Community economies in Monsoon Asia: Keywords and key reflections

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Abstract: A diversity of place-based community economic practices that enact ethical interdependence has long enabled livelihoods in Monsoon Asia. Managed either democratically or coercively, these culturally inflected practices have survived the rise of a cash economy, albeit in modified form, sometimes being co-opted to state projects. In the modern development imaginary, these practices have been positioned as 'traditional', 'rural' and largely superseded. But if we read against the grain of modernisation, a largely hidden geography of community economic practices emerges. This paper introduces the project of documenting keywords of place-based community economies in Monsoon Asia. It extends Raymond William's cultural analysis of keywords into a non-western context and situates this discursive approach within a material semiotic framing. The paper has been collaboratively written with co-researchers across Southeast Asia and represents an experimental mode of scholarship that aims to advance a post-development agenda.

Keywords: community economies, keywords, Monsoon Asia, post-development

Introduction

This paper presents an initial output of a collaborative keywords project and invites on-going participation by scholars and activists who are keen to foster post-development imaginaries in Asia.[1] We deploy Raymond Williams's (1983) path-breaking method of cultural analysis in an experimental mode with the aim of producing a radically different 'map' of Monsoon Asia's economic geography. The familiar map of South-east Asia's economic geography is populated by patterns and practices of capital accumulation, urban growth and resource extraction that mark the impact of modernisation. In this paper, we present a selection of practices whose rationalities emanate from 'other' place-based world views, or cosmovisions.[2] Our keywords reveal

powerful and persistent practices of interdependence built on a diversity of social, cultural, economic and ecological relations. They are animated by place-based ethics of careful exchange, reciprocity and redistribution. Indeed, these keywords describe a 'geography of absence' populated by shadow practices that have been delegitimised as viable ways of surviving and creating well-being or deprived of their specificity and folded into umbrella eco- nomic categories such as 'social capital' that can be harnessed as raw materials of moderni- sation (Gibson et al., 2017).

Our bold foray is inspired by post-development thinker Boaventura de Sousa Santos's 'sociology of absence' (de Sousa Santos, 2014) which highlights existing knowledges, practices and imaginaries that are occluded by dominant modernist rationality. A geography and sociology of absence sheds light on what has been 'subtracted' from the present by 'a kind of [metonymic] reason that claims to be the only form of rationality' (Santos de Sousa Santos, 2014: 165 insert added). Santos pro- poses that we must address absence as a neces- sary prelude to generating a 'sociology of emergence' which has the potential to 'enlarge the present' and provoke 'realistic possibilities and future expectations' (de Sousa Santos, 2014: 184). In light of Santos' proposal, we ask whether a geography of seemingly absent economic practices could reveal emergent com- munity economies that offer different, non- capitalist, otherly rational, post-development pathways. At the centre of this vision of com- munity economies are acts of ethical negotia- tion between humans, and between humans and non-humans, around what is necessary for survival, what constitutes surplus, how it is distributed and how to care for the natural and social commons that support life (Gibson-Gra- ham, 2006; Gibson-Graham et al., 2013).

The map that might materialise from this exercise is yet to be drawn and its shapes and shades are only vaguely discernible. At this stage of the project, our objective is relatively modest. It is to inventory a set of 'subtracted' practices, to present their workings, to connect their names to embodied know-how, habits, materialities and spiritualities and to see their nuances in both the specificity of place and the shared experience of living in Monsoon Asia.[3]

This experiment with making the discursively absent more present exists in a shared space with other projects of reframing area studies, such as Willem van Schendel's work on revealing how metaphors of 'area' that have privi- leged 'heartlandism and state-centredness' have produced the invisibility of whole tracts of lands and peoples in Southeast Asia (Van Schendel, 2002:660, 664).

This project is, however, not just an exercise in discursive recovery. We broach the geography of absence in Monsoon Asia with a sensitivity to how language, practice and materiality interact. In this sense, we are taking Williams's method onto the terrain of material semiotics. We have consciously deployed the regional nomenclature of 'Monsoon Asia' rather than the more usual geographic designation of 'Southeast Asia'. Monsoon Asia constitutes 'area' in terms of the shared experience of a climatic system in which large-scale winds bring distinct seasons of wet and dry weather. We are keen to explore how, across regions affected by the monsoon, practices of more-than-human inter-action and interdependence have evolved in symbiosis with the temporality, excesses and scarcities this weather system brings. In the cur-rent context of global warming and increased climate uncertainty, especially in the Asia Pacific region, we are drawn to consider how more-than-human monsoon assemblages might be sites of emergence.[4]

The paper has three sections. The first intro-duces the collaborative project of tracing words together across Monsoon Asia using the key-word method developed by Williams (1983). The second presents a spectrum of keywords arranged in terms of themes relevant to commu-nity economies. The third offers reflections on some of the features of an emerging 'map' of community economies in Monsoon Asia – the imaginary contour lines, if you will, that join diverse place-based practices across space.

Tracing keywords

Raymond Williams' 1976 book Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society (revised in Williams, 1983) marked out a new field of cul-tural studies in which attention was given to how words came to mean different things at

different times and in different contexts and how certain words became 'key' to particular times. Keyword entries were not scholarly dic- tionary items but were to describe everyday words in general usage, words that 'brought something significant to "the central processes of our common life"' (Bennett et al., 2005: xviii). This was a path-breaking project that highlighted the 'worlding' powers of language and terminology. As a quintessential artefact of British cultural studies, the original volume traced the often global origins of 'English' words used in Britain.

In more recent times a New Keywords: A Revised Vocabulary of Culture and Society vol- ume was produced as a collaborative project led by editors Tony Bennett et al. (2005). This volume enrolled multiple authors to update the original selection of words and extended the content to cover words in usage in the wider Western Anglophone context. In subsequent years, scholars have applied the keywords method to non-western cultures and languages other than English, such as Andrew Kipnis' (2006) tracing of the meanings of suzhi in China.[5]

Other scholars, informed by a critical post-colonial sensibility, have creatively modified the keywords method. One such project culmi- nated in the book Words in Motion: Toward a Global Lexicon edited by Carol Gluck and Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing (2009). This project sought to redress the way that 'stories of globalisation' ignored the 'work of thinkers, writers, scholars, and journalists in the Global South' (Tsing, 2009a: 16). The chapters of Words in Motion are each organised around a central Middle Eastern or Asian word chosen for its concrete-ness, 'whose movement could be traced first across linguistic and cultural borders, then through social and political processes as these changed across time' (Gluck, 2009: 6). The essays on 'adat' (the Arabic root word for habits or customary practices) and 'chumchon' (a Thai word for community), are particularly interest- ing for what they tell us about how the grounded practices we might associate with community economies in Monsoon Asia have become delegitimised.

Mona Abaza discusses how the term custom ada or adat (plural) travelled alongside shari'a 'the law' with Islam to Southeast Asia (2009: 68).

Anna Tsing points out that, while the universal and transcendent framework of shari'a law disal-lowed official legal recognition of local custom-ary practices, they were allowed to coexist so long as they did not contradict the law (2009: 47). In Indonesia, the Dutch colonial administra-tion gave new life to the term adat by coining the term Adatrecht to refer to customary law – partic-ularly laws pertaining to land access and rights. The Dutch were keen to appropriate land from local people and needed to know about local customs in order to negotiate and subjugate. There was also some interest by the western colonisers in containing the spread of Islamic influence, and local land rights could be held up as a front behind which colonial power was exercised (ibid: 48). Thus it was that those cus-tomary, indigenous practices (including native spirituality) that bore upon property (i.e. land) rela-tions were more formally recognised (ibid: 55). It follows that other customary practices of commu-nity survival relating, for example, to wealth or labour sharing, remained largely unrecognised.[6]

Craig Reynolds traces the movement into Asia of words concerning local practices by looking at the cluster of affinity words that travelled with the term 'community' to Thailand. They include 'self-sufficiency, subsistence economy, and local knowledge, or "native wisdom"' (Reynolds, 2009: 287). According to Reynolds, the Thai term for community, 'chumchon' (literally the coming together of people), was most likely coined by Prince Wan in the 1930s. He notes that in Thailand the term includes ideas of Other-ing, of 'an inclusive-exclusive fencing off of out-siders by community members and the feeling of "we-ness" as opposed to "they"' (289). Reynolds locates the prehistory of community/chumchon in idealised and static notions of village life and sees the 'lingering lure of community culture ... with its ineffable qualities of shared labour, reciprocity, and resistance to the outside menace of bureaucracy and meddling development workers' as 'romantic, anachronistic' and unable to 'embrace shortcomings' (ibid: 300). For Reyn-olds, there is little evidence on the ground for qualities such as 'mutual cooperation and gener-osity' (ibid: 298). Instead the term chumchon has been enrolled in various iterations of socialist and statist projects of community development and Gandhian-inspired anti-modernity politics making it a political tool in national level agendas.

Our concern in this paper is not in showing how political terms and affiliations travelled from west to east and came to frame local practices. We are interested in staying with thick descriptions of place-based economic practices and attending to the becoming/negotiating of community, framed here as nothing more or greater than the interdependence that anchors all life. In contrast to Gluck and Tsing's project of 'word-and-world-following' (Reynolds, 2009: 7), our project focuses on word-and-world/ place-grounding.

A Keywords of Community Economies in Monsoon Asia Workshop provided the initial sharing upon which this paper is built. It brought together researchers based in Australia and New Zealand who have conducted field- work in parts of Asia with research partners who are based in the region. Together collabo- rators documented one keyword that denoted a diverse economic practice that contributes to daily survival and well-being.[7] The keywords and phrases were to be explicitly embedded in place, though they might correspond with prac- tices that go under other names in other places within Monsoon Asia or beyond. We creatively modified the keywords method. We selected terms/practices that are in common usage, that are central to common life in a particular area, and that reflect the ethical commitments associ-

ated with distinctive worldviews. But our words

are all in different languages. While they do not cumulatively add up to a common language, they contribute to a new politics of language that abandons the structures of valuation associated with capitalist economics.

Keywords

The range of keyword entries included below were the focus of some discussion at the Key- words of Community Economies in Monsoon Asia Workshop. An initial brainstorm (Discussion 1) was conducted around emerging themes in the entries. This afforded a host of categories and themes in the mode of grounded theory analysis. A second discussion (Discussion 2) began to iden- tify affinities between practices and connections with the ethical concerns of community econo- mies as discussed in Take Back the Economy: An

by J.K. Gibson-Graham et al. (2013). Four clusters were identified associated with different ways of supporting livelihoods in Monsoon Asia:

a. practices of caring for – maintaining, replen- ishing and growing – the natural and cultural commons
b. individual and collective ways of deploying labour to survive together well and equitably
c. arrangements that gift surplus to enrich social and environmental health
d. transactions with others that support interde- pendent well-being.

The following keyword entries are organised into these clusters and the following section of the paper discusses some of the cross-cutting themes that emerged from Discussion 1.

a. Those relating to caring for a commons and living with more than human interdependence

These keywords and phrases all refer to rela- tionships of care and sensitivity to the more than human world – of rivers, ancestors and specific places from which seeds spring. In each case, the more than human constitutes a com- mons that is made, shared by and sustains a community of commoners.

Sống chung vó'i Lư (living with the flood)

Ethical Guide for Transforming Our Communities

Vietnam This phrase is indigenous to the Mekong Delta. It refers to open, adaptive and diverse livelihood strategies that, at heart, seek to accept and benefit from the annual floods that affect the delta. The ethic of adaptation of sống chung vó'i lʉ contradicts the modernist (state-led) development model that has seen floods framed as a risk and the landscape radically re-engineered for the purposes of intensive production and settlement. The radical implication of sống chung vó'i lʉ has seen attempts by the state at various times to co-opt the term and, though certain practices associated with số ng

chung vó'i lʉ have since ceased, this powerful idea persists. In recent years, in response to deteriorating environmental conditions and agri- cultural productivity, there has been a rethink- ing of the logic of controlling floods, with measures now being actively pursued to reintro- duce floods onto farmers' fields and to de- intensify rice production. On-going struggles for

more locally-determined approaches to livelihoods continue to express the ethic of sống chung vớ'i lư through the insistence on vernacular knowledge claims and resistance to perverse intensification strategies. As such, this keyword reinforces the value of place-based knowledge systems, the protection and maintenance of commons and the regenerative potential of diversity in pursuing more adaptive society–nature relations.

Hamutu moris hamutu mate (together in life, together in death) Timor Leste Life-cycle events and commemorations are part of a vibrant complex of practices glossed in the Timorese language of Tetum Terik as the inter- play between hamutu moris hamutu mate (together in life, together in death). In the pro- cess, people across Timor Leste (but also in West Timor) generate densely woven inter- relationships of spiritual ecology with ancestors, living relatives, their local environments and the Most Sacred One (Nai Luli Waik). Social and spiritual life and livelihoods are enacted and reproduced through careful attention to these relations for the sake of 'intergenerational well- being', or a pervasive concern for sustaining and nourishing social and spiritual relations that stretch across the past, present and future. Fami- lies of particular lineages are organised around origin groups linked to particular ancestral houses and local spirit ecologies which embed these families in intimate, intergenerational social, spiritual, political and economic rela- tionships with their extended kin from other ancestral houses. The alliances formed include the obligation of members of each 'house' to perform particular ritual duties at ceremonies to do with life-cycle events, from birth to death, and assist with house-based associated rituals and agricultural practices which are inseparable from spiritual life.

बीज Beej (India-Hindi); বীজ Bīja (Bangladesh); Binhi (Philippines); Hạt giố ng (Vietnam); Vittnam (India-Telugu) (seed) Seed is a more-than-human keyword and actant that underpins diverse economies through Monsoon Asia in emphatically place-based ways. Seeds are sites of struggle in that they are often corporatised, bred, sold and patented by multinationals or state-owned modernist development actors. Yet they may also be an active agent within alternative development imaginaries and realities. It was in this sense that seed was offered as a key- word by co-researchers and co-authors from India, Vietnam, the Philippines, Bangladesh and Australia.[8] The hundreds of thousands of varieties of rice seed, and other crops throughout Monsoon Asia, may be grown, sown and collected with care, with a place-based knowledge and as part of beyond-capitalist systems in ways that give meaning to life. Traditional varieties that have been handed down in some commu- nities, despite pressures to adopt high yielding, genetically uniform seeds, may be multiplied and shared, and new farmer-bred varieties may be developed through farmer-to-farmer exchanges of information and breeding (such as those initiated by the MASIPAG network of the Philippines, see Bachmann et al., 2009). As such, seeds have the potential to work beyond capitalism and support diverse practices with different kinds of norms. Seeds, then, have the potential to be both a grounded connection to place and a microcosm of relationality, connection and exchange. They spring, literally, from a place and are made by and with the soil, the planting practices, the social norms of harvest and seed selection used, down to the very valley and field that will make and re-make the seed.

b. Those relating to practices of reciprocal labour that enact interdependence

These keywords all refer to ways that human bodies and their capacities are offered to others to support survival needs under conditions laid down by community negotiated rules.

Provas (sharing) Cambodia In rural Cambodia, provas is a traditional form of labour exchange allowing rural households to complete work in the rice fields (provas dai – 'a helping hand') or rear their livestock (provas ko – sharing cattle). Before more than 25 years of conflict and trauma engulfed Cambodia in the late twentieth century, provas was often imprecise. The elderly benefited from the labour of the young and dif- ferent forms of labour were exchanged (Meas, 1995; Krishnamurthy, 1999). Since the late 1980s provas has declined. Government land

reform, the advancing market economy, off-farm income and increasing landlessness or diminishing plot sizes have both accelerated the need for paid employment and made provas less of a necessity (Van Acker, 2003; Meas and McCallum, 2009; Diepart, 2010). This is not to say provas disappeared. Rather, it is a smaller part of livelihood portfolios than it was and tends to be more rigid. Tasks are reciprocated within short time-frames between people of equal skill and strength (the same sex and invariably the same age). Importantly, new hybridities have emerged as provas is combined to fit particular circumstances. For example, in the villages, construction teams use provas to fit farming into the gaps between jobs, and market vendors draw on provas from other vendors if they need to leave their stall and attend to other tasks or when they need to clear their own produce early (Lyne, 2017:104–106).

Bayanihan (being and becoming a hero) Luzon, Philippines Bayanihan comes from the Tagalog root word bayani which is roughly trans-lated as 'hero' in English, and the suffix han which, when added to a root word, creates both a noun and an action word. The concept of bayani, however, is more complex than its sup-posed English translation. While a hero may be viewed to be extraordinary and exceptional, the bayani always belongs and speaks for and with her people. The bayani is constitutive of bayan, which may refer to multiple scales of places (e.g. country, city, town, province, etc.) and various groups of people (e.g. compatriots, town mates, etc.). In the Philippines, the term bayani-han is mobilised as a form of collectively performed reciprocal labour that is deployed in agriculture, house building and many other urban and rural activities (see also kamañidun-gan below). The following example is drawn from research with informal miners working on the periphery of Metro Manila. When a self-employed, subsistence miner or his family member needs financial help for hospitalisation, his fellow informal miners in the neighbourhood will collectively devote one Sunday to manually crush tuff rubbles and sell them to truckers of construction contractors. The cash gained from this practice is given as a form of sympathy and practical aid (pagdamay) for the community member in need. The recipient then owes a debt of gratitude (utang na loob) to his community members and might contribute to the same form of bayanihan when another fellow miner or community member is in a similar situation in the future. Through bayanihan, the informal miners are able to address the need for financial support of a community and help save a life in one way or another. One miner's accomplishment also becomes a feat for his fellows, and vice versa.

Kamañidungan (reciprocated building labour, a local version of bayanihan) Batanes, Philippines Kamañidungan is a practice of cooperative labour for house building and repairs. It involves skilled and unskilled labourers representing 10 to 20 households gathering together to work on one house, and contributing all the materials, skills and labour needed. In building a traditional Ivatan resi-dence, one household may contribute the roof-ing materials such as cogon grass, another the free services of a skilled cogon roofer and another the skill of building the limestone walls. Building and repair tasks are prioritised ahead of time, depending on urgency and need, and scheduled roughly once a month, often on a Saturday. Most households contribute to the shared meal, which is an important aspect of the gathering. Typically, one labourer will be assigned the role of lunch overseer. It is their job to tend the fire, cook the rice and organise the vayan (the food that accompanies the rice). The owner of the house under construction typi-cally makes sure that there is enough food to go around and enough left over for kamañidungan group members to take a family meal home after the day's work. This redistribution of sur-plus food to families is one way in which the practice serves to generate and redistribute social surplus. Another way is through the cir-culation of knowledge of traditional house building and artisan skills and its redistribution beyond the collective work team, among young people, for example.

c. Those relating to practices of gifting that enact interdependence

These keywords all refer to ways of sharing goods and wealth within a community by gift-ing to those with specific needs at specific

times. The gift transaction is associated with distinctive ritual practices or community rules.

Pha kwan (tray of your soul) Laos At times, when families need extra support from the communities around them, that support is called on not just from the people around, but also from the world of spirits. Pha kwan are offering trays that are presented by community members to others at ceremonies around birth, marriage, departures and returns and at other key intervals in a person's life, such as after recovery from a severe illness. The 'tray' usually includes an elaborate arrangement of flowers and banana leaves, boiled eggs, fruit, sweets, alcohol, money and candles. The offerings on the tray are for the kwan (souls), but once 'consumed' by the soul may be eaten/taken by those involved in the ceremony. At marriage, the pha kwan are presented during a ceremonial binding together of the couple's souls. The pha kwan are also offered during baci ceremonies, which take place following severe illness, travel or childbirth. In Lao (and Sipson Pann, Northern Thai and Isan) culture, people are understood to have multiple souls. The baci ceremony calls back a soul that may have gone missing during travel, or fled the body during stressful times of childbirth or illness. The ceremony heals the physical and metaphysical constitution of a person, and their wider community, by restoring balance and strength across both the physical and spiritual realm. Following childbirth and at times of death, community members also offer material support – giving gifts necessary for the new baby, making cash contributions to assist with funeral costs.

Jimpitan (to pinch with the tips of one's fingers) Java, Indonesia Jimpitan refers to a practice in which households regularly donate a small portion of rice or money to a community emergency fund. The practice arose in rural Java where daily donations were traditionally hung in cups outside homes for collection by the evening security patrol. The donations are very small – jimpitan means to pinch with the tips of one's fingers – emphasising the act of giving over the amount, lessening social divisions and encouraging everyone to be both a 'giver and a receiver'. A community

committee determines how the fund should be used – traditionally to provide support during emergencies, but increasingly for community infrastructure projects, cultural events such as weddings or funerals, or to support families in need. Jimpitan remains widely practised in Java, evolving spatially differentiated inflections that reflect particular socio-ecological contexts. In some communities, jimpitan systems have become very inclusive, involving women and migrants in decision-making processes for example, while others remain exclusive, potentially limiting their effectiveness in engaging with the full range of community issues. The on-going longevity and popularity of jimpitan, which continues to prosper beneath shifts in government regimes and development trends, emphasises its importance to community life.

Dana (generosity, charity and donation) Myanmar (Burma) The word dana derives from Sanskrit and Pali languages, and is in usage across societies in Monsoon Asia where Theravada Buddhism is practised, referring to donations given to monks or monasteries. Although dana is associated with religious giving in order to gain merit for a better rebirth in one's next life, under the modern Burmese version of Theravada Buddhism there is a belief that if you do good things, you will get good things back and you do not need to wait, you can reap the benefits in this life. Regardless of whether merit is immediate or delayed, or for altruistic purposes or not, a strong 'culture of giving' has been observed in Myanmar society that goes beyond religion. It is common for Burmese, whether Buddhist or non-Buddhist, to give donations for the purpose and intent of social respect, social welfare or social development. The word dana is therefore used more broadly to refer to social donations, initiated by anyone from any religious faith. In Myanmar, social donations are part of an informal system of non-state welfare and they are substantial. They are particularly important in a context where citizens have low levels of trust in the state to redistribute taxes for social welfare purposes. Myanmar's university alumni is one example of elaborate dana networks, where former students give cash donations to their retired

teachers at annual ceremonies. In this cultural context, dana represents a deep respect for teachers, an ethic of care for the elderly and the value of maintaining social ties and lifetime friendships.

d. Transactional practices of rotating access and seasonal support

These keywords all refer to ways of distributing access to survival goods in a sequential manner that attends to the temporality of specific needs.

Mudalolose (also muganti, mugagilirang) and Mandusi (also mangemong, mamuruh, male-jung) North Sulawesi, Indonesia In the volcanic islands of North Sulawesi, Indonesia, smallholder farmers rely on a unique system for harvesting nutmeg that has enabled them to sur- vive well together in their island ecosystem. Nut- meg trees are particularly well suited to the local ecology, where an active volcano produces rich soils for tree growth and gaseous emissions that form a natural pesticide (Rampengan et al., 2016). Harvesting arrangements include mudalo- lose (a form of tree tenure) and mandusi (fruit gleaning), practices which stimulate a good har-vest while at the same time redistributing wealth. In the absence of an official land titling system, mudalolose involves the rotation of tree harvest-ing rights between different families over time. It is a distinct system of access where trees are divided and distributed between different fami-lies over two-year time intervals (i.e. one family has a right to harvest certain trees for two years, while the other families rely on mandusi as they wait their turn). Access to tree harvesting can also be exchanged for services, with families giving access to non-family members in exchange for help: historically, it was common for a midwife to be given access rights to a tree for a certain period of time for help with a birth, for example. Families can similarly sell durations of harvesting rights for cash or loans. Mandusi is a practice of ground-fruit gleaning which enables non-harvesting family members to collect fallen nut-meg. All village members are able to benefit from gleaning, however, including the landless and school children who collect it on the way to school for pocket money. Mandusi thus benefits families without trees as they can earn a

reasonable income from this practice but it also benefits those with access rights because the gleaners clean the land in the process of collect-ing fallen nutmeg. Gleaning thus contributes to the health of the crop and the more equitable dis-tribution of income across households. The nut-meg tree and its harvest are enmeshed with multiple types of economic transactions, and mandalolose and mandusi are community eco-nomic practices that distribute surplus to enrich social and environmental health.

Arisan (rotating savings and credit group) Indonesia Arisan is a rotating credit system that has been present in Indonesia for over one hundred years. In contemporary times, arisan involves a regular meeting of a consistent group whereby each member contributes an equal amount of money or goods at each meeting. A draw is held allowing one member to receive the combined sum of contributions. The mem-bers may also contribute more and have more than one chance so they can win the draw sev-eral times. This rotates around the group until everyone has won according to their contribu-tions. It is customary that the winner will host the following round. Arisan provides a social platform for community members to both save money and gather regularly. Trust is an impor-tant element of arisan: all members need to fin-ish the round, so that every person gets a turn taking home the pot of money. There is no legal agreement in place among the members, but the practice works through social sanctions. Each member must be involved and present for each regular round. If members are unable to bring the amount on the day of the arisan, another member can be approached discreetly to pay for them so they are not excluded (and then if they win, they pay back the lenders per-sonally). When difficult occasions arise, such as sudden financial burdens following family death or accident, the winner can give their winning turn to the members most in need and continue joining the draw for another round. This allows people in need to access immediate financial support with no interest.

Punggawa-Sawi (captain-sailor or patron-client) Southeast Sulawesi, Indonesia Coastal and maritime communities in Southeast Sulawesi,

known as Sama Bajo, use the phrase pung-gawa-sawi to characterise patron–client connections. The phrase has its origins in the distinction between captains and boat crews. These bonds remain fundamental to the conduct of their fishing based livelihoods and the historical reproduction of their sea- based household economies. Punggawa-sawi expresses the idea of an economic safety net but also a form of market-based interdependency founded on debt (Pelras, 2000). These days Punggawa are usually wealthier traders and residents of local Sama bajo villages. They provide a regular source of credit for Sawi crew members to cover household living costs and emergency expenses especially dur- ing the southeast monsoon when high winds and big swells limit fishing activity. In return, Sawi crews are obliged to sell their catch to Punggawa or their agents (pengumpul) when the fishing season revives. As a framework and mechanism for social resilience in the face of uncertainty and the vagaries of maritime-based fortunes, the punggawa–sawi relationship has proved its value over hun- dreds of years. But it comes at a cost of autonomy and the freedom to pursue alterna- tive economic choices that might offer more attractive returns.

Key reflections

The keywords we have presented are just a sample of a vast vocabulary of practices spread across Monsoon Asia and perhaps beyond. Certainly, many of the practices described are engaged in by people all around the world. However, the naming of each and the micro-negotiations that constitute each transaction and ethical commitment are distinct and place specific.

What collectively situates them together on a plane of potentiality is, among other things, their inherent sociality and flexibility, their commitment to human and more than human well-being and their unique temporalities. The enduring value of these various practices, relations and knowledges is reinforced by their persistence, creative adaptability and resistance to total appropriation (despite frequent attempts of state co-option). These relations, practices and associated knowledges and cosmovisions are by no means isolated, traditional or static, although their historical roots run deep. Rather, these relations and practices reveal the creative negotiation that communities in this interconnected part of the world have long pursued in response to external forces and agents of change (Langton et al., 2006).

We are not yet in a position to offer a definitive answer to the question of whether these community economy practices might offer different 'post-development' pathways. But, we can reflect on themes that connect these keyword entries and identify some of the emerging contours of community economies in Mon- soon Asia.

Other temporalities

The keywords describe relations marked by cycles of life and death (yuu kam, pha kwan, hamutu moris hamutu mate, dana), and practices that seek to mitigate misfortune through careful opportunities to redistribute risk (arisan) and wealth (jimpitan) as well as encourage reciprocity (bayanihan, kamañidungan, provas, dana) and mutual obligation (punggawa–sawi). Detailed, complex and situated hydro-ecological knowledge (mudalolose, mandusi, sống chung vó'i lʉ) enables resilience in the face of variability, shocks and stresses. All these activities contribute to collective survival strategies that can be activated when needed, responding to seasonal climatic variations, life cycles and spiritual connections across time.

In this sense they are always situated in multiple time-frames, activating past knowledges, ensuring futures will be secure, attending to the many presents experienced by different community members. They are not governed by the linear time of capital accumulation and the presentist logic of the market (de Sousa Santos, 2007: 72). They are like the diverse seeds that are increasingly being exchanged by people's organisations that offer a variety of planting and harvesting times, opening up different temporalities to those of genetically modified varieties. These seeds manifest the past, the heritage of peoples, the places that created them and the future, as future harvests. They are thus both a disruptive force to the present logic of capital
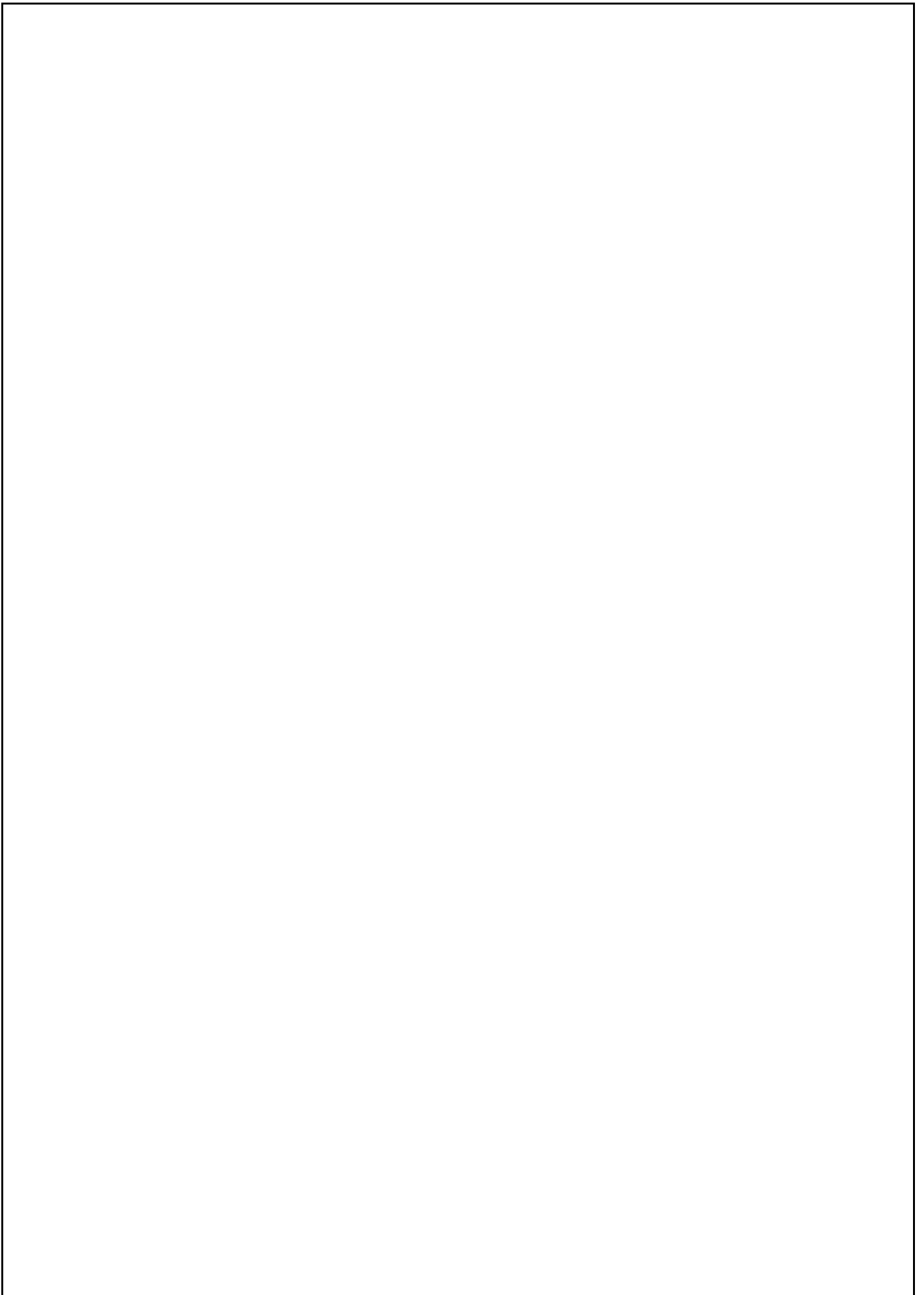
and an embodiment of hopeful futures/presents/pasts.

Already hybrid

Community economic practices are responsive to changing technologies, environmental processes and state intervention. They are already hybrid in the sense that they are part of both community economies and global capitalist economies. For generations punggawa–sawi (the Indonesian captain–sailor patron–client relationship) has produced marine products that have entered into exploitative global commodity value chains. Other practices have been co-opted by government policies that attempt to turn them into raw materials for modernisation and scale them up into standardised govern- ment development initiatives. In the 1960s, for- mer Philippine president and dictator Ferdinand Marcos employed bayanihan (reciprocal labour exchange) as a strategy in building his idea of a New Society (Bagong Lipunan) to further his political and economic interests (San Juan, 2007). Similarly, under the Suharto New Order regime, Javanese customary institutions such as jimpitan (small gifts of rice for social use), arisan (small rotating credit groups) and gotong royong (community labour activities) were widely disseminated as national programmes of economic development or social protection across the Indonesian archipelago. They often failed to translate effectively into other socio-cultural contexts and more usually simply became a vehicle for misappropriation of government expenditure. In Cambodia in the early 1980s, Heng Samrin sought to enforce provas-reliant 'solidarity groups' (krom samaki) to make efficient use of farming resources. But more enforced collective labour in the aftermath of traumas experienced under the Khmer Rouge was unconducive to restoring village life (Meas, 1995). Meanwhile, insofar as these practices pertain to World Bank community-driven development projects enacted with 'social funds', the practices have been instrumentally construed as 'social capital' and selectively used for / channelled into support for linear and unsustainable capitalist economic growth.

But the direction of change is not always set. Provincial and municipal governments on Batan Island in the northern Philippines have incorporated cooperative labour and material sharing in response to the monetisation and privatisation of cogon grass growing. The communal grass (cogon) reserves are being maintained, financed and managed by the government around Ivana and Uyugan. The government has established a scheme whereby community members can access the cogon for free so long as they have a low-cost permit and use the cogon for roofing. The government scheme is a way of generating an open access cogon commons which in turn encourages the preservation of cogon roofing skills and the continuation of kamanidungan (collective labour practices). The scheme is one example of local agencies working to enable community practices like kamanidungan to continue. Overall, recent field observations in Batanes show that kamanidungan continues to play an important role, and equally that local institutions are committed to finding ways forward that meld traditional knowledge and practice into present day survival and resilience.

Collective care of humans and non-humans[8]

If care refers to all the work that we do 'maintain, continue and repair our world so we might live in it as well as possible' (Tronto, 1993: 103), a community economy of care is one where negotiations around what it takes to sur- vive well includes negotiations around care for our 'world' – our societies, families, environ- ments, traditional practices and ways of life (Dombroski et al., 2018). In many of the exam- ples of economic activities, care was interwo- ven into the practice in ways quite different from other forms of capitalist economy. For example, arisan members could gift their win- ning turn to another when times were hard, or indeed, pay for another person's turn if they were short that week. Another example is that care taken in preparing trays and gifts for the baci ceremony ending the period of yuu kam when Lao women give birth. While these forms of exchange are not purely altruistic, they are certainly infused with a form of care that main- tains, continues and repairs the world, including the social and spiritual worlds.

The practices of giving and receiving that occur in association with pha kwan require an expanded vision of what and who is engaged in the exchanges and transactions that secure individual and community well-being. The life-

cycle rituals and contributions signal the need to take into account an expanded view of what is necessary for surviving well. The health and well-being of individuals, and the communities that they are part of, depend in part on maintaining not just the human members of that community but the unseen spiritual world that they are connected to in life and in death. The gifting of material goods and cash that takes place around these pivotal moments in the life-cycle can be understood as a distribution of surplus, yet the surplus is distributed not just to living people, but to flighty souls. Thus, as the same time as the material needs of community members are attended to through the giving of gifts for a new baby, or the collection of cash contributions to funeral costs, emotional and spiritual needs are also cared for. The care given is part of what brings communities into being, through transactions that take place between human and non-human elements of both the seen and the unseen worlds.

Bayanihan (the practice of reciprocal labour) is a form of collective sociality that, in the case of informal miners, cushions their common economic hardships. There are times when the wife of another miner acts as the collector of contributions and makes a list of the labour performed and amount given by individuals or families. This accounting keeps track of the total sum of collection and, compared with arisan in Indonesia and dana in Myanmar, is not used as proof of what amount has to be reciprocated by the recipient. In its more general application among acquaintances or strangers, bayanihan is a form of pakikipagkapwa, or a way of extending self to others. Some do not even deliberately expect something in return (kawanggawa). In this case, bayanihan could be seen as a form of volunteering. However, it is always generally anticipated that those who are helped by a bayanihan practice will extend the good deed to others (though not necessarily the one who was directly aided) in a similar situation in the future. The good deed may not necessarily be as a form of labour; it could also be in a form of gift or time. The main point is that the ethics of care, compassion and being together is reverberated so that the spirit of bayanihan lives on.

As a practice jimpitan provides a form of financing for community emergencies, events, or initiatives. It is a resilient form of financing arising from caring community relations that pursue shared interests and value collective actions. While it is important to note its limited amount, the jimpitan fund is more flexible, adaptive and reliable than government support or foreign aid, providing communities with possibilities to pursue projects and support one another in the absence of outside assistance. While most jimpitan practices engage with market economies at some level (to raise money for the fund through selling rice for example) the practices of donation and decision-making are rarely market-oriented; instead they seek to improve community life in diverse ways. Financing, for example, has been directed for initiatives such as Posyandu health posts to support children and pregnant women, to set up low cost services that make dining and cooking equipment available for cultural events and to fund roads and other infrastructure that external agencies have failed to support. In these, and many other ways, jimpitan enlarges the possibilities and opportunities for communities to draw upon local strengths in pursuit of collective goals. For this sort of community financing to be effective and just it is important that representation on jimpitan decision-making bodies is inclusive, open and fair. When done well jimpitan challenges the dependencies and power relations inherent within conventional top-down financing flows and provides a model of community economic practices that is likely to have value for interested communities far beyond its Javanese origins.

Seeds are being cared for and reclaimed by farmers' networks, Indigenous people, peoples' organisations, farmers and farming families despite capitalist norms of monocultural, high-input agriculture and threats from privatised regimes of intellectual property (Wright, 2005). Seeds, then, do not only reflect place, they help create it. Yet, seeds are also a form of relationality and connectedness. For seeds do not have to be sold, they do not have to be subject to Western, dominant forms of intellectual property. Seeds may be selected and shared in ways that support diverse nourishing life worlds. They may be supported through open source systems, regulated by deep cultural norms, or may be shared freely through diverse systems of

knowledge and ownership that support, and are led by, farmers and Indigenous people beyond corporate and Western control. Seeds, then, are points of connection to place, to each other; even as they are planted by a different person, in a different plot, they become that place too with its own history and present. And in doing so, seeds have the potential to disrupt the conventional regimes of capitalist exchange in a number of ways, as illustrated by the system of seed exchange and farmer-led breeding by MASIPAG in the Philippines. First, for example, the use of bayanihan – say one day per month when farmers work on each other's land or support each other in emergency situations – represents both the intentional resuscitation of this deeply held cultural practice under threat from the individualising tendencies of mono-agricultural capital, as well as a non-commodified system of reciprocal, negotiated labour practice. Second, the collection of traditional varieties, the farmer-led breeding of new place-based varieties and the farmer-to-farmer sharing of these varieties of seeds is a deep form of multi-temporal commoning. That is to say, sharing seeds is a form of commoning now (both materially and epistemologically, as the seeds manifest the knowledge-making practices of previous generations), as well as a commoning-to-come in the form of future har- vests. In this respect, seeds are not an object practised on, or a privately-owned means of production, but are themselves an active subject in the sustenance of community life, a non- human actor that takes its place in a more-than- human community of care.

Sociality and surplus distribution

A final theme concerns community-based mechanisms for distributing wealth and surplus for either material livelihood benefit or to reduce vulnerability and enhance resilience. But also wrapped up in these mechanisms is sociality. The enactment of social relationships is foregrounded as important, in and of themselves, inherently producing individual and community well-being. Much of the surplus distribution is through non-market transactions, whereby people, groups and communities self-organise, using monetary donations and material gifts to express appreciation and to honour and acknowledge what has been given or sacrificed in various relationships. The important function of sociality embedded in such transactions is often missed or overlooked, with the focus solely placed on helping to overcome hardship or make households more financially secure.

In Myanmar's higher education sector, through charitable acts of giving donations (dana), alumni members foreground social relationships as important, in and of themselves, inherently producing and reproducing social and economic well-being among extensive alumni communities. Across the entire higher education sector, the surplus of alumni members, measured in thousands of US dollars, is distributed to the country's retired teachers through thousands of self-organised non-market transactions, year after year. No one is forgotten; even those retirees who cannot attend annual ceremonial events on university campuses will be graced with a home visit, no matter where they reside. The donations and gifts are a public expression of appreciation and they honour and acknowledge what has been given or sacrificed in the student–teacher relationship. The cash donations are also meant to help to overcome hardship or make households more financially secure, particularly to supplement government pensions as teachers move into retirement. Teachers are financially supported to help their own ageing parents, and as they themselves age, their alumni communities support them more.

Conclusion

Our collective project of documenting and assembling keywords of community economies aims to challenge the hegemony of a development lexicon that pins progress to modern rationalities and the growth of capitalism. This exercise offers a productive addendum to the critical work of Wolfgang Sachs' Development Dictionary (1992) and Andrea Cornwall and Deborah Eade's exposé of development 'buzzwords and fuzzwords' (2010). What these dictionaries lack are alternative lexicons inclusive of words that emerge from place. This paper has drawn attention to keywords for place-based practices that express 'other', non-capitalist rationalities. Our aim is not to pull these words from their localised contexts and launch them

into some idealised realm of inter-cultural understanding (Esteva and Prakash, 2014:118, fn6). It is, instead, to stay with practices in place and explore their productivity within ecologies of surviving well.

The keywords we have collected are ready to begin to populate a different map of the eco- nomic geography of Monsoon Asia. They are fill- ing in that sociology of absence that has left community economic practices in the shadows, delegitimised and incapable of offering any via- ble pathways to a different future. If one of the tasks of imagining and enacting alternatives to development is to multiply possibilities and allow for newly emergent ways of living together and surviving well (Dombroski, 2015), then our key- words project is making an initial contribution.

Our compendium of diversity cannot, how- ever, ignore the 'modern' development project with which community economic practices co- exist. Many practices have been rebadged or changed under colonialism or in post-colonial contexts. In some places where there is knowl- edge and awareness about what has been lost, old, past practices are being resuscitated. We are just beginning to articulate the distinctive logics of interdependence that shape the com- munity economic practices gathered here. This work involves learning to be affected by differ- ence, appreciating what thick description can do and experimenting with new ways of co- working with others.

We have only just begun the task of inventorying and we invite others to join us.

Acknowledgements

Notes

1 This paper is one output of a workshop on Keywords of Community Economies in Monsoon Asia held in September 2017 at Western Sydney University as part of the ARC Discovery Project 150102285 Strengthening Economic Resilience in Monsoon Asia. The workshop was organised by Chief Investigators Katherine Gibson, Ann Hill and Lisa Law with assistance from Joanne McNeill and Isaac Lyne and attended by seven of the authors. A second output is the Keywords of Monsoon Asia Website www.communityeconomiesasia.wordpress. com. This website provides an on-line focus for commu- nication in which we are testing out the possibilities for a new mode of decolonised scholarship (Chen, 2010).

2 The Spanish term 'cosmovision' has emerged in the Latin American context where a strong indigenous presence has mobilised a language to resist the predations of colo- nialism, capitalism and enlightenment rationalism. Cos- movision attempts to grasp the integration of place or territory, history, ecology and spirit within an embodied worldview with its own logics of appropriation and inter- connection (Escobar, 2008: 58).

3 The countries from which entries have been compiled for this paper include Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, Myan- mar, Bangladesh, India, the Philippines, Indonesia and Timor Leste. This starting point reflects the locations and field experience of the network of scholars convened by our Workshop and thus represents only a portion of the entire region of Monsoon Asia.

4 Whether our attempts thus far to bring the materiality and temporality of weather and other more than human elements to bear on the sociality of practices is convinc- ing or not, it remains a guiding motivation for this pro- ject. We are interested navigating around the racist and Eurocentric legacies of environmental determinism to understand the specificity of 'tropical community econo- mies' without also suggesting any inherent regional homogeneity, or reinstating the kind of 'trait' geography that van Schendel is critiquing (2002: 658).

5 See also Go (2017) who, while not explicitly deploying a keywords approach, interrogates local meanings of the term waray (literally 'none' or 'nothing') denoting both the language of people in the Eastern Visayas region of the Philippines and attitudes of 'brinksmanship' and 'ferocity' that comprise the resilience to withstand the ravages of extreme weather events that often leave them with nothing (233).

6 Even with recognition, customary practices become known only as 'shadow-space' terms in relation to Islamic law and Western colonial law (Tsing, 2009b: 43).

7 This selection of keywords forms the beginning of a larger collaborative compilation (see www.community economiesasia.wordpress.com).

8 The Seeds of Resilience Research Collective contributed to the selection of this keyword. They are: Mr Ambuj Soni, Mr Duskar Barik, Prof Madhushree Sekher, Dr Venkata Ramanjaneyulu Gangula, Prof Nimruji Pra- sad Jammulamadaka, Ms Ma Corazon Jimenez-Tan, Ms Georita Gallano Pitong, Ms Elizabeth Cruzada, Ms Thi Hong Phuc Dinh, Prof Amita Singh, Ms Analyn Mirano, Ms Emily Cordero-Guara, Mr Adinarayana Kot- tam, Ms Parboti Singh, Mr Sree Harsha Thanneeru, Dr Jagjit Plahe, Prof Gavin Jack, A/Prof Sarah Wright, Mr J. Emmanuel Yap, Ms Eleanor Lang, Mr Lachlan Gregory and Dr Anna Szava.

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