



SEASPAN

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The Rites of Spring: From Procreation to Population

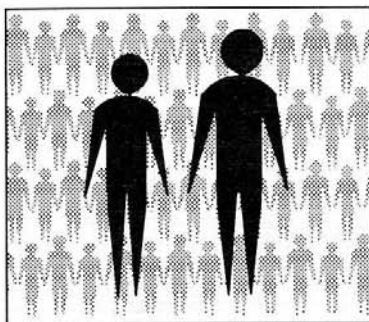
Women's status and fertility trends in Southeast Asia

by Joo Ean Tan
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At the UW's Center for Studies in Demography and Ecology, Dr. Charles Hirschman and several graduate students are using data from the 1970 and 1980 censuses to investigate the relationship between fertility and socioeconomic development in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand.

The fertility of many countries in Southeast Asia has undergone a transition from high to low levels in the last three decades or so. This decline in the number of children women are having has taken place within a context of rapid social and economic change. While there is much research on the relationship between fertility and socioeconomic conditions, the findings have not shown a straightforward relationship between fertility and socioeconomic development, and the investigation of this relationship remains an important research topic.

A great deal of fertility research has focused on the relationship between women's individual characteristics and fertility. Even so, it seems reasonable to expect also that the fertility behaviour of women is influenced not only by their individual experiences but by their social setting. We believe that impacts of socioeconomic changes on fertility are mediated by changes in the characteristics of the community in which women live -- characteristics such as the status of women, the economic roles of children and the level



of infant mortality. The preliminary findings of the project offer strong support for this hypothesis. Community characteristics measured at the provincial level appear to have an impact on fertility independent of the individual characteristics of these women.

One idea that has been central in fertility research has been the changing status of women. The issues that are subsumed under the notion of women's status are as numerous as the many facets of women's lives. They do, however, influence the nature of women's roles inside and outside the household. It is reasonable to expect that women's access to the modern sector and their actual participation in these modern sector occupations mediate the impact of socioeconomic development on fertility. Two measures are included in the analysis in an effort to get at one of the many different dimensions of women's status: the proportion of women aged 15-34 who have more than a primary education and the proportion of women aged 15-34 who have jobs in the non-agricultural sector.

continued on page 9

Population pressures in Vietnam's Red River Delta

by Peter Xenos, Tran Thu Phuong,
Luu Thi Thao and Vu Xuan Truong

This excerpt was taken from a paper presented by Dr. Xenos, of the East-West Center's Program on Population, at the Consortium's Fifth Annual Conference, held at UBC last October.

The Red River Delta of Vietnam is well known for the very high population densities it had reached by early in the 20th century, and for the remarkably intensive land use that has evolved there. The rapid and sustained population growth of the last several decades has produced an extraordinary situation -- a population density which by 1989 averaged 784 persons per square kilometer across the delta and in some areas exceeded twice that level -- although, remarkably, most households continue to derive their livelihoods from agriculture.

Over the years strenuous effort has gone to enhancing the productivity of a rich but very limited use of agricultural land in the delta. Almost always, and increasingly, technical choices have favored labor-using over other technologies. There is widespread recognition, at both official and household levels, that relative to other production inputs, and especially relative to land, there is a large reservoir of surplus labor in the delta as a whole.... Efforts to enhance agricul-

continued on page 3

Inside: UW hosts SEASSI again this summer. See pages 6 & 7 for details.

Maluku & Nusa Tenggara:

Ecological assessment for conservation planning

by Dr. Gordon Brent Ingram
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Some of the most biologically rich areas on Earth are in eastern Indonesia. There are large tracts of primary rainforest and shallow marine areas with coral reefs. This world of sea and islands is comparable in diversity of marine and terrestrial plants and animals as is the Amazon Basin in terrestrial and freshwater life. But the area also is considered Indonesia's last frontier and there are mounting pressures for intensive and largely unsustainable levels of resource extraction. The forests and seafood resources are particularly at risk.

Fortunately, Indonesia was an enthusiastic signatory to the Convention on Biological Diversity which was unveiled at the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. The Convention recognizes the responsibilities of countries of the South, such as Indonesia, to protect their biological resources and also those of the North, increasingly consumers of genetic material for biotechnology and agriculture, in supporting badly needed conservation and development.

Islands have had a central and often metaphorical role in the development of modern theory of biology and evolution. They often support unique species. Yet they are often vulnerable to change that leads to destruction of habitat and extinction of species.

Nowhere in the world today is this contradiction more painfully apparent than in the smaller islands of eastern Indonesia. As roads push inland and populations increase, these islands of rainforest as well as drier types become increasingly fragmented. Habitat fragmentation is a cumulative process, involving all human activities in an area, that diminishes the remaining areas of viable habitat to the point where sensitive species cannot survive. Local extinctions often result. Certain points in the geometry of these islands are more strategic. Identification of these key sites and configurations of areas will be crucial to inte-

grating concerns for conservation with those for economic development.

There have only been limited government settlement programmes, *transmigrasi*, of Javanese families in this region. In most cases, the traditional laws of the local communities, *adat*, still take precedent. As with many developing countries, concerns for continued access to subsistence resources and sustainable and equitable access to forest and marine resources have been secondary for government planners. Extractive operations with short term benefits are too often favoured. These operations have generated badly needed income for government and as with many countries, such as the already heavily deforested Philippines, corruption has been a major factor in unsanctioned logging. Eastern Indonesia is also the major source in the illegal traffic of birds, particularly parrots, which have key ecological roles.

Land use planning in this daunting context has involved both provincial and national governments and has accommodated some habitat protection. But the data that would lay the basis for proposal for new parks, ones which could coexist with development, has been lacking. Use of satellite imagery, integration of a range of map sources and considerable field research is necessary in order to

integrate the concerns for the conservation of biological diversity into broader development planning.

The Landscape Ecology Geographic Information Systems Laboratory (LEGIS) of the UBC's Department of Forest Resources Management and the Landscape Architecture Program, under the partial auspices of the UBC Centre for Southeast Asian Research, is engaged in a long-term inventory of the remaining natural habitats of these islands. Information is gradually being compiled and entered onto computerized maps for particular island groups. There are, of course, huge gaps.

LEGIS has entered into cooperative agreements with three Indonesian institutes: the Department of Forest Resources Conservation at the Agricultural University of Indonesia (IPB), the Environmental Studies Centre of Universitas Gadjah Mada, and the Environmental and Marine Resources Studies Centre at Universitas Pattimurra. At each of the three universities, there is a commitment to long-term, cooperative investigation and training, along with UBC technical support for modest computerized data bases, on the biological diversity of particular island groups. The British Columbia Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology is currently funding linkage efforts.

The Bandung Initiative

UO Assistant Professor Ann Hawkins (International Studies) participated in a global forest conference in Bandung, Indonesia in February. Over 400 participants representing governments, business communities, scientists, and non-governmental and international organizations were in attendance.

Issued at the conference was the Bandung Initiative, a strong statement by countries with large tropical forests such as Indonesia, Malaysia and Gabon. The Initiative emphasized the importance of including all the world's

forests, including temperate and boreal forests, in any discussion on environmental issues.

Hawkins said she agreed with this initiative. "Everybody should be critical of everybody else's forest management. It should not just be the north criticizing the south."

The conference was organized and sponsored by the Indonesian Ministries of Forestry, Environment and Population, as well as by the Institute of Ecology at Bandung's Padjadjaran University and the United Nation's Food and Agricultural Organization.