



Implementation of Social  
History Research Models in  
History Study in North  
Sumatera

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**Submission date:** 17-Apr-2023 07:29PM (UTC+0700)

**Submission ID:** 2067150376

**File name:** Implementation\_of\_Social\_History\_Research\_Models.pdf (1.11M)

**Word count:** 8986

**Character count:** 47666

# Implementation of Social History Research Models in History Study in North Sumatera

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**Abstract**—Social history studies in North Sumatra still rarely use historical research methods. In general, the social history in North Sumatra is written by sociologists, so the methods and models used by social research methods are not historical methods. This resulted in the object being studied only the structure of the community while the change of society over time was neglected. This paper wants to examine the factors causing the low historical studies conducted by historians in North Sumatra, mapping the focus of social history studies in North Sumatra and applying the social history research model in the study of history in North Sumatra. The method used is a historical method that includes four stages, namely heuristics, source criticism, interpretation, and explanation. The sources used are in the form of written and oral sources. Writing sources in the form of literature both books and journals. While for oral sources, interviews were used. The approach used to answer the problems in this study is a multidisciplinary approach. Based on the results of the study concluded that the study of social history in Sumatra can be studied using social history research models. In the history of the social revolution in East Sumatra can be analyzed using a model of the level of development. Another model that is also suitable for social history studies in North Sumatra is a systems model. This model can be used to examine the history of the social life of plantation workers in East Sumatra.

**Keywords**—model, social history research, North Sumatra

## I. INTRODUCTION

Historical studies in North Sumatra have been carried out by many experts, but most are still carried out by experts from other fields of science, such as anthropology and sociology so that the research produced is not in accordance with the rules of historical research. Likewise with historical research conducted by students of the Department of History Education, Faculty of Social Sciences, Medan State University. The limited number of lecturers with fields of historical expertise and the number of lecturers who have expertise in sociology and anthropology has resulted in the application of historical research methods that are rarely used.

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Sumatra that still rarely use historical research methods is social history, cultural history, and political history. Social history in North Sumatra, which is generally written by sociologists, only shows the structure of the community studied and a little review of changes in society from time to time. The history of culture which is mostly studied by anthropologists has not maximally seen the cultural changes from each period so that it is similar to anthropological studies. Not much different from the political history in

North Sumatra which was written by political scholars who only analyzed how the structure of power from one community group. Whereas in the historical approach, political history does not only examine the structure of power but analyzes the meaning and function of power from within each period of time.

Anthropologists, sociologists, and political experts use social and cultural approaches to study history in North Sumatra. The involvement of these experts in historical writing in North Sumatra was due to historians being less productive in writing history in North Sumatra, both social, cultural and political history. Therefore, this study, the author seeks to examine the application of social history research models in the study of history in North Sumatra. The problems that arise in this study are why the study of history in North Sumatra is more researched by anthropologists and sociologists. What themes can be the focus of social history studies in North Sumatra, what models can be used in historical research, how is the application of social history research models in the study of history in North Sumatra.

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Historical studies in North Sumatra include social history, cultural history, ethnic history, economic history, and political history. Although in other regions it also has the same study the history in North Sumatra has its own characteristics. North Sumatra is a multi-ethnic region so its history also varies greatly according to ethnic background. In addition, residents in North Sumatra also have a religious background. This condition further enriches the diversity of communities in North Sumatra.

Social history that can be studied in North Sumatra includes a variety of social facts, such as social class, labor, poverty, comparison, violence, crime, migration, and urbanization [1]. This is in accordance with the definition of social history, namely the history that examines society. Thus all social aspects in people's lives can become social history. When viewed from themes that can be studied in social history at a glance, it is almost the same as sociological studies, but between these two disciplines, there are differences. In sociology studies, social classes are discussed usually without clear space and time. The objects studied by sociology are also general in nature, such as the class of bureaucratic elites in Indonesia. In contrast to social history which will try to see the uniqueness of the elite classes of the Indonesian bureaucracy from every different period and space, such a study of the class of Javanese bureaucrats in the colonial period written by Sartono Kartodirdjo [2]. The Sartono Kartodirdjo study can be used

as a model in looking at the history of social classes in North Sumatra, especially regarding the history of the bureaucrat class which is dominated by Batak ethnic groups. Historical sources relating to this theme are quite numerous and are well stored because educated Batak families usually keep various family documents.

Word Social history can be categorized as the history of society. Reference [3] argues that social history is about the structure and process of human reciprocal actions and actions as they have occurred in the recorded socio-cultural context in the past. However, in practice, it is rarely formulated in terms that are so analytical and not always viewed in more comprehensive terms.

The object of social history study is not only upper-class society, but small communities of small people also choose history. History is no longer only owned by elites, rulers, or dominant groups, but also by controlled groups or subaltern groups that are eliminated and powerless.

The study of social history cannot be separated from Sartono Kartodirdjo because he is the pioneer of the study of social history in Indonesia. According to [4], social history is any historical phenomenon that manifests the social life of a community and group. Social history also covers various aspects of life except for political aspects. Social history is also often referred to as the history of social movements which include the trade union movement, socialist movements, emancipation movements, and other community movements.

## II. RESEARCH METHODS

The method used is a historical method that includes four stages, namely heuristics, source criticism, interpretation, and explanation. The sources used are in the form of written and oral sources. Writing sources in the form of literature both books and journals. While for oral sources, interviews were used. The approach used to answer the problems in this study is a multidisciplinary approach.

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### A. Historical Studies in North Sumatra

North Sumatra is one of the largest provinces on the island of Sumatra and is a space for studies of various disciplines including history. But compared to other disciplines, the study of history in North Sumatra is still limited, especially social history. In general, the study of North Sumatra is more cultural and carried out by anthropologists, while the study of history focuses more on economic history, namely the history of plantations. This is related to the historical background of North Sumatra which is a plantation area since colonial times. Some studies of history of plantations in North Sumatra are books titled *Taming the Coolie Beast: Plantation Society and the Colonial Order in Southeast Asia* by Jan Breman [5], *Planter and Peasant: Colonial Policy and the Agrarian Struggle in East Sumatra 1863-1947* by Karl J. Pelzer [6], and *Koeli Kontrak Tempo Doeloe dengan Derita dan Kemarahannya* by Mohammad Said [7]. Even though the history of plantations, North Sumatra can be used as a laboratory for social history studies. But not many historians are interested in writing social history.

In the early 1970s, many scientists in Sumatra began to be interested in writing cultural history, especially anthropologists. They studied ethnic history in North Sumatra, especially the Batak and Minangkabau ethnic groups. Usman Pelly is dissertation wrote about the culture of adaptation of Minangkabau and Mandailing people's in Medan, North Sumatra [8]. Reference [9], [10], and [11] also examined ethnic and Batak culture.

### B. Themes in the Social History Study in North Sumatra

The main concern of social history is how people defend themselves, regulate their fellow human relations (such as status and authority) and how to solve problems in dealing with their environment (natural or social) and with neighbors. So it is not the strands and actions of historical actors that are too important but the pattern of that behavior. What is the connection between behavior that produces an event, which is a historical story material with a social situation that surrounds it [12].

The method used is a method of social history that examines history by using social science approaches such as sociology. The focus of the study is carried out by looking at the social structures that exist in the community that act as historical actors. This method is an important theme in social history writing.

Social history began to develop since the 1950s. Social history has a vast and diverse claim. Most social history also has a close relationship with economic history, so that it becomes a socio-economic history. In terms of social history, in addition to researching society in total and globally. Themes such as the history of a social class, especially the history of the workers, are important themes in social history. The history of the role of a class, insofar as it remains the history of a unit of society with a certain scope and time can be classified in social history. However, an article about social classes, such as the middle class without clear space and time, would not be historical writing. Historical writings still have to consider all uniqueness, by limiting themselves to a certain scope of time and space. Reference [13] which is a historical work because it does not discuss the generality of the bureaucratic elite class, but the uniqueness contained in it is mainly because of the limited scope and space.

Another theme that can be worked on in social history is historical events such as rebellion. In writing a history of rebellion, historians can use the social sciences to explain historical events clearly [1].

Social institutions are also arable material for social history including family history. In Indonesian history, there has not been much discussion about how children were raised in the past centuries, even from families who kept historical information like the nobility. Historical sources regarding noble families in the past are still quite numerous and stored well so that it can be a material for social history studies [1].

Social facts can also be used as themes in social history, such as poverty, comparison, violence, crime. Likewise, the opposite is abundance, piety, knighthood, population growth, migration, urbanization and so on.

### C. Models in Social History Research

The model is very important in writing, both natural and social sciences. For history, the model will provide heuristic inspiration that is useful in the search and collection of materials and compilation. According to [14], every social history writing requires a model, which although not very formal and detailed in structure, at least as a framework will appear a central circle (central nexus) or a circle of relations from the problem to be worked on. As is known that a social system is a unit of interconnected units, as well as a historical system, is the relationship of units into larger units. The circle of cause and effect, influence and action can be a system if the structure becomes clear.

In a synchronous model, the community is described as a system consisting of structures and parts. Structural and functional approaches in the social sciences refer to synchronic models that see portraits of society in a static state, in a zero time state. In ethnographic research, for example, we find descriptive paintings of patterns of detailed integration of a society just as people make descriptive grammar to describe language forms. A synchronic model prioritizes painting that extends in space by not thinking too much of its time dimension [1].

The diachronic model prioritizes painting that has a dimension of time, with very little space. The diachronic model that offers not only a structure and function but a movement in the time of concrete events must be the main goal of historical writing. Thus, the diachronic model can also be said to be a dynamic model. Historians must look for the diachronic development model by looking at the materials and their actuality. The diachronic model will show how the evolution of a cultural form and eliminate the imagery of zero time. According to [15], historians who use oral traditions in expressing the past from people who do not know letters. The diachronic model will be the perfect complement to synchronic writing. Historians must see the structure as well as conjuncture, the structure is not a symptom at zero time that does not change. A series of events that follow one after another not only answer what is but also why something exists and how it occurs. Causal relations, influence, actions with intentionality are the essence of historical writing. History is not a synchronic arrangement of events, or a correlation between variables which are a sequence of situations, but a dynamic or dialectical sequence with clear time.

The diachronic model can be written in two types of models, first the narrative model. In this model society or culture is described in evolution. How he grew from the start as a unique symptom bearing in mind the importance of all details. Historical development is seen as a series of chains of causality that have for generations fostered new symptoms in society or culture. Second, a diachronic model can start from a situation synchronously, and through an intermediate situation to the final situation. Of course, for every situation that is being described, all the evidence must be clearly stated so that it appears to be developing. Such dynamic models can appear as alternating situations or synchronous models that are made sequentially. For the first dynamic model, society or culture is seen as developing from the simplest level to an increasingly complex level, while for the second model the pressure lies in the situation which is the pieces. In both actual synchronic and diachronic models are

always completeness, and the relationship between the two models is a dialogue that runs in a dialectical form. That is, an established and structured state is always negated by its own development. There are several models that historians can use to reconstruct the past, as in [1] which states five models:

- Evolutionary model. This first model is called the evolution model to show the type of writing that depicts the development of a society that stands up to become a complex society. This model can be applied if it has historical sources that allow writing.
- Central circle model. This model does not write history from scratch but from point to point. Every writing that departs from the center of history in the middle is usually always started with the asynchronous painting of the community, and then diachronically shown its growth. In this circle model, event A has the consequences around it because A is the center of a central loop. In turn, A and his circle cause the occurrence of central B which is also nearby there are a number of symptoms again and beyond. Historical dynamics are logical mergers of a series of linked historical phenomena.
- Interval model. This model is a collection of synchronic drawings sorted in chronologically so it appears to be its development, though it does not appear to be a true causal relationship. This model is thought to be for example when obtaining a glimpse of a period in the particular period of a particular society. Then by chance, there was also information about the society in another period, without any linking link between the two periods. Demonstrate so that the synchronous sequence can show imperfectly the development of diachronic.
- Long-term, medium, and short-term models. This model is the application of the theory of community development that is adopted from sociology. The models used in explaining historical developments are the models used by Sociologists Neil J. Smelser [16]. He uses a structural differentiation model to describe the stages of development of the industrial revolution from British society, especially the workers. In contrast to the descriptive and uniquely patterned historical approach, Smelser deliberately approached the Industrial Revolution as an illustration of a formal and explicit conceptual model drawn from sociological thinking. In short, this model says that in a particular condition of a social disequilibrium, the social structure will change in such a way that the original role of various types of activities becomes increasingly specialized. In other words, the social structure becomes increasingly complex and sorted out. With this abstract analytical model, developments can be highlighted towards the industrial community wherever and whenever. The key to Smelser's approach is structural differentiation, the process is increasingly towards specialization.
- Systematic model. This model is very suitable for tracing social history in the sense of social change. In the early stages, social elements are determined and used as a measure of social change. In 1972, Thomas

C. Cochran introduced this model in his writing entitled *Social Change in America* [17]. He tried to use the behavioral sciences approach to history and tried to see American history. The result is an institutional history that emphasizes the change in behavior rather than describing political events, great people and interesting events. He showed that social institutions and social roles from earlier times had undergone a radical change from 1900 to 1970. For him to describe each social institution and finally he made an analysis of the basic characteristics of American society in the 20<sup>th</sup>.

#### *D. Social History Model in Historical Studies in North Sumatra*

One of the historical studies in North Sumatra that can use models in social history is the history of the social revolution in North Sumatra. The model that can be applied is the developmental level model. In the social revolution that occurred in North Sumatra, the complexity of the existing social structures, such as communities divided into various ethnic groups and interests, the government and institutions which continued to grow after independence, appeared. The social revolution in North Sumatra or at the beginning of independence known as East Sumatra was a social movement carried out by the people against the rulers of the Malay sultanate which reached its peak in March 1946. This revolution was triggered by the communist movement that wanted to abolish the royal system on the grounds of anti-religious. This social revolution involved the mobilization of the people which led to the killing of members of the family of the Malay Sultanate who were known to be pro-Dutch as well as the pro-Republic middle class and the local administration of the Republic of Indonesia.

The social revolution in North Sumatra was inseparable from the attitude of the sultans, kings, and feudalists in general, who were not very enthusiastic about Indonesian independence because after Japan entered, the Japanese government revoked all the privileges of the nobility and plantations were taken over by the laborer. The nobility did not feel happy and hoped to get their rights back in collaboration with the Netherlands/NICA so that they further distanced themselves from the pro-republican side.

Meanwhile, the pro-republic urged the national committee of the East Sumatra region to abolish special regions such as the self-government/kingdom and replace them with a people's democratic government in accordance with the spirit of the struggle for independence. But the pro-republic itself was divided into two camps; moderate stronghold who wanted a cooperative approach to persuade the nobility and radical camps to prioritize the path of violence by mobilizing the masses of plantation workers [18].

The social revolution has an impact on the social life of the people in Langkat. Most women feel tremendous fear and trauma, especially the Sultan's family who have survived. The families of victims of the social revolution are many who experience mental and mental disorders, due to the trauma they experience when witnessing the process of murder and rape. Social conflicts in this area also continue to

occur in several regions in East Sumatra. In the Langkat area, for example, people who did not receive treatment of the Front of the People took revenge. Uncontrollably people carried out vigilante acts against Communist leaders or followers. Even the social revolution also has an impact on the education sector. All schools in the Langkat region stopped teaching and learning during the social revolution in Langkat. Many teachers leave the teaching assignment because they have to make a living with other businesses. In schools, there are also no students because many come with parents who leave Langkat. In addition, many school buildings and yards were used as the headquarters of the People's Front group.

Violent events in East Sumatra to overhaul the feudal political system that prevailed in this area became the reason for experts to categorize it as a revolution. Reference [19] argues that although the revolutions in the world vary widely but there are certain patterns that can be recognized in almost all revolutions, starting with the initial action of destroying old governance, and ending with the formation of a new and relatively stable type of government, usually far different from what was imagined by the first stage revolutionary leaders. For example, the French Revolution produced the greatest wealth of historical analysis, and the typology of revolution usually included in the category of major or classical revolutions, while with the Russian Revolution the most influential revolution. Historians disagree about how broad or narrow a boundary will be drawn for the concept of revolution, but whatever the definition is produced. That definition will not be adequate if it does not cover at least two important key points.

There are several elements that are the same in both revolutions, and in other revolutions. The first stage was the formation of an idealistic alliance of various political groups, from cautious groups to radical groups, to overthrow the old governance. This step, and the enthusiasm that it creates, stimulates and excites young people, especially children, easily in the city where the actions occur. Splits soon arose among allied members, and the revolution moved to the left as it appeared that physical strength was in the hands of those holding weapons or young people on the road, not in the hands of the old leader. Finally, one of the elements in the alliance which overthrew the old government succeeded in imposing a solution on the other parties and was often helped by the attitude of many people who were fed up with anarchy and violence permeated the revolution. This condition was at the end of the revolution, even though the impact was only felt for decades or even centuries later. New rulers, although usually representing a larger part of society than the old rulers, cannot rely on relatively passive people's obedience, as did the old government. Many parties are dissatisfied because the aims of their revolution are not fulfilled by the forced settlement, and therefore denounce it as a betrayal of the revolution. The new ruler has one advantage, namely, they have strong symbols and revolutionary myths (flags, struggle songs, slogans, heroes, annual memorials, ideals of independence and/or equality and brotherhood). All of this becomes the basis for unity at a higher level than before, these symbols are manipulated by new authorities in their efforts to seek legitimacy. But the new society was more difficult to regulate than the old people, and the fierce

enthusiasm raised by the revolution took a long time to subside [19].

The revolution that occurred in Indonesia can be categorized as this classic type of revolution. The Indonesian Revolution moved quickly to the left from the proclamation until the events of July 3, 1946. Based on historical analysis, the events that occurred in 1945-1949 were correct and right if they were termed revolutions. This concept, in reality, is more appropriate and more helpful to explain Indonesia. With regard to the potential of the Indonesian revolution to express or even achieve total change in social attitudes and relations, it is best examined through the so-called social revolution which affected Sumatra and Java between October 1945 and March 1946. The term social revolution was initially used by supporters of movements this is to distinguish them from the political revolution to replace Dutch or Japanese government with the Republic of Indonesia. The same element of the two groups is a movement from below to overthrow Indonesian officials who occupy positions under Japan and the Netherlands and have been established in power by the new Republican government. Therefore, in each case, social revolution challenges and opposes the official policies of the Republic in their territory, even though they themselves believe wholeheartedly in their revolution and leadership [19].

Another social history study that can also use social history research models is about the lives of plantation workers in East Sumatra. A systematic model can be used to examine the social changes that occur in the lives of plantation workers in East Sumatra. In this systematic model what is seen is the behavior of historical actors from various social layers. This is in accordance with the conditions of the people in East Sumatra plantations which consist of several social layers, namely planters or commonly called *toean keboen*, foremen and laborers.

The opening of plantations in East Sumatra was driven by the policy of the Dutch colonial government which issued the Agrarian Law in 1870 which opened the widest opportunity to open up plantation land. In addition, the growth of capitalism and industrialism encouraged expansion into colonies to invest in plantation companies [20]. Jacob Nienhuys became the first person to open a plantation in East Sumatra. He became the foundation of the tobacco culture which became known in the world [5]. He was given the assignment by the trading company *Pieter Van De Arend & Consortium* to open a plantation close to the port. The desired target company to Nienhuys is to seek 75 to 150 hectares of plantation and still have the rest of the area for possible expansion in the future will come. But it is very difficult to find areas that can be used as plantations as required by the company. This resulted in Nienhuys searching for plantations outside Java and going to East Sumatra [6].

Before the entry of foreign capital to open a plantation in Deli. Deli is still an almost unknown area in the archipelago. The Deli area only became an area controlled by small Malay kingdoms led by their respective kings who competed with each other. Some rulers such as the Deli Sultanate made political agreements with the Dutch by voluntarily surrendering land to the Dutch and recognizing Dutch sovereignty. This work is done because the military

exhibition carried out by the Dutch made this kingdom feel threatened. Political matters like this also contributed to the factors that made it easier for European entrepreneurs to get Tobacco plantation land in Deli [5].

In the first years of the opening of private plantations, the crops that were first cultivated were not tobacco. Many planters or *toean keboen* instead took over nutmeg or coconut gardens that had belonged to indigenous entrepreneurs. At the beginning also, Nienhuys intends to open a plantation with various types of plants with the Sultan Deli. So, Nienhuys in the first few years was not only busy with planting and buying tobacco plants, but also trading black pepper, nutmeg, rice, opium, etc [21].

The development of plantations in Deli is increasingly rapid along with the easy access to land with a very long lease period (99 years) from the Deli Sultanate. This also attracts huge investment because it is very open to planting perennials and large factories to produce plantation products [22].

In a relatively short period of time, tobacco which was the first commodity that was widely planted in Deli became the most sought-after commodity in the world. Thus, tobacco prices can also be sure to be high. With an additional capital of 30,000 guilders to finance the harvest and gain a profit of 67,000 guilders, making the Deli a world-famous region. In 1869, Nienhuys founded a company called the *Deli Maatschappij*, the first limited liability company operating in the Dutch East Indies. Nienhuys shares in it consist of nutmeg gardens, coconut plantations, an oil refinery, and several land contracts.

The number of plantations continued to increase from 13 in 1873 to 23 in 1874. In 1876 there were 40 plantations in operation. The position of *Deli Maatschappij* is always in an important position, in 1873 the company's land area reached 26,000 odors, consisting of three plantations with a workforce of 1,525 permanent porters, of whom there were 1,400 Chinese coolies, and about 385 freelancers [5].

The increase in the amount of land for opening tobacco is in line with the level of production produced by plantations in Deli. In 1872 the number of tobacco products in East Sumatra was still inferior to that of Java, but in 1884 Deli's tobacco production of 125,000 bale exceeded Java production in the same year with a total of 128,806 bale [23]. At the beginning of the establishment of the *Deli Maatschappij*, the preferred production was tobacco production. In its history, the airline has become the most famous roll tobacco producer in East Sumatra.

Plantation developments also helped to encourage large migrations to East Sumatra and Deli. This migration was Europeans who came to open plantations in Deli. In 1884 there were 688 Europeans who came to Deli to open a plantation. A large number of new plantations that were opened also had an impact on the employment of workers to meet production targets. These workers were originally brought in from Singapore and China and later the Javanese who were brought in from Java. Be Deli became a very crowded area with the formation of a new society, namely the plantation community.

At the beginning of the opening of the plantation, the search for labor or labor was far more difficult than finding

land to be made into plantations. In 1874, shortly after the plantation was opened, the majority of the population of Deli and its subordinates consisted of Batak people, according to an estimate of 20,000, spread in 272 villages in the interior, and 12,000 Malays living in 78 villages in the coastal area. At that time there were only a few Chinese coolies employed as laborers [5].

All foreign plantations in East Sumatra are opened only by human labor. The clearing of thicket forests, logging of large trees in the land clearing, construction of waterways or irrigation, tillage, tobacco planting and so on is carried out by plantation workers brought in from outside and inside the country. The plantation opening work still uses conventional tools (without machinery), hoes and machetes became the main tools in opening plantations in Deli in colonial times [24].

In contrast to plantations on Java, where labor for plantations is taken from villages around the plantation. The workers in the plantations in Deli or East Sumatra were people who came from outside the Deli area, this was because local people did not intend to become workers on the plantations. At the beginning of the plantation, workers were brought in from Singapore and were Chinese. After the formation of the *Deli Maatschappij* has been carried out the addition of 800 Chinese workers to increase production in plantations established by Jacob Nienhuys [7].

Along with the development of plantations, the demand for laborers has increased, this has resulted in an increase in the price of each worker on the Malay Peninsula imported from brokers. So plantation owners look for other ways by looking for workers from their home areas such as India and China. However, the strict rules imposed by Britain which limited workers out of India and the sensitivity of Chinese people to money also became an obstacle in bringing large numbers of workers, so another alternative was to find workers from Java because workers on Java were always available at all times. But there are still many plantation owners who refuse to use Javanese laborers, especially in the field of tobacco care [19].

The arrival of Javanese workers is regulated by an institution called *Vrij Emigratie Deli Avros* (VEDA). Through this institution, plantation owners seek and "order" workers to be employed on plantations by only mentioning the amount they need. In 1874 the workers who entered VEDA to Deli were 316 people. It was the Vedas who were tasked with finding workers in the Java area and took them to Deli and other areas of East Sumatra. In theory, they will also return workers who have finished contracting back to Java [25].

In 1875, *Deli Maatschappij* began to bring in suitable laborers employed on plantations by bringing Javanese from Bagelan. However, the plantation owner's satisfaction with laborers from Java was very low because Javanese were considered lazy, and were not suitable for tobacco plantation work. Plantation owners more exploit students on menial jobs such as land clearing, road construction. The enormous exploitation was seen by Javanese women who were made prostitutes.

To get these workers, many plantation owners use the services of labor seekers in Java. The service companies

even published advertisements in the mail news peddle copies of these posters. Promotions carried out by these companies are like promoting general merchandise.

The advent of plantation workers from outside Deli has transformed Deli into a heterogeneous area inhabited by various ethnic groups and various races. Population growth rose significantly because the process of urbanization was carried out to meet the workers needed in the plantation. laborer plantations continue to change and the overall number continues to increase from year to year. The workers from Java are workers with the highest percentage increase. Even in the 1920s when the Chinese reduced dramatically, the increase in Javanese increased significantly, meaning that the Javanese had dominated plantation communities. The increase in the entry of Javanese is due to various factors, one of the factors being uncertainty that the Chinese, in the long run, will continue to be sent as plantation work.

Another factor that made Javanese as plantation workers were because entrepreneurs now began to trust workers from Java. Javanese labor prices are relatively far cheaper than Chinese in terms of wages and in terms of costs incurred from their origin, resulting in Javanese being chosen, this is supported by the start of the discovery of new crops on plantations that do not require special skills such as planting tobacco. Apart from the above factors, the driving factor of the people from Java flood Deli because of the decline in the welfare of the Javanese on the island of Java [22].

The entry of large numbers of Javanese also raises a question. How can a tribe that has strong family ties and the principle of "eating and eating that are important to gather" can be brought to Deli in the number of tens of thousands of Javanese who come to Deli are people who do not have jobs in their villages looking for the police, expelled from the village, because he had done something wrong and felt embarrassed, or because of his household conditions that were unable to support him. The overpopulation of Java, especially in Central Java, is dense, areas where the population often suffers from hunger, even people who have just come out of prison or prisoners. So many people want to find a better livelihood [26].

The entry of coolies from outside has formed a new order in the plantation. Deli area becomes a very crowded area. The suitability of land in this area to produce high-quality tobacco has made this area a half-producing region of world tobacco needs in the late 19th century to the beginning of the 20th century. The amount of this production is in line with the development of the population which is very high even in the vulnerable time from 1880 to 1920 there was a tenfold increase in population. Residents in Deli or even throughout East Sumatra, the majority are immigrants. The contract coolies to work on the plantation almost reached 250,000 people out of 1,200,000 inhabitants. Plantation in Deli developed very rapidly and advanced, but this area became an area where many people were forced to work, profits were not shared equally, and colonial social hierarchies were very sharp [19].

The Deli and East Sumatra plantation communities are a unique community bond. The employment relationship between the employer and the laborer is the most influential thing in people's lives in the plantation. The hegemony and violence carried out by the *toean keboen* against the coolies

were very prominent. Wild East is an expression that describes social life in Deli in this era. Deli which in the colonial period was an area that was still relatively remote but could develop very quickly into a very busy area with its plantations [5].

The life of plantation communities is shaped by social structure and function that refers to work relations and ethnicity. Structurally, the division of labor and society in plantation communities is divided into 4 groups: first administrators consisting of Europeans. Secondly, the staff consisted of European assistant doctors. Third, Employee non-staff consisting of doctors Natives, and all four workers consisting bag male workers, women belonging to ethnic Javanese, Chinese, Rivet, and Batak [27].

The division of classes in plantation communities is very visible. Class division is divided into several classes, namely the first class is the ruler in this case the Dutch East Indies government. The second class is the capitalist class, namely the people who have capital originating from Europeans. The third class is the proletariat class, namely plantation workers. Other classes included in the plantation community were local rulers, namely the sultans who were the owners of the land used as plantations [28].

Plantation managers and assistants are usually held by Europeans or Dutch. While the foreman and tandil consist of Balinese, Chinese or Tamil people. In other words, who can become a foreman or *tandil* is from the colored people. The foreman and *tandil* are in charge of helping the assistants to carry out direct supervision and coordinate the work carried out by the plantation coolies. Foreman and *tandil* also have a very important role, so that many workers want to become foremen or paramilitary. Dutch assistants who did not master the language of coolies became very dependent on them. This system has become longer with the presence of new positions such as the chief foreman and head of the porter. The plantation manager is also assisted by several administrators who manage the administration and finance of plantations including the salaries received by coolies.

The community structure on the plantation is very hierarchical based on position in the job. The coolies were very obedient to the orders of superiors, this kind of thing had begun even when it was the first time they set foot on a plantation. The coolie is usually placed in barracks divided into teams led by a work overseer. Outside working hours, the foreman also serves as a security and border guard.

The plantation community structure also describes social functions in a highly hierarchical society. So that all activities and events in society are networks that work together in an organized manner in an organized manner because of the very strict rules that all elements of the community must adhere to in the plantation.

For coolies, much social life is spent while working, this is due to very long working hours every day. Labor hours are arranged in *koeli ordonantie*. The work starts at 5.30 in the morning and ends at 17.30. Break time starts at 11.00 until 12.00. Holidays for coolies are only during the day of receiving wages because the plantation determines that day as a holiday [27].

The daily life of plantation coolies in East Sumatra is clearly illustrated in the novel entitled *Rubber* by Szekely-

Lulofs [29]. Apart from the impression of being too dramatizing, but the work of fiction was able to provide an overview of the daily life of plantation coolies in East Sumatra at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, such as:

Days change, pass, connect and connect into a long series consisting of chains of equal length and color. Fourteen days of work, a day of rest. Fourteen days of drudgery, draining. A day playing, smoking, squatting on small events. And always work in the same order. Coolies wake up by the sound of kentongan. They sleep with the sound of tongs. All opposition and resistance are broken by this deadly order. They run jobs like machines; without thinking, without understanding why they did the job. They do not understand the production market, regarding trade, or about speculation in the world of white people [29].

The social life of coolies on plantations is really governed by the rules and restraints carried out by plantation owners. life is only filled with busy work schedules without being able to get out of the plantation, as in [5] which reveals:

"Payday leave twice a month is considered an official work stop day, but it is not a holiday at all. Early in the morning, the coolies get various kinds of work-sweeping the streets, cleaning up the garbage around the building, etc., before the half-month payment calculation begins. For extra work, coolies are not paid at all. Only after those hours can the workers do what they want, even then within certain limits. But at least, on that day they can usually leave the plantation to visit the capital city which is close to the plantation. In ordinary days there is no time for holidays. The coolie just came home from work after dark or continued working in the fields at night [5].

Plantation in Deli is a community environment where plantation owners can act as they please. The planters apply their own laws in overcoming every legal issue on the plantation with their own "court". This is based on the principle of planters that coolies must always be on the plantation and continue working. In fact, if there is a rebellion outside the plantation, as long as it does not affect the production and work system in the plantation, the planters does not really care [7].

The practice of "state in the country" has been running since the beginning of the plantation opening by Nienhuys. For the planters, this practice is a sufficient facility to punish the coolies who work lazily. The suffering of this sentence was never recorded, it even became the secret of the plantation [7].

In social life, this hierarchy and social status place the superiority of Europeans towards Asians. References [30] reveal that

It was here that I became a plantation employee and with a salary of 200 guilders in my pocket. The men are waiting for me, like a prince who awaits his arrival in my country. No, that description at all not true. In my hometown, no prince is expected to arrive at my arrival is waiting here! I never found a situation like this in my country. There is no. There is no place in Europe that presents this much power. Only here can a person become the real ruler. For all that is needed is white [30].



In this paper, the hierarchy of plantation society in the structure of society is very sharp, in addition to the Europeans who place themselves higher in rank than the workers, as well as assumptions and "recognition" of the workers that their degree is much more lower than the planters.

In addition to occupational and occupational factors, the structure and structure of plantation communities are also influenced by ethnicity within the plantation. Community groupings are formed not only from work positions but also from their ethnic groups. This also triggered conflict on the plantation. Javanese coolies seem to be the lowest layer in the structure of society. The coolies are placed in situations where they have no right to be treated humanely. Even in reference number [21], it was revealed that:

A very well-known brochure written by Van den Brandt, entitled *de Milionen uit Deli*, which had lived 13 years on the East Coast of Sumatra, said there were bad conditions and forced use of coolies. In his brochure, Van den Brandt first revealed that there were injustices in carrying out the rules. In Medan alone, the percentage of crimes committed to coolies that were not brought into the legal domain, according to him, increased by 100%. Other bad conditions in the plantation are forced deprivation of liberty into daily habits, also many deaths, abuse of authority and position, according to him the plantation on the East Coast of Sumatra is a terrible sight. So, finally, the government in 1903 sent Rhemrev to conduct an investigation. During Rhemrev's visit in 145 plantations, he was assisted by government officials, Chinese *tandil* who acted as translators, and *vice toean keboen*. During his visit, he found that many coolies who did not dare to talk about the situation that happened on the plantation and the *toean keboen* themselves claimed to have hit their coolies [21].

The above writings have proven that social relations are patriarchal, where coolies are considered very low and Europeans are considered very high, this is a general "rule" where everyone follows. In fact, people who have just entered the plantation will follow this pattern and adapt. This pattern has become a fertile land for the birth of racism [5].

Racism has also formed a pattern within the plantation community, so that skin color and ethnic or ethnic origin can determine the position of work provided in the plantation. Reference [31] clearly illustrates the division of labor on plantations, as follows:

For the work of digging the land and making roads used by the Javanese, the Baewan people turned out to be suitable for building drying wards and coolies housing. Rivets are good for digging land. Banjar and Siam people in groups build a drying barn. Malays want to be coachmen. Batak people also descended from their ever-green mountains and tried to get wages by building houses and cutting down forests, but the main workers remained Chinese [31].

Thus the division of labor is carried out according to the nation, this is done by plantation owners who consider that for optimal work efficiency requires heterogeneity of workers must be reduced. Because this often triggers fights

between fellow coolies who are different from other ethnic groups.

Contract coolies have become very poor communities. They are also forced to follow the applicable rules. Slavery and forced servitude are the most prominent things when discussing the social system of workers on colonial plantations.

Basically, the plantation community is a multiracial society, consisting of European, Chinese, Javanese, and other indigenous peoples. Revoked from the roots of each culture, groups into a new community isolated from the outside community. Plantation communities are miniatures of colonial society in general because plantation communities also have the same characteristics, such as segmented according to ethnic, racial, dualistic groups based on the European and Non-European economic sectors, and social domination.

From the description above, life in plantations has a social structure that symbolizes the structure of social power. The workers who number more than Europeans remain the lowest group in the community grouping. Coolies like not having the power to fight violence committed by plantation owners. The coolie accepts their situation as victims of plantations or plantation control systems that use violent methods.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research that has been done, it can be concluded that the low history of studies in North Sumatra is caused by the lack of ability of historians to use other disciplines as an approach. The themes studied by historians are still limited to a number of topics such as plantation and culture, while the themes in social history have not been touched by historians.

Some social history research models that historians can use are evolutionary models, central circle models, developmental level models, long-term, medium and short-term models, and systematic models.

In the study of the history of North Sumatra, a level of development model can be used to examine social history in this area, namely the social revolution history in East Sumatra which was formerly the area of North Sumatra. Social structures in society continue to develop and complex in accordance with time and space. The Malay community in East Sumatra experienced turbulence and carried out a social revolution towards the existing social structures and rulers.

In addition to the developmental level model, a systematic model can also be used in assessing the history of plantations. A systematic model can be used to examine the social changes that occur in the lives of plantation workers in East Sumatra. In this systematic model what is seen is the behavior of historical actors from various social layers. This is in accordance with the conditions of the people in East Sumatra plantations which consist of several social layers, namely planters or commonly called planters, foremen or *tandil*, and coolies.

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