In Memoriam - Thee Kian Wie: Dedicated Scholar and Public Intellectual

The definitive version of the text was subsequently published in

Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies, 50(2), 2014-07-30

Published by Taylor and Francis and found at http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00074918.2014.938408

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Thee Kian Wie: An Appreciation

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A Dedicated Scholar and Public Intellectual

With the passing of Thee Kian Wie (hereafter ‘Kian Wie’) on February 8, 2014, aged 79 years, Indonesia lost one of its most distinguished citizens. Kian Wie, or ‘Pak Thee’ as he was widely known to Indonesians, was a dedicated and productive scholar, a public intellectual, a life-long civil servant, a mentor, a raconteur, and a cosmopolitan able to converse with ease in several languages. He had a remarkable empathy with people across nationalities, ethnicities and socio-economic classes. His circle of friends and colleagues at home and abroad was extraordinarily wide. In fact, it is difficult to think of any other Indonesian academic social scientist of his generation with a wider international network; he was a bridge between the Indonesian and international scholarly communities. And above all else, he was a warm, charming, generous, principled and modest human being, with a fierce sense of justice and support for the less privileged.

Born in 1935, Kian Wie was raised in modest but comparatively comfortable circumstances in a Dutch-speaking family with ‘Calvinist values’, that attached great importance to education and hard work. His father, the son of poor Chinese shopkeepers in Bogor, was fortunate to be able to obtain an education at a Hollandsch-Chineesche Kweekschool (HSC, Dutch Chinese Teachers College). He worked as a teacher and was fluent in Dutch. His mother was from a more prosperous family, and was educated in Dutch and Chinese-language schools, and later in the Netherlands. The family lived in Petojo, central Jakarta, in an ethnically mixed and harmonious neighbourhood.

For two years Kian Wie attended a European Primary School, one that was typically open only to Europeans. He was therefore a member of the tiny elite of Indonesian colonial society that received a privileged Dutch education. Most of his school contemporaries were Dutch. He cherished an early school class photo in which he is pictured with the majority of blond Dutch boys. His early schooling was interrupted by the Japanese occupation and the struggle for Independence. Together with his mother, brother and sister, Kian Wie was initially taken up-country to an estate owned by a relative near Cibadak, West Java. Returning to Jakarta during the occupation, the children were taught basic language and maths skills by their now-unemployed father, while their mother supported the family through trade. Perhaps surprisingly, he described

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1 For helpful comments on an earlier draft we thank Howard Dick, Soedradjad Djiwandono, Peter McCawley, Pierre van der Eng and Thomas Lindblad. We have also drawn on the fascinating interview with Thee Kian Wie conducted by Andreas Weber and Henk Schulte Nordholt that appeared in Itinerario. Unless otherwise indicated, quotes are taken from this source.
the occupation as a ‘care free’ period for him and his two siblings, although they were aware of the general economic hardship, and the Japanese military presence.

Resuming his schooling in early 1946, he quickly moved on to a secondary school, the Hoogere Burgerschool (HBS), where he had ‘marvellous Dutch teachers … who instilled in me a thirst for knowledge’, particularly history. Graduating in 1952, he was already reading the Economist magazine, a lifelong habit he maintained. Proceeding immediately to the University of Indonesia (UI), his first preference was to study history. But it was not available, so instead he chose economics and enrolled in the Faculty of Economics (FEUI). Led by the redoubtable Professor Sumitro Djokohadikusumo, several of the professors were from the Netherlands, and they lectured in Dutch.

He described Jakarta life then as relatively peaceful, albeit ethnically segregated and with simmering anti-Chinese sentiment. He was not active politically on campus. He has clear recollections of the dominant intellectual influence of Dean Sumitro, enjoying both his course and the general discussion he fostered. Kian Wie then graduated in 1957, with a thesis on ‘The Economic History of the Chinese in Indonesia’. In it, he emphasized the importance of narrowing the gap between the ethnic Chinese and indigenous populations, a belief to which he adhered strongly throughout his life. He describes his academic record as ‘average’, as he just passed (‘ragu ragu’) the final exam and thesis-writing requirements.

At the time of graduation, the world around him was changing radically. Sumitro left for Padang in 1957 to join the Permesta Revolt, and Kian Wie was not to reconnect with him again until early 1970s. In 1958 the last Dutch professors also left, and with it the Dutch cultural presence to which he was so attached. It also became increasingly difficult to access foreign literature, apart from that supplied by the Soviet bloc and China. Most of the Indonesian graduate students sent abroad in the early 1950s had not yet returned, and so FEUI was suddenly ‘empty’.

Kian Wie was not invited to remain on the FEUI faculty, which was a big disappointment. A business career did not interest him. But through friends, he learnt that there were positions available at the Indonesian Council of Sciences (Majelis Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia, MIPI). He applied for a junior position and in 1959 was accepted. At the interview, the director exclaimed ‘What a strange Chinese are you!’, in view of the very low salary. However, for Kian Wie the appointment was highly significant: ‘At MIPI, I for the first time felt fully accepted as an Indonesian, despite my Chinese background, and for this reason I finally felt comfortable with my identity as an Indonesian without disavowing my Chinese origin.’

2 In fact, the Thee family had (and still has in the case of his brother) a strong UI connection, with sister Lilian studying Law and brother Sutisna studying Medicine.
The decision to join MIPI, later to become LIPI (Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia, Indonesian Institute of Sciences), was a defining event in his life. ‘Sleepy LIPI’, as he was to affectionately refer to the institution, was thereafter at the centre of his professional and personal life. He joined a small group of eminent Indonesian researchers - Taufik Abdullah, Mely Tan, Hilman Adil, Eddy Masinambow, Achie Luhulima, and Adrian Lapian – who became lifelong friends and who together made a major contribution to the country’s intellectual life.

Kian Wie was a LIPI staff member until his formal retirement at age 65 in the year 2000, and he continued to be a very active member of its research community until his very last days, in total almost 55 years, including the time spent abroad on leave. Despite his frustrations with the institution, including occasional egregious malfeasance at the top, his commitment to the institution was total, and he never seriously contemplated leaving it for greener, more lucrative pastures elsewhere. In fact, he ‘farewelled’ the institution with a visit a day before his passing, declaring with vintage Kian Wie humour ‘I’m still healthy and I’m not yet a ghost!’ LIPI staff commemorated his contribution to the institution with a packed and emotional farewell on February 10.

Having secured the LIPI job, Kian Wie was intent on studying abroad. In all likelihood, if bilateral relations had not deteriorated, he would have elected to study in the Netherlands. But by the early 1960s, the international study opportunities were narrowing and increasingly slanted towards the Soviet bloc. By now fluent in German, Kian Wie considered an offer to study at the Karl Marx University. In retrospect, this could well have had disastrous implications for his future career, and indeed his life. Fortuitously, he also received an offer from the Ford Foundation to study in the United States. The selection committee decided that, in view of Kian Wie’s interest in economic history, he would study at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. He left Jakarta in mid-1963 and, after an orientation program, settled into life at Madison for the next five years.

The US was a cultural shock: ‘When I arrived in America, I thought I had landed on a foreign planet. It was so exciting in view of the huge differences between advanced America and backward Indonesia.’ Although constrained by his impecunious circumstances, Kian Wie enjoyed life, and here too developed a wide circle of friends. One of his closest friends, with whom he shared lodgings for a period, was Soedradjad Djiwandono, later to become the Governor of Bank Indonesia. Owing to Kian Wie’s language proficiency, and to the fact that he was still single, he mixed widely, beyond the Indonesian campus circle.

He quickly completed the masters coursework, and then cast around for an economic history research topic. He was attracted to the work of Professor Robert Baldwin on the faculty. Baldwin had recently written a book on the ‘export technology hypothesis’ as applied to Zambia, and Kian Wie saw parallels with the colonial plantation economy of East Coast (Oostkust) Sumatra, which had experienced an export boom from the late 19th century as
it opened up to the global economy. This then became his thesis topic, *Plantation Agriculture and Export Growth: An Economic History of East Sumatra, 1863-1942* (later published as a book in 1977), under a distinguished panel of economists, Robert Baldwin, John Bowman, and Jeffrey Williamson. He was also able to undertake extensive research at the Cornell library, where he connected with that campus’s lively Indonesian graduate student community.

Kian Wie was not able to visit Indonesia for the five years he lived in the US, and this was of course a period of turbulence back home. He felt disconnected and out of touch, viewing the events of 1965-66 with great apprehension, especially the anti-Chinese riots. Briefly, he even considered seeking asylum in the US.

He eventually returned to Jakarta in September 1969. Almost every aspect of life had changed. The political environment was very different, and the economy was now growing. At LIPI, most economists had moved on, to Bappenas or other government agencies. But life quickly became busy. His first major research project was a regional economic survey of South Sumatra, coordinated jointly with Kyoto University, under the leadership of Professor Shinichi Ichimura. He described working with him as tough, demanding, but very rewarding, and the two became close friends. The experience reinforced his concern that Indonesians lacked the work discipline of the Japanese. He also reconnected with Professor Sumitro, by then back in Indonesia as Minister for Trade and later Research, on a major government study, the Long-Term Development Project. Then in 1976, he had his first major, post-PhD intellectual contact with the Netherlands, at a joint conference on Indonesian history. This was to be the first of many such conferences, and he developed a strong network of researchers and friends in that country, particularly with Thomas Lindblad of Leiden University.

Over this period, Kian Wie had perhaps the most challenging political experience of his life. In early 1978, he joined with his friends Taufik Abdullah, Mely Tan and others in signing a petition to Adam Malik, then chairman of the DPR (Parliament), requesting that the recent media closures and prohibitions be revoked. Intended initially as a private document, it quickly became public, and Kian Wie was dismissed from his position as assistant director of the then National Economic Institute (LEKNAS) within LIPI. For a period it looked as though he would be dismissed from the civil service. Advised to keep a low profile, he took up a visiting fellowship for several months at the Institute of Development Studies, Sussex. This opportunity opened up new cultural horizons for him, including London and its cultural and historical attractions.

When he returned to Indonesia in late 1978, life was calmer and Kian Wie resumed his busy life. He became involved in an important study on foreign investment and technology transfer, the first of many such studies, for the United Nations ESCAP in Bangkok. A year later, his long association with Australia, particularly the Australian National University, commenced, when he was ‘discovered’ as he puts it by Peter McCawley. First visiting in 1980, he observed that ‘my long visit to ANU and subsequent visits really changed my
life and gave a strong boost to my academic career.’

During the 1980s, by now one of the senior LIPI staff, he was given additional administrative responsibilities. Over the period 1986-90, he was Head of the Centre for Economic and Development Studies, PEP-LIPI. These were fiscally stringent times, with very little research funds available, but he led by example. He was also able to secure graduate scholarships, mainly to Australia and Europe, for his younger staff. He constantly exhorted them to take these opportunities with his mantra ‘going abroad is not a right, it is a duty’.

**Thee Kian Wie the Scholar**

Life in Indonesia is challenging for a committed Indonesian researcher who takes pride in scholarly publications but has few resources to draw on. There are constant demands on their time from the home institution, government agencies, educational institutions, the media, embassies, international organizations, and the foreign research community, and across a wide array of issues, some well beyond their areas of expertise. When that researcher is among a tiny handful who responds efficiently to communications and who has a reputation for reliable delivery, the demands can be overwhelming. Such was Kian Wie’s life. Somehow he managed to meet his deadlines – often at the cost of all-night writing sessions – and, just as important, to maintain a reasonably coherent set of research interests. His prodigious output of research and publications was achieved despite a serious health scare in 1993 and less than robust health in later years. As a chronic asthmatic, he suffered badly from Jakarta’s worsening air pollution. Nevertheless, he made an effort to keep fit including, as he would remind friends, by climbing the many flights of stairs at the LIPI building rather than using the lift.

We now briefly highlight some of Kian Wie’s major academic achievements and interests over a professional research career spanning almost half a century.

**a) Economic history**

Economic history was a natural interest for Kian Wie. He loved reading history from his childhood; he developed the analytical skills from his economics training to be able to interpret and explain historical events; he had the language skills to read historical documents; he had remarkable recall of historical events and facts; and Sumitro, his earliest mentor, had an interest in the subject. Kian Wie was instrumental in keeping economic history work alive in Indonesia over the past quarter century, through his writings, his links with foreign researchers, encouraging the small number of young Indonesian researchers in the field, and teaching a highly regarded economic history course at his alma mater, FEUI. His frequent lament, that young Indonesian researchers lacked interest in historical events, especially the colonial period, seemed to spur him on to ever-greater effort.
Kian Wie organized the ‘First Conference on Indonesia’s Modern Economic History’ in Jakarta in October 1991, in collaboration with Dutch and Australian colleagues. The conference was supported by a consortium of Dutch and Indonesian interests, including Professor Sumitro who gave the keynote address. The conference achieved recognition for the study of Indonesian economic history, and led to subsequent conferences in Canberra (1992) and Amsterdam (1994). It later led to the acclaimed volume The Emergence of a National Economy in 2002, written jointly with his Australian and Dutch friends, Howard Dick, Vincent Houben and Thomas Lindblad. This was written with the textbook market in mind, both in Indonesia and abroad, and it continues to be in wide use. Kian Wie’s major contribution to the volume was on the Soeharto era. This was a broad-ranging analysis, covering the major episodes of the period. He also noted the regime’s institutional weaknesses, culminating in rising corruption in its later years, the two-edged sword of globalization, and growing energy and environmental challenges.

Kian Wie’s economic history work was generally positive rather than normative in tone. That is, he did not set out to condemn the colonial system beyond its obvious iniquities, nor did he engage with some of the grand debates, such as the ‘colonial drain’, or theories of imperialism. Rather, he sought to meticulously document and analyze the Dutch colonial economic system and its impacts on local commerce and living conditions. He pointed out that, unlike some other colonial powers, initially the Dutch were exclusively motivated by commercial opportunities, such as the spice trade. Such an extractive regime has been an ever-present feature of Indonesia, he maintained:

‘Institutions and practices of extraction, leading to regressive distribution of assets, income and wealth, have been sustained during the post-colonial era. … The abuse of public resources by rent-seeking elites has been a constant factor in Indonesian history and Dutch colonial rule set the example in its most extreme form.’

Kian Wie was also a chronicler of the history of Indonesian economic policy making. Here he made a seminal contribution to our understanding of this policy history through the regular “interviews” series with technocrats and business figures in the Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies, generally conducted jointly with an ANU colleague, and later collected with an extensive editorial introduction in his 2003 Recollections volume.

b) Industrialization and East Asian Development

Kian Wie had an enduring interest in various aspects of industrialization. He was attracted to the work of economic historians such as Gerschenkron, and their theories of industrial ‘catch-up’. He was fascinated by the post-war industrial success of first Japan and then the Newly Industrializing Economies (NIEs, that is, Hong Kong, Korea, Singapore and Taiwan). He sought to apply their experience to Indonesia, adjusting for the very different circumstances, such as the latter’s weaker human capital base, its richer natural resource endowment, and its more corruption-prone political economy. He worked on
foreign investment, technology transfer and acquisition, SMEs and Indonesia in East Asia. These overlapping interests led to many research projects and publications, such that Kian Wie was easily the major Indonesian scholar in this field. A distinctive feature of his work was firm-level interviews, a laborious activity that he nonetheless enjoyed greatly, and which was the source of his major insights into the process of technology ‘catch-up’ and skill acquisition.

In his thinking about industrial policy, Kian Wie was attracted to the East Asian model of export-oriented industrialization, and he wrote at length about the importance of Indonesia emulating the achievements of the Asian NIEs. He also admired the achievements of the Japan/Korea model of guided industrialization, although he was realistic enough to recognize that this model could not be readily adapted to Indonesia. Indeed, he thought it unlikely that the country’s state-owned enterprises and the leading conglomerates could ever evolve into the dynamic, outward-looking organizations along the lines of Korea’s leading chaebol. Similarly, he was attracted to the vision – but less the practice – of the country’s long-time technology minister (and later president), B.J. Habibie. This was a consideration in his initially hesitant decision to accept the Habibie Award in 2006.

Contrary to much popular sentiment in Indonesia, Kian Wie embraced globalization. He saw obvious merit in adopting a broadly open policy towards foreign investment, especially that from Northeast Asia. He believed that there were major technological spillovers from the Japanese investments in Indonesia, especially in manufacturing.

Kian Wie’s interest in SME development was at the intersection of his work on industrialization and poverty. He saw small firms as a vehicle for industrial growth, attracted again to the Japanese model, of subcontracting and technology transfers from large to smaller firms. He was also one of the first Indonesian researchers to argue that, for all the government’s rhetoric about the importance of promoting SMEs, in practice the complex regulatory regime actually adversely affected them. This is because of the pecuniary economies of scale resulted in higher fixed compliance costs for smaller firms, and because they are generally excluded from the formal fiscal and financial incentives, not to mention the patronage networks open to the owners of larger firms.

c) Other Research

Kian Wie’s other research interests are too numerous to mention in detail. He maintained an interest in regional (sub-national) economic development that perhaps grew out of his doctoral dissertation. His 1975 volume on South Sumatra with Ichimura, together with other Japanese and LIPI researchers, was one of the first detailed regional surveys in the Soeharto era. In the late 1980s, he teamed with another close friend, the ANU’s Colin Barlow, to write a well-regarded monograph on the economy of North Sumatra.

Although he did not undertake original research on the subject, poverty was always a topic of deep concern. A 1981 volume collated some of his earlier
writings on this topic, and he continued to write columns in the quality media, such as Kompas and Tempo. His views on poverty were quite straightforward: rapid economic growth was necessary, but it needed to be supplemented by economic empowerment through employment creation and better education. He was critical of the ostentatious life-styles of much of the political and business elites, and particularly of the high-level corruption at the expense of the poor. These writings also connected to his other research interests, including the unhealthy disparities between the ethnic Chinese and pribumi communities, and the need to promote a vibrant small enterprise sector. In later years, he played an important role as an active member of the board of trustees of SMERU, Indonesia’s leading social policy research institute.

As a general rule, Kian Wie did not engage with political discourses, preferring to focus on his academic research. But one exception was an opinion piece he wrote in Kompas in 2009 defending his good friend and now vice-president Boediono. During the election campaign, Boediono was under attack as a supporter of ‘neo-liberalism’. Kian Wie sought to debunk the view that support for a market-based economy implied no role for government, as the critics of Boediono were attempting to assert. He reminded the critics that what concerned economists was the risk of ‘government failure’, especially in statist regimes or those in which there is elite capture by vested interests. But in a market-based economy there was much that government needed to do, in education, social safety nets, infrastructure, institution building and much else.

Thee Kian Wie the Person and his Social Milieu

Kian Wie was eclectic in his international connections and interests, with an extraordinarily diverse group of friends. (Just how many foreigners regarded him as their closest Indonesian friend?) His longest period abroad was in the US, yet that country was not a major part of his life subsequently. He was ‘culturally Dutch’ as he put it, and he always felt comfortable in the Dutch milieu. After 1980, his closest academic ties were with Australia. Also, in spite of the occupation experience, he greatly admired Japan, for its spectacular industrial growth, its work discipline, and its social courtesies. His self-described mentors, all academics of eminence and broad interests, reflected this diversity of interests: Indonesia’s two most influential public intellectuals in the economics profession, Sumitro and Mohammad Sadli, Australians Heinz Arndt and Jamie Mackie, and Ichimura from Japan.

In the case of his Dutch connections, Kian Wie used to delight in educating young Dutch researchers about their colonial history in Indonesia, never in a lecturing or moralistic tone. The Australian connection played an important role in his career, with many close friends and collaborators at the ANU and beyond (Howard Dick and Robert Elson in particular in the latter category). As a result of his almost 20 visits to the ANU he observed that ‘both my wife Tjoe and I consider Canberra our second home town.’

Kian Wie not only greatly enjoyed these international connections but he would also employ them to great effect in support of his junior staff. He was a
mentor and role model to many younger Indonesian researchers, both in LIPI and beyond. He was constantly encouraging his younger colleagues to develop international connections, through publishing, collaborative research and international conferences. Drawing on his bulging list of name cards, he spent much time typing – always one-finger style – references in support of applications to study abroad.

Central to Kian Wie’s life, as noted, was his ethnicity. He was a proud Indonesian, but equally proud and open about his ethnic origins: ‘I myself am a cultural hybrid, an Indonesian national of Chinese origin who is culturally Dutch.’ He worked in an institution that is predominantly staffed by members of the pribumi community. He would often express his frustration at what he saw as the arrogance and greed of Indonesia’s ethnic Chinese community, especially its business leaders. He felt some sympathy for the sentiments expressed by the long-time Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir to his country’s ethnic Chinese community to the effect that ‘you’ve never had it so good’. In Chinese-dominated cities like Hong Kong he was regarded curiously, as one who was not fluent in a Chinese dialect. Yet his family and many of his friends were ethnic Chinese. And he fiercely resisted pressure to change his name to an Indonesian one. Why should I, he reasoned, I am ethnic Chinese. In 1967, in Madison, he received a letter from the Indonesian Embassy in Washington DC formally requesting he change his name. His reaction was immediate and emotional: ‘I got really angry, tore the letter to pieces and threw it in the rubbish bin.’

In his 1981 volume on poverty and inequality, Kian Wie wrote ‘… in this life, there are values that are more virtuous than only chasing material welfare for oneself.’ [authors’ translation] In fact, he practiced what he preached, living a modest life. After his marriage to Tjoe, as he used to joke, relatively late in life, they settled happily into a small residence in Cempaka Putih Indah, that he termed the ‘rabbit hutch’. This was a warm, welcoming environment, visited by their wide circle of friends. Kian Wie would often hold court, expounding on his latest interests, who he had met recently, and some political or social gossip. He would proudly show visitors his latest ‘Mickey Mouse’ papers, as he liked to refer to his important output. Their son, Marcel, now a distinguished film critic for the Jakarta Globe, and also a talented singer with his own musical genre, grew up in this pleasant environment. Occasionally the ever-gracious Tjoe would gently admonish Kian Wie as ‘Mr Chatterbox’. But theirs was a life of great companionship, mutual interests (apart, notably, from religion) and love.

Kian Wie could easily skip from the deeply serious to the flippantly (and sometimes politically incorrect!) humourous. He had a wicked – but never malicious – sense of humour, with his jokes in English, arguably his third language, often impressing native speakers. A favourite line was to the effect that ‘I may not be a first-rate economist but I am a first-rate comedian!’ In mock anger, he would sometimes punch the air and shock unsuspecting guests with a statement that he shared the same birthday with Adolf Hitler, and had some similar personality traits. He joked that he liked to ‘shoot from the lip’. He boasted that he would groom himself for the prospect of attractive
female company. And he loved to warn his friends that they were dealing with a ‘slippery, sneaky, slithering oriental’.

On the big issues of the day in Indonesia his judgements were always considered and nuanced. On Soeharto’s rule, he was willing to see both sides of the coin, relieved that Indonesia never became communist and recognizing the impressive economic and social achievements, while critical of the outrageous palace corruption and ruthless oppression of human rights. As noted, he respected Habibie for his vision and intellect while finding his ‘megalomaniac’ tendencies disturbing. On the Yudhoyono presidency, he recognized that he was arguably Indonesia’s first president to be able to conduct himself on the international stage, in English. But he expressed frustration that SBY was unable or unwilling to take decisive action on key policy issues.

Although never shy to criticize, he deeply loved his country. He lived abroad for extended periods, but he never seriously contemplated an international career. In the troubled years of 1998 and 1999, when Indonesia was in the international spotlight for the wrong reasons, he joked that, when abroad, he would pretend that he was another nationality. (It was never quite clear which one!) He was proud of the country's successful political and economic transition after the dark days of 1997-99. He would quietly remind his foreign friends of the enormity of the transition, and help them understand the cultural nuances in this now very democratic and expressive nation. During the prosecution of the Bali terrorists, for example, he would gently observe to his friends that the ‘smiling assassin’ interpretation of the terrorists was culturally mistaken – the smile signified nervousness, not glee.

Kian Wie received numerous awards and fellowships. He was a two-time recipient of national awards for service to his country, the Bintang Jasa Utama and the Bintang Jasa Naraya. He received the Habibie award in 2006, an honorary doctorate from the Australian National University in 2004, the Sarwono Prawirohardjo award and the Kompas award in 2008. Two festschrifts were produced in his honour, a special issue of this Bulletin in April 2000 on the occasion of his formal retirement from LIPI at age 65, and Lindblad and Purwanto (eds, 2010) to commemorate his 75th birthday, while several books contained dedications to his intellectual contributions. He was a member of the Commission for Social Sciences, Indonesian Academy of Sciences (Akademi Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia, AIPI), a duty he took seriously, together with several academic journals, including the Bulletin from 1984. For the last decade of his life, he edited the major Indonesian economics journal, managed by Sumitro for several years in the 1950s, and now published only in English as Economics and Finance in Indonesia (EFI, formerly EKI). As usual, he attended to this task assiduously, not only reading the papers and commissioning referee reports, but also going well beyond normal editorial duties with detailed grammatical improvements on papers that he considered were not up to par.

Kian Wie was a dedicated scholar and a wonderful person to the numerous friends in many walks of life in Indonesia and abroad. He was a ‘true
Indonesian’ to quote the dedication to him that appeared in Elson’s (2001) volume. Selamat jalan, Kian Wie. You have not really left us because we can always spend time with you and your thoughts in the dozens of articles and books that you have bequeathed to us.

4. Select Publications


The North Sumatran Regional Economy-Growth with Unbalanced Development (co-author with Colin Barlow), Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, 1988.

Industrialisasi Indonesia – Beberapa Kajian (Studies on Indonesia's Industrialisation), Jakarta, LP3ES, 1994.


Indonesia's Technological Challenge (co-editor with Hal Hill), Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, 1998.


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(revised draft 170614, 5,310 words)