

An inter-colonial pattern of globalization in East Asia and its impact: imperial polities and trans-border health norm making at the League of Nations Rural Hygiene Conference, Bandung, 1937

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What distinguished a process of globalization in East Asia, and furthermore, how did this distinct East Asian pattern affect a broader process of globalization?

While much of the literature on globalization concerns on the interactions beyond or without the governments, this paper focuses on a regional and global health governing norm making in East Asia in the early twentieth century as a significant part of globalization. It argues that there were two distinct natures of this globalization process in East Asia since the 1900s. First, it was defined by the fact that the dominant form of the political unit in the region was not the independent, sovereignty nation-states, but diverse forms of imperial polities. An attempt for making a governing norm across the political boundaries over the issues in East Asia, therefore, needed to be a cooperative action between these imperial polities, and the nature of these interactions was either inter-imperial or inter-colonial, as opposed to inter-national. Second, these actions were led by public health experts in an absence of the inter-governmental organizations in the region. The paper further argues that this distinct pattern of the health norm making process in the region had two significant impacts. First, the inter-colonial initiatives from Asia, along with the inter-national initiatives from the Americas, contributed to the reshaping of a broader global norm making process, namely influencing the revision of the International Sanitary Convention. Second, this integration of a region to the world defined a pattern, an inter-colonial path, through which national voices emerged in global norm making process. The paper's argument is based on an examination of the League of Nations Health Organizations Rural Hygiene Conference, Bandung, 1937, and its backgrounds leading to the conference.