



Community Economies Research Network
CERN Asia

Centre for Sustainable Communities
University of Canberra



ECONOMIC DIVERSITY IN CONTEMPORARY TIMOR-LESTE

12 October 2023 Thursday

10:30 AM New Delhi | 12 PM Bangkok | 4 PM Sydney/Canberra | 6 PM Auckland

1-hour event

REGISTER <https://bit.ly/CERNAsiaCSC>



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Economic Diversity in Contemporary Timor-Leste: An Overview

We will present an overview of the introduction to the edited volume, *Economic Diversity in Contemporary Timor-Leste* (Leiden University Press, 2023). This introduction challenges hegemonic, market-driven analyses which characterise Timor-Leste's economy as weak, homogeneous and disformed and elucidates the agentive cultural institutions, logics and practices which underpin and mobilise diverse Timorese economic ecologies. It begins from the assumption that capitalism and its market economy is only one regime, among others, of production, exchange, distribution and consumption that people rely on to make their living. Developing the idea of the interdependencies of economic diversity, it outlines the processes through which an assemblage of institutions and their localised and historical relationships are mobilised for reproducing collective life. It introduces the ways in which subsequent chapters analyse this economic diversity and presents an overview of the ways in which they pattern out across diverse spatio-temporal contexts.

Seeing you, Mina Bessa, over the land of Eluli (*in memoriam*)

Based on our research we question two concepts: productive work and abundance. With this research we argue the following: firstly, we assert that all the landwork is productive although not paid and performed within the domestic sphere. In other words, it produces the abundances that are essential for the endless flow of life; secondly, the concept of abundance can be thought of as the power to assess and state what kind of resources and wealth are valuable to a community giving it the power to decide what can never be reduced to commodities and so to live and live well.

Discussion Questions

1. Do we understand economic diversity in terms of confrontational relationships, or do we view it as a matter of complementarity and supplementarity? Is there nothing else besides capitalism?
2. Drawing on the context of Timor-Leste and elsewhere in the region, how can we as scholars most effectively challenge hegemonic, market-driven policy and analysis and better elucidate the agentive cultural institutions, logics and practices which underpin and mobilise local and regionally diverse economic ecologies?