

Preface

James J. Fox

Divided Loyalties is an ethnography of exceptional insight, analysis and theoretical significance. It is a work of engaged social inquiry based on intimate personal knowledge and local understanding of the island of Timor.

This book is a concerted attempt to examine the consequences of the disruptions that occurred after the United Nations-sponsored 1999 referendum on independence when hundreds of thousands of East Timorese fled or were moved en masse to West Timor. The majority of these East Timorese returned to their homeland, but large numbers chose to remain and to settle in different parts of West Timor.

Divided Loyalties examines the strategic settlement of these East Timorese, their diverse efforts at assimilation as distinct ethnic communities and the divided allegiances these efforts created. The critical feature of this study is its presentation of the mixed personal motivations involved in these efforts, the human dilemmas resulting from decisions taken and their effects on community relations.

Good ethnography depends on presenting a 'view from within'—one that provides analytical rigour but combines this with a sensitive presentation of the actions and motivations of the subjects of analysis. *Divided Loyalties* offers an ethnography that focuses on the central dilemma of the East Timorese: their demand for rights as 'displaced' Indonesian citizens coupled with their insistence on maintaining ancestral connections to their abandoned homeland. This book conveys the personal sense of struggle, sacrifice and the sadness of separation that pervade the efforts of these East Timorese to establish their new lives and livelihoods.

As an ethnography, this work is grounded on clear theoretical foundations that provide a glimpse of age-old processes of settlement and alliance common to Austronesian populations. Recourse to narratives of origin and the recognition of local precedence are highlighted in the contemporary discourse of the Timorese. The book describes the fashioning of a variety of these different modes of discourse to support successful resettlement.

Timor can be defined by its multiple migrations over centuries. The history of these migrations forms an underlying basis for the distribution of populations on the island and thus for both the island's social commonalities and its contemporary differences. There were previous migrations from east to west in the colonial period, particularly towards the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries, when the Portuguese began imposing a head tax on the populations they were attempting to control. *Divided Loyalties* draws on this earlier history to show how memories of these events continue to feed a discourse on relationships among the East and West Timorese and serve as the means of restoring relations from the past to the present. The nuances of this discourse are a paramount feature of this ethnography.

Andrey Damaledo's concern for the problems of the East Timorese began with their 1999 exodus to West Timor. As an Indonesian civil servant based in Kupang, he became involved in the initial reception and provisional settlement of these refugees. During this time, he conceived of the idea of doing a PhD, applied to The Australian National University and was accepted. He arrived in Canberra with tentative but determined plans for his doctoral research. His eventual thesis—based on further extended fieldwork—was awarded the Ann Bates Prize for the most outstanding thesis on an Indonesian topic. The Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) also recognised Andrey's outstanding work and awarded him an Allison Sudradjat Prize.

For Andrey, however, the award of his doctorate was just the beginning. He immediately launched himself into other research on Timor. Fortunately, he was able to obtain a Fellowship from the Center for Southeast Asian Studies (CSEAS) at Kyoto University that has enabled him to revise his thesis for publication and undertake new research in both East and West Timor.

This book can therefore be considered as an initial ethnography with more to come in the future. It marks the beginning of a personal journey in advancing the ethnography of the island of Timor as a whole.

This text is taken from *Divided Loyalties: Displacement, belonging and citizenship among East Timorese in West Timor*, by Andrey Damaledo, published 2018 by ANU Press, The Australian National University, Canberra, Australia.