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## *Editorial Board*

Hamza Alavi, Keith Buchanan, Malcolm Caldwell, Jean Chesneaux,  
Noam Chomsky, Peggy Duff, Jonathan Fast, Gabriel Kolko, C.R. Hensman,  
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## ARTICLES

George Lee

**An Assimilating Imperialism**

Adrian Chan (translator)

**Nguyen Ai Quoc (Ho Chi Minh) – The Youth of Annam**

Richard W. Franke

**Limited Good and Cargo Cult in Indonesian Economic Development**

Michael Morrow

**Thailand: Bombers and Bases – America's New Frontier**

Premen Addy

**South Asia in China's Foreign Policy – A View from the Left**

John Gittings

**China-watching in Hongkong**

## REVIEWS

Ian Buchanan

**China's Changing Map**

C.R. Hensman

**The Cultural Revolution in China**

Christopher Collingwood

**Man and Land**

## DOCUMENTS

The New Asia, by *Renato Constantino*: Indochina Manifesto: Vietnam; Capital of the  
New World, by *Josie Fanon*: Vietnam Policy; Superficially Ingenious, by *Gabriel Kolko*:  
Korean Unification: How Green the Revolution, by *Marvin Harris*: They are not  
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Richard W. Franke

## Limited Good and Cargo Cult in Indonesian Economic Development

Millenarian movements are no new phenomenon to the Javanese countryside. From the early nineteen-hundreds revolt led by the Jogjakarta Prince Diponegoro to the communalistic Samin upsurge of the last decade of that century much of rural Java was from time to time caught up in searches for the *ratu adil*, or just king, the state of *semadi* or inner peace, or a new social order described as *sama rata sama rasa*, equality and unanimity. A long-time student of Javanese society and religion summarises the apparent immediate cause of these whirlwinds "... by the nineteenth century the capitalistic economy of Dutch estate and mining enterprises and the penetration of other Western culture patterns by means of the colonial administrative apparatus in all phases of Indonesian life, introduced alien and disorganising forces of such magnitude that the traditional cosmology was unable to absorb them." He goes on to point out that post-colonial Indonesia continued to be subject to these swirls of millenarism, associated in part with the "Marxist doctrine of international revolution" and in part with the traditional cosmology of the Javanese.<sup>1</sup>

Today the situation is undefined after the massive social upheaval which followed in the wake of the coup d'état of 30 Sept. 1965, but already fragmentary evidence suggests that millenarian fever has not altogether subsided in rural Java and may even be regaining ground lost during the anti-Communist slaughters of 1965-66. In East Java reports are frequently heard of mass conversions to Balinese Hinduism. In Central Java there is talk of large-scale rise in Christian membership, especially among *abangan* or "syncretist" Hindu-Moslems, and the Buddhist *pangestu* movement, a Javanese mystical sect, appears on the rise also, especially in the Solo-Jogja area, the recognised centre of Javanese traditional culture. Though little is known at present about these movements and especially about their recruitment bases, it seems safe to conclude at least that there is a vague fluxing underway in rural Java, one without particular direction and without a defined and aggressive revolutionary philosophy, but one which nevertheless expresses both a dissatisfaction with things as they are, and a need to look for new sources of spiritual growth.

Such is not the case in the major cities, however, nor among the government officers and administrators in all parts of the island. Far from the vague and unorganised yearnings which are spawned amidst the tight life of the small farmer and the even more desperate situation of the landless labourer, government people and some of the business elite have found a unifying ideology to help them deal with the new times. It is not that government

workers in Indonesia have, relative to their rural counterparts, such an unsatisfactory situation. Salaries may be low, absurdly so to foreigners, but even the office typist who earns but Rp. 1,000 per month (about \$2.50) is already twice as well off as a small landowner or landless labourer in Central Java. In addition government employees receive a rice allowance, medical benefits, and frequently a house. For higher officials there are expense accounts, cars, trips abroad to attend conferences, or at least to local vacation spots to attend "upgradings" from time to time. A quick check on the so-called underpaid government employee in Indonesia can be made by any amateur social scientist travelling around Java who will stop at the first-class Chinese restaurant in every town he passes through. Inside will be seen members of the local armed forces, the local tax office, the local traffic police, the local agricultural extension service, the local health department, and so on, paying out for one meal what a landless labourer spends on food for his family in one entire month of good employment.

But being relatively better off than one's all too poor neighbours is not always as satisfying to persons involved as the moralistic observer might want to demand; and Indonesians, like other people, are subject to pressures and influences, both subtle and overt, which can tend to push the stage of complete satisfaction yet another rung away. And so the town-based government employees and some members of the business community have begun to create their own private "revolution of rising demands," and since every revolution needs an ideology, they have looked around them and found one. This ideology, which bears so many similarities with "conventional" millenarian movements, is nevertheless quite different both from its traditional rural counterparts and from the major theoretical models offered to explain them, and at once has implications for Indonesia's latest attempt at economic development.

### I. Limited Good in a Javanese Village

The anthropologist George Foster was apparently the first to formulate explicitly and point out the apparent generality of "the image of limited good in peasant societies." This concept summarises the often noted ideas and behaviour complexes among peasants who express their belief that all goods, both material and spiritual, are strictly limited in quantity and that for one person to acquire more of anything requires a compensatory loss by someone else in the community. Recently Foster's formulation has come under attack from G. Huizer who suggests that the concept cannot be validated in isolation from the "culture of repression" which forces its way onto peasant society from above. In his reply Foster notes that he had intended to draw "an important distinction" between scarcity in fact and scarcity as it is perceived, but Javanese peasants would immediately take issue with Foster on this matter both in what they say and in what they do.<sup>2</sup> Land is in tight supply, especially in East and Central Java, and rental fees express with excruciating accuracy the productive capacity of a piece of irrigated paddy field. In one village along the north coast of Central Java, the best land rents for Rp. 35,000 per hectare in the rainy season when farmers hope for a harvest of about 40 quintals while during the dry season when the expected return drops to 35 qt. the rent becomes Rp. 30,000.

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In another region, nearer the ocean where saline effects reduce the rainy season harvest to only 8 qt./ha. rents drop to a corresponding Rp. 7,000. Further and more minute variations can be based on soil type as distinguished by consistency such as *entjer*, meaning soil that holds water for long periods of time, *tandus*, or porous soil, or by chemical content as indicated to the farmer by a simple but reliable colour scheme: *tanah telong* ("tri-coloured land") which is a mixture of sand, clay, and lime and which is known from experience to give the best harvests, and *tanah lempung* a black clay soil which is said to require larger amounts of fertiliser than *tanah telong*. These categories are further refined by considering the distance from an irrigation canal which varies from *loh*, or close-by, to *upat-upat*, land so far from the headwater of the canal that it may only be

Table I

*Land Types and Simplified Rental Prices and Harvest Expectations in the Village of Lestari, Central Java, 1970-71*

Rainy Season, 1969-70 and 1970-71

Land Type	Irrigation	Rent	Harvest	Selling Price
tanah telong	loh	Rp. 35,000	40 qt.	Rp. 450,000
tanah telong	"medium"	Rp. 32,000	36 qt.	Rp. 360,000
tanah telong	diupat-upat	Rp. 20,000	25 qt.	Rp. 160,000
tanah lempung	loh	Rp. 20,000	32 qt.	Rp. 300,000
tanah lempung	"medium"	Rp. 17,000	20 qt.	Rp. 200,000
tanah lempung	diupat-upat	Rp. 14,000	17 qt.	?

Dry Season, 1970 and 1971

Land Type	Irrigation	Rent	Harvest	Selling Price
tanah telong	loh	Rp. 30,000	35 qt.	
tanah telong	medium	Rp. 25,000	25-30 qt.	
tanah telong	diupat-upat	rarely rented,	highly uncertain	
tanah lempung	loh	Rp. 20,000	20-25 qt.	
tanah lempung	medium	Rp. 14,000	17-20 qt.	
tanah lempung	diupat-upat	rarely rented	highly uncertain	

NOTES: All figures are for one hectare, but many Javanese farmers think of land in terms of *bahu*. One *bahu* is 0.7 ha.

There is no *tanah tandus* in the village; all figures for *tanah entjer*.

Less renting occurs in general during the dry season as the village economy shifts from part-commercialisation to subsistence production. Only the rainy season crop is regularly put up for sale on the market, though a few very large land-owners and some village officials, who receive land grants as their pay, are able to exchange rice for cash in the dry season.

safely planted in secondary crops such as corn, peanuts, or soybeans during the dry season. Table I gives an idealised summary of these land classifications, but a local farmer would want to know exactly which piece of land he was about to rent, and would know its particular worth to a finer degree than the chart can show.

But land is not the only stringently limited good in rural Java. Farming inputs are also in short supply, and in spite of government low-interest loans, most farmers remain bound to the practice of *ngirit* or skimping on the recommended doses of fertiliser and pesticides. This practice often leads to frustrations on the part of local agricultural extension workers.

Sukardi, the local extension worker, invited us to accompany him and a touring American advisor to a nearby village to talk with a farmer known in the area for his "modern" ideas. Great was Sukardi's disappointment when the farmer explained his preference for endrine, a spray chemical, over basudin, a new systemic pesticide by arguing that with endrine you can spray plant by plant as you see the stem borers appear, while basudin must be scattered over the soil in advance and in prescribed amounts. Sometimes with endrine you can save half of your planned outlay if not too many plants are attacked. As we climbed back into the jeep to leave, Sukardi grumbled about how farmers never listened to scientific advice since they are always trying to cut financial corners.

What this farmer was expressing, however, was not only the very limited supply of capital. To be able to send out people with their hand sprayers every few days to search for infected plants that can be sprayed individually, one must command a cheap and dependable supply of labour, and in rural Central Java that supply is only too cheap and too eager for work. It is perhaps the only "unlimited" anything in the villages. The severity of the relationship between services offered and opportunities to exchange those services for goods can be appreciated from a village census which shows that 112 of 269 families are continually in debt at least one season in advance, having to take an estimated 25% reduction in potential ("market") wages in order to borrow the desperately needed money in advance of the labour which they can offer.<sup>3</sup> This practice is known as *idjon kerdja* (*kerdja* means "work" and *idjon*, which originates from the word for "green", indicates the long-known Javanese pattern of selling the harvest to a speculator before the plants have begun to bear grain; this classical *idjon* is also practiced, but its incidence is slight, occurring only in 7 of the 269 families while a total of 17 different families "bought" *idjon*, some from farmers in nearby villages). The competition for position as an employed agricultural labourer can be further appreciated from the fact that only 13 farming families regularly buy *idjon kerdja* in the village.

Further evidence for the operation of the Limited Good concept among Javanese villagers is found in their attitudes towards those who have become wealthy. Better-off villagers always got that way through a combination of chance, praying long nights at the local shrine, and getting special contact with God, practicing *ngirit*, and especially by being *njetil*, or stingy. Often the more deprecatory *gudji* will be used to explain how so-and-so got to own a coveted ½ hectare of paddy field while most people cannot afford to eat rice during the full calendar year. Only two exceptions to the pattern of stinginess could be

discovered. One man insisted that a friend in a nearby village, who owns 3½ ha. of paddy field, most of it inherited from his parents, is a *ndep salangé*. A *salangé* is a container woven from coconut fibres and from which Javanese used to hang food in their houses before the days of the food cupboard. *Andep* means low and the meaning becomes clear.

The second exception was not limited to hanging food low enough from the ceiling beams so that all who passed through could partake. The former village headman, who came to power during the hectic days of the *Gerakan Tiga Daerah*, an as yet little understood local revolutionary movement in three districts along the north coast of Java in 1945, was generally agreed to be the only man in the village who is *blaba*, a true sharer. This headman, who retired after 20 years of service in 1964, is commonly cited as an example of how dangerous is the practice of *blaba*. Though as village head, he commanded an incredible 10 ha. of paddy field for his personal use, at the end of his term in office he was still a relatively poor man, not even the full owner of his house. As one of his neighbours put it:

That's what happens when you are *blaba*. Amin was always giving things away, but now that he has no power, his friends ignore him.

The lesson is clear enough: except for rare birds like Amin, Javanese villagers squeeze each rupiah till the garuda grins.

A final incident will help to show how powerful is the sense of the limited nature of everything. The village of Lestari has a shrine commemorating its founding by a certain refugee from the court in Solo some two hundred years ago. At this shrine people often sit out the night in ascetic prayers, a practice known as *njepi* which is believed to bring favour from on high: a good harvest, luck in the lottery, or success in a local election. But in Lestari's charter history the founder made it plain that anyone who should ever *njepi* at her gravesite must never do the same at the burial site of her brother who accompanied her on the flight from the court of Susuhunan, and who now lies enshrined in a section of the town of Tegal, some 40 km. away. When asked about this injunction which is not explained in the history, a knowledgeable villager thought for a few moments, then replied:

You must not ask for too much. If you have been praying at one shrine and then you go to another, God will know you are trying to get too much and he will only reward your first prayer.

Even the all-powerful God of the Universe, the *Tuhan Jang Mah Esa*, acquiesces unwittingly in the villager's sense of the strictly limited nature of that which can be had by men.

## II. The New Indonesian Cargo Movement

Pardjono is a middle level government employee living in a government-owned house in a fashionable area of Djakarta. Though he clearly suffered during the inflation of the early and mid-1960's, he has not done badly for himself and his family, managing from his salary of Rp. 6,000 per month (about \$16) to acquire a car, television, ice box, fancy stereo set, and the latest Japanese and European clothes for his children as well as some of the most expensive local textile

products. His dream is to buy a newer car and to make a trip to Europe, both seemingly as impossible on his salary as the other goods he has accumulated. But he has figured out a plan, he tells us, and without engaging in corruption, he will go. He will rent out "his" house to a foreign company as office space or housing and the expected \$600 per month will make both his dreams come true. He will find another place to live temporarily, in quarters not so luxurious, but adequate, outside the housing market suitable for foreigners.<sup>4</sup>

Needless to say, land rents in Djakarta are not what they are in the villages. In place of the tight, almost merciless, bargaining which must go on among farmers for control over one season's harvest from a small parcel of land, many of Pardjono's friends have been able to gain sudden wealth from sources which by Indonesian standards seem to be "unlimited". If Pardjono is fortunate in his choice of foreign firm, he will have the rent paid for two or even three years in advance and can go directly to Europe, and perhaps bring back the new car as a souvenir. Such thoughts have definitely entered his mind.

Other examples of a similar nature could be given by most members of the foreign community in Djakarta. Stories are told of rents running as high as \$1500 per month. Equipped with all the Western conveniences such as running water, electricity, and a 6-lane freeway to connect them with the main business district of Djakarta, many of these homes lack only air-conditioning, and this the foreigners will provide of course, selling it off cheaply when they leave. The magnitude of the fortunes envisioned can be appreciated when one considers that Pardjono's \$600/month amounts annually to 121 times the yearly per capita income for Indonesia as estimated by the World Bank for 1969. Certainly an incentive for innovatory behaviour.

The boom cannot last indefinitely of course, at least not at its current level, but enough real cases have occurred to convince people like Pardjono that wealth is just a contract-signing away. And this significant addition: Pardjono considers his coming vacation and automobile to be part and parcel of what everyone around him in the government continually refers to as "development". His derivation of the meaning of the term is not hard to find, when one considers the simple link that can be made between words and the physical changes going on around Djakarta. The city is bubbling over with glistening new foreign banks, hotels, luxurious shopping centres — some of them equipped with that latest of "international class" attractions: female barbers to cut male hair — at least one bowling alley, a modern race track, and an Australian-donated intensive care centre and American-donated cobalt treatment equipment to complete the VIP section of the nation's top hospital. (It might be noted in passing that a government health apparatus of even the simplest kind has yet to appear in the villages.)<sup>5</sup> The entire set-up is not unlike the often-noted practice of cargo cultists to appropriate the symbols of the millenium, believing that by manipulation of these, the sought-after kingdom will come at last.

And come it seems to readers of press reports on Djakarta's new night life, part of that capital's efforts to become what Indonesian government English has dubbed a "metropolitan city". By May of 1971 the governor could claim proudly that his city was so metropolitan as to have 23 entertainment havens, nearly all of them built in the last three years, and many provided with hostesses

who offer conversation to the wandering tourist or businessman. In spite of some moral opposition from Islamic groups, the hostess phenomenon has begun to catch on, and by April, 1971, Semarang, a port city in Central Java, could boast three places of its own where the visitor could rent a pretty smile and some broken English phrases.<sup>6</sup> Spreading from the capital city, the phenomenon has probably caught on in other large towns as well.

A recent newspaper account of the lives of hostesses indicates how they fit into the cargo atmosphere. After describing the natural qualities of beauty, grace, linguistic talent, and politeness which are required of girls who would become hostesses, the reporter begins to dazzle his readers with the economic facts: some girls earn enough to buy motorcycles, cars, new houses, and the like; and one girl claimed her weekly income from salary and tips amounted to Rp. 90,000,<sup>7</sup> which if figured monthly would give her more than Pardjono might get for his house, though of course the hostess cannot expect a three-year advance.

Nor is the fever of sudden money limited to Djakarta and other large cities where some of the success stories actually come true. In local government offices in Central Java the bug is also beginning to spread. A district staff member points his thumb upwards — an Indonesian sign of approval — and exclaims "Wah, America, you people are really making it all possible." By "America" of course he means the foreign countries which have been pouring in funds since the establishment of the Suharto government, and by "it" he means the new typewriters, adding machines, two-storey shopping centre, cars, motorcycles and bicycles and even his superior's new jeep, some of the goods already marked with the hand-shake emblem of USAID, others unmarked but understood to have been given by foreigners. Money will come in as well, and a new office will be built — for the first time in Indonesian history the district office will be air-conditioned like the offices in the Western-import movies.

And everywhere the tourism mania is spreading. Within a few years one is told by an excited production department official in a small town, Americans will be tired of Bali and Djakarta and will be moving out to look at the "real" Indonesia. Already he has drawn up plans for a massive first-class hotel on which work can be started as soon as a foreign bank, made aware of the tremendous tourist attractions in his region's mountains and beaches and rice-fields, will put up the capital to start a "joint venture". "A little advertising and before long we'll be packing them in. After all, now there are American banks in Djakarta and they have lots of money." His face shines with the sincerity and hope of one who has seen a vision. Like Pardjono, the governor of Djakarta, and hundreds of pretty Indonesian hostesses, he has become a follower of the New Indonesian Cargo Movement.<sup>8</sup>

### III. Theoretical Implications of the New Indonesian Cargo Movement

The literature on millenarian movements is enormous, and numerous analytical proposals have been put forward to increase our understanding of them. The anthropologist Anthony Wallace, for example, has developed a four-stage sequence model which he terms a revitalisation cycle, emphasising the sudden exposure of a closed society to the cultural intensity of an outside, usually

Western colonial group. The accompanying loss of self-esteem when the primitive is suddenly faced with the overwhelming technical display of his new master, enemy, doctor, or missionary, brings on psychological strain which leads to massive repudiation of the traditional society couched in the secret language and behaviour of the cult.<sup>9</sup> Peter Worsley and Eric Hobsbawm, among others, have laid the blame more specifically on the capitalist economy which disrupts the stable if static tribal society by placing it coercively among the vagueries of the international market-place. They go on to predict that the millenarian movement, occurring after the first intensive contact with the powerful forces of commercial economy, will evolve into a modern type of political movement, often a revolutionary one since the cult leader and the cult ideology lay the groundwork for supra-village and often supra-tribal or ethnic organisation.<sup>10</sup> Kenneth Burrige's work exemplifies another train of thought on the subject, the detailed analysis of the symbols of the cult, and the manner in which millenarian thinking is built up and held together by various logical processes.<sup>11</sup>

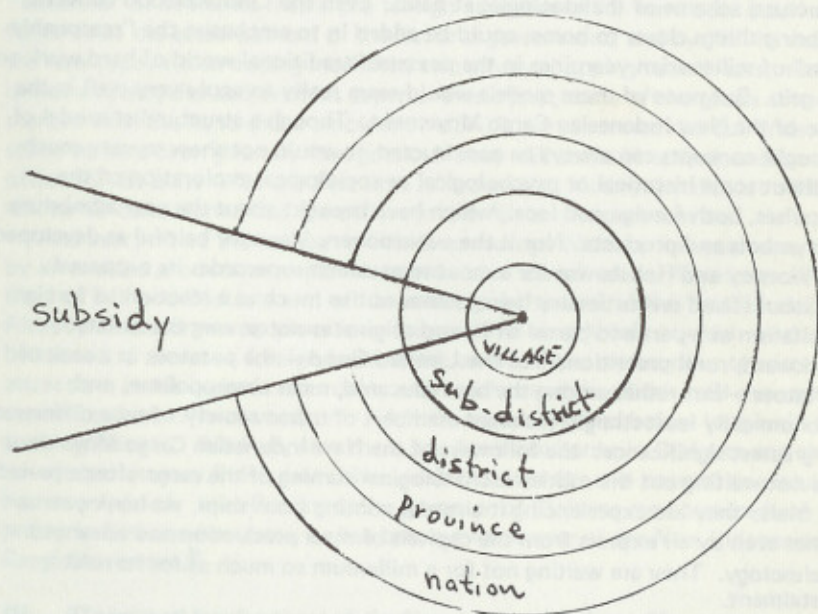
Now the earlier millenarian movements on the Javanese countryside, and perhaps the current millenarian tendencies there, could all be approached from any of these points of view. They can be seen, as the initial quote from Van der Kroef indicates, as reactions to Dutch capitalism and its accompanying cultural matrix, nor would it be difficult to put together a revitalisation sequence or a structural scheme of the ideologies at hand. Even the Limited Good concept, to bring things closer to home, could be added in to emphasise the "reasonableness" of millenarian yearnings in the peasants' traditional world of hard work and no gain. But none of these models would seem really to apply very well in the case of the New Indonesian Cargo Movement. Though a structuralist model of thought concepts can always be constructed, it would not show us very much without some historical or psychological or sociological exploration of the impulses, both foreign and local, which have brought about the new admixture of symbols and products. Nor is the evolutionary idea very helpful as developed by Worsley and Hobsbawm for a movement which supercedes its supposed nationalist and revolutionary heirs, comes not so much as a reaction to foreign capitalism as a part and parcel of it, and originates not among the isolated, backward, rural practitioners of the Limited Good — the potatoes in a sack of potatoes — but rather among the best educated, most cosmopolitan, and economically least straight-jacketed members of urban society. And a difference of greatest significance: the followers of the New Indonesian Cargo Movement are not waiting out the sudden eschatological coming of the cargo after a period of trials; they are experiencing it already, coming from ships, via banks, sometimes even by air express from the capitals of mass production and advanced technology. They are waiting not for a millenium so much as for its next instalment.

And what is more — the new cargo ideology is *not* a "revitalising" influence, either on the government employees who take part in it or for the villagers who must watch its course from far below. Rather it has become a hindrance to the renewal possibilities in Indonesian society.

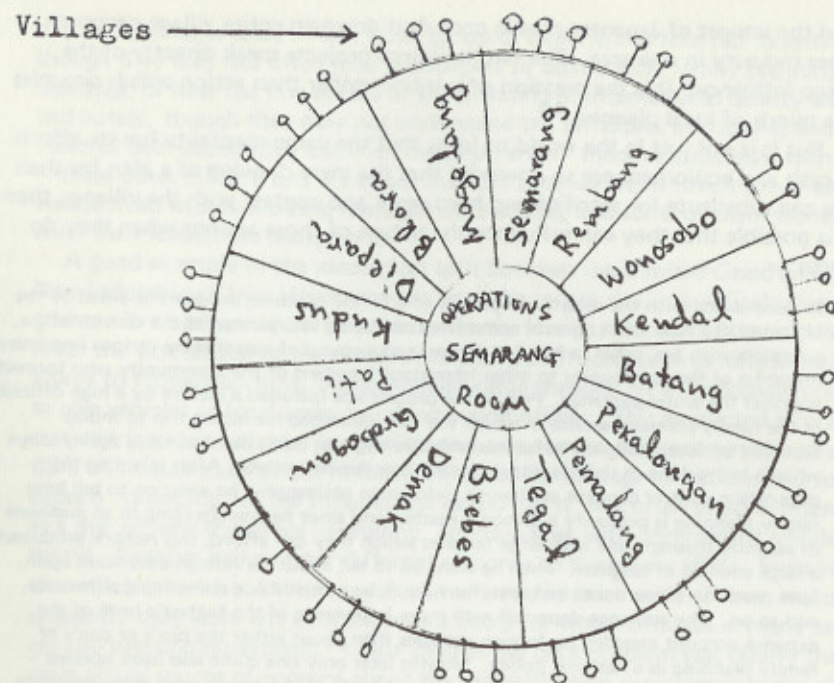
#### IV. Development Implications of the New Indonesian Cargo Movement

Djakarta, the central cargo depot and spiritual centre for the new cargo ideology, has been briefly described. But successful economic development depends not only on cabinet and capital city, but also on the ideas and actions as transferred to the small towns and villages via middle-level government workers.

An all-pervasive by-product of the cargo-fever in lower level offices is the continuing existence, possibly even the recent strengthening of what one might call the "operations room complex". Usually a spanking-new, modern-looking building inside of which is a long conference table, map-bedecked walls, complete with pointer hanging near the chairman's place, the operations room is invariably more empty of people than a museum. Facing the rows of maps on the opposite side of the room hang the "pelaksanaan" (implementation) charts which show how the Repelita or 5-year development plan will be carried out in the particular locality. Here are two sample charts:



In the first chart can be seen how the village programme is encompassed in an ever-larger scheme of development, leading to the national level with subsidies cutting in to provide stimulation to the traditional economy. In the second chart



the role of the operations room is shown, with plans emanating from the provincial capital to various districts and passing finally out to the villages. Asking what the plans are, that is, how the subsidy is going to be used brings on yet another chart, and one that actually appears on the walls of village offices:

National Goal	Village Task
Increasing Food Production	Intensification
Physical Development	New Village Office
Communications Development	Repair Village Road
Educational Development	New Village School Building
Spiritual-Mental Development	Religious Lessons
Industrial Development	Small Industry leading to Medium Industry

Each of these goals and tasks deserves a brief note. Increasing food production by intensification was started under the Sukarno regime.<sup>12</sup> Village roads are not all that bad, especially when one considers that bicycles form the major traffic except for pedestrians. Religious lessons are aimed at persons supposed to have been "influenced" by atheistic communism. Small and medium industry is rather a mystery since government projects and import practices are often contrary to such development: large textile factories with modern Japanese machinery have driven thousands of small hand-loom producers to bankruptcy,

and the import of Japanese plastic cord shut down an entire village coconut-fibre industry in one area. The two buildings projects speak directly of the cargo influence: it is the creation of symbols rather than action which occupies the minds of local planners.<sup>13</sup>

But it is not just in the world of ideas that the cargo mentality has its effects. If cash and equipment are so powerful that the mere drawing of a plan for their use can substitute for sacrifice and hard work and contact with the villages, then it is possible that they can influence the nature of those actions when they do occur:

In accordance with the recent acceptance of a family planning programme aided by the UN and US a local birth control committee was being inaugurated at the district office, complete with tea, cakes, a full rice dinner, and a round of speeches by various important members of the community to other important members of the community who formed together the entire audience. Part of the programme included a lecture by a high official in the family planning service in which the man described his recent trip to India, financed by foreign money as he was only too eager to point out again and again, to see what is being done in that country towards population control. After rejecting the population control concept as alien to Indonesian philosophy, he went on to tell how family planning is primarily a personal matter, and since he was speaking to an audience of wealthy townspeople with large families which they can afford, this remark produced a large amount of laughter. Then he went on to tell about his foreign adventure again, how much his plane ticket had cost, how much he received as a daily living allowance, and so on. The audience departed with more knowledge of the fantastic level of the expense account awarded by foreign agencies than about either the pro's or con's of family planning as a national policy. Months later only one clinic had been opened — in the district town — and villagers continued to talk of the programme with ignorance and mistrust. Though the clinic is free, costs of travelling to town are great enough to dissuade most rural people from coming to inquire about something in which no one has taken the trouble to try to interest them.

The final remarks of the official's speech underscore the effects of his conversion to the cargo ideology:

I saw there (in India) doctors in hospitals working without shoes. Think of it, doctors without shoes. Here in Indonesia we are a bit more civilised!

A person and a nation which have started to receive cargo surely do not degrade themselves to the position of barefoot doctors. Nor is birth control the only kind of programme subject to this difficulty:

An irrigation dam was being built to irrigate 800 ha. of first-class paddy land that had been lying unused for four years.<sup>14</sup> About mid-way through the project, "technical" problems developed, and work was suspended and then begun again. About this time a rumour swept government offices that America had surveyed the project and was going to build the dam. Immediately the construction work was stopped, and as of April, 1971, more than a year after the stoppage, nothing more had been done, though no one could be found who could say where the "America" story had started. Meanwhile two more farming seasons were lost, and at last check, office people were claiming that a group of *Dutch* engineers had agreed to build an "international class" dam on the site.

In contrast to these cases, of course, many examples could be found everywhere in Indonesia of dedicated, hard-working, self-sacrificing government people trying to make some reality out of the development goal. But one must wonder, in the booming atmosphere of the cargo movement, whether they can win the

day. And what is more — that other group of millenarians referred to earlier, though they may not often read newspapers or attend local family planning meetings, or hear the fine details of the planning of international quality dams and hotels; though they may not understand the principles of national and international debt-accounting and the "developmental" theories associated with them — these other millenarians are aware that the Limited Good which they have always lived with is showing few signs of changing, and some of them wonder what their leaders are really up to.

A good example of the ideological split between the Limited Good and the New Indonesian Cargo Movement has been the recent rice intensification programme in which a number of private, mostly foreign, companies participated. After the first season of the programme showed difficulties in getting production inputs to farmers on time, the companies came through on an Indonesian request to give vehicles to local agricultural extension offices. This amounted in practice to a new jeep for a district level office and one or even two motorcycles in addition. A frequent complaint in local offices is the shortage of vehicles and so this sudden "dropping" as the Indonesians would call it, was often cited in interviews as a sign of how things are improving. In interviews with government officials that is. Farmers had a rather different response to the whole affair. Even with the vehicles, harvests fell below calculated levels in most areas of Java, and consequently they were left with enormous debts for which officials in many areas are still pressing repayment.<sup>15</sup> But though the debt problem was clearly the main actual source of concern about the intensification programme in the villages, it was not only their *own* debts which farmers found appalling:

Why is the government taking all those new vehicles from the foreigners? How will we pay for them?

Unlike the government office workers, farmers do not expect they will receive handouts from anyone, and anyone who thinks he will is obviously being tricked.<sup>16</sup> And the acceptance of these gifts by their leaders proves to them not their corruptibility — for that they already know without any foreign assistance to help them.<sup>17</sup> Rather it adds proof of their naivete, and naivete is not taken as a quality for good leadership. Further, there are the culture-of-repression implications of the statement above — "how will we pay for them?"

Nor is the entire idea of foreign aid as popular in the villages as it may be in government circles. In contrast to the district official with his raised thumb, the farmer is more likely to react as follows to the New Indonesian Cargo Movement:

It's not wise to borrow so much. Who will pay it back? Why doesn't the government stop buying so many cars and help us fix the irrigation canals?

Such open bitterness — and such open identification of "the government" as the reason for the bitterness — are not easily elicited from Javanese in interviews, but once a conversation has got onto the subject on its own, a stream of pent-up criticism is likely to flow. Nor is the criticism apparently limited to the ears of visiting anthropologists. Not so long ago in Solo, President Suharto, in a rare emotional speech during the political campaign preceding the "elections" of 1971, made what seems to be a reply to misgivings about the scale of foreign borrowing undertaken by his government:

We are not eager to show off our debts!  
We will not go back on our promises!  
We need not worry that we will not be able to repay!<sup>18</sup>

There are many in Indonesia not so convinced as the President.

## V. A Policy Thought

No one can deny the need for capital investment in changing the nature of the economies of the poorer countries. Yet a country like Indonesia, brimming with Western-trained experts, both homeborn and foreign, might well consider whether capital is really just an "economic" factor which can be added or subtracted with even linearity. For it is difficult to see at present how the current cargo ideology can sustain the development of a dedicated national leadership that can adequately lead programmes for the benefit of more people than merely those at the immediate junctions of millennial commerce.

It was not our privilege while in Indonesia to witness much self-examination and criticism from inside the cargo movement, but at least one villager in Central Java has already started to combine his moral world with the little he knows about the ideology being bred above him. In the same conversation about searching after assistance from God at the village shrine, an elderly man offered the unsolicited view that:

In olden times people went to the shrine and sat in the cold without sleeping to prove their worth before asking God's favour. But today there are too many goods to be had, so now they just try to acquire them.

By "olden times" he is referring to an ideal which is still very much present in village society, and by "people" he means those who were once looked to as candidates for the *ratu adil* but who now have become mere collectors of cargo.

## FOOTNOTES

The research on which this paper is based was carried out in Indonesia between November, 1969 and September 1971, on a student fellowship in anthropology from the United States National Institute of Mental Health. A total of 15 months were spent in one village in Central Java and 7 months were spent in Djakarta and various towns usually in the homes of government officers. An earlier draft has benefited from many critical comments by friends in Indonesia, Holland, and the United States.

1. J. Van der Kroef, 1958-59. Javanese Messianic Expectations: Their Origin and Cultural Context. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*. Vol. VI:299-323. The quote is from page 310. Two other recent contributions to the study of Javanese millenarism are: Harry Benda and Lance Castles, 1969. The Samin Movement. *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land-, en Volkenkunde* Vol. 125:207-240; and The Siau-w Giap, 1967. The Samin and Samat Movements in Java: Two examples of Peasant Resistance. *Revue du sud-est Asiatique*, pp. 303-310, and *Revue du sud-est de l'Extreme Orient*, 1968, pp. 107-113 and 1969, pp. 63-77.
2. George Foster, 1965. Peasant Society and the Image of Limited Good. *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 67:293-315, reprinted in Potter, Diaz, and Foster, 1967. *Peasant Society: A Reader*. Gerrit Huizer, 1970. "Resistance to Change" and Radical Peasant Mobilisation: Foster and Erasmus Reconsidered. *Human Organisation*, Vol. 29:303-313 and "Comments" by Foster, pp. 313-314.
3. Such large wage decreases do not always occur according to strict supply-demand schedules. Patron-client relations "absorb" some of the debts into a social network

of exchanges in which the landless labourer, though kept excruciatingly poor, is provided with relative certainty that his *idjan* loan will come through each season. He returns the favour by being always on call to his patron. More detail on these exchanges will be given in other papers not yet written.

4. Pardjono, like many of his friends, may actually own the house by now, having received it with big deductions for "depreciation", not at all in tune even with pre-1965 real values, so that "essentially, the residences are gifts." From the section on housing, in "Report of the Commission Four on Corruption," *Sinar Harapan* 23 July, 1970.
5. Many minor cholera epidemics for example, are never reported in the press, though some with death counts running to more than 100 have occurred in recent years from place to place in rural Java.
6. *Bahari*, 18 April, 1971. The reporter complains about Semarang's backwardness compared to Djakarta, noting that the Semarang hostesses still act like "kampung" (boondocks) girls.
7. *Kompas*, 9th June, 1971.
8. A higher-level example of the uncritical air with which tourism is regarded is contained in a report by a leading Indonesian economist on the current economic situation in the special region of Jogjakarta in Central Java. The section on tourism is fully as long as that on the subject of what villages have done or could be doing with the central government's Rp.100,000 subsidy. One might question how much economic growth is to be gained by tourism since hotels tend to be overstaffed and even if filled with guests, might not be able to offer many new jobs. The souvenir industry, especially silver and textile printing (*batik*) might be given a slight boost, but otherwise the primary gainers except for the government airlines are likely only to be a few lucky pedicab drivers who can con an unwitting tourist into paying a spectacular sum for a quick tour of the town. Yet the writer of the economic survey seems convinced of the developmental significance of his subject, concluding that "There is clearly need for more effective promotion". Mubyarto, 1970. Economic Developments in D.I. Jogjakarta. *Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies*, VI: (no.3) 14-32.
9. Anthony Wallace, 1956. Revitalisation Movements. *American Anthropologist*, 58:264-281.
10. Peter Worsley, 1968. *The Trumpet Shall Sound* (1st edition, 1957). Eric Hobsbawm 1959. *Primitive Rebels*.
11. Kenelm Burridge, 1960. *Mambu: A Melanesian Millenium*.
12. A study of this programme is being worked on.
13. Many readers will be aware that charts in place of action is not a phenomenon peculiar either to Indonesia or to the current period in that nation's history. But it is worth emphasising the difference between the so-called "pragmatic" government in Djakarta and the continuing inaction in rural areas. Joint-ventures and "subsidy thinking" do not notably bring about substitution of action for rhetoric. One student has noted the apparent relationship between many non-developmental aspects of the current development effort and what he identifies as traditional Javanese concepts of time, nature, and society. These he feels are exemplified among others, by the HUT, or birthday complex (from the Indonesian "Hari Ulang Tahun" meaning birthday or anniversary), in which time, money, and energy are poured out lavishly to celebrate the founding of offices, governments, and 5-year plans. It is important to realise, however, that the HUT complex is not so much a feature of "Javanese Culture" or "The Javanese" as it is of certain specific groups. Farmers do not participate in HUT activities unless an active government officer comes through from town to tell them to get out the flags. In this sense, of course, farmers are clearly more development-minded than is the government, a situation which does not find its way into the thinking of post-1965 Indonesian students who invariably discuss the prob-



lem of agricultural change as one of "educating the farmers". An analysis based on traditional culture is insufficient without noting the variations in "culture" as one moves up or down the social hierarchy. See J.A. Niels-Mulder. 1970. *Tjara Berpikir Orang Djawa. Basis*, XIX: 398-405, esp. p. 402.

In this same vein, the following remarkable article appeared in the press, from which we take a few selections:

Labour Day, May 1, has been abolished in Indonesia. Fishermen's Day which falls on Sept. 21, is not heard of any longer and this is also the case with Farmers' Day which falls on Sept. 24. Indonesian workers, farmers, and fishermen once assumed a position of dignity in our society. In all other countries, workers and farmers play a rôle in development. Most of our farmers do not have land. What about our fishermen? The concessions given to foreigners and Japanese in particular have really caused the fisherman to lose enthusiasm. It is hoped that with the abolition of the holidays is honour of the "pillars of the revolution" (a Sukarno period designation for common people), the workers, fishermen, and farmers will not be left to their fate, wretched and suffering in their own independent country.  
*El Bahar*, 22 Sept. 1970.

This article suggests that the HUT complex may not be so much a part of traditional Javanese culture as it is a product of the prevailing ideology and the goals and interests of the nation's rulers, all of which are obviously capable of changing over time.

14. A report on the construction of this dam appeared in *Kompas*, 5 Sept. 1970, but gave highly exaggerated predictions both of expected harvest increases and of prospects for completion.
15. As one Djakarta official put it: "We don't want the farmers to get the idea they can just borrow without any concern for paying back."

It should be noted that foreign company participation in rice intensification collapsed in 1970 and has been replaced by a government-run plan with "help" from local private enterprise. It is too early to make evaluative remarks on the programme as a whole, but it might be noted that belief in the power of "inputs" is so strong that the new programme, like the old — but *not* like the pre-1965 programme which became tangled up in a whole series of rural political crises — has no provisions for social reforms. When inputs are elevated to this level, perhaps it is justified to think of them as essentially "carg" too, and the New Indonesian Cargo Movement may spread to the wealthier farmers in the not-so-distant future. Consider the following quotation from the same source cited in footnote 8:

Another improvement has been an increase in private investment in rice processing facilities, in the rural areas, in Triangggo, for instance, the first rice huller ever was installed by the village co-operative in 1967. Since then, eight more have been bought by wealthy farmers in the village. (Mubyarto, *op.cit.*, p. 17)

The author adds no note of concern about this possibly formidable concentration of processing facilities in the hands of the few, nor if its possible effects on the job market for handpounding of rice, a source of employment for many landless families.

16. In reporting on the mission-accomplished return of Prof. Widjojo Nitisastro, chairman of the National Planning Board (BAPPENAS), from an IGGI (International Group for Indonesia) conference with promises of loans totalling \$ 640 million, the newspaper *Pedoman* commented as follows:

The news from Rotterdam was good news at the end of 1970 and may be regarded as a Christmas and New Year's present. (19 Dec. 1970)

An opinion poll taken among "people with an income of Rp. 3,000 to Rp. 10,000" per month asserted that there was a majority in favour of the foreign aid programme of the government (*Kompas*, 3 Feb. 1971). If "income" was taken as "salary" then this polled group would have included many Cargoists. The results, therefore, are hardly surprising.

17. We are planning a case study of local finance as it affects one village. For the present it might be mentioned here that information on villagers' feelings about corruption does not seem to get to the highest levels of government. Witness the following reply by President Suharto to a women's delegation:

The people in the villages are not influenced by the hullabaloo about corruption in the cities.

Suharto was referring for the most part to some student protests that have occurred intermittently and to the devastating report of a Commission which he established to handle the corruption issue but whose report was leaked to the press and contained a number of criticisms of his government. The writer of the article cited above makes his own evaluation of the President's response:

Information Pak Harto (Suharto's name in the press and in polite conversation is prefaced by a term of respect) receives needs to be supplemented by material and concrete data from the public. (*Kompas*, 13 August, 1970).

18. *Kompas*, 15 June, 1971.

## THIRD INDOCHINA WAR by Fred Branfman

The author of this pamphlet, which is reprinted from *Liberation*, spent four years in Laos during 1967-71 and more recently has been a director of "Project Air War", a research group in Washington. In the pamphlet he documents the massive onslaught of United States air power against the Indochinese peoples, the horrifying development of the 'electronic battlefield' in place of the withdrawing American ground troops, and also the use of mercenary forces and the cynical exploitation of the Meo tribesmen and others. Despite all these desperate measures Branfman is able to report a tremendous rise in morale in the guerrilla zones and an ever-hardening determination of the Indochinese people to assert their own independence and defeat the imperialist aggressor.

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