia*), right (Photo by Linda S. McIntosh).

Fig. 23 – Dyeing cotton thread with bellyache bush (*Jatropha gossypiifolia*) or *jarak* (Photo by Linda S. McIntosh).

Fig. 24 – Bellyache bush-dyed cotton threads dyed creates a light-yellow hue the weaver informants call golden bamboo (Photo by Linda S. McIntosh).

Fig. 26 – A dye composed of fresh turmeric and smooth-skinned limes produces a cloudy yellow colour, left, while turmeric mixed with kaffir lime juice creates, a bright yellow, right (Photo by Linda S. McIntosh).

Fig. 27 – An Alorese weaver adds slaked lime powder to the turmeric and lime juice dye vat to produce orange (Photo by Linda S. McIntosh).

Fig. 25 – The weaver dyes cotton threads with fresh turmeric (*Curcuma longa*) or *kumo* with fresh lime juice in simmering water (Photo by Linda S. McIntosh).

Fig. 28 – Cotton threads dyed with fresh morinda roots (*Morinda citrifolia*) or *bota* (Photo by Linda S. McIntosh).

Fig. 30 – A weaver adds a handful of salt to a ground heartwood of the sappan tree (*Caesalpinia sappan*) simmering water (Photo by Linda S. McIntosh).

Fig. 32 – Fresh *taum* or indigo leaves (*Indigofera tinctoria*) for creating shades of blue (Photo by Linda S. McIntosh).

Fig. 29 – Cotton thread dyed with dried morinda roots. The cotton was oiled and then mordanted with an alum prior to dyeing (Photo by Linda S. McIntosh).

Fig. 31 – Sappan or *pen*, *hong*, or *song* wood-dyed cotton threads (Photo by Linda S. McIntosh).

Fig. 33 – Cotton threads dyed in an indigo vat multiple times produces a deep blue shade (Photo by Linda S. McIntosh).

Fig. 34 – Wood of the Jujube tree (*Ziziphus mauritiana*) or *kebuka* (Photo by Linda S. McIntosh).

Fig. 35 – A jujube or *kebuka* wood dye vat creates a light pink tan to brown shades (Photo by Linda S. McIntosh).

Fig. 36 – Indian ash tree (*Lannea coromandelica*) or *bula* produces a cinnamon brown colour (Photo by Linda S. McIntosh).

Fig. 37 – Threads dyed with an Indian ash or *bula* tree dye vat with the addition of slaked lime powder creates a lavender brown shade (Photo by Linda S. McIntosh).

Fig. 38 – Adding ground *ipi* or Borneo teak wood (*Intsia palembanica*) to simmering water to dye threads dark brown (Photo by Linda S. McIntosh).

Fig. 39 – Dried root bark of the mangrove (*Rhizophora mucronata*) or *tongke* (Photo by Linda S. McIntosh).

Fig. 40 – Dried mangrove root bark or *tongke*-dyed cotton threads (Photo by Linda S. McIntosh).

Green Dyes

Keroko puhong (*Calotropis gigantea*) - Milkweed grows profusely on Ternate and other islands, and its leaves and stalks are also used as a dyestuff for light green. When leaves are combined with turmeric and candlenut in room temperature water, a yellow dye is created.

Ketapang (*Terminalia catappa)* - Tropical almond leaves form a light green while a black colour can be achieved from its bark and fruit. The wood makes a light yellow.

Marine Life Dyes in Alorese Language

Weavers have created other dyes using marine life such as sea hares, sea urchins, sea cucumbers, and sponges as the main ingredients (fig. 41). They manipulate the internal organs of echinoderms, a phylum of marine animals that includes sea cucumbers, to produce different shades of green. The use of a mordant was not observed when dyeing with the different types of marine life, and water was at room temperature rather than heated when processing these dyes.

Kula or sea sponges are sessile metazoans or multi-celled, immobile animals belonging to the phylum *Porifera*. Demospongiae is the largest class of this phylum and includes *Spongiidae* or the common bath sponges. The sponge diversity of Indonesia's seas is high although inadequately studied. Over 10,000 species are thought to exist worldwide, and approximately 800 have been recorded in Indonesia's seas. Coral reefs are the habitat of numerous species, and sponges are filter feeders eating plankton and algae as water passes through their bodies. They exhibit a range of colours depending on their food source, and their colouration is considered to protect against UV rays. Weavers use different coloured sponges, such as light blue, pink, yellow, dark-purple or black, to dye threads (fig. 42). Threads are kneaded with pieces of sponge in water to colour the fibres the same colour as the sponge (fig. 43).

Purple, Grey, and Black Dyes

Kenuna or squid ink creates a reddish dark brown-to-black colour, and a few weavers use squid ink as a cloth dye. The ink was used to draw on bark cloth or tapa or *kapa* in Hawaii, and ink from squid and cuttlefish has also been used for writing, drawing, and painting since Greco-Roman times (Krohn-Ching 1978: 13). The squid is a cephalopod, or a marine animal with a large head, belonging to the phylum Mollusca (sea hares are also part of this phylum). Cephalopod ink, generally composed of melanin, is generated in ink glands and stored in the ink sac, and squids release the liquid along with mucus as a defence mechanism.

Ufe kotong or the sea hare in general belongs to the genera *Aplysia*. The inks from sea hares created from the combination of two glands, one consisting of opaline and the other ink, contain aplysioviolin (APV) used to deter predators.

APV is derived from red algal photosynthetic pigments that form part of the sea hare's diet,[1] which are also used as natural food colourants and cosmetic dyes.[2] APV has served as a dye since antiquity. The colour of the sea hare ink varies depending on the sea hare's food choice, and *Aplysia californica, Aplysia dactylomela, Aplysia oculifera,* and *Aplysia parvula* consume red algae to produce purple ink. Weavers produce a purple or rose brown dye by removing the ink gland from the sea hare and massaging the ink into the yarns (fig. 44). *Aplysia parvula* (Alorese *siput*) produces more ink and, thus, dye than the other species.

Beragang or sea urchins are marine animals classified in the phylum *Echinodermata.* Several species live in Indonesian waters such as *Diadema setosum* and *Diadema savignyi*. Their habitat is also the coral reef, and they also feed on different coloured algae. The ink from sea urchins creates different shades of purple, but generally, a dark shade of purple is produced by those inhabiting the sea surrounding Ternate Island. Sea urchin ink was also used to draw on bark cloth or tapa or *kapa* in Hawaii. Dyeing with sea urchins resembles the colouring of threads with other kinds of marine life, by removing the ink gland and massaging the ink directly into threads.

Kula miteng or the seagrass Thalassia hemprichii that has turned red produces shades of grey. However, the government has forbidden foraging seagrass since it is the habitat of the dugong (*Dugong dugon*) and various fish and turtle species, and weavers of Uma Pura have ceased using it as to dye.

Green Dye

Nenas is the type of sea cucumber (Alorese *menafe kotong*, in general) used for dyeing. Sea cucumbers belong to the class *Holothuroidea* of the phylum *Echinodermata*. Some species reside in coral reefs, and others are bottom feeders, acquiring nutrients from algae, waste products, and tiny organisms on the seafloor. Weavers apply the internal organs of sea cucumbers to produce a green dye. Light green occurs after two submersions in the dye bath, while a dark army green is formed after dyeing the threads seven or more times (fig. 45).

Contemporary Trends in Production of Alorese Textiles

Government programs promoted the commercialisation of handwoven textile production in the last decades of the 20th century. Bureaucrats and teachers are required to wear clothing made from locally woven textiles once a week, and another mandate also encourages students to wear this type of clothing weekly. Textiles for this market are not expensive and are generally composed of threads produced in factories. Weavers use synthetic dyes

1. Prince and Johnson 2013.

2. Solymosi et al. 2015.

to apply warp ikat technique quickly. Presently, machine-spun threads and chemical dyes are readily available in the market, and many weavers use these materials for textile production. Access to these factory-produced materials has led to cloth in a rainbow of colours, including white, black, green, yellow, and pink, being woven instead of the primary shades of blue and red.

The diversification of the consumers of Alorese textiles includes national and international tourists and fashion designers from the national capital of Jakarta. Some of these consumers prefer natural materials such as handspun cotton and natural dyes. Weavers of Uma Pura, thus, have buyers for textiles dyed naturally with plants and marine life. Some experienced dyers, such as Mama Sahari Kamarin, president of the Pante Laut Weaver's Cooperative of Uma Pura Village, have been invited to teach natural dyeing to others in Indonesia, including Batak weavers of North Sumatra. However, these different consumers of the Alorese textiles often demand a colour range of natural dyes contrasting with the primary dyes of indigo and morinda.

Uma Pura weavers have also been encouraged to create new patterns via government programs and other external elements. These designs include realistic representations of trees, especially the banyan tree, and animals such as butterflies, fish, turtles, elephants, crabs, and other living creatures. Items from the social environment also inspire new or non-traditional motifs. Designs of mosques and traditional houses where rituals occur are produced using warp ikat technique.

The ongoing commercialisation of Uma Pura textile production is creating a decline in the quality and types of warp ikat motifs. The patterns have increased in size and become less detailed. The number of designs decorating one *tenapi* is also declining for the weaver to complete a weaving in a shorter amount of time. An increase in the size of the stripes is also occurring, emphasising on colour or the dyes used to produce a particular textile. The authors have requested some weavers to reproduce the traditional *tenapi*, especially ones signifying clan affiliation, but they were reluctant to take the order even for a high price. Tying intricate warp ikat patterns takes time. Dyeing threads with indigo and morinda to create the dark shades used to create the ceremonial garments traditionally also requires redyeing the threads multiple times. Additional time is, thus, needed to complete a traditionally designed and coloured textile.

Fig. 41 – The inks of sea urchins, *beragang*, and sea hares, *ufe kotong*, are some of the marine life dyes of the Alorese (Photo by Linda S. McIntosh).

Fig. 42 – Different-coloured dyed threads from various sea sponges or *kula* (Photo by Linda S. McIntosh).

Fig. 43 – Dyeing threads with fresh orange-coloured sea sponge and water produces a light orange shade (see Fig. 22), far right) (Photo by Linda S. McIntosh).

Fig. 44 – Dyeing threads with ink and opaline for sea hares or *ufe kotong*. Dried threads dyed with sea hare ink are in the foreground (Photo by Linda S. McIntosh).

Fig. 45 – Threads dyed with the internal organs of sea cucumbers or *nenas*. Light green is achieved by dyeing threads a few times, left, while a dark green is produced by dyeing materials seven or more times, right (Photo by Linda S. McIntosh).

Conclusion

Warp ikat textile production and natural dyeing continue to thrive in Uma Pura, Alor Regency, Indonesia, as a niche occupation for women when it has declined in other Alorese settlements on Alor and Pantar islands. Weaving in other Alorese villages was almost extinct until the government intervened in the 1970s (Gomang 1993: 108). However, textile production of Uma Pura has experienced change, especially in the last fifty years. Government programs and other external factors such as tourism affected what women wove. Synthetic threads and machine-spun cotton have replaced most of the handspun cotton and milkweed threads the weavers previously made, and chemical dyes are used along with natural ones. The threads and chemical dyes purchased in the market come in various colours, and weavers are producing textiles in colourways beyond the traditional indigo blue and morinda red that dominate traditional weavings. The commercialisation of Alorese textiles requires raw materials for dozens of textiles to be woven by one woman annually, leading to a reliance on threads that are sold in the local markets instead of cultivating and processing the materials in or near the village.

Textile production continues for personal and household consumption, including ceremonial garments indicating patrilineal clan affiliation, and for local trade with other Alorese and non-weaving groups belonging to the Alor-Pantar branch of the Trans-New Guinea ethnolinguistic family that compose the majority of the regency's population. However, the consumers of Alorese textiles have expanded to include other people belonging to other ethnic groups from different parts of the country and international clients. The uses of the weavings are changing due to the diversity of consumers. Alorese textiles of Uma Pura are tailored into school and government employee uniforms and become part of contemporary fashions. Examples serve as souvenirs for domestic and international tourists.

The diversification of textiles produced by weavers of Uma Pura has led to the reduction of time and resources to traditional weavings such as ceremonial *tenapi* representing patrilineal clan affiliation. A woman may make one for herself and her immediate family members in a decade or even a lifetime. The number of weavers with the skills and information regarding the design format and motifs composing these traditional garments is declining. Some women, especially new weavers, cannot describe the characteristics of some *tenapi*. The names of traditional motifs have not changed yet, but it is possible for change to occur or for some designs to be lost. Preserving this knowledge now will serve as a resource for researchers and members of Uma Pura and other communities to use in case some of these traditions disappear.

The warp ikat motif repertoire of Uma Pura has also grown as commercialisation increased. Weavers continue to find inspiration for new designs from their natural and social environments. Many of these patterns

are figurative, depicting fish and other marine life and important religious structures such as mosques and ritual houses. Traditional motifs or ones that decorated textiles mid-20th century and earlier consist of geometric shapes and undulating lines symbolic of items significant to the Uma Pura community. Both categories of patterns decorate contemporary production.

Emilie Wellfelt noted that both the individual and group identity of the people of Uma Pura are embedded in membership in one of the settlement's eight patrilineages or *suku*. The textiles produced in this community, especially *tenapi* of Uma Pura's patrilineages, are an expression of clan affiliation. Although these *tenapi* differentiate members of lineage from another, the textiles also unite members of the community. These warp ikat-decorated weavings also serve as symbols of Alorese culture, unifying members of Uma Pura with members of the same group living in coastal areas of northwest Alor and west and central Pantar islands. The warp ikat textiles have also become symbols of Alor Regency's cultural heritage, and the government has registered geographic indication for Alorese warp ikat as Alor textiles in 2019 (ASEAN GI Database, accessed April 27, 2021).

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Résumés – Abstracts

Peter Carey

On His Netherlands Majesty's Service: The Remarkable Journeys of the Dutch Corvette-of-war* Pollux *in the Indies/Indonesia and Around the World, 1824-1838

Alfred de Vigny's *Servitude et Grandeur Militaires* (1835) could be the leitmotif for this article which describes the highs and lows of the fourteen-year history of the corvette-of-war *Pollux* (1824-38) as it experienced the vicissitudes of the Dutch colonial wars in the Indies/Indonesia. Launched in Rotterdam in March 1824, the corvette immediately achieved fame with its round-the-world voyage via South America, Cape Horn, and the Marquesas in the company of the frigate Maria *Reigersbergen*, during which it discovered a new islet in the Pacific Ocean. But its arrival in Java in late August 1825 plunged it into the turmoil of the Java War (1825-30). After serving as a troop transport, patrol vessel and floating prison, its high point came in the immediate aftermath of the war when it was chosen to transport the Java War leader, Prince Diponegoro, into exile in Manado (3 May-12 June 1830). On two occasions in 1827 and 1832, its return journeys to the Netherlands brought it close to disaster: the first when a storm east of Cape Agulhas (South Africa) destroyed its navigational equipment and foresail and the last when scurvy wiped out a third of the ship's crew including its long-serving captain and first officer. Ending its days as a guard vessel on the Scheldt, its brief fourteen years of service gave it a ring side seat to the birth of the Netherlands Indies state (1816-1942) and the suffering of its Javanese and Minangkabau opponents. In the interstices of this history there are insights into the savage punishments meted out to the crews of Dutch men-of-war, Diponegoro's reaction to these, the strikingly unhealthy shipboard conditions which convinced the prince to eschew Dutch doctors, and the culture of fine wine drinking amongst the ship's officers in which the prince also participated.

Au service de sa Majesté des Pays-Bas : les voyages remarquables de la corvette de guerre néerlandaise* Pollux *aux Indes/Indonésie et autour du monde, 1824-1838

Servitude et Grandeur Militaires (1835) d'Alfred de Vigny pourrait être le leitmotiv de cet article qui décrit les hauts et les bas des quatorze années d'histoire de la corvette de

guerre *Pollux* (1824-38) alors qu'elle traversait les vicissitudes des guerres coloniales aux Indes/Indonésie. Lancée à Rotterdam en mars 1824, la corvette s'illustre aussitôt avec son tour du monde via l'Amérique du Sud, le Cap Horn et les Marquises en compagnie de la frégate Maria *Reigersbergen*, au cours de laquelle elle découvre un nouvel îlot dans l'océan Pacifique. Mais son arrivée à Java fin août 1825 la plonge dans la tourmente de la guerre de Java (1825-30). Après avoir servi de transport de troupes, de patrouilleur et de prison flottante, son point culminant est survenu au lendemain de la guerre lorsqu'elle a été choisie pour transporter le chef de la guerre de Java, le prince Diponegoro, en exil à Manado (3 mai-12 juin 1830). A deux reprises en 1827 et 1832, ses voyages de retour vers les Pays-Bas l'ont conduit au bord du désastre : le premier lorsqu'une tempête à l'est du cap Agulhas (Afrique du Sud) a détruit son équipement de navigation et sa misaine, le second lorsque le scorbut a anéanti un tiers de l'équipage du navire, y compris son capitaine de longue date et son premier officier. Finissant ses jours comme navire de garde sur l'Escaut, ses brèves quatorze années de service lui ont donné une place de choix dans la naissance de l'État des Indes néerlandaises (1816-1942) et les souffrances de ses adversaires javanais et minang. Dans les interstices de cette histoire, on trouvera un aperçu des punitions cruelles infligées aux équipages des vaisseaux de guerre néerlandais, de la réaction de Diponegoro à cet égard et des conditions étonnamment malsaines à bord des navires qui ont convaincu le prince d'éviter les médecins néerlandais, ainsi que de la consommation de vins fins d'Afrique du Sud parmi les officiers du navire, à laquelle le prince s'est également adonné.

Edgar Bolun Liao

Creating and Mobilizing "Syonan" Youth: Youth and the Japanese Occupation of Singapore, 1942-1945

In 1942, The Japanese Occupation of Singapore (1942-1945) interrupted British rule in Singapore and paved the way for the island-city's independence in 1965. The scholarly literature on this dramatic and traumatic period usually focus on the military aspects of the British capitulation to the Japanese invasion or submerge Japanese military officers and civilian administrators' efforts to mobilize and discipline children and youth within the broader examination of Japanese social policies. This article examines these different efforts to school and mobilize youth in Singapore during this period. to create new subjects out of Singapore's children and youth and to discipline their bodies for incorporation into a new pan-Asian Japanese empire. Even though these attempts failed, they paved the way for the subsequent social policies and disciplinary projects of the British colonial and local nationalist governments after the war. Thus, the Occupation heralded the intersection of state-society relations and age relations in Singapore.

Créer et mobiliser la jeunesse "Syonan" : la jeunesse et l'occupation japonaise de Singapour, 1942-1945

En 1942, l'occupation japonaise de Singapour (1942-1945) a interrompu la domination britannique à Singapour et a ouvert la voie à l'indépendance de la cité insulaire en 1965. La littérature académique sur cette période dramatique et traumatisante se concentre généralement sur les aspects militaires de la capitulation britannique face à l'invasion

japonaise ou occulte les efforts des officiers militaires et des administrateurs civils japonais pour mobiliser et discipliner les enfants et les jeunes dans le cadre d'un examen plus large des politiques sociales japonaises. Cet article examine ces différents efforts de scolarisation et de mobilisation des jeunes à Singapour au cours de cette période. Il s'agissait de créer de nouveaux sujets à partir des enfants et des jeunes de Singapour et de discipliner leurs corps en vue de leur incorporation dans un nouvel empire japonais pan-asiatique. Quoique ces tentatives aient échoué, elles ont ouvert la voie aux politiques sociales et aux projets disciplinaires des gouvernements coloniaux britanniques et nationalistes locaux après la guerre. Ainsi, l'occupation a-t-elle annoncé l'intersection des relations entre l'État et la société et des relations intergénérationnelles à Singapour.

Gilles Forlot

"I'm a child of Lee Kuan Yew, cannot help it": ***Students' narratives on language and ethnic planning in Singapore***

This article examines the perceptions of young Singaporean university students on their country's language policies and their own linguistic practices. The central objective of this text is to analyze the somewhat ambivalent discourses that these youths engage in when it comes to discussing the language policies implemented by their elders in Singapore. The discourses analyzed here express feelings that range from legitimization of the choices made by the first rulers of independent Singapore to resentment for creating artificial and essentialist categories which led to language loss, language shift and communicative barriers. Their testimonies also reveal that these students are aware of the ways languages and ethnicities have been commodified and instrumentalized towards both the manufacturing of the state and its national narrative. The article also examines how some Singaporean Chinese students position themselves critically vis-à-vis the homogeneous Chineseness that was imposed onto them via the post-independence Mandarin-only policy.

"I'm a child of Lee Kuan Yew, cannot help it"*: discours d'étudiants sur le planning ethnique et linguistique à Singapour*

Cet article examine les perceptions de jeunes étudiants universitaires singapouriens sur les politiques linguistiques de leur pays et sur leurs propres pratiques linguistiques. L'objectif central de ce texte est d'analyser les discours quelque peu ambivalents que tiennent ces jeunes lorsqu'il s'agit de discuter des politiques linguistiques mises en œuvre par leurs aînés à Singapour. Les discours analysés ici expriment des sentiments qui vont de la légitimation des choix faits par les premiers dirigeants du Singapour indépendant au ressentiment lié la création de catégories artificielles et essentialistes qui ont conduit à l'appauvrissement linguistique, au changement de langue et aux barrières dans la communication. Leurs témoignages révèlent également que ces étudiants sont conscients de la façon dont les langues et les ethnicités ont été standardisées et instrumentalisées pour la fabrication de l'Etat et de son récit national. L'article examine également la manière dont certains étudiants chinois de Singapour se positionnent de manière critique vis-à-vis de la sinité homogène qui leur a été imposée par la politique de priorité absolue au mandarin après l'indépendance.

Christina Wu

Legislating the Women's "Bill of Rights": Examining Singapore's Civil Society Through the Origins of the Women's Charter (1961)

Sixty years after its enactment, the Women's Charter remains lauded as a landmark piece of legislation in Singapore. Through its provisions, this legislative Act affirmed the rights of women, protected vulnerable women and girls, outlined the rights and responsibilities of married persons, and mandated that all non-Muslim marriages were henceforth to be monogamous. This article examines the historical developments that led to the introduction of this unprecedented "women's Bill of Rights" by the PAP (People's Action Party) government in 1961. Whilst extant literature credits its origins to the lobbying efforts of the Singapore's Council of Women formed in 1952, this article argues for the need to adopt a broader contextual perspective to better account for the development of this "revolutionary" Bill between 1952 and 1961. Furthermore, earlier attempts at marriage reform, such as the 1950 Age of Marriage Bill spearheaded by the Singapore Progressive Party's John Laycock, have curiously been overlooked in the larger narrative of women's rights and social reform in Singapore. This article thus seeks to remedy this gap in our knowledge and to provide a fuller understanding of Singapore's civil society in the post-war era, leading up to the introduction of the Women's Charter.

Légiférer sur la "Déclaration des droits" des femmes : regard sur la société civile de Singapour à travers les origines de la Charte des femmes (1961)

Soixante ans après sa promulgation, la Charte des femmes est encore saluée comme un texte législatif historique à Singapour. Par ses dispositions, cet Acte législatif affirmait les droits des femmes, protégeait femmes et jeunes filles vulnérables, définissait les droits et les responsabilités des personnes mariées et imposait que tous les mariages non musulmans soient désormais monogames. Cet article examine les développements historiques qui ont conduit, en 1961, à l'introduction par le gouvernement du PAP (Parti d'action populaire) de cette « déclaration des droits des femmes » sans précédent. Alors que la littérature existante attribue ses origines aux efforts de lobbying du Conseil des femmes de Singapour, créé en 1952, cet article défend la nécessité d'adopter une approche contextuelle plus large pour mieux expliquer l'origine de cette loi révolutionnaire. En effet, les tentatives antérieures de réforme du mariage, telles que le projet de loi sur l'âge du mariage de 1950 mené par John Laycock, membre du Parti progressiste de Singapour, ont curieusement été négligées dans le récit plus général des droits des femmes et de la réforme sociale à Singapour. Cet article cherche donc à combler cette lacune dans nos connaissances et à proposer une appréhension plus complète du rôle de la société civile de Singapour dans l'immédiat après-guerre, jusqu'à l'introduction de la Charte des femmes.

Nurul Huda Mohd. Razif

Chasing Fate & Fortune in the Borderland: Cross-Border Marriage & Migration at the Malaysian-Thai Frontier

This article examines the feminization of migration at the Malaysian-Thai frontier through the lens of cross-border marriages between Malaysian men and Thai women (predominantly of Malay ethnicity). Based on long-term ethnographic fieldwork conducted in the Malaysian city of Kota Bharu, Kelantan, it explores the migration process as a hopeful endeavor in seeking "fortune" in several senses of the word: employment and economic prospects (Mal. *rezeki*), and opportunities for marriage (Mal. *jodoh*, or "fated union"). Second, it illustrates how Thai women's reported use of magical means such as love magic and sorcery in their search for *jodoh* and *rezeki* inspires both fear and desire among Malays. Thai women's seductive and supernatural prowess, I argue, constitutes a crucial but understudied capital for navigating a precarious labor and marriage market where their employability and (sexual) desirability overlap, allowing them to subvert existing narratives of female cross-border marriage migrants as victims of precarity.

À la recherche du destin et de la fortune en région frontalière : mariage & migration transfrontalières à la frontière entre la Malaisie et la Thaïlande

Cet article examine la féminisation de la migration à la frontière entre la Malaisie et la Thaïlande, au prisme des mariages transfrontaliers entre hommes malais et femmes thaïlandaises, principalement d'ethnie malaise. Partant d'un travail de terrain ethnographique de long terme mené dans la ville malaisienne de Kota Bharu (Kelantan), l'article explore le processus de migration en tant qu'effort plein d'espoir à la recherche de la « fortune » dans différents sens du terme : emploi et perspectives économiques (mal. *rezeki*), et opportunités de mariage (Mal. *jodoh*, ou « union avec l'âme-sœur »). Par ailleurs, il illustre l'utilisation par les femmes thaïlandaises de moyens magiques tels que les charmes d'amour et la sorcellerie dans leur quête du *jodoh* et du *rezeki* qui inspirent à la fois peur et désir aux Malais. Les prouesses de séduction et de surnaturel des femmes thaïlandaises constituent, selon moi, un capital essentiel mais peu étudié pour naviguer sur un marché précaire du travail et du mariage, où leur employabilité et leur désirabilité (sexuelle) se chevauchent, ce qui leur permet de renverser les récits existants sur les femmes migrantes mariées à l'étranger comme victimes de la précarité.

Ai Fatimah Nur Fuad

Female Religious Authority among Tarbiyah Communities in Contemporary Indonesia

This article analyses female religious authority among members of Indonesia's Tarbiyah movement. It focuses on how women members at the lower levels of the organisational hierarchy of the Tarbiyah movement regularly and continuously build their own religious

authority through *liqo* (weekly religious trainings) and how they perceive and practice religious authority in the *liqo* designed by the movement. This article argues that *liqo* is used not only as a means for developing members' Islamic knowledge and religiosity, but most importantly for building its members' religious authority. However, although women joined *liqo* in a very disciplined way to have more authority in their community, religious authority generally is still dominated by men. The only religious authority that these female members have comes through the structure for becoming a mentor in the *liqo*.

Autorité religieuse féminine parmi les communautés Tarbiyah dans l'Indonésie contemporaine

Cet article analyse l'autorité religieuse féminine parmi les membres du mouvement Tarbiyah en Indonésie. Il s'intéresse particulièrement à la manière dont les femmes membres des niveaux inférieurs de la hiérarchie organisationnelle du mouvement Tarbiyah construisent régulièrement et continuellement leur propre autorité religieuse par le biais de formations religieuses hebdomadaires dites *liqo*, et comment elles perçoivent et pratiquent l'autorité religieuse par le biais du système de la *liqo* conçue par le mouvement. Cet article soutient que la *liqo* est utilisée non seulement comme un moyen de développer les connaissances islamiques et la religiosité des membres, mais surtout pour construire l'autorité religieuse de ses membres. Cependant, bien que les femmes aient rejoint la *liqo* de manière très disciplinée pour acquérir plus d'autorité dans leur communauté, l'autorité religieuse reste généralement dominée par les hommes. La seule autorité religieuse dont disposent les membres féminins provient de la structure permettant de devenir mentor au sein de la *liqo*.

Linda S. McIntosh & Yulianti A. Peni

Alorese Textiles, specifically* Tenapi*, and their Production of Ternate Island, Alor Regency, NTT, Indonesia

Little has been published about the handwoven textiles woven by the Alorese ethnic group of Alor Regency, Indonesia. This article attempts to fill this absence by describing textile production, natural dyeing, and some tubular garments or *tenapi* of the Alorese (Alurung) people of Uma Pura, Desa Ternate Selatan. Specific *tenapi* distinguish Uma Pura's eight patrilineages from one another via the combination of motifs, stripes, and design formats. Weavers use marine life dyestuffs to colour threads, creating a unique characteristic. Production for sale to non-traditional consumers is threatening their continuation since others demand different coloured and patterned weavings. Weavers continue to make the ritual garments, but a decline in the quality of motifs is observed. Documentation of these textiles is crucial for a better understanding of Alorese material culture.

Textiles alorais, en particulier le* tenapi*, et leur production sur l'île de Ternate, district d'Alor, NTT, Indonésie

Peu de choses ont été publiées sur les textiles tissés à la main par le groupe ethnique alorais du district d'Alor en Indonésie. Cet article tente de combler cette absence en

décrivant la production textile, la teinture naturelle et certains vêtements tubulaires ou *tenapi* de la population aloraise (Alurung) d'Uma Pura, Desa Ternate Selatan. Des *tenapi* spécifiques différencient les huit patrilignages d'Uma Pura les uns des autres par la combinaison de motifs, de rayures et de dessins. Les tisserands utilisent des colorants issus du monde marin pour colorer les fils, créant ainsi une caractéristique unique. La production destinée à être vendue à des consommateurs non traditionnels menace leur existence, car ces consommateurs exigent des tissages de couleurs et de motifs différents. Les tisserands continuent à fabriquer les vêtements rituels, mais on observe une baisse de la qualité des motifs. La documentation de ces textiles est cruciale pour une meilleure compréhension de la culture matérielle aloraise.

Ge SONG

Indes néerlandaises et culture chinoise

Deux traductions malaises du Roman des Trois Royaumes (1910-1913)

Archipel Hors-Série n° 1

Ge Song, 2021, *Indes néerlandaises et culture chinoise – Deux traductions malaises du Roman des Trois Royaumes (1910-1913), Archipel* Hors-Série n°1, xxii + 344 p. ISBN : 978-2-910513-86-3

Aux Indes néerlandaises, l'existence d'une importante communauté de descendants de Chinois ne lisant plus ou peu le chinois entraîna un courant tout à fait exceptionnel de traduction et de diffusion de romans chinois traditionnels en malais sous forme imprimée, lequel dura pendant une soixantaine d'années (1880-1942). Chose plus remarquable encore, il donna lieu à la publication simultanée de deux traductions intégrales du fameux « Roman des Trois Royaumes » ou *Sanguo yanyi* 三國演義 (1910-1913). Ce livre, *Indes néerlandaises et culture chinoise*, vise à étudier ces deux traductions sous les angles littéraire, philologique, historique et sociologique, afin de montrer quel rôle elles ont joué à un moment où la communauté sino-indonésienne essayait de repenser son identité culturelle et politique.

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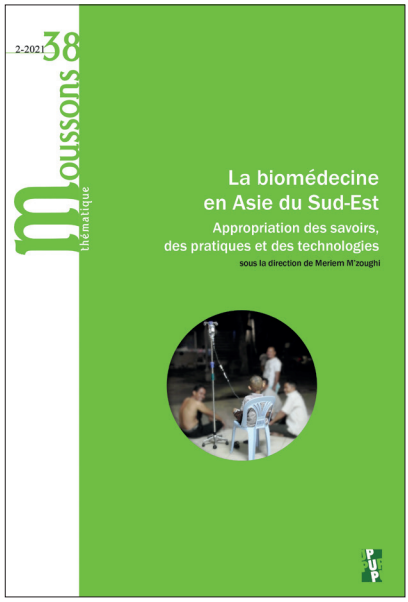

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