

IJIDI: Book Review

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As a native anthropologist residing in Thailand who has conducted anthropological research in both local and international contexts for the past 20 years, I've been waiting for a book like this for a long time. Despite an increasing interest in Asian anthropology over the last three decades, little has been published on the development of Southeast Asian anthropology. Not only has little been published about its connections to other countries in the region but also to the rest of the globe. Japanese anthropology developed in the early 19th century and appeared to be at the forefront of information in those Asian disciplines. Indian anthropologists developed their applied research methods from 19th century colonial anthropology by focusing on Indigenous peoples to aid the Nehru government's welfare policies in the 1950s. Anthropology in the People's Republic of China has focused on ethnology and ethnicity in the main parts of the Asian continent. All of these examples have established their own anthropological school for decades.

It should be mentioned that anthropological research in Southeast Asian countries such as Indonesia, Vietnam, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Myanmar, Singapore, and Brunei have each had a different experience than these aforementioned examples as well. What about their academic pursuits? *Southeast Asian Anthropologies: National Traditions and Transnational Practices* will be the first and most important book for everyone interested in information and research about Southeast Asia's anthropology as well as social sciences. Each chapter is written by anthropologists and international scholars based in the Southeast Asia region who are experts on various issues in Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Vietnam, Cambodia, Brunei, Thailand, and the Philippines. I am so excited that each of them has endeavored to break free from the legacy studies of colonialism and postcolonialism by conducting research that is relevant to their own national and regional requirements.

The book is divided into three sections regarding knowledge production's chronological order from past to present, the first of which is titled "The Making of Anthropological Traditions," and discusses the historical contextualization that anthropology has established in university programs, professional associations, and advocacy organizations in the Philippines, Cambodia, and Vietnam. In chapter one, for example, Jose Jowel Canuday and Emma Porio attempt to anchor their questions by tracing how the concept of "Filipino" in academic anthropological discourses changed over time in anthropology institutions in the Philippines. The Philippine anthropological practice of the past and the present, and perhaps the potential disciplines in this

area, were formed by the desire to retain anthropology—which refers to the social and political material circumstances of the envisioned national community. In chapter two, Cambodian anthropologist, Chivoïn Peou, discusses not only how the Khmer-Rouge regime corrupted local scholarship with the far-leftist ideology of the 1970s, but also how national scholarship has recently led to the reconstruction of traditional identity and related fields in the sense of nation building. In the final chapter of this section, Vietnamese cultural anthropologist Nguyen Van Chinh discusses Doi Moi policy reform as a more globally oriented prospect for renovating the socialism concept of ethnology to the new trends of cultural anthropology from the 1990s. However, the process of integration of ethnology into a new trend has moved at a slower pace than it should.

The second section, "Challenges in Anthropological Practices," starts with a chapter written by two more Filipino Anthropologists, Maria F. Mangahas and Suzanna Rodriguez-Roldan. The authors discuss maritime anthropology in the Philippines, which is less welcome from main institutional and nation-state-bound narratives. The authors also explicitly and instinctively situate themselves in the narrative, and it makes extensive use of "less-formal" sources such as literature of local knowledge relating to fishing resources. Yeoh Seng-Guan demonstrates how social anthropology has evolved from colonial times via the perspective of the multicultural and multi-ethnic lens into the current established study in West Malaysia. Vineeta Sinha, a Singaporean anthropologist, investigates "official statements," one of the goals of anthropology as a discipline, and the pressures placed on the institutional and intellectual practice of anthropology in Singapore.

The third section asks specialist researchers from regional nations to discuss what Southeast Asian anthropology has been and should be in the perspective of "Trends in Transnational Anthropologies." It is also examined through the present boundaries of nation-states and transnational interactions. In chapter seven, Victor T. King and Zawawi Ibrahim re-consider debates over "who studies whom" and a foreground of Borneo Anthropology that broke past difficulties of "West versus non-West." In addition, in chapter eight, Yunita T. Winarto and Iwan M. Pirous re-examine pre-conceived notions of who is the Anthropological "other" in Indonesia. Next, Dang Nguyen Anh raises concerns about the Doi Moi reform, which aims at increasing internationalization both of the anthropological theory and practice of so-called anthropology renovation, and contributes research to national industrialization and modernization to address the needs of the economic and social development of the country. In the book's final chapter, Ratana Tosakul discusses the trends of transnational ethnographies of border and migration studies produced by Thai Anthropologists in local and foreign anthropology logical education institutes.

As a native anthropologist based in Thailand and has undertaken anthropological research in both local and international contexts for the past 20 years, I am so excited about this book. Each chapter includes accounts of knowledge production of Southeast Asian anthropology by expert scholars in the region. Furthermore, we can see strong expressions of a commitment to questioning how to establish anthropology in each author's native lands throughout the chapters. While remaining critical of power and representation disparities of the modern West when it comes to knowledge production, the emphasis in this text is on articulating the development of anthropology's indigenization and the practices of anthropologists "at home" in Southeast Asia. The book also looks toward Southeast Asian anthropology, that should transcend the limitations of a simplistic East-West opposition, by considering the wealth of regional and global perspectives exhibited by contemporary scholars on Southeast Asian anthropology themselves.

I believe this book will be especially relevant and helpful to those interested in information and Asian Studies in general—Southeast Asian studies in particular. This timely and important book provides a valuable examination of the current state of the academic study of Southeast Asian anthropology by native anthropologists. Southeast Asian anthropology has changed the regional structure of knowledge production among their own field. Therefore, we should look forward to the prospect of Southeast Asian knowledge production if progress can be made in research funds, educational institutions, and academic forums in Southeast Asia that provide potential platforms for inter-regional specialization both in teaching and research. I believe that in order to be a native Southeast Asian anthropologist in the twenty-first century, we must employ our knowledge and research to learn how to critique "ourselves" in the interaction of the global north and south, and more issues such as ethnic conflicts in Myanmar and the Philippines, and the growth of the poor and the middle class in urban areas are waiting to be explored.

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