Sedentary Schooling for Seafaring Nomads... 

...Hurdles along the Pathway to Human Flourishing?

Exploring the im/possibility of culturally sustaining compulsory schooling.

For centuries, the nomadic Bajau people have sailed the seas between what we now refer to as Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines on houseboats of their own construction. 

Adapt maintenance divers, they forage the sea floor for sea cucumber, fish, black coral, pearls, and more, often spending over 60% of their working day underwater.

On a single breath, they can reach depths of seventy feet, stay submerged for five minutes, and see twice as well as we can (Lam et al. 2011).

But genetic adaptation is only part of the puzzle. This "FAA" of Bajau culture practices must be taught and learned intergenerationally...

Therein lies The Problem...

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) Article 28 (1) (a) makes primary education compulsory and available free to all and (e) encourages regular attendance at school.

As a signatory of this convention, Indonesia is duty-bound to ensure that Bajau children receive a formal education, just as do other children of the nation.

The Solution? (suggested)

Education For All

All cultures are valuable and deserving of respect.

All children have the right to an education.

What I really want to know is...

Who do they recognize as teachers, and (how) do teachers sustain Bajau linguistic and cultural knowledges and practices?

How are Bajau people learning to live off the sea?

How do the Bajau people conceive of education?

What role did the provision of schooling play in Bajau sedentarization?

Research Statement:

I intend to ethnographically study the educative experiences and cultural practices of a community of Bajau people in Southeastern Sulawesi, engaging with the processes of sedentary schooling.

Participant Observation

Elicitation Techniques

Data will be collected over a period of two months.

Conclusion

Thank You

for sharing questions & comments.