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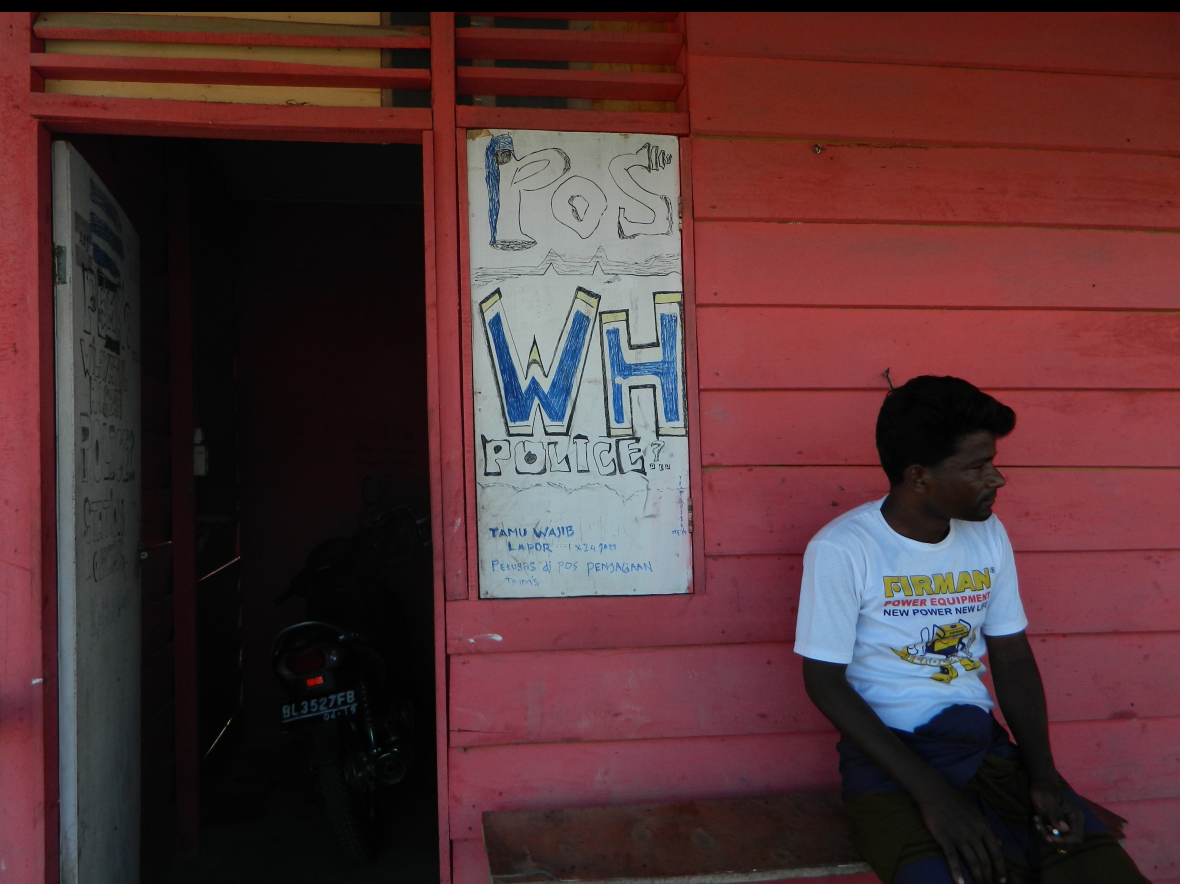

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The current issue of ASEAS, 11(2), discusses the highly relevant topic of forced migration in Southeast Asia. Historically, the region is known for the so called boat people crisis in the aftermath of the Vietnam War between 1975 and mid 1995, when almost 800,000 Vietnamese fled their country by sea in fear of prosecution. Currently, Southeast Asia is experiencing its second major forced migration crisis with nearly one million Rohingya people who fled Myanmar in fear of an ongoing genocide committed by the Armed Forces of Myanmar. Thus far, we know little about the current state of refugees and internally displaced persons in Southeast Asia. There are only estimates available on the actual number of people that migrate involuntarily to or within the region. However, according to UNHCR estimates, 3.37 million of the 68.5 million forced migrant population worldwide were hosted by Southeast Asian countries in 2017. At the same time, Southeast Asia has one of the weakest protection frameworks for refugees and asylum seekers worldwide. Only Cambodia, the Philippines, and Timor-Leste have ratified the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 protocol. Contributions to this issue include two case studies from Indonesia focusing on refugee self-organization and the local politics of hospitality towards refugees respectively, and one article that scrutinizes the politics of refugees and asylum seekers registration in Malaysia and Thailand.

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Editorial: Forced Migration in Southeast Asia

Gunnar Stange & Patrick Sakdapolrak

▸ Stange, G., & Sakdapolrak, P. (2018). Forced migration in Southeast Asia. *Austrian Journal of South-East Asian Studies, 11*(2), 161-164.

The current issue of ASEAS, 11(2), focuses on the highly topical theme of forced migration in Southeast Asia. Historically, the region is known for the so-called boat people crisis in the aftermath of the Vietnam War between 1975 and 1995, when almost 800,000 Vietnamese fled their country by sea in fear of persecution. Currently, Southeast Asia is experiencing its second major forced migration crisis with nearly one million Rohingya people who have fled Myanmar in fear of an ongoing genocide committed by the Armed Forces of Myanmar (Tajuddin, 2017). Thus far, we know little about the current state of refugees and internally displaced persons in Southeast Asia, and we have only estimations on the actual number of people that migrate involuntarily to or within the region. However, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reports approximately 3.37 million of the 68.5 million forced migrant population worldwide were hosted by Southeast Asian countries in 2017 (UNHCR, 2018). At the same time, in 2017, Southeast Asian countries accounted for nearly six million internally displaced persons (IDP) due to ongoing domestic armed conflicts, recurring natural disasters, as well as aggressive developmental politics (Internal Displacement Monitoring Center, 2018).

Southeast Asia has one of the weakest protection frameworks for refugees and asylum seekers worldwide. Only Cambodia, the Philippines, and Timor-Leste have ratified the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 protocol. Although the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration mentions ASEAN's and its member states' commitment to guarantee the right to seek asylum (ASEAN, 2013), thus far, the member states' way to address the issue of forced migration has been rather unilateral. This is mainly due to ASEAN's very strong rules of cooperation, namely respect of state sovereignty, non-interference in the international affairs of member states, consultation, and consensus (Amer, 2009). At this point, it is highly unlikely that ASEAN and the region as such will decide to adopt a joint regional framework for, or approach to forced migration any time soon (Petcharamesree, 2016).

Thus far, there exists only very limited knowledge on how the low protections standards in most Southeast Asian countries specifically affect the lives of refugees and asylum seekers and their coping and adaptation strategies respectively. The contributions to this issue address this research gap as they are primarily concerned with the question of how the life realities of refugees and asylum seekers are being shaped in socio-political environments that have no or very low protection standards for this highly vulnerable 'group' of persons of concern. This includes themes such as self-organization in the absence

of access to education, registration practices in the absence of asylum frameworks, as well as refugees and asylum seekers management practices on the municipal level in the absence of support from the national level of government.

The Current Research section of this issue opens with a contribution by Thomas Mitchell Brown (2018) focusing on refugee-led education initiatives in Cisarua, a small town in West Java, Indonesia. Based on ethnographic research, the author documents refugee resilience and self-reliance, tracing the emergence of refugee-led education initiatives, detailing their form, function, and benefits to the community, and analyzing the contextual factors that drove their emergence and proliferation. The article is an important contribution to understanding the living conditions and needs of an estimated 14,000 asylum seekers and refugees who live in protracted transit in Indonesia due to the restrictive Australian immigration policy in recent years. Brown shows that although refugees are oftentimes portrayed to be passive agents in need of outside assistance, they are, in fact, highly capable of constructively addressing their collective needs.

In her article, Jera Lego (2018) scrutinizes the politics and practices of refugees' and asylum seekers' registrations in Malaysia and Thailand. Based on extensive field work, Lego traces the cases of registration exercises along the Thai-Myanmar border and mobile registration in Kuala Lumpur until around 2013. In doing so she analyses the mechanisms and technologies employed by the UNHCR in cooperation with non-governmental organizations for registering and identifying refugees from Myanmar. Lego argues that both the registration and non-registration of refugees and asylum seekers can be understood in terms of competing rationalities of the various actors involved, their incongruent programs, and uneven technologies that serve to actively construct and assert knowledge and information concerning the existence of refugees, or to conceal and deny their presence.

Antje Missbach, Yunizar Adiputera, and Atin Prabandari (2018) focus on the sub-national level of refugee protection in Indonesia. Their article responds to changes initiated by the 2016 Indonesian Presidential Regulation on Handling Foreign Refugees, which delegated more responsibility for managing refugees to the sub-national levels of the administration. The authors discuss the case of refugee management in the city of Makassar, known for its welcoming attitude towards refugees. By examining the current living conditions of asylum seekers and refugees in Makassar and comparing them to other places in Indonesia, the authors ask whether the concept of 'sanctuary city' is applicable in a non-Western context to enhance current discussions of creating alternative models for refugee protection beyond the national and regional level.

Claudia Seise's (2018) contribution goes beyond the specific thematic focus of this issue as it refers to the broader historical context of migration to Southeast Asia, and in this case to Indonesia. In her article, she looks at Maulid celebrations – held to remember the Prophet Mohammad's birthday – among the *Alawiyin* in Palembang, South Sumatra, who are descendants from Hadhrami immigrants. Maulid celebrations organized by the *Alawiyin* in Palembang are separated along gender lines. The author shows how female-only Maulid celebrations enable Muslim women to express their emotions and allow for bodily expressions during the actual Maulid event. Seise argues that, in these celebrations, women express the religious emotions that they

wish to show, but also express those emotions that are expected from them as signs of their love for the Prophet Muhammad. Emotional practices, such as these, Seise argues, are part of an understanding of Islam internalized by the Alawiyin.

The In Dialogue section features an interview with the Indonesian peace and conflict advisor Shadia Marhaban on conflict transformation in Southeast Asia, conducted by Gunnar Stange (2018) in Vienna, in June 2018. Shadia Marhaban speaks about her peace-building work all over Southeast Asia and her experiences in violence prevention work in the city of Marawi, Mindanao, Philippines, in the aftermath of the mass exodus of hundreds of thousands of people during the so-called siege of Marawi in 2017.

In the Network Southeast Asia section, Kristina Großmann (2018) reports on the kick-off workshop of the transdisciplinary research project "FuturEN: Governance, Identities, and Future Along Categories of Differentiation" in Palangkaraya, Central Kalimantan, Indonesia. The project explores environmental conflicts, especially those related to coal mining, focusing on the nexus between ethnicity, gender, and status in Central Kalimantan. The workshop aimed at discussing diverging future visions regarding coal mining on an intersectoral expert level. Großmann finds that the participants mainly profited from the space for exchange and networking that the workshop provided. The challenge, however, for a similar workshop to be held in the future will be to achieve a stronger involvement of actors from the local private mining sector.

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Building Resilience: The Emergence of Refugee-Led Education Initiatives in Indonesia to Address Service Gaps Faced in Protracted Transit

Thomas Mitchell Brown

▸ Brown, T. M. (2018). Building resilience: The emergence of refugee-led education initiatives in Indonesia to address service gaps faced in protracted transit. *Austrian Journal of South-East Asian Studies*, *11*(2), 165-181.

Following recent changes in Australian immigration policy, and in the context of an increasing global refugee crisis, more than 14,000 asylum seekers and refugees now live in protracted transit in Indonesia, spending years awaiting resettlement through the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to a third country. Despite the increasing length of time refugees are spending in Indonesia, they live in a state of limbo, prohibited from working and having limited access to education. Although refugees in such situations are commonly perceived to be passive agents resigned to helplessness and in need of outside assistance, refugee communities are challenging this notion by working together to independently address their collective needs. As such, the question emerges: How and to what extent do refugees self-organize to overcome barriers in access to basic services and rights while living in protracted transit in Indonesia? In Cisarua, a small town in West Java, the Hazara refugee community has responded by banding together and mobilizing their skills and experiences to independently provide sorely-needed education services for their own community. This article documents this example of refugee resilience and self-reliance, tracing the emergence of these refugee-led education initiatives, detailing their form, function, and benefits to the community, and analyzing the contextual factors that drove their emergence and proliferation in Cisarua.

Keywords: Asylum Seekers; Education; Indonesia; Refugees; Resilience; Self-Organization

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INTRODUCTION

While refugees and asylum seekers living in host countries are typically pictured living in detention centers and camp environments, separated from the local population, an increasing number of the world's refugees and asylum seekers now live in urban environments among the host community. More than half of the world's refugees now live in urban centers (UNHCR, n.d.). Life in developing host countries like Indonesia presents a range of challenges for asylum seekers and refugees. Despite living in relative safety, their basic human rights and economic, social, and psychological needs often remain unfulfilled. Thus the question emerges: How and to what extent do refugees self-organize to overcome barriers in access to basic rights and services while living for extended periods in urban environments in developing host countries such as Indonesia?

This paper seeks to explore this question through a detailed study of how Hazara refugees living in Cisarua, West Java, have self-organized to provide education to refugee children and adults in Indonesia.

In recent decades, Indonesia was used as a transit point for asylum seekers, typically from the Middle East and South Asia, who sought to reach Australia by boat. In 2013, Australia enacted toughened border policies to 'stop the boats', which have all but ceased the flow of asylum seekers reaching Australian territory. However, this policy has created a bottleneck effect, with Indonesia left to play host to a burgeoning number of asylum seekers and refugees who now spend years, rather than months, in the country. At the end of 2016, there were 14,405 asylum seekers and refugees in Indonesia registered with the UNHCR, approximately half of which were from Afghanistan, with significant populations from other countries including Somalia, Myanmar, Iraq, Nigeria, and Sri Lanka, among others (UNHCR Indonesia, 2016a). Around 6,000 asylum seekers and refugees live independently in the community, largely in the city of Jakarta and in Cisarua, a small town in West Java (Kemenko Polhukam, 2017). The remainder live in some form of detention, or community housing provided by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), with facilities spread across the Indonesian archipelago but with large populations in the cities of Medan and Makassar (Hirsch & Doig, 2018; IOM, n.d.; Kemenko Polhukam, 2017; Missbach, 2017).

Indonesia is not a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention or the 1967 Protocol, but the government has authorized the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) to be responsible for refugees during their stay in Indonesia, and has decreed that refugees may be allowed to remain until they can be resettled in a third country. However, Indonesia offers no pathways for refugees to settle permanently or naturalize in the country. As such, more than 14,000 asylum seekers and refugees live for years in Indonesia as they await resettlement through the UNHCR to a country that will accept them (UNHCR Indonesia, 2016b). With such obstacles to onward mobility and no possibility of local integration, Indonesia has shifted from its traditional role as a transit country to one where asylum seekers and refugees live in a state of indefinite transit, limbo or 'stuckedness' (Gleeson, 2017; Missbach, 2015). With limited resettlement options and a growing global refugee population, the resettlement process for refugees in Indonesia is becoming more challenging, and waiting times continue to lengthen. During their prolonged stays in Indonesia, refugees are not permitted to work and have limited access to education services, with a relatively small proportion of refugee children able to enter the Indonesian education system due to a range of barriers (Missbach, 2015; UNHCR Indonesia, 2017b).

Some two and a half thousand asylum seekers and refugees living in Indonesia have settled in Cisarua, a small urban town in West Java near the city of Bogor. The Cisarua refugee population consists mostly of ethnic Hazara refugees from Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan (UNHCR Indonesia, 2017a). A culture of self-support, resilience, and resourcefulness can be observed in this refugee community as they band together to navigate their protracted and uncertain situation. In particular, faced with the prospect of children missing years of education at a critical stage of their development, groups of Hazara refugees in Cisarua have pooled their skills and expertise to independently initiate a number of informal education centers to serve their community. This paper maps the emergence of these initiatives and explores the reasons for this phenomenon

occurring at this time and in this place in Indonesia. In particular, it is argued that the significant numbers of women and family units in Cisarua and the absence of external support in the area provided the necessary motivation, whilst the relative freedom and ability to self-organize that refugees in Cisarua enjoy (compared to those in detention or community housing), together with the experience and expertise of many refugees in Cisarua, provided the capability to execute the ideas. Finally, the strong social capital that has developed among Hazara refugees in Cisarua is highlighted as crucial in spurring action, by providing points of connection between this motivation and capability.

This paper provides an illustrative case study of self-organization among urban refugees living for extended periods in developing host countries. The study has implications for how refugees can be viewed as agents of change, and the potential that refugee community organizations hold for improving the lives of refugees the world over. By focusing on a community situated outside of Africa and the Middle East, this research adds geographic and cultural breadth to the body of knowledge on urban refugees in developing host countries. Furthermore, this paper adds a rich case study to the emerging literature on self-organization of refugees and provides a much-needed perspective on how refugees in Indonesia have responded to the new context of protracted transit that has emerged since 2013.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The supporting data for this paper was collected between 2015 and 2018 through participatory research and semi-structured interviews with founders, managers, and teachers of refugee-led education centers and the wider refugee community in Cisarua, West Java. Fieldwork was conducted for a period of six weeks in October and November 2015, involving immersive participatory observation of the Hazara refugee community while living with a group of eight men from Afghanistan and Pakistan. These men became the entry point to the refugee community in Cisarua, and snowball sampling was used to recruit additional research participants (Atkinson & Flint, 2001). Time spent in refugee education centers offered opportunities to access respondents from more varied backgrounds – in particular young refugees, women, and families. This immersion in refugee communities in Cisarua allowed for meaningful participatory observation, and led to the development of rapport with respondents. Since this major block of fieldwork, several short return visits have been undertaken in 2016 and 2017, and regular correspondence, including informal interviews, were maintained with key respondents remotely via email and phone, as refugee-led initiatives have undergone changes and new education centers have emerged.

BACKGROUND: REFUGEE-LED COMMUNITY EDUCATION INITIATIVES IN URBAN SPACES

> Rather than taking an individualistic attitude to survival, most refugees work together, establishing community organizations and helping each other. (Koizumi & Hoffstaedter, 2015)

While not always highly visible, it is commonly understood that refugee communities across the globe work together to overcome common challenges. This phenomenon

directly challenges the perception that refugees and asylum seekers are passive agents resigned to the protracted situations they face and in need of help from outsiders (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2016). Kirsten McConnachie (2014), a leader in the study of self-organization amongst refugees, has observed significant refugee-led governance and justice systems in refugee camps along the Thai-Burma border. However, McConnachie's research focuses on closed-off camp environments, where homogeneous refugee communities live separately from the host population. There has been little detailed research conducted on refugee self-organization in urban refugee environments.

The emerging literature on urban refugees living in developing host countries largely concentrates on African cities, with a few isolated additional case studies from Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, India, and Pakistan (Lyytinen & Kullenberg, 2013). In addition to limitations in regional scope, there are also literature gaps in the study of social structures of refugees in urban environments. While some authors have looked at social interaction between urban refugees and host populations, none have explored concepts of self-organization as deeply as McConnachie's research on camp environments (Calhoun, 2010; Kobia & Cranfield, 2009; Koizumi & Hoffstaedter, 2015; Lyytinen & Kullenberg, 2013; World Vision, 2015). There are many formal and informal refugee-led organizations working to assist refugee communities in urban and refugee camp contexts across the world, but few have been the prime focus of intensive field research. As such, this paper fills an important gap in the literature.

Malaysia provides additional examples of refugee self-organization in a refugee host country that has similar characteristics to Indonesia. Like those in Indonesia, refugees in Malaysia face periods of protracted transit as they await resettlement, being allowed to stay with limited rights until they can be resettled (Gleeson, 2017; Jesuit Refugee Service, 2012). In 2009, UNHCR Malaysia initiated the Social Protection Fund, providing small grants for projects run by refugee communities to support skills training, income generation, community development, and service delivery (UNHCR, 2010a, 2010b, n.d.). The Social Protection Fund has supported some 120 refugee-led projects in Malaysia, with an estimated 20,000 individuals benefitting from refugee-led initiatives ranging from community centers and sports halls to credit facilities, day care services, schools, shelters, and tech-focused enterprises (UNHCR, 2010a). One example is the Chin Refugee Committee (CRC) – a community organization promoting the protection, empowerment, and development of Chin refugees in Malaysia. The CRC provides a variety of services for the community, ranging from support with asylum seeker registration to newly arrived persons, health care and housing services, establishing small enterprises such as stores to serve the refugee community, and engaging in public relations on behalf of the Chin community in Malaysia (CRC, 2012). Despite similarities in legal protection frameworks, differences in context can explain why such UNHCR support for refugee self-organization has emerged in Malaysia but not in Indonesia. Firstly, Malaysia hosts some 150,000 asylum seekers and refugees, far more than Indonesia (UNHCR Malaysia, 2015). As such, the capacity of UNHCR Indonesia is much lower due to funding constraints. Secondly, the phenomenon of refugees facing prolonged stays in the host country is relatively new in Indonesia but has been an issue for decades in Malaysia, prompting awareness of the need for self-reliance.

This research also makes an important contribution to the existing literature on refugees in Indonesia, which has a range of foci – from international law and protection to international relations and refugees in detention (Hirsch & Doig, 2018; Kneebone, 2017; McNevin, Missbach, & Deddy, 2016; Missbach, 2015, 2016, 2017; Nethery & Gordyn, 2014; Nethery, Rafferty-Brown, & Taylor, 2012; Tan 2016; Taylor & Rafferty-Brown, 2010). In the last five or six years, Indonesia has transformed from a staging post for irregular movement to Australia to a host country where refugees spend an indefinite period of time waiting to be resettled. What little in-depth primary research that does exist on refugees living in the community in Indonesia was mostly conducted before this crucial change (Missbach, 2015; Sampson, Gifford, & Taylor, 2016). As such, this paper provides much-needed perspective on the experience of refugees in the current context and is the first to provide a detailed case study of the refugee-led education initiatives that have emerged since Indonesia's transition to a long-term transit country.

CISARUA: THE UNASSUMING HOME OF A REFUGEE SELF-HELP MOVEMENT

> Within the refugee communities, there is a wealth of knowledge and skills for project implementation . . . . They best know the needs of their communities for their day-to-day survival. (Letchimi Doraisamy, UNHCR Malaysia Social Protection Fund, cited in UNHCR, 2010b)

The urban area of Cisarua in the mountains of West Java has in recent years become home to some two and a half thousand asylum seekers and refugees, mostly ethnic Hazaras from Afghanistan, Pakistan, or Iran (UNHCR Indonesia, 2017a). Refugees in Cisarua remain relatively close to the UNHCR Indonesia central office in Jakarta, while benefitting from a cooler climate and more affordable cost of living. Unlike other refugees in Indonesia, who may be supported by international or local caretaker groups, or who live in detention or community housing, refugees in this urban area live with relative independence, relying on personal savings or remittances from family members who live overseas.

As of the end of 2017, there were five refugee-led education centers in Cisarua, in addition to a women's group and a karate club run by a refugee woman. At the same time, a range of informal self-support activities were taking place in the community. This phenomenon has only emerged in the last four years, and has done so exclusively amongst the Hazara refugee population in the urban locality of Cisarua. This may have been driven by a number of factors that make the refugee community in Cisarua distinct from those in other parts of Indonesia, an in-depth analysis of which will be presented in the following section. Whatever the cause, the phenomenon points to strong inter-refugee relations and the emergence of a culture of self-support, solidarity, and entrepreneurship in response to an increasingly protracted situation faced by refugees in Indonesia. Refugee leaders in Cisarua are able to mobilize the skills and expertise of the refugee community to serve those members who face barriers in access to services. At this stage, the range of services offered by refugee organizations in Cisarua is not as expansive as those seen in neighboring Malaysia, and typically focus on survival and self-improvement, with particular attention towards education.

The current movement of refugee-led education initiatives began in 2014, when four Hazara men founded the *Cisarua Refugee Learning Centre* (CRLC) to address the lack of education options available to children in the refugee community. Of these four men, one was a photographer, one was a journalist and had run a media company, another worked as a researcher, and one was a young, intelligent and enthusiastic teenager who soon became the figurehead of CRLC. The school soon attracted the attention of foreign supporters and a benefactor group, Cisarua Learning Limited, was established by a group of Australians. The group supports the school by connecting them with Australian teachers, students, academics, and journalists who wish to offer support, as well as by organizing an online fundraising campaign each year. The center offers courses from a range of disciplines with a particular focus on English instruction. The staff is comprised of volunteer teachers, who are typically women, and male administrators and media specialists from the refugee community. The school has seven classrooms, 12 teachers, six administration staff, and nearly 200 students (CRLC, 2017).

In March 2015, another school following a similar model, the *Refugee Learning Nest* (RLN), was established by seven refugees with the support of the Swiss-Australian non-profit *Same Skies* (RLN, 2018). Same Skies held a community consultation with refugees in the area which revealed that expanding access to education for children was the highest priority for refugees. In particular, refugees in Cisarua saw that the CRLC model was successful, but could only accommodate a limited number of students. Same Skies then financed the opening of RLN as well as providing training and capacity building through site visits and remote mentoring. In 2015, it had a staff of 15 volunteers, 10 teachers, and five administrators catering for around 45 students (volunteer at RLN, 15 October 2015). In addition to formal classes for children, English classes for women as well as a handicraft class were held. The RLN also has sports facilities which are used regularly and support football teams and a Saturday morning Taekwondo class.

In September 2015, some of the leadership team from CRLC created a new school, the *Refugee Learning Centre* (RLC), again increasing the overall capacity of refugee education in Cisarua. They received a small grant from Same Skies for initial setup costs, but were quickly able to fundraise additional means independently through their effective use of social media, photography, and videography, and through contacts with sympathetic groups and individuals, often from Australia. The RLC staff consists of six male managers and 17 mostly female teachers who provide education for 110 children as well as 50 adult women (RLC, 2017). They offer students opportunities to learn English, mathematics, history, science, geography, and art. In response to community demand, two additional education centers have subsequently been established in the area – *Cipayung Refugee Educational Centre* (CREC) and *Hope Learning Centre* (HLC) (CREC, 2017; HLC, 2017). As such, there are now five refugee education centers operating in Cisarua, all following the same basic model established by CRLC in 2014 – organizations serving refugees that are operated by refugees themselves but that rely on donations from individuals, charities, and other groups outside the refugee community.

Altogether, the five refugee schools serve hundreds of primary school to junior high school aged children as well as adults. Refugees who volunteer to be managers,

administrators, and teachers at the education centers are able to put their skills to use and have an impact on their community while gaining useful experience and expertise. The schools also support a range of additional activities that benefit the wider refugee community, such as English classes for adults, sports programs, community-based health workshops, vocational skill-sharing programs, and arts and handicraft classes for women. In general, the activities are based on the particular skill-set that a member of the refugee community is able to offer as a volunteer. These include individuals with knowledge of visual art, English, mathematics, science, or sports, which they are willing to teach onto others. English is often a focus of the learning activities, since most refugees hope to be resettled to a country where English is the national language, or at least a common lingua franca.

It should be noted that these initiatives emerged despite considerable barriers to self-organization in the refugee community, in particular, the poor protection framework in Indonesia, ambiguous guidelines on what activities refugees can and cannot engage in, and crackdowns on refugees who do engage in work in Indonesia. During fieldwork conducted in 2015, respondents indicated that many refugees in Cisarua feared that volunteering or starting organizations could be perceived as working or engaging in entrepreneurship, which has the potential to create issues with authorities or to harm their resettlement case with the UNHCR. Since no clear guidelines on permissible behavior were available, rumors were rife in the community, creating a sense of paranoia and confusion. As a result, many refugees were reluctant to engage in activities that would benefit both themselves and their community, preferring to 'play it safe'. Given that there are now five learning centers in Cisarua, it appears that the reluctance to self-organize witnessed in 2015 has since been, to a significant extent, overcome. As will be seen in the discussion, this can be seen to result from the precedence of the initial learning centers that have operated without incident and that have provided visible benefits for the community.

Cisarua's education centers benefit volunteers and the refugee community at large, including those who are not direct recipients of the services. Those who volunteer and lead these initiatives are empowered by putting their skills to use and making an impact on their community, while also developing their capacity by gaining experience. Abdul Khalil Payeez, a refugee who has been in Indonesia for five years and is now the managing director of CRLC, states that rather than having nothing to do and just sleeping all day, "I spend my time positively, doing something for others, and getting to know lots of people from different countries and communities" (A. K. Payeez, managing director CRLC, 22 April 2018). Working on a positive initiative like this gives volunteers purpose and takes their minds off the uncertain and difficult situations they face as refugees that are so often the cause of serious mental health issues in refugee communities in Indonesia and elsewhere (Jayadi, 2018). It can also alleviate the sense that their stay in Indonesia is simply a 'wasted time' and give them a sense of purpose and identity outside of just being a refugee waiting for resettlement: "I can say I am Khalil, not that I am a refugee" (A. K. Payeez, managing director CRLC, 22 April 2018). It became evident during the field study that the education centers act as community hubs, providing much-needed places for socialization and community activities for refugees from all walks of life. Members of the community, including parents, are often called upon to lend their skills, whether in

cleaning, maintenance, or building activities, and are involved in decision-making within the schools through regular meetings. The initiatives give structure and hope to the lives of all those involved – not just the pupils and volunteers, but also the parents and the broader community. As one respondent put it, "this is not just a school, it is a house of hope" (N. Karim, volunteer teacher at CRLC, 22 April 2018). A number of respondents indicated that the refugee community in Cisarua is now stronger and more interconnected as a result of the learning centers.

In addition to the education centers, there are two other refugee-led initiatives operating in Cisarua that focus on women's empowerment and sports. The *Refugee Women Support Group Indonesia* (RWSGI) is a group run by a female Hazara refugee who previously worked for various NGOs in Pakistan, and has a focus on textile and jewelry making. The group also runs workshops on women's issues, including health and hygiene, reproductive health, sexual and gender-based violence, and family planning. Most recently they have started Indonesian language classes for women and children (RWSGI, 2017). The group sells their textile products at stalls in Jakarta as well as in Australia through a Melbourne-based NGO (Beyond the Fabric, 2017). Another refugee-led organization is the *Cisarua Refugee Shotokan Karate Club* (CRSKC), established by a young Hazara woman who was a professional karate athlete in Afghanistan and fled the country after threats from extremist groups related to the mixed-gender karate school she operated (CRSKC, 2017; Harvey, 2016). The club runs regular karate classes for adults and children. These initiatives offer social and mental health benefits to refugees akin to those of the education centers as discussed above.

Whilst the refugee-led organizations are impressive examples of self-organization amongst refugees, it is also important to recognize the strength of the less visible informal activities of self-support that exist in the community in Cisarua. It became evident during fieldwork in 2015 that a strong culture of mutual support was emerging in the refugee community in Cisarua, in particular for learning English and playing sports. Many refugees with a strong grasp of English would travel to private houses to teach groups of adults or adolescents who are over the age serviced by the refugee schools. Often these students would then in turn teach younger students or those with a lower level of English competency. Sporting activities were another well-established pastime amongst Hazara refugees in Cisarua and also acted as important community gatherings. Most men, who typically had little to do otherwise, played soccer or worked out every day. There were a number of indoor soccer facilities and gyms which were used almost exclusively by refugees. These activities offered space for community gatherings, not only for the participants but also for the spectators, who gathered to watch the soccer matches. A number of schools have tapped into this, with refugee men acting as coaches to student teams, giving some girls their first chance to play. The schools support regular training and matches, benefitting the mental wellbeing of teachers and students alike. These are important examples of how the refugee community informally self-organizes to manage the difficulties that come with living in a state of protracted transit in Indonesia.

In late 2017, the phenomenon of refugee-led self-support initiatives appeared to have spread to Jakarta – the other major center in Indonesia for urban refugees living independently in the community. The *Health, Education and Learning Program*

(HELP) was established by two refugees from the Hazara community in Cisarua. These Hazara refugees sought to bring the refugee learning center model to Jakarta in order to address the lack of services available to the refugee population there. The HELP center reflects the diversity of the refugee population in Jakarta, with volunteer teachers from Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Somalia, and Yemen, and 140 students (both children and adults) from nine different countries (HELP, 2017). One of the co-founders reported in April 2018 that, initially, it had been difficult to facilitate learning across so many language and cultural groups, but that things were improving and that children as well as parents from different backgrounds were becoming more connected as a result of the center (M. B. Bayani, 23 April 2018). The center also has seven foreign and ten Indonesian volunteers, which is possible in a cosmopolitan large city but would be a challenge to achieve in the small town of Cisarua (M. B. Bayani, 23 April 2018).

DISCUSSION: FACTORS THAT ENABLED THE INITIATION AND EXPANSION OF REFUGEE-LED INITIATIVES IN CISARUA

Despite their uncertain situation, refugees in Cisarua exercise a high degree of agency in their ability to band together to surmount difficulties faced while in transit. Through their ability to mobilize their own social capital to independently initiate community organizations, members of the Hazara refugee community challenge the commonly held perception that refugees are passive and resigned to their fate. Yet, this phenomenon is not unique to refugee communities in Indonesia. Indeed, the international NGO *Urban Refugees* claims to have established a network of refugee-led initiatives in some 40 countries (Urban Refugees, 2017).

Urban refugees living in developing countries across the world face many of the same challenges as those in Cisarua, and Indonesia, in relation to access to rights, services, and livelihoods whilst in protracted transit (Church World Service, 2013; Gleeson, 2017; Kobia & Cranfield, 2009; Koizumi & Hoffstaedter, 2015; Lyytinen & Kullenberg, 2013). As such, it is important to ask why and how the phenomenon of self-organization to overcome such challenges emerged in this specific context. Such an analysis will identify the key supporting conditions that contributed to the initiation and expansion of refugee-led initiatives in Cisarua, which are likely to also be applicable to other urban refugee communities in developing host countries outside Indonesia. This discussion is presented in four sections. The first three sections cover motivation, capability, and the connection between these two in relation to the emergence of self-organization in Cisarua. The final section comments on the rapid expansion of refugee-led initiatives in Cisarua and their recent spread to Jakarta.

Motivation: Changing Conditions and the Lack of External Service Provision

The first contextual factor to discuss in terms of motivation to self-organize is the recent change in Indonesia's role as a host country for refugees. Changes to Australian immigration policy introduced at the time of the 2013 federal election, combined with a declining number of resettlement places available to a growing number of refugees globally and the refugee crises in Europe and Bangladesh, have significantly changed

Indonesia's position in relation to refugees in recent years (Gleeson, 2017; Missbach, 2015). In the past five or six years, hopeful asylum seekers and refugees have seen Indonesia transform from a staging post for irregular movement to Australia, to a transit country with relatively fast resettlement to third countries available, to a host country where refugees face protracted and uncertain waits. Such protracted situations are not uncommon for urban refugees living in developing host countries across the world (Gleeson, 2017; Koizumi & Hoffstaedter, 2015; Loescher & Milner, 2006). During fieldwork conducted in 2015, many refugees in Cisarua were beginning to confront the uncomfortable reality that they would be in Indonesia for long periods of time. This required a shift in mindset, away from the conditions that the refugees had understood when they had initially decided to travel to Indonesia. Through this acceptance, many who had been reluctant to make long-term plans in the country were beginning to ponder how they could develop themselves and their community. The long, uncertain wait for resettlement that refugees now face in Indonesia may have created their very motivation to self-organize in order to address the community's immediate needs and to ensure that time in Indonesia is not simply 'wasted'. This effect of Australia's recent immigration policy on refugees in Indonesia has yet to be explored in detail as most primary in-depth research on urban refugees living in the community in Indonesia was conducted before this change (Missbach, 2015; Sampson et al., 2016). It may be that protracted situations in host countries are a necessary precondition for the emergence of refugee-led initiatives, given the precedent in countries like Malaysia and the fact that such groups had only started to emerge in Indonesia since onward travel to Australia became impossible (Gleeson, 2017; UNHCR, 2010a, 2010b, n.d.). The situation for refugees in Indonesia has become even more dire since 2015, with UNHCR Indonesia now telling refugees that they should expect more prolonged stays in the country, and that some would be unable to be resettled to a third country in their lifetime (UNHCR Indonesia, 2017c). Interestingly, UNHCR Indonesia is now actively encouraging refugees to volunteer and undertake other activities that would enrich their lives whilst in Indonesia (UNHCR Indonesia, 2017c). The open statement of this hard truth and the explicit authorization from UNHCR to engage in volunteer activities may see further expansion of refugee self-help initiatives in the future.

Refugee leaders in Cisarua cited the presence of many families and children without education as the principal motivator for the emergence of refugee-led education initiatives. Of the 2,735 asylum seekers and refugees registered with UNHCR in the region of West Java (encompassing Cisarua) in 2016, 490 were adult women and 708 were children and adolescents under the age of 18 (UNHCR Population Statistics, 2016). While these proportions are similar to those for the general refugee population in Indonesia, refugees outside Cisuara, living in detention or community housing under the care of IOM and other caretaker groups, benefit from support and the provision of certain services (Hirsch & Doig, 2018; IOM, n.d.; Missbach, 2016, 2017). As such, they "have a lot of expectations from the responsible organizations" (N. Karim, volunteer teacher at CRLC, 22 April 2018). Even if they are not receiving adequate services, "they are waiting and waiting for someone to do it, or something to happen" (A. K. Payeez, managing director CRLC, 22 April 2018). Indeed Lyytinen and Kullenberg (2013) indicate that, in some cases, humanitarian agencies may, through

their programming, stifle self-organization and self-reliance by inadvertently marginalizing existing refugee-initiated community structures in urban environments, either by failing to recognize them or by creating new parallel structures. The situation is mixed in Jakarta, where a limited number of refugees receive support from caretaker groups and some are also able to form relationships with sympathetic individuals and civil society groups. By contrast, the complete lack of support organizations in Cisarua appears to have encouraged self-organization and self-reliance since there was no expectation of outside intervention. That is to say, there is an understanding in Cisarua that assistance can only come from within the community itself. Abdul Khalil Payeez, managing director of Cisarua's first learning center, summarizes the situation neatly: "Necessity is the mother of invention . . . because there is no organization working here, like IOM, UNHCR, we feel it is our responsibility. We don't have to wait for others to do, we can do it ourselves" (A. K. Payeez, managing director CRLC, 22 April 2018). The factors that motivated refugees in Cisarua to self-organize, in particular a lack of access to services whilst living in protracted transit – are also faced by many urban refugees in developing host countries outside Indonesia. Whilst the motivation for refugee-led education initiatives in Cisarua is clear, it had to be supported by sufficient capability in the refugee community to drive action.

Capability: Experience, Expertise, and the Freedom to Self-Organize

In Cisarua, refugees have had both the freedom and the capacity to self-organize around their motivation to provide education to the many refugee children in their community who would otherwise go without schooling. One refugee believed that the reason refugee-led initiatives were able to emerge in Cisarua, and later Jakarta, is that refugees there were "totally independent" (a female refugee leading programs in both Jakarta and Cisarua, 23 April 2018). Refugees in Cisarua live 'freely' among the host community, independent of support or direct oversight from any organization. In contrast, refugees in detention or community housing face restrictions on their freedom of movement, are under surveillance, and are often provided with certain services by caretaker groups (Hirsch & Doig, 2018; IOM, n.d.; Missbach, 2017). Indeed, if refugees in detention or community housing want to do something to help one another, "there are a lot of requirements they have to fufill, . . . have to ask authorities to start any small initiatives" (a female refugee leading programs in both Jakarta and Cisarua, 23 April 2018). As such, these refugees face many barriers to self-organization that are not shared by the refugees in Cisarua.

Another factor important to the success of refugee-led education initiatives has been the large number of refugees with high capacities living in Cisarua. The refugees involved in the education centers had previously been teachers, journalists, entrepreneurs, or had held other white-collar professions in their countries of origin. It is also important to note that refugees in Cisarua are economically distinct from the majority of refugees in Indonesia in having the ability, through savings or remittance networks, to support themselves financially whilst they live in Indonesia. In fact, those refugees living in Cisarua who run out of money often move to Jakarta in search of assistance from organizations there. Others are forced to surrender themselves to authorities and be placed in detention or community housing outside of Java in order to be

provided with food and shelter (Kemenko Polhukam, 2017; Smith, 2014). It follows that many of the refugees living in Cisarua are middle-class and educated. As such, they may have greater capacity and confidence to initiate community organizations. However, it must be noted that there are highly capable refugees all over Indonesia and other parts of the world who have not initiated such groups and services. This is the case even within Cisarua: "I have quite capable friends in Cisarua . . . who have worked in Afghanistan and Pakistan and have knowledge to offer . . . but they don't have either the will or the courage to help" (A. K. Payeez, managing director CRLC, 22 April 2018). This may signal a simple lack of interest or motivation to offer their time and capabilities or may be a symptom of the mental health issues that plague refugees living in protracted transit, often robbing them of their motivation (Jayadi, 2018). Therefore, the simple presence of qualified refugees is not sufficient for the emergence of refugee-led self-support initiatives. The same is true for freedom to self-organize: Many urban refugee communities in developing host countries enjoy relative freedom but do not initiate the kind of community groups seen in Cisarua (Gleeson, 2017; Koizumi & Hoffstaedter, 2015; Lyytinen & Kullenberg, 2013). While freedom and high capacities of refugees are necessary preconditions for the emergence of refugee-led initiatives, they are not sufficient. Only in connection with a strong motivation can this capability be translated into action.

The Role of Social Capital in Connecting Motivation With Capability

The large population of Hazara refugees living together in the small town of Cisarua and the strong social capital that has emerged amongst their community have provided the crucial point of connection between motivation and capability that explains the emergence of refugee-led initiatives. Thousands of refugees and asylum seekers live in close proximity in Cisarua. The vast majority are Hazara, sharing a common language, culture, and history that has allowed them to develop strong social capital. Hazara refugees are often neighbors, and organically befriend one another and socialize actively. As such, individuals are generally known to one another and are able to keep up with happenings throughout the refugee community in Cisarua. There are even routine meetings, known as *chanda*, of Hazara refugees living in the same localities. Groups of 50 or 60 refugees will meet weekly or monthly for religious and cultural activities as well as to provide a platform to discuss common issues facing the community (a male refugee leader assisting with education initiatives in Cisarua, 23 April 2018). These meetings provide an organic way for people to raise issues and priorities for the community and find potential solutions and have been used to discuss initiating new learning centers as well as the performance of existing ones. Indeed, one respondent suggested that these groups allowed parents to ask educated or skilled refugees in the community to initiate new learning centers to serve their children (a male refugee leader assisting with education initiatives in Cisarua, 23 April 2018). However, communication and cooperation are not limited to these small groups, with strong social capital existing in Cisarua's broader Hazara refugee community. Thus, it can be seen that refugees in Cisarua possessed the unique combination of motivation, capability, and strong social capital needed for the emergence of refugee-led education centers.

The case study of Cisarua demonstrates that social capital is a crucial factor in enabling refugee communities to identify common issues and mobilize people to work together to overcome them. The extent to which urban refugee communities develop social capital varies greatly in different contexts. In particular, Calhoun (2010) demonstrates how the strength of social capital amongst urban refugees not only varies from location to location, but also amongst different nationality groups of refugees living in the same locality. Whilst refugees in detention centers and community housing in Indonesia live close to each other and may also be from the same country of origin, they face clear barriers to self-organization and may also lack motivation due to existing supporting services. In Jakarta, despite living with freedom, the refugee population is geographically dispersed in a megacity of 10 million people. In addition, the refugee population in Jakarta is much more diverse than in Cisarua, comprising refugees from many different countries of origin (UNHCR Indonesia, 2017a). Distance and diversity make communication and the development of social capital in this case more difficult.

The Spread of Education-Oriented Refugee Initiatives in Urban Settings

Since the establishment of Indonesia's first refugee learning center in Cisarua in 2014, there has been a rapid expansion of similar initiatives in Cisarua and more recently to Jakarta. As discussed above, one major barrier to the emergence and spread of the centers was the perception that engaging in volunteer activities had the potential to damage cases with UNHCR or to create issues with Indonesian authorities. None of the refugee-led organizations established in Cisarua since 2014 has encountered any trouble from authorities to date, as was initially feared, and after a number of years without incident, more risk-averse members of the refugee community have become involved with refugee-led organizations. Abdul Khalil Payeez confirms that by the time CRLC and RLN were established "everybody in Cisarua got to know that there are learning centers now, and there is no problem . . . so people got more confident and started volunteering in different places. Then RLC was established, Cipayung [Refugee Educational Centre], and Hope [Learning Centre]" (A. K. Payeez, managing director CRLC, 22 April 2018). Furthermore, since 2014 the refugee community has been exposed to the success of the learning centers, creating more demand for these services and encouraging more refugee leaders to provide them. In combination with the contextual factors highlighted above, the increased confidence in the Hazara community that these activities are permitted as well as the visible benefits they provide to the community can explain the increasing number of refugee-led education centers in Cisarua and beyond.

Jakarta holds many of the characteristics that made the emergence of refugee-led initiatives in Cisarua possible: the presence of children in need of education; the freedom to self-organize; and, presumably, refugees who can offer their skills and experience in a voluntary capacity. Yet, because refugees in Jakarta are geographically dispersed and have less commonality of language and culture, the strong social capital that enabled the almost 'spontaneous' emergence of self-organization in Cisarua is not present to the same extent in Jakarta. This may explain why HELP was initiated *not* by refugees within the Jakarta community, but by two Hazara refugees

from Cisarua who were then able to find refugee volunteers in Jakarta willing to help. Despite these challenges, the capital city does offer benefits to refugee-led organizations, as there are more Indonesians, foreigners, and civil society groups who are sympathetic to refugee issues and willing to help. For instance, HELP was able to more easily find Indonesian and international volunteers and establish a localized base for fundraising than organizations in Cisarua. Hence, the larger and more cosmopolitan urban environment of Jakarta may represent a favorable location for the mobilization of support for more refugee-led initiatives in the future.

CONCLUSION

Through a detailed case study of a refugee community in Indonesia, this paper demonstrates how urban refugees living in a developing host country can overcome gaps in service provision through self-organization and self-reliance. In Cisarua, an unassuming urban town in West Java, the Hazara refugee community has led a movement to independently provide education to those in their community who would otherwise go without. Over the last four years, members of the community have independently initiated five refugee-led education centers that serve hundreds of children and adults. All the centers loosely operate on the same model – they are led by refugee volunteers but rely on financial assistance from individuals and groups outside the community. In addition to benefitting the pupils directly, the centers also serve to empower and build the capacity of refugee volunteers and can be seen to benefit the broader refugee community by providing much-needed places for socialization and community activities. With the acceptance that they will be living in Indonesia for some years due to shifting geopolitical contexts and the knowledge that external support is not forthcoming, refugees in Cisarua are motivated to build self-reliance and provide educational services for the large number of children in their community. Furthermore, the refugee inhabitants of Cisarua have the capability needed to implement these initiatives, with the independence and freedom to self-organize and the presence of well-educated refugee leaders with valuable experience and expertise to offer. Yet, without the strong networks within the Hazara refugee community that existed and continue to exist in Cisarua, it is less likely that their motivation and capability would have come together to produce action. The strong social capital observed in Cisarua – a product of refugees living in close proximity and sharing a common language, culture, and history – provided the lynchpin for the emergence and expansion of the refugee-led learning centers in Cisarua.

This study complements the emerging literature (Calhoun, 2010; Kobia & Cranfield 2009; Koizumi & Hoffstaedter, 2015; Lyytinen & Kullenberg, 2013; McConnachie, 2014) on urban refugees and refugee self-organization by not only providing a detailed case study of a new geographic area and community, but also by tracing the history of the community's self-organization efforts, investigating the forms and functions that refugee-led initiatives may take, and analyzing the factors that explain the emergence and proliferation of such initiatives in specific contexts. In doing so, it highlights the agency and resilience that refugees exercise in the context of protracted transit in developing host countries where they face a lack of formal rights and of access to services and livelihoods. These findings imply that refugees can be viewed as agents

of change and serve to highlight the potential that refugee-led organizations hold for improving the lives of refugees the world over. The implications of refugee-led organizations will be of interest not only to scholars but also to practitioners and policymakers concerned with effecting change on forced migration issues. As one of the first studies to explore in-depth how refugees in a certain locale in Indonesia are adapting to a new political context that has emerged since 2013, this paper provides a basis for future scholarship on the contemporary situation of refugees in Indonesia. Its importance is further enhanced by the fact that the political context mentioned above – in which Indonesia has become a location of protracted transit for refugees, whereas it once was a staging post – looks to be here to stay.

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Making Refugees (Dis)Appear: Identifying Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Thailand and Malaysia[1]

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Thailand and Malaysia together host hundreds of thousands of refugees and asylum seekers even while neither of the two countries has signed international refugee conventions and there exist little or no formal national asylum frameworks for distinguishing refugees and asylum seekers from other undocumented migrants. Scholars who have explored this situation and the precarious condition of refugees and asylum seekers have yet to question how refugees and asylum seekers are identified in light of this legal ambiguity. This paper follows the cases of registration exercises along the Thai-Myanmar border and mobile registration in Kuala Lumpur until around 2013 in order to explore the mechanisms and technologies employed by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in cooperation with non-governmental organizations for registering and identifying refugees from Myanmar. It argues that both the registration and non-registration of refugees and asylum seekers can be understood in terms of competing rationalities of the various actors involved, their incongruent programs, and uneven technologies that serve to make refugees both appear and disappear, that is, to actively construct and assert knowledge and information concerning the existence of refugees, or to conceal, deny, if not altogether dispense of the presence of refugees.

Keywords: Governmentality; Malaysia; Refugee; Refugee Status Determination; Thailand

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INTRODUCTION

Many Southeast Asian countries have long been producing, receiving, and serving as transit points for forced migrants without the benefit of national asylum frameworks. Between 1975 and 1995, some three million refugees and asylum seekers fled Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam in what came to be known as the Indochinese refugee crisis. Since the early 1980s, various ethnic minorities from Myanmar have also been fleeing to its neighboring countries. At the height of the influx of forced migrants from Myanmar, Malaysia was host to more than 270,000 so-called persons of concern[2] to the United Nations High Commissioner

1 This paper is based on a PhD dissertation entitled *Constructing the Refugee Category: Sovereignty, Ambiguity, and Governmentality*, submitted to the International Christian University in Tokyo, Japan, in 2016. It uses data gathered from interviews with UNHCR staff, non-governmental organizations, refugees, and refugee community leaders in Bangkok and Mae Sot in Thailand in 2013, and in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in 2010 and 2013.

2 This includes refugees, persons living in refugee-like situations, asylum seekers, stateless persons,

for Refugees (UNHCR) in 2014, while The Border Consortium (TBC) recorded more than 153,000 refugees and asylum seekers living in the nine camps along the Thai-Myanmar border in 2006 (The Border Consortium, 2007). Despite the large presence of refugees and asylum seekers, neither Thailand nor Malaysia has signed the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees nor its 1967 Protocol, and there exists no formal national asylum frameworks for distinguishing refugees and asylum seekers from other undocumented migrants. That these refugees and asylum seekers live precarious lives has not gone unnoticed (Amnesty International, 2010; Human Rights Watch [HRW], 2012; International Federation for Human Rights & Suara Rakyat Malaysia, 2008; Jesuit Refugee Services, 2012; United States Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, 2006).

Scholars have explored this situation and characterized the condition of refugees and asylum seekers as one occupying "an indeterminate space, an unsettled socio-legal location" (Nah, 2007, p. 56) in which the operation of borders remains unclear. Others have commented on how governmental responses towards refugees and asylum seekers serve to perform and reify states and borders (Hedman, 2008). Such literature, however, has yet to specifically question how refugees are identified when no national asylum framework exists in the first place. Roger Zetter's (1991) influential article considers how the refugee label is formed, transformed, and politicized in the case of Greek-Cypriot refugees. His analysis, however, focuses on the labeling of refugees in contexts where formal legal frameworks exist and where refugee norms are institutionalized. Crisp's (1999) working paper entitled "Who Has Counted the Refugees?" is highly informative and suggests various factors involved in registering displaced persons and in collecting statistics concerning these populations. He finds, for instance, that logistical problems matter in the decision whether or not to individually register refugees, that states for various reasons may try to inflate or deflate refugee figures, or that at times registration is resisted by refugees themselves, state actors, or even the UNHCR's operational partners. The situation in Southeast Asia since the 1980s is absent from Crisp's (1999) account, and he does not attempt to relate his findings to a more generalized understanding of the state, international organizations (IOs), and other actors involved in the regimes of governing forced migration.

This paper aims to fill these gaps by exploring efforts to register and thereby identify refugees and asylum seekers in cases where formal national asylum frameworks are absent. Why does it matter how refugees are identified? First, it matters from the perspective of the rights of forced migrants. Registration as an asylum seeker serves as the starting point for gaining recognition as a refugee and all the rights that accrue to it under international law. Second, it matters for understanding the process of norm creation and of constructing the refugee category. How refugees are identified in the absence of national asylum frameworks could reveal the strategies employed by the various actors involved, the effectiveness of those strategies, and the possibilities for strengthening and internalizing refugee norms in host countries. Since, by definition, the refugee category exists in relation to states and the international system of nation-states (Haddad, 2008), practices that contribute to creating it promise to reveal insights into the exercise and practice of state sovereignty and international

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and other uncategorized groups described simply as "others of concern to the UNHCR" (UNHCR, 2015).

politics, and of state sovereignty within international politics. Third, and related to this, it matters for revealing the complex dynamics between the state, the UNHCR, non-government organizations (NGOs), and forced migrants.

This paper focuses on the second and third reasons and aims to shed more light on the dynamics between Southeast Asian states, the UNHCR, NGOs, and forced migrants. Southeast Asian states have been accused of rejecting refugee norms as Eurocentric and unsuited to the Southeast Asian context (Davies, 2008), or of being preoccupied with sovereignty and economic development at the expense of protecting human rights (McConnachie, 2014). On the other hand, the UNHCR is seen as one of the "gold standards" in the so-called international humanitarian order (Barnett, 2010), an epistemic resource and norm entrepreneur, albeit with its own pathologies (Barnett & Finnemore, 2004), whose practice of conducting refugee status determination (RSD) procedures is inherently problematic (Kagan, 2006). Caught between Southeast Asian state authorities, the UNHCR, and the NGOs that may seek to provide material and non-material resources, care, and/or compassion are those forced migrants seen as either hapless victims or survivors with agency.

Do the governments of Southeast Asian states simply reject refugee norms as Eurocentric and irrelevant or are they merely illiberal, corrupt, and erratic in responding to refugees and asylum seekers? How does an influential IO like the UNHCR promote and implement refugee norms in relation to such states? What role do NGOs and forced migrants then play? To answer these questions, this paper takes the case of two of the largest refugee populations in Southeast Asia, namely, those in peninsular Malaysia and on the border between Thailand and Myanmar, and it examines the mechanisms for registering those populations until around 2013. The two cases serve an interesting contrast between largely urban-based refugees, in the case of Malaysia, and a protracted refugee situation in a non-urban area, in the case of the Thailand's border.

APPROACHING THE ABSENCE OF NATIONAL LAWS

In the absence of national asylum laws, it is necessary to use a framework that elaborates on the ways that power is articulated through other mechanisms and practices. Here, governmentality, a way of examining collective activities and organized practices as deliberate schemes through which subjects are governed or rendered governable (Dean, 1999), is instructive. Lippert (2005) distinguishes between three concepts deployed when using a governmentality approach: technologies, programs, and rationalities. Technologies are "the material and intellectual means, devices, and mechanisms that make different forms of rule possible" (Lippert, 2005, p. 4). Programs are those "imagined projects, designs or schemes for organizing and administering social conduct" (Lippert, 2005, p. 4) within which various technologies are assembled. Rationalities include, but are not limited to, moralities, ideologies, "notions of the appropriate forms, objects, and limits of politics, and the right distribution of governing duties within secular, religious, military, and familial sectors" (Lippert, 2005, p. 4). Organized practices that tend to be taken for granted therefore become clues to understanding larger programs of governance borne of particular mentalities or rationalities of rule.

Rationalities, moreover, differ greatly depending on what Michel Foucault (2007) refers to as mechanisms of power. Mechanisms of power may be pastoral, sovereign, governmental, or disciplinary, each of which is underpinned by different rationalities that constitute their subjects in different ways. The sovereign conceives of its subjects in territorial terms, the governmental in terms of populations, the pastoral in terms of the life or soul of the individual, and the disciplinary in terms of the bodies of individuals. These rationalities tend to utilize particular mechanisms of government toward different ends. Sovereign rationality is mainly expressed through the imposition of laws and the use of force, while governmental rationality deploys forms of knowledge and expertise. The sovereign, moreover, is the ultimate source of authority; it is characteristic for its capacity to determine states of exception, as Carl Schmitt (1985, p. 1) has famously written. Governmentality, on the other hand, is articulated precisely in terms of governmentalization of the state, that is to say the elaboration of bureaucratic regulations and procedures separate from the person and the activity of the sovereign (Foucault, 2007). In addition, governmentality, seeks "to structure the field of possible action, to act on our own or others' capacities for action" (Dean, 1999, p. 14). In other words, it presumes that the individual who constitutes the population is a locus of freedom. Thus, governmentality studies are often seen as a preoccupation for understanding liberal governments where sovereign power is understood to have receded. As Dean (1999, p. 147) argues, however, liberalism itself contains elements of despotism for those who are deemed not to possess the attributes required of the autonomous and responsible subject, and that, conversely, it is also possible to think of governmentality under authoritarian forms of rule.

This paper attempts to take up this challenge, to consider governmentality under less or non-liberal forms of rule, such as in Thailand and Malaysia, and to examine the ways in which sovereign rationalities are articulated as they overlap, compete, or perhaps collaborate with other forms or modes of government in the context of identifying refugees and asylum seekers. In the same vein, the paper argues that the UNHCR can be understood as being motivated by governmental rationalities, and NGOs, including aid agencies and refugee community organizations (RCOs), as being guided by pastoral rationalities. IOs and NGOs are therefore understood as sources of governance imbued with radically different rationalities underpinning their respective programs and mechanisms for implementing these programs.

At this point, we may already begin to address some of the questions raised in the previous section. For one, it can be argued that disregard for human rights and refugee norms does not have to come at the expense of a preoccupation with sovereignty, nor does a more liberal form of rule guarantee the protection of human rights, as the surge of xenophobic, populist politics in Western democracies in recent years has shown. Liberal governmentality contains elements of despotism, as mentioned earlier, while sovereign power's exceptionalist tendencies to assert itself can exist alongside particular forms of governmental rule. Meanwhile, IOs exhibiting 'pathologies' is not surprising given governmentality's tendency to homogenize populations, which runs counter to the underlying principle of refugee norms that must take into consideration the multiple and complex circumstances refugees and asylum seekers face.

On this premise, this paper argues that efforts to register and/or cease registration of refugees and asylum seekers can be understood as an outcome of competing

rationalities of the various actors involved, their incongruent programs, and uneven technologies that seek to make refugees both appear and disappear. The Thai and Malaysian states, the UNHCR, and its partner NGOs are each animated by sovereign, governmental, or pastoral rationalities that shape the various programs for governing refugees, constituted as either populations or communities through different mechanisms. These programs then serve to make refugees appear, in the sense of being made visible on official records or in the public discourse, or disappear, in the double sense of having them leave the territory through resettlement and (sometimes forcible) repatriation, or of limiting the numbers of those visible on official records. The identification of refugees thus serves as a rich site for understanding multiple forms of governmental rationalities. The use of the terms appear/disappear rather than visible/invisible is deliberate as the latter suggests that something that exists is hidden from plain sight. Instead, appearance/disappearance indicate the need, on the one hand, to actively construct and assert knowledge and information concerning the existence of refugees or, on the other hand, conceal, deny, if not altogether dispense of the presence of refugees within a given territory.

REGISTRATION IN MALAYSIA

Malaysia has seen its fair share of refugees and asylum seekers: from Filipino Muslims fleeing into Sabah in the 1970s, to the so-called Vietnamese 'boat people' and Cambodian Cham Muslims during what came to be known as the Indochinese refugee crisis, to Thai Muslims who had fled into Kedah and Perak in the 1980s, to Bosnian Muslims in the early 1990s, and Indochinese as well as Acehnese fleeing throughout the 1990s and into the mid-2000s. Temporary residence permits were granted to some of these groups on the basis of exemption from provisions of the Immigration Act granted at the discretion of the Minister of Home Affairs. In most cases, these permits were granted on humanitarian grounds, serving as "humanitarian exceptions", which simultaneously appropriate for the Malaysian state a noble role while distancing itself from the language of rights and any obligation it invokes (Lego, 2012). Apart from these, there are no national asylum frameworks that provide protection for refugees as understood in international law.

Except during the Indochinese refugee crisis, under the 1989 Comprehensive Plan of Action (CPA), registration and RSD conducted by the UNHCR in Malaysia has been ad hoc and irregular, at least until the early 2000s. Alice Nah (2007) argues that an incident involving high profile arrests of over 400 Acehnese asylum seekers outside the UNHCR compound in Kuala Lumpur in 2003 was a highly symbolic event that reinforced an internal change in the UNHCR. Since that event, and under a new representative, Volker Turk, UNHCR-Malaysia was

> restructured and repositioned, increasing its capacity to fulfill its mandate of protection and assistance. From having previously adopted a relatively meek and submissive role, it began to engage proactively with the Malaysian government, with civil society groups, and with the media on the issue of protection. Operationally, it increased and amended its registration and RSD processes. It also defended the identity documents it produced by intervening when registered persons of concern were arrested. It made appeals for their release, ar-

> ranged for legal representation in court, organized medical services for those in detention, and processed more cases for resettlement. It lobbied for change through every step of the law enforcement system. (Nah, 2007, p. 49)

It also happens that these enhanced operations occurred, as Nah (2007) pointed out, at the same time that the Malaysian government had begun to more strictly regulate immigration flows in response to the growing number of undocumented migrant workers arriving since the 1980s, when the Malaysian economy experienced rapid economic growth. The Malaysian government enacted harsher immigration laws allowing for fines of up to 10,000 MYR (roughly 2,000 USD), imprisonment of up to five years, corporal punishment, frequent immigration crackdowns, and broader police powers.

It could thus be argued the UNHCR was prompted to elaborate and enhance its mechanisms to more effectively implement its programs for managing refugee populations in response to the state's actions to assert its sovereignty and enforce its borders by criminalizing those who may be seeking asylum. The arrests were particularly galling for the UNHCR because not only were they an excessive show of sovereignty that disregards international refugee norms, they also very blatantly preempted the possibility that the UNHCR could register and then determine whether those asylum seekers could be recognized as refugees. In other words, those actions prevented the possibility of making those 400 arrested Acehnese appear as either refugees or not.

Mobile Registration

One innovation, developed by the UNHCR as early as 2004 as part of its efforts to enhance its mechanisms, was the implementation of mobile registration exercises in which UNHCR staff would head to refugee settlements in jungle areas to seek out and register refugees and asylum seekers. Informants narrated how the UNHCR would typically inform RCOs when and where these mobile registration exercises would be held. In the beginning, these were held in so-called jungle settlements, but later on, they were also held in urban areas, often in church facilities. The UNHCR then headed to these locations, where they gathered and recorded information from those with asylum claims. One of the first groups to be registered under these mobile registration exercises was a group of 600 refugees from Aceh seeking refuge in western Malaysia's Penang Island (UNHCR Malaysia, 2004). Since then, several other mobile registration exercises were implemented on an ad hoc basis. Between 2008 and 2010, with funding from the Australian government, the UNHCR in Malaysia was able to register some 75,000 asylum seekers (Crisp, Obi, & Umlas, 2012).

The Chin Refugee Committee (CRC), one of many RCOs, considered these mobile registration exercises to be extremely beneficial. The CRC Annual Report narrates how, prior to mobile registration exercises, refugees and asylum seekers had been seeking refuge in jungles. There, they would set up tents or small huts in groups of 100 to 300 people in each camp for fear of raids conducted by the *Ikatan Relawan Rakyat* (RELA)[3], immigration officers, and police forces in urban areas. Since the mass mobile

3 RELA (People's Volunteer Corps) is a civilian volunteer group established in 1972 under the Emergency (Essential Powers) Act of 1964 to "help maintain security in the country and the well-being of its people" (GoM1964 Emergency [Essential Powers] Act, cited in Hedman, 2008, p. 375). It has been criticized for

registration exercises conducted by the UNHCR in early 2009, many of those refugees left their settlements in the jungles and moved to urban areas where they felt safer. Nevertheless, some jungle camps still remained in some areas, such as the Cameron Highlands in Pahang State, as of 2012 (Chin Refugee Committee, 2012, p. 31).

A blog by the RCO known as the Voice of Chin Refugees (VOCR), announcing one such mobile registration, offers revealing insights on the nature of these exercises (see Figure 1). For one, the UNHCR's mobile registration exercises gather detailed and regularized information, such as dates of birth, parents' names, date of arrival in Malaysia (point #3), and only one particular place of registration where they must remain with the knowledge of local community leaders (point #4). Asylum applicants must be able to provide documented asylum application statements, otherwise the UNHCR will not accept their application (point #5). The guidelines also reveal that asylum seekers are not guaranteed protection from arrest by virtue of having lodged an asylum application. Asylum applicants are warned that Malaysian state authorities may disregard refugee norms by arresting and detaining them. The UNHCR promises not to provide protection in the event of an arrest if the asylum applicant arrested had failed to follow certain guidelines (point #1). Finally, restrictions apply to asylum for extended family members (points #6 & 7).

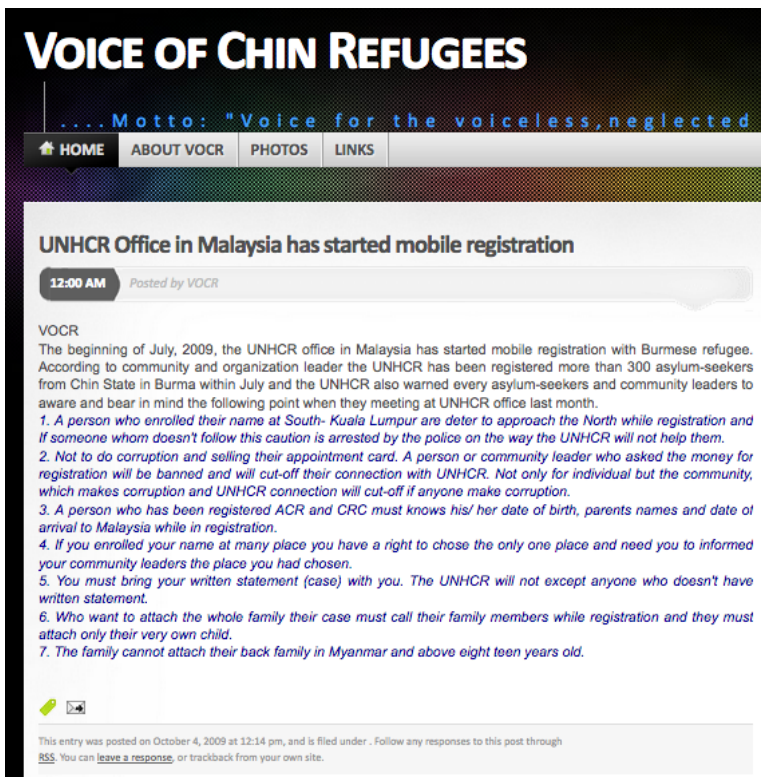

Figure 1. Announcement of mobile registration exercise to be conducted by the UNHCR. (screenshot by the author; VOCR Blog, 2018).

harsh immigration crackdowns, arbitrary detention, and other abuses.

This announcement by an RCO interestingly reveals the UNHCR's governmental compulsion to rationalize information on refugee populations, which in turn underpins a program for fixing these populations to particular places. This can be problematic given that mobility is often a survival strategy for refugees and documentation is not readily available due to their circumstances. RCOs serve as the conduit for the distribution of information as well as for monitoring any changes in the data gathered from refugees and asylum seekers. The extent of the UNHCR's governmental power is revealed in its capacity to withhold protection and assistance depending on an asylum seeker's ability to conform to their guidelines. Dependence on RCOs, however, could also pose some problems. According to some NGO workers, the UNHCR learns about the presence and location of asylum seekers in the country through RCOs. Not all refugee groups, however, are as close-knit and organized as others. For example, most of my informants from various NGOs were unanimous that the Rohingya are the least organized among the refugees originating from Myanmar. Nor did Sri Lankans and Afghans have the kind of community organizations that many of the ethnic groups from Myanmar had at the time of the interviews[4].

Regular Registration and Refugee Status Determination (RSD)

Asylum seekers who know about the UNHCR and who have the means make the trip to the UNHCR's Kuala Lumpur office, even though they run the risk of being stopped by the authorities along the way. There, they register with the UNHCR and the long process of applying for refugee status ensues. Elsewhere, I have documented the different steps that asylum seekers had to go through as of 2010 (Lego, 2012). Upon registering with the UNHCR office in Kuala Lumpur, asylum seekers typically received a so-called 'under consideration' (UC) card as proof that they were persons of concern. Then, they would undergo RSD interviews in which a UNHCR officer carefully examines an asylum seeker's account, cross checks this with information about the country of origin, and makes an assessment of the credibility of the asylum claim. Getting an appointment for RSD took anywhere between three months to a year, except in cases of extreme vulnerability, such as in the case of an unaccompanied minor, for whom an appointment could be made within a month. RSD interviews lasted between half a day and more than a day. Asylum applicants may have to return several times for an RSD interview. The entire process from registration to receiving the results of RSD took anywhere from one to three years.

Difficulties at each stage are rife. Crisp (2010) warns that the difficulties posed by proximity and access to registration could lead to a situation of "survival of the fittest", whereby refugees who have the most contact with the UNHCR are not the most vulnerable but are the most articulate, entrepreneurial, and able. Nah (2007) wrote that documents issued earlier by the UNHCR did not appear "official" enough, and authorities tended to disregard them. Laminated, tamper proof cards issued towards the end of 2004 appeared more "professional", and were more readily accepted by authorities. She adds that it was possible that by that time authorities may have gained greater awareness of the UNHCR and its function, leading to the better recognition

4 Most of the interviews took place in August 2013.

of the new identification-card format (Nah, 2007, p. 54). While UNHCR documentation has started to afford some protection, even those who became 'recognized' refugees are still vulnerable to arrests, detention, corporal punishment, and deportation. As Malaysia's national Human Rights Commission (*Suruhanjaya Hak Asasi Manusia* or SUHAKAM) admitted in its 2009 Annual Report, "refugees/asylum seekers are vulnerable to arrest even if they possess a UNHCR card" (SUHAKAM, 2009, p. 35). At that point, NGOs had become crucial as they alert the UNHCR, alert the human rights commission, and send protest letters. As an informant working for an NGO that provides health services for refugees and asylum seekers explained, they also submit names of possible persons of concern to the UNHCR when they encounter them during visits to prisons and detention centers.

The UNHCR's governmental rationality is evident in its response to incidences of the state's disregard for refugee norms and in its efforts to make refugee populations more legible. The UNHCR's mobile registration exercises, in particular, served to make visible those refugees who would otherwise remain invisible in jungle settlements and urban dwellings. In addition, the UNHCR actively asserted the presence of refugees by protesting and seeking release from arbitrary arrest and detention. Also evident is the Malaysian state authorities' sovereign compulsion to assert its prerogatives in its periodic raids, indiscriminate arrests, and detentions, which the UNHCR may or may not be able to negotiate. Finally, the pastoral function of NGOs and RCOs to know and watch over community members was also revealed when the UNHCR sought to alert communities for mobile registration exercises, in the ways that RCO leaders disseminated information about these exercises, and in the various ways that NGOs assisted in alerting the UNHCR to persons of concern in detention.

REGISTRATION ON THE THAI-MYANMAR BORDER

Many of the areas along the border between Thailand and Burma/Myanmar had been under the control of various ethnic nationalities such as the Karen, Karenni, Kachin, Chin, Shan, and Mon. A consortium of NGOs on the border known as The Border Consortium (TBC) has been and continues to be the main provider of food, aid, and other forms of material assistance to refugees and asylum seekers. TBC's annual reports contain a history of the populations on the border. In 1984, a major offensive by the Burmese military sent some 10,000 Karen to the Thai side of the border that have since been unable to return. As Burmese military offensives continued, the population on the border grew to some 80,000 by 1994, 115,000 in 1997, and more than 120,000 as of June 2013 (The Border Consortium, 2017). According to TBC, the first camps were established in 1984, when Thailand's Ministry of Interior (MOI) invited a number of Bangkok-based Christian agencies (who were working with Indochinese refugees at that time) to provide emergency assistance. These agencies eventually formed a consortium and became the main provider of food and shelter. From the outset, the consortium worked with the Karen Refugee Committee (KRC) – a RCO established by Karen authorities to oversee the refugee population – and with a Karen Committee for Coordination of Services to Displaced Persons in Thailand (CCSDPT) subcommittee to coordinate response with other NGOs. The MOI likewise set policy and administered assistance programs through this subcommittee.

As the Burmese Army overran other parts of the border, the consortium extended assistance to Karenni refugees who had fled into Mae Hong Son Province through the Karenni Refugee Committee (KnRC) in 1989 and to Mon refugees in Kanchanaburi Province through the Mon National Relief Committee (MNRC) in 1990. The MOI gave formal approval for NGOs to work with these new populations in May 1991, and new guidelines were set up which confirmed previous arrangements that limited assistance to food, clothing, and medicine, and restricted agency staff to the minimum necessary. Three NGOs provided assistance under this agreement: TBC provided around 95% of food and non-food items; the Catholic Office for Emergency Relief and Refugees (COERR) provided most of the balance; and Medicines Sans Frontiers (MSF) operated as the main health agency (The Border Consortium, 2012, p. 122). As refugee numbers grew, so did the number of agencies providing services. In May 1994, the MOI extended the NGOs mandate to include sanitation and education services. New procedures were established and NGOs were required to submit formal program proposals, apply for staff border passes, and submit quarterly reports via the provincial authorities (The Border Consortium, 2012, p. 122).

It was not until the first half of 1998 that the Thai government gave the UNHCR an operational role on the border. After an exchange of letters of agreement in July 1998, the UNHCR was able to establish fully operational offices in the provinces of Mae Hong Son, Mae Sot, and Kanchanaburi by early 1999 (The Border Consortium, 2012, pp. 122-123). According to a field officer at the UNHCR in Mae Sot, the working arrangement between the UNHCR and the Royal Thai Government stated that (1) the UNHCR would be allowed access to the border, (2) their mandate would be international protection and not the provision of basic needs (a service already being met by NGOs on the border), and finally that (3) the UNHCR must seek "durable solutions" (UNHCR field officer, Meo Sot, 25 July 2013). Durable solutions, in UNHCR parlance, refers to three options: repatriation to the country of origin, resettlement in a third country, or integration into the host country. The Thai government officially denies the possibility of local integration.

Universal Registration (1999-2005)

The first universal registration of the border population was undertaken in 1999. A mechanism called the Provincial Admissions Boards (PABs) was set up to determine the status of new asylum seekers. According to a UNHCR field officer in Mae Sot, the PAB is composed of six to seven members, including the governor of each province, the defense chief, the communication chiefs, military chiefs, representatives from the prime minister's office, representatives from immigration, and the UNHCR. When it was first established, the PAB screened asylum seekers based on whether or not they left Burma/Myanmar "fleeing fighting and the consequences of civil war" (HRW, 2012, p. 20) – a broader definition than that contained in the 1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees.[5] The 1999 exercise allowed for the registration of more than

5 Article 1 of the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees defines refugees as those who are unwilling or unable to avail of the protection of their country owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion (United Nations General Assembly, 1951/1967). It is a definition that emphasizes individualized

100,000 persons but was discontinued at the end of 2001, and for three years there was a "no new arrivals" policy, or in other words, no registration of newly arriving asylum seekers took place (The Border Consortium, 2005, p. 2). Registration was resumed in 2004, when another border-wide registration exercise was implemented. This time, the criteria for assessing asylum claims were extended to include those fleeing Burma/Myanmar for "political reasons" (HRW, 2012, p. 20). This resulted in the re-registration of 101,992 persons from 1999 and the identification of 34,061 others who had arrived since that time, a total of 136,053 persons (The Border Consortium, 2011, p. 6). All refugees officially registered during the 2004/2005 re-registration process, and those subsequently approved by PABs have been eligible for resettlement to third countries. As of the end of 2012, TBC had recorded 80,637 departures to third countries, 78% of which have been resettled in the US (The Border Consortium, 2012, p. 12). Universal registration by the PABs has ceased since November 2005. When asked why, the UNHCR field officer opined that Thai officials believed registration could lead to resettlement in a developed third country. They feared this would serve as a strong pull factor for asylum seekers to cross over the border and to enter the camps. He believed the Thai government was deeply frustrated that a large population of refugees and asylum seekers continued to remain on the border despite the implementation of registration and resettlement. An officer at one of the NGOs on the border agreed that the prospect of resettlement did draw asylum seekers into camps and that this influenced Thai authorities to suspend registration activities (NGO officer, Mae Sot, 24 July 2013).

Non-Universal Registration (2005–2013)

While a "no new arrivals" policy has been in place since 2005, the so-called PAB fast-track has been operational for family members of those who were previously resettled, in accordance with the principle of family reunification, and for extremely vulnerable cases, such as those suffering from a serious medical condition (UNHCR field officer, Mae Sot, 25 July 2013). As of July 2013, some 1,100 individuals had been registered under fast-track PAB, and most of them had been resettled (UNHCR IT officer, Bangkok, 16 July 2013). Registration of new births to prevent statelessness was made possible under Thailand's Civil Registration Act published in February 2008 and implemented in September 2011. UNHCR conducts birth registration activities in the various camps every month and then forwards this information along with copies of delivery certificates to Thai district authorities for them to issue birth certificates. These birth certificates serve as official records of birth but do not confer nationality to the newborn. According to an officer at TBC, since December 2012,

> "Thai authorities are not allowing providing birth certificates to babies born to parents who are both unregistered. So, you can only get a birth certificate in the camps now if one of the parents is registered with the UNHCR or the Ministry of Interior" (TBC officer, 24 July 2013).

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persecution rather than more generalized causes.

In lieu of any universal mechanism for registering new arrivals, refugee camp committees have taken it upon themselves to implement some type of screening procedure. The officer at TBC refers to it as "indigenous registration", or "self-registration" of refugees:

> Each refugee camp committee establishes a new arrivals committee. . . . They are responsible for deciding, for collecting information, and deciding whether they have the right to asylum. . . . Most people are accepted, there's very few people who are screened out, and they would be for very clear reasons, and so this new arrivals committee would then provide lists every month to TBC, say, here was the original list, these are the people we screened in, these are the people we screened out, and we would then use that to update our population statistics, demographics, and everything, but also that feeds into the whole process of ordering food for the next month so, a hundred twenty new mouths to feed. . . . UNHCR is not keeping statistics on unregistered persons. So, anyone who's entered the camp in the last eight years, about 60,000 people, are not on anyone's books. The only books that they're on are the refugee camp committee's books and our own books. (TBC officer, 24 July 2013)

It appears that the UNHCR does not approve of this self-registration conducted by refugees. The UNHCR field officer described this as illegal, saying that only the UNHCR and/or state authorities have the right to decide who gets asylum. The UNHCR seems to be of the impression that self-registration by the refugees lends itself to abuse by members of the so-called 'new arrivals committee' who prioritize friends and relatives over others who seek access to camps.

Finally, to monitor changes in the population, UNHCR and other authorities conduct spot checks. One officer at the UNHCR in Bangkok described how he came up with a list of persons estimated to be over 100 years old, which UNHCR field offices then used to verify whether these persons were still living (UNHCR officer, Bangkok, 16 July 2013). HRW also describes other headcount or screening activities conducted by the *Tahan Phran* (paramilitary force in charge of security outside the camps) and the *Or Sor* (volunteer corps in charge of internal camp security) under the direction of the camp commander known as the *Palad* (a deputy of the district chief under the MOI). HRW reports one case in 2008 in which the Tahan Phran entered Ban Mae Surin and Mae Ra Ma Luang camps, conducted brief interviews, and a few days later, deported dozens of refugees and asylum seekers to Ei Tu Hta camp for internally displaced persons (IDP) in Burma/Myanmar (HRW, 2012, p. 27). Other incidences of deportation have also been documented.

Thus, from the outset, provision of aid and assistance on the border was made possible through the services of NGOs, making use of preexisting RCOs, but under clear guidelines and agreements set by the Thai state authorities. These guidelines reveal that the Thai government's program for managing refugees has always been short-term, the nature of the welcome afforded to those displaced persons temporary, barring the possibility for local integration. It is also quite revealing how the UNHCR's presence has been limited – a move that arguably dissociates those persons on the border from the refugee label, thereby casting much ambiguity over whether those populations can be 'legitimately' considered refugees or displaced persons. The

UNHCR's governmental compulsion is once again evident in subsequent efforts to implement universal registration. Although the UNHCR has adhered to the Thai government's orders suspending universal registration, it continues to deploy alternative mechanisms, such as family reunification and consideration of vulnerable cases. Meanwhile, indigenous registration has emerged among RCOs as an effort to maintain care for their communities even as various state authorities conduct random deportations. The interplay between the pastoral, governmental, and sovereign rationalities of NGOs and RCOs, the UNHCR, and Thai state authorities are thus evident. NGOs and RCOs are the primary providers of care and compassion through personal and community networks represented by RCOs. The UNHCR has sought time and again to rationalize knowledge of refugee populations but has been restricted by Thai authorities, who prefer to minimize the number of refugees on record, whether through suspending registration, or conducting spot checks and deportations.

The situation of various ethnic groups and communities on the Thai-Burma/Myanmar border over the last three decades is vastly complex. It has as much to do with the varied histories of these communities as it does with the actions and inactions of a multiplicity of state and non-state actors. However, insofar as we can problematize the identification of refugees by looking at the continuities and discontinuities of border registration and the ambiguous figures that emerge, we can at least conclude that the state and international governmental organizations (in this case the UNHCR) are engaged in competing programs to either diminish the presence of refugees or to make it evident and legible. On the one hand, the UNHCR's governmental compulsion to gather and systematize information on refugee populations is evident, while, on the other hand, the Thai government's sovereign rationality to reify its borders, control the presence of refugees and asylum seekers, and obscure, if not minimize, their numbers can also be inferred. The UNHCR's minimal involvement with refugees from Burma/Myanmar compared to other NGOs and its discontinued and minimal registration activities all reflect the preponderance of the Thai state authorities' heightened sovereign sensibilities. Meanwhile, non-government NGOs and RCOs, motivated by pastoral rationalities, serve to fill a gaping need for social services, even giving birth to indigenous registration activities that allow these organizations to better care for refugees and asylum seekers living in the camps.

CONCLUSION: MAKING REFUGEES (DIS)APPEAR

This paper has shown that in the case of both Thailand and Malaysia, the UNHCR has sought to make refugees 'appear' in the sense of making them visible, their presence known, and knowledge of them legible by gathering detailed and standardized information and by elaborating on registration and status determination procedures, even as they are restricted in their reach and resources. RCOs, with their intimate knowledge of their community members, serve to complement and fill some of these limitations faced by the UNHCR. All this is made possible by the acquiescence of the state, even as the different arms of the executive variously suspend, permit, or undermine the UNHCR's programs. What appears as erratic state behavior on the part of the Thai government in allowing and then disallowing universal registration,

can be understood in terms of an evolving ambivalence towards refugee norms and a fundamental concern for reducing the presence of refugees whether by resettlement or repatriation, whichever is more effective. The Malaysian government's apparently contradictory behavior of allowing the UNHCR to conduct RSD procedures while simultaneously enforcing immigration crackdowns can be attributed to the Malaysian state authorities' sovereign compulsion to assert its prerogatives over its migrant population without necessarily acknowledging the presence of refugees. The UNHCR is at times a vital figure able to make important interventions in an otherwise inhospitable immigration program, while, at other times, it is severely constrained and forced to discontinue its programs for registering newly arriving refugees. Asserting the presence of refugees is therefore an outcome of a struggle among competing rationalities and programs of the various stakeholders. It is a struggle that is largely tilted in favor of the state but nonetheless a struggle in which other actors are sometimes able to achieve certain objectives.

To address the questions I raised in the introduction, it is not simply that Thailand and Malaysia reject refugee norms as Eurocentric because they have, on several occasions, permitted the observance of these norms, particularly when it contributed to the objective of reducing the number of refugees on their territory. State responses to refugees can neither be reduced to a factor of illiberality nor to a factor of dysfunction. The state is inherently motivated by sovereign rationality, and it is precisely in allowing and deciding on states of exception within the ambiguous socio-legal space inhabited by refugees and asylum seekers that Thailand and Malaysia unambiguously assert this sovereignty.[6] The UNHCR, motivated by governmental rationality, first and foremost seeks to create and assert knowledge about refugees and asylum seekers. But since the 'refugee' construct is inextricably linked to territory and territorialized states, the UNHCR cannot implement any program without taking into consideration the states' sovereign reach. NGOs and RCOs embedded in communities and networks are sometimes able to transcend territories but are nonetheless subjected to the state's use of force.

Understanding the interplay between the state, the UNHCR, and NGOs in terms of varied rationalities serves to highlight: (1) the extent to which states, when focused on asserting their sovereign power, can disregard refugee norms, even as they interact and accommodate IOs and rights groups; (2) the importance of the UNHCR's continued functioning; and (3) the crucial role that NGOs play in supporting forced migrants given the UNHCR's tendency to homogenize refugee populations by virtue of its nature as a governmentalizing agent.[7] It is hoped that the UNHCR, NGOs, and RCOs are continuously empowered, and that the state is socialized not just into adopting refugee norms but also away from an excessive focus on its sovereign sensibilities. Unfortunately, this does not seem likely under the current political climate.

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6 For a discussion on how Giorgio Agamben's notion of states of exception can be conceived in terms of a 'humanitarian exception' employed by states to simultaneously adopt a noble role while distancing itself from the language of human rights, see Lego (2012).

7 Elsewhere, I have discussed in more detail the UNHCR's relationship with the Malaysian state (Lego, 2012).

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Is Makassar a 'Sanctuary City'? Migration Governance in Indonesia After the 'Local Turn'

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Taking into consideration three levels of government (regional, national, and sub-national) that potentially offer protection to refugees, this paper is concerned with changes initiated by the 2016 Presidential Regulation on Handling Foreign Refugees. This regulation has delegated more responsibility for managing refugees to the sub-national levels of administration in Indonesia, which, like other nations in the Southeast Asia, has been reluctant to provide protection for refugees or any options for their integration into society. The reason for this is that, despite many vociferous demands in favor of a 'regional solution' in the aftermath of the 2015 Andaman Sea Crisis, most attempts ended up in abeyance. Following suit with the so-called 'local turn' in migration studies, which increased attention to the local dimensions of refugee protection due to the receding capacities in the major actors involved both in global refugee protection and international migration management, we direct attention to the sub-national level of refugee management in Indonesia using as a case study the city of Makassar, which has hitherto enjoyed a fairly positive reputation for welcoming refugees. By examining the current living conditions of asylum seekers and refugees in Makassar and comparing them to other places in Indonesia, we ask whether the concept of 'sanctuary city' is applicable to a non-Western context and, in doing so, hope to enhance current discussions of creating alternative models for refugee protection beyond the national and regional level.

Keywords: Indonesia; Migration Governance; Presidential Regulations; Refugees and Asylum Seekers; Sanctuary Cities

INTRODUCTION

An unprecedented 65.6 million people around the world at the end of 2017 have been forced from their homes by war and conflict, which means that the number of displaced people currently exceeds the number uprooted during World War II. At the end of 2016, there were close to 3.5 million refugees, 2.7 million internally displaced people, and more than 1.5 million stateless people in the Asia-Pacific region (UNHCR, 2017a). In 2016, Southeast Asia hosted a total of 2.8 million persons of concern, including over 483,000 refugees, 68,000 asylum seekers, 462,000 internally displaced people (IDPs), and over 1.4 million stateless people (UNHCR, 2018).[1] Indonesia, the focus of this article, hosted less than

1 These UNHCR statistics include figures for Bangladesh, which is not usually considered part of Southeast Asia.

14,000 asylum seekers and refugees in mid-2018, which is substantially less compared to its neighbours, such as Thailand and Malaysia. The majority of asylum seekers and refugees in Indonesia come from Afghanistan (56%), Somalia (10%), and Myanmar (8%). Southeast Asia has the weakest normative frameworks for refugee protection of any region, apart from the Middle East (Klug, 2013). Most Southeast Asian states simply never felt obliged to sign the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (Refugee Convention) (Davies, 2008).

The countries producing the largest numbers of refugees currently are Afghanistan, South Sudan, Syria, and Myanmar. Against widespread politicized perceptions of a 'refugee crisis' in Europe, the United States, and Australia, the majority of displaced people lack the will and the means to travel long distances, tending to stay relatively close to their home countries. On these grounds, when critical migration scholars speak of the 'global refugee crisis', they usually mean a political crisis of compassion and thus tend to emphasize the lack of collective responsibility and binding commitments for hosting displaced people. In light of the absence of trans-regional and global schemes to deal with the many challenges that displaced people face, the topic of so-called South-to-South hospitality has recently re-entered academic studies and regained attention (Pacitto & Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2013). Spontaneous acts of coping with large inflows have raised expectations and increased the pressure for temporary or permanent integration of refugees and asylum seekers in countries that are usually not among the typically Western resettlement countries.

Particularly during so-called times of extraordinary irregular movements, such as the 2015 Andaman Sea crisis when thousands of Rohingya arrived in insular Southeast Asia by boat, politicians and humanitarian advocates issued calls for 'regional solutions' to address the hardship of forcibly displaced people (Fontaine, 1995). Given the extremely low accession rate to the 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its associated 1967 Protocol[2], the search for 'regional solutions' in Southeast Asia is tied to high hopes for alternative forms of protection that are not as strict as those set out in the Refugee Convention. In the aftermath of the Andaman Sea crisis, the combined efforts of the multilateral fora and mechanisms that were deployed to resolve the situation, including the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime as well as the Bali Declaration on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons, and Related Transnational Crime and its Regional Cooperation Framework, ended up in abeyance, leaving it rather uncertain "whether they have improved the region's preparedness to respond to such events in the future" (Gleeson, 2017, p. 6).

This article seeks to contribute to the debate on regional solutions by taking into consideration also national, and more importantly, sub-national approaches. Since there is no functioning regional mechanism to deal with displaced people in Southeast Asia, and considerable doubt that one might ever materialize, it is necessary to scrutinize the temporary admittance of displaced people into each Southeast Asian host country and the prevalent complementary and alternative forms of

2 Only three out of 11 Southeast Asian states have ratified the 1951 Refugee Convention: Cambodia, the Philippines, and Timor-Leste. It is unlikely that Indonesia will sign and ratify the Convention in the near future.

protection available for them at both national and sub-national levels.[3] For this article, Indonesia was chosen because of its geopolitical significance within the Asia-Pacific region. Like all but three Southeast Asian states, Indonesia is not a signatory to the Refugee Convention and thus not legally obliged to offer protection to refugees (Tan, 2016). Out of the three durable solutions envisioned by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), only two are available for refugees in Indonesia: voluntary repatriation to their countries of origin and, if this is not possible, resettlement to a third country. Local integration is not a legal option so far. However, because of the ongoing influx of new asylum seekers, global resettlement fatigue, and deterrence policies in the region, de facto integration is about to happen in Indonesia and elsewhere in the region.

Makassar has been chosen as a case study for this article because of its functional role in accommodating asylum seekers and refugees. As Indonesia's fifth largest city, Makassar is often referred to as Kota Angin Mamiri (city of breeze) because of its seaside location.[4] Also, due to its long-standing tradition as an important trade hub and host for a large sea-faring and migratory population, Makassar enjoys a reputation as being cosmopolitan and tolerant (Sutherland, 2011). Although Makassar had frequently seen the temporary stay of internally displaced people from different conflict areas within Indonesia, only from 2010 onwards did the city become a hub for foreign asylum seekers and refugees. Not only does Makassar have an immigration detention center (IDC), but it also has a range of community shelters. In 2011, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) started using two hotels for housing asylum seekers and refugees who could not be placed in the IDC (Missbach, 2017a). The number of shelters has grown in recent years, with 18 available in August 2017 for 1,158 asylum seekers and refugees (IOM, 2017). At the end of 2017, 13,840 asylum seekers and refugees were registered with the UNHCR all over Indonesia. Of these, 1,838 were living in Makassar, 564 of whom languished in the IDC and other forms of temporary detention, despite the growing consensus among Indonesian government agencies that immigration detention facilities should no longer be used for housing refugees and asylum seekers for the long term (UNHCR, 2017b).

When measured against Makassar's reputation as a city known for welcoming refugees, current developments – after the issuance of the Presidential Regulation No. 125/2016 that we define here as a watershed moment as it sought to formalise the 'local turn' in Indonesia – represent a dramatic deterioration in hospitality. In this paper we scrutinize the handling of refugees in Makassar under the premise of 'sanctuary cities' – a broad term applied to cities that have policies in place designed to limit cooperation with federal immigration enforcement actions and deportation and instead offer some community-driven forms of hospitality and protection – and ask whether any of the approaches that were developed in the United States and Europe are in Indonesia. Critical readers might think that this application of a concept that was developed in more affluent societies onto a non-Western context is

3 Unlike many other studies dealing with the decentralized politics of Indonesia, we define 'local' here as primarily the urban setting, rather than the province or regency, which is usually considered the main sub-national entity.

4 Makassar is the provincial capital of South Sulawesi, located on the southern part of Sulawesi Island. It is a major port city with a majority Muslim population of around 1,7 million.

epistemologically naive, but to us it is of utmost (political) importance to shed light on how non-Western refugee hosting societies operate, as they are often ignored within the current global scenario.

Whereas several authors have scrutinized the handling of refugees on a national level (Kneebone, 2017; Tan, 2016), we pay attention to sub-national approaches, in part because of the local turn expedited by the Presidential Regulation No. 125/2016. In this article, we argue that whereas the sanctuary city and the way it is practiced elsewhere (outside of Indonesia) depicts an emancipative bottom-up approach, the local turn in Indonesia stands primarily for a top-down approach that seeks to shift responsibility for refugee protection and migration management from the national to the sub-national level without equipping the local stakeholders or offering budgetary concessions. Overall, as our case study will show, the handling of asylum-seekers and refugees remains shaped by rightlessness, restrictions, and reprimand, despite a few nascent initiatives driven by the Makassar municipality and to a lesser extent local communities.

This article is the outcome of collaborative effort between researchers based in Indonesia and Australia, who have conducted interviews over more than a year, individually and as a team, with national and local stakeholders involved in the management of refugees. In 2017, the authors observed three *sosialisasi* (information-sharing) events related to the implementation of Presidential Regulation No. 125/2016 in Jakarta (one national and one provincial) and in Makassar. During several research trips to Makassar, usually for a week at a time, the authors established contact with a number of asylum seekers and refugees in their community shelters and kept in contact with some of them through social media. This article is based on a variety of sources, including formal interviews with authorities and informal conversations with refugees, online communication via social media with selected informants, and Indonesian-language press reports and grey literature. The article is divided into three main parts: First we explain the sanctuary city concept; then, we introduce the Indonesian context with regard to its hosting of asylum seekers and refugees over protracted periods of time and particularly the changes aspired by the issuance of Presidential Regulation No. 125/2016; and finally, we offer a detailed portrayal of Makassar and its local policies vis-à-vis refugees and asylum seekers. The theoretical lessons learnt from the research are fleshed out in a brief conclusion.

THE 'SANCTUARY CITY'

The concept of the sanctuary city has gained significance and popularity worldwide as local communities have welcomed and protected refugees and asylum seekers in defiance of restrictive state policies (Bauder, 2017; Darling, 2010; Hintjens & Pouri, 2014; Nyers, 2010; Squire & Darling, 2013; Villazor, 2010). Its popularity and spread across several geopolitical contexts means that the concept now refers to variety of practices and policies, which differ substantially across different national and local contexts. Bauder (2017) has categorized two contesting forms of the sanctuary city that are worth summarizing here. The first concept derives from the United States context, which advocates non-cooperation with federal immigration authorities and challenges the mainstream discourse of citizenship and belonging, whereas the

second derives from the United Kingdom and is much more focused on the culture of hospitality, engagement, and social inclusion.

Non-Cooperation and 'Local Citizenship'

The sanctuary city concept originated in Berkeley, California, in 1971 to protect US Navy sailors who resisted the Vietnam War. City law prohibited city officials from assisting the implementation of federal law at that time. The concept evolved and inspired subsequent generations to protect undocumented immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers across the US (Bauder, 2017). For example, in San Francisco advocates have interpreted the concept as providing a place where 'local citizenship' (as opposed to national citizenship) is granted to undocumented refugees and asylum seekers. This approach, fostered by local authorities, was characterized by non-cooperation and non-compliance with US federal immigration law, which placed restrictions considered harmful to refugees (Villazor, 2010). From 1987, San Francisco became a 'city of refuge' in response to the US federal government's denial of protection to asylum seekers from El Salvador and Guatemala (Villazor, 2010). Two years later the city passed an ordinance confirming its non-cooperation and non-involvement with federal immigration law, declaring that "no department, agency, commission, officer or employee of the City and County of San Francisco shall use any city funds or resources to assist in the enforcement of federal immigration law" (Villazor, 2010, p. 583). One way of translating this decision into everyday policies was the 'don't ask don't tell' approach, applied by the local authorities and service providers, which discouraged local stakeholders from inquiring about anyone's legal migration status and revealing it to federal officials (Villazor, 2010).

As well as upholding the principle of non-cooperation with federal immigration law and law-enforcement officials with regard to asylum seekers, the sanctuary city concept, as enacted by San Francisco local authorities, contained ideas for challenging the formalistic and normative discourse of citizenship and belonging. In its legalistic sense, citizenship is a concept that came into being with the rise of the nation-state and refers to the "formal or nominal membership in an organized political community" (Bosniak, 2000, p. 456). From this perspective, to be a citizen means to possess the legal status, acknowledged by the state, of being part of a nation. Holding citizenship is connected with the possession of certain rights and duties, but undocumented immigrants not only lack citizenship in their place of residence and, consequently, access to certain basic rights, but also often have very few options to ever legalize their status without enduring punitive consequences for their presence in that place of residence.

Through San Francisco's sanctuary law, undocumented immigrants are eligible for local citizenship. As citizens of the city, they have equal status with local residents in terms of rights, privileges, and obligations (Villazor, 2010). In practice, when dealing with public sectors such as schools and healthcare services, they will not be asked about their immigration status and, if their status is known, it will not be revealed to the federal immigration officers. The only exceptions to the law concern adult immigrants who have committed crimes and felony. The local citizenship law was supported by the issuing of "identification cards to residents regardless of legal

status, the promotion of low-cost banking, and the city's long-standing opposition to immigration raids" (Gavin Newsom, Mayor of San Francisco, quoted in Villazor, 2010, p. 591).

In 2018, the Federation for American Immigration Reform estimated that more than 500 US jurisdictions – both states and municipalities – had adopted sanctuary policies. However, many sanctuary cities now face severe repercussions from the federal government under President Trump and its highly restrictive immigration acts, and they have frequently been threatened with cuts in federal funding. Despite the threats, a number of sanctuary cities, including Berkeley, have reaffirmed their status and commitment as sanctuary cities and promised to protect all residents, regardless of their immigration status, by not supporting, communicating with or submitting to the demands of federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers.

Hospitality, Engagement, and Reframing the Discourse

The sanctuary city model crossed the Atlantic in the early 2000s to the United Kingdom, where the City of Sheffield from 2005 onwards embarked on a popular reconceptualization of the concept in a way that continues its "long tradition of offering a welcome to refugees" (Wainwright, 2003). As the first city to the Gateway Protection Program – a collaborative program between UK national government, UNCHR, local authorities, and national NGOs – Sheffield has been actively involved in enabling the most vulnerable refugees to gain access to services and participation in the wider host community (Darling, 2010). The sanctuary city movement in the UK, generally speaking, has been centered on offering hospitality and protection to asylum seekers and refugees, and making the city a welcoming place for them. In 2009, the city council of Sheffield drew up a manifesto outlining key areas of concern, and 100 supporting organizations signed on.

According to Darling (2010), the local stakeholders in Sheffield based their approach on three main principles, which were translated into various activities. First, they aimed to rally political support by establishing a network of civil society agencies (academia, local communities, organizations, business, refugee and asylum seekers groups), partly to demonstrate the legitimacy of the movement. Second, they sought to apply visual strategies to mark the city as a welcoming city for refugees and asylum seekers, for example, by providing signs to organizations and local communities that declared their support for the sanctuary city movement, by distributing postcards to individuals on how they could support refugees and asylum seekers, and developing infographics that debunked myths about asylum seekers to make people think again. Third, they encouraged active engagement between refugees, asylum seekers, and local residents through various interactions and events, including cultural events such as dancing and concerts, shared meals, and giving honorary awards to citizens in recognition of their endeavors to provide to refugees and asylum seekers.

The main philosophy behind Sheffield's sanctuary city approach was the strategic application of ideas of hospitality and engagement to offer an alternative discourse to the public in Sheffield, which was intended to make local residents proud of their culture of welcoming refugees and asylum seekers but also set out explicit expectations for future benefits from the welcomed refugees in order to create a more vibrant host

community inclusive of all its residents. Sheffield became the UK's benchmark which led to the establishment of the network of about 15 sanctuary cities in the UK, but the outcome of the 2016 referendum in which Britons voted to leave the European Union and the anti-immigration sentiment that fueled it now pose difficult challenges for advocates of the sanctuary city movement.

Before moving on to our Indonesian case study, it is necessary to contrast the two contending perspectives and practices of sanctuary cities to establish a basis for comparison with our case study from Makassar. Generally, the sanctuary city model in the UK appears to be more encompassing than the US model, as it seeks to engage not only local officials, but also civil society organizations, religious groups, and grassroots communities. While the sanctuary city concept in the UK is centered around ideas of generosity and engagement and a struggle for abstract justice grounded in hospitality, the US model is marked by non-cooperation with federal government officials and by the notion of local citizenship, thus envisioning a more "concrete political struggle" (Squire & Darling, 2013). Having replaced the notion of asylum with sanctuary, UK sanctuary city advocates perceive refugees and asylum seekers as guests who deserve a warm welcome, good treatment, and protection, at least for a period of time. Critics of this approach have remarked that rather than providing tangible and legal solutions for marginalized refugees and illegalized asylum seekers, such urban sanctuary initiatives tend to offer only symbolic gestures that actually contribute to the normalization of the precarious situation of refugees and asylum seekers. In contrast, the spirit of sanctuary cities in the US is rooted in much broader debates on the possession of human rights and protection on a permanent basis and is, therefore, more than just a friendly welcome and a diffuse expectation towards refugees and their contributions to the host communities. Non-cooperation with federal government immigration acts and law-enforcement officials and the enactment of the idea of local citizenship signifies equal status and rights for residents and immigrants in a city from the very start rather than in the undetermined future and without the explicit expectations for benefit in return for the friendly welcome.

THE 'LOCAL TURN' OF REFUGEE MANAGEMENT IN INDONESIA

International migration concerns the movement of people across national state boundaries, and, as such, its management, regulation, and supervision are primarily the tasks of national governments. At the global level, the paradigm of migration management "strives for a coordination of states' regulatory (inter)-actions to render international migrations predictable and beneficial for all stakeholders" (Ahouga, 2018, p. 1524). However, this national-centric migration management has been questioned in recent years by analysts of both the macro- and micro-politics of migration, in large part because international migration affects, first and foremost, sub-national governments, which become the actual locus of migration. This view is also reflected in the findings of the UN Joint Migration and Development Initiative (JMDI), which say that "the drivers and impact of migration are often most strongly felt at the local level", but at the same time "local governments have not received the same level of attention as other stakeholders, while their involvement and potential impact on the connections between migration and development is crucial" (JMDI, 2008). The

localness of migration effects is felt more strongly, considering that migrants are rarely, if ever, equally distributed within national borders. In fact, "immigrants may often feel closer and more connected to the city they live in than to the country they have arrived in" (Jørgensen, 2012, p. 244).

The importance of local actors in migration management and integration policy has been indicated by a number of scholars (Caponio & Borkert, 2010; Jørgensen, 2012; Penninx, 2009; Schmidtke, 2014). Although urban anthropologists, geographers, and sociologists have studied urban refugees for at least two decades, inter-governmental and supra-national migration organizations, such as JMDI and IOM, have only recently shifted their attention to local stakeholders and settings. For example, in 2015 IOM convened a Conference on Migrants and Cities, which sought to "bring together ministers, high-level government officials, mayors and other local authorities, the private sector and civil society organizations to discuss the complex dynamics of human mobility at city and local level" (IOM, 2015). This strategic shift, often dubbed the local turn in migration management, is a trend that "seeks to engage new [local] actors in its endeavour to create coordinated strategies and practices regulating international migration" (Ahouga, 2018, p. 1524). The unifying theme of this local turn is the need to recognize the strong effects of migration on local actors and, thus, the important role they can or should play in migration governance.

IOM's Conference on Migrants and Cities in 2015 also marked the institution's key role in pushing for greater inclusion of actors at the sub-national level. IOM claims to provide services "to address the migratory phenomenon from an integral and holistic perspective . . . in order to maximize its benefits and minimize its negative effects" (IOM, 2007, p. 3). As the most prominent proponent of the migration management paradigm, it claims to serve its member states by promoting and implementing "a regulated openness to international migration flow" (Ahouga, 2018, p. 1526). However, in the context of the local turn within global migration management, IOM plays a key role in engaging "local actors in order to further 'diffuse' and legitimise migration management's regulated openness to the local scale through an articulation of different space-times" (Ahouga, 2018, p. 1526).

In Indonesia, which in the three decades before 2000 experienced only the infrequent arrival and passage of asylum seekers and refugees through its territory, the state had only minimal involvement in regulating and providing services to those people. In the absence of any basic legal provision for the treatment of refugees, subsequent Indonesian governments preferred to delegate these tasks to the UNHCR and the IOM. Much of the funding for these organizations and their programs for refugee status determination, resettlement, or repatriation came from the Australian government and other international donors (Hirsch & Doig, 2018). Indonesia perceived its role first and foremost as 'transit country' and was mostly concerned with speedy regular and irregular departures from its shores. Given that Indonesia has become a bottleneck for asylum seekers and refugees in the last five years, as fewer are resettled and very few embark on irregular departures, Indonesia now faces the prolonged presence of these people. Rather than approaching this challenge centrally, at the national level supported by national funds, the current Indonesian government under President Joko Widodo aims to shift the challenge down to the next level of government.

In the context of Indonesia, the local turn has been marked by the issuance of

Presidential Regulation (PR) 125/2016 on the Treatment of Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Indonesia, which is now the main legal instrument governing the treatment of refugees in Indonesia. The PR covers five aspects: search and rescue of refugees; housing them; securing them; supervising them; and funding of related activities (Missbach et al., 2018). Except for search and rescue, which is coordinated by national organizations, the four other aspects contain provisions that clearly reflect a local turn in Indonesian refugee policy. In this context, local governments (*pemerintah daerah*) are given, to a certain extent, both authority and responsibility caring for refugees in their jurisdictions.

This is not to say that local governments had no role in managing refugees and asylum seekers living in their areas before the PR was issued. In fact, the PR can be considered as formalizing practices that were already in place in a more informal way. Local governments *did* make policies that affected the lives of refugees in their areas and they also worked with central government bodies and international migration and refugee organizations before the PR came into force. For example, in Makassar, the local government efforts to support handling asylum seekers and refugees and their accommodation in alternatives to immigration detention has been acknowledged by the central government as a success (Panga, 2016). Makassar was the first city in Indonesia to sign an MoU with IOM. Signed in September 2015, this MoU served as a platform for coordination between the municipal government and IOM to address issues related to refugees and asylum seekers. Through the MoU, the relevant services and work units (*Satuan Kerja Perangkat Daerah*/SKPD) under the Makassar government, such as the local departments of education, healthcare, and social affairs are required to provide basic services to refugees and asylum seekers, supported by IOM funding (Malia, 2016; Syukri, 2015). The Makassar government has even claimed it has produced a blueprint for the management of refugees in Makassar to be used elsewhere in Indonesia (IOM, 2016).

So far, the PR is the most important marker of the local turn in Indonesia's refugee management because it signals a deliberate attempt by policy-makers to turn to local actors and position them at the center of Indonesian refugee governance, supported (but not directed) by national agencies. It assigns formal responsibility to local governments and empowers them to use their resources to carry that responsibility. On the one hand, this shift of responsibility could be seen as empowering local stakeholders and giving them a say in the management of refugees rather than just serving as "a passive setting for the interventions of international organisations and states" (Ahouga, 2018, p. 1524) that often tend to ignore local authorities and local civil society organizations. On the other hand, there is the risk that local stakeholders might get easily overwhelmed by their new tasks and responsibilities. For example, under the PR, local governments, such as the Makassar municipal government, are required to identify suitable accommodation for refugees and provide temporary accommodation while they do so. The PR states that the local government should use its own assets (land, buildings, etc.) to house refugees. The operational and maintenance costs of these assets as they are being used for housing refugees are charged to the central government in a loan scheme. The PR lays out strict criteria for the housing, which must, for example, be close to healthcare services and religious facilities, be within the same municipality as the nearest immigration detention center, and be

reliably secure. As for the provision of basic necessities, such as clean water, food, and clothing, health and sanitary services, and religious amenities, the PR provides for this to be facilitated by international organizations, because funding such requests would be far beyond the means of most local governments. This provision in the PR means, however, that the housing must also meet quality and safety standards set by the international organizations, such as IOM, which tend to be higher than what is considered appropriate for local (Indonesian) tenants. Another consequence of the PR, however, is that when international organizations are no longer offering financial support for refugee-related tasks, local governments are in big trouble.

Under the PR, the local governments now have the authority to use their budget (*Anggaran Pendapatan dan Belanja Daerah*/APBD) for refugee-related program expenses. In a series of PR information-sharing events it was made clear that local governments can use their APBD to cover the costs of transfer and placement of refugees in community housing, of renting temporary accommodation until more permanent shelter is available, and even of funerals. These expenses are to be allocated under unforeseen expenses (*Belanja Tak Terduga*/BTT), and program expenses allocated through services and work units (SKPD) under the governor and mayor/regent. However, spending money on politically unpopular activities, such as providing for refugees, is something many local leaders are unwilling to do, as it runs counter to their political interests and reputation (Missbach et al., 2018).

In sum, the practices, and from 2016 also the legal provisions, of refugee management in Indonesia have certainly taken a local turn. Arguably, the central government and its agencies still have significant authority over the fate of refugees and asylum seekers, but as we have shown, the powers and role given to the local governments are equally critical, if not more so, to their welfare as those of the central government. Against this backdrop, can a local government use this power and serve as a sanctuary for refugees and asylum seekers coming to Indonesia for prolonged periods of time? In order to see what the local turn has meant for asylum seekers and refugees in Indonesia we turn to our case study in Makassar in order to consider whether or not the treatment of refugees and asylum seekers in Makassar resembles either of the sanctuary city approaches outlined above in any way. We have structured our deliberations and reflections on the potential and challenges of such a possible framing loosely around, first, local government involvement in protecting refugees, second, local civil society organizations, and third, local host communities.

OUTSOURCING REFUGEE PROTECTION TO LOCAL ACTORS: THE EXPERIENCE OF MAKASSAR

Generally speaking, until early 2018 Makassar had a reputation for being a rather hospitable city for refugees and asylum seekers ("IOM Puji Toleransi di Makassar", 2016). The main reason for this was the openness and welcoming approach by the municipal government. Not only had the local city government allowed for the establishment of IOM-sponsored community shelters to be used by refugees and asylum seekers who were released from immigration detention centres (IDC), but the city government was also more supportive of allowing some refugee children to attend local schools

(Hafanti, 2018).[5] Makassar is still considered a good model for creating community shelters and alternatives to detention (ATD) (Missbach, 2017a). It has been successful in placing a good number of refugees outside the local, prison-like immigration detention centre, in shelters that meet international quality and safety standards. The PR has formalized this role for local government – a role that is strategic and crucial for the welfare of refugees. It is probably the role that has the greatest impact in current refugee management, as accommodation is tightly connected to the provision of food, water, health care, education, and spiritual/religious services. In this regard, the inclusion of local government in refugee governance under the PR is not incidental, but rather a recognition of the vital role that local government can play.

What makes Makassar most attractive to refugees is, however, the relatively quick transfer from immigration detention centers to community shelters, which were like "paradise" compared to the IDC (IRIN, 2014). Because of its reputation, not only did hundreds of asylum seekers move from other Indonesian cities to Makassar where they surrendered to immigration authorities to be placed briefly in detention or directly in a community shelter (Missbach, 2017a), but detainees in IDCs in other Indonesian cities also staged protests and demanded to be transferred to the Makassar IDCs in anticipation of prompt transfer to community accommodation (Jonker, 2017). The initial hospitality, however, might not suffice to make Makassar resemble a sanctuary city. Makassar's attractiveness for refugees and asylum seekers, who relocated themselves from Jakarta, made the city a victim of its own success. Because of these spontaneous arrivals, local migration authorities eventually demanded that newcomers be stopped (Cipto, 2016). Because fewer asylum seekers have been coming to Indonesia since 2015, the number of newcomers to Makassar started to decrease.

Similar to other Indonesian refugee hubs, Makassar only saw some rudimentary involvement of Indonesian NGOs, such as the faith-based organisation *Dompet Dhuafa* and *Palang Merah Indonesia* (Indonesian Red Cross) which became involved in facilitating some medical services and some recreational activities (Suryono, n.d.). Some local NGOs collaborated with the municipal authorities in providing special services to underage and unaccompanied minors. However, most of this involvement remains rather basic and temporary. There is little long-term engagement or sustainability to be expected any time soon. The specific reasons for this remain unclear. Generally speaking, Indonesian civil society organisations have little interest in refugee matters and only very few have dedicated their attention and resources to helping refugees stranded in Indonesia (Suaka, 2016). The main exception was the arrival of ca. 1,800 Rohingya in Aceh in May 2015, which saw an enormous amount of spontaneous donations (Missbach, 2017b).[6]

Whereas sanctuary cities elsewhere, particularly in the UK, can count on the strong support from local civil society organisations and also volunteers, a lot of the positive developments for refugees in Makassar can be attributed first and foremost

5 In most other refugee hubs, refugees organized their own schools as access to state-funded education proved very difficult. Learning in Indonesian schools helps the refugee children to learn Bahasa Indonesia much faster, which is positive for their local integration.

6 The exemption appeared not least because the Rohingya are a persecuted Muslim minority from Myanmar and their destiny struck a chord with Indonesian Muslims who donated generously to readily available networks and charities.

to the city's mayor, Mohammad Ramdhan 'Danny' Pomanto, renowned for his friendly outreach to asylum seekers and refugees. For example, on his initiative, the local government organized community outreach seminars to inform local inhabitants of Makassar about asylum seekers and refugees (Marzuki, 2016). Asylum seekers and refugees were invited to local carnivals and fairs (Alfian, 2017). The relationship between the mayor and some refugees was particularly close, as he offered, for example, his private residence for an exhibition of paintings by refugees (Saldy, 2016). In return, Mayor Pomanto knew how to play to the gallery by appearing in public with young asylum seekers and refugee children who pronounced their gratitude to him for their positive treatment in Makassar (Warga Imigran Persembahkan Kado, 2017). Last but not least, in January 2016, Pomanto received an award for "the support and collaboration in handling asylum seekers and refugees" from the Indonesian Ministry of Law and Human Rights (Kusuma, 2016). Although there have been some outstanding individuals in the recent local government who, like Mayor Pomanto, have supported the well-being of refugees in Makassar, it is uncertain whether this level of support will be maintained under different mayors in the future. Caring for refugees serves no voter base, so this budget allocation is a politically unpopular decision for any mayor. Moreover, the APBD requires approval from the local legislative body (*Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah*/DPRD), where the politics relating to the city's budget decisions are very contentious. Consequently, it is difficult to expect that any meaningful sum of funding will be set aside to care for refugees.

In the past, it was relatively easy for Makassar to emerge as a success story in refugee management, as it did not require the expenditure of any taxpayers' money. With the announcement by the IOM in March 2018 to decrease its funding for refugees and the limited range of other international funding sources, the PR puts Makassar and the Indonesian government in a difficult position regarding budget allocation. The response from the Makassar government and the Indonesian government will determine whether taking the local turn is, in fact, a viable option. The latest developments in Makassar, however, signal an end to the friendly welcome of refugees and a more restrictive treatment of them. Despite these aspirations to do away with immigration detention for refugees and asylum seekers, the treatment of refugees and asylum seekers in Makassar remains imbued with security and surveillance motives, even in non-custodial accommodation facilities (Missbach, 2017a).

While the PR generally indicates the local turn by empowering actors at sub-national level, in ways consistent with existing practice in Makassar, its implementation still suffers from an absence of operational guidelines, which makes it difficult for the Makassar government to determine the practical steps it must take to fulfil the responsibility mandated by the PR. On the one hand, the Makassar city government had already gained considerable experience in housing refugees prior to the implementation of the PR, which meant that Makassar had no real difficulty in carrying out its responsibility as mandated by PR. On the other hand, as technical and implementation guidance that was to follow the PR's issuance had not been circulated and explained to the city government, local officials were not in a hurry to implement the provisions of PR. In mid-February 2018, about two dozen of immigration officers raided several community shelters in the city of Makassar and arrested

several refugees in an unusual show of force.[7] The reasons for the raids and arrests put forward by local immigration authorities were mostly linked to non-compliance. Inhabitants of the shelters must comply with certain rules and regulations to avoid being put back into the overcrowded prison-like IDC on Makassar's outskirts.[8] These rules range from curfews, the prohibition to drive motorbikes, drink alcohol, or make noise at night. As shaky videos captured during the raid on cell phones show, the young men were taken from their rooms while other inhabitants watched in fright.[9] Unwilling to accept such conduct, shelter inhabitants across the city staged a peaceful protest in front of the local UNHCR office and complained about their arbitrary treatment by local immigration authorities (Freischlad, 2018; Nur, 2018; Padmasari, 2018). Peaceful protests continued until September 2018, but with less press coverage.[10]

At first the local media appeared to be sympathetic to the refugees' cause and pointed to a new head of immigration detention who was testing the boundaries of his authority with that of other authorities involved in refugee matters. In order to push back against their negative portrayal in the media, local immigration authorities held a press conference, in which they blamed refugees for all kinds of moral vices, such as drinking alcohol, having affairs with the spouses of police officers living nearby, and engaging in same-sex activities and paedophilia (Cipto, 2018; Prayudha, 2018).[11] Although it might sound utterly absurd to many readers, in Indonesia such rumors easily fall on fertile ground and create tensions, as a number of anthropologists have demonstrated (Bubandt, 2008; Herriman, 2010, 2015). The local government, which had done much in support of refugees, remained rather silent throughout this tense period, not least because of upcoming local elections that might bring a change in local government. Until these arrests, demonstrations, and anti-refugee smear campaigns, Makassar was a rather friendly place, but those times might be coming to an end sooner than later, not least due to the absent support from the Indonesian central government and the decreasing funding from IOM. Whatever potential Makassar held to become a sanctuary city, might therefore vanish before it ever enfolds properly.

CONCLUSION

In this article, we have shown that over the last years migration management and refugee care in Indonesia has indeed seen a local turn, which means that cities and regencies now play a greater role in accommodating and managing asylum seekers and refugees than in the past, when the central authorities perceived the handling of

7 The authors were first alerted to these raids in phone calls and Facebook postings by several refugees living in some of the shelters.

8 Unfortunately, the rules are often spelled out rather vaguely, leaving plenty of room for immigration authorities to exercise discretion (Missbach, 2017a).

9 One such video went viral on social media, see https://m.youtube.com/watch?feature=youtu.be&v=YakmTzFQeaY.

10 Indonesian filmmaker Andrianus 'Oetjoe' Merdhi captured some of the protests in his recent documentary *Respite*, see http://amerdhi.mengoceh.de/respite-trailer2018/

11 For the full press conference, see https://video.okezone.com/play/2018/02/22/1/109444/waduh-imigran-di-sulsel-kerap-mengganggu-istri-aparat

asylum seekers and refugees their exclusive task. We have argued that this local turn was an essential reaction to the failure of creating a regional protection mechanism that would provide a more concerted way of dealing with incoming asylum seekers within the region based on the existing regional legal frameworks, such as the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration (Gleeson, 2017). Furthermore, we have reasoned that this local turn in Indonesia – although set in motion informally prior to the issuance of the PR – was eventually formalised through the decree. Unwilling to create a comprehensive protection framework for asylum seekers and refugees on the national level and provide the necessary funds to run it, the Indonesian central government has sought to shift the responsibility to sub-national levels, first and foremost regencies and municipalities. Indonesian cities became a locus of sanctuary, but – judged on the criteria for what constitutes the best practice cases for sanctuary cities elsewhere – they fall short of meeting any of those.

There is a fine distinction between the local turn of refugee care and the concept of sanctuary city. While the former has only been emerging in the last decade or so, the latter has been around since at least the 1970s. Local turn is a set of efforts undertaken by international and national actors to include local actors in the management of international migration. The goal of this inclusion is to create better policies and practices in regulating migration, considering that local actors are the ones affected the most by it. As such, it is clear that the local turn lacks normative orientation as to what kinds of 'regulation' it wants to pursue. The concept of sanctuary city, on the other hand, clearly has normative goals, i.e. protection from deportation, hospitality, engagement, and social inclusion. It advocates a certain 'kind' of regulations that aim for a better treatment of migrants.

While both have different goals in mind, it does not necessarily mean that both are mutually exclusive. Empowering local actors in migration governance should prima facie support the establishment of sanctuary cities, if not its pre-requisite. There are, however, aspects of the local turn that may hinder the goals of sanctuary city. The local turn as a phenomenon in migration management and refugee care is usually characterized by a top-down approach, where actors at the international and national level 'ask' sub-national governments to be more proactive in migration governance. This puts sub-national governments as passive recipients of responsibility that spill over from the top. As such, the hierarchical nature of this relationship may remain, hindering meaningful policy initiatives from below. Another aspect of local turn that may contradict sanctuary city is the prominence of local state actors over local non-state actors, particularly the civil society. As the case of UK has shown, civil society activism is the key driver for sanctuary city. Whether the local turn can meaningfully empower civil society as an important local actor for refugee care remains to be seen.

Nowadays, the majority of asylum seekers and refugees is living in Indonesian cities and their surroundings. Initially it was only Jakarta, where the UNHCR has its main office, but later on also other big Indonesian cities – such as Makassar, Medan, and Surabaya – started to attract asylum seekers and refugees. So, it is fair to say that Indonesia's refugee population has predominantly been an urban one. Yet, cities in Indonesia have not displayed the same welcoming reception or the autonomous sanctuary in the same way as what sanctuary cities have been well-known for in the US or in the UK, which remain somewhat consistent despite the growing

anti-immigration sentiment in recent years and the rise of President Donald Trump who is openly hostile towards sanctuary cities. Whereas sanctuary cities elsewhere were primarily an emancipatory act against the discriminating federal migration laws or the hostile state more generally – driven by local activists and progressive local stakeholders – in Indonesia the appointment of cities as responsible units was ordered by the central government. This top-down instruction that saw very little consultation of local stakeholders vis-à-vis the more organically grown bottom-up initiatives, particularly in the UK, thus draw a number of consequences in what cities in Indonesia can actually offer refugees and asylum seekers residing there. For a final conclusion on the consequences of the local turn in migration management and refugee care in Indonesia (as currently implemented through the PR), we need to continue our close observations of the situation and the upcoming developments on the ground in Makassar and elsewhere in Indonesia.

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Women Remembering the Prophet's Birthday: Maulid Celebrations and Religious Emotions Among the Alawiyin Community in Palembang, Indonesia[1]

Claudia Seise

▸ Seise, C. (2018). Women remembering the Prophet's birthday: Maulid celebrations and religious emotions among the Alawiyin community in Palembang, Indonesia. *Austrian Journal of South-East Asian Studies*, *11*(2), 217-230.

In Palembang in South Sumatra, Indonesia, *Maulid* celebrations are considered an important religious event in the lives of many Muslims. Over the past twenty years, there has been an expansion of activities, the driving force behind which has been a young generation of *Alawiyin* in Palembang. *Maulid* celebrations organized by the *Alawiyin* in Palembang are separated along gender lines. In this paper, I show how female-only *Maulid* celebrations enable Muslim women, and especially the *sharifat*, to express their emotions and allow for bodily expressions during the actual *Maulid* event. I will argue that, in women-only celebrations, women express religious emotions which they wish to show but also which are expected from them as the expression of love for the Prophet Muhammad is part of the Islamic understanding internalized by the *Alawiyin*.

Keywords: *Alawiyin*; Islam; *Maulid*; Muslim Women; Religious Emotions

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It is the Islamic month of *Rabi-ul-Awal* – the month of the Prophet Muhammad's birthday. Everywhere in Indonesia Muslims celebrate this important event called *Maulid*. I have been invited to attend several *Maulid* events in Palembang, the capital city of the province of South Sumatra. As I arrive at the first location of *Maulid* celebrations, I can hear simple music and the beating of hand drums. Young women with face veils stand lined up to greet each individual visitor. The space is decorated with colorful curtains and posters with pictures from the two holy cities, Mecca and Medina, and with verses from the Qur'an. The stage is decorated with red and gold, the traditional Palembang colors, and with plants and small flags with the 99 names of Allah. More and more women, young and old, come and sit down in front of the stage. Around one thousand women attend this special celebration.

In the following paper, I focus on the celebrations remembering the Prophet Muhammad's birthday in Indonesia. I closely observe two *Maulid* celebrations held especially for Muslim women who claim descent from the Prophet Muhammad, and who are called *sharifat,* in Palembang, South Sumatra. As a

1 A preliminary version of this article was presented as a conference paper at the 8th EuroSEAS Conference held at the University of Vienna in 2015.

female Muslim researcher, I was granted permission to attend two women-only *Maulid* events by the organizing committee in 2014. In the following, I will provide a short introduction to Islam and the *Alawiyin* group especially in Indonesia, and Islamic teachings and practices in Palembang in particular, before turning to the *Maulid* celebrations. My main argument in this paper is that female-only *Maulid* celebrations enable Muslim women, especially the *sharifat*, to express their religious emotions and allow for bodily expressions during the actual *Maulid* event. Furthermore, I would like to propose that *Maulid* events and specifically female-only *Maulid* celebrations are a means to strengthen *Alawiyin* identity and their interpretation of Islamic practices. However, further research needs to be conducted to support this hypothesis.

ISLAM AND THE *ALAWIYIN* COMMUNITY IN INDONESIA

Indonesia has the largest Muslim population in the world. Around 200 million Muslims form 88% of the country's population. Located between the Indian and Pacific Ocean, the archipelago has been part of important trading routes for centuries, and thus part of translocal networks spanning the Indian Ocean long before the formation of modern nation states (Freitag, 1997; Freitag & Oppen, 2010). This resulted in a vibrant culture that accommodates six major religions, nowadays encompassed by the national ideology of *Pancasila*, which states the belief in "the one and only God" (*Ketuhanan yang Maha Esa*). Indonesia is also home to different local beliefs and syncretic forms of worship. It is known for its religious pluriformity in general and its Islamic pluriformity in particular (Houben, 2015; Seise, 2017). Especially since the *reformasi*, a period of transition after decades of authoritarian rule, this pluriformity has increased.[2] The diversity of Islamic practices in Indonesia ranges from syncretistic forms interwoven with non-Islamic traditions, rituals, and beliefs, to reformist Islam inspired by the Egyptian reform movement and the *Ikhwanul Muslimin*; and from fundamentalist forms of Islam like *Salafi* Wahabism, aiming at purifying Islamic practices from anything not in line with their interpretation, to political Islam in various forms ranging from moderate to radical. Additionally, the Indonesian decentralization reforms resulted in the implementation of *shari'ah* law in Aceh and in Bulukumba, South Sulawesi (Azra, 2013; Barton, 2004; Bruinessen, 2008; Bubalo & Fealy, 2005; Burhani, 2013; Burhanuddin & van Dijk, 2013; Hefner, 2013; Houben, 2015; Lukens-Bull, 2005).

Although often perceived as being located in the Muslim periphery by the rest of the Muslim world (Eickelman & Piscatori, 1990), Indonesia is seen as a center of Islamic knowledge by many Indonesian Muslims (Lukens-Bull, 2005; Seise, 2017; Srimulyani, 2012; Woodward, 2011). Various local Islamic scholars were known beyond Indonesia and especially in the centers of Islam in Mecca and Cairo (Azra, 2004;

2 Different scholars have attempted to give names to the Islamic pluriformity found in Indonesia, among others Geertz (1976), Woodward (1989, 2001), Riddell (2001), Ali (2007), van Bruinessen (1999, 2008, 2009). The categories range from *santri* versus *abangan* to traditionalist vs. modernist, political versus cultural Muslim, fundamentalist versus liberal, great tradition versus little tradition, and local versus global Islam (Ali, 2007). Other categories include normative and mystically inclined Islam (Woodward, 1989). Woodward (2001) proposed that there exist five basic Islamic orientations: indigenized Islam, traditionalism, modernism, Islamism, and neo-modernism. Riddell (2001) suggests almost the same categories: modernism traditionalism, radical Islamism, and neo-modernism. Neo-modernism, similar to neo-traditionalist inclinations, aims to bridge traditionalism and modernism.

Laffan, 2011). It is in different places around Indonesia, especially in the thousands of local boarding schools, or *pesantren*, and informal study circles as well as in the family where Islamic knowledge is transmitted and learned (Bruinessen, 1994, 2008; Hadar, 1999; Lukens-Bull, 2005; Madjid, 1985; Srimulyani, 2012).

Palembang is the fourth largest city in Indonesia. It is located in the province of South Sumatra. Historically, we can find three different teachings of Islam in Palembang. The first were the *Shattariyyah* teachings, which were similar to those found in Java, which combined Javanese mysticism with Islam. The second consisted of the *Sammaniyah tarekat* and what Azra (2004) describes as neo-Sufism which, compared to the *Shattariyyah* teachings from Java, placed a stronger emphasis on the observance of *shari'ah*. These teachings, which included the thoughts of scholars like Al-Palembani (probably died 1789)[3], and teachings that were largely based on the perspectives of al-Junayd (died 909/10), al-Qushayri (986-1072), and al-Ghazali (1058-1111), were sponsored by the Palembang Sultanate in the 18th century (Azra, 2004). They basically replaced the *Shattariyyah* teachings.

The third type of teachings of Islam found in Palembang are the teachings and practices brought by Hadhrami migrants, who claim to be descendant of the Prophet Muhammad, referred to as *Alawiyin*. They came to Palembang before the founding of the Indonesian nation in 1945, mainly in the 19th and early 20th century. However, migration on a large scale started already in the middle of the 18th century. With the founding of the nation-states, Hadhrami migration to Southeast Asia came to a halt (Slama, 2005). Until today, the Islamic practices and teachings observed by the *Alawiyin* are very similar to the Islamic practices found in the Hadhramaut in contemporary Yemen. These include annual Islamic festivities like the *Maulid* or *ziarah* (Alatas, 2008, 2014, 2016), as well as personal Islamic practices like *dzikir* and social practices like, for example, the strict separation of men and women and a gendered division of the public and domestic domains (Slama, 2012). It is important to note that historically, Hadhrami migrants played an "important role in the growth of the tradition of Islamic learning in the region", and "encouraged the Sultans of Palembang to pay special attention to religious matters" (Azra, 2004, p. 112).

This influence of the Hadhrami migrants on the Sultans of Palembang resulted in the acceptance and spread of the *shari'ah* based neo-Sufism, which is very similar to the Islamic understanding adhered to by Hadhrami migrants and which, until today, is taught, learned, and practiced by the majority of Palembang Muslims. This is why the Islamic tradition of the *Alawiyin*, the descendants of former migrants, plays the second major role in established Islamic practices in the city of Palembang. For the *Alawiyin*, the religious and societal life in the Hadhramaut is regarded as religiously exemplary (Slama, 2005), and for the majority of the traditional, non-*Alawiyin* Muslim community in Palembang (excluding different reformist movements, like the *Irsyadis*), the *Alawiyin* are considered as religious examples. *Ustad* Taufiq Hasnuri, for example, a non-*Alawiyin* scholar in Palembang, always refers to his *Alawiyin* teachers

3 Historically, Palembang is home to several well-known so-called *Jawi* scholars. The most famous of them is probably Shaykh Abdul Samad Al-Palembani, written as Al-Falembani in Arabic sources. His most famous work in the archipelago is probably his *Hidayah al-Salikin*, which was written in *Jawi* Malay (Malay with Arabic letters), and is an explanation and commentary of Imam Al-Ghazali's *Bidayah Al-Hidayah*. His *Hidayah al-Salikin* is still read in different study circles around Palembang.

and praises their good character, piety, but also their lineage as descendants of the Prophet Muhammad. *Ustad* Kailani, a lecturer from the Islamic State University in Palembang who passed away in 2017, expressed similar praise.

Besides the adoption of *Shafi'i fiqh*, one of the four legal schools of Islamic law, different Islamic rituals and practices are adopted from the tradition of the *Alawiyin* in Palembang and incorporated into everyday life. One example is the celebration of *Maulid*, the Prophet's birthday, which has been extended, consisting of festivities lasting over 40 days. Another important ritual introduced by the *Alawiyin* community is the *Ziarah Kubro*. While *Maulid* is a celebration in which men and women take part, although at separate events, *Ziarah Kubro* is traditionally for men only. *Ziarah Kubro* has been initiated by the *Alawiyin* community, but now involves different layers of society. It includes the visitation of the tombs of mostly local *ulama* who descended from the Prophet Muhammad, but also of non-*Alawiyin ulama*, and the Palembang royal family. *Ziarah Kubro*, like the *Maulid*, is an outreach *dakwah* (Islamic proselytization) activity by the *Alawiyin* community toward the general non-*Alawiyin* Palembang Muslim community. At the same time, it is an activity that unites Palembang Muslims through their religious heritage, the *ulama*, that shaped the Islamic teachings and interpretations found in Palembang. In addition, it is a strengthening and reinforcement of cultural practices from Hadhramaut, where *ziarah* and *hawl* (also *haul*, i.e. annual visits to the tombs and remembrance of the death of *ulama* and so-called saints) celebrations form established cultural and religious practices.

CELEBRATIONS OF THE PROPHET'S BIRTHDAY

Celebrating the Prophet Muhammad's birthday is a significant Islamic annual ritual in Muslim countries all over the world. Starting around the 13th century, the collective performance of the *Maulid* celebration has been widely practiced in Sunni Islamic countries. One of the main characteristics of this festival is the communal reading and singing of pious literature in both prose and verse. This literature is called *Maulid* and is the source of the festival's name. On a theological level, *Maulid* celebrations have been subject to harsh debate throughout the centuries. Until today, Muslim scholars debate whether celebrating the Prophet's birthday is permitted or not and whether it is an impermissible innovation that Muslims should refrain from. However, most mainstream Sunni scholars consider it to be a good innovation, also called *bid'ah hasana* (Gori, 2010). With regards to this tension, Holmes Katz (2008) remarks how one given ritual can be construed both as 'folk religion' and as following correct or 'orthodox' Islam by different groups of Muslim scholars and their followers. It thus reflects the different interpretations of Islamic orthodoxy as well as accepted Islamic practices. This discourse can also be found among the different factions of Islamic thought in Indonesia where *Maulid* is both vigorously defended as well as condemned as an unlawful innovation (*bid'ah say'iah*). One group that opposes the celebration of *Maulid* is the reformist organisation *Al-Irsyad* (*Jam'iyyah al-Islah wa al-Irshad al Arabiyyah*, or the Arabic Organisation for Reform and Guidance, founded in 1914), whose founders and members are Hadhrami Arabs who do not trace their genealogies to the Prophet Muhammad. They are not referred to as *Alawiyin* and criticize the *Alawiyin* for their traditional religious practices (Slama, 2005). A whole body of contemporary popular literature has developed around

this topic in Indonesia and regularly fills the pages of different Islamic magazines. In the case discussed below, the *Maulid* celebration is considered to be a good innovation and, at the same time, belongs unquestionably to the Islamic orthodoxy and orthopraxy of the majority of the Muslim population in Palembang.

Different places throughout the Muslim world celebrate the Prophet's birthday differently, often incorporating local culture(s) and traditions and special needs of the practitioners. A study by Holmes Katz (2008) of *Maulid* performances by women in Sanaa, Yemen, reveals that women have special demands in their expression during the celebrations. An interesting account of the incorporation of local traditions in a *Maulid* is also given in Hamdani's (2012) article about the celebration of *Maulid* in Cirebon, West Java, where *slametan* (ritual feast) and *sekaten* (traditional festival) form important parts of the celebration, similar to the official *Maulid* celebrations held by the *Kraton* – the Sultan's palace – in Yogyakarta. Sila (2015) provides another detailed account of local *Maulid* celebrations in South Sulawesi and links them to the spiritual inclination of the local *Alawin* community to *tasawwuf* (sufism) and argues that they celebrate *Maulid* to obtain union with Allah. According to Sila (2015), the celebration of *Maulid* in South Sulawesi can be traced back to the historical figure of Sayyid Jalaluddin al-'Aidid from Hadhramaut, whose descendants still live in Cikoang and Ujung Pandang in South Sulawesi and Jakarta. The link to *tasawwuf* could also be observed in the celebration of *Maulid* in Palembang, especially among people belonging to the *Ba' Alawi tarekat*.

The most widespread, and according to van Bruinessen (1998) "the most popular text throughout the archipelago, second only to the Qur'an itself" (p. 1), is the *Maulid* text known as *Barzanji*. It is read not only in celebrations of the Prophet Muhammad's birthday on the 12th of the Islamic month *Rabiul Awal*, but it is also used for other important occasions throughout the Islamic year as well as life cycle ceremonies. There are, however, numerous other *Maulid* texts, some more popular than others, including the *Syaraful Anam* (written by Syihabuddin Ahmad al-Hariri), *Ad-Dibai* (written by Abdurrahman ad-Diba'i), *Al-Azabi* (written by Mohammad al-'Azabi), and *Simthud Durar* (written by Habib Ali bin Muhammad al-Habshi). All of these texts can be seen as united by their shared description of the prodigies that are connected to events before and immediately after the birth of the Prophet Muhammad. In addition, they recount certain episodes from the Prophet's biography, for example the miraculous night flight from Mecca to Jerusalem and the ascent to heaven known as *Isra Miraj*. Other indispensable elements are the praises to the Prophet in the form of so called *sholawat*. In addition, Gori (2010) argues that *Maulid* texts convey a "very refined theological message" (p. 52), which is the assertion that the light of the Prophet Muhammad was created by Allah before the entire universe was created. After the creation of the world, the light of the Prophet Muhammad passed through several generations of different Prophets until it was finally manifested in the Prophet Muhammad himself.

CELEBRATING *MAULID* IN PALEMBANG

Traditionally, the center of the *Maulid* celebrations has been the *Mesjid Agung*, the main mosque in the administrative and economic center of Palembang. Celebrations of *Maulid* among the *Alawiyin* have existed side by side with the centralized celebration in the mosque. However, for over 20 years, *Maulid* celebrations have been held at

various locations, mosques, and private homes over a period of 40 days[4]. The driving force behind this extension of festivities is the young generation of *Alawiyi*n living in Palembang through their organization *Majelis Maulid Arba'in*. Translocal connections with their ancestor's homeland in Yemen play a crucial role in the valorization of *Maulid*. The *Majlis Maulid Arba'in* organizes the *Maulid* celebrations for both men and women. Women usually gather in the morning before noon, while men celebrate in the evenings. Celebrations are strictly divided according to gender lines, and as I will explain in the following, this imposed separation is the only way for many women, especially the *sharifat*, to partake and express their religious emotions during these celebrations. As a hypothesis, I also suggest that celebrations serve as a tool to safeguard traditional *Alawiyin* identity.

In Palembang, the community of Alawiyin claim to be 39th or 40th generation descendants of the Prophet Muhammad via their paternal lineage and consider themselves as belonging to the *ahlul-bait*, or the family of the Prophet Muhammad. For the 'Arab community' in Palembang, which is how they are referred to by the local population, the month of the Prophet's birthday is a time of reverence, remembrance, and intense community activity. For them, apart from being a religious and spiritual ritual, celebrating *Maulid* bears the meaning of their special relationship to the Prophet Muhammad and his family. Commemorating *Maulid* is a way to express their love and longing for the Prophet as well as a way to strengthen the spirit of their Islamic practice. It is likewise a time for the community to come together and to enjoy the festive atmosphere. However, these celebrations are also used to express *Alawiyin* identity.

When I asked *Habib* Mahdi why *Alawiyin* in Palembang celebrated the *Maulid* for 40 consecutive days while traditionally it is celebrated on the Prophet's birthday only, his first explanation was that the number 40 has a special significance in Islam:

> In Islam the number 40, as some Muslims have understood it, can be considered a sacred number (*angka kermat*). And there exist many signs from the Prophet that the number 40 has indeed a special meaning. For example, one *Hadith* explains the stages through which a fetus develops in the mother's womb. It is in steps of 40 days. In addition, there are several *Hadith* that explain that any good deed that is done consecutively for 40 days will become a part of that person (*akan meresap ke dalam dirinya*). This inspired our young people and their teachers to conduct the 40 days of *Maulid*. . . . Most of the attendees of the nightly *Maulid* celebrations are young people, usually around one thousand of them. So, with the 40 days of *Maulid* celebrations, listening to the life story of the Prophet Muhammad again and again, we hope that the Prophet will become the idol, the model example (*Uswatun Hasanah*) to our young people. . . . Our goal is packaged in the form of these celebrations, so that it is more appealing.

Habib Mahdi continued to explain that what I translate as 'goal packaging' is actually something taught by the *auliyah* (the friends of Allah) and earlier Islamic scholars. By packaging one's goal in an interesting event, *Habib* Mahdi argues, it is easier to attract the young generation. While religious seminars, discussions, or study circles

4 According to local sources, it was *Habib* Umar bin Ahmad Syahab who instructed his student *Habib* Muhammad Rafiq Al-Kaff to start conducting the 40 day *Maulid* celebrations in the year 1995. Interestingly, the 40 day *Maulid* celebration has spread to other parts of Indonesia as well.

are less frequented, well-packaged *dakwah* activities reach not only the younger generation but most lay Muslims in Indonesia.

WOMEN CELEBRATING *MAULID*

Throughout the centuries, *Maulid* celebrations have always attracted women to participate. Because of the traditionally strict gender separation in many Muslim majority countries, Muslim women used to celebrate *Maulid* amongst themselves, often in domestic ceremonies. In Syria, for example, the observance of a women's *Maulid* can be traced back to the 15th century (Holmes Katz, 2008). *Maulid* celebrations, Holmes Katz (2008) argues, "sidestepped issues of ritual purity and mosque access [and this] provided a religiously meaningful framework for women's sociability" (p. 468). Apart from issues of ritual purity, I argue, that women-only celebrations open up the possibility for a less restricted freedom of movement in terms of covering the *aurat*[5] as well as bodily expressions that would usually be considered inappropriate in mixed gender celebrations in an Islamic environment. Therefore, the importance of a religious space of their own incorporates the need for spiritual, emotional, and physical expressions within an environment that exists within the boundaries of *shari'ah* compliance and established traditions. I argue that, similar to how Saba Mahmood (2012, p. xv) describes pious subjects and the relationship between outward bodily acts (including rituals, liturgies, and worship) and inward belief (state of the soul), the women who attended the female-only *Maulid* celebrations in Palembang could express the state of their soul and their emotions because the outward prerequisites of being screened from any male attention enabled them to express that state through bodily actions.

> In Palembang. The taxi follows a long muddy road. It has rained, and part of the lane is flooded. To my right and left the rainwater has formed small lakes. The taxi driver grumbles that this place is where the *jin* dispose of their children. This is a common expression in Palembang for a place that we might describe as being somewhat at the end of civilization. At the end of the lane is an archway bearing the phrase '*Rubath Al Muhibbien*'. This is the entrance to an Islamic boarding school (*pesantren*) founded by a local *Alawiyin ulama* with the name *Habib* Umar bin Abdul Aziz. This is the first location for this year's celebration of the Prophet Muhammad's birthday among the *Alawiyin* community. It is the 15th of January 2014, the 13th day of the Islamic month of *Rabiul Awal* and one day after the actual birthday. Today marks the *Maulid* celebration reserved especially for women. No men are allowed. It was the day before that men flocked to the *pesantren* to celebrate their Prophet's birthday. While women were allowed, their celebrations were confined to a separate building.
>
> Simple music and the beating of hand drums can already be heard. Outside of the actual location of the celebration is the only place where some men can be seen, directing visitors and cars. Closer to the location young women with face veils stand lined up to greet each individual visitor. . . . Most of them wear

5 *Aurat* is the part of the women's body that has to be covered according to Islamic teachings. This is usually everything except face and hands. According to the *Hanafi* school of law, feet are also excluded. The covering of the face with a veil or *niqab* is subject to debate across the different schools of law and thought.

> a black dress with a colorful headscarf. I, instead, wear a long beige dress and a light rosé colored headscarf. One of my male informants, a lecturer at the local university who is closely affiliated with the *Alawiyin* community, has told me that it is proper to wear white during the *Maulid* celebration.[6]
>
> The atmosphere is rather informal and women are still chatting with their neighbors and distributing snacks among the children. But suddenly, all women rise to their feet, raising their hands in a prayer pose, some still holding the small recitation book, some holding a little child. It is the climax of the celebration. Praises to the Prophet Muhammad (*sholawat*) as well as prayers are recited for about five minutes. Some women sway right and left, some raise their hands above their head, while others close their eyes and sway back and forth. Whereas some women were still talking earlier, in these moments full concentration is given to the text, as every moment is cherished. Some women have tears running down their cheeks. It is a very special moment, the love for the Prophet Muhammad flowing into the unseen, and also touching my heart.

I argue that these moments were a time of controlled ecstasy during which women were able to express their religious emotions, their love for the Prophet, or simply their sympathy for the musical rhythms of the ceremony without the worry that they would displease Allah by opening their *aurat* in front of men outside of their family, or with physical movements that are otherwise frowned upon in the public sphere. Only due to the historically cultivated practice of gender separation, which is still widely practiced among the *Alawiyin* community in Palembang, did the female attendees feel comfortable to express their inward state and emotions through bodily expressions. *Ibu*[7] Sara, an attendee at the *Maulid,* confirmed: "I feel very comfortable here at the *Maulid*. I can move freely. Only women are here. That is why I feel comfortable to dance a little bit (*Karena itu saya enak joget-joget sedikit.*)". Another woman, *Ibu* Maja, told me that: "Here at the *Maulid* are only women. I don't have to feel ashamed (*malu*) to express my true feelings". She further explained that she is not used to attend events where men and women gather together. "In our tradition we don't mix (*tidak campur*)", she added. When I asked her why, *Ibu* Maja explained that Allah does not like us to mix with non-relative men. In addition, I could observe that several women who had arrived at the *Maulid* celebrations with their faces covered removed their *niqab* after they felt safe that no man could see them.

The peak of the *Maulid*, which was marked by the standing up (*qiyyam*) of the attendees in honor of the Prophet's birth, was at the same time the ceremony's closing point. After the singing of the *Maulid*, the female students of the *pesantren* performed a short play telling the story of Asma, the daughter of the Prophet's companion Abu Bakr. A woman next to me explained that the story of Asma was supposed to remind the women that even in difficult times one should always turn to Allah. Before the meal was served an *Ustadzah*[8] talked about the importance of the *Maulid* celebrations and their significance for a person's spiritual growth.

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6 It seems that my informant was not aware of the fact that it is only men who wear white during the celebration, and that women traditionally wear black, following the example of the Prophet's daughter Fatima.

7 The Indonesian term *Ibu* (literally mother), is used to honorably address elderly women.

8 *Ustadzah* is the female form of *Ustad* and stands for a person considered an Islamic teacher or scholar.

The second *Maulid* celebration I attended was held in a huge private home in the center of Palembang owned by an *Alawiyin* family. The building reflected the wealth of its residents. The sequence of events was similar to the first celebration except that the play was omitted. The women whom I met during this event were the same as at the first location. Three elderly women were reading the *Surah Yasin*, the part of the Qur'an that is considered to be its heart and that is traditionally read in Indonesia at different life cycle ceremonies, on Thursday nights, and at other important events. It is supposed to bring special blessings (*barokah*) to the attendees as well as to the event. During this *Maulid*, I could observe an additional ritual that was not practiced during the previous *Maulid* celebration. During the *qiyyam* (standing up), several young women distributed perfume and small fragrant cut flowers to the visitors. Upon my inquiry, a fellow visitor, *Ibu* Tini, explained that the *qiyyam* is the peak of the Maulid and at the same time is the deepest expression of love for the Prophet Muhammad. Further, because the Prophet Muhammad is known to have particularly liked fragrant perfumes, it is good *adab* (good etiquette) to apply perfume while reading *sholawat* and performing *doa*.

RELIGIOUS EMOTIONS, *HAYA,* AND EXPRESSIONS OF *ALAWIYIN* IDENTITY

Religious emotions and the bodily expressions connected to them played an important part in the *sharifat*'s celebration of the *Maulid* in Palembang. In their book *The Sociology of Religious Emotion*, Riis and Woodhead (2010) argue that scriptural and theological traditions include religious emotions in the central objectives of religious life. This implies that religious emotions belong to a believer's religious reality. Moreover, they argue, that "neither the Bible nor the Qur'an – nor the Hebrew scriptures – draws the typically modern contrast between reason and emotion, or subordinates the latter to the former" (p. 3). Riis and Woodhead (2010, p. 2) speak of the Qur'an as an

> emotionally self-aware and self-reflective source [that] repeatedly insists on the importance of feeling, and contains intra-textual prompts on the emotions that it is intended to inspire. 'Believers', it says, 'are those who, when God is mentioned, feel a tremor in their hearts, and when they hear His signs rehearsed, find their faith strengthened, and put (all) their trust in their Lord' (see Qur'an 8: 2).

Religious emotions such as those described above, like love for the Prophet Muhammad, and the bodily expressions connected to it, such as tears and closed eyes while swaying back and forth, belong to the religious reality, tradition, and teachings of the Muslim women who attend the *Maulid* celebrations in Palembang.

In further reference to Riis and Woodhead (2010), the love for the Prophet Muhammad that was expressed during the *Maulid* celebrations described above in the form of ecstatic praying (*doa*), tears, heartfelt praising of the Prophet (*sholawat*), and the use of fragrance can be linked to the Islamic principle expressed in the Islamic teachings about loving the Prophet. It is said that a Muslim should love the Prophet Muhammad more than his or her father, mother, or children and even more than

him- or herself; this love brings a believer closer to Allah.[9] Therefore, the different emotions that were expressed and felt by the women during the *Maulid* celebrations were just as personal as they were expected from them by the emotional regime inherent in the Islamic teachings they have internalized.

I further argue that the need for a women-only environment to be able to express these religious emotions reflects the deeply inculcated sense of piety (*taqwa*) and value of modesty/shyness (*haya*) among the women present at the *Maulid* celebration. Women like *Ibu* Sara or *Ibu* Maja, who have grown up in the tradition of the *Alawiyin* community and who consider the strict segregation of men and women (which in Indonesia traditionally is not practiced to such an extent) as belonging to their special status and identity as descendents of the Prophet Muhammad, would arguably behave much more reservedly and with much more *haya* in a mixed gender gathering. More likely, I assume many of them would not even attend such a gathering. Therefore, to hold a *Maulid* especially for women enables these *sharifat* to act without the feelings and embodiment of *haya* and piety expected of them in public spaces or at mixed gatherings. For example, I noticed that on the occasion when I and my husband visited an *Alawiyin* home, the women of the house would not join us for tea and snacks. Rather, they would hand the tea and snacks to their husbands through a curtain. It was the husband who then entertained us as guests. This again illustrates the strict understanding of *haya* that is expected of the *sharifat*.

The women at the Palembang *Maulid* acted out the religious norms and values which they have come to internalize. This is somehow different from what Saba Mahmood (2012) discussed in her study on the *Politics of Piety* about how *haya* is acted out and embodied by the subjects in her study in order to cultivate and display a more pious self. The women studied by Mahmood chose to actively learn how to embody religious norms and especially *haya* in order to become more pious Muslims. The *sharifat* at the *Maulid* gatherings in Palembang, however, chose to attend a female-only event in order to avoid having to embody the *haya* expected from them by the *Alawiyin* interpretation of Islam. In a mixed male and female gathering they would be obliged to embody the *haya.* Attending a female-only *Maulid* celebration therefore meant that they were able to protect their piety while still expressing their religious emotions through bodily expressions. They did not feel obliged to conform to the strict *haya* expected of them in mixed gender gatherings. Therefore, unlike the women in Mahmood's study who learned how to embody *haya*, the *sharifat* in Palembang chose the female-only *Maulid* event in order to avoid having to conform to the expression of *haya* expected of them. Furthermore, I argue that to hold female-only *Maulid* celebrations is in itself a sign of the strict *haya* and piety expressed by the

9 These teachings are based on narrations traced back to the Prophet Muhammad: (1) Narrated via Abu Huraira: "Allah's Messenger said, 'By Him in Whose Hands my life is, none of you will have faith till he loves me more than his father and his children.'" (*Hadith* from the collection of Sahih al-Bukhari); (2) Narrated via Anas: "The Prophet said 'None of you will have faith till he loves me more than his father, his children and all mankind.'" (*Hadith* from the collection of Sahih al-Bukhari). The importance of loving the Prophet Muhammad is also derived from the following Qur'anic verse: "Tell them, (O Prophet): 'If your fathers and your sons and your brothers and your wives and your tribe and the riches you have acquired and the commerce of which you fear a slackening, and the dwellings that you love, if they are dearer to you than Allah and His Messenger and striving in His cause, then wait until Allah brings about His decree. Allah does not guide the evil-doing folk.'" (surat 9, ayat 24)

Alawiyin community, while at the same time allowing for the personal expression of women's religious emotions.

According to my observations, traditional non-*Alawiyin* religious events in Indonesia, even the *Maulid,* are oftentimes held for both men and women simultaneously. However, inside the gathering, seating arrangements usually separate men and women. Therefore, I propose an understanding of the embodiment and expression of *haya* and piety in the separation of the genders during the *Maulid* celebrations in Palembang as a marker of *Alawiyin* identity. This does not mean that this expression of *haya* and piety does not exist in other groups and places across Indonesia. However, in Palembang, it appears to be both internalized (embodied) and instrumentalized by the *Alawiyin* in the course of establishing and maintaining their unique identity. This hypothesis opens up a field of further research, which I will shortly touch upon below.

Unlike the majority of *Maulid* celebrations around Indonesia that read *Barzanji*, a new *Maulid* text from the above-mentioned *Habib* Umar bin Hafiz was read at the *Maulid* celebration which I attended in Palembang. This shows a shift from the traditionally read *Maulid* texts to lyrics composed by a contemporary *ulama* that is of the same descent, stressing the re-discovery of the *Alawiyin* identity. Essential to the *Alawiyin* identity is their reference to the Prophet Muhammad, his daughter, Fatima, his son-in-law, Ali, and his two grandsons Hasan and Husein. As was explained to me by a woman who attended the *Maulid* celebrations, *Alawiyin* tradition dictates that *Alawiyin* women wear black dresses during *Maulid* celebrations, whereas men usually wear white. Both dress codes were seen as following the *sunnah*, the transmitted practice, of the Prophet Muhammad. However, *Alawiyin* women put greater stress on the example of the Prophet's daughter Fatima who, they explained, used to wear black as well as a *niqab* – a face veil. That is why black is preferred, especially during the celebrations of the Prophet's birthday, as a form of love and respect. Important in connection with the expression of the *Alawiyin* identity among *Alawiyin* descendants, is the rising consciousness about the unique identity of the *Alawiyin* among non-*Alawiyin* members of the Muslim society in Palembang. This includes following the *Alawiyin*'s tradition, taking them as religious role models, and taking part in their religious events such as the *Maulid*, the *Ziarah Kubro,* or even going on *ziarah* to the Hadhramaut to visit the tombs of famous saints or scholars.

CONCLUSION

I have shown that *Maulid* celebrations initiated by the *Alawiyin* community are an essential part of Islam as it is practiced in Palembang. Women-only celebrations are held separately from those for men and serve the need for expression of religious emotions in an environment that makes women feel comfortable to express these emotions in ways that are acceptable in terms of *shari'ah* regulations or, in the words of an *Alawiyin* woman, "what is liked or disliked by Allah". I have also argued that women-only celebrations appear to support the expression of women's religious emotions, but which are also expected from them as one of the central components in their understanding of Islam, since the expression of love for the Prophet Muhammad is part of the Islamic practice internalized by the *Alawiyin*. The *sharifat* in Palembang

chose the female-only *Maulid* events in order to avoid having to conform to the expression of *haya* expected from them in mixed gender gatherings by the *Alawiyin* interpretation of Islam and female piety. I further argue that to hold female-only *Maulid* celebrations is in itself a sign of the strict *haya* and piety expressed by the *Alawiyin* community, while at the same time giving space for the personal expression of women's religious emotions.

In future research, it would be interesting to further look into how the *Maulid* and especially the women's celebrations of *Maulid* in Palembang also serve to build and strengthen the *Alawiyin* identity. It also seems that religious celebrations, such as the *Maulid*, held by the Alawiyin community in Palembang serve to reinforce their special status as religious role models among the Muslim population in this city, which they have inherited through their status as descendants of the Prophet Muhammad. Finally, the *Maulid* also serves to promote *dakwah* among both *Alawiyin* and non-*Alawiyin* Muslims in Indonesia. How this form of *dakwah* further shapes *Alawiyin* identity in relation to the broader Muslim society in Indonesia is also a question for further ethnographic research.

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Workshop Report: Central Kalimantan in the Year 2030: Natural Resources, Social Justice, and Sustainable Development

Kristina Großmann

▸ Großmann, K. (2018). Workshop Report: Central Kalimantan in the year 2030: Natural resources, social justice, and sustainable development. *Austrian Journal of South-East Asian Studies, 11*(2), 231-233.

The one-day kick-off workshop that took place in Palangkaraya – the provincial capital of Central Kalimantan, Indonesia – is part of the transdisciplinary research project "FuturEN: Governance, Identities, and Future along Categories of Differentiation: The Case of Coal Mining in Central Kalimantan, Indonesia".[1] This project explores environmental conflicts, especially those related to coal mining, focusing on the nexus between ethnicity, gender, and status in Central Kalimantan.[2] The aim of the workshop was to elaborate on diverging future visions regarding coal mining on an intersectoral expert level and to find correspondences between different scenarios. The workshop organizers – Kristina Großmann, Alessandro Gullo, Pinarsita Juliana, Marko Mahin, Semiarto Aji Purwanto, and Meta Septalisa – invited representatives of relevant groups on the provincial level, including representatives from the government, the business sector, universities, and civil society organizations.[3] In the further course of the research project, Kristina Großmann plans to conduct a series of workshops in Murung Raya, the northernmost district of Central Kalimantan, where coal mining is prevalent. The closing workshop is again to be held in Palangkaraya.

During the workshop, two discussion groups were formed and discussed the following four guiding questions relating to Central Kalimantan:

- How is the status quo regarding the social, political, ecological, and economic situation?
- What will the future look like in 2030? Describe utopias and dystopias!
- How do we get there? Describe pathways towards utopia and dystopia!
- Who might be relevant actors? Point out actors, their relationships, and their power relations!

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1 The workshop was conducted on 20 March 2018.

2 The three-year project (2017-2020) is funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and led by Kristina Großmann.

3 Alessandro Gullo works as a student assistant in the project. Dr. Semiarto Aji Purwanto is associate professor of anthropology at the University Indonesia (UI) in Jakarta. Dr. Marko Mahin is professor of anthropology at the Universitas Kristen in Palangkaraya, a protestant priest, and head of an indigenous peoples' rights organization. Pinarsita Juliana and Meta Septalisa have both worked for several international and national civil society organizations in the field of environmental transformations, gender, and community development in Palangkaraya.

We applied Actor-Network Analysis to identify and map out actors and to estimate each actor's influence in the field. About 30 participants from universities, civil society organizations, the local newspaper, and two government officials attended the workshop and avidly discussed Central Kalimantan's future.

Status Quo and Future: Environmental Degradation, Land Conflicts, and the Loss of Local Knowledge

All participants described the current and future situation as increasingly worrisome (*semakin memprihatinkan*). Deforestation and environmental degradation were interlinked with increasing social injustice, a loss of culture and local knowledge (*kearifan lokal*), and a declining local economy. All agreed that Central Kalimantan is rich in natural resources (*sumber daya alam*) but performing poorly with regard to social, political, and economic development. The low level of development was related to a weak government dominated by companies resulting in a poor level of implementation and application of state policies and laws as well as low tax revenues. Conflicts in the last decades had arisen mostly as the result of changes in the status of land use (*peralihan fungsi tanah*) and of a loss of access, control, and management of land (*pengelolaan tanah*). Other difficulties stated were the lack of means of production and financial capital as well as dependencies on the global market and low prices for local products.

Participants particularly stressed the intertwinement between environmental degradation and a loss of culture. A central point was the ongoing discrimination, exclusion, and loss of local knowledge, local identity, and local economy. These aspects, however, were considered important for maintaining local livelihoods and a sustainable use of natural resources in the light of an increasing domination of and competition with global market players.

Road Maps, Actors, and Power: Strengthening Civil Society Organizations

Participants argued that the civil society is (still) weak because community members and activists are excluded from relevant processes. Women's rights activists condemned the lack of women's influence due to their underrepresentation in decision-making. Participants described not only the marginalization of opposition as a problem, but also the strong profit-seeking mentality and lack of courage among politicians, villagers, and members of civil society organizations. Politicians and members of the village elite have not spoken out against companies as they continued to receive bribes. Participants mentioned that some activists were hesitant to reveal information about the socio-ecological damage caused by companies due to the lack of legal support by their organizations. Moreover, most participants expressed strong disappointment with the government: "If we were to trust the government it would lead us into a nightmare-like situation". Also government representatives stated that they have too few capacities to respond to all complaints they receive from villagers.

Participants saw opportunities for change in the establishment and strengthening of civil society organizations, which should challenge, control, and change the executive and the legislative branches of government. Foremost members of environmental

and human rights organizations were very specific in formulating concrete steps. They suggested to educate the young generation and people in remote areas in order to improve awareness and knowledge. Further steps included taking action in the form of advocacy, hearings, audits, demonstrations, and land reclamation to increase the self-determination of the local population and to push for a functioning auditing system.

Concrete programs that were mentioned in order to enhance social justice and sustainable development and to improve the local management of natural resources were social forestry and the agrarian reform program, recently launched by the current president Joko Widodo that aims to reduce land conflicts and land deprivation by mapping land, distributing land certificates, and acknowledging customary land rights. The representative of the indigenous land management scheme *Dayak Wake Up* (*Dayak Misik*) promoted this scheme, while other participants criticized it for being less effective due to overlapping land rights, legal insecurity, and the lack of measures to prevent deforestation. All agreed that for a strong civil society it would be necessary to improve synergetic cooperation among networks to assure knowledge transfer, to mutually support (*gotong royong*) each other, as well as to place critical people in the political realm in order to increase influence, and to establish "agents of change" in the communities.

Impacts of the Workshop: Networking and a Space for Critical Discussion

The discussions at the workshop were lively, open, and constructive. Participants profited from a space for exchange and networking, which might otherwise have not been possible. Some revitalized old networks and, at the same time, established new connections. Thus, for all participants the major positive outcome of the event was networking for future collaborations and mobilization. The workshop also enabled joint reflections, discussions, and a shared understanding of current and future socio-ecological conflicts and potential solutions to them.

The main weakness of the workshop was the absence of powerful stakeholders, as only two state representatives and no representative from the business sector took part. Consequently, major conflicts and potential solutions could not be addressed in the way originally intended by the organizers. Therefore, a next step would be to invite relevant actors to take part in a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) of a maximum of ten participants to hopefully be able to elaborate on more disputed topics.

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"From Frustration to Escalation in Marawi": An Interview on Conflict Transformation in Southeast Asia With the Indonesian Peace and Conflict Advisor Shadia Marhaban

Gunnar Stange

▸ Stange, G. (2018). From frustration to escalation in Marawi: An interview on conflict transformation in Southeast Asia with the Indonesian peace and conflict advisor Shadia Marhaban. *Austrian Journal of South-East Asian Studies, 11*(2), 235-241.

Shadia Marhaban has been actively involved in international peace mediation, capacity building, and human rights activism for more than 20 years. She is from Aceh, Indonesia, where she joined the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) in the early 2000s. She was an advisory member of GAM's peace negotiating team during the 2005 Helsinki talks that brought an end to nearly 30 years of armed conflict. After her return to Aceh, she became a founding member of the Aceh Women's League (LINA). The NGO was involved in reintegration programs for female ex-combatants and provided democracy education trainings. In recent years, her work has focused on facilitating dialog between conflicting parties in many regions of Southeast Asia affected by armed conflict. In her work, she is mainly engaged with resistance and liberation movements and their political transition. She believes that considering the dimensions of identity, religion, and culture is key to successful war-to-peace transitions and the achievement of sustainable modes of conflict resolution. With a background in political science and international relations, she is a fellow at the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, of Harvard University and has been teaching classes on mediation and conflict transformation at universities in Austria, Indonesia, and the US. In this interview, conducted by Gunnar Stange in Vienna in June 2018, Shadia Marhaban speaks about her peace-building work all over Southeast Asia and her experiences in violence prevention in the city of Marawi, Mindanao, Philippines.

Keywords: Conflict Transformation; Forced Migration; Marawi; Mindanao; Philippines

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Gunnar Stange: *During the last ten years, you have been working with armed resistance and liberation movements to support their transition from 'arms to politics'. In which countries and with what groups have you been working and how successful has your work been?*

Shadia Marhaban: For the past ten years, I've been working in conflict affected areas in Southeast Asia such as in the Philippines, Myanmar, and South Thailand, as well as in conflict affected areas outside the region, like Nepal and Northeast India (Nagaland). I'm working with a multi-level approach from the combatant fronts up to the leadership and decision-making levels of these resistance and liberation movements. Aside from the direct engagement with the armed liberation fronts, I also work with civil society organizations that are aligned with

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these movements, especially in the crafting of frameworks for peace negotiations with governments. In the Philippines, for example, I work with women, youths, or religious leaders to create an inclusive platform by which civil society organizations and other stakeholders can actively participate in the negotiations and the peace process through empowerment and awareness building. We organized international peace forums with leaders of liberation fronts, such as the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF)[1] and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF)[2] in the Philippines, that tackled issues and concerns that arise in many peace process efforts all around the world. This includes support in the post-agreement stage to smoothen the transition of revolutionary armed groups to the political and development arena, to build up political parties, to prevent the abuse of power once empowered politically, and to establish transition mechanisms. The primary aim is to learn from experiences of non-state armed groups that have been engaging in peace processes in other countries.

It is quite difficult to measure the success of such efforts. Governments must also be committed to adopt positive changes in order for the agreements and other efforts to be successful. Political agreements are just an instrument to transform revolutionary organizations to be part of or lead a responsive government. However, there are visible changes in the awareness of the stakeholders that we work with. These changes can be best described as gradual shifts from individual, personal, and parochial perspectives to more organized and unified engagements with relevant stakeholders in the post peace agreement setting, such as the government, international organizations (IO), and civil society organizations (CSO). We aim at raising awareness for the political transition through capacity building by, for example, forming institutions that conduct trainings and employ mediation approaches.

Stange: *As all over the world, we see a new turn to authoritarianism in some parts of Southeast Asia. What are the implications of these political trends for the resolution of armed conflicts in the region?*

Marhaban: The trend towards authoritarianism affects the process of peace efforts, especially in the Philippines and Thailand. In the Philippines, the at first promising political order of the Duterte administration[3] finally transformed the political system from a largely democratic government into an authoritarian one. This had some positive and some negative implications for the country. The campaign of President Duterte against illegal drugs and the extrajudicial killings of drug suspects demonstrate the authoritarian turn of the government. It is a manifestation of impunity.

1 The MILF is engaged in an armed secessionist campaign in the Southern Philippines aiming for the establishment of an independent Islamic State in large parts of the island of Mindanao. The organization broke away from the more secular oriented Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) in 1978 (Abuza, 2005).

2 The MNLF started its insurgency against the Government of the Philippines in 1972. The movement's ultimate aim was the establishment of an independent nationstate for the Muslim population in the Mindanao region (Noble, 1976).

3 Rodrigo "Rody" Roa Duterte was elected the 16th President of the Philippines on 9 May 2016. Shortly after he had taken office, he initiated the so-called Philippine Drug War. Thus far, this campaign has led to the extrajudicial killing of thousands of alleged drug traffickers and users by the Philippine National Police, death squads, and 'vigilant' individuals (Johnson & Fernquest, 2018).

The rule of the ruler prevails over the rule of law. The campaign spread fear amongst the people and silenced human rights advocates. It also divided the Filipino people – some are resisting these developments, but the majority is supporting the campaign.

Regarding the peace talks between the MILF and the Government of the Philippines, the authoritarian leadership of President Duterte and his strong political commitment sped up the process that led to this year's passage of the proposed Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL) into law, also known as the Bangsamoro Organic Law (BOL)[4]. The signing of the BOL into law by the president is a big leap in putting the armed conflict in Mindanao to an end. It is a new dawn for the Bangsamoro people who have been struggling for their right to self-determination for more than four decades now. It signifies the commitment of the government for the installation of a new political entity for Muslim Filipinos in the southern part of the country. With the signing of the BOL, the current Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) will be replaced by the new Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BAR).

Stange: *Coming back to Aceh, the place where your career started: How sustainable is the peace in Aceh 13 years after the signing of the peace accord in Helsinki?*[5]

Marhaban: I think the sustainability of any peace effort depends on its acceptability for the stakeholders and the commitment of the conflicting parties to implement signed agreements. After the signing of the peace agreement between GAM and the Government of Indonesia in 2005, Aceh's political landscape started to transform into a more democratic political system that facilitates people's participation in the government as well as the equal access of the people to the state's basic services such as health care, education, and infrastructure development. This can be considered a peace dividend that benefits the people of Aceh. Albeit the Helsinki agreement was not perfect, it provided the basis for the establishment of a peaceful and more developed Aceh. I would say the agreement will be sustained as long as the involved parties abide by it faithfully.

Stange: *Are there lessons to be learned from the Aceh peace process for other peace processes and ongoing armed conflicts in the region?*

Marhaban: Yes! The Aceh process became model and inspiration for other countries in Southeast Asia for the past 10 years. Aceh provided space for exchanges of experiences, knowledge sharing, and best practices. The key lesson to be learned is that the sincerity of both parties in implementing agreements is the main ingredient for a successful transformation from armed struggle to development. The political

4 The BOL (Republic Act No. 11054), signed by President Rodrigo Duterte on 26 July 2018, is the legal implementation of the "Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro" – the peace agreement between the Government of the Philippines and the MILF that was signed in 2014 (Internation Crisis Group, 2018a).

5 On 15 August 2005, GAM and the Government on Indonesia signed the so-called Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in Helsinki, Finland, after eight months of negotiations. The peace agreement ended nearly 30 years of armed conflict in Aceh and provided the basis for a renewed regional autonomy of the province of Aceh within the Indonesian nation state (Stange & Patock, 2010).

will of the parties, especially the government, to end violence is very important at all stages of peace negotiations. Challenges are always waiting somewhere along the way. Therefore, parties must be open and ready to face those challenges, use them as a tool in exploring new approaches and perspectives to sustain the installed political settlement and other peace mechanisms that are already working on the ground.

Stange: *You are actively involved in violence prevention activities in the city of Marawi in the Southern Philippines. The city was overrun in May 2017 by the so-called Maute group, a pro-Islamic State group, and could only be liberated in October 2017 by the Philippine's army and police. In how far was the event connected to the still unresolved Mindanao conflict that involves several armed groups?*

Marhaban: Looking deeper into the emergence of new Moro[6] armed groups in Mindanao, it appears the main reason for their formation was frustration. Let me revisit the emergence of the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) in 2010, led by commander Umbra Kato. Kato was an active supporter of the peace talks between the MILF and the Government of the Philippines from the very beginning. His hopes for the establishment of a government that would address the grievances of the Moro people was very high during the drafting of the Memorandum of Agreement on the Muslim Ancestral Domain (MOA-AD) under the administration of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. Unexpectedly, some political leaders in Mindanao filed a petition against the MOA-AD that led the Supreme Court of the Philippines to declare the agreement "unconstitutional" the night before the official signing in Kuala Lumpur in October 2008. Due to the ruling of the Supreme Court, the signing was instantly aborted by the government. The hopes of Umbra Kato for having his ideal government turned into hatred because of his frustration over the failed signing of the agreement. He lost his trust in the peace process, split from MILF, and established a new armed group called the BIFF with an even more radical Islamist agenda.

The Maute group consists of former members of the MILF under the command of Abdullah Macapaar, also known as Commander Bravo. Its members were actively involved in the MILF's efforts to continue the peace talks in the early 2010s. However, due to the dragging process combined with the influence of the global jihadi ideology, they separated from the group of Commander Bravo and set up their own group. They started to recruit members by capitalizing on the incapability of the government to address the grievances of the Moro people in Mindanao. They talked to other frustrated members of MILF, aggressive and idealist youths, especially out-of-school youths. They established their forces' visibility and gained support from the local communities of Butig municipality in the province of Lanao del Sur (Mindanao). In the middle of 2016, the Maute group started to attack government establishments and military check points in the locality. In December the same year, they attacked the town Butig, Lanao del Sur. They successfully took over the old municipal hall of Butig, raised the ISIS[7] flag, and declared their group a local front of ISIS in the

6 The term "Moro" was initially used by the Spanish colonial regime referring to the predominantly Muslim population in the Southern Philippines. Nowadays, the term is used as a self-designation by most Muslims in and from the Southern Philippines.

7 ISIS stands for the "Islamic State in Iraq and Syria" to which the group had pledged allegiance. Before

Philippines. Around 1,000 families were displaced because of this incident. Schools, houses, and other civilian properties were damaged. After the Butig war, the Maute group moved to the City of Marawi to expand their operation. They established their base in the heart of the city. Out of frustration, they started again to promulgate incompetency of the MILF and the government in addressing corruption and vices in the "Islamic city of Marawi". They claimed that they were the ones who cleaned the city from sin and from the vices of corrupt leaders. Finally, on 23 May 2017, the siege happened! It caused the displacement of more than 200,000 residents. Tall buildings, mosques, and malls were completely destroyed. The crowded city turned into a ghost town. You could not see a single soul walking in the streets for months.

Stange: *As you said, during the siege of Marawi, more than 200,000 residents were internally displaced. What were the humanitarian implications of this, and has this crisis been resolved?*

Marhaban: The loss of lives and livelihoods as well as damaged and destroyed infrastructure are the more visible consequences of the crisis. However, there are deeper implications, not only for the internally displaced persons (IDP) but also for the Maranao[8] people as a whole. The crisis generated mistrust towards the government and the peace process. It also divided the people, not only the Maranaos but also the larger Bangsamoro people. New dynamics emerged between the clan of Maute and other Maranao clans – they started to accuse each other of being the real culprit in destroying Marawi. The crisis also exposed children, youths, and women to threats such as recruitment to armed groups, child labor, and abuses. These vulnerable groups of the community are the most affected by the crisis. Children cannot go to school because their schools are destroyed. Mothers lost their children during the crisis and are struggling to recover from physical and mental wounds. Children lost their parents. Relationships and families broke apart. These are the deeper humanitarian implications of the crisis. There are ongoing efforts in addressing the humanitarian crisis. Various government agencies are working together in addressing the recovery needs, reconstruction, and rehabilitation of Marawi. They set up the so-called Task Force Bangon Marawi (TFBM)[9]. TFBM drafted a recovery and rehabilitation plan for the affected areas. However, the implementation of the plan is slower than expected. Aside from the slow implementation, the Maranaos are questioning the inclusivity of the plan. According to them, TFBM drafted the plan without proper consultation with the victims. The TFBM intervention is mainly focusing on infrastructure related development – housing, clearing of debris in the ground zero, and provision of temporary shelter for the IDPs. Local NGOs, with support of international NGOs, are engaging in psycho-social recovery work with the victims.

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pledging allegiance to ISIS, the Maute group operated as private militia headed by the matriarch Farhana Maute that backed local politicians by the use of coercion and extorted local businesses (International Crisis Group, 2018b).

8 Maranao (the people of the lake) is the official designation for the predominantly Muslim population originally living in the area of Lake Lanao on Mindanao island. They are part of the Moro group.

9 Task Force to Re-Build Marawi.

Stange: *How would you describe the situation in Marawi today, and how long will it take to rebuild the city and rehabilitate the victims?*

Marhaban: Many of the victims are now in diaspora. You can find them in the vicinity of Marawi but also anywhere in the Philippines. They were forced to leave Marawi and settle somewhere else in the country to survive. I think it will take time for Marawi to totally recover from this havoc. The government may manage to reconstruct the damaged houses of the civilians, but the broken identity of the Maranao people will be difficult to 'repair'. There are deep scars in their hearts brought by the crisis. It needs serious efforts in transitional justice to help reconstruct the torn social fabric of the people. We need to address the following questions: Why and how did the crisis happen? Who are the victims, and who are the perpetrators? What is adequate justice for the victims? How about reparations for the damaged properties? And, last but not least, how to ensure that the same will not happen again? Finding answers to these questions is how I try to contribute to the rehabilitation of Marawi and the Maranaos. However, this effort needs a lot of resources and commitment of both the government and the victims. Further, there should be a working coordination mechanism to ensure interventions and engagements are complimentary to each other and not overlapping or even contradicting.

Stange: *Last but not least, what kind of measures would it need to prevent a crisis such as the 'siege of Marawi' from happening again?*

Marhaban: First, it will be important to carefully evaluate the recovery and rehabilitation interventions for Marawi to make sure that they do not trigger part two of the siege. It is important to have a comprehensive and inclusive rehabilitation plan for the city – a plan that ensures that all important stakeholders are involved in the process to avoid deprivation and division of the people. The Marawi siege brought multiple layers of damages to the Maranao people – physical, emotional, political, and spiritual. Those layers need to be considered in the attempt to rehabilitate the city. The failure to contemplate on any of these layers may deviate results of any intervention to something else. To prevent this from happening again in Marawi or in other part of the world, there must be a strong foundation of good governance from the local government units (LGUs) up to the national government. People must feel the presence of the government through an equal access to basic services, meaningful participation, and the representation of important sectors of society in decision-making processes, especially decisions that affect people's personal views and beliefs. Functioning information mechanisms should also be established in the local government units to ensure that the efforts of the government are transmitted to the people. The people, on the other hand, should be able to report security issues, calamities, disasters, and other information to the government for appropriate responses and actions. However, this cannot be done by the government alone. This also requires active community participation. There should be a platform from the municipal government down to the local *barangay*[10] units on which people can freely

10 The village level. Smallest administrational unit in the Philippines.

share and listen to information on issues like security threats and corruption. I think civil society organizations can play a role in establishing this platform. Hard work is needed for this platform to gain legitimacy from the community and the government.

Stange: *Shadia, thank you very much for taking the time for this interview.*

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Book Review: Vatikiotis, M. (2017). Blood and Silk: Power and Conflict in Modern Southeast Asia.

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▸ Lego, J. (2018): Book review: Vatikiotis, M. (2017). Blood and silk: power and conflict in modern Southeast Asia. *Austrian Journal of South-East Asian Studies*, *11*(2), 243-244.

Michael Vatikiotis' *Blood and Silk: Power and Conflict in Modern Southeast Asia* is an impassioned commentary on the state of affairs in a region that appears phenomenal for its rapid economic growth but at the same time perplexing because of intractable corruption and conflict. The author raises questions and highlights paradoxes regarding problems of governance and democratization and then tries to address these questions by citing colonial legacies and failures in institution building, as well as anecdotes from his experience as a journalist, mediator, student, and long-time observer of the region.

The book is divided into two sections. *Part I: Power* covers the geopolitical features and the long sweep of precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial history that has led to the present state of what he calls a "demi-democracy" (p. 295), characterized by a persistence of violence, personality-driven and clientelistic politics, pernicious graft and corruption, lack of institutional integrity, and little respect for laws. *Part II: Conflict* deals with what Vatikiotis considers the most pressing concerns for the region – unresolved conflicts borne of contested identities, growing religious sectarianism and extremism, and the (re)emergence of a powerful China that is "no longer hiding its strength" (p. 282).

Vatikiotis asks, for instance, why Southeast Asian countries rank poorly in freedom and good governance indices despite social and material progress, and why democracy has proven hard to establish. He dispels the notion that this is because social change has lagged behind political transformation, reasoning that Southeast Asians are better educated than ever. Instead, he points to the weak institutional roots of democratic reform and shallow, personality-based politics that drive change, if any. Related to this, he poses the often repeated but seldom satisfactorily answered question of why graft and corruption persist and offers several answers including the fact that governments are poorly financed, that bribery serves to maintain deeply entrenched social hierarchies, and that this ultimately serves to control the elite and fuel systems of patronage. This is consistent with much of the literature on Southeast Asia highlighting elite-driven, clientelistic, patronage relationships as characteristic of politics and governance in the region.

Vatikiotis' assessment of the influence of colonial legacies on the present state of affairs seems accurate, though not new to students of the region. "The seeds of subnational conflict lie in the process of modern state formation, which involved the disruption of precolonial autonomous principalities and the birth of the cohesive, centralised nation state" (p. 201), he writes of deeply rooted conflicts in

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Southern Thailand and Aceh. "The shallow basis for this unity," moreover, "was built on an administrative framework steeped in colonial exigency and historical prejudices. Imperfect integration and forced assimilation became the conductors of grievance that eventually generated violence [...] As new states struggled to establish themselves, rebellions erupted along poorly defined borders and fault lines of social and ethnic division" (p. 204). Indeed, contemporary fractures in Malaysia and Myanmar, for instance, can be traced back to the colonial administrative divisions under British rule, as discussed in most textbooks dealing with the colonial history of the region.

However, in attempting to distill conclusions about such a diverse region, Vatikiotis risks overly generalizing and seeing the region as more exceptional than it might be. Writing again about unresolved conflicts, Vatikiotis declares that motives ascribed to sovereignty only disguise selfish personal interest – compromise in Southeast Asia is seen as a sign of weakness and loss of face (p. 224). This however may be just as true in hierarchical societies of Northeast Asian countries with deep cultural sensitivities related to "losing face". He writes of the "perpetual selfishness of Southeast Asian elites" (p. 286) and how, "more than any other part of the world today that claims to adhere for the most part to democratic principles of government and has the GDP to do so, Southeast Asia fails chronically to deliver on the promise of popular sovereignty" (p. 286). One might be harder pressed to identify any part of the world where elites unselfishly gave up power and delivered popular sovereignty at no cost to their privilege. Elsewhere, the author may verge on exaggeration. He describes Thailand as "a singularly archaic state" (p. 290) that has managed to perpetuate elite power and privilege through a strong military and much revered monarchy. Surely, there are other regions of the world where more antiquated practices survive even though Thailand's military and monarchy are indeed profoundly influential if it were to be compared to modern liberal democracies.

This is perhaps one problem of Vatikiotis' and many others' approach to understanding Southeast Asia – the assumption that economic growth would lead to liberal values and democratic governance. Indeed, some contemporary academic discussions on the politics of Southeast Asia have evolved from asking why democratization has failed, to why nondemocratic forms of governance persist. In other words, much of the contemporary discourse has evolved to the question of durable authoritarianism – something that the author fails to mention.

The book takes the reader on a fascinating but exasperating journey informed by history and established scholarship on the politics of Southeast Asia. However, it does not necessarily reveal anything new or challenge any existing studies. Rather, it reads more like a personal lamentation by an ardent follower. "As someone who has never really felt attached to a particular country in the patriotic sense, watching the simple ceremony", Vatikiotis writes of an independence day celebration in Indonesia, "I catch myself feeling a tinge of attachment, a desire to belong to this ambitious, somewhat improbable nation" (p. 288-289). Vatikiotis certainly does not pretend to be a detached observer but, in doing so, he may well convert a casual observer to a dedicated advocate for political change in such a pivotal region.

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