



# PIPC Online Speaker Series

## *“Settler Colonialism in Indonesia: Transmigration and Ethnic Cleansing in West Papua”*

Over the late 20th century, Indonesia resettled hundreds of thousands of people to the province of West Papua, transforming its demographic composition. Yet, despite controlling West Papua since the 60s, organized resettlement or "transmigration" was very limited until the mid-1980s and has been limited to only certain areas. So, what accounts for variation in transmigration to West Papua? Drawing on confidential government sources, I compiled a new, complete panel of all transmigration in each regency of West Papua between 1964-2000. Using a difference-in-differences design I show that, after an aborted Papuan uprising in 1984, Indonesia ethnically cleansed and settled its border with Papua New Guinea to forestall cross-border insurgent activity. I then show that, after the discovery of the enormous Grasberg gold mine in the 1980s, Indonesia cleansed and settled the area around the mine. By drawing on restricted internal data, this paper provides the first comprehensive evidence that transmigration has been strategically used by the Indonesian state to defeat insurgents and secure control over Papua's rich resource base. I draw out the implications of these findings for our understanding of settler colonialism more generally.

**Registration:** <https://pipcoss-7-22.eventbrite.com>

**\*\*Registration is required to receive the presentation ZOOM link\*\***

**July 21 6:00 pm (PST)**

**July 22 10:00 am (Japan)**

**July 22 9:00 am (Singapore)**

**July 22 11:00 am (Sydney)**