

**GSID**

**Discussion Paper No.215**

**Conditions for Offering Able-bodied Men to the Dutch  
Government Coffee Cultivation:  
Women, Children, and Elderly Men in the 1820s  
Priangan, West Java**

**Atsuko OHASHI**

**February 2021**

**Graduate School  
of  
International Development**

**NAGOYA UNIVERSITY  
NAGOYA 464-8601, JAPAN**

〒464-8601 名古屋市千種区不老町  
名古屋大学大学院国際開発研究科

# Conditions for Offering Able-bodied Men to the Dutch Government Coffee Cultivation: Women, Children, and Elderly Men in the 1820s Priangan, West Java

Atsuko Ohashi

## 1. Introduction

The Priangan region is well known as the place where coffee was produced by local people's corvée labor in the 18th century, and the coffee production there has been a popular research topic. In 2010, the author published a monograph on this topic and argued that (1) the system resulted, even if only slightly, in improvements to the people's economic situation, however, (2) the system brought more harm than benefit to the people of the Priangan region, and the main detriment was neither coercion nor poverty, but the deprivation of the peoples' power to control their own time and energy (Ohashi 2010). The second argument is rather new compared to the previous arguments which question whether coercion or poverty truly existed (Bremen 2010, 2015). This paper is a translation of Chapter 13 in the book.

This paper investigates the reasons why the local people of the Priangan region accept heavier coffee cultivation and transportation and, especially, to the large-scale mobilization of able bodied men than before, examining the local production systems and lifestyles in the 1820s. To understand this underlying circumstances, it is significant to investigate the units of people's agricultural production and daily lives and the sources that the people had to have relied on outside of their daily life units. However, these questions have not been investigated in full-scale up to this point. Accordingly, most part of this paper is devoted to two issues: identifying the units of local production work and daily lives and the daily necessities that the local people procured from outside the region. Section 2 explores the relationship between the daily life unit and the units for imposition of tribute and corvée in Dutch colonial documents. Section 3 examines the mechanism through which able-bodied men were mobilized from their daily life units as well as the women and children's labor that enabled this mobilization. Section 4 investigates the daily lives of the local people who accepted to this mobilization from a material aspect, and identified the daily necessities, which they procured from outside of the region, and those whom the people had to have relied on for obtaining these daily necessities. These investigations also aim to identify the mechanisms through which the local people, who to a certain degree had voluntarily participated in coffee cultivation, found themselves unable to withdraw without risk of incurring significant disadvantages.

This paper focuses mainly on the 17 districts in Tjandjoer Regency located within the Priangan region near the seat of the Dutch colonial government that were considered promising sites for coffee and rice production and Timbanganten District, which was the main area of coffee cultivation in Bandoeng Regency in the 1820s.<sup>1)</sup>

## **2. Households and Units for Imposition of Tribute and Corvée in the Dutch Government's Documents**

### **2-1. Household size based on the local statistics**

Population and other statistics began to be recorded at the district level in Priangan Residency in the late 1820s. The household size in the region can be estimated from these records as follows.

The National Archives of the Republic of Indonesia possesses the district-level population statistics for the Tjandjoer and Bandoeng Regencies in 1827<sup>2)</sup> as well as more detailed population statistics for Timbanganten District in Bandoeng Regency.<sup>3)</sup> The population statistics of Timbanganten District in the former statistics and the latter- more detailed - statistics for Timbanganten District respectively report the numbers of hamlets are 245 and 120, the number of houses 6,208 and 5,481, and the total populations 30,724 and 23,639. In both sets of statistics, the name of the hamlet is followed immediately by the number of houses. This is probably because, in the Priangan region at the time, married couples lived apart from their parents, and the number of houses, excluding that of the native chiefs, was roughly equal to the number of common people's households. While 70% of the hamlet names in the latter statistics can also be found in the former statistics, in all cases, the number of houses and population were higher in the latter- more detailed- statistics of Timbanganten District. This tendency is especially evident in basin-floor wet-rice field areas in the northern part of the district. This is perhaps because the more detailed statistics aggregate several hamlets and count them as one hamlet. There are several hamlet names found in both statistics whose data on hamlet size (number of houses and population) also match. These hamlets tend to be located in the southern part of the district, where wet rice fields are not spread. These tendencies can be explained as follows. The latter- more detailed- statistics of Timbanganten District were compiled first. A more thorough investigation was conducted when the district-level data were compiled for the entire regency. These thoroughgoing investigations compiled more detailed data of the basin-floor areas near the main town of Timbanganten District; however, in the case of hamlets in the southern part of the regency far away from the main town and considered not important for the Dutch government, the data were either copied from earlier statistics or the same data as previous was reported by the hamlets themselves.

Keeping the above possibility in mind, comparison of the population data of hamlets whose name, number of houses, and total population are the same in both statistics reveals that "population" in the district-level statistics of the entire regency indicates the total population of local people excluding native chiefs, at least for the Dutch government.<sup>4)</sup> Using district-level data of the two regencies mentioned above, the number of individuals per house was found to be 3.1 to 6.3 in Tjandjoer Regency and 4.9 in Timbanganten District; the number of "males available for corvée labor" (males 10 years of age and higher) per house was found to be 1.0 to 1.7 in the 17 districts of Tjandjoer Regency and 1.3 in Timbanganten District. However, given that the ratio of females to males is generally greater than

1 in the regency-level data (see Note 1, Table 13-1), there is a strong possibility that the number of “males available for corvée labor” is underreported.

From the above examination of population statistics, it can be estimated that each house was occupied by a household with three to six persons whose main members constituted a nuclear family. This estimate is consistent with the following records. Based on a survey that he himself had directed in 1815, Raffles estimated mean family size to be 4 to 4.5 members. Similarly, in the first population survey by the Dutch colonial government (1778), the typical household (*huisgezin*) was reported to consist of one adult male, one adult female, and two children [Raffles 1988: I 70; Jonge 1862-1888: vol. 11 364, 366].

In addition, examination of the characteristics of the 17 districts in Tjandjoer Regency reveals that districts with higher numbers of individuals per house also tended to have higher numbers of males available for corvée labor” per house. Districts with higher numbers in these two categories were the districts with a higher proportion of wet rice cultivators among those who had obligation to pay tribute and corvée and the districts of the key transportation hubs. Furthermore, districts with higher proportions of wet rice cultivators among those had obligation to pay tribute and corvée tended to be districts with wet rice fields developed long ago or the small districts in which coffee was cultivated intensively . In the outlying areas of the regent town in Tjandjoer Regency, the number of children per couple ranged from four to five or five to six [Wilde 1830: 185; Haan 1910-1912: vol. 4 519]. If children are defined as individuals who are 15 years old or younger, these figures support the tendency towards higher numbers of individuals per house in districts with high engagement in wet rice cultivation. This is perhaps due to the achievement of stable food production through irrigation and the reduced need for women to move around due to permanent settlement, which led to shorter interpregnancy intervals and lower infant mortality.

Based on the examination above, it can be concluded that, while there is some variation, the typical household in the Priangan region from the late 18th to the early 19th century consisted of four to six persons whose main members constituted a nuclear family. The next section examines units for imposition of tribute and corvée and units for people’s daily life .

## **2-2. Relationship between households and units for imposition of tribute and corvée**

In Dutch colonial documents from the beginning of the 19th century to the 1820s, the term *koffij tjatja* appears as a unit for corvée labor for coffee cultivation in the Priangan region.

Today, one *koffij tjatja* is understood to mean coffee cultivators and all of their family members including their close relatives. For example, a father together with his sons and sons-in-law is counted as a single *koffij tjatja*.

However, this *koffij tjatja* is, actually, made up of three to four households that live separately from each other (in their own house). [Koffij Report: 11]

In Bandoeng Regency in 1822, each *tjatja* consisted of five able-bodied men together with their families [Justitie en Plitie 1822: 22 Mei, Inlander Manga Dipa]. The governor-general Van den Bosch described one *tjatja* in the Priangan region consisted of 22 individuals including four or more married couples and their children, who cultivated 4 “*bau*” rice fields [Breman 1982: 208], while the government official Van Deventer described one *tjatja* as consisted of 21 individuals [Haan 1910-1912: vol. 4 544]. These descriptions of *koffij tjatja* from the beginning of the 19th century to the 1830s indicate that, in this region, one *tjatja* did not consist of a single married couple, but a middle-aged or older couple and their married children. In most cases, around 20 men and women, both old and young, although some smaller *tjatja* also existed.<sup>5)</sup>

*Tjatja* functioned as the unit for rice cultivation and tribute. In the Priangan region at the time, there was no local unit for measuring farmland [Statistiek 1822: memoir C No. 1], and units used outside of the region were not applied either. According to a document in 1820, *djoeng* and *bafu*, which were used in the central part of Java island, were unknown in the Priangan region. Wet rice fields were counted by a pair of water buffalo for rice cultivation, *pancar* in Sundnese language, The word *pancar* meant “pair” And used as a unit to measure rice fields in official documents In 1814, one *pancar* was considered to be roughly equivalent to four *bafu*.<sup>6)</sup> There was another term, *sarakit*, that was also used in the Priangan region at the same time to count wet rice fields. *Sarakit* also had the meaning of “pair,” and especially a “pair of water buffalo” [Haan 1910-1912: vol. 2 709; Wilde 1830: 84; Coolsma 1913: 444, 500; Erlinga 1984: 545, 614-615; Rigg 1862: 429]. In addition, in appendices of General Reports of Priangan Residency 1830 - 1832, the classifications of wet rice fields were “field from which 10 *tjaen* can be harvested with one *pancar* (*sawa dapat satoe pentjer 10 tjaen*),” “8 *tjaen* field,” “5 *tjaen* field,” and “3 *tjaen* field” [Algemeen Verslag 1830-1832: Appendices]. In an appendix of *General Report 1836*, wet rice fields are classified in Dutch as “the number of water buffalo pairs needed to cultivate 10 *tjaen* fields,” “... 8 *tjaen* fields,” “... 5 *tjaen* fields,” and “... 3 *tjaen* fields” [Algemeen Verslag 1836: Appendix]. The above records suggest that *pancar* was used by the European officials in Priangan Residency as the main unit for counting wet rice fields and as the unit for levying rice tributes.

The number of individuals able to be sustained by a *pancar* can be estimated from the amount of rice harvested as follows. In the appendices of General Reports 1830-1832, the maximum amount of ears of rice harvested from one *pancar* in the Tjandjoer regency was 10 *tjaen*, or 6.2 tons [Wilde 1830: 89-91; Haan 1910-1912: vol. 2 707]. Among wet rice fields tabulated by the Dutch colonial government, 19% produced 10 *tjaen* of ears of rice per year, while 41% produced 8 *tjaen*, and 38% produced 5 *tjaen*. Eight *tjaen* is equivalent to approximately 4.9 tons of ears of rice. Five *tjaen* is equivalent to approximately 3.1 tons.<sup>7)</sup> From this, at minimum, a little more than 10% was collected as rice tribute [Haan 1910: vo. 2 693-695], leaving a maximum of 1.8 and 1.1 tons, respectively. Assuming the annual

rice consumption by one adult to be 120 kg, which was the consumption in the Priangan region in the 1980s [Igarashi 1984b: 61-63] and likely an overestimate of actual consumption around the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the number of individuals that can be sustained becomes 15 and 9 adults, respectively and approaches the size of the typical one *tjatja*, which consisted of around 20 individuals (including children).<sup>8)</sup>

In addition, in the 1822 case that was already mentioned, the *tjatja* consisting of five able-bodied men had wet rice fields that produced 9 *tjaen* (approximately 5.5 tons) ears of rice. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that one *koffij tjatja* in the 1820s was essentially the same as one *pancar*. Apparently, the number of people that can be fed using two water buffalo during the rainy season is four couples with children. This is potentially one of the factors determining the size of *tjatja* as a unit for paying tribute through *corvée* labor.<sup>9)</sup>

Based on the above, it can be surmised that, in the Priangan region from the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the 1820s, the unit for paying tribute and performing *corvée* consisted of approximately 20 individuals in four or so households. However, it is highly unlikely that the number of people that could be fed by fields cultivated using two water buffalo was the only factor determining the size of the units. First, while it is possible that, in areas lacking irrigation or having only rudimentary irrigation, the fields that could be cultivated by two water buffalo could only support four households or so, in areas with good irrigation where the growing season could be extended by rotating rice fields, larger fields could be cultivated with two water buffaloes. In the Priangan region at the time, adequate irrigation water was available in much of the area. Second, documents showing that one *tjatja* in the Priangan region consisted of around 20 individuals can be found as far back as the late 17<sup>th</sup> century when swidden agriculture was the dominant practice [Haan 1910-1912: vol. 4 544].

The next section examine *corvée*, subsistence agriculture, and distribution of labor within *tjatja* for everyday tasks as other factors determining the size of *tjatja*.

### **3. Mobilization of *Corvée* and “Female and Child” Labor**

#### **3-1. Relationship between *tjatja* and *corvée***

A report on coffee production in 1818 argued that the ideal *tjatja* consisted of a single married couple living in a single house and expressed irritation at the fact that *tjatja* in reality comprised three to five couples as follows: “there is a big gap between the number of households and the number of coffee growers” and “although the population of the district has increased, this has no or almost no influence on the number of *koffij tjatja* [Koffij Report: 10-11; Haan 1910-1912: vol. 4 403].<sup>10)</sup>

However, according to various documents, the colonial government tolerated that one *tjatja* was a group of 20 or so individuals consisting of an elder couple and their married children, including three to five able-bodied men and

understood that two or more men could stably be mobilized for corvée from the unit.<sup>11)</sup> And using this existing unit of *tjatja* the government mobilized almost all able-bodied men when large amounts of corvée became necessary. The following is a case from Timbanganten District in Bandoeng Regency in the 1820s.

I was in a *tjatja* that consisted of myself and four other male family members. Despite this fact, this year, I was not able to cultivate our wet rice fields, which is capable of producing nine *tjaen* ears of rice. That's because no one was at home. One went off to work on a new road; another moved to the town of the regent; yet another moved to a lodging for officials; and the last went off to a coffee plantation. For this reason, no one was around to do our own work.<sup>12)</sup> We brought the coffee beans we picked to Maas Tjandra Dinata [ the name of an aristocrat] who is a *pattingi* [ lower-rank official] without any pay. [Justitie en Politie 1822: 22 Mei, Inlander Managa Dipa]

When a volcano in Timbanganten District erupted in 1772, hamlets at the foot of the volcano were completely annihilated. However, because the able-bodied men were away from the hamlets delivering coffee beans to Cirebon, almost every male except for the elderly and infirm escaped with their lives [Haan 1910-1912: vol. 3 640]. As can be seen below, such mobilization of labor from *tjatja* led to intensification of work for *tjatja* members other than able-bodied men.

### **3-2. The role of female and child labor**

Between the beginning of the 19th century and the end of the 1820s, Europeans appeared to be interested in the lives of the local people, and women started to be described as workers and not simply as prizes for native chiefs as in the past. For example, J. Olivier, a Dutchman who travelled in the Priangan region from 1817 to 1826, after describing the work division of couples in the region, praised work by women as wives as follows: "The men are responsible for supporting the family and carrying out subsistence agriculture, while the women are responsible for housework, childrearing, and helping with the agriculture" As reasons for women on Java island being treated with greater respect than in other areas in Asia, Olivier identified "the fact that the women like to care for others, are hard working, cheerful, knowledgeable, skillful, and helpful for their husbands. Furthermore, their understanding of the work and skill often exceed that of their husbands" [Olivier 1827: 104-105]. Although his comments were not specific to Priangan Residency, Raffles praised the work by common women as being equal to that of men [Raffles 1988: vol. 1 70-71]. What are the implications of this?

First, the interpretation that the husbands engaged in subsistence agriculture as individuals responsible for supporting their families was likely a misunderstanding on the part of the Dutch who were steeped in the idea of the

modern nuclear family that was starting to become established in the Netherlands. Below, the actual circumstances in colonial documents written in Priangan Residency are examined .

In the Priangan region at that time, the first stages of farm work—including the preparation of irrigation, plowing with water buffalo, and preparation of rice nurseries and fields—were considered work for able-bodied men. The subsequent work, transplanting of seedlings, which required many hands was mainly done by women and children. Weeding was performed for a month and a half to two months after transplanting. Those who performed this work is unknown. After developing ears, the plants were watched to protect them from sparrows. In some cases, a small watch hut was built in which able-bodied men stayed overnight. However, in locations that were considered safe, this work was performed by children. The last stage of work was the rice harvest. This also required many hands and was primarily carried out by women and children, with the elderly lending a hand. As can be seen from the above, for rice fields located in developed areas with little risk of attack from wild animals, all of the work with the exception of preparation of irrigation, plowing, and field preparation could be performed without able-bodied men. Even work requiring physical strength did not necessarily have to be performed by able-bodied men in a *tjatja*; in some cases, women hired men outside of the *tjatja* to do this work [Haan 1910-1912: vol 2 723]. Wilde [1830: 85] also reported that work of rice cultivation was primarily performed by women and children. However, it is speculated that this pattern of rice cultivation, being carried out primarily by women and children, was not the original arrangement but, rather, a consequence of able-bodied men being mobilized for corvée. A regent of Bandoeng described the subsistence agriculture other than rice as follows:

Fruit trees, betel trees, areca palm, beans, corn, and other crops, most notably coconut trees, were owned by individuals...and were not subject to the payment of tribute...the crops were for owners' use or for times of emergency. Care of these plants, which was neither intense nor regular, was carried out by owners' children and young, unmarried men (*bujang*). If children or unmarried were not available, the hamlet chief would order his followers to perform this work. [Haan 1910-1912: vol. 2 714].

The above was considered the work of children and young, unmarried men and able-bodied men were not expected to carry out.

With regard to clothing, documents from the late 18th century to the 1820s indicate that the clothing was self-made and that the making of clothing was considered the work of common women in the Priangan region. The women cultivated cotton, spun thread from this cotton, and wove the thread into fabric using looms. The self-made clothing included cloth to cover the waist, cloth to cover the upper body, and small kerchiefs to cover the head. Children remained naked until around the age of 10 [Nederburgh 1855: 125; Wilde 1830: 150]. In addition to clothing, cotton-filled pillows were also thought to be self-made. If there was any extra fabric, this was sold to make money.



Compared to Central Java, the proportion of the local people in the Priangan region who wore cotton clothing was still small, and many still wore traditional straw skirts [Olivier 1827: 223; Raffles 1988: vol. 1 90; Haan 1910-1912: vol. 4 510]. Daendels also had the impression that the local people were mostly clad in straw skirts [Haan 1910-1912: vol. 4 518]. According to documents cited in Section 4 of this chapter, the local people in the Priangan region purchased cloth from outside the region. The above indicates that, in this region, clothing work was carried out by able-bodied women and that demand was not fully satisfied by self-production.<sup>13)</sup>

Although detailed documentation has not yet been found, in addition to cooking (beginning with rice polishing), child rearing, caring for the sick and elderly also seems to be women's work. It was reported that a large proportion of traditional healers (*doekoeng*) in the region at the time were elderly women [Wilde 1830: 167].

It can be said from the above that, in the 1810s and 1820s, among the common people, labor for subsistence agriculture and everyday work was provided primarily by able-bodied women assisted by children and the elderly.

Furthermore, under circumstances where able-bodied men were away from their home, often for long periods of time, either working on large coffee plantations in the mountainsides or delivering coffee, men often died or went missing while away; even if they returned home, many were unable to work [Haan 1910-1912: vol. 3 613, 675]. There were possible cases that the above were reported in order to avoid *corvée*.<sup>14)</sup> In such cases, women became the head of household and engaged in *corvée*. The following are testimonies given by two women from the eastern Priangan region in 1822:

I own a coffee garden and wet rice fields producing seven *tjaen*. However, I was unable to cultivate the fields. That's because I was hardly ever at home. I spent half of the month preparing meals for workers building a new road in Pola [place name]. Two or three days after I returned home, another official came, and I had to go to the coffee plantation to do planting and weeding work. After that, I worked on a road near the hamlet and I had to polish rice at a lodging for government officials.

In addition, I had to harvest rice for four or five days for the Raden [title name of an aristocrat]. After that, I worked at the lodging for government officials for 15 days, where I cleaned the grounds and fixed the fence. Not only was this work unpaid, I also had to prepare my own meals.

Whenever Dutch officials or native aristocrats would visit the lodging, we had to provide betel, rice, eggs, oil, and chicken without being paid....

I haven't gotten anything from my own coffee garden. I worked my garden and maintained it, but when the time to harvest it came, Mandoor [author's note: name of a petty native chief] and his followers came, picked the coffee cherries, and took them away without paying me at all... [Justitie en Politie 1822: 22 Mei, Vrouwe Saijpa]

I worked on a coffee plantation for two months. When I returned home, Penglako [author's note: name of a petty native chief] came again and told me to go to the new road in Pola, where I had to prepare meals for workers for a month on numerous occasions.

I worked in Raden Najapoera's [ name of a aristocrat] rice fields. I had to take care of 2,000 coffee trees in my garden. But, I had to hand over all of my harvest to Mandoor without any payment.

When Europeans visited the lodging, I couldn't provide chickens, for which I had to pay one wang [ unit of currency]. [Justitie en Politie 1822: 22 Mei, Vrouwe Kanami]

The two cases above indicate that women were also used for the same kinds of *corvée* as able-bodied men, with the exception of transporting coffee beans.<sup>15)</sup> Olivier writes that a wife's knowledge and skill were beneficial to her husband and that, often, wives exceeded their husbands' understanding and proficiency at work. This is an indication that women were capable of maintaining their lives without able-bodied men. And it seems that the Europeans praised women's work for being equivalent to men, because their work made it possible for able-bodied men to be mobilized from their households to generate profits for the Netherlands and England. It is likely that the groups of 20 or so individuals comprising four or so nuclear families served an important function insofar as the women, children, and elderly were able to engage in subsistence farming, fulfill tribute and *corvée* duties, and carry out the tasks of everyday life such as child bearing and rearing and taking care of the elderly and sick, all in the absence of able-bodied men.

However, women would also flee when the work became unbearable. The two testimonies above were from women who had fled. Many documents from the beginning of the 19th century to the 1810s indicate that the people in the Priangan region at the time were much more obedient to the native chiefs, cultivating coffee with hardly any pay, compared to people in other regions [Algemeen Verslag 1827: 1, 15; Koffij Report: 26; Raffles 1988: vol. 1 129, 143]. On the other hand, as illustrated by the testimonies above, even the people considered to be fairly wealthy fled when they were made to engage in *corvée* and found themselves unable to cultivate their own rice fields, which resulted in food shortages.

The next section examines one of the factors that led the local people to act in the manner mentioned above by focusing on the material lives of local people and commerce.

#### **4. Daily Necessities, Luxury Items, and Commerce**

This section examines the material lives of the local people in the Priangan region from the beginning of the 19th century to the 1820s described mainly by Wilde, Olivier, Nederburgh.

First, the diet of the common people at the time consisted of cooked rice, raw or boiled vegetables, chili peppers, and salt flakes, with the addition of a little dried fish or meat, depending on the season and location. The main drink was water. Betel was chewed after the two meals of the day that were taken around 10 in the morning and around 6 in the evening. Snacks consisting of rice cakes, bananas, corn, and others were also taken twice a day with coffee [Wilde 1830: 146-147; Olivier 1827: 114; Haan 1910-1912: vol. 3 630]. When rice crops failed, the main diet consisted of corn, *aren* palm starch, and taro [Haan 1910-1912: vol. 4 444]. After exhausting their rice stocks in two to three months, swidden farmers would eat *gadung* (a vine root), *aren* palm starch, corn, bananas, taro, and, in extreme cases, rice bran [Haan 1910-1912: vol. 4 507, 511-512]. Thus, the diet consisted of rice, tubers, corn, banana, and palm starch as staple foods; vegetables and a small amount of fish or meat; and salt and chili peppers as seasonings. All documents investigated described similar diets.<sup>16)</sup>

A comparison of the everyday diets described above and crops produced in the region at the time is as follows. Wilde describes the crops produced in the following order. (1) A relatively long explanation of coffee, rice, pepper, cotton, indigo, cane sugar, palm sugar, palm starch, and tobacco. Among these, the rice and palm starch were consumed by the family cultivating them or within the Priangan region. (2) The names of several plants from which different types of dyes and oils were extracted. The dyes included rhubarb (*konneeng gede*), turmeric (*kurkuma*, *knyet*), Indian madder (*tjankoedoe*, *mangkoedoe*), *kahi setjang* (from which a red dye was produced), and sappan wood (*sapanhout*). The oils included coconuts (*kalap*, *keleutik*) and candlenuts (*kamirie*) as the main plants along with peanuts (*ktjang soeok*, *katjang taneuh*), castor beans (*djarak kalikie*), as well as *djarak kosta* (bush in the same family as the castor oil plant) and *palma christie* (from which oil is extracted) The dyes and oils were mainly exported outside the region or paid as tribute to the native chiefs. (3) Fruits and vegetables originally from Europe. (4) A brief explanation of potato, sweet potato, taro, and corn. Wilde cultivated potatoes on his own private land and sold them in Batavia. Small amounts of corn were cultivated by each household. (5) Wilde lists the names of various beans, including mung bean (*katjang djogo*, *katjang heedjo*), soya bean (*katjang kadelih*), *katjang maas*, and *katjang djaat*, the foul-smelling *djengkol* and *peuteuj* beans. And, finally, Wilde provided (6) a short explanation of cucumbers, banana, and fruits [Wilde 1830: 61-112]. Among them such as beans, tobacco, potato, cabbage, taro, rice, banana, *palma christie*, and peppers were cultivated in newly-opened coffee plantations while the coffee trees were still small [Wilde 1830: 74-77].

Although poultry and livestock do not appear in Wilde's book, it is evident from descriptions of tribute of *sidekah* (rice, chicken, and vegetables offered three times a year) and *soegoeh* (payment offered when the native chiefs had visitors) that chicken were raised [ Section 3, Item 2 ]. The chickens, eggs, and the oils mentioned above were primarily paid as tribute to the native chiefs, consumed by wealthy commoners, or eaten on special occasions such as festivals.

From the discussion above, it is evident that, the common people were largely self-sufficient in terms of food, with the exception of salt and salt-dried fish.

Second, home furnishings were made of bamboo and wood or, in some cases, just bamboo. The use of the term *bilik* (referring to woven bamboo walls) suggests that the houses were similar to the traditional houses still seen in the region in the 1980s. A prototype of the house, consisting of a low-floored hut with bamboo pillars and woven bamboo walls, seems to have already existed at this time [Haan 1910-1912: vol. 4 508-509]. Bedding consisted of a mat made from the *pandan* (screw pine) leaves and cotton-filled cushions. The same type of bedding was used by swidden farmers [Wilde 1830: 150-151]. Household goods made of bamboo and rattan could be obtained in the region.

Third, the main cookware used by wealthy families consisted of a copper steamer (*dangdang*) for cooking rice, bamboo baskets, a Chinese-style steelwok (*taadjo*), a steel or ceramic pan (*priedjoek, kwalie*), a few stone or unglazed ceramic jars, a small stone mortar for grinding spices, and a bamboo bucket. There are documents stating that wealthy people cooked rice in steel pots. Prior to this period, Chinese woks and copper steamers did not exist, and the local population steamed rice in bamboo tubes and used banana leaves as plates. This was still true in the 1820s in remote areas where swidden agriculture was still widely practiced [Wilde 1830: 151; Haan 1910-1912: vol. 3 627, vol. 4 517-518]. It is possible that the copper steamers, Chinese-style steel woks, and porcelain ware, which are known to have started spreading at the beginning of the 19th century, not only improved cooking efficiency but, also, helped spread prosperous lifestyles; these items, however, had to be imported from outside the region.

Fourth, equipment for weaving included spinning wheels, small devices for removing cotton seeds, and looms (*pakara tinoen*). Whether these were purchased from outside the region or self-made is not known, however swidden farmers seem to have possessed these implements.

Fifth, Wilde listed the following as farm implements: hatchet (*balioeng*), hoe for wet rice field work (*patjoel bawak*) hoe for dry field work (*patjoel tjina*), two types of spades (*lanjam sawa, lanjam boegis*), axe (*bedok*), small knife for handicrafts (*pesoh rawet*), two types of knives for cutting grass (*korreet gede, korreet luttiek*), sickle (*ariet sikkel*), axe for slashing (*koedjang*), machete for cutting grass (*parrang*), and small sickle for harvesting ears of rice (*aniani*). Owning two water buffalo was seen as a symbol of wealth [Wilde 1830: 151, 152]. According to a document in 1812, the spades were now equipped with steel blades, although spades were previously made from areca palm and knives from bamboo [Haan 1910-1912: vol. 3 627]. All of the tools above become highly effective when fitted with steel blades. And, having blades means having to purchase steel from outside the region and relying on a blacksmith to shape them.<sup>17)</sup>

Lastly, the nature of trade with outside regions is examined. The trade conducted by the Priangan people in Krawan Residency near the border with Priangan residency in 1809 was as follows. The Priangan people transporting coffee also carried with them rice, sugar, and water buffalo hides and traded these for “small items of clothing, fabric, copperware, porcelain goods, various types of ironware, salt, opium, tobacco, areca palm seeds, as well as cotton,

needles, thread, and other small items” [Haan 1910-1912: vol. 4 592]. According to this document, the items that the local people had to procure outside the region were salt, ironware, and porcelain. Particularly essential were salt, the demand for which could not be met by local salt wells, and iron that was needed in large quantities for wet rice cultivation and was not produced in the region.

In the 1820s, the exclusive suppliers of these items to the Priangan region were the Dutch colonial government and Chinese merchants. The local people transported coffee beans to three big coffee storehouses on the residency border and were paid in copper coins, which they then used to purchase everyday necessities from nearby Chinese shops [Wilde 1830: 185]. For the local population, salt was an important return cargo after transporting coffee beans. It was reported that, if salt was not sold near a coffee storehouse, the transporters would take their coffee beans to a different coffee storehouse. Recognizing this problem, at the turn of the 19th century, the Dutch colonial government began selling salt at each of the three biggest storehouses as well as the small coffee storehouses that were established in each district [Haan 1910-1912: vol. 2 715, vol. 3 648, vol. 4 10-11; Algemeen Verslag 1827: 4, 12-13]. As a consequence, the Dutch became the exclusive supplier of salt to the local people.

Those who had opportunities to purchase such goods at the biggest storehouses—i.e., those who transported coffee beans to these storehouses—included native chiefs in districts, wealthy common people who owned water buffalo and carts, and able-bodied men who were mobilized to transport coffee to the storehouses. The two former groups, who got profit from the return cargo, were highly motivated to transport coffee beans. In contrast, the compensation paid to *corvée* workers for the transportation was far insufficient, and whether such workers benefitted from the return cargo is unknown. Furthermore, for the families waiting the return of their men from coffee transportation, it was the able-bodied men that would bring back salt, steel farm implements, and luxury items. *Tjatja* that provided coffee transporters who could not participate in the return cargo trade and households without able-bodied men had no choice but to rely on the native chiefs and wealthy people when they needed any of these goods and, thus, found themselves in an extremely disadvantaged position. In this respect, women, children, and the elderly were almost completely reliant on able-bodied men, particularly those from wealthy families, and native chiefs.

The above discussion indicates that local people who adopted irrigated wet-rice cultivation and agreed to engage in coffee cultivation became materially wealthier than those who continued to practice swidden agriculture. However, daily necessities that needed to be purchased and convenience goods were brought into the region through the trade monopolized by the colonial government as well as native chiefs and Chinese merchants subordinate to the government. Furthermore, the way to purchase these goods was embedded in the system for coffee transportation.

## 5. Conclusions

This paper discusses the people's responses that enabled the mass mobilization of able-bodied men as *corvée* workers in the Priangan region in the late 18th century to the 1820s. The first was the existence of a unit for engaging in production, paying tribute, performing *corvée*, and providing mutual assistance that consisted of one parental couple and three or so sons' and/or daughters' families. Approximately four couples and their children could be supported by rice fields cultivated during the rainy season using two water buffalo. Furthermore, the unit was acceptable for the women, children, and elderly members to have been able to stably carry out the daily tasks of subsistence agriculture, tribute payment and *corvée* labour, child bearing and child rearing, and nursing care even in the absence of able-bodied men. Second, the local people were able to obtain daily necessities and luxury items, which they purchased with money earned from coffee cultivation with rice cultivation. This material wealth was made possible through coffee transportation and trade under the monopolistic control of the Dutch colonial government, native chiefs, and Chinese merchants. It was extremely difficult for the local people, even those wealthy, to engage in profitable economic activities evading coffee cultivation and transportation. When the people were unable to work for their subsistence food production because of the *corvée* labour, their wealth was of little value. In such cases, the local people had no choice but to ask for the mercy of native chiefs or give up their property and flee. The subordination of the local people to the Dutch and native chiefs and the common women's labor as the same level as that of men were a consequence of such underlying social circumstances in Priangan Residency during this period.

---

Table 13-1. Characteristics of 17 main districts in Tjandjoer Regency and Timbanganten District in Bandung Regency

District name	Mean hamlet size (no. of houses)	Population / no. of houses (no. of people)	No. of males available for corvée labor / no. of houses (no. of people)	No. of individuals engaged in paddy cultivation / no. of tribute-paying individuals (%)	No. of males available for corvée labor / no. of tribute-paying individuals (no. of people)	No. of males available for corvée labor / No. of females available for corvée labor (%)	Role of district
Tjibeureum	120	4.5	1.18	93	5.3	95	Coffee production (intensive)
Kaliastana	164	4.5	1.37	98	6.6	88	Coffee production (intensive)
Padakattij	190	6.2	1.67	95	7.3	85	Coffee production (intensive)
Tjipoetorie	139	5.4	1.70	76	2.7	98	Coffee production (old development)
Pesser	87	5.6	1.53	95	3.5	88	Coffee production
Goenoeng Parang	83	5.3	1.48	66	2.2	86	Coffee production (intensive)
Tjimahie	66	3.8	1.00	80	3.0	83	Coffee production
Tjiheulang	40	3.8	1.14	64	2.1	96	Coffee production
Maleber	55	4.5	1.10	95	4.0	89	Rice production (newly developed)
Tjiketoeg	73	5.0	1.31	98	3.9	87	Rice production (newly developed)
Nnogorij-Tjandjoer	340	5.2	1.62	100	3.6	92	Rice production (old development)
Tjiblagoeng	133	5.2	1.62	95	2.1	90	Rice production (old development)
Tjikalong	91	3.5	1.31	93	5.0	82	Rice production (old development)
Tjikondang	74	4.9	1.32	80	5.8	79	Unknown: provision of labor?
Madjalaija	122	4.9	1.31	57	6.4	113	Small transporation hub
Mande	81	3.1	1.30	56	1.4	96	Small transporation hub
Tjitjoeroeg	75	5.8	1.67	69	3.5	93	Small transporation hub
Timbanganten	125	4.9	1.34	95	9.9	82	Coffee production

Source: Calculated from Bevolking van het Regnetshap Tjandjor in December 1827; Bandeong.

## Endnotes

- 1) The characteristics of these districts are mentioned in Table 13-1 below.
- 2) The column labels for the table are as follows: hamlet name (*Namen der Kampongs*), house (*huizen*), males available for corvée labor (*werkbare mannen*), females available for corvée labor (*werkbare vrouwen*), male children (*mannelijk kinderen*), female children (*vrouwelijk kinderen*), and population (*bevolking*).
- 3) Malay-language data written in the Roman alphabet. As far as I investigated, this level of data remains for Timbanganten District only. Timbanganten District has a topography that is suitable for coffee cultivation, but transportation to the northern coast of Java was difficult. The fact that data for this district alone remains is more than coincidence but is likely the consequence of high level of interest of the Dutch colonial government in this district, whose main problem was transportation. The column names of this Malay-language data written in the Roman alphabet are as follows: hamlet name (*nama kampong*), houses (*roemah*), male petty native chiefs (*kepala ketjil lalaki*), female petty native chiefs (*kepala ketjil prompoean*), male religious officials (*padri lalaki*), female religious officials (*padri prompoean*), male available for corvée labor (*orang kwat kerdja lalaki*), female available for corvée labor (*orang kwat kerdja prompoean*), elderly males (*orang toewa lalaki*), elderly females (*orang toewa prompoean*), male widowers and divorcees (*yang suda batjene lalaki*), female widows and divorcees (*yang suda batjene prompoean*), 10 to 15 year old males (*anak oemoer 10 sampe 15 lalaki*), 10 to 15 year old females (*anak oemoer 10 sampe 15 prompoean*), young males (*anak ketjil lalaki*), young females (*anak ketjil prompoean*), total population (*djoemla sakalian orang*), *somahan* (likely means “household”), rice-producing paddy fields (unit: *tjaen*) (*sawah dapat tjaeng padi*), domestic horse (*piaraan binatang kuda*), domestic water buffalo (*piaraan binatang kerbo*), domestic cattle (*piaraan binatang sapie*).
- 4) The “males available for work” in the regency data by district is the sum of “males available for corvée labor,” “elderly males,” “male widowers and divorcees,” and “10 to 15 year old males” in the detailed data of Timbanganten District; likewise “females available for work” is the sum of “females available for corvée labor,” “elderly females,” “female widows and divorcees,” and “10 to 15 year old females.” Furthermore, in the detailed data for Timbanganten District, “houses” was slightly higher than the sum of “male petty native chiefs,” “male religious officials,” “males available for corvée labor,” “elderly males,” (the number for these categories is the same for females) and “male widowers and divorcees.” The total for *somahan*, which is believed to mean “household,” was 5,020, which is 188 lower than the “number of houses.” It was the same or slightly higher than the sum of “males available for corvée labor,” “elderly males,” and “male widowers and divorcees.” Based on this, it can be said that “household” refers to the number of households minus the number of petty native chiefs and Muslim officials.
- 5) In addition, Hoogendorp reported *tjatja* as consisting of two males with weapons, two females, and two children [Haan 1910-1912: vol. 4 544]. Furthermore, Maleber District in Tjandjoer Regency was a newly-developed basin-



floor district expected to produce rice that previously had the second lowest average hamlet size in the regency, with a little more than half (69) of the 134 hamlets consisting of ten or fewer houses . A detailed breakdown of these hamlets with ten or fewer houses is as follows (number of hamlets): one house (3), two houses (5), three houses (12), four houses (10), five houses (4), six houses (10), seven houses (6), eight houses (7), nine houses (7), and ten houses (5). The fact that the number of hamlets consisting of three or four houses was more than double that of hamlets consisting of one or two houses, while the number of hamlets consisting of five houses again fell to half is consistent with reporting that many *tjatja* consisted of three to four houses [Bevolking van het Regentschap Tjandjor in December 1827].

6) Surveys on the decline of well-being conducted in the 20th century also indicated that two water buffalo were able to cultivate 3-4 *bafu* field during the western monsoon season [Onderzoek 1904-1914: Vb Bijl. IV pag 2].

7) To convert the amount of unpolished rice harvested to polished rice, I used 0.4, which is the conversion factor used in Indonesia in 1980. However, because the weighing of harvest and tribute paying was carried out immediately after harvest before the rice had sufficient time to dry, the actual conversion rate at the time was likely slightly lower.

8) It is evident from documents that, at first, those who settled in the area from elsewhere were supported in households or *tjatjas* [Haan 1910-1912: vol. 2 697].

9) The exact degree of joint management of rice cultivation within *pancar* is unknown. It can be said that the statisticians at the time employed items that would have been easy for native chiefs to count. Thus, what is recorded is not households but the number of houses, water buffalo, horses, etc. Similarly, *pancar* is speculated that what was counted was pairs of water buffalo or numbers of plows that were counted rather than the number of individuals engaged in cultivation.

10) The first population record of the Priangan region compiled in 1778 defined one *tjatja* consisted of one man, one woman, and two children [Jonge 1862-1888: vol. 11 364, 366]. However, it is unclear whether this was actually true or whether *tjatja* was used in the Priangan regencies to refer to households.

11) This seems to have been the unit compromised by the native chiefs and common people from the 1820s to around 1860 [Haan 1910-1912: vol. 4 519-520].

12) If a simple calculation is made based on this testimony, that would mean that four males were mobilized while one remained. Either the one remaining individual was too old to cultivate rice or the individual giving the testimony may simply have missed to explain where was the individual.

13) In addition, it was the men who wove baskets and small mats, while women, men, and children wove straw mats (*tikar*) [Olivier 1827: 22].

14) Under the lowest level of Muslim officials (*amil*), there were many poor people (*miskien*) . Such people relied on alms from wealthier people and were not conscripted to perform corvée labor. As such, sometimes the regents made them work on the coffee plantations [Olivier 1827: 293-294; Wilde 1830: 180-181].

15) This corvée labor was called *toegoer* in Sundanese language.

16) When corn and palm starch are removed and bean is added, the list of food categories is the same as the 1980s diet of farmers living in mountainous areas of the Priangan region [Igarashi 1984b: 64]. In the western part of Java island, corn might be included in vegetables.

17) Although copperware was imported from other regions, coppersmiths existed in the area since olden times. Farm implements fitted with copper blades seem to have existed [Haan 1910-1912: vol. 3 347-349].

## References

### Archival materials

National Archives of Republic Indonesia

Priangan Residency

Algemeen Verslag, Preanger Regentschappen. 1830-32, 36.

Justitie & Politie, Preanger Regentschappen. 1822( 22 Mei)

Bevolking van het Regentschap Tjanjor in December 1827 Preanger 29a/6

Bandoeng 整理番号 Preanger 30/7・8

Kultuur Verslag (Archieven Cultures) 1816-1920

No.267 Koffij Report 1818

### Published materials, books and articles:

Breman, J. 1982. The Village on Java and the Early-Colonial State. *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 9(4):189-240.

Breman, J. 2010. *Koloniaal Profijt van Onvrije Arbeid: Het Preanger stelsel van gedwongen koffieteelt op Java*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

Breman, J. 2015. *Mobilizing Labour for the Global Coffee Market: Profits from an Unfree Work Regime in Colonial Java*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

Coolsma, S. 1913. *Soendaneesh-Hollandsch woordenboek*. 2de druk. Leiden:A.W.Sijthoff's Uitgevers-maatshappij.

Eringa, F.S. 1984. *Soendaas-Nederlands Woordenboek*. Dordrecht, Cinnaminson: Foris Publications Holland.

Haan, F. de. 1910-12. Priangan, *De Preanger-regentschappen onder het Nederlandsch Bestuur tot 1811*. 4vols. Batavia: G.Kolff & Co.

Igarashi, T. 1984. The Dietary Habits of the Two Sundanese Villages. (in Japanese) (五十嵐忠孝. 1984. 「二つのスンダ人村落における食生活」. 『インドネシア人類生態学調査集成』 鈴木庄亮・五十嵐忠孝 (編). 東京: 日産化学振興財団. pp54-65.)

Jonge, Jhr. J.K.J. de. ed. 1862-1888. *De Opkomst van het Nederlandsch gezag in Oost Indie, verzameling van het onuitgegeven stukken uit het Oud Koloniaal Archief (1595-1814)*. 13vols. s'Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff.

Nederburgh, S.N. 1855. Consideratien over de Jaccatrasche en Preangerregentschappen, onder Batavia sorteerende en of daaruit meerder voordeelen dan thans, voor de Compagnie te behalen zijn ?. *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land-, en Volkenkunde*. 3:110-148, 195-246, 300-318.

- Ohashi, A. 2010. *The Global Economy and a Local Society: Sweets and Bitters of People in West Java, 1700-1830*. (in Japanese) (大橋厚子。2010. 『世界システムと地域社会:西ジャワの得たもの失ったもの 1700-1830』)
- Olivier, J.Jz. 1827. *Land- en zeetogten in Neederland's Indie, en eenige Britsche etablissementen, gedaan in de jaren 1817 tot 1826*. Amsterdam: C.G. Sulpke.
- Onderzoek naar mindere welvaart der Inlandechte Bevolking op Java en Madoera, 1904-1914*. 33 vols.
- Raffles, T.S. 1988. *The History of Java*. Singapore: Oxford University Press. reprint.
- Rigg, J. 1862. *A Dictionary of the Sunda Language of JAVA*. Batavia: LANGE & CO.
- Wilde, A.de. 1830. *De Preanger Regentschappen op Java gelegen*. Amsterdam: M. Westerman.