
This book focuses on negotiations of first-class citizenship and nation-states from viewpoints of ethnic minorities and simultaneously examines processes in which state power culturally excludes minority ethnic groups from the category of full citizens. Culture in this book is seen as being in a process of construction and reconstruction, entangled with power and history. In the introduction of the book, Rosaldo, the editor of this volume, develops Geertz and Anderson’s works about nation-state formations. He reinterprets Geertz’s concept of “primordial sentiments” (Geertz 1973) as “recent creations or else older loyalties that have been newly transformed” (4); he also criticizes Anderson (1991) for focusing on only metropolitans and the elite and ignoring minorities and non-elites in his discussion about national building. This collection examines how state power marginalizes minorities and non-elites, who may have recently recreated strong attachments or loyalties, and how they accept, contest, and challenge national ideologies imposed by the states in hinterland Southeast Asia.

Island Southeast Asia is an area where a variety of cultures, languages, religions, and historical experiences exist. The six chapters of this volume deal with three countries, the Philippines, Malaysia, and Indonesia. The first two chapters discuss Muslim population’s struggles over their claims on citizenship in the Philippines. In the first chapter, Horvatich
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discusses from a historical perspective the creations of contradictory identities—Sama, Moro, and Filipino—among the Muslim Sinama speakers. Horvatich interestingly claims that the modern education system and nationalism, which must have played a role of creation of homogeneous citizens according to preceding studies, produce intellectual leadership that creates a shared Sama identity—which enables the Sinama speakers to resist the domination of another Muslim ethnic group and Filipinization of their culture. Blanchetti-Revelli discusses pan-Muslim Filipino or Moro identity and analyzes changing meanings of the term Moro. He argues how Muslim minorities in the Philippines positively redefined the category of Moro in their national movements, and how the successive state powers have changed meanings of Moro as well as the category of full-citizens in processes of the state formations.

In the third chapter, Brosius examines how the Penan perceive the Malaysian state and government through an analysis of discourses among and mutual images of the Malaysian government, the Penan, and environmentalists from developed countries. According to Brosius, based on their cultural values, the Penan see the Malaysian government as a mere successor of another government and as morally deficient: for them, Malaysia is not an inclusive moral community as Anderson (1991) notes in his discussion about nationalism. Rather, they find hope in the colonial government, whose image reflects northern environmentalists (although the image the present government has of the colonial government and northern environmentalists is contrary to that held by the Penans).

In one of the last three chapters dealing with Indonesia, Atkinson compares two types of history, anthropological historical accounts based on Wana narratives, and the Indonesian government’s public history, and shows differences between interests of the local elite and ordinary people. She claims that while an anthropological historical account overlooks elements of nationalism in a millenarian movement, public history depicts the same event in order to contribute to nation building and loses viewpoints of ordinary local people. She notes that although the Indonesian state acknowledges cultural pluralism, the government admits it only within the limits the state establishes. In the fifth chapter, Kuipers claims that although preceding studies about citizenship analyze either institutions or consciousness, such analytical frameworks are not useful for a study of Sumbanese society. Instead, he examines Sumbanese activities, such as verbal performances, which represent their participations in social lives. He states that in pre-colonial times, verbal performances brought charismatic as well as political power, but since the Sumbanese experienced state political power, their verbal performances became signs indicating that they participate in the state as audience members. In the last chapter, providing plenty of examples, Tsing claims that people in South Kalimantan participate in the nation-state through their own ways of spreading and constructing/reconstructing news. She states that various interpretations of news can coexist and that examples she analyzes do not show people’s consciousness of horizontal comradeship among citizens, as Anderson (1991) notes, but hierarchical relationships.

All these six chapters in this volume follow Rosaldo’s dichotomy between metropolis and hinterlands, the center and the peripheral, or the mainstream and minorities. However, these are relative terms and at least the editor and some of the authors are certainly aware of this. In this relation, I have a question about whether those who live in hinterlands really have perceptions of the states that are quite different from those of metropolitans. It is not strange that the same national ideologies that marginalize some people are seen as belonging to the category of the mainstream of the nation. If the authors focused on individuals, the boundary between metropolitans and people in hinterlands may have been blurred.

Nonetheless, each chapter provides unique insights into studies of citizenship and
the mechanisms of marginalization through criticisms of preceding studies. The book also contributes to ethnographies of Island Southeast Asia, providing new viewpoints derived from the critiques. Although many anthropologists look for non-elites and minorities in Anderson’s famous book (1991), this collection satisfies these needs.

REFERENCES CITED

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