



so strongly reinforced by patronage networks that it is likely to remain—‘everything was forever, until it was no more’.

Uniquely, this book contains an appendix on collaborative practices, which describes how the authors, through some trial and error, settled on a writing style that managed to minimise tendencies for one author to dominate the other. Issues of language and positional bias are discussed candidly, and this account may serve as a valuable guide for authors who wish to undertake collaborative book projects across language and cultural boundaries.

Overall, this book on life inside the Indonesian Plantationocene is an extremely valuable contribution to the literature on palm oil. However, like many good books, in the process of providing answers, it throws up even more questions.

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## Indonesia

*Personal religion and magic in Mamasa, West Sulawesi: The search for powers of blessing from the other world of the gods*

By C.W. BUIJS

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*Personal Religion and Magic in Mamasa, West Sulawesi* consists of an Introduction and five chapters. The first chapter, ‘Religion and Magic’, talks about ‘the other world’ that people seek when they cannot solve problems in their own lives. Therefore, they start a relationship with certain powers or beings (God/gods) who might help them (through prayers, offerings, incantations and the like). The author, C.W. Buijs, talks about Marcel Mauss’ concept of collective representation in which magic is produced by collective forces and ‘magical judgement is formed prior to the experience’ (p. 11). Thus, experience simply confirms what has happened. Buijs also presents Reimar Schefold’s ideas on the meaning of symbolic acts, a system of thought indicating ‘a deeper layer, namely the essence, the soul’ (quoting Schefold, p. 14).

The second chapter, ‘Headlines of the Religion of the Torajas in West Sulawesi’, gives an overview of the autochthonous religion (*aluk to yolo*) of the Torajas, who inhabit the Mamasa River region of West Sulawesi, Indonesia. Until the early twentieth century, the Torajas were isolated, mainly due to their mountainous homeland. The first Christian missionaries were allowed to enter Mamasa in 1907 after Dutch rule over the region started. By the mid-twentieth century, most Torajas had become Christians—at the beginning of the twenty-first century, only about 3 per cent still embraced *aluk to yolo* and lived in so called ‘enclaves of the aluk’. The author lists all the authorities in the *aluk* and society: *tokeadá* (people of the highest rank,

responsible for social regulation, whose ancestors are *tomanurun* who descended from the heavens to earth); *toburake* (priestesses who lead public rituals); *toso'bok* (priests and priestesses responsible for rice cultivation); and *tomebalun* (the death priests who wrap the corpse).

Prayers and offerings are an essential part of Toraja religion, so when people pray to *dewata* (gods) they offer them slaughtered animals, such as chickens, pigs, buffalos, and dogs (depending on the type of ritual). In general, all Toraja rituals can be divided into two essential groups: rituals for life, *rambu tuka*, and rituals for the dead, *rambu solo*, with special regulations concerning the time and place of the ritual, officials involved, rules for sacrificing animals, and the form of offerings. The Torajas believe that the blessings of earthly and heavenly gods are necessary for human well-being and, therefore, they willingly perform very elaborate rituals.

The third chapter, 'Pairan, Individual Religious Responsibility', discusses *pairan*, the personal relations of a human being to the gods. Buijs rightly claims that researchers always pay attention to the public rituals carried out by the community; however, they overlook personal religious activities performed privately to receive blessings for themselves and for the people around them. Despite interviewing many people—old and young—nobody was able to provide a relevant definition of *pairan*, however. In the end, based on many conversations with diverse kinds of people, he sums up that 'Pairan concerns in the first place the personal life and the responsibility for each other in a family and also in the society. People experience a sort of calling and task that comes from the gods, which concerns all the relationships in which they live' (p. 43). The author discusses the importance of the traditional house with its emphasis on the kitchen, considered to be its heart. A part of the text is devoted to the rituals connected with the birth of a child, and last, but not least, to the fact that *pairan* used to permeate the whole society as a religious responsibility and how nowadays elderly people are deeply concerned about *pairan* not being properly performed anymore.

The fourth chapter, 'Stones and Incantations, Vestiges from the Other World of the Gods', details other forms of individual relationships with gods besides *pairan*. The Torajas believe that vestiges in the form of stones and incantations from the other world of gods have the power to ensure good relations with the deities. They can be divided into 'living' and 'dead' vestiges. The former are effective if a living relationship with the gods is maintained, which means that now and then blood from a cockerel's crest must be smeared on the stone. In the case of incantations, the relationship is assured by pronouncing certain words. The dead vestiges, on the other hand, do not require a living relationship with the gods; their efficacy lies in their origin.

The last chapter, 'Pairan and Magic, Personal Religion in Daily Life', summarises the information provided in the previous chapters and looks into the future of practising *pairan* within the Christian faith. The author (inspired by Mauss) claims that magic is different from religion because 'it is not an organized cult but it is carried and maintained by the belief of the community' (p. 139). In the case of the Mamasa Torajas, the difference lies in these three aspects: secrecy, ownership and attachment to objects or words. Buijs concludes that due to new religions, education and political changes, *pairan* cannot be maintained in the modern, mostly Christian, society.

Buijs' study of personal religion and magic reveals the blind spot in previous ethnographies, which have mainly focused on public rituals. He writes in a sophisticated and, at the same time, very readable style; the book is well designed with abundant photographs that perfectly illustrate the issues discussed. There is a convenient glossary at the end of the book, too.

The information presented, obviously supported by extensive fieldwork, is so precious because the autochthonous religion is diminishing, and since the Torajas transmit their knowledge exclusively orally, it will disappear one day. Therefore, a book that includes several eulogies and prayers in high Toraja language, which nowadays even Torajas themselves hardly understand, is priceless ethnographic material. Buijs has preserved information about an ethnic group whose original religion and the rituals connected with it will probably fully disappear in the near future. This book will enable future generations to unravel the culture of their ancestors and, thus, contribute to a better understanding of their own unique history.

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## The Philippines

### *Filipino time: Affective worlds and contracted labour*

By ALLAN PUNZALAN ISAAC

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Allan Punzalan Isaac offers us a temporal framework to understand the lives and labour of Filipinos, in the Philippines and abroad, in relation to and *beyond* the scope of capital: 'Filipino Time'. The introduction reviews the concepts that support his argument, including affect, affective labour, queer relationality and Filipino Time, which he uses to interpret the lives of Filipinos in various industries of care and contracted labour. While the labour of Filipinos produces a commonly circulated narrative of dislocation and disjuncture, it also produces incommensurable life-making socialities and creative capacities when time is viewed as multivalent and multidirectional. The argument is exemplified through a wide range of material, including interviews, novels, plays, documentary films, and other media. In doing so, Isaac draws out Filipinos' relations and proximity to capital, but also how they create new worlds and imagine new futures despite their assigned capitalist labour-time locations. Isaac allows interdisciplinary scholars and writers of Filipino/a/x labour a way to acknowledge the determinism of capitalist relations, while holding in tension the life-affirming practices of Filipino Time.

In chapter 1 Isaac turns to Ramona Diaz's documentary, *The Learning*, about Filipina migrant teachers of Black American students in Baltimore, Maryland. He notes that the conjoined histories and trajectories of both groups—Filipina migrants and Black youth—are bound up in the reverberations of slavery in the United States