

Introduction

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Southeast Asia has been a hub of travel and commerce since early centuries, because of its location at the maritime crossroads between the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea, and because it has a long history of producing valuable tropical commodities for international markets. During the early modern era, when the number of visitors to Southeast Asia increased due to the development of commercial activities, Southeast Asian port-cities became highly cosmopolitan environments that housed merchants from not only Southeast Asia but also East Asia, South Asia, West Asia, and Europe. Southeast Asian rulers established the customs in order to deal with foreign visitors. Upon arrival at a port, foreigners were accepted by a harbour-master, generally called a *syahbandar* in the Indonesian Archipelago, who regulated the market of the city. After an initial meeting, foreigners were allotted warehouses to store their merchandise, provided with the lodging, and were then able to participate in trade business under the jurisdiction of the *syabandar* [Cortese 1944: 265; Meilink-Roelofs 1962: 7, 42]. Most of these foreigners, then in accordance with Southeast Asian customs, took local women as temporary wives. These women were also involved in commerce at local markets [Reid 1988: 155–156, 162–175; Andaya 2006: 118–127].

These foreign visitors leaned on local collaborators to both develop commercial activities and maintain their daily life. After entering into the Southeast Asian maritime world, the Portuguese, Spanish, and Dutch colonized such port-cities as Malacca, Manila, Batavia, and Ambon, in order to monopolize trade between Europe or Nueva España (New Spain) and Southeast Asia. They were, however, hardly able to keep their establishments without securing the cooperation of local merchants who helped them to secure commercial commodities and daily necessities such as foodstuffs. Local merchants including the Chinese who had created commercial networks with Southeast Asians, became important brokers between Europeans and Southeast Asians [Blussé 1988]. Moreover, most of Europeans and other foreigners were bachelors who had left their families in their home country. They often married local women or cohabited with them as concubines. Recent studies have clarified the roles of these local women in teaching their partner the local language and customs, rearing their children, and integrating their partners and families into the social life in colonial cities [Taylor 1983; Bosma and Raben 2008: 26–65; Jones 2010: 29–125].

This book aims to investigate the role of local collaborators—including local women, interpreters, Chinese merchants, and the foreign descendents of locals—in integrating foreign visitors, migrants, and colonizers into Southeast Asian societies during both the early modern and modern eras. These associates were key mediators between foreigners and local society. They assisted foreigners to form worldwide economic networks, execute Christian missionary activities, and colonize Southeast Asia. They also helped local people to develop commercial activities with foreigners and maintain the social order by teaching visitors the local manners and customs. Although the existing literature tends to argue that these local associates began to lose their importance as colonial rule intensified from the later part of the nineteenth century, the case studies in this book suggest that local women, interpreters, and foreign descendents of locals adapted themselves to changing circumstances and continued to play a significant role in colonial society, mediating between colonizers and locals into the twentieth century. The book covers the period from the early modern era until the first half of the twentieth century in order to comprehensively examine their role.¹

Until the middle of the nineteenth century, most Europeans and Chinese living in Southeast Asia were creoles and mestizos (*peranakan*). Once their communities were established, these locally born residents mediated between foreigners and local society and often involved themselves in intra-Asian trade by utilizing networks forged between and among urban communities. In this book's first chapter, E. Miyata shows how the Spanish colonists arriving in Manila took advantage of preexisting Portuguese and Chinese networks. The oppositional relationship between China and Spain led the Spanish authorities to prohibit the Spanish from going to China for trade. Portuguese merchants then played a significant role in Spanish trade by providing silk from China to Manila in exchange for silver from Acapulco, while Chinese merchants provided daily necessities for the Spanish.

Commercial activities in Southeast Asia began to decline from the 1660s by the political disorders due to the political turmoil caused by China's transition from the Ming to Qing dynasty, the decline of the European pepper trade in the 1670s, and the intensification of the Dutch trade monopoly in maritime Southeast Asia [Reid 1993: 267–325]. Southeast Asia, however, revived commercial prosperity in the eighteenth century after the Qing dynasty achieved hegemony in China. The development of commercial

¹ This book consists of several working papers that are the results of two research projects. The first, "Research on Historical Sources Concerning Modern Southeast Asia" (2015–17), which aims to examine the rise of modern urban societies and nation-states in Southeast Asia. The second, "Research on Reports by Early Modern Visitors in Southeast Asia" (2018–20), which aims to investigate the social integration of foreign visitors, migrants, and colonizers into Southeast Asian societies from the perspective of locals. I am very grateful for the financial support of the Japan Society for Promotion of Science.

relations between China and Southeast Asia caused political changes in mainland Southeast Asia. From the mid-eighteenth century to the early nineteenth century, new dynasties arose in Burma, Siam, and Vietnam and each dynasty strengthened the integration of their kingdom in order to respond to increasing trade with China [Lieberman 2003: 20, 47–48]. Chinese merchants played a significant role in commercial business between these kingdoms and China.

The Nguyen dynasty which unified Vietnam in 1802 organized highly elaborate court rituals to commemorate New Year's Day, the Dragon Boat Festival, ancestral worship of the imperial clan, and the birthdays of the Emperor and Empress Dowager in order to mobilize not only court and army officials at Hue but also rural governors, chieftains, tribal leaders in mountain regions, and the delegates from Cambodia, Luang Phabang, Vientiane, and Jarai. These states all paid tribute to Vietnam by providing local commodities. In return, they received lavish gifts of good quality of silk products from China and Vietnam, European fabrics from Manila and Singapore, and decorative coins. In this book's third chapter, Y. Taga argues that the Chinese associates of the Nguyen royal court were involved in procuring silk products and European textiles and selling the commodities that the court received as tribute. Supported by these Chinese, the Nguyen dynasty successfully maintained social relationships between ruler and subjects, capital and province and suzerain and vassalage during the first half of the nineteenth century.

When foreigners increased the spread of their activities beyond urban towns, local interpreters became indispensable to their operations. As French missionaries established stations in Vietnam including rural villages, Vietnamese collaborators became highly important in order to preach Christianity in their local language. In the late seventeenth century, the Société des Missions Étrangères de Paris set up missionary stations in Vietnam and endeavored to train Vietnamese priests. These native priests played a significant role in both interpreting between the French missionaries and the Vietnamese as well as adapting Christian teachings to better fit local Confucian values. In chapter two, M. Makino argues that these native Christian leaders were highly regarded as “glocal elites” equivalent to Nguyen dynasty officials who had passed their Chinese civil service examinations. Even during the period of Minh Mạng's reign in which most French missionaries and Vietnamese priests were severely persecuted, there were almost no apostate priests owing to tight support from local Christian communities.

As European colonial rule expanded from cities to rural regions, local interpreters played increasingly important roles as mediators between the colonial authorities and the local population. For instance, when France established Cambodia as a protectorate in 1863, the territory housed not only Cambodian but also Lao, Cham, and other ethnic groups. Although the research to date on colonial Cambodia stresses on Vietnamese officials' role in mediating between the French colonial authorities and Cambodians, in chapter five, T. Kitagawa suggests the importance of the Cambodian officials of secretaries-

interpreters who worked for French officials and were proficient in plural languages in the bordering regions. These Cambodian officials also played important roles in dealing with local revolts and analyzing the causes of rebellions in official reports. This suggests us that these reports written by the colonial authorities on anti-colonial movements need to be rechecked from these officials' point of view.

These mediators operated on the margins of power, and were thus vulnerable when power relations between foreigners and local societies changed. European colonial powers expanded and extended the reach of their rule and economic activities from the later part of the nineteenth century. As plantation and mining companies developed in these colonies, foreign workers increased and Southeast Asian societies became more plural. In the face of colonial rule, Southeast Asians in the Dutch East Indies and British Malaya began to create national identities from the beginning of the twentieth century, seeking for their own autonomous nation-state. Chinese, Arab, Indian, Eurasian, and other migrants had to find their place under the changing political circumstances.

Chinese people played important roles not only as traders between China and Southeast Asia and plantation entrepreneurs, but also as intermediaries between the colonial governments and the local populations and Chinese migrants by tax farmings in the nineteenth century Dutch East Indies and the Straits Settlements [Mona Lohanda 2002: 21–48; Trocki 1990]. The Dutch authorities, however, endeavored to abolish Chinese tax farmings of selling opium and running of toll houses, pawnshops, and gambling houses from the end of the nineteenth century in order to intensify colonial rule by replacing these operations with state monopolies. Some Chinese businessmen in Java responded by actively moving into the international business by transforming their *kongsi* (Chinese traditional firm) to “limited liability company” under Dutch law. Y. Kudō writes in chapter four that these Chinese were able to develop sugar industry and international rice trade, by having the loan of funds from European banks, and further to set up trading firms and their banks. Chinese locals and merchants were essential mediators in the Dutch East Indies.

Indonesia (the Dutch East Indies) linguistically consists of about three hundred different groups, the majority of whom were Muslims. Arabs in the Dutch East Indies were more smoothly integrated to local society compared with their Chinese and Eurasian counterparts. The Indonesian nationalism movement, however, began to develop on the basis of *pribumi* (natives) via the rise of the Sarekat Islam, which aims to improve spiritual and material conditions of Muslims in the East Indies, against the local Chinese population who became arrogant toward their Javanese neighbors after the establishment of the Republic of China in 1912 [Shiraishi 1990: 37–47; Adam 1995: 167–177]. Non-*pribumi* Chinese and Arabs were in due course excluded from the Indonesian claim to an independent nation-state. M. Yamaguchi argues in chapter six that Arabs, nevertheless, continued to play important roles in unifying Indonesian Muslims through the 1920s helping to form the Indies Al-Islam Congresses and mediating between the Indonesian

Muslim community and the Caliphate Congress in Cairo and the Congress of the Islamic World in Mecca. He concludes that Arabs resulted in helping to strengthen the Indonesian Muslim consciousness.

The Malay, generally defined as Malay speaking Muslims, have highly heterogenous origins. Especially to the Malay Peninsula immigrants from Sumatra, Java and other places in Indonesia increased from the nineteenth century [B. Andaya and L. Andaya 1982: 180–181]. Malay nationalists endeavored to bring these migrants into the fold of Malayness in order to defend their native rights from the Chinese and Indian population in the Peninsula. The consciousness of the Malay was going to be established in the 1930s after the economic depression in 1929. However, at the same time, distinctions arose among regionally different Malays under each Sultanate. In chapter seven, Y. Tsuboi argues that no pan-Malayan Malay association was formed in the 1930s because many Malays retained too much loyalty to their own state.

Previous historians have pointed out the importance of local women as mediating different ethnic groups in both the Dutch East Indies and British Malaya [Abeyasekere 1987: 75–80; Butcher 1979: 194–216]. As nationalism developed throughout the region, differences between the colonizers and the colonized became more distinct. Nevertheless, the custom of local women cohabiting with Europeans did not retreat from the colonial scene. Indonesian nationalists opposed the custom of European men keeping *nyai* (Indonesian concubines) and urged them to move into a state of wedlock. On the other hand, they especially female intellectuals, strongly condemned marriages between Indonesian men and European women because such marriages led to family life under the influence of Dutch imperialism, as Hirosue argues in chapter eight. Indonesians highly regarded the role of mothers in family life and perceived the conjugal life between Indonesian women and European men as being strongly influenced by the Indonesian wives. Such families appeared to nationalists as renewed buffers between the colonizers and the colonized during the last stages of Dutch colonial rule.

Previous studies have argued that the development of nationalism, the intensification of colonial rule, and the development of traffic induced Europeans and the Chinese to live within their own communities keeping their cultures [Furnivall 1944; Doorn 1983]. This book suggests that as distinctions between the colonizers and the colonized people and those between natives and non-natives became clearer, intermediaries became increasingly important. The role of the local women, interpreters, Chinese, Arabs, and other people of foreign descent in fomenting the social integration within Southeast Asian colonial society needs to be reexamined.

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