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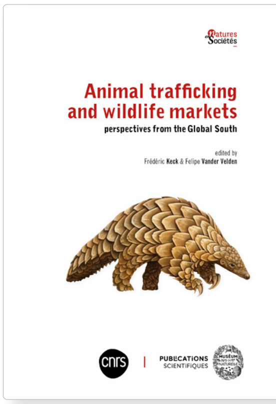

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Animal trafficking and wildlife markets
perspectives from the Global South

sous la direction de Frédéric **Keck** & Felipe **Vanden Velden**

LE LIVRE

Cet ouvrage examine des cas de marchés d'animaux et de trafic d'espèces sauvages en Asie, en Afrique et en Amérique du Sud, souvent qualifiées de «Sud global», par opposition à l'Europe et à l'Amérique du Nord, définies comme le «Nord global». il vise notamment à comprendre pourquoi, au-delà des normes internationales de protection de la biodiversité, la circulation des animaux et de leurs parties corporelles est perçue comme scandaleuse, alors que des mouvements similaires dans le Nord global sont présentés comme conformes à ces normes. La notion de trafic, qui désignait à l'origine le déplacement ordinaire de biens tels que des œuvres d'art ou des véhicules, en est venue à désigner le commerce illégal du fait de la tentative moderne de réglementer les échanges selon une conception contemporaine qui «purifie» les objets et les sujets, la nature et la culture. Or, les relations entre humains et animaux sont bien plus riches et ambivalentes qu'une simple dichotomie entre légal et illégal ne le laisse supposer. L'enquête ethnographique menée par les auteurs réunis ici sur les innombrables mouvements d'animaux à travers des mains humaines illustre ces différentes significations du «trafic d'animaux». Cet ouvrage rassemble des enquêtes basées sur des travaux de terrain ethnographiques et des archives historiques afin d'examiner les transformations récentes des marchés d'animaux sauvages à travers le monde, notamment l'utilisation d'internet et des réseaux sociaux pour diffuser des images d'animaux, de leurs parties et des marchés où ils sont vendus. il contribue à l'anthropologie du trafic d'espèces sauvages par l'étude ethnographique de ces marchés. Par «marchés d'animaux», nous entendons les lieux où les humains appréhendent les animaux à la fois comme êtres vivants et comme marchandises, générant ainsi des tensions par la capture et parfois la mise à mort d'animaux pour les transformer en objets de valeur.

LES ÉDITEURS SCIENTIFIQUES

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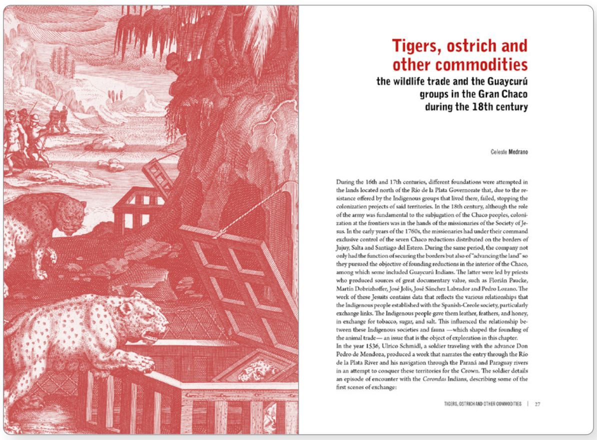

Tigers, ostrich and other commodities
the wildlife trade and the Guaycurú groups in the Gran Chaco during the 18th century

Celeste **Medrano**

During the 16th and 17th centuries, different foundations were attempted in the lands located north of the Río de la Plata Governorate that, due to the resistance offered by the Indigenous groups that lived there, failed, stopping the colonization projects of said territories. In the 18th century, although the role of the army was fundamental to the subjugation of the Chaco peoples, colonization at the frontiers was in the hands of the missionaries of the Society of Jesus. In the early years of the 1760s, the missionaries had under their command exclusive control of the seven Chaco reductions distributed on the borders of Jujuy, Salta and Santiago del Estero. During the same period, the company not only had the function of securing the borders but also of "advancing the land" so they pursued the objective of founding reductions in the interior of the Chaco, among which some included Guaycurú Indians. The latter were led by priests who produced sources of great documentary value, such as Florián Paucke, Martín Dobrizhoffer, José Jolís, José Sánchez Labrador and Pedro Lozano. The work of these Jesuits contains data that reflects the various relationships that the Indigenous people established with the Spanish-Creole society, particularly exchange links. The Indigenous people gave them leather, feathers, and honey, in exchange for tobacco, sugar, and salt. This influenced the relationship between these Indigenous societies and fauna —which shaped the founding of the animal trade— an issue that is the object of exploration in this chapter.
In the year 1536, Ulrico Schmidl, a soldier traveling with the advance Don Pedro de Mendoza, produced a work that narrates the entry through the Río de la Plata River and his navigation through the Paraná and Paraguay rivers in an attempt to conquer these territories for the Crown. The soldier details an episode of encounter with the *Corondas* Indians, describing some of the first scenes of exchange:

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are inauthentic, since they are not made from wild native species, and involve spurious intentions by supposedly deceiving consumers, who expect feathers from native (or better yet, *Indigenous*) birds.
In this way, popular notions of authenticity and Indianness (McCallum 2011) intertwine with the preference in domestic and international markets for Indigenous art/crafts and those made from native species, particularly those that are rare, vulnerable, protected, and/or threatened. What is native here in Rondônia (feathers from Amazonian birds) becomes exotic elsewhere, which may be Tokyo, São Paulo, or even downtown Porto Velho; what is exotic here (feathers from chickens, which were introduced with colonization) elsewhere becomes spurious, since chickens are non-native birds which are generally not linked to Indigenous art or crafts.
In addition, Karitiana pieces which are confiscated for legal or repressive reasons occasionally return to circulation through other channels which are not governed by the market but rather through *gift giving*. For example, in 2009 I learned from a biologist colleague at the Federal University of Rondônia (UNIR) that staff of the local IBAMA office where the Karitiana headdresses confiscated from the APK store were kept had been giving these pieces to various people. This same biologist was also a professor, and on her classroom wall displayed a beautiful headdress donated by this same agency. In an interview, she stated that during a visit to IBAMA to resolve an issue she noticed a headdress hanging in the meeting room. When she asked one of the staff about it, she was told: *"There is a room full of these, would you like to take one?"* Here the usual logic associating Indigenous peoples with gift-giving practices (in contrast with merchandise) is inverted: the native people treat the objects like merchandise, while public agents use them as gifts.
It is also very common, as I have mentioned, for large Karitiana headdresses to be displayed in hotel lobbies, companies, and various public agencies scattered across Porto Velho and other cities in the state of Rondônia. Many of these pieces are not acquired directly (at least, not openly) from the Karitiana via payment (buying and selling): instead, they are often given as gifts, causing the circulation of these objects to continue uninterrupted and fostering trade since these crafts, artists, and art are publicized and popularized in various points around the city. For example, the fact that they are used to decorate hotels certainly catches the attention of tourists interested in bringing home a souvenir of their trip to the Amazon region and a piece of local culture (figure 3.2).
So Indigenous people are only allowed to utilize the bodies of animals within their territories and for uses considered traditional, and objects produced with parts of animal bodies cannot be made into merchandise. Note that Brazil's Environmental Crimes Law criminalizes the acts of those who *acquire, keep, hold in captivity or deposit* wild animals *or products corresponding thereto*, but does not say anything about *donations, presents*, or *gift giving*. Karitiana

figure 3.2 Karitiana headdress displayed in the entryway to a hotel in Porto Velho, 2015. Credit Felipe Vander Velden.

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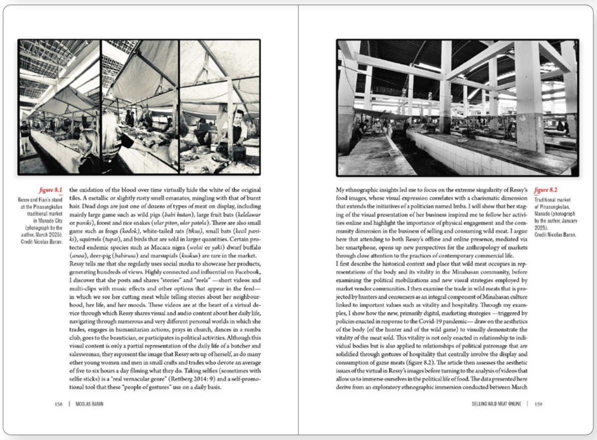

figure 8.1 Ressy and Fian's stand at the Pinasungkulan traditional market in Manado City (photograph by the author, March 2025). Credit Nicolas Baran.

the oxidation of the blood over time virtually hide the white of the original tiles. A metallic or slightly rusty smell emanates, mingling with that of burnt hair. Dead dogs are just one of dozens of types of meat on display, including mainly large game such as wild pigs (*babi hutan*), large fruit bats (*kelelawar* or *paniki*), forest and rice snakes (*ular piton, ular patola*). There are also small game such as frogs (*kodok*), white-tailed rats (*tikus*), small bats (*kecil paniki*), squirrels (*tupai*), and birds that are sold in larger quantities. Certain protected endemic species such as Macaca nigra (*wolai* or *yaki*) dwarf buffalo (*anoa*), deer-pig (*babirusa*) and marsupials (*kuskus*) are rare in the market.
Ressy tells me that she regularly uses social media to showcase her products, generating hundreds of views. Highly connected and influential on Facebook, I discover that she posts and shares "stories" and "reels" —short videos and multi-clips with music effects and other options that appear in the feed— in which we see her cutting meat while telling stories about her neighbourhood, her life, and her moods. These videos are at the heart of a virtual device through which Ressy shares visual and audio content about her daily life, navigating through numerous and very different personal worlds in which she trades, engages in humanitarian actions, prays in church, dances in a rumba club, goes to the beautician, or participates in political activities. Although this visual content is only a partial representation of the daily life of a butcher and saleswoman, they represent the image that Ressy sets up of herself, as do many other young women and men in small crafts and trades who devote an average of five to six hours a day filming what they do. Taking selfies (sometimes with selfie sticks) is a "real vernacular genre" (Rettberg 2014: 9) and a self-promotional tool that these "people of gestures" use on a daily basis.

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My ethnographic insights led me to focus on the extreme singularity of Ressy's food images, whose visual expression correlates with a charismatic dimension that extends the initiatives of a politician named Imba. I will show that her staging of the visual presentation of her business inspired me to follow her activities online and highlight the importance of physical engagement and the community dimension in the business of selling and consuming wild meat. I argue here that attending to both Ressy's offline and online presence, mediated via her smartphone, opens up new perspectives for the anthropology of markets through close attention to the practices of contemporary commercial life.
I first describe the historical context and place that wild meat occupies in representations of the body and its vitality in the Minahasan community, before examining the political mobilizations and new visual strategies employed by market vendor communities. I then examine the trade in wild meats that is projected by hunters and consumers as an integral component of Minahasan culture linked to important values such as vitality and hospitality. Through my examples, I show how the new, primarily digital, marketing strategies —triggered by policies enacted in response to the Covid-19 pandemic— draw on the aesthetics of the body (of the hunter and of the wild game) to visually demonstrate the vitality of the meat sold. This vitality is not only enacted in relationship to individual bodies but is also applied to relationships of political patronage that are solidified through gestures of hospitality that centrally involve the display and consumption of game meats (figure 8.2). The article then assesses the aesthetic issues of the virtual in Ressy's images before turning to the analysis of videos that allow us to immerse ourselves in the political life of food. The data presented here derive from an exploratory ethnographic immersion conducted between March

figure 8.2 Traditional market of Pinasungkulan, Manado (photograph by the author, January 2025). Credit Nicolas Baran.

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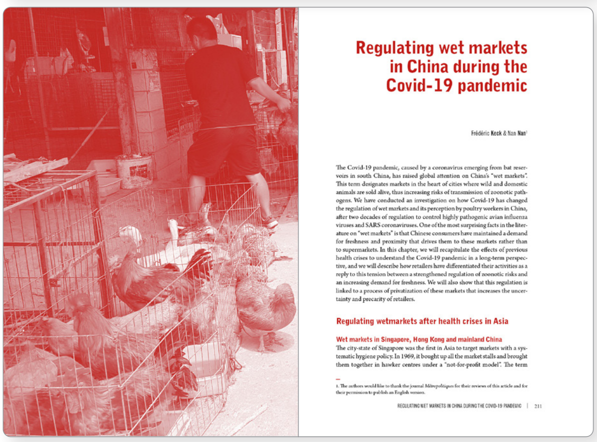

Regulating wet markets in China during the Covid-19 pandemic

Frédéric **Keck** & Nan **Nan**[1]

The Covid-19 pandemic, caused by a coronavirus emerging from bat reservoirs in south China, has raised global attention on China's "wet markets". This term designates markets in the heart of cities where wild and domestic animals are sold alive, thus increasing risks of transmission of zoonotic pathogens. We have conducted an investigation on how Covid-19 has changed the regulation of wet markets and its perception by poultry workers in China, after two decades of regulation to control highly pathogenic avian influenza viruses and SARS coronaviruses. One of the most surprising facts in the literature on "wet markets" is that Chinese consumers have maintained a demand for freshness and proximity that drives them to these markets rather than to supermarkets. In this chapter, we will recapitulate the effects of previous health crises to understand the Covid-19 pandemic in a long-term perspective, and we will describe how retailers have differentiated their activities as a reply to this tension between a strengthened regulation of zoonotic risks and an increasing demand for freshness. We will also show that this regulation is linked to a process of privatization of these markets that increases the uncertainty and precarity of retailers.

Regulating wetmarkets after health crises in Asia

Wet markets in Singapore, Hong Kong and mainland China
The city-state of Singapore was the first in Asia to target markets with a systematic hygiene policy. In 1969, it bought up all the market stalls and brought them together in hawker centres under a "not-for-profit model". The term

1. The authors would like to thank the journal *Métropolitiques* for their reviews of this article and for their permission to publish an English version.

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