

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Indigenous Movements in Southeast Asia: An Analysis Based on the Concept of ‘Resonance’

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Abstract: This paper analyses the different indigenous movements that have been active in Southeast Asia over the past 30 years. For that purpose, the concept of “resonance” is used, due to its versatility as a perspective for the study of social movements. The analysis is descriptive and longitudinal given that the resonance of indigenous mobilization is analyzed in each one of the seven Southeast Asian territories, from 1980 until 2010. It is worth highlighting that the information used in the analysis comes mainly from in-depth interviews with members of organizations advocating the rights of indigenous peoples in the region. Consequently, this paper aims to offer considerable, new first-hand evidence about indigenous movements in Southeast Asia.

Keywords: indigenous movements, Southeast Asia, resonance, frame analysis, credibility, salience, human rights, environment.

Since the early 1980s, there has been a considerable expansion of indigenous movements in Southeast Asia, in different political, social, and religious contexts. The aim of this paper is to interpret the emergence, development, and impact of these movements via the conceptual framework of “resonance” and a qualitative methodology, based on in-depth interviews carried out with leaders and allies of the different indigenous movements.

It is an important issue, given that in Southeast

Asia there is great controversy over the definition of indigenous peoples. Asia was subject to European colonization, but the colonizers and their descendants were never the numerical majority and in any case their policies of cultural assimilation were much less aggressive than those of regions such as Latin America (Mommsen, 1992). Thus, after independence, different native peoples in Southeast Asia found themselves living together with a dominant society—that was in fact no less native but rather a different

ethnic majority—that identified with the nation state. This is due to the fact that acculturation only occurred within certain sectors of the autochthonous population that, after independence, would become the dominant society and political elite.

At the same time, several peoples escaped acculturation by the western powers or pre-colonial societies, given that they lived in remote areas that were difficult to reach. Today, these peoples maintain their native cultures; their economic, political, and social systems; and self-identity as indigenous (Tauli-Corpuz, 2008, p. 80). Consequently, the classic definitions of indigenous peoples such as the International Labor Organization's Covenant 169 or the definition offered by former Special Rapporteur on Discrimination Against Indigenous Peoples, José R. Martínez Cobo, are highly contested in Southeast Asia (Daes, 2008, p. 44; Kingsbury, 2008: p. 106). Indeed, the region's indigenous peoples (IP) asked that the processes of definition should be carried out differently in each country (Erni, 2008, p. 19).

In this context, this paper aims to analyze the impact of indigenous movements in Southeast Asia and is structured as follows: in the first section, the concept of resonance is unpacked, reviewed, and revised; the second section offers an overview of the different indigenous movements in Cambodia, the Philippines, Indonesia, the Malaysian Peninsular, Sabah, Sarawak¹, and Timor Leste². In the third section, an empirical, qualitative analysis is carried out, applying the different sub-dimensions of resonance to the study of the different indigenous movements between 1980 and 2010. This analysis is based on in-depth interviews with IP leaders (85% of the interviewees are IPs themselves), and other allies of indigenous movements (lawyers, academics, and politicians) and finally, some tentative conclusions are drawn and pointers to future research are established.

Resonance: Analyzing the Impact of Indigenous Movements

Social movements have been analyzed from four main perspectives: (1) the Political Opportunity Structure (POS) theory focuses on the contextual conditions that might be favorable or unfavorable

for the emergence and success of a particular social movement; (2) organizational structure and resource mobilization, which considers the social movement's human, social, and economic resources, its organization, and actual or potential allies; (3) the Repertoires of Collective Action (RCA) approach focuses on the different strategies and actions a social movement undertakes; and (4) the perspective of cognitive frames analyzes the movement's discourses (identification and evaluation of grievances, nature of their demands, appeals to bigger audiences, etc). Although all of these perspectives have been useful and frequently employed in studies on social movements in general, the area of cognitive frames deserves special mention in the case of indigenous movements, due to the considerable symbolic and identity-orientated nature of their discourses (Trejo, 2000; Maiz, 2004).

This study therefore adopts this perspective, making use of a methodological-conceptual tool that nevertheless facilitates the incorporation of elements of the different perspectives mentioned above: *resonance*. The concept is formulated by Robert Benford and David Snow (2000) and is closely related to the idea of the movement's effectiveness. Indeed, it refers to the (real or potential) results of mobilization and the movement's capacity to achieve them (Snow & Benford, 1988). According to these two authors, the resonance concept consists of two main dimensions: credibility and salience. In turn, these two dimensions are divided into three sub-dimensions, as can be seen in Figure 1 below.

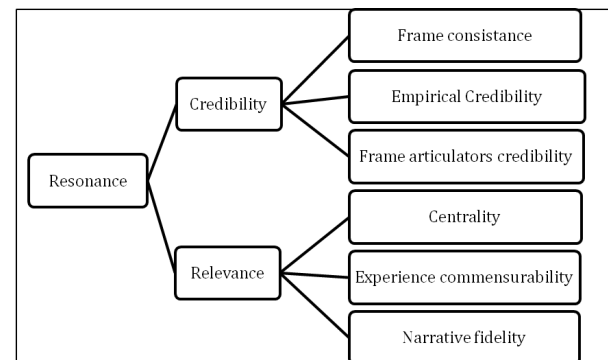


Fig. 1 Model for the analysis of the resonance of social movements.

Source: the authors based on Benford and Snow (2000).

According to Benford and Snow (2000), to be successful, a social movement must be credible in the first place. Credibility can be achieved first by achieving congruency between beliefs, demands, and strategies of action. This means for example that a pacifist movement should not use violent means, given that they will jeopardize the movement's *frame consistence*. According to the theory, social movements should interrupt everyday political life, without becoming illegitimate in the eyes of other more pacific groups (Tarrow, 2008, p. 141). Another way of improving the credibility of a social movement is to use a discourse or frame that directly refers to current events in the world. Resorting to other populations or communities that have similar demands increases what has been called the *empirical credibility* of a particular discourse (Benford & Snow, 2000, p. 620). Who is delivering the speech is as important as what it says. A particular demand will be more credible if it is stated by someone with a high status or prestige within the community or the audience. When the nucleus of the mobilized social sector is considered of low status within the community, prestigious allies may become a crucial resource for certain social movements. (Haas, 1981; McGuire, 1985). This idea directly relates to the *frame articulators' credibility* given that it makes it more likely that the demands and frames are considered to be credible. In this sense, the role of both national and international networks is fundamental as they construct cognitive frames, offer meaning to specific events or situations, and exert pressure over less powerful actors (Keck & Sikkink, 2000, pp. 30–33).

For a movement to be resonant and then successful, the *salience* of the movement is equally important as its credibility. According Benford and Snow's theory (2000), salience relies on three different components. First, values and beliefs expressed through the movement's discourse should have a central position within the society's hierarchy of values and beliefs. The greater the *centrality* of the position, the greater the capacity to mobilize large numbers of different people. Secondly, discourses should be congruent with the population's daily experiences, which directly refers to the *experience commensurability* of a social movement, as defined by Benford and Snow

(2000, p. 261). Finally, discourses should correspond to a society's dominant myths, suppositions, or ideologies. When this correspondence exists, we can say that the frames have *narrative fidelity* (Fisher, 1984).

Having described the different components of the concept of resonance, it is clear that the sub-dimension of frame articulator's credibility, facilitates the incorporation of organizational elements such as the existence of influential allies which are of particular importance for indigenous movements (Brysk, 2000). Conversely, the dimension of salience makes it possible to link the movements' demands with particular strategies and States' openness to international human rights and environmental regimes.³ For all of these reasons, the concept of resonance is extremely useful given its capacity to incorporate different approaches within social movement theory. However, this paper will make some slight changes given that it deals with a specific type of movement in different contexts. First, the sub-dimension of empirical credibility is replaced with *mobilising capacity*, referring to how many people or groups are mobilized by indigenous organizations, something that is nevertheless related to the credibility of the movement and its frames. Likewise, the sub-dimension of *commensurability* will be replaced by coherence of the discourse with the regimes in which the State participates. For example there will be a lot of coherence if the movement makes claims in terms of human rights in a State that is well integrated into the international human rights regimes. Conversely, there will be little coherence if the claims are made in the same terms but the State is not integrated into the international human rights regime.

An Overview of Indigenous Movements in Southeast Asia

The region of Southeast Asia is characterized by an economic model based on the exploitation of natural resources (Manchanda, 2006). Given that to a large extent IPs inhabit areas where important reserves of petrol, minerals, or other natural resources can be found, the conservation of indigenous territories is

seen as an obstacle to economic development, which is the main and most urgent priority for the region's States. For several decades, the prevailing economic model managed to raise living standards for many people. In part, the policies based on mega-projects and a clientelistic distribution of the benefits to large sectors of the population constituted a strategy to contain possible communist revolts (Jones, 2012, pp. 98–99). The strategy worked until the economic crisis of 1997, when the clientelistic networks and patronage system became unsustainable. The economic crisis gave way to episodes of protest and mobilization in the Philippines, Malaysia, and Indonesia, where the population demanded more democratic and transparent governments, as well as a fairer distribution of the wealth generated in previous decades.

On the other hand, there is also a problem of the “securitization” of ethnic minorities in Asia, where ethnic minorities, including IP, are perceived as disloyal to the nation state and likely to collaborate with foreign enemies, may these enemies be neighboring or far-away countries (Kymlicka & He, 2005, pp. 44–50). In this context, the degree to which IP's rights are acknowledged in the region is very varied (Inguanzo, 2014) and a considerable part of the differences seems to be related to the force of the indigenous movements active in each State. These movements are very diverse both internally and externally, in terms of their age, outreach (local, regional, or state), relationship with the State (from cooperation to confrontation), and international networks.

One of the oldest indigenous movements is that of the Philippines, which is divided into the indigenous movement of Mindanao and the indigenous movement of the Cordillera region. With regard to the former, in the 1970s the Manobo people organized to defend their lands from the aggressive policies of the dictatorial government of Ferdinand Marcos, which led to the resettlement of people from the North of the country to Mindanao. Manila's policy, which at that time was justified by a problem of demographic density, sought to generate Christian majorities in the island of Mindanao, which was originally home to a Muslim majority. The result was the massive loss of

land for indigenous communities. Some years later, in 1982, another type of indigenous mobilization began, this time in the North of the Cordillera region. In this case there was no armed uprising, rather there was a protest against a project to construct four dams in the Chico River, financed by the World Bank (Magno, 1999). Given that it was a World Bank project, the indigenous mobilizations of those years gained great international visibility. Today, the Philippine indigenous movement, particularly in the Cordillera, is the strongest movement in Southeast Asia, with a notable international projection.

Other strong indigenous movements are those of Sabah and Sarawak, which emerged in the late 1980s in the context of various projects of massive tree-felling in native lands. At that time, the roadblocks carried out by the indigenous communities of both Sabah and Sarawak gained great international visibility. Their aim was to defend their native communal lands and important international campaigns—involving the NGO World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and others—were launched against the use of wood coming from indiscriminate and massive tree-felling. The result of this international boycott was the regulation of tree-felling and the creation of sustainable wood certificates (Keck & Sikkink, 2000, pp. 170–223). Currently the roadblocks are much less frequent, mainly because they were criminalized towards the end of the 1980s, particularly in Sarawak (Osman, 2000).⁴

Regarding the indigenous movement of Peninsular Malaysia, in 1989 Center for Orang Asli Concerns (COAC) was created as the organization to promote and defend the *Orang Asli* (IP in Malay). Its outreach is inter-State given that it operates throughout the peninsula, yet its capacity to pressurize is limited, due to a lack of material and human resources. In fact, the main difficulty for mobilization in the peninsular is not only that the indigenous population is less than 1% of the total population but also because it is very geographically dispersed and ethnically fragmented, making it difficult to organize large-scale mobilizations (COAC, personal communication, November 19, 2011).

In Indonesia the indigenous movement emerged together with democracy. Its progress was slow, in

part due to the difficulty in unifying communities from the entire Indonesian archipelago under the same umbrella organization. In any case, the AMAN organization became stronger over the years and today comprises almost 2,000 communities. According to representatives from the Asian federation of indigenous movements, the Indonesian AMAN and the Philippine constellation of groups protecting IPs' rights are by far the strongest movements in the region (IP member and AIPP chairperson, personal communication, October 22, 2011).

Indigenous movements in Timor Leste and Cambodia are very limited, albeit for different reasons. In 2001 a small organization emerged to defend IPs' rights in Timor Leste called *Covalima Youth Center* (CYC). However, due to the escalating violence caused by the armed conflict in 2006 (Human Rights Watch, 2006), the organization abandoned this objective and concentrated on issues relating to the armed conflict of the time (IP member and AIPP chairperson, personal communication, October 22, 2011). In Cambodia, there was no organized indigenous movement prior to the Land Law signed in 2001. Indeed, the oldest indigenous organization in Cambodia, the Highlander's Association (HA), was organized in 2001. Furthermore, the majority of organizations that today fight to defend IPs' rights—namely Cambodia Indigenous Youth Association (CIYA), Organization to Promote Kui Culture

(OPKC) and Indigenous Rights Active Members (IRAM)—emerged after the law was signed. The main organizations of the different indigenous movements in Southeast Asia can be found in Table 1.

Resonance of Indigenous Movements in Southeast Asia Over the Past Thirty Years

Having presented the main indigenous movements in Southeast Asia, the resonance of the different movements will be analyzed, according to the conceptual framework proposed in the first section of this article. For this purpose, the analysis will be divided into 5-year periods that reflect the evolution of the different movements and developments at the international level, in line with the boomerang effect (Keck & Sikkink, 2000, pp. 31–33) that is key for our understanding of IP's rights.

The first period goes from 1980 to 1984, corresponding to the first tentative steps taken at the international level towards an indigenous rather than assimilationist perspective, with the creation of the International Working Group on Indigenous Issues by the UN's Economic and Social Council in 1982. The second period goes from 1985, with the preparation of the Declaration by the International Working Group, to 1989, when the ILO's Covenant 169 was passed. In the third period, which starts in 1990 and

Table 1 *Main Organisations of the Indigenous Movements of the Southeast Asian States Reviewed in this Study*

State	Organizations
Cambodia	CIYA, OPKC, IRAM
Timor Leste	CYC
Indonesia	AMAN
Peninsular Malaysia	COAC -JOAS
The Philippines	CPA, KAMP, PANAGTAGBO-Mindanao, PANLIPI
Sabah	PACOS -JOAS
Sarawak	SADIA -JOAS
International -Asia	AIPP

Source: The authors

Note: JOAS is an umbrella organisation that operates throughout Malaysia and is based in Sabah

ends in 1994, the Development Fund for the IPs of Latin America and the Caribbean was established, the Covenant on Biological Development was passed, and the International Year for the Rights of the World's Indigenous Populations was proclaimed. The fourth period starts at the beginning of the International Decade for the Rights of IPs in 1995 and ends in 1999. The fifth period starts in 2000—when the Figure of the Special Rapporteur was created—and ends in 2004—when the international decade on indigenous population came to an end. The sixth and final period begins in 2005, when the UN Declaration on the Rights of IPs was beginning to be debated in the Assembly, and ends in 2010, following the passing of the UN Declaration in 2007.

Period I: 1980–1984

Period I, which goes from 1980 to 1984, is characterized by a general absence of organized indigenous movements in the region, with the exception of the Philippines. This in itself does not rule out the possibility of isolated protests in some parts of Borneo, but they cannot be characterized as movements, given that they had no repercussions beyond the communities affected.

With regard to the Philippines, as has already been mentioned above, the indigenous movement emerged in the North as a consequence of a mega-project to build four dams along the Chico River in the Cordillera Region, at the end of the 1970s (Morales-Fernholz, 2002, p. 326). It is important to note that the frame employed was one of human rights. Analyzing the movement according to the framework offered by Robert Benford and David Snow (2000), we can conclude that it had considerable resonance during this period, as will be described below.

The consistency between the demands and the RCA was broad, although it is worth analyzing the pacific and violent routes taken by the movement. At first, despite being highly disruptive with occupations and the removal of construction material, it was not violent. Only after the repressive reactions by the Armed Forces did a considerable sector of the movement join the communist guerrilla.

In any case, for a large part of Philippine society, indigenous protests were still legitimate, given that they also counted on the support of the Church⁵, anthropologists, and human rights' lawyers. Consequently, the *credibility of the frame's articulators* was high given that the allies had considerable prestige at the heart of Philippine society. Therefore the campaign to delegitimize indigenous protest by Marcos' regime had some impact but did not manage to resonate with the population, particularly the democratic opposition (Coronel Ferrer, 2005, p. 118). For that reason, the CPA's mobilising capacity was reasonably high. Finally, the narrative fidelity was broad given that the IPs of the Cordillera have a legitimate and accepted identity both among society in the Cordillera as well as Philippine society in general.⁶

On the other hand, the indigenous movement's frame salience was limited, given that, although the values were important for the majority of the population of the Cordillera (where according to the census more than 75% of the population is indigenous⁷), the population represented a very limited percentage of Philippine society as a whole (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2012). Although there are no opinion data from that time on these issues, it is likely that for the vast majority of people, the demands with regard to ancestral territories was not a priority issue. Furthermore, the coherence between the human rights frame employed by the movement and the Philippines' participation in the international human rights regime was also limited.

Period II: 1985-1989

From 1985 to 1989 the Philippine indigenous movement gained greater domestic resonance and the indigenous movements of Sabah and Sarawak emerged, both of which had considerable international impact.

For its part, the main difference for the Philippine indigenous movement in comparison with the previous period was the democratic transition. In this second period the demands for IPs' rights was made again with a human rights frame enjoying *resonance*

not only among the opposition but also among the democratic forces in power. In fact, the IPs had allies within the political elite, such as the Anthropologist Bennaguen and Father Bernas who participated in the Constitutional Commission of 1987, noticeably increasing the movement's credibility.

It was only then the word "cultural communities" was included [...] it was only then that the word "ancestral domain" was included in the Constitution. Because the word ancestral domain is very foreign. [...] More or less, the Constitution language led to self-determination of indigenous peoples and respect for their governance, their culture, their lands. (PANLIPI member, personal communication, August 10, 2012)

The democratic transition, and more specifically the constituent process, were key moments for the recognition of IPs' rights in the Philippines. The indigenous movement even adopted new strategies within its RCA, including institutionalized channels of political participation, such as creating a lobby for the constituent process. That did not mean the total abandonment of the armed strategy for certain sectors of the movement, but these sectors became increasingly isolated and the State considered indigenous organizations such as CPA to be valid interlocutors. The movement's consistency was therefore slightly improved.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that the change in attitude on the part of the Philippine State with regard to human rights meant that the indigenous discourse itself made in terms of these rights had greater resonance among the government elites. The coherence and centrality of the values made by the movement were therefore greater. Furthermore, the movement articulated a discourse that was coherent with the frames used in United Nations' forums, where the new Philippine regime that was favorable to human rights wanted to portray a good image. This in turn had a considerable impact on the domestic acknowledgement of IPs in the Constitution.

And if some of the language [in the Constitution] appears to be like UN

indigenous [language], [it] is because some of those who were lobbying had been already out there, at the UN arena, providing these inputs. (IP member Evelyn Dunuan, personal communication, August 18, 2012) 8

With regard to Sabah and Sarawak, the indigenous movement began to develop in the States of Borneo in the late 1980s, mainly after 1987 when the State of Sarawak imprisoned more than 40 indigenous protestors who had blocked a highway together with their main international ally, Bruno Manser⁹. At this time, the movement employed a double frame based on the protection of the environment and traditions inherited from the colonial period.

With regard to the movement's resonance, it was very similar in the two States, although in the international sphere the Sarawak movement had greater repercussion. Furthermore, the considerable weight of the native population as well as the intense tradition of legal pluralism reflected in the prior recognition of Native Customary Rights (NCR) meant that the centrality of the values defended was also considerable. Furthermore, the organizations in defense of IPs' rights carried out actions to raise awareness about the rights already recognized in Borneo's legal texts, which in itself guaranteed the centrality of the movement's discourse.

But nobody was talking about NCR. Only when you go deep, they found that there was this legal document from the thirties [The Land Ordinance], protecting this. We started doing that during the eighties, when we came up. But people were not using it because [the] land office was trying to hide it. It seems... (PACOS director, personal communication, November 19, 2011)

In any case, the frame's centrality was incomplete given that there was an important non-native sector (the Malays mainly, but also a Chinese minority) which was initially insensitive to concern over native lands, the environment, and particularly, human rights. Nevertheless, when using international cognitive frames, the indigenous movements in Sabah and Sarawak always framed the fight as an environmental

struggle and not as a human rights issue. However, Malaysia's participation in the international regime to protect the environment was very limited until the 1990s, and so the coherence of the frame employed by the movements was very limited.

With regard to the actions taken by the indigenous movements, the main strategy at the local level was carrying out roadblocks (politician from PKR and lawyer in defense of the NCR, personal communication, November 25, 2011). Given the great visibility of this strategy, the RCA was soon broadened, with international campaigns via NGOs in protection of the environment. At first, the domestic repercussion was very limited, given that the State governments responded by repressing the protests, even calling the indigenous activists communists (Endicott, 1987, p. 48). However, the international boycott of wood from Borneo managed to change the governments' attitudes towards the protection of the environment in general and of forests more specifically. Indeed, this led to the regulation and certification of "sustainable" wood, in a "boomerang" model. The consistency between the discourse and the RCA was considerable.

With regard to external allies, there are slight differences between the indigenous movement in Sabah and Sarawak. In Sabah, the Christian church and the student movement were more directly involved:

In the eighties, that is when PACOS and all these organizations were built..., because of the student movement [...]. After that, or because of that, Mahartir¹⁰ almost lost the elections, because of the student movement. So he came out with this bill, [the] University Act, in 1988 or something. Since then, no societies were allowed in the University, except for government uniform police cadet[s], army organizations... And religious ones. (JOAS member, personal communication, November 28, 2011)

The Church also offered material resources for these small associations and financed training programs for activists in the 1980s, paying for indigenous leaders from Sabah to travel to the

Philippines to learn from the experiences of the indigenous movement there (IP member and director of PACOS, personal communication, November 29, 2011). On the other hand, the Sarawak indigenous movement at that time depended more on international environmentalist NGOs such as Borneo Project. The credibility of the frame articulators for both cases was therefore mixed, given that although the allies had certain international prestige, they were not approved by the political authorities.

Finally, it is worth pointing out that the narrative fidelity was very high during this period, given that the indigenous movements of Sabah and Sarawak justified their fight in terms of consuetudinary rights that had been recognized officially and historically. In these cases, the use of the IP concept did not suppose a problem given that it resonated perfectly with the collective imagination and the foundational myths and legends of the States. Indeed, it resonated with the official history acknowledged in legal texts.

Period III: 1990-1994

The 1990s was a decade of intense indigenous mobilization both in the Philippines and in the Malaysian Peninsular. Despite greater criminal penalties for participating in protests, the number of roadblocks increased in Borneo and the international campaigns gained greater force.

In the Philippines, there was a change of government. The new President, Fidel Ramos, who had been a General during the Martial Law period but at the last minute supported the un-armed population, prioritized the pacification of the military zones of the Cordillera and Mindanao.

[Fidel Ramos] started his term by asking the question: why is there no peace and development in the country? So he created a commission called the National Unification Commission [NUC] [...], and then consultations were organized by the government [...] it was identified that the main problem of IPs, was that we were out there, joining the NPA[National People's Army], or they were with the Cordillera

People Liberation Army [CPLA], and also there were all these tribal wars... and that was because we were quarrelling over our ancestral lands and domains, and we were also fighting development aggression projects of the government: the Dams, big roads, the multinational farms, so we were the poorest of the poor, [...] the key root of all this, was the non-recognition of our lands and domains. (IP member Evelyn Dunuan, personal communication, August 18, 2012)

There then began a period of intense work and preparation for what would in 1997 become the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (IPRA). However, the process to draw up this law divided the Philippine indigenous movement between those for and against the IPRA. Thus, as of the 1990s, a chasm grew at the heart of the indigenous movement between those who adopted a confrontational attitude with the State and those who opted for a strategy of collaboration. The division within the indigenous movement obviously meant that the consistency of the discourse and the movement itself was somewhat lesser given that there were different organizations with contrasting frames: one more focused on human rights and the other on environmental issues.

CPA is a rebel group, and they don't want to do anything with [the] government. [...]. We even formed a coalition for IP rights, and we were marked by them as pro-government because we were working within the legal structure [...] And then, some of the NGOs who worked with the movement, were more biased with environmental issues. And when the environmental [group] gave up also because of the mining issue and all these things, most of the NGOs, fell [in] with the environmental issues and not the IP issues. [...] And then some of the NGOs who were working also with IP issues, wanted to please the Cordillera side, it was a big powerful block [...], (PANLIPI member, personal communication, August 10, 2012)

In another order of ideas, the movement's main allies during the 1990s were the Church and lawyers. The Episcopal Commission on Indigenous Peoples

(ECIP) was particularly important for the legal acknowledgement of IPs' rights and particularly for drawing up the IPRA.

During the IPRA consultations, they [the Church] didn't give us funds, but they provided the venues: after the mass they would invite people. And people from the secretariat of ECIP together with PANLIPI¹¹, they did all the documentation. And they brought people to the Congress... They have these publications, they write about IP issues. (IP member Evelyn Dunuan, personal communication, August 18, 2012)

Equally important were the contacts within the Senate, particularly Senator Flavio El Sino who pushed for, presented, and defended the legislative initiative and Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, who would later become President (IP member Evelyn Dunuan, personal communication, August 18, 2012; and PANLIPI member, personal communication, August 10, 2012). The credibility of the frame's articulators in those years was therefore very high, despite the fact that the movement was divided.

During those years, as has been mentioned above, the indigenous movements in Sabah and particularly in Sarawak gained greater strength. The Sarawak movement managed to consolidate its networks with international organizations in defense of the environment. For its part, the Sabah movement via PACOS continued its work in raising awareness and with specific mobilizations which on occasions ended with the presentation of a memorandum to the authorities. They continued with their double frame of environmentalism and legal traditions.

The perception, since then, is that politicians are more open to the demands of indigenous movements:

In Sarawak, some are just quiet, and also [the] time is not right for them to speak out. In Sabah we can see that some of the ministers here are also voicing out these land rights in Sabah, whereas in Sarawak most of the ministers... [on] the government side, although they are IPs themselves, they don't want to be seen in that light. (President of PACOS, personal communication, November 29, 2011)

The fact that in Sabah organizations such as PACOS or JOAS are valid interlocutors with the state government and have collaborated in pilot projects to co-manage natural parks shows that the frame articulator's credibility has been greater in Sabah than in Sarawak since 1995. Indeed, the Sarawak government does not consider them to be valid interlocutors and has persecuted them politically. All of the staff of SADIA, except for one, have been imprisoned incommunicado via the application of the Internal Security Act over the last decades. They have also suffered from searches of their offices, arbitrary detentions, and even forced exile (SADIA and IP members, personal communications, November 23–25, 2011).

Finally, it is worth mentioning that in 1989, COAC was born as an organization to promote and defend IP rights in Peninsular Malaysia. It has very few resources and its greatest contribution to the movement is raising awareness among the communities themselves and documenting violations of IP rights as well as their protests. Their frame is based solely on legal traditions. However, their capacity for action and mobilization is much lesser than that of indigenous movements in Borneo, given that the protests are localized and do not normally gain visibility beyond the community itself. In part, the organization's weakness is due to the lack of human resources dedicated to the cause.

I remember when, it was 1995 I think, I met some *Orang Asli* politicians. It is not that they don't have the people but they just went for government jobs, and the few that got to that level, they are co-opted by the system. (Representative of IWGIA-Asia, personal communication, October 23, 2011)

As well as the problem of the co-optation of indigenous leaders, it has been very difficult for the indigenous movement of Peninsular Malaysia to gain trustworthy allies. In fact, in contrast to what happened in the States of Borneo, the indigenous movement in Peninsular Malaysia from the start maintained a conflictive relationship with the pro-environment Malaysian movement and consequently the phenomenon of *bridging* is absent:

Environmental NGOs...I wouldn't say they are allies. We can go with them, but we cannot depend on them for supporting Orang Asli issues. They accuse us of destroying the environment. (Director of COAC, personal communication, November 18, 2011)¹²

In this sense, the credibility of the articulators is very limited in Peninsular Malaysia. Their consistency is also limited because the RCA is narrow and not very effective. The same goes for the centrality of the discourse at the heart of Malaysian society, as well as the coherence and narrative fidelity. The *Orang Asli* have formed part of the collective imagination of Malay society ever since British colonization. However, the government has waged a campaign to blur the idea of "original inhabitants" of Malaysia. In this sense there is a term—*bumiputra*—used to designate the "sons of the earth", that is to say the original inhabitants. This category includes both the *Orang Asli* as well as the Malaysians of Malay ethnic origin. The *bumiputra* have been given special rights of positive discrimination due to their status as original inhabitants but consequently the demands and concerns that are unique to indigenous people are not acknowledged. In practice those of Malay ethnicity have more rights than indigenous people given that they are Muslim (Endicott & Dentan, 2004).

Period IV: 1994-1999

In period IV the indigenous movements outlined in the previous sections continued with similar strategies and frames. Furthermore, new movements arose in Cambodia and Indonesia. Initially, they were very weak movements. The former was directed completely from above, by the international organizations present in Cambodia during the transition. In Indonesia the newly formed movement was very fragile, especially under the regime of Soeharto, given the high levels of repression. It was linked above all to the Church, the Indonesian human rights movement, and the fight for the liberation of Timor Leste, but these were not influential allies as they had been in the Philippines in the mid-1980s. Both movements framed their struggle as a human rights problem.

In Cambodia, the resonance of the movement was based almost completely on the frame articulators' credibility, in this case the international NGOs, who were able to connect with the international IP movement. However, in those years there were neither important mobilizations nor was it a central theme for Cambodian society, which did not consider it to be an important issue. The narrative fidelity was mixed, given that despite representing a very small percentage of the total population, it was clear that there were IPs in Cambodia, particularly when, during the regime of the Khmer Rouge, indigenous ways of life had been used in government propaganda (Ovesen & Trankell, 2004, p. 248). Yet in any case the movement was led by NGOs and international organisms:

In Cambodia, if it wasn't for the donors, the international NGOs, and the multilateral organizations, like Asian Development Bank and the World Bank, [...] there would be no recognition of what they call indigenous minorities [...]. There would not be a law on indigenous community land rights, or a community forestry law. [...] In most cases, without a strong IP movement not much would happen, but in Cambodia, initially the indigenous movement was really incipient, certainly not very strong, so it is not because the indigenous movement was a real factor there, actually it was the international community that put the pressure on the Cambodia government to come up with a law. (Director of IWGIA-Asia, personal communication, October 23, 2011)

With regard to Indonesia, during this period the indigenous movement was still very embryonic, to a large extent due to the absence of civil and political freedoms during Soeharto's dictatorial regime. In any case, the last years of the dictatorship saw the emergence of a human rights movement with two branches that were reasonably independent from each other. Timor Leste's human rights movement denounced the genocide perpetrated in this part of the island of Timor as well as other human rights violations. The movement had important connections with the international community and expressed

the fight in terms of the Timor people's right to self-determination (Inguanzo, 2014, p. 64). During these years there was also a lot of mobilization in West Papua for human rights and self-determination. Their situation and struggle were similar to those in Timor Leste although they did not have as many international contacts.

The other branch of the human rights movement was in action in the rest of the country, but very particularly in Jakarta and the communication or cooperation between the human rights movements in Timor and Indonesia were very scarce (Jetschke, 1999). In any case during these years, the indigenous movement was located in a specific area since communication and cooperation between the islands was very difficult.

We have a Dayak movement in West Kalimantan. A movement that was protesting against the regulations in the Soeharto regime. It was focused on the change in regulation, democratization and empowering and recognizing the rights of Indigenous Peoples. (AMAN-West Kalimantan IP member, personal communication, December 2, 2011)

In summary, during this period, apart from carrying out isolated actions, the Indonesian indigenous movement had little consistency or credibility of the frame articulators, given that its main ally was the Christian Church. Although the church had important international connections, it lacked an intermediary in a predominantly Muslim country. However, the main shortcoming of Indonesia's indigenous movement was the total absence of narrative fidelity, given that since Soeharto, there has been an official idea that in Indonesia there are no IPs as such, but rather all of Indonesia's inhabitants are original inhabitants (Kingsbury, 2008, p. 106). On the other hand, the coherence, centrality and mobilising capacity were very limited or located in very specific islands.

Period V: 2000-2004

Between 2000 and 2005 there was a generalized expansion of the already existing movements. Interestingly for this paper, some of these movements

broadened their frames: a part of the Philippine indigenous movement began to tackle indigenous problems from an environmental perspective whereas in Sabah and, particularly, in Sarawak they began to frame some cases as a human rights problem, given that they began to use the courts. Nevertheless, these changes are still moderate in comparison to Indonesia, where the human rights frame was exchanged for an environmental one.

In the Philippines, the indigenous movement has remained divided up until the present day. On one hand, IPRA has empowered the indigenous organizations but on the other the concerns of the organizations in opposition to the law have been fulfilled. The process of land-titling is arduous and tedious, the agency created for the application of IPRA, the National Commission for Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), has been criticised for corruption by all of the IP rights' organizations, including PANLIPI, and the free, prior, and informed consent recognized in the law has not been duly applied. These problems mean that indigenous mobilization and protests are the order of the day. The RCA is very varied, especially that of large organizations such as CPA, that include the more classic repertoires such as training and raising awareness, denunciations before international organizations, land occupations, protests against multinational companies or state agencies, as well as actions that are less conventional:

There is this interesting experience: several times, during these annual general assemblies of mining companies, some of our advocates in the host country, will buy one stock so they can attend it [...] And then [they] suddenly distribute statements [...] in front of the stockholders, and say: don't you know that the money you are investing in this corporation is leading to extra-judicial killings, militarization of our communities? So we use creative ways also. (CPA chairperson, personal communication, August 16, 2012)

Although the movement is still divided, the result of the chasm has been a specialization of the organizations defending IPs' rights. All of them worked on raising awareness and training activists

but PANLIPI is more centered on providing legal assistance and CPA and KAMP on mobilizing at the grassroots level. CPA has a more international projection and links the Cordillera movement with movements in other countries and regions. KAMP concentrates on the domestic sphere, aiming to unite the different indigenous movements throughout the country, as well as linking the movement with potential allies (bridging), especially in the big cities such as Manila, via campaigns such as the "1000 streamer". On the other hand, PANAGTAGBO-Mindanao focuses on raising awareness but also aims to defend the interests and participation of IPs in the peace agreements between the Philippine State and the nationalist organizations of Mindanao such as MNLF and later on MILF.

Regarding the indigenous movement in Sarawak, it aimed to change its strategy in the face of the State's highly repressive by taking cases before the courts, which is a much less disruptive action. The first successful case was the *Norak Nyawai v. Borneo Pulp Plantation Sdn Bhd & 2 Ors*, (2001)¹³ which was defended by the lawyer Baru Bian. Judge Datuk Ian Chin hon Chong of the Supreme Court of Sarawak ruled in favour of the indigenous community, setting a precedent for various cases (Faruqui, 2008; Xanthaki, 2003). In 2011, in Sarawak alone there were nearly 300 cases in the courts (Member of SADIA and militant of PKR, personal communication, November 25, 2011).

With regard to the movement's resonance, during this period the frame articulator's credibility increased, given that during these years new alliances were forged between the indigenous movement and the democratic opposition. Particularly important has been the support of lawyers of Chinese ethnicity; indeed the Chinese population of Malaysia also suffers from discrimination by the Malays. Many wealthy lawyers have been educated in human rights and Commonwealth law abroad (European diplomat, personal communication, November 26, 2011). Although they are still a minority, there is an increasing number of lawyers who dedicate their time and efforts to defending the communitarian rights of native people. Several members of the movement also point out that this new group of committed lawyers

corresponds to a generational change and young legal experts with concerns over human rights.

Indeed, allies in Sabah have built bridges with other ethnic minorities, particularly with the Chinese minority:

We still need to work together with the Chinese groups. Because we have one common enemy which is the mainstream Malay, because they are the ones who came up with all these privileges and policies [...] In Sabah, we have to work with the Chinese, because at the end of the day, if you are segregated... [...] Why [are] Chinese lawyers [...] more concerned about rights than native lawyers? Because they are established and they are wealthy. (Director of JOAS, personal communication, November 28, 2011)

Moreover, there has been a change in the main frame of the Sarawak indigenous movement, from an environmentalist discourse, to a human rights one. Nevertheless, as seen in previous sections, the Malay government, and in particular that of Sarawak, is not as sensitive towards human rights as the environment, and so the coherence of the human rights frame is lesser in this sense. This situation did not occur in Sabah, where although the movement incorporated the legal strategy into its repertoire of collective action together with a human rights perspective, it did so only marginally, highlighting instead the environmentalist perspective.

For PACOS, going to Court is our last option. [...] Now, we won this case. But for 5-10 years, we won just one case. [...] We really work hard on the ground. So we say: 'you have NCR, don't move. Don't let outsiders encroach your land. Even if the police come. (Coordinator of the land rights programme of PACOS, personal communication, November 29, 2011)

In any case, for a long time the environmentalist perspective was maintained by the indigenous movement, to a large extent because the Sabah State was particularly sensitive to this issue (Director of PACOS, personal communication, November 29,

2011). In fact, the reason why the Sabah government collaborated more closely in defense of IP rights was the importance of tourism and, consequently, the vision of foreigners.

We don't have any more natural resources. We finished our forest resources [during the] last decade, oil is totally in the control of federal government, so the only resource we rely on, is palm oil and tourism. So if anything happens to tourism, Sabah is going to die. So that is why Sabah is quite sensitive in terms of perception, especially [from] the Europeans [...]. They can say don't go to Sabah because they are not respecting indigenous rights, bla bla bla, I think tourists wouldn't come here. It can happen! But in Sarawak, they are arrogant now, because they still have a lot of resources, especially timber, but [it] is going to run out soon (JOAS Chairperson, personal communication, November 28, 2011)

In Peninsular Malaysia, on the other hand, in the first decade of the 21st century there were barely any changes with regard to the movement's resonance, which continued to be weak in all of the dimensions. The roadblocks extended bit by bit and as of 2005, cases were taken to court and alliances were generated with lawyers, particularly with the Bar Council. Although some cases have been successful for the *Orang Asli*, particularly in the last few years, the movement has scarce resonance among Malayan society, compared with other movements in the region. It is important to note that the Church and environmentalist organizations are not allies of the indigenous movement in Peninsular Malaysia (COAC director, personal communication, November 19, 2011).

With regard to Cambodia, the beginning of the 21st century saw the formation of the indigenous movement, protected by international organizations. The first organization was the (HA) created in 2001 with the support of a Ratanakiri NGO called NTPF. Later, others appeared including CIYA, which was founded in 2005, OPKC (both very locally-based), and IRAM, a network with inter-provincial reach that groups together various local organizations. Their actions are not particularly disruptive but rather focus on raising awareness, project management with international funding, and cooperation with the

Cambodian human rights movement. For example, CIYA and OPKC have representation in the direction of the Cambodian Centre of Human Rights.

With regard to Indonesia, as of 2000 AMAN began a progressive expansion that was slow but relentless. Its strategies were not particularly disruptive; for example, in this period they did not even choose to carry out large-scale protests.

Sometimes we make pressure on the Government, but until now [2011], AMAN has not done big demonstrations. Because demonstrations are a bad thing for [...] pressure. Sometimes we campaign and put pressure on the local and national government. But we are not 'provocateurs', because we don't want to present a bad image of the Indigenous Peoples. Many countries support the campaigns, like England. There has also been a lobby trip in Europe, Brussels, European Union and Brazil. (Member of AMAN –West Kalimantan, personal communication, December 2, 2011)

The many allies of the movement include the Catholic Church and the environmental NGOs, rather than lawyers or other ethnic minorities, as was the case in Malaysia. In other areas, the organization has collaborated widely with Indonesia's human rights commission (Komnas HAM) and the Department for the Environment.

Given the organization's disposition towards dialogue, in general the State has not criminalized the movement, except in the case of violent episodes in Kalimantan (but where AMAN was not involved) and in Western Papua, where the level of repression has been very high and human rights' violations continue to the present day. AMAN considers that the repression is directly related to the existence of abundant natural resources (AMAN member, personal communication, July 10, 2012). Membership of the organization follows a traditional pattern: communities rather than individuals join. As previously mentioned, there are almost 2,000 indigenous communities affiliated in AMAN and therefore the mobilizing capacity is elevated. The RCA and discourse have been constant throughout the years, which has meant that a large number of communities want to join AMAN (AIPP

director, personal communication, October 22, 2011). The consistency is therefore high but the frame articulators' credibility and coherence are limited. In any case, the big problem of the Indonesian indigenous movement continues to be its narrative fidelity. The State does not accept the existence of IPs, but the processes of dialogue and collaboration with AMAN have brought about a tentative, implicit recognition.

Finally, in Timor Leste the indigenous movement is very weak. There is a grassroots demand for the acknowledgement of land rights, but this claim is not heard by the political elite who aim to use the land for national development (AIPP director, personal communication, October 22, 2011). The main organization that approaches the issue of the defense of IPs' rights is CYC, but it is more focused on youth issues. For these reasons, the movement's resonance is particularly weak (or even inexistent) in all of the dimensions, particularly those that do not depend on external factors.

Period VI: 2005-2010

This last period is a continuation of the tendencies with regard to the resonance of indigenous movements, established as of 2005. However, certain changes occurred in the nature of the demands in the Philippines, Sarawak, Sabah, and Indonesia. In all of these places, a demand for greater participation or political autonomy of the IPs can be found.

In the Philippines and Sarawak, they tried to send indigenous representatives to Parliament. In the former it was via indigenous political parties, particularly Katribu, and in the latter (and Sabah) by generating allies with the democratic opposition. Up until now Katribu has not obtained parliamentary representation at the national level and in Sarawak the PKR, which is not an exclusively indigenous party but rather includes Chinese sectors as well, has obtained a very narrow representation in the State Parliament. In general, there are demands for greater political autonomy in the Philippines, Sabah, Sarawak, and Indonesia. CPA demands a genuine political autonomy than that offered by

the government in Manila and for that reason has rejected the proposals of the Autonomy Statutes for the Cordillera Region presented in referendums three times (CPA IP member, personal communication, August 16, 2012).

In Indonesia, in contrast, there are demands for independence in Western Papua, Kalimantan, and Molucas, although they have never been put forward by AMAN (AMAN IP member, personal interviewcommunication, July 10, 2012; AMAN-Kalimantan, personal communication, December 2, 2011). This is consistent with the idea that, in Southeast Asia, demands for independence arise where there are high levels of repression (Colchester, 2001; Duncan, 2004), precisely in those areas where there is a greater percentage of indigenous population. In any case, the independence of some of the islands enters into conflict with the State ideology of *Pancasila* and therefore it does not acknowledge this type of claims.

Whereas in the Philippines, Sabah, Sarawak, and Indonesia, the tendency is to increase the demands by incorporating political rights, the main change in Timor Leste has been a contraction of the movement and a reduction in the demands for indigenous rights. The main reason is that the armed conflict of 2006 changed the strategy of the organizations that had previously been dedicated to defending IPs' rights.

They are dealing with internal conflicts so that's also what they are trying to address: the internal conflicts of the different groups. So a lot of efforts of indigenous organizations are put in{to} that, because of course, you can only build a wider unity and cooperation if you resolve the internal conflicts, so that's why there is still no strong national organization for Indigenous Peoples Rights defence in Timor Leste. (AIPP President, personal communication, October 22, 2011)

Conclusion

This paper has aimed to analyze the impact of indigenous movements in Southeast Asia over the past 30 years. The concept of resonance has been

useful when approaching the study of indigenous movements from different perspectives within social movement theory such as repertoires of collective action, resource mobilization, and cognitive frames. Likewise, it has been particularly efficient in analyzing the impact of indigenous movements given that it includes different dimensions on which a movement may be successful.

By studying different cases in Southeast Asia it is clear how indigenous movements have used different strategies to communicate their demands to the political authorities of their respective States. Some have resorted to influential allies to increase the credibility of their discourse, as is the case in Cambodia, the Philippines, Sabah, and to a lesser extent Sarawak. Others have chosen to frame their claims according to the values of society and the State, as was the cases of movements in the Philippines, Cambodia, and Indonesia over the last decade. For its part, the Indonesian indigenous movement has encountered serious difficulties in confronting an official discourse (coming from the State) which goes against the discourse of the indigenous movement itself. This means that the movement's narrative fidelity has been limited. Nevertheless, it has managed to gain credibility among society and the authorities, via a careful selection of the RCA and frames used.

An interesting result of the study has been the tracking of several shifts between human rights-based and environmentally-based frames throughout the 1980s and 1990s to more participatory-orientated frames as of 2005. As well as considering the future resonance of the different indigenous movements in Southeast Asia, it will be of interest to establish which master frame is selected in the next few years, in line with both internal and external political developments.

According to the previous analysis, in Southeast Asia there have been two important cycles of indigenous protest. The first one occurred in the late 1980s and early 1990s, when indigenous movements emerged in the Philippines, Sabah, and Sarawak (as well as in Latin America). The second cycle happened in the 2000s, mainly in Indonesia and Cambodia. However, the resonance of particular indigenous movements in the region do not relate to a specific

cycle of indigenous protest, since the most resonant cases are the Philippine indigenous movement (from the first cycle) and the Indonesian indigenous movement (which belongs to the second cycle). This evaluation of the strongest indigenous movements in the region coincides with the perceptions of the chairperson of the indigenous associations' Asian federation (AIPP) and of IWGIA-Asia.

Notes

- ¹ Sabah and Sarawak are Special States within the Malaysian Federation and therefore are treated separately.
- ² The selection of cases is based on Inguanzo (2016) "citizenship form" criteria. According to Inguanzo's findings, the recognition of indigenous peoples' rights is only possible in liberal or communitarian citizenship regimes but not in citizenship regimes that are republican in form, such as Thailand, Myanmar, Vietnam, and Laos (pp. 184-185). Therefore, in the latter type of regime, indigenous movements have very little impact regardless of their discourse, strategies, or internal structure.
- ³ Furthermore, the concept can also link in with the cognitive frame effect of bridging, which is related to both the frame articulator's credibility and the movement's centrality (Benford & Snow, 2000, p. 624).
- ⁴ On criminalization of roadblocks in the 80s see also Amnesty International's report on the issue (Amnesty International, 1997).
- ⁵ However, the direct implication of members of the clergy in actions of the movement was limited to well-known actors such as Father Conrado Balweg.
- ⁶ This was largely due to the fact that during the period of Martial Law, Marcos published Presidential Decree No. 410 to acknowledge the existence of "national cultural communities" who had special rights over their ancestral land.
- ⁷ Data from the Census of Population and Housing, 2010.
- ⁸ Dunuan, a previous member of the National Commission for Peace (an organization that carried out the consultations on the Social Reform Agenda in the 1990s) was the first representative of the IPs designated in the Chamber of Representatives during the government of Fidel Ramos, co-author of IPRA and first president of the NCIP.
- ⁹ Bruno Manser was a Swiss anthropologist who worked for years with the Penan people in Sarawak

and is known internationally for his environmental activism in the protection of tropical woods.

- ¹⁰ Prime Minister of Malaysia at that time.
- ¹¹ PANLIPI is an NGO formed by lawyers fighting for education and the defence of IPs' rights.
- ¹² At this time the interviewee showed the author photos of the Orang Asli community, extracting resin from the trees in a traditional way.
- ¹³ The other two are another company (Borneo Pulp and Paper Sdn. Bhd) and a state agency: Bintulu Department of Lands and Maps.

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