

ASEAS

7(1) 2014

Österreichische Zeitschrift für Südostasienwissenschaften
Austrian Journal of South-East Asian Studies

FOCUS CONFLICT DYNAMICS AND TRANSFORMATIONS





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Österreichische Zeitschrift für Südostasienwissenschaften
Austrian Journal of Southeast Asian Studies

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MEDIENINHABERIN & HERAUSGEBERIN / PUBLISHER

SEAS – Gesellschaft für Südostasienwissenschaften / Society for Southeast Asian Studies
ZVR-Zahl 786121796, Liebharts-gasse 11/25, 1160 Wien, Austria

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ISSN: 1999-2521 (Print), ISSN 1999-253X (Online)

UNTERSTÜTZT VON / SUPPORTED BY





ASEAS

7(1) 2014



Österreichische Zeitschrift für Südostasienwissenschaften
Austrian Journal of South-East Asian Studies

FOCUS **CONFLICT DYNAMICS AND TRANSFORMATIONS**



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Österreichische Zeitschrift für Südostasienwissenschaften 7(1), 2014
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The present ASEAS issue features a focus on 'Conflict Dynamics and Transformations in Southeast Asia'. It brings together topical works of researchers from various academic fields that offer a comprehensive perspective on current developments in some of the region's political, social, and environmental conflicts as well as on approaches to their management and resolution. The contributions include case studies from Indonesia, Myanmar, the Philippines, and Thailand, as well as analyses of the status and prospects of regional security cooperation within the framework of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

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Conflict Dynamics and Transformations in Southeast Asia

Gunnar Stange & Iris O'Rourke

► Stange, G., & O'Rourke, I. (2014). Editorial: Conflict dynamics and transformations in Southeast Asia. *ASEAS – Austrian Journal of South-East Asian Studies*, 7(1), 1-4.

The present ASEAS issue features a focus on 'Conflict Dynamics and Transformations in Southeast Asia'. It brings together topical works of researchers from various academic fields that offer a comprehensive perspective on current developments in some of the region's political, social, and environmental conflicts as well as on approaches to their management and resolution. The contributions include case studies from Indonesia, Myanmar, the Philippines, and Thailand, as well as analyses of the status and prospects of regional security co-operation within the framework of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

The complex and interdependent nature of conflicts makes it inevitable to study their causes and potential solutions through approaches that transcend the borders of classical academic disciplines. In his comprehensive monograph *Peace by Peaceful Means*, Johan Galtung (1996), the 'father' of peace research, reminds us just how challenging and intellectually demanding peace research is. He argues that this is owed to the many spaces in which peace and conflict researchers have to search for causes, conditions, and contexts in order to understand their subject of study (Galtung, 1996, p. 1). Thus, the multi- and interdisciplinary character of area studies – here, Southeast Asian Studies – provides a suitable framework for deciphering the multilayered trajectories of conflicts, which, after all, might contribute to their peaceful transformation.

Despite its political, religious, and ethnic diversity, Southeast Asia is by no means more prone to inter- or intrastate conflicts than other regions of the world. On the contrary, especially with regard to interstate conflicts, the member states of ASEAN rightfully claim that the norm of non-interference in domestic issues and consensus diplomacy has largely spared the region the terrors of interstate armed conflict. Yet, the postcolonial states of Southeast Asia are still the arena of a significant number of domestic armed conflicts in which resistance and liberation movements (Dudouet, 2009) are challenging the respective nation states by striving for greater self-determination or even secession, with all the tragic consequences.

On the other hand, during the last decade, Southeast Asian governments have gradually moved away from military conflict resolution approaches. It appears that the mode of procedural conflict resolution (Elwert, 2004) through legitimate institutions is becoming the dominant norm in managing domestic violent conflict. Timo Kivimäki (2012, pp. 419–420), for example, shows that battle deaths related to violent conflicts in Southeast Asia have significantly declined since the mid-2000s. Indeed, since the formation of Southeast Asia's post-

colonial states following the end of the Second World War, the region has never been as peaceful as it is today (Vatikiotis, 2009, p. 28). Recent successful conflict mediation processes underline this trend, for example, that between the Free Aceh Movement and the Government of Indonesia in 2005 and the comprehensive peace accord between the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the Government of the Philippines in the southern Philippines in March 2014.

This issue begins with a regional macro-perspective, proceeds to a comparative national perspective, and finally offers thickly described empirical case studies at the micro-level. In the first two articles, the authors address one of the most hotly debated issues with regard to the increasingly integrating ASEAN: regional security cooperation. Henning Borchers ponders the possibility of the development of an ASEAN peacekeeping force despite member states' reluctance towards a regional conflict resolution mechanism, as this could challenge ASEAN's constitutive norm of non-interference in domestic politics of its member states. Borchers argues that the progress in institutionalizing regional cooperation regarding 'soft' security issues – such as environmental challenges – stands to facilitate a slow deepening of 'hard' security cooperation at the ASEAN level, which can deepen political trust among member states.

Similarly, Kathrin Rupprecht argues that the ASEAN operational norm of non-interference is insufficient to adequately address state-internal conflicts and impedes efficient security cooperation. She examines two cases of long-lasting and violent separatist conflict embedded in ethnic and religious sentiments: the cases of the resistance of the Patani-Malays in Thailand's Deep South and of the Bangsamoro in the southern Philippines. Rupprecht concludes that non-traditional security issues linked to state-internal conflicts demand a more proactive ASEAN role. Yet, the role Malaysia did play bilaterally in brokering the recently signed path-breaking peace accord between the MILF and the Government of the Philippines gives reason to believe that ASEAN as an organization will play a more proactive and institutionalized role in regional conflict management in the years to come.

Based on interviews with representatives of armed opposition groups in Myanmar, Sina Kowalewski analyzes their leaderships' perspectives on Myanmar's current multidimensional transition. According to the findings of her study, the government's top-down strategy in implementing political and economic reforms and the mistrust between the conflicting parties constitute severe challenges to the ongoing ceasefire negotiations and peace processes. The armed groups mainly interpret the government's efforts as a strategy to maintain the current status quo of power relations between the Myanmar central government and the country's ethnic minorities. The main issues at stake in this complex and rapidly proceeding peace process are political legitimacy, economic as well as political participation, and the improvement of the socio-political situation of the country's diverse ethnic groups.

In their contribution, Jeroen Adam and Boris Verbrugge challenge the rigid distinction between formal and informal actors in conflict mediation approaches. Based on an analysis of existing conflict management practices in Mindanao, the Philippines, they find this distinction may actually be counterproductive and lead to unintended consequences such as reinforcing existing power imbalances by favoring already well-connected elite actors. Also, they caution against overlooking that the

typically 'formal' may have significant informal traits or that presumed 'informal' actors may derive authority and legitimacy from the 'formal' political sphere.

In the context of a land conflict between the indigenous Batin Sembilan and an oil palm company in Jambi province, Central Sumatra, Indonesia, Barbara Beckert, Christoph Dittrich, and Soeryo Adiwibowo show how the Batin Sembilan used the concept of indigeneity to enhance their agency and empowerment. In their resistance against a multinational company, they have become empowered actors instead of marginalized victims. The authors show, however, that access to land is still contested and shaped by power asymmetries.

Within the frame of indigenous political strategies, Timo Duile analyzes socio-ecological conflicts arising around palm oil expansion in Kalimantan, Indonesia, and the conceptions of nature that are employed in the course of these conflicts. Duile demonstrates how the indigenous Dayak's concepts of nature differ fundamentally from hegemonic concepts that frame nature as opposed to culture or the human mind. Even though the Dayak in Kalimantan, the Indonesian part of Borneo, have to refer to some hegemonic epistemic premises in order to enter global discourses, indigenous knowledge is neglected by Western discourses on local knowledge in Kalimantan. In reference to Descola, Duile shows how Dayak concepts are negotiated and revitalized for political strategies.

In the 'In Dialogue' section, Ying Hooi Khoo offers an insider's perspective on extra-parliamentary opposition politics in Malaysia, in particular, the *Bersih* movement. Bersih comprises 89 non-governmental organizations whose aspiration is to push for a thorough reform of the electoral process in Malaysia through rallies and demonstrations. In her interview with Hishamuddin Rais, a prominent Bersih activist, she illustrates the linkages between grassroots political activism and the broader democratization process in Malaysia.

Last but not least, in the 'Southeast Asia Visually' section, Vera Altmeyer provides well-informed insights into the 2012 gubernatorial elections in Jakarta, Indonesia, with a thick visual description of the highly contrastive campaign strategies of the two main pairs of candidates: incumbent Governor Fauzi Bowo and his running mate Nachrowi Ramli on the one hand, and challenger Joko Widodo and his running mate Basuki Tjahaja Purnama on the other. With Indonesian presidential elections set for July 2014 and acting Jakarta Governor Joko Widodo as the most promising candidate, this visual report could not be timelier.

May peace prevail!



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ASEAN's Environmental Challenges and Non-Traditional Security Cooperation: Towards a Regional Peacekeeping Force?

Henning Borchers¹

► Borchers, H. (2014). ASEAN's environmental challenges and non-traditional security cooperation: Towards a regional peacekeeping force? *ASEAS – Austrian Journal of South-East Asian Studies*, 7(1), 5-20.

This article reflects on the prospect for an ASEAN peacekeeping force and regional security cooperation. I argue that progress on 'soft' security issues stands to facilitate a slow deepening of 'hard' security cooperation at the ASEAN level. Governments of ASEAN member states are still reluctant to develop a regional mechanism for conflict resolution, which they perceive to be a challenge to the norms of non-interference and state sovereignty. Yet, these norms are subject to dynamic shifts in the security environment that regional governments now have to manage. The establishment of mechanisms to address politically less controversial non-traditional security issues such as environmental challenges stands to further develop and consolidate military-to-military ties and deepen political trust among member states. An ASEAN standby force for emergency response and disaster relief has become a politically acceptable initiative and could set the stage for the development of an ASEAN peacekeeping force.

Keywords: ASEAN; HADR; Peacekeeping; Security Community; Security Cooperation

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In diesem Beitrag wird die Möglichkeit einer ASEAN-Friedenstruppe und einer regionalen Sicherheitskooperation betrachtet. Ich argumentiere, dass Fortschritte bei „weichen“ Sicherheitsfragen eine stetige Vertiefung der „harten“ Sicherheitszusammenarbeit auf ASEAN-Ebene ermöglichen. Noch zögern die Regierungen der ASEAN-Staaten, einen regionalen Konfliktlösungsmechanismus zu entwickeln, da sie diesen als Infragestellung der Normen der Nichteinmischung und der staatlichen Souveränität sehen. Diese Normen hängen jedoch von dynamischen Veränderungen in der Sicherheitsumgebung ab, mit welchen die Regierungen konfrontiert sind. Die Einrichtung von Mechanismen um politisch weniger umstrittene, nicht-traditionelle Sicherheitsthemen anzugehen, wie z.B. Umweltherausforderungen, ist ein erster Schritt dahin, militärische Kooperationen weiter zu entwickeln, zu festigen sowie das politische Vertrauen zwischen den Mitgliedstaaten zu vertiefen. Eine ASEAN-Abufruppe für Notfall- und Katastrophenhilfe ist bereits eine politisch akzeptable Initiative geworden. Dies könnte den Weg für die Entwicklung einer ASEAN-Friedenstruppe festlegen.

Schlagworte: ASEAN; HADR; Friedenssicherung; Sicherheitsgemeinschaft; Sicherheitskooperation

¹ Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in this article do not necessarily represent the views of the New Zealand Human Rights Commission.

INTRODUCTION

In 2003, Indonesia proposed an Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)² peacekeeping force towards the development of a regional mechanism for conflict resolution. The proposition was part of a comprehensive proposal for the ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC), one of the three pillars³ of the ASEAN Community. At the time, several other ASEAN members rejected the idea of a regional force as ‘unnecessary’ or ‘too early’, with resistance largely credited to concerns over the norm of non-interference in member countries’ internal affairs (Bandoro, 2004; Chongkittavorn, 2004; Kuah, 2004). Over the past decade, ASEAN advanced the APSC and military-to-military ties through preventive diplomacy and confidence building measures. Several member countries also developed their peacekeeping capabilities for United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (UNPKO) and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR). The Association further adopted plans to establish a regional mechanism to address non-traditional security (NTS) challenges, including the development of a regional standby force that could be deployed in response to environmental disasters. Plans to establish a regional mechanism for conflict resolution remain vague.

Focusing on the prospect of an ASEAN peacekeeping force, this article reflects on ASEAN’s approach to regional defense and security cooperation. I argue that progress on ‘soft’ security issues stands to facilitate a slow deepening of ‘hard’ security cooperation at the ASEAN level. ASEAN governments are still reluctant to develop a regional mechanism for conflict resolution, which they perceive to be a challenge to the norms of non-interference and state sovereignty. Yet, these norms are subject to dynamic shifts in the security environment that regional governments now have to manage. The establishment of mechanisms to address politically less sensitive NTS challenges such as environmental disasters stands to further consolidate military-to-military ties among ASEAN member states through joint military exercises and thus deepen political trust. An ASEAN standby force for disaster preparedness and emergency response in the region has become a politically acceptable initiative. This could set the stage for the development of an ASEAN peacekeeping force that could address more intricate political challenges such as domestic or regional conflicts.

Firstly, I will provide a historical outline of ASEAN’s approach to regional security, followed by a brief review of ASEAN security community building by means of an analysis of relevant literature and ASEAN policy papers. I will then analyze selected examples of regional peacekeeping initiatives and security cooperation. Lastly, I will discuss ASEAN’s approach to disaster preparedness and emergency response, and the implications related mechanisms could have for the development of an ASEAN peacekeeping force.

2 The ASEAN includes Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.

3 The other two pillars of the ASEAN Community are the ASEAN Economic Community and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASEAN Secretariat, 2009a).

ASEAN'S APPROACH TO REGIONAL SECURITY

Security has always been a core concern of ASEAN. Following Indonesia's armed opposition to the creation of Malaysia (*konfrontasi*) between 1963 and 1966, interstate war has been notably absent in Southeast Asia since ASEAN was established in 1967. The promotion of regional peace and stability is among the main objectives outlined in the Bangkok Declaration, the Association's founding document. The declaration refers to security only in the context of external interference (ASEAN Declaration, 1967). Yet, alongside interstate tensions, most of ASEAN's founding members were also facing internal threats with potentially regional implications from the turbulent processes of nation building and Cold War dynamics. Strengthening the state was ASEAN's principal approach to manage internal security challenges, advance economic development, and maintain regional stability (Bellamy, 2004, p. 93; Rolls, 2012, p. 128).

The Association has successfully maintained a stable interstate peace among its members based on the norms of respect for national sovereignty, non-interference in internal affairs, the non-use of force, and a consensus-based approach to decision-making, collectively referred to as the 'ASEAN Way'. The expansion of multilateral security and defense cooperation to a level "short of a formal military alliance" was also one of the options considered early on (Rolls, 2012, p. 129), but concerns over Cold War power rivalries prevented the formation of a military pact, which could have been perceived as a threat by communist regimes in the region (Acharya, 2000, p. 26). Moreover, most of the founding members already had *de facto* or formal alliances with Western powers that helped maintain regional stability. Security and defense cooperation at the ASEAN level was confined to bilateral relationships (Acharya, 1991; Tomotaka, 2008, p. 19).

The norms entailed in the 'ASEAN Way' account for ASEAN's strengths and weaknesses. Norms have a transformative impact as a determining factor in interstate interactions and facilitate security community development (Adler & Barnett, 1998). ASEAN has been comprehensively and critically studied within the framework of security communities (Acharya, 1991, 2000; Bellamy, 2004; Caballero-Anthony, 2005; Haacke, 2005; Kuah, 2004; Tomotaka, 2008). The rules laid out in the 'ASEAN Way' have without doubt promoted shared values and a collective ASEAN identity among the region's state-makers and bureaucratic elite, consolidating a level of mutual trust as well as deepening interstate practices through regular interaction. These processes have created "a transnational region comprised of sovereign states whose people maintain dependable expectations of peaceful change" (Adler & Barnett, 1998, p. 30). Yet, internal conflicts with at times regional implications are prevalent in the region and have regularly raised questions as to the Association's legitimacy, as it refrains from addressing regional conflicts and the poor human rights records of some regional governments. The "cliché problem" (Sukma, 2010, p. 3) of non-interference is at the core of ASEAN's ongoing struggle to effectively address regional security concerns as it obstructs collective efforts at conflict resolution in order to avoid confrontation.

ASEAN's perspective on regional conflict resolution changed with the Association's engagement in the Cambodian conflict. The 1978 Vietnamese invasion of Cam-

bodia provided ASEAN, at the time including Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand, the grounds for acting collectively towards the peaceful settlement of a regional dispute. To avert the perceived Vietnamese threat to Thailand's sovereignty and regional stability, ASEAN advanced political, economic, and diplomatic initiatives, and urged and supported UN measures in order to effect Vietnam's withdrawal from Cambodia, specifically through the Jakarta Informal Meetings in 1988 and 1989 that helped facilitate the establishment of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) and the deployment of UNTAC peacekeeping forces from 1992 to 1993 (Sundararaman, 1997). This shared expression of the 'ASEAN Way', based on the commitment to diplomacy and consultation, was a formative experience for ASEAN that shaped the Association's future approach to community building and regional peace and security (Bellamy, 2004, pp. 99-100; Caballero-Anthony, 2005, p. 259). Furthermore, Brunei, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand contributed military and civilian police personnel, marking UNTAC as ASEAN member states' first contribution to a multilateral peacekeeping operation in the region.

In subsequent years, ASEAN had to redefine its role in managing regional security in a changing post-Cold War strategic and security environment. Security issues were increasingly raised in a range of extra-regional dialogues, highlighting the need for a multilateral approach. This led to the establishment of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) in 1994, a platform that expanded ASEAN's style of confidence building and preventive diplomacy to the wider Asia-Pacific region (Rolls, 2012, p. 131; Tomotaka, 2008, p. 22). Yet, the Forum's predominantly foreign ministry-affiliated participants, its emphasis of process over action, and slow pace towards developing a platform for preventive diplomacy were criticized by non-ASEAN members (Brandon, 2002; Tomotaka, 2008, p. 23). This gap was addressed through the establishment of the Shangri-La Dialogue (SLD) in 2002, "Asia's most prominent exercise in defence diplomacy" (Capie & Taylor, 2010, p. 359), which provides a forum for defense, security, and intelligence officials from the ARF countries to meet and discuss security issues pertaining to the Asia-Pacific. A similar platform exclusive to ASEAN was yet to emerge. Regional repercussions of 9/11 and maritime security as well as pandemics and environmental disasters further highlighted the need for a multilateral approach towards defense diplomacy and security cooperation at the ASEAN level.

THE ASEAN POLITICAL-SECURITY COMMUNITY

The notion of establishing a Southeast Asian security community to facilitate political and security cooperation has been at the heart of ASEAN's concept of regional order since its early years (Acharya, 1991, p. 161). In 2003, Indonesia advanced a set of propositions suggesting a range of measures towards the establishment of an ASEAN Security Community as one of the three pillars of the ASEAN Community. Indonesia, having emerged from the crippling impacts of the Asian financial crisis and the socio-political tensions this had created domestically, was eager to again project its claim for regional leadership both to the Association's other members and to an international community that welcomed the norms and values Jakarta espoused with its proposal ("Indonesia Proposes", 2004; Kuah, 2004). Following East Timor's referendum and

independence, which had been facilitated by an Australian-led international force, it likely was also in Jakarta's interest to develop a regional mechanism to avert further international interference in domestic and regional affairs. Australia's leadership in East Timor had soured the relationship between Jakarta and Canberra for several years following the intervention. Ongoing conflicts in Aceh, where the Megawati administration had declared martial law in 2003, and Papua also highlighted the need to establish a mechanism to manage domestic problems regionally. The tenets of the 'ASEAN Way', which continue to determine relations among member states and that prioritize dialogue over confrontation, would be preferable to the embarrassment caused by the intervention of extra-regional forces.

Other ASEAN governments were, however, apprehensive of Indonesia's projection of what was perceived as a "democracy agenda" that challenged the principles enshrined in the 'ASEAN Way' (Sukma, 2008, p. 138). In order to address these concerns while maintaining core elements of the original proposal, Indonesia proposed the establishment of peacekeeping centers in the region to build regional capabilities for UN-led peacekeeping missions and disaster relief. These objectives were better aligned with the less contentious dimension of regional non-traditional security cooperation, acknowledging that peacekeeping missions increasingly have to meet a wider range of objectives, including HADR (Uesugi, 2004). While noting the region's need to develop its capacity for conflict prevention and resolution, the revised proposal refrained from highlighting the potential of regional peacekeepers for the purposes of 'hard' security cooperation within ASEAN. Sugeng Raharjo, a former Indonesian foreign ministry official, suggested that "the wording was changed but the spirit is the same" ("Indonesia Modifies", 2004). The revised proposal was approved in the same year at the ninth ASEAN Summit. By signing the Bali Concord II, member states committed to its principal components of norm setting, conflict prevention, conflict resolution, post-conflict peace building, and the establishment of an ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC) by 2020 (ASEAN Concord II, 2003).⁴

Through the Bali Concord II, ASEAN outlined its commitment to 'comprehensive security' and enhanced defense cooperation, though within the framework of the 'ASEAN Way' to inform interstate relations. The norm of non-interference substantially shaped member states' initial resistance to the original proposal and Jakarta's response as the Bali Concord II reaffirmed ASEAN member countries' "rights to lead their national existence free from outside interference in their internal affairs" (ASEAN Concord II, 2003, p. 3). This perpetuation of ASEAN's core norms raised the question of whether the initiative really was "more of the same" (Rolls, 2012, p. 132). Any development and implementation of new mechanisms was further set to move "at a pace comfortable to all", which confirmed the tradition of the lowest common denominator in ASEAN's consensus-based decision-making culture (ASEAN Concord II, 2003, p. 3).

The Vientiane Action Programme, which was adopted the following year (2004), aimed to address a wide range of security issues by initiating the gradual institutionalization of confidence building measures, multilateral security dialogues, and mechanisms (ASEAN Secretariat, 2004b). Multilateral dialogues such as the ASEAN

4 The timeline for establishing the APSC was later changed to 2015 (ASEAN Secretariat, 2009b, p. 1).

Defence Minister's Meeting (ADMM, since 2006) and the ADMM-Plus (since 2010) have since become important regional platforms for ASEAN member states and dialogue partners to advance security cooperation and defense diplomacy.⁵ As the highest defense mechanism within ASEAN, the ADMM is a significant step in ASEAN security regionalism towards the APSC as it promotes "regional peace and stability through dialogue and cooperation in defence and security" by means of military-to-military interaction (ASEAN Secretariat, 2006).

Despite restated commitments to establishing an ASEAN mechanism for regional conflict resolution, progress towards this goal remains slow. The objective of establishing "regional arrangements for the maintenance of peace and stability" was first expressed in the 2004 Vientiane Action Programme (p. 8). It was reiterated in the 2009 APSC Roadmap (p. 14). In 2011, defense ministers agreed to establish an ASEAN Peacekeeping Training Centre Network to facilitate planning, training, and exchange of experience in order "to contribute to peacekeeping efforts in the world" (Indonesian Defense Minister Purnomo Yusgiantoro, cited in "Defense Ministers Discuss", 2011; ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting [ADMM], 2011b). Concrete steps to establish a mechanism for the management of regional security are yet to materialize. Recent territorial spats between Thailand and Cambodia as well as the conflict between Rohingya Muslims and Rakhine Buddhists in Myanmar highlight the need for such a mechanism and have raised renewed calls for an ASEAN peacekeeping force ("Asean Peacekeepers", 2012; Pitsuwan, 2011).

TOWARDS AN ASEAN PEACEKEEPING FORCE?

ASEAN member states are yet to agree on a uniform view of defense cooperation that could make a regional force possible. The idea of some form of military arrangement, even a "joint command", had been raised several times throughout the 1970s and 1980s, yet it failed to receive the support of ASEAN leaders (Acharya, 1991, p. 161). Indonesia's proposal for an ASEAN peacekeeping force that could be deployed to help resolve regional and internal conflicts met with resistance from the representatives of several regional governments, who at the time considered Jakarta's proposal for an ASEAN Security Community a "blatant and unacceptable bid to reassert itself over the rest of the region" (Wain, 2004). Vietnam's foreign minister considered the idea of a regional force "too early" and argued that the region's political and military policies were not sufficiently compatible for the level of cooperation required for such an initiative (Acharya, 2005, p. 149). Possibly in view of the Association's economic prerogatives, Singapore's foreign minister argued that ASEAN was neither a security nor a defense organization and that the grouping was the "wrong entity to play a peacekeeping role" (Acharya, 2005, p. 149; Kuah, 2004, p. 4). Thailand's foreign affairs minister rejected the idea as unnecessary and argued that there were no conflicts in the region that would justify the mobilization of an ASEAN force (Kuah, 2004, p. 2). The resistance of regional governments to this level of 'hard' security cooperation was indicative of the latent antagonism that exists among members of the Association.

⁵ The ADMM-Plus includes ASEAN dialogue partners Australia, China, India, Japan, the Republic of Korea, New Zealand, Russia, and the United States.

Notwithstanding efforts towards community building, mutual distrust and competition within ASEAN endure. The several territorial disputes in the South China Sea involving Malaysia, Vietnam, and the Philippines as well as border disputes between Thailand and Cambodia, among others, underline this complexity (Acharya, 1991, pp. 173–174, 2000, p. 128; “ASEAN, Preventive Diplomacy”, 2011; Bandoro, 2004; Sukma, 2011). Faith in the Association's conflict resolution procedures has been modest at best, evident in the yet to be utilized High Council mandated in the 1976 Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) that was again put forward in the APSC (Tomotaka, 2008, p. 21). The absence of a regional mechanism for conflict resolution is particularly noteworthy in view of the disproportional ratio of armed conflict in Southeast Asia to the number of peacekeeping operations in the region (Helmke, 2009, p. 4).

The response to Indonesia's propositions also indicated regional governments' ongoing commitment to the norm of non-interference (Bandoro, 2004; Chongkitavorn, 2004; Kuah, 2004). ASEAN member states' initial lack of response to the post-referendum violence in East Timor highlighted the significance of this norm in interstate relations in the region, though once Indonesia conceded to UN intervention, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand did eventually deploy personnel to the Australian-led International Force for East Timor (INTERFET) and to the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET).

The norm of non-interference continues to impact on regional affairs, but some change is underway. Rizal Sukma from the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in Jakarta, who was involved in drafting the 2003 proposal, noted that Indonesia had failed to address the question of non-interference in view of its proposed mechanisms for conflict resolution and peace building (Khalik, 2003). Sukma asserted that Indonesia did not want to question the principle, though he claimed a more flexible interpretation was necessary in order to address internal security problems within the region. This episode once again demonstrated the intricate balance norm entrepreneurs in ASEAN have to maintain between the ‘ASEAN Way’ and efforts to realign these norms to address emerging issues in a changing security environment. Prior to Indonesia's proposal, Malaysia's Anwar Ibrahim and Thailand's Surin Pitsuwan endeavored to adjust ASEAN's founding principles. Their concepts of ‘constructive intervention’ and ‘flexible engagement’, respectively, met with considerable resistance at the time (Acharya, 2005, p. 150; Bellamy, 2004, p. 97; Bellamy & Drummond, 2011, p. 187; Haacke, 2005). Acharya thus asserts, “the most significant barrier to peace operations in Asia ... is normative” (Acharya, 2005, p. 149). These reactions also explain the lingering skepticism towards the global ‘Responsibility to Protect’ (R2P) debate. Alongside its premise to address human security in the context of government atrocities, R2P has also been invoked to legitimize the forcible delivery of humanitarian assistance without a government's consent in response to the initial resistance of Myanmar's government to accept foreign assistance following cyclone Nargis, and it has been argued that the principle is making some normative headway in the region (Bellamy & Drummond, 2011, p. 263).

Following Indonesia's proposal, one can discern growing support for the notion of a regional peacekeeping capability as several ASEAN members developed their peacekeeping capacities. Primarily, regional governments value the participation in multilateral peace operations under UN auspices, as this helps advance their interna-

tional standing, multilateral diplomacy, and defense capabilities. Since 2003, Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines have substantially increased their contributions of police, military experts, and troops to UNPKO. Jakarta has invested considerably in the country's peacekeeping capacities as Indonesia intends to be among the top ten contributing countries to UNPKO by 2020 (Luftia, 2012). Also the Philippines have more than tripled contributions to UNPKO since 2003 and numbers of troop deployment, in particular, have sharply increased (UN Peacekeeping Statistics, 2013).

While these developments are less pronounced in other ASEAN countries, there is a discernable regional trend to advance peacekeeping capacities. Singapore's contribution has been modest since the country deployed several hundred peacekeepers to UNPKO in East Timor. Brunei started deploying modest numbers of peacekeepers in 2006 (UN Peacekeeping Statistics, 2013). Cambodia has been a steady contributor to UNPKO since 2004. Thailand's contributions dropped following the 2006 military coup, increased again from 2010, but dropped again sharply in mid-2012. In 2010, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand also established the ASEAN Peacekeeping Centre Association, a first step towards the establishment of the ASEAN Peacekeeping Centres Network that was endorsed by the ADMM in its 2011 Joint Declaration. The network's purpose is "aimed to promote and enhance cooperation among defence and armed forces within ASEAN" to leverage member states' peacekeeping competencies and capabilities, which would benefit both UN-led operations and regional initiatives (ADMM, 2011a).

Signaling a significant shift in attitude towards the UN, Vietnam first expressed support for UNPKO in 2006. Hanoi has yet to contribute peacekeepers to UNPKO, which might be due to political opposition as much as capacity ("Vietnam Mulls Participation", 2006). In developing its peacekeeping capacity, Vietnam is also deepening bilateral relationships with extra-regional partners ("Australia Expands", 2012; "Vietnam, Bangladesh", 2012). Myanmar and Laos are yet to participate in this development. But the shift is obvious. Carlyle Thayer of the Australian Defence Force Academy thus proposed that "there is normative pressure building up regionally in support of peacekeeping under U.N. auspices" ("Vietnam Mulls Participation", 2006).

Furthermore, these developments are paralleled by a gradual reinterpretation of the norm of non-interference. The language of the 2009 APSC Roadmap entails a subtle shift from the 2007 ASEAN Charter, which had already indicated a more flexible interpretation of non-interference vis-à-vis the achievement of collective goals in economic affairs, but also increasingly in view of regional security (Bellamy & Drummond, 2011, p. 189). The Roadmap makes no mention of the norm of non-interference, a notable omission in view of its security context. Instead, it emphasizes the objective to "strengthen efforts in maintaining respect for territorial integrity, sovereignty and unity of ASEAN Member States [by] addressing threats and challenges that may affect the territorial integrity of ASEAN Member States including those posed by separatism" (ASEAN Secretariat, 2009a, p. 13). This objective reflects Indonesia's original proposal to develop 'standby arrangements' for a peacekeeping force as a "maximum security response ... that could one day help settle disputes such as those in Aceh and the southern Philippines" (ASEAN Secretariat, 2004a). Two regional missions highlight the potential of this arrangement. In Aceh, Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand supplied approximately 40 percent of the military observers

and civilian monitors to the 2005–2006 Aceh Monitoring Mission (AMM) that was established by the European Union, and which facilitated the implementation of the 2005 Helsinki Memorandum of Understanding.⁶ Yet, the security component of the International Monitoring Team (IMT) in Central Mindanao comes closest to the idea of a regional force.⁷ The IMT was established in 2004 under the Government of the Philippines-Moro Islamic Liberation Front Coordinating Committee on the Cessation of Hostilities (CCCH) and has since been credited with successfully reducing the number of ceasefire violations (Bendahara & Au, 2012). In October 2012, in view of a peace agreement that was signed in early 2014, a Philippine government representative raised the idea of an international peacekeeping force through the existing IMT structure to facilitate demobilization, disarmament, and reintegration (DDR) of the armed forces of the MILF (Arguillas, 2012). The mission's success is also due to the favorable conditions of the constellation. Both Malaysia and Indonesia, who contribute a substantial share of the peacekeepers, have played significant roles in mediating the conflicts in Central Mindanao since the 1990s.

The development of regional peacekeeping capacities will further benefit from initiatives at the level of ASEAN-centered multilateral mechanisms such as the ARF and the ADMM-Plus. At the 2010 ADMM-Plus meeting in Hanoi, defense ministers agreed to establish a Peacekeeping Working Group to identify capability gaps as well as opportunities for collaboration to enhance member states' contributions to peacekeeping operations (Department of National Defense, Republic of the Philippines, 2012). Member countries of the ARF have conducted annual Peacekeeping Expert Meetings since 2007, focusing on capacity building, civil-military cooperation, and regional cooperation in peacekeeping, post-conflict peace building, and HADR (ASEAN Regional Forum [ARF], 2010).

The convergence of peacekeeping and aspects of NTS and HADR creates opportunities to expand military cooperation. The APSC Roadmap instructs member states to create a “cohesive, peaceful, stable and resilient region with shared responsibility for comprehensive security ... which goes beyond the requirements of traditional security but also takes into account non-traditional aspects vital to regional and national resilience” (p. 11). Regional cooperation on some of the less contentious issues of NTS such as environmental disasters can thus facilitate military-to-military ties through joint training, operations, and exercises as well as the development of a regional standby arrangement for disaster relief. As such, the non-traditional security agenda could become the platform on which to advance traditional security cooperation.

NON-TRADITIONAL SECURITY: ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES

The NTS agenda advances the intractable debate on normative realignments as it questions the *modus operandi* of the ‘ASEAN Way’, which hitherto had been framed within traditional security concerns. Since the late 1990s, ASEAN had to manage a

6 Thailand, Malaysia, Brunei, the Philippines, and Singapore provided monitors to the mission alongside the European Union, Norway, and Switzerland.

7 At the time of writing, the IMT's Security Component included 11 peacekeepers from Malaysia, 15 peacekeepers from Brunei, 15 peacekeepers from Indonesia, and two peacekeepers from Norway.

range of security issues, such as transnational crime and terrorism as well as natural and man-made environmental disasters, which initiated a gradual shift towards a more qualified form of sovereignty that allowed some degree of interference at the regional level. Sukma (2008, p. 147) argues that while the doctrine of non-interference continues to remain relevant, it needs to be interpreted in the context of member states' interdependence and their vulnerability to transboundary issues and spillover effects of domestic events in member countries. Bellamy and Drummond (2011, p. 196) assert that "many Southeast Asian states are moving away from the traditional notion of sovereignty ... towards accepting a localised variant of sovereignty as responsibility" that allows for criticism of domestic policies and limited diplomatic pressure in the event of humanitarian crises. Also Caballero-Anthony and Haywood (2010, p. 7) note a gradual shift in attitudes towards the principles of state sovereignty and non-interference, with 'regional' security concerns at times outweighing concerns over 'interference'. They conclude that "the 'ASEAN way' itself is not an entirely static concept and what is considered interference in the domestic affairs of a country is an ever-widening notion" (Caballero-Anthony & Haywood, 2010, p. 5).

These dynamics became evident in ASEAN's – albeit belated – response to cyclone Nargis that devastated parts of Myanmar in 2008. ASEAN, long criticized for its hands-off approach to the Burmese regime, raised concerns over human security and eventually responded despite initial concerns over the prerogative of non-interference. Nargis triggered the largest humanitarian operation ever coordinated by ASEAN, who successfully mediated between the Burmese regime and international aid donors, diminishing fears of political intervention in order to manage the humanitarian crisis (Emmerson, 2008a, p. 45). Although critics pointed out the non-political nature of ASEAN's involvement, some observers argued that the cyclone "transformed Myanmar from ASEAN's embarrassment into its opportunity" (Emmerson, 2008a, p. 45) as the Association's relationship with the regime became an asset in the aftermath of the disaster (see also Bellamy & Drummond, 2011, p. 191).

The experience highlighted the need for more formal mechanisms to facilitate a coordinated regional response to such disasters. It further demonstrated the role ASEAN militaries could play in assisting relief efforts (Gunawan, 2008) and illustrated the significance of cooperation with non-state actors as well as civil-military coordination. This multi-faceted approach widens the security discourse in the region towards a pluralistic response to security challenges, further eroding the Westphalian logic of state-centered security (Emmerson, 2008b, p. 147; Sukma, 2008). Then-ASEAN Secretary-General Surin Pitsuwan, who was credited with putting pressure on Myanmar to cooperate, later proclaimed, "this is the New ASEAN – a community that puts people at the centre of concern" (Pitsuwan, 2008, p. xx). The response to Nargis highlighted ASEAN's efforts at "working around the sensitivities to external interference and avoiding charges of intrusion by emphasising the cooperative character of the NTS agenda in which sovereignty is not trumped or superseded, but rather, pooled" (Caballero-Anthony, 2008, p. 207). Since Nargis, this approach has been further institutionalized.

The establishment of a legally binding ASEAN disaster mitigation mechanism draws from the lessons learned, but progress remains slow. The ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) was designed as a

“proactive regional framework for cooperation, coordination, technical assistance, and resource mobilisation in all aspects of disaster management” (ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response [AADMER], 2005). The process was initiated several weeks before the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami and ASEAN Foreign Ministers ratified AADMER in July 2005. It took more than four years for the agreement to come into effect, however, and overall progress has been criticized as too slow in view of the frequent disasters in the region (Amul, 2012).

The ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre), established in November 2011 and based in Jakarta, serves as the hub for coordinated disaster response under the mandate of the AADMER. The Centre faced its first major challenge with typhoon Haiyan, which devastated parts of the central Philippines in November 2013. While the Centre had been monitoring the movement of the typhoon and deployed a field team to the region prior to the typhoon's landfall to coordinate relief efforts, some observers were critical of ASEAN's response, noting that regional relief efforts were coordinated bilaterally, rather than through ASEAN (Graham, 2013). A week after landfall, there was still no clear chain of command to coordinate relief efforts, a gap that the Centre would have been mandated to fill. Further, the naval relief effort, a significant dimension of HADR in a predominantly maritime region, was being led by extra-regional states, with ASEAN navies mostly absent (Graham, 2013). Thailand's foreign minister Surapong commented that “a quick response team is needed for ASEAN, the 10 countries have human resources and enough equipment, so it is time to share and cooperate” (Graham, 2013).

The AADMER is also the most significant step yet towards a more functional level of security cooperation. Article 9 of the AADMER mandates the establishment of an ASEAN Standby Arrangement for HADR deployed on a voluntary basis and based on the state's capabilities. Under the ASEAN Standby Arrangements and Standard Operating Procedures (SASOP), the AHA Centre now co-organizes the multi-level ASEAN Regional Disaster Emergency Response Simulation Exercise (ARDEX) that began in 2005, where ASEAN member states practice, assess, and review the readiness of disaster emergency response mechanisms (Pacific Disaster Center, 2013). ARDEX-13, which was hosted by Vietnam shortly before typhoon Haiyan, was the first opportunity to test the operational capability of the AHA Centre.

In the 2011 ADMM declaration, defense ministers adopted plans to use military assets and capacities for HADR operations (ADMM, 2011b, p. 4). The establishment of the standby arrangement is perceived as a matter of urgency that requires the acceleration of “the effective operations of the ASEAN military in HADR operations regionally and internationally ... to minimise loss to life and property due to natural and man-made disasters, while respecting the sovereignty of the affected State” (ADMM, 2011b, p. 4 and Annex D, p. 2). Indonesia and Singapore co-hosted the first ASEAN HADR Table-Top Exercise (ASEAN HADR TTX) in July 2011 as a step towards practical cooperation of ASEAN militaries. The second HADR TTX was co-hosted by Brunei and Singapore in 2013 in an effort to strengthen ASEAN centrality especially in the context of military-to-military cooperation as well as the coordination with civil HADR mechanisms such as the AHA Centre (Wood, 2013).

Progress towards the standby arrangement has been limited to the ongoing identification of member states' assets and capacities. The implementation of the

AADMER work programme is the primary responsibility of the member states, which have to develop the policy and legal framework at the national level to facilitate the establishment of necessary structures and mechanisms for implementation, coordination, and enforcement (ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management, 2010, p. 74). Without a definite timeframe, these processes will take time. Voluntary contributions by ASEAN member states, “preferably on a regular basis”, along with contributions from dialogue partners are meant to finance the implementation of the AADMER work programme (AADMER, 2012). Without secure funding, the viability of the mechanism cannot be ascertained. Also the voluntary nature of the standby arrangement should not surprise critics of ASEAN’s *modus operandi*. The ‘ASEAN Way’ still sets the pace for the development of a regional mechanism that provides the clearest outline yet for a regional force.

Notwithstanding the shortcomings of this mechanism, progress made towards regional responses to environmental, or ‘soft’, security challenges may stand to facilitate the emergence of a collective response to ‘hard’ security challenges, though a regional mechanism for conflict resolution is unlikely to be realized in the near future. ASEAN’s preference for a ‘soft’, or lower, degree of institutionalization means that the normative realignment currently underway will take time to manifest itself in institutions and practices. The prevalence of NTS threats to national and regional security will continue to highlight the need to accelerate this development.

To adequately address current security challenges will require regional governments to sacrifice a degree of their sovereignty. As the norm of sovereignty as responsibility as a concession to the primacy of individual human rights and security gains traction (Bellamy & Drummond, 2011, p. 186), one can be hopeful that the conflicts that have festered under the protective fold of the ‘ASEAN Way’ for decades and that have led to many ‘man-made disasters’ across the region will be subject to closer regional scrutiny in the near future. The establishment of a regional force as a conflict resolution mechanism is still eyed with caution, as it is perceived to be a challenge to the norms that help uphold regional peace and stability. Yet, a regional force could also be a powerful statement consolidating the level of trust and the sense of community within ASEAN. This may allow for an open dialogue also on those conflicts that could, if further ignored by regional governments, adversely affect community building towards a “peaceful and stable Southeast Asia where each nation is at peace with itself”, the very purpose that is at the core of ASEAN’s existence (ASEAN Secretariat, 1997).

CONCLUSION

I have argued that ASEAN’s cooperation on some non-traditional security challenges stands to facilitate the deepening of traditional security cooperation. The Association has made considerable progress towards adapting to the changing security environment, most notably in the area of defense diplomacy and the management of non-traditional, specifically environmental, security challenges. Military cooperation within ASEAN remains limited, as indicated by the lack of progress towards a regional mechanism for conflict resolution, but plays an increasing role in HADR. Thus far, commitments to a regional mechanism for conflict resolution are not designed to

move beyond the level of political rhetoric. The main obstacle has been the question of whether and under what conditions ASEAN's approach to security should include a right to intervene in a member country's internal affairs. The norms framing South-east Asian security cooperation are only slowly succumbing to the changing security environment regional governments have to face as they have to consider whether and when to prioritize human security over state security and external versus internal security threats (Emmerson, 2008a, p. 6). ASEAN's response to a range of NTS issues in recent years, such as the cyclone Nargis, suggests that these new challenges have contributed to a realignment of the 'ASEAN Way'.

ASEAN governments have come to realize that multilateral defense cooperation is necessary in order to effectively address NTS challenges. ASEAN could benefit from a deepening of regional defense cooperation, as it consolidates confidence among its members. The objective of establishing an HADR standby force is encouraging. The nascent initiative seen in the network of national peacekeeping training centers provides a framework for advancing joint initiatives that could well include all ASEAN members in the future. The security component of the peacekeeping operation in Central Mindanao is a positive example of an initiative that is already predominantly regional. These initiatives indicate that the notion of a regional force, which was outright rejected ten years ago, is slowly gaining traction in the regional normative framework. The 'soft' institutionalization of security and defense cooperation is at a pace observers might criticize as too slow in view of the urgent needs faced by many disaster- and crisis-struck communities in the region. However, acknowledging the achievements of ASEAN to date, an ASEAN peacekeeping force might yet be a not-too-distant possibility. Whether it would work towards resolving some of ASEAN's long-standing internal conflicts or whether it would serve to ward off international scrutiny of ASEAN's at times questionable approach to protecting its citizens' human rights remains to be seen.



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Separatist Conflicts in the ASEAN Region: Comparing Southern Thailand and Mindanao

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► Rupprecht, K. (2014). Separatist conflicts in the ASEAN region: Comparing Southern Thailand and Mindanao. *ASEAS – Austrian Journal of South-East Asian Studies*, 7(1), 21-40.

This paper examines two cases of separatist conflict, namely the conflict in Southern Thailand and the conflict in the southern Philippines. Both conflicts have been long-lasting, extremely violent, and embedded in ethnic and religious sentiments. The comparison shows that there are structural analogies in both conflict cases that indicate similar root causes. State-internal conflicts of this scale are not purely a matter of national politics. States and non-state actors have influenced – and are still influencing – both separatist conflicts in various ways and towards different outcomes. It becomes apparent that non-traditional security issues that are linked to state-internal conflicts demand a more proactive role of ASEAN in the field of conflict management.

Keywords: ASEAN; Conflict Management; Mindanao; Separatism; Southern Thailand

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In diesem Beitrag werden separatistische Konflikte am Beispiel Südthailands und der südlichen Philippinen untersucht. Beide Konflikte dauern bereits lange an, sind äußerst gewalttätig und von ethnischen und religiösen Spannungen geprägt. Durch einen Vergleich der beiden Krisenregionen werden strukturelle Gemeinsamkeiten sichtbar, die auf ähnliche Konfliktursachen hinweisen. Binnenstaatliche Konflikte solchen Ausmaßes sind nicht nur eine Frage nationaler Politik. Staatliche und nichtstaatliche AkteurInnen nahmen und nehmen auf unterschiedliche Art und Weise und mit unterschiedlichen Zielen Einfluss auf separatistische Konflikte. Es wird deutlich, dass nicht-traditionelle Sicherheitsfragen in Verbindung mit binnenstaatlichen Konflikten eine proaktivere Rolle ASEANs im Rahmen des Konfliktmanagements notwendig machen.

Schlagworte: ASEAN; Konfliktmanagement; Mindanao; Separatismus; Südthailand

INTRODUCTION

“The days when domestic political controversies could not be discussed in regional settings are over” (Pitsuwan, 2008, p. xx). This statement by former ASEAN Secretary-General Surin Pitsuwan represents a progressive stance on the operational mode of ASEAN. Since Southeast Asia as a region is seeking to become an integrated community, this no longer allows for keeping state-internal issues out of regional discussions. “New kinds of dangers have arisen that cannot be solved by governments alone. These threats have taken root in the cracks between sovereignties, the spaces between states” (Pitsuwan, 2008, p. xix).

Stability and security are major driving forces in regional integration. Founded in 1967 against the backdrop of the Cold War, ASEAN has always seen its core purpose in regional security concerns. However, ASEAN’s more recent aspiration to establish a Security Community by 2015 is strikingly contrasted by the large number of prevailing conflicts in the region. ASEAN’s working principle of non-interference normatively excludes the organization from playing a proactive role in conflict management, particularly when it comes to state-internal conflicts. However, this type of conflict can indeed become a concern for the region when it evolves to a stage where negative impacts such as criminal activities, refugee flows, and terrorism spill across national borders. It can be argued that ASEAN’s current operational norms are insufficient to curb complex security issues in the region and hence pose a serious roadblock to efficient security cooperation.

To substantiate this hypothesis and exemplify the dilemma described above, the first part of this paper takes a look at two specific cases of separatist conflict, namely the Patani-Malays of Southern Thailand and the Bangsamoro of Mindanao in the southern Philippines. The choice of subject matter is far from random as both conflict cases have special relevance to ASEAN and the region of Southeast Asia. On the symbolic side, Southern Thailand represents the fault line of Southeast Asian diversity – precisely the geographical meeting point of maritime (predominant Muslim) and continental (predominant Buddhist) Southeast Asia. Prevailing conflict here surely has implications for the region’s sense of being a united community. The case of Mindanao in the southern Philippines, on the other side, highlights the urgent need to address non-traditional security issues imposed by state-internal conflict. Illegal arms trade, kidnappings, and terrorist activities in the border region around the Sulu Sea have frequently challenged the security of the whole Southeast Asian region in the past.

The second part examines how various actors have managed these two conflicts, moving from the national to the bilateral, regional, and global sphere. State-internal conflicts of this scale are not purely a matter of domestic politics, even if ASEAN and its members would like to perceive it that way. States and non-state actors have influenced (and continue to influence) the separatist conflicts at hand in various ways and towards different outcomes.

PATANI AND MINDANAO – HISTORICAL ROOTS

The Patani-Malays in Southern Thailand

The separatist movement of the Patani-Malays concerns the three southernmost border provinces of Thailand: Pattani,¹ Yala, and Narathiwat. In contrast to the predominantly Buddhist Thai nation state in which Muslims make up a minority of approximately four percent, the population in these provinces consists of 80 percent ethnic Malay-Muslims (Abuza, 2009, p. 26; McCargo, 2009, p. 2).

Historically, the region was part of the ancient Malay kingdom Langkasuka. Under the influence of Indian and Arab merchants, the Court of Patani converted to Islam in 1457 (Yuniarto, 2004, pp. 36–40). The subsequent centuries saw alternating periods of independence and Siamese suzerainty. The Patani sultanate became a semi-independent vassal kingdom and tributary to the Siamese Empire of Ayutthaya (Abuza, 2009, p. 11; Haberkorn, 2013, p. 190; Mahmud, 2008, p. 4). The influence of Western colonization finally brought about the complete incorporation into the Siamese state with the Anglo-Siamese Treaty of 1909 (Abuza, 2009, p. 11; Tan, 2007, p. 267).

As Patani perceives itself as an entity under foreign control, rebellions and uprisings against Siamese rule² have always been part of its history. With Bangkok's intensified efforts to disseminate Thai national identity in the first decades of the twentieth century, the Patani separatist movement started to manifest itself politically. Especially the two authoritarian governments of Phibun Songkram (1938–1944 and 1948–1957) enforced strict assimilation policies “that adversely affected all facets of Muslim identity and ethnicity, including matters of attire, bureaucratic administration, education, judicial settlements and revenue collection” (Tan, 2007, p. 267). The 1950s also saw the systematic resettlement of Buddhists from the Northeast of Thailand into the Patani region (Abuza, 2009, p. 15).

Consequently, three principal Muslim separatist groups emerged in Patani, which demonstrates the continuing heterogeneity of the insurgents' political agenda. The first group, the Barisan Nasional Pembebasan Patani (Patani National Liberation Front or BNPP) founded by Malay aristocrats, was mainly “a conservative group committed to orthodox Islam. As stated in its constitution, the basic political ideology of the BNPP [was] based on the Al-Quran, Al Hadith and other sources of Islamic law” (Che Man, 1990, p. 105). However, the BNPP was divided into several fractions that favored either independence, autonomy within Thailand, or integration into Malaysia (Abuza, 2009, p. 17). In contrast, the Bertubuhan Pembebasan Pattani Bersatu (Patani United Liberation Organization or PULO) was more pragmatic and less religious in its outlook. With a broader base than the BNPP, its declared goal was to achieve an independent sovereign Muslim state through armed struggle, which also led to the establishment of its armed wing, the Pattani United Liberation Army (PULA) (Abuza,

1 Annotation regarding terminology: ‘Pattani’ is the Thai name of the modern-day province; by contrast, ‘Patani’ is a Malay term that includes much deeper historical connotations. This paper will consistently use the Malay term – not to take a position, but in order to indicate the related aspects of constructed identity which are so essential for the nature of separatism (cf. McCargo, 2009, p. 1f).

2 Siam was renamed Thailand in 1939.

2009, p. 18). The third group, the Barisan Revolusi Nasional (National Revolutionary Front or BRN) “was opposed to the nationalist agenda of PULO and mistrusted the BNPP’s goal of restoring the feudal Pattani sultanate” (Abuza, 2009, p. 18). With close ties to the Communist Party of Malaya, it had a much more leftist, anti-capitalist orientation (Abuza, 2009, p. 20). Besides these three main separatist groups, there was a wide range of smaller groups that emerged especially in the 1970s, but all of them were highly prone to fractionalization and internally divided on issues of ideologies, strategies, and aims. During the 1980s and 1990s, the insurgency movement in the South waned partly because of increased divisions among all its sub-groups (Haberkorn, 2013, p. 191).

Elements of armed struggle have existed in the Patani separatist movement since its beginning. However, in 2004 under the government of Thaksin Shinawatra, the conflict was revived with a new dimension of violence. Right after several coordinated actions in January 2004 that included raids of army camps, weapons and ammunition theft, the burning of schools, and several bomb attacks, the Thai Prime Minister declared martial law across the three southern provinces (Haberkorn, 2013, p. 192). The situation has greatly deteriorated since then. The International Crisis Group (ICG) estimated in a report from December 2012 that “[between] 4 January 2004 and 30 November 2012, violent incidents in the southernmost provinces killed 5,473 people and injured 9,693” (ICG, 2012a, p. 4). By these numbers, the separatist conflict in Patani is one of the most violent, contemporary state-internal conflicts in Southeast Asia.

In early 2013, the Thai government agreed to start peace negotiations with one insurgent group, the BRN (Rustici, 2013). Whether or not this step leads to a nascent ‘peace process’ in Patani is yet to be seen. The talks had to be postponed repeatedly due to the recent political turmoil in Thailand’s capital (Hunt, 2014). As long as political stability in Bangkok is not restored, the insurgency in the South will most likely remain at the periphery of the Thai government’s agenda.

The Bangsamoro in the Southern Philippines

The history of the Bangsamoro can be described as a continuous struggle against foreign domination in three parts: first against the Spanish, later the American colonizers, and finally against the Philippine nation state (Hussin, 2003, p. 11; Wadi, 2008, p. 21). Similar to the Patani-Malays, the Bangsamoro can look back on a pre-modern history of autonomous statehood. Before the arrival of colonialism, Islamized groups inhabited the southern regions of the Philippine archipelago, including the main island of Mindanao and the adjoining islands in the Sulu Sea (Che Man, 1990, p. 19). Unlike the Patani-Malays, the Bangsamoro are not a homogeneous ethnic group. The Tausug, Maguindanao, and Maranao are the three main tribes of in total 13 ethnolinguistic groups that make up the Bangsamoro people. In pre-colonial times, there were several sultanates in the region of Mindanao, each of them a separate political entity (Abreu, 2008, pp. 9–10).

The arrival of the Spaniards in 1565 stopped the spread of Islam in the Philippines. With their historical baggage of the Iberian *reconquista*, the Spanish instantly perceived the encountered Muslims as natural enemies. The Moro-Spanish Wars lasted

for about three hundred years, but although the political power of the local Muslim sultanates declined towards the end of the nineteenth century, Spanish colonialism never managed to fully subjugate the Moro people (Abreu, 2008, p. 12; Che Man, 1990, p. 22; May, 2013, p. 222). Spain had to cede its colony to the United States in 1898. This handover also included the Moro region even though the Iberian colonizers had never held full sovereignty over these territories (Che Man, 1990, p. 23).

As new colonial masters, the Americans introduced policies aimed at incorporating the Bangsamoro into the Philippine state. But what was portrayed as greater tolerance towards the Muslim ethnic groups, the Moros experienced as encroachment of their Islamic identity (Abreu, 2008, p. 13; Che Man, 1990, p. 23). The most pervasive change in this regard consisted of the new landownership laws, which were fundamental for the land-grab of untitled ancestral land by American companies and transnational corporations (Abreu, 2008, p. 14; Rodell, 2007, p. 228). Sporadic Moro uprisings did not prevent resettlement schemes that brought Christian Filipinos to the region and substantially changed the demographic make-up of Mindanao (Tan, 2003, p. 5).

The Philippines achieved independence in 1946, but for the Muslims of Mindanao this meant just another transfer of colonial mastery. Continued internal migration aggravated the situation and gave rise to increasing tensions between traditional landowners and new settlers, between local Muslims and migrant Christians. By 1970, the Moros only made up a mere 21 percent of the population of Mindanao (Rodell, 2007, p. 228). Finally, the Jabidah Massacre³ in 1968 sparked the political establishment of the Moro Independence Movement which preceded the foundation of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) in 1972. The aim of the MNLF was to fight for Bangsamoro independence and for the return of ancestral lands. The group received support from the international Islamic community and was granted observer status in the Organization of Islamic Cooperation⁴ (OIC) (May, 2013, pp. 222–223).

While it seemed impossible to effectively counter the militant movement, President Marcos declared martial law in September 1972. The fighting continued in the early 1970s, killing several thousands and triggering massive refugee flows (May, 2013, p. 223). After the situation reached a stalemate in 1975, peace negotiations facilitated by Libya and the OIC led to the signing of the Tripoli Agreement in 1976 that stipulated an area of Muslim autonomy for 13 provinces. However, tensions within the MNLF caused an internal split and led to the establishment of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). Unlike the secularist MNLF, the MILF propagated a religious turn in the separatist struggle and, unsatisfied with the reached compromise, pushed for the continuation of militant struggle. The MNLF itself later disagreed with the Philippine government on the implementation of the Tripoli Agreement and continued fighting as well.

After the end of the Marcos dictatorship in 1986, the new Aquino government reopened negotiations with the MNLF, which culminated in provisions for an Au-

3 During the Jabidah Massacre on 18 March 1968, at least 28 Muslim soldiers of the Philippine army that had received training for an invasion of Sabah were killed. The resulting scandal drew international attention and caused frictions in the relationship with Malaysia (Guitierrez, 2000, p. 309; Rodell, 2007, p. 229).

4 The OIC was formerly known as Organization of the Islamic Conference.

tonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM). Successive Philippine governments have since repeatedly tried to negotiate and implement the ARMM but, faced with a fractioned separatist movement, all these efforts have not brought lasting peace to Mindanao (May, 2013, pp. 224–226; Rodell, 2007, p. 241). It was estimated in 2011 that since the 1970s, around 120,000 people have been killed in violent clashes and about 2 million people have been displaced by the separatist conflict (May, 2013, p. 230).

The 1990s saw the emergence of another, even more radical group. The Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) has close ties to the network of Al-Qaeda and stresses the notion of a jihad against the Christian world rather than mere Bangsamoro separatism. After 9/11, the MILF eventually distanced itself from the ASG and was willing in 2002 to continue the peace talks with the government that had started in 1997. These difficult and often interrupted negotiations were concluded in late 2012 with a framework agreement between the MILF and the Philippine government. Both parties agreed to establish a Transition Commission with the task to draft the Bangsamoro Basic Law that would provide for a Transition Authority. A final peace agreement was signed in March 2014, providing a roadmap for the ongoing transition process that aims to have the MILF participate in the 2016 elections. Even though this latest agreement can be seen as a historical breakthrough, its validity can only be proven by successful implementation and strong political commitment from both sides (Esquerra & Burgonio, 2014).

STRUCTURAL SIMILARITIES

Political Environment

At first glance, the conflict areas of Patani and Mindanao share striking similarities in terms of their geographical distance relative to their national centers of political power. Both regions are situated in the southern periphery of their respective states; this constrains direct control and influence by the central governments. Both regions are regarded as poor and underdeveloped compared to the rest of their countries (Che Man, 1990, pp. 24–36; Funston, 2008, pp. 6–8; Rivera, 2008, pp. 33–35). It has often been argued that socio-economic grievances strongly influence and perpetuate separatist movements. Unequal development and economic marginalization introduce the perception of internal colonialism, which further fuels resentment against the central political system (Che Man, 1990, p. 113; Diaz, 2003, pp. 44–45; Gutierrez, 2000, p. 331).

It is remarkable that both separatist movements emerged in the political context of the 1960s and 1970s and underwent profound fractionalization processes. On the one hand, the various splinter groups in each movement created a messy and complicated setting, which makes it difficult to voice clear demands and poses obstacles to official peace negotiations. On the other hand, the central governments may not be considered solid institutions either. Both Thailand and the Philippines experienced various political shifts over the past few decades, which repeatedly changed the governmental actors and the overall political environment in both conflicts (Chalk, Rabasa, Rosenau, & Piggott, 2009, pp. 37–40; Hussin, 2003, pp. 14–15; McCargo, 2009, pp. 55–56).

The aims of both separatist movements are not internally coherent either. Their demands range from outright independence to mere greater autonomy (Funston, 2008, pp. 42–43). In contrast, the position of the central governments is clearly aiming at protecting national sovereignty. Neither Bangkok nor Manila has ever signaled approval for letting their violence-prone southern regions create independent states. The protection of sovereignty, national territory, and its borders is of paramount importance to them (Gutierrez, 2000, pp. 307–309; McCargo, 2009, p. 60; Santos, 2005, pp. 55–57).

Finally, it should be highlighted that in both nation states the structures for political participation have severe shortcomings, especially with regards to the inclusion of ethnic Muslim minorities into the broader political system. In Patani, for example, the centralized apparatus of Thai bureaucracy has brought about major political grievances for the local Muslims as they feel misunderstood and discriminated against by non-local Thai government officials who do not speak their language and originate from a different religious and cultural background. Efforts to install a more representative bureaucracy have failed because Patani-Malays that entered government service adapted to the bureaucratic culture and were often seen as “traitors” by their own communities (McCargo, 2009, pp. 57–59; Pitsuwan, 1982a, p. 210). In Mindanao, the Bangsamoro had to make an equally disenchanting experience with the administrative body of the ARMM which, established in 1990, “quickly became a massive and inept bureaucracy, a hindrance to, rather than an effective tool for, the delivery of services” and “an additional layer of government between Manila and the existing provincial structure” (Collier, 2005, p. 168). In short, the mismanagement of political participation sets a vicious cycle into motion: As the Muslim minorities feel disregarded and oppressed, they resort to violence and are consequently mistrusted even more by the political system (Diaz, 2003, pp. 23–30; Funston, 2008, p. 10; Pitsuwan, 1982a, pp. 269–271).

Ideological Frames

The construction of a specific identity is vital for any secessionist movement because it provides the lines of argumentation that are used to contextualize, justify, and legitimize the separatist struggle and its leaders’ moral authority (Hafez, 2003, p. 20). Imagining an ‘alternative community’ opposed to the existing nation of the dominating state thus lies at the core of every form of separatism (Collier, 2005, pp. 155–160; McCargo, 2012, pp. 112–116). When comparing the Patani and the Bangsamoro cases, there are two powerful social constructs that significantly shape the separatists’ identity and meaning. Ethnicity and Islam are undeniably the most important cornerstones here, constituting identity markers with both internal and external aspects (Che Man, 1990, p. 2, p. 12–14).

Ethnicity is a social construct based on, among others, shared history, geography, culture, language, traditions, and beliefs. It serves as an underlying justification to demand an independent nation state because ethnic groups themselves can be regarded as “candidates for nationhood” (Suhrke & Noble, 1977, p. 4). Gutierrez (2000) for example concludes after examining the emergence of the Bangsamoro identity in Mindanao, “They are thus a nation within a nation, aspiring one day for their own

state but content for the moment to accept the limitations of the historical conditions they cannot change” (p. 335). A similar statement could easily be made for the Patani-Malays of Southern Thailand. For both minorities, ethnicity is a political tool to establish their ethno-cultural divergence as opposed political identity vis-à-vis the Thai/Filipino nation state (Gutierrez, 2000, pp. 312–314; Pitsuwan, 1982a, pp. 8–11). A shared history of violent struggle and enduring resistance against forced assimilation plays a significant role in this context because the perception of the Patani/Bangsamoro ethnic identity being threatened by outsiders fuels the separatist movements (Che Man, 1990, p. 74). The aspect of ethnicity links both separatist movements to the wider Malay world of Southeast Asia. Both conflict areas border on nation states dominated by ethnic Malays (Malaysia and Indonesia). Besides the idea of a pan-Malayness, historical ties of ethnic kinship cross national borders and thus forge connections that are essential to influence and sustain the separatist movements in Southern Thailand and Mindanao (Pitsuwan, 1982a, pp. 259–262). However, a distinction between both cases has to be made with regards to ethnic identity. Unlike the Patani-Malays, the Bangsamoro are not a homogeneous ethnic group and have only been constructed as an ethnic identity with the political rise of the separatist movement since the 1970s. The subgroups of the Bangsamoro may share a history of struggle against foreign rule but they are still distinct from each other and do not speak a common language, for example. This is one of the main reasons for a deeper fractionalization among the Bangsamoro separatists (Gutierrez, 2000, pp. 321–323).

Islam is in fact closely intertwined with both ethnic concepts of Patani and Bangsamoro because it has pre-colonial, historical roots in the areas and constitutes a dominant aspect of practiced culture. Nevertheless, it can be seen as its own dimension in the ideological framework because the aspect of religion distinguishes the separatist minorities in both cases from the dominant national identity. As religion is politicized and “provides an ideal ‘blueprint’ for the development of an informal political organization” (Cohen, 1969, p. 210), its ideological influence on both separatist movements is preeminent. Transmigration that brought in settlers of different ethnic and religious background has aggravated communal tensions in both cases, which are often interpreted in religious terms and fuel fear and anxiety on both sides of each conflict (Kamlan, 2005, p. 101; McCargo, 2012, p. 47; Yusuf, 2009, p. 212). Islam then does not only provide the overarching moral justification to fight against non-Muslim ‘oppressors’ but also connects the separatists to the global Muslim community, or *ummah*, which has Muslim countries offering recognition and support for the Muslims of Patani and Mindanao. Besides that, pan-Islamic and Islamic reformist influences from abroad have also substantively shaped the ideologies of both separatist movements (Lingga, 2005, pp. 84–86; Pitsuwan, 1982a, pp. 262–265).

Cross-Border Effects and Regional Significance

The conflicts in Southern Thailand and Mindanao have both transcended national borders and are affecting the region of Southeast Asia at large. As religious and ethnic ties connect the Malay-Muslims of Malaysia with the minorities in Patani and Mindanao, Malaysia as the closest neighboring country has been involved in and affected by the development of both separatist conflicts. Violence in the conflict ar-

has caused displaced people to cross the borders into Malaysian territory (Che Man, 1990, pp. 139–140; Pitsuwan, 1982b, pp. 34–38). Also, border security remains an issue until today. Transboundary crimes such as human trafficking, smuggling, sea piracy, and gunrunning are symptoms of ‘porous borders’ that pose a threat to national security (Funston, 2008, pp. 20–23; Miani, 2011, pp. 142–145; Vatikiotis, 2006, p. 28). Issues like these have strained bilateral relationships between Kuala Lumpur and Bangkok/Manila on several occasions throughout the past few decades. Malaysia has been repeatedly accused of harboring or supporting separatists by both sides (Bajunid, 2006, p. 216; Pitsuwan, 1982b; Tan, 2003, p. 109; Wadi, 2007, p. 22).

Over time, the two separatist conflicts have affected the wider region as well. Transnational crime, as manifested for example in the illegal Sulu arms market, profits from ongoing armed conflicts in the region and threatens regional security (Miani, 2011, pp. 5–8). Besides, there is the looming fear in the region that international terrorist networks are exploiting the scenes of protracted separatist conflicts. In fact, this threat cannot be disregarded: Links between Al-Qaeda’s network and the regionally operating Jemaah Islamiyah are undisputed. The ASG as a splinter group of the Bangsamoro separatist movement has been associated with both terrorist networks; the closeness between the MILF and global terrorism is questionable but cannot be dispelled completely (Chalk et al., 2009, pp. 26–29; Funston, 2008, pp. 34–36; Williams, 2003, pp. 93–94). As a complex security issue, “[t]errorism is not merely a danger to some innocent lives and to property. It is a threat to the economic well being of ASEAN countries because terrorist incidents affect the tourist industry and undermine investor confidence” (Singh, 2003, p. 202).

COMPARING CONFLICT MANAGEMENT APPROACHES

The Domestic Sphere – Political Responses to Separatism

Thailand’s policies towards the southernmost provinces have been focused predominantly on integrating the Patani-Malays into the Thai nation state. Since the beginning of the twentieth century, the Patani people have repeatedly been affected by Thai national policies of forced assimilation, especially in terms of culture, language, religion, and identity. These policies gave special attention to education and the role of the local Islamic schools (Aphornsuvan, 2007, pp. 56–57; Che Man, 1990, pp. 163–164; Pitsuwan, 1982a, pp. 188–191; Pramungkas, 2004, p. 81). Besides, Islam as religion has been integrated into the body of Thai administrative structures. A system of provincial Islamic councils is headed nationally by the *Chularajmontri*, “the advisor of the King on Islamic affairs” (Dubus & Polkla, 2011, p. 30). This effort to nationalize Islam through institutionalization was aimed at diffusing Malay nationalist tendencies, but proved to be futile. The Patani-Malays do not see themselves represented through this body (Che Man, 1990, p. 165; Funston, 2008, p. 12). Another feature has been the notion of facilitating economic development, based on the assumption that socio-economic grievances constitute the root cause of the separatist insurgency. However, economic development schemes alone have not been successful in curbing the grievances of the Patani-Malays.

The government of General Prem Tinsulanonda in the 1980s created the Southern Border Provinces Administrative Centre (SBPAC), which was tasked with coordinating the provincial administration in the Deep South while cooperating with local leaders and religious bodies. Also, an inter-agency security body was created, the Civilian-Police-Military task force 43 (CPM43) (Dubus & Polkla, 2011, pp. 31–34; Funston, 2008, pp. 15–18). These two new administrative structures combined with a nation-wide democratization process, amnesty policies, and overall economic development in Thailand gradually improved the situation. By the end of the 1990s, the insurgency was reduced to such a minimum that many observers regarded the issue as solved to a great extent. However, when Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra took office in 2001, government policies in the South changed profoundly. Thaksin dissolved the SPBAC and the CMP43 in 2002 and declared the unrest as “criminal” in essence, rather than politically motivated. The re-emergence of violence in 2004 is thus not a coincidence and can be interpreted as a result of political mismanagement (Dubus & Polkla, 2011, pp. 56–59; McCargo, 2009, p. 9; Melvin, 2007, pp. 28–31). Thailand’s regimes have frequently changed in the recent past. Nevertheless, the general attitude of the government remained unchanged: First, Bangkok is vehemently opposed to political autonomy or allowing any decrease of state sovereignty in this regard; secondly, the Thai government insists that the conflict in the South is a domestic issue and tries to minimize any internationalization of the conflict. Only very recently has Thailand accepted Malaysia’s help as facilitator in peace negotiations with one of the insurgent groups (Lamey, 2013, p. 8; Rustici, 2013).

In contrast, the Philippine government has reacted to the separatist insurgency in Mindanao quite differently. Since the 1970s, there have always been peace negotiations including third parties. Political autonomy for Mindanao has been the main item of negotiation right from the beginning, but its successful implementation has been overshadowed by the fractionalization of the separatist movement and a prevalent lack of genuine commitment from the central government.

A recurrent point of contestation has been the government’s insistence on the use of plebiscites to determine the territorial extent of the ARMM. Due to demographic changes, the Bangsamoro now constitute a minority in most parts of Mindanao. Therefore, a plebiscite would substantially weaken the structure of the ARMM. Another critical feature about the agreed autonomy is the issue of ancestral domains and land ownership rights. Unaddressed landlessness among Muslims in Mindanao remains a root cause for prevailing poverty and socio-economic grievances (Gutierrez & Borrás, 2004, p. 41). Thus, even though the installation of the ARMM should theoretically accommodate the separatist demands, its viability is greatly challenged by executive restrictions, lack of funding, political discordance, and institutional inefficiency (Bauzon, 2008, p. 105; Mastura, 2007, pp. 130–132; Rivera, 2008, pp. 39–40). Nevertheless, with regard to the overall conflict management approach adapted by the Philippine governments, it can be concluded that the prevailing willingness to negotiate with the help of third parties has greatly benefitted the process of conflict resolution (May, 2013, p. 231). Unlike the Thai government, Manila has been open towards the political compromise of autonomy. However, the case of Mindanao has also shown in the past that the signing of formal peace agreements alone does not automatically solve the conflict situation on the ground. As long as underlying prob-

lems pertaining to identity remain unresolved, separatism continues to exist and can reemerge in violence (Glang, 2003, p. 73).

Involving the Neighbor? Malaysia's Role

Malaysia's Influence on the Conflict in Southern Thailand

Malaysia was dependent on Thailand's support in combating the Communist insurgency after World War II (Pitsuwan, 1982b, pp. 6–8). During the 1960s and 1970s, both countries had close military cooperation along the shared border. Nevertheless, the bilateral relation between Malaysia and Thailand in this regard was always marked by mutual distrust as Thailand simultaneously suspected Malaysia of harboring and supporting Patani-Malay insurgents (Che Man, 1990, p. 160; Pitsuwan, 1982b, pp. 9–12). Suhrke (1975) describes this apparent solidarity as a “trade-off pattern whereby support for, or acquiescence in the existence of, one rebel group was incompatible with a similar attitude toward the other rebel group” (p. 197).

With the end of the Cold War era and the surrender of the CPM, this balanced “trade-off pattern” in managing security between the two countries no longer exists. Indeed, Thailand's mistrust with regards to Malaysia's attitude towards the Muslim insurgents grew in the 1990s. Mostly, the issue of dual citizenship continuously sparks the anger of the Thai government. The number of Muslim Malays that hold Thai-Malaysian dual citizenship is estimated at between 50,000 and 100,000 and with its connections on both sides of the border, this particular group has indeed gained noticeable political leverage (Bajunid, 2006, p. 218; Funston, 2008, p. 22). Thailand's recent step to accept Malaysia as facilitator for peace negotiations clearly represents a shift of position with regards to Malaysia's role in managing the Patani conflict. A possible explanation could be Malaysia's obvious success in helping to mediate the conflict with the MILF in Mindanao (Rustici, 2013).

Malaysia as Mediator in the Mindanao conflict

In contrast to the case of Southern Thailand, Malaysia has had a much more active role in the process of managing the separatist conflict in the southern Philippines. This has two apparent reasons: First, the Philippine government has always been very open towards peace negotiations involving third parties facilitators; secondly, Malaysia's stake in terms of security has much more weight and persistence in the bilateral relationship with the Philippine neighbors. The influx of refugees from Mindanao into Malaysian territory has been much more considerable and furthermore the Philippine territorial claim of Sabah substantially predisposes Malaysian-Filipino relations. Whereas the threat of Communist insurgency in Malaysia has dissolved completely, the Sabah claim has never entirely vanished over the decades.

As such, Malaysia is not a neutral third party to the Bangsamoro conflict. During the 1970s, Malaysia was actively providing training and support to the separatist movement in Mindanao. At the same time, Malaysia was also lobbying for the Bangsamoro cause in the OIC. Being recognized on this international platform increased the political bargaining power of the insurgents against the Philippine gov-

ernment. Simultaneously, by supporting the Bangsamoro separatism, Malaysia could portray itself internationally as a concerned Muslim nation and gained political leverage against the Philippines' Sabah claim (Che Man, 1990, pp. 138–140). With Malaysia's commitment to ASEAN, these foreign policy tactics have gradually subsided, but security concerns still remain on the forefront of Malaysia's motivation for engagement, especially the rising threat of terrorism in the region. The Sipadan hostage crisis⁵ in 2000 and several bombing attacks in the following years demonstrated a drastic need for closer security cooperation (Lingga, 2007, pp. 44–45; Mastura, 2011, pp. 10–11; Wadi, 2007, p. 22).

Malaysia stepped in as mediating party after 2001, brokering the negotiations between Manila and the MILF. The goal was primarily to reach a win-win situation based on the principle of non-independence under the emphasis on unity, moderation, and the urgent need for economic development (Santos, 2003, pp. 8–9). Still, the Malaysian-led negotiations reached a deadlock and finally faltered in mid-2003, mainly due to disagreements on governance structures and ancestral land rights (Camillegri, 2008, p. 77). After several setbacks, negotiations resumed with Malaysian help in 2010, leading to a framework agreement between the government and the MILF in 2012 (Muzaffar, 2012), and culminating more recently in the signing of the peace agreement in 2014 (Esquerra & Burgonio, 2014).

Other External Actors

ASEAN's 'Non-Role'

ASEAN's non-interference principle as embodied in the diplomatic culture of the 'ASEAN Way' prevents the regional body or its member countries to intervene in state-internal issues such as separatism. However, it has been demonstrated that both conflicts at hand have repercussions on the wider region and therefore cannot be seen as purely domestic issues. Malaysia's role as stakeholder reemphasizes this aspect.

It can be argued from a constructivist viewpoint that the mere existence of ASEAN in Southeast Asia has deterred the escalation of separatist conflicts so far. After all, the non-interference principle effectively protects and strengthens state-sovereignty for all member states and good bilateral relations have so far proven paramount to the ethnic or religious ties in the mosaic of Southeast Asian diversity.

ASEAN as an international organization is more than the mere sum of the bilateral relations among its members. Even though it has not played a proactive role in managing the separatist insurgencies in Southern Thailand or Mindanao so far, it still provides an intergovernmental platform that has at least in theory the capacity to influence the two conflicts. The ASEAN Charter for example includes a chapter on dispute settlement and does not distinguish between inter-state or intra-state con-

5 In 2000, the ASG raided a Malaysian tourist resort on Sipadan Island in Sabah. Twenty-one foreign nationals were taken hostage and three persons were killed. Libya finally paid 15 to 20 million USD as ransom. A similar incident occurred in 2001 when a beach resort on Palawan Island in the Philippines was raided: Twenty tourists were taken hostage, four were killed, three of whom were beheaded by the ASG (Means, 2009, p. 206; Wadi, 2007, p. 17).

flict scenarios. Here, it instructs all ASEAN members “to resolve peacefully all disputes in a timely manner through dialogue, consultation and negotiation” (ASEAN Charter, Art. 22(1)). Besides, the Charter also stipulates that any “[parties] to the dispute may request the Chairman of ASEAN or the Secretary-General of ASEAN, acting in an ex-officio capacity, to provide good offices, conciliation or mediation” (ASEAN Charter, Art. 23(2)). ASEAN’s role as a mediator in conflict management is thus possible in theory (Vatikiotis, 2009, p. 32).

However, there have been no official statements by ASEAN on the conflicts at hand or their progression. Also, neither Thailand nor the Philippines has called upon ASEAN’s capacity as mediator or provider of good offices. This clearly reflects the weakness of ASEAN in the field of conflict management. The organization neither has nor is expected to have the capacities for managing conflicts. Against the backdrop of the aspired Security Community and closer regional cooperation, it is however necessary to develop such expertise. A potential role model in this context could be the OIC.

The OIC

Just like ASEAN, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) is an international organization that works on an intergovernmental basis. The OIC, established in 1969, today comprises 57 Muslim countries and consequently considers itself “the collective voice of the Muslim world” (OIC, 2013). One of its objectives is “to safeguard the rights, dignity and religious and cultural identity of Muslim communities and minorities in non-Member States” (OIC Charter, Art. 1 (16)). As such, the OIC is an important stakeholder in the conflicts of Southern Thailand and Mindanao.

Indeed, the OIC has played an important role in both conflicts providing an international political platform for Muslim interests. Its influence is particularly remarkable with regards to the case of the Bangsamoro. The OIC accepted the MNLF as observer in 1977 and thus gave the separatist movement international recognition and political leverage. The initial peace negotiations between the MNLF and the Philippine government in the 1970s were facilitated under the auspices of the OIC, mediated by its member state Libya (Lingga, 2007, pp. 47–49). With regards to the capacities of the organization as an actor of conflict management, Santos (2005) observes:

The OIC can only exert moral suasion, such as through its resolutions. But it has no real power as OIC. ... Still, the OIC has the “*trust factor*” for Muslims like the MNLF and MILF, and the “*fear factor*” for governments like the GRP in terms of leverage over OIC member-countries as petroleum exporters and as employers of Filipino and other overseas labor. (p. 98)

A similar point could be made for the case in Southern Thailand, although the role of the OIC is much less pronounced there. The Patani-Malay separatist movement is not represented in the OIC; however political pressure by the Muslim world is still felt by the Thai government. Thailand has tried to improve its relations with Muslim countries, especially in the Middle East, and was recognized as an observer country to the OIC in 1998 (Yusuf, 2009, pp. 209–210). In 2005, an OIC delegation

was invited for an observation and assessment mission to the Patani region and “concluded that unrest in the south was neither the result of religious discrimination against Muslims nor was it rooted in religion itself; instead, it could be traced to culture and historic neglect of the south” (Sharqieh, 2013, p. 166). The secretary-general of the OIC has also repeatedly urged the Thai government to launch a peace dialogue with the Patani insurgents (ICG, 2010, p. 7; Sharqieh, 2013, p. 167).

Separatists or Terrorists? The US and the Global War on Terror

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and the subsequent global war on terror has drastically changed the landscape of geopolitical security. Globally, it has certainly heightened the awareness for the urgency to combat terrorism. In the academic discourse on the insurgencies of Southern Thailand and Mindanao, there have been several re-examinations with regards to international terrorism links (cf. Connors, 2007; Storey, 2009; Wheeler, 2009). This renewed attention coupled with the Asian pivot in US geostrategic concerns has influenced the dynamics of both conflicts to various degrees since the early 2000s. However, the US officially recognizes that these separatist insurgencies in Thailand and the Philippines are domestic issues and was never directly involved in any mediation efforts (Santos, 2005, pp. 98–101; Wheeler, 2009, p. 179). In the context of its war on terror, the US is nevertheless very concerned about both conflict situations as domestic grievances could be exploited and co-opted by international terrorism (Storey, 2009, p. 139).

Both Thailand and the Philippines have pledged alliance to the US in its global war on terror and have both become “Major Non-NATO Allies” to the American superpower (Tuazon, 2008, p. 77; Wheeler, 2009, p. 184). The Philippine government under Arroyo asked for US assistance in combating terrorists in 2001 and the Philippine army has since officially received special training by the US (Kane & Rodriguez, 2006, pp. 191–200; Lingga, 2007, pp. 51–52; Santos, 2005, p. 100). Also, the global war on terror caused the MILF to re-enter peace negotiations with stronger commitment – mostly for the fear of being listed as an international terror organization. The MILF even started to cooperate with the government on combating the ASG in Mindanao (Rodell, 2007, pp. 240–241; Tuazon, 2008, p. 82). Thailand, on the other hand, was initially quite hesitant to pledge alliance to the crusade against global terrorism, but did so in 2003 under Prime Minister Thaksin, primarily to mend bilateral relations with the Americans. The US has been very cautious not to get too overtly engaged in the conflict of Southern Thailand, but has provided support and training to the Thai army (Pongsudhirak, 2007, p. 272; Wheeler, 2009, pp. 182–184, 192–195).

Leaving aside the question of whether links between international terrorism and domestic separatism are real, constructed, or merely whipped up to justify US influence in the wider region, it still needs to be asked whether this form of internationalization is really helping to address both conflicts effectively. Regarding Southern Thailand, Connors (2007) argues that the focus on terrorism may simply deter attention from settling the actual grievances of the Patani-Malays (pp. 163–164). Surely, it can be argued that separatism and terrorism breed in the same environment of socio-economic grievances and take up similar ideological frameworks for justification; but security measures and military presence alone can never attend to their root causes in a holistic way (Almonte, 2003, pp. 236–40; Tan, 2007, pp. 110–112).

CONCLUSION

The analysis in this paper on the state-internal conflicts of Southern Thailand and Mindanao has underlined the complexity of both conflict cases. First, the structural similarities of both separatist movements were elaborated on, which not only makes them comparable but also offers valuable insights into the emergence of separatist conflicts in general. Socio-economic grievances as well as inequity of modernization and development can be seen as material root causes for insurgencies. However, the factor of identity is of pre-eminent importance for the emergence of separatism. Based on history, language, culture, and religion, an identity is constructed and consequently leads to an alternative 'imagined community' in the sense of Benedict Anderson (1991), which is distinct from the dominant nation of the state (pp. 6–8). Thus, if this issue of the distinct identity is ignored or sidelined in conflict management, it can never be possible to address separatist conflicts effectively.

The comparison of conflict management approaches by different actors has further exemplified the complex scene of conflict resolution efforts. It may be argued that separatism is primarily a domestic political issue that concerns the nation state. However, the analysis in this paper has found that state-internal conflicts in this form cannot be regarded in an isolated way. They have indeed implications on the bilateral, regional, and global sphere and thus concern and involve more stakeholders than just the respective national government. In this regard, there are several aspects that can either support or disrupt successful conflict resolution. It is noteworthy that internationalization through involvement of third parties in mediating peace negotiations has shown positive effects on the resolution process of state-internal conflicts. This in turn should be a strong incentive for ASEAN to explore its potential as regional actor in conflict management. The OIC as another intergovernmental organization could serve as a role model here as it already has considerable experience in managing state-internal conflicts in Southeast Asia. Also, it would be in ASEAN's interest to play a more significant role in managing conflicts within its own region in order to prevent the unilateral intervention by external powers such as the US.

With reference to Pitsuwan's statement quoted in the beginning, it can be confirmed that the days when domestic issues could be seen as strictly separated from the regional sphere are certainly over. In an interdependent and closely connected region that seeks to be an integrated community, state-internal conflicts do indeed concern all members and therefore need to be discussed in a regional setting. It clearly remains a challenge to ASEAN to adapt to these changes. Only by embracing new and more progressive forms of regional cooperation can ASEAN evolve into a community that is able to play a proactive role in conflict management.



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„In Our Hearts, We Do Not Have Trust“: Frieden und bewaffnete Gruppen in Myanmar

Sina Kowalewski

► Kowalewski, S. (2014). „In our hearts, we do not have trust“: Frieden und bewaffnete Gruppen in Myanmar. *ASEAS – Austrian Journal of South-East Asian Studies*, 7(1), 41-60.

Der vorliegende Artikel betrachtet die Perspektiven der Führungskreise bewaffneter Oppositionsgruppen auf den politischen Übergangsprozess in Myanmar. Die Allianz aus 16 bewaffneten Gruppen, der United Nationalities Federal Council (UNFC), zweifelt am Friedenswillen der Regierung und interpretiert deren Reformen als Strategie zur Absicherung bestehender Machtverhältnisse. Dementsprechend bringen bewaffnete Gruppen wie die Karen National Union (KNU) und die Kachin Independence Organization (KIO) dem Friedensprozess nur wenig Vertrauen entgegen. Das vorherrschende Misstrauen und die Top-down-Strategie der Regierung in der Umsetzung von Reformen fordern daher den Friedensprozess heraus. Der Artikel basiert auf Interviews mit bewaffneten Gruppen und ihnen nahestehenden Organisationen in Thailand und Myanmar in den Jahren 2012 und 2013.

Schlagworte: bewaffnete Gruppen; Burma/Myanmar; Kachin Independence Organization; Karen National Union; United Nationalities Federal Council

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This article analyzes the perspectives of armed opposition groups' leaderships on the political transition process in Myanmar. The alliance of 16 armed groups, the United Nationalities Federal Council (UNFC), questions the government's desire to peace and interprets its political reforms as a strategy to maintain the existing balance of power. Therefore, armed groups such as the Karen National Union (KNU) and the Kachin Independence Organization (KIO) have little trust in the peace process. The mistrust between the conflicting parties and the government's top-down strategy in implementing reforms hence constitute the main challenges to the peace process. This article is based on interviews with members of armed groups and related organizations in Thailand and Myanmar in 2012 and 2013.

Keywords: Armed Groups; Burma/Myanmar; Kachin Independence Organization; Karen National Union; United Nationalities Federal Council

INTRODUCTION

Die politischen Reformen in Myanmar und die zahlreichen Runden der Friedensverhandlungen zwischen unterschiedlichen bewaffneten Oppositionsgruppen und der Regierung werden inner- und außerhalb des Landes als große Chance für die Realisierung von Frieden und Demokratie wahrgenommen. Die in der Allianz der 16 bewaffneten Gruppen, dem *United Nationalities Federal Council* (UNFC), vertretenen Führungskreise der Opposition bleiben jedoch skeptisch, inwiefern die aktuellen Entwicklungen auf einen Politikwandel der Regierung hindeuten. Sie interpretieren den von der Regierung eingeleiteten Reform- und Friedensprozess als Strategie, um die „ethnischen Nationalitäten“¹ zu schwächen und die bestehende Machtverteilung aufrechtzuerhalten. In der Literatur zu Transformations- und Friedensprozessen wird ökonomischen Bedingungen häufig eine große Bedeutung zugemessen (vgl. Collier & Hoeffler, 2000; Przeworski, Alvarez, Cheibub, & Limongi, 2000). So gelten die ökonomischen Motive bewaffneter Gruppen als Hindernisse für Friedensprozesse. In dem vorliegenden Artikel möchte ich die Perspektive bewaffneter Gruppen in Myanmar auf den Transitionsprozess herausarbeiten und zeigen, dass die Friedensfähigkeit von bewaffneten Gruppen durch ihre Interpretation der aktuellen Situation beeinflusst wird. Ich beziehe mich auf den UNFC und zwei seiner Mitgliederorganisationen, die *Karen National Union* (KNU) und die *Kachin Independence Organization/Army* (KIO/A). Ihre Perspektive auf den Transitionsprozess entwickeln die Führungskreise dieser bewaffneten Gruppen nicht aufgrund feststellbarer Veränderungen, sondern basierend auf aktuellen und vergangenen Erfahrungen. Vergangene Erfahrungen wie die Zerstörung des Hauptquartiers der KNU in Manerplaw 1995 und aktuelle Erfahrungen wie der Bruch des Waffenstillstandsabkommen mit der KIO/A durch das myanmarische Militär 2011 führen bei bewaffneten Gruppen zu mangelndem Vertrauen in den Friedensprozess. Die Führungskreise bewaffneter Gruppen begegnen dem Friedensprozess daher mit Zurückhaltung. Ziel des Artikels ist es, einen Blick auf die vorherrschende Sicht der Führungskreise von KNU und KIO auf den Friedensprozess zu geben. Dadurch wird eine im wissenschaftlichen Diskurs bisher vernachlässigte Perspektive erschlossen.

Der vorliegende Artikel basiert auf mehr als 40 Interviews, welche ich während zwei vierwöchiger Feldforschungsaufenthalte im Mai/Juni 2012 und im Oktober/November 2013 in Thailand (Bangkok, Nordthailand und Grenzregion zu Myanmar) und Myanmar (Yangon, Karen-Staat und Kachin-Staat) führte. Die Interviews waren dabei nur wenig formalisiert und die Interviewfragen wurden in Abhängigkeit zu den jeweiligen InterviewpartnerInnen entwickelt. Die meisten Interviews wurden in englischer Sprache geführt. Wenn dies nicht möglich war, standen den Interviewten nahestehende Personen als ÜbersetzerInnen zur Verfügung. So stellte ich sicher, dass in diesem sensiblen politischen Kontext die Anwesenheit der ÜbersetzerInnen die Aussagen nicht verfälschte. Die größte Herausforderung der Feldforschung bestand im Zugang zu relevanten Personen. Auch wenn sich die politische Situation

1 Besonders die Führungskreise der ethnischen Gruppen bezeichnen sich selbst nicht als Minderheiten, sondern als ethnische Nationalitäten, auch da die ethnische Verteilung nur durch einen neuen, verlässlichen Zensus zu klären sei. Dies zeigt sich beispielsweise auch in der Namensgebung des UNFC. Der UNFC rekurriert auf Nationalitäten (*nationalities*) anstelle von Minderheiten.

in den letzten Jahren entspannte, bedurfte es umfangreicher Vorarbeiten, um das Vertrauen von GegnerInnen der ehemaligen Militärregierung zu gewinnen. Bei der Vorbereitung der Feldforschung legte ich daher besonderen Wert auf die Identifizierung von und den Zugang zu relevanten InterviewpartnerInnen.² Zu den InterviewpartnerInnen zählten politisch-militärische Vertreter der KNU, der KIO und RepräsentantInnen des *United Nationalities Federal Council* (UNFC), VertreterInnen lokaler Hilfs- und Menschenrechtsorganisationen, FriedensaktivistInnen sowie ein Verhandlungsführer der Regierungsseite, heute Vertreter des *Myanmar Peace Center* (MPC). Zum Schutz der InterviewpartnerInnen wird auf die Angabe von Namen und Detailinformationen wie beispielsweise zum Ort der Interviews, die zu deren Identifizierung führen können, verzichtet. Bei zivilen InterviewpartnerInnen habe ich die Organisation oder ethnische Zugehörigkeit angegeben. Bei militärischen InterviewpartnerInnen habe ich darauf jedoch verzichtet, da dies wiederum Rückschlüsse auf die Person erlaubt hätte.

TRANSITIONS- UND FRIEDENSPROZESS IN MYANMAR

Seit über 60 Jahren kämpfen in wechselnder Intensität bewaffnete Gruppen der ethnischen Nationalitäten gegen die Zentralregierung von Burma/Myanmar.³ Zwar konnten in den vergangenen Jahren, beispielsweise Mitte der 1990er Jahre, immer wieder Waffenstillstandsvereinbarungen geschlossen werden, eine politische Regelung und damit die dauerhafte Beendigung der Konflikte blieben aber aus. Nicht selten basierten die Waffenstillstandsabkommen dabei auf ökonomischen Regelungen. Waren bewaffnete Gruppen bereit, ihren Widerstand gegenüber der damaligen Militärregierung aufzugeben, erhielten sie informell die Erlaubnis wirtschaftlichen Vorhaben in den gewünschten Bereichen nachzugehen und beispielsweise Jademinen zu betreiben. Besonders einflussreiche Mitglieder von (ehemaligen) Widerstandsgruppen wurden durch wirtschaftliche Beteiligungen in das Regierungssystem eingebunden (Meehan, 2011, S. 386–391). Die Strategie der Regierung zur Beendigung der bewaffneten Konflikte basierte somit stets darauf, (wenigen) einflussreichen Führungspersönlichkeiten wirtschaftliche Beteiligungen einzuräumen und dadurch negative Anreize für die Wiederaufnahme von Kämpfen zu schaffen (Farrelly, 2012, S. 53).

Nach dem Amtsantritt der Regierung unter Präsident Thein Sein startete der damalige Eisenbahnminister Aung Min 2011 eine neue Friedensinitiative. Innerhalb von zwei Jahren gelang es dem Verhandlungsteam der Regierung,⁴ mit mehr als ei-

2 Besonders Wolfgang Trost und Maung Zarni unterstützten mich dabei sehr und stellten Kontakte zu relevanten InterviewpartnerInnen her. Darüber hinaus intensivierte ich Kontakte, die aus einem sechswöchigen Feldforschungsaufenthalt im Oktober und November 2010 in Thailand entstanden waren.

3 1989 beschloss die damalige Militärregierung Burma (deutsch Birma) in Myanmar umzubenennen. Häufig wird argumentiert, dass Burma und Myanmar prinzipiell die gleiche Bedeutung haben, da beide Namen Bezeichnungen für die offiziell größte ethnische Gruppe der Birmanen sind. Andere AutorInnen argumentieren, dass der Begriff Myanmar mit Buddhismus gleichzusetzen ist, so dass andere Religionen ausgeschlossen werden (Keenan, 2012, S. 34). In diesem Artikel verwende ich Burma für den Zeitraum bis 1989 und Myanmar für den Zeitraum danach.

4 Zu Beginn der Friedensverhandlungen war das Mandat des Verhandlungsteams unklar. Mit der Gründung des Myanmar Peace Center (MPC) 2012 sind die Personen des ersten Verhandlungsteams nun auch

nem Dutzend bewaffneter Gruppen Waffenstillstandsvereinbarungen zu unterzeichnen, darunter auch mit der einflussreichen Gruppe der KNU. Nach einem 17-jährigen Waffenstillstand zwischen der KIA und dem myanmarischen Militär flammten im Juni 2011 bewaffnete Auseinandersetzungen auf, die trotz zweier Abkommen zwischen der KIO und der Regierung im Mai und Oktober 2013 nicht beendet werden konnten. Die Führungskreise der bewaffneten Gruppen zeigen sich der neuen Friedensinitiative gegenüber skeptisch. Sie vermuten, dass ähnlich wie bei vorherigen Waffenstillstandsvereinbarungen durch wirtschaftliche Beteiligungen einzelner Führungspersonlichkeiten Anreize für die Beendigung des bewaffneten Widerstands geschaffen werden sollen. In den geführten Interviews betrachten die InterviewpartnerInnen häufig die Absicherung bestehender Machtverhältnisse als Ziel der Regierung. Die Motivation der Regierung wird in einem Interview beispielsweise so beschrieben: „Power is like drugs: If you are addicted to it, it is hard to stop“ (damaliger hochrangiger KNU-Funktionär, persönliches Interview, Mai 2012). Durch symbolische Neuerungen sollte zudem die Unterstützung des globalen Nordens gesichert werden. Die Reformen werden daher auch als „only cosmetic changes“ (General bewaffneter Gruppe, persönliches Interview, Mai 2012) beschrieben.

Der Reformprozess fort von einer Militärherrschaft begann bereits 2003, als der damalige *State Peace and Development Council* (SPDC)⁵ mit der *Roadmap to a Discipline-Flourishing Democracy* seine Strategie verkündete, das Land in die Demokratie zu führen (Zin & Joseph, 2012, S. 106). Wie in diesem Fahrplan angekündigt, setzte die Regierung 2008 eine neue Verfassung in Kraft und konzipierte sich damit formell als parlamentarische Demokratie mit Militäreinfluss. Die bewaffneten Konflikte sollten durch die Transformation der ethnischen Widerstandsarmeen in eine dem myanmarischen Militär unterstellte Grenzschutztruppe, die *Border Guard Force* (BGF), beendet werden. Als Gegenleistung für die Transformationsbereitschaft erhielten die ethnischen Gruppen die Möglichkeit, sich politisch zu beteiligen und beispielsweise eigene Parteien für die Wahlen aufzustellen. Dies interpretierten mehrere bewaffnete Gruppen jedoch als eine Kapitulation und so waren es mit der *New Democratic Army-Kachin* (NDAK), der *Kayan New Land Party* (KNLP), der *Pa-O National Organization* (PNO) und Teilen der *Democratic Karen Buddhist Army* (DKBA) nur 4 der etwa 20⁶ bewaffneten Gruppen, die sich dem Kommando des myanmarischen Militärs (*tatmadaw*) unterstellten.

Ein weiterer Schritt des Fahrplans waren die Wahlen im November 2010. Zwar entsprachen diese nicht den demokratischen Standards des globalen Nordens und wurden beispielsweise von der Europäischen Union als „weder frei noch fair“ (Council of the European Union, 2010) beurteilt, dennoch kennzeichneten diese in vielen

offiziell mit der Aushandlung von Frieden und Waffenstillstand beauftragt.

5 SPDC war der offizielle Name der damaligen Militärregierung. Bis 1997 trug diese den Namen *State Law and Order Restoration Council* (SLORC). Mit der Umbenennung 1997 ging jedoch keine Politikänderung einher.

6 Burma News International listet 19 aktive bewaffnete Gruppen auf (Burma News International [BNI], 2013), darunter einige kleinere Gruppen mit weniger als 500 KämpferInnen. Etwa 12 aktive bewaffnete Gruppen haben 500 oder (deutlich) mehr KämpferInnen, wie die *United Wa State Army* (UWSA) mit mehr als 25.000 Mitgliedern. Paul Keenan (2012) identifiziert 37 bewaffnete Gruppen, darunter befinden sich auch Gruppen mit einer Stärke von 20 KämpferInnen. Er kommt zu dem Ergebnis, dass die bewaffneten Gruppen insgesamt über eine Stärke von 61.770 KämpferInnen verfügen (Keenan, 2012, S. 255).

Augen den Auftakt des Reformprozesses (Effner, 2010). Als mit den Nachwahlen 2012 die Oppositionsführerin Aung San Suu Kyi mit der *National League for Democracy* (NLD) ins Parlament einzog und hunderte politische Gefangene entlassen wurden, waren zentrale Forderungen von EU, USA und anderen Ländern des globalen Nordens erfüllt, die daraufhin ihre jahrzehntelange Sanktionspolitik beendeten. Für negative Aufmerksamkeit sorgte ab Mitte 2011 die Gewalt gegen Muslime, besonders gegen die staatenlosen Rohyinga im Rakhine-Staat, die von Menschenrechtsorganisationen wie Human Rights Watch als ethnische Säuberungen klassifiziert wurde (Human Rights Watch [HRW], 2013).

TRANSFORMATIONSPROZESSE UND BEWAFFNETE GRUPPEN IN DER THEORIE

Bei der Betrachtung zentraler Ergebnisse der Transformationsforschung⁷ und der Forschung zu bewaffneten Gruppen wird deutlich, dass besonders der Transformationsforschung, aber auch weiten Teilen der Forschung zu bewaffneten Gruppen, ein rationales Akteursverständnis zu Grunde liegt, das dem eigenen Verständnis bewaffneter Gruppen kaum gerecht wird. Mit diesem Artikel stelle ich daher die Perspektive bewaffneter Gruppen in Myanmar in den Fokus, um ihre Interpretationen und die sich aus dieser Perspektive ergebenden Voraussetzungen für einen stabilen Frieden aufzuzeigen.

Politische Transformationsprozesse avancierten besonders mit dem Zerfall der Sowjetunion zu einem bedeutenden Forschungsthema (Merkel & Thiery, 2010, S. 186). Dabei stand zunächst die Frage nach den Ursachen und Verlaufsformen der Transformationsprozesse im Vordergrund, wohingegen mittlerweile ein verstärktes Augenmerk auf die Konsolidierung bestehender Demokratien gerichtet wird. Aus unterschiedlichen theoretischen Zugängen wird dabei argumentiert, dass für die Konsolidierung der Demokratie die politischen und gesellschaftlichen Verhältnisse in den Transformationsländern entscheidend sind. So werden Transformationsprozesse über das sozioökonomische Entwicklungsniveau abgesichert und damit konsolidiert; ein Rückfall in autokratische Regimeformen ist dort unwahrscheinlich, wo zugleich keine extreme ökonomische Ungleichheit und ein gestiegenes Bildungsniveau herrschen (Przeworski et al., 2000). Myanmar kann im Gegensatz zu einer Vielzahl von Transformationsprozessen als ein besonderer Fall betrachtet werden, da es sich hierbei um einen „top-down, regime-driven“ (Nilsen & Tonnesson, 2013) Prozess handelt. Dies äußert sich auch im Fahrplan der Regierung. Diese Strategie führt dazu, dass aus einer kritischen Perspektive die Reformen stets dem Verdacht ausgesetzt sind, die Absicherung bestehender Machtverhältnisse hätten einen größeren Stellenwert als die Einbeziehung unterschiedlicher Bevölkerungsgruppen. Zum anderen kann es AkteurInnen nach Jahrzehnten von Militärherrschaft und Repression Probleme bereiten, bei der Veränderung ihrer Perspektive mit dem ambitionierten

⁷ Transformation und die Forschung zu Transformationsprozessen geht über Transformationsansätze hinaus. Während sich der Begriff der Transition besonders auf den Übergang von einem nicht-demokratischen zu einem demokratischen Regime bezieht und damit politische Wandlungsprozesse thematisiert, betrachtet die Transformationsforschung auch Wandlungsprozesse der gesellschaftlichen und wirtschaftlichen Ordnung (Egger, 2007, S. 154). Da sich die Diskussion des Falls Myanmars besonders auf die politischen Veränderungen konzentriert, verwende ich hier den Begriff der Transition.

Plan und Tempo der Regierung Schritt zu halten. Die Regierung strebt für 2014 einen neuen Zensus an und 2015 werden Parlamentswahlen stattfinden. Friedensverhandlungen zwischen den bewaffneten Gruppen und der Regierung hätten bereits Ende 2013 abgeschlossen sein sollen und neue InvestorInnen drängen in das Land. All dies sind relevante Themen und Ereignisse für die ehemaligen GegnerInnen der Militärregierung, ohne dass ihnen jedoch Gestaltungsmöglichkeiten eingeräumt werden. Diese Gleichzeitigkeit von Ereignissen kann somit durchaus dazu führen, dass AkteurInnen den Anschluss verlieren. Des Weiteren sind ökonomische Ungleichheit und ein schlechtes Bildungsniveau drängende Probleme in Myanmar. In Bezug auf die Ergebnisse von Przeworski et al. (2000) ist der Transitionsprozess momentan daher nur schlecht abgesichert. In diesem Top-down-Demokratisierungsprozess wird somit ein demokratisches Paradox (Chestermann, 2005) sichtbar, nämlich die Einführung demokratischer Strukturen mit autokratischen Mitteln. Denn trotz (sichtbarer) Veränderungen lässt die Regierungsstrategie auch den Raum, die Reformen als autokratisches Herrschaftsinstrument zu interpretieren.

Eine Vorbedingung für Transformationsprozesse in Kriegsgesellschaften stellen in der Regel Friedensabkommen zwischen den Konfliktparteien dar. Die Forschung zur internationalen Konfliktregelung hat einige Voraussetzungen für den Erfolg von Friedensprozessen und politischen Transformationen herausgearbeitet. Zu den wichtigsten zählt dabei, dass eine Situation besteht, die Friedensverhandlungen für beide Seiten notwendig macht („entry point“). Beispielsweise weil eine sich gegenseitig bedingende Pattsituation („mutually hurting stalemate“) besteht, „where the hopes of victory of each side are blocked by the other and that blockage hurts“ (Zartman, 2004, S. 147). Ramsbotham, Woodhouse und Miall (2011, S. 179) unterscheiden zwischen der Reife eines Konfliktes, Friedensverhandlungen zu beginnen und diese erfolgreich zu beenden, da Konfliktparteien nicht nur willens sein müssen, Friedensverhandlungen zu beginnen, sondern auch, die verhandelten Bedingungen umzusetzen, auch wenn die schmerzenden Umstände noch bestehen. Für die Beendigung von Gewaltkonflikten ist es daher notwendig, dass die Konfliktparteien Verhandlungen als Chance zur Verbesserung der Situation wahrnehmen. Im UNFC organisierte bewaffnete Gruppen in Myanmar wie die KIA und die bewaffneten Gruppen der KNU, die *Karen National Liberation Army* (KNLA) und die *Karen National Defense Organization* (KNDO), interpretieren die Verhandlungen jedoch kaum als Chance zur Verbesserung der Situation, sondern als Strategie zur Legitimierung und Absicherung der bestehenden Machtverhältnisse. Sie betrachten die Verhandlungen als Teil einer Strategie, die darauf abzielt, die ethnischen Nationalitäten zu schwächen und sie (weiter) zu marginalisieren.

Bewaffnete Gruppen werden häufig im Kontext fragiler Staatlichkeit diskutiert und sind damit unter anderem auch für die Arbeit internationaler Organisationen relevant. Dies führt dazu, dass die vorliegenden Arbeiten oft *policy*-orientiert sind. Dabei kann jedoch die Komplexität von Motiven unterschätzt werden, besonders wenn bewaffnete Gruppen überwiegend als rationale Interessensmaximierer betrachtet werden, die aus Profitgier handeln. Collier und Hoeffler (2000) kommen in ihrer Studie zu dem Ergebnis, dass Habgier (*greed*) und nicht politischer Missstand (*grievance*) das überwiegende handlungsleitende Motiv bewaffneter Gruppen in Bürgerkriegen ist. Aus dieser Perspektive ist eine Kriegsgesellschaft auch durch das spezifische öko-

nomische Gefüge der Bürgerkriegsökonomie gekennzeichnet, in dem bewaffnete Gruppen als WirtschaftsakteurInnen mit ökonomischen Interessen auftreten. Durch den (illegalen) Handel, unter anderem mit Rohstoffen und Drogen wie Opium und Coca, bereichern sich bewaffnete Gruppen selbst und sichern ihre ökonomische Vormachtstellung ab, indem der Gewaltkonflikt in Gang gehalten wird (Ballentine & Sherman, 2003, S. 2). Auch am Fall von Myanmar wird deutlich, dass Wirtschaft und bewaffnete Gruppen in einer Beziehung zueinander stehen. Woods (2011) führt den Begriff des Waffenstillstandskapitalismus (*ceasefire capitalism*) ein, der die wirtschaftlichen und politischen Beziehungen zwischen Geschäftsleuten, dem Militär und der ethnischen Elite in Gebieten unter Waffenstillstand regelt. Er zeigt so, dass es beispielsweise myanmarische Geschäftsleute und transnationale InvestorInnen waren, die im Kachin-Staat eine erste Transition von *war-making* hin zum *state-making* finanzierten und den Waffenstillstandsabkommen der 1990er Jahre den Weg bereiteten. Aber auch Geschäftsleute der Kachin und die KIO/A profitierten von dem Waffenstillstandskapitalismus: Geschäftsleute agierten als VermittlerInnen zwischen chinesischen InvestorInnen und den jeweiligen Widerstandsgruppen und die KIO/A garantierte Schutz bei der Durchführung von Wirtschaftsprojekten (Woods, 2011, S. 752–761).

Ein ökonomischer Blick auf bewaffnete Gruppen trägt zum Verständnis der Beziehungen zwischen diesen Gruppen und externen AkteurInnen sowie deren Motive bei, dennoch wird eine solche Perspektive nur begrenzt den internen Prozessen von bewaffneten Gruppen und ihren politischen Motiven gerecht. Mit den internen Prozessen bewaffneter Gruppen beschäftigen sich beispielsweise die Arbeiten von Schlichte (2009) und Engels (2012). Schlichte argumentiert, dass die politische Vorherrschaft von bewaffneten Gruppen auf ihrer Fähigkeit basiert, Legitimität herzustellen. Ihren bewaffneten Kampf können sie dabei über politische Projekte legitimieren. Abstrakte Vorstellungen wie Befreiung und Revolution haben dabei große Mobilisierungseffekte, auch weil der Nachweis über die Realisierbarkeit faktisch nicht oder erst bei realer, politischer Macht zu erbringen ist (Schlichte, 2009, S. 104). Engels analysiert ausgehend von soziologischen Handlungstheorien die Motive bewaffneter Gruppen. Biographische Erfahrungen von Gewalt, Exklusion und Missachtung stellen Motive für den Eintritt in den bewaffneten Kampf dar, da der Einsatz von Waffen aufgrund von gruppenbezogenen Missachtungserfahrungen als legitim und einzige Möglichkeit zur Erreichung von politischen und individuellen Zielen erscheint (Engels, 2012, S. 171–177).

Die Arbeiten von Schlichte und Engels zeigen somit, dass eine vornehmliche Betrachtung bewaffneter Gruppen als ökonomische Akteure zumindest unterkomplex ist und internen Prozessen, die zu deren Transformation und Entstehung führen, nur unzureichend gerecht wird. Der Argumentation der AutorInnen folgend führt dies dazu, dass eine dauerhafte Niederlegung der Waffen nicht durch Versprechen von ökonomischem Gewinnen erreicht werden kann. Die Ergebnisse der unterschiedlichen Forschungsstränge zusammenführend bedeutet dies, dass für einen dauerhaften Frieden eine Situation geschaffen werden muss, die bewaffnete Gruppen zu einer freiwilligen Transformation veranlasst. Dafür müssen Führungspersönlichkeiten auch während der Übergangsphase ihre Legitimität gegenüber ihren AnhängerInnen aufrechterhalten können, Erfahrungen von Missachtung und Exklusion müssen als

durch die Transformation überwindbar und politische Programme als durch eine Verhandlungslösung realisierbar rezipiert werden.

Generell neu sind Arbeiten zur Transition bewaffneter Gruppen. Dudouet (2013) identifiziert vier Analyseebenen möglicher Faktoren für die Transition von bewaffnetem zu unbewaffnetem Widerstand: die Intragruppen-Ebene, die Beziehung zwischen der bewaffneten Gruppe und der Gesellschaft, die Beziehung zwischen Gruppe und Staaten sowie die mit der internationalen Gemeinschaft. Auf der Intragruppen-Ebene sind Veränderungen von Eigenschaften und der Identität der Führungspersönlichkeiten, Veränderungen im Wertesystem und in der Ideologie der Führungselite, Kriegsmüdigkeit und die Verschiebung der Machtverhältnisse innerhalb der Entscheidungsstrukturen Motive für die Transformation von bewaffneten Gruppen (Dudouet, 2013, S. 406). Auch diese Ergebnisse deuten darauf hin, dass mit der Entscheidung zur Niederlegung der Waffen eine Veränderung der Perspektive bewaffneter Gruppen einhergeht. Ich möchte nun zeigen, wie die Führungskreise bewaffneter Gruppen und ihnen nahestehende Organisationen die Friedensinitiative interpretieren. Zentral für diese Perspektive ist, dass sie das Handeln der Regierung als Strategie zur Marginalisierung der ethnischen Nationalitäten und Sicherung der ökonomischen Vormachtstellung, also als Strategie zur Aufrechterhaltung der Macht von Regierung und Militär, deuten.

DIE ETHNISCHEN NATIONALITÄTEN UND DER BEWAFFNETE KAMPF

Nach dem Zensus⁸ von 1983 wird in Myanmar zwischen acht ethnischen Gruppen unterschieden, wonach die Birmanen mit 69 Prozent die Bevölkerungsmehrheit stellen, gefolgt von den Shan mit 8,5 Prozent, den Karen mit 6,2 Prozent, den Rakhines (Arakanesen) mit 4,5 Prozent, den Mon mit 2,4 Prozent, den Chin mit 2,2 Prozent, den Kachin mit 1,4 Prozent und den Karenni mit 0,4 Prozent (Steinberg, 2010, S. xxiv). Weitere bedeutende ethnische Gruppen, wie unter anderem die Wa, Naga, Kokang oder Palaung, wurden in diesem letzten Zensus nicht gesondert erhoben. Zwischen den ethnischen Gruppen sorgen die Zahlen für einen Disput; so sind militärische Führungskreise der Karen beispielsweise der Ansicht, dass der Bevölkerungsanteil der Karen gezielt nach unten korrigiert wurde, indem buddhistische Karen⁹ den Birmanen und nicht den Karen zugerechnet wurden. Für jede der oben genannten ethnischen Nationalitäten formierten sich bewaffnete Gruppen, die sich meist als Selbstverteidigungsarmeen gegenüber dem myanmarischen Militär betrachten, wie beispielsweise die KNLA oder die KIA. Nur wenige dieser Gruppen agieren als Zusammenschlüsse, allerdings gibt es durchaus militärische und politische Allianzen. Militärisch haben sich zurzeit beispielsweise die *Ta'ang National Liberation Army* (TNLA) und die *Arakan Army* (AA) mit der KIA alliiert. Aktuell vereinigt der UNFC als Dachorganisation 16 bewaffnete Gruppen. Die *All Burma Students Democratic Front* (ABSDF) ist eine der wenigen bewaffneten Gruppen, die sich nicht als Selbstverteidi-

8 Von 30. März bis 10. April 2014 fand die Erhebung des ersten Zensus nach mehr als 30 Jahren statt. Es wird jedoch eine Politisierung der Ergebnisse befürchtet (Transnational Institute, 2014).

9 Die Karen gehören verschiedenen Religionen an. Exakte Zahlen liegen hierzu nicht vor, es kann jedoch geschätzt werden, dass jeweils rund ein Drittel der Karen christlich, buddhistisch und animistisch orientiert sind (Steinberg, 2010, S. 107).

gungsarmee einer ethnischen Gruppe versteht. Die ABSDF wurde nach der gewaltsamen Niederschlagung der Proteste von 1988¹⁰ von StudentInnen gegründet und kämpft seitdem in wechselnden Allianzen für die Beendigung der Militärherrschaft. Innerhalb der bewaffneten Gruppen hat die *United Wa State Army* (UWSA) eine Art Sonderstatus. Sie ist mit etwa 25.000 Angehörigen die militärisch stärkste Gruppe in Myanmar, geht keine Allianzen mit anderen Gruppen ein und kontrolliert de facto, wenn auch nicht offiziell anerkannt, einen autonomen Staat. Die UWSA gilt als wichtiger Akteur im Drogenhandel, besonders mit Opium, Heroin und Amphetaminen (BNI, 2013, S. 180; Keenan, 2012, S. 88). Während viele andere politisch-militärische Gruppen wie die KNU und die KIO Aktivitäten zur Begrenzung des Drogenhandels unternommen haben, zählt der Drogenhandel für die UWSA zu den wichtigsten Einnahmequellen. Andere bewaffnete Gruppen finanzieren sich (auch) durch den Handel mit Holz und Jade, Einnahmen aus Casinos sowie durch die Erhebung von Steuern (Keenan, 2012).

Bereits ab 1920 unter britischer Herrschaft engagierten sich ethnische Nationalitäten wie die Karen bei den damaligen Machthabern für die Gründung eines sich selbst verwaltenden Karen-Staates. Mit dem Abkommen von Panglong 1947 handelten General Aung San und VertreterInnen von Kachin, Chin und Shan die Grundlagen für das politische System eines unabhängigen Burmas aus. Im Abkommen heißt es eher unspezifisch, „full autonomy in internal administration for the frontier areas is accepted in principle“ (Panglong Agreement, 1947), jedoch stellt dieses Abkommen auch heute einen wichtigen Bezugspunkt und damit die Legitimation für den bewaffneten Kampf dar. Durch das Attentat an Aung San und sechs seiner Kabinettsmitglieder im Juli 1947 scheiterten auch die Vereinbarungen des Panglong-Abkommens. Kurz nach der Unabhängigkeit des damaligen Burmas begann der bewaffnete Konflikt zwischen der Regierung und ethnischen Widerstandsarmeen. In der Perspektive der KNU dient dieser der Selbstverteidigung. So heißt es in einem Statement der KNU zur Geschichte der Karen:

When Karen security posts and villages were attacked by Government troops and large numbers of Karen killed and women brutalized in the area around the capital Rangoon in late 1948 and early 1949, the KNU believed it had no choice but to take up arms against the Government in defense of itself. (KNU, o.J., S. 3)

Auch der bewaffnete Konflikt zwischen Regierung und KIA geht auf eine Verteidigungsstrategie zur Bewahrung der Identität der Kachin zurück. Der bewaffnete Kampf der KIA begann 1961, hauptsächlich als Widerstand gegen die Entscheidung des Premierministers U Nu den Buddhismus zur Staatsreligion zu erheben. Die Kachin sind überwiegend ChristInnen, nach Schätzungen etwa 90 bis 95 Prozent (Steinberg, 2010, S. 107). Innerhalb der Kachin erhielt und erhält die KIA/O großen Zuspruch und Unterstützung: „The Kachin people look to the KIO to act. In their eyes, the KIO was founded to defend the Kachins’ heritage, their culture, religion, language and every other aspect of life“ (Euro Burma Office, 2010, S. 2). Der UNFC ist die neu-

10 Friedliche Proteste von Studierenden für Demokratie wurden am 8. August 1988 vom Militär gewaltsam niedergeschlagen. Dabei starben etwa 3.000 Menschen.

este Allianz bewaffneter ethnischer Widerstandsbewegungen und wurde im Februar 2011 auf einer fünftägigen Konferenz von 15 ethnischen Gruppen gegründet. Die Gründung des UNFC verfolgt das Ziel „to strengthen the teamwork cooperation in their struggle for a true democratic federal Union of Burma against the ruling military junta“ (Linn, 2011). Der UNFC ging aus dem *Committee for the Emergence of Federal Union* (CEFU) hervor und möchte alle bewaffneten Widerstandsbewegungen in den Friedensverhandlungen mit der Regierung vertreten (BNI, 2013, S. 174). Zunächst weigerte sich das Verhandlungsteam der Regierung allerdings Friedensgespräche mit dem UNFC zu führen, traf sich in der Folgezeit dann jedoch doch einige wenige Male mit dem UNFC. Ein Verhandlungsführer der Regierungsseite begründete die Weigerung damit, dass die UNFC-VertreterInnen „only promote their own personal interests“ (persönliches Interview, Mai 2012). Ein erstes informelles Treffen zwischen Aung Min und einem UNFC-Vertreter fand allerdings schon im Dezember 2011 statt. Ein hochrangiger UNFC-Vertreter erklärt die fehlende Gesprächsbereitschaft der Regierung mit dem UNFC wiederum so: „The Government peace team did not want to talk with the UNFC, because they do not want to make the UNFC strong. They only came to us because of the KIA membership“ (persönliches Interview, Oktober 2013). Auch wenn die Regierung den UNFC als Vertretung der bewaffneten Gruppe nicht anerkennt, hat der UNFC für die bewaffneten Gruppen im Widerstand eine wichtige Koordinierungsfunktion.

Seit 2011 wurden zahlreiche Waffenstillstandsvereinbarungen erneuert und neu geschlossen, dennoch bleiben Gruppen wie die KNU, KIO und der UNFC skeptisch. Diese Skepsis erklärt sich auch aus den bewaffneten Auseinandersetzungen im Kachin-Staat, die im Juni 2011 begannen. *Tatmadaw* (das myanmarische Militär) brach im Juni 2011 den Waffenstillstand mit KIO/A, um – wie es in der Perspektive des KIO-Führungskreises und von RegierungskritikerInnen heißt – chinesischen Unternehmen Schutz beim Staudambau zu gewähren (hochrangiger KIO-Funktionär, persönliches Interview, Mai 2012). So habe *tatmadaw* Militärstützpunkte auf KIA-kontrolliertem Gebiet errichtet und die KIA angegriffen. Diese Erklärung für den Ausbruch des bewaffneten Konfliktes ist innerhalb der Kachin-Gemeinschaft weit verbreitet und wird auch von gemeindebasierten Organisationen geteilt. So heißt es beispielsweise in einem von verschiedenen lokalen Organisationen im Zuge von Luftangriffen des myanmarischen Militärs gegen die KIA veröffentlichten Statement: „Since June 2011, Burmese troops started war against Kachin Independence Army“ (Kachin Community Based Organizations, 2012). In der Wahrnehmung der bewaffneten Gruppen und der ihnen nahestehenden Organisationen wird nicht abgestritten, dass der Präsident zu einer Beendigung der Kampfhandlungen aufrief, allerdings habe er nicht die notwendige Autorität aufbieten können oder wollen, das Militär zum Rückzug zu veranlassen: „The president, he was whispering and not shouting“ (Kachin-Entwicklungshelferin, persönliches Interview, Mai 2012). Auch mehr als zwei Jahre nach dem Beginn der bewaffneten Auseinandersetzungen konnten diese nicht beendet werden. Die KIO/A fordert anstelle eines erneuten Waffenstillstandsabkommens eine politische Regelung, die dauerhaft Sicherheit vor Übergriffen gewährleistet. Besonders die Zivilbevölkerung leidet unter den Kämpfen. Mehr als 100.000 Menschen sind vor der Gewalt geflohen und leben als intern Vertriebene (*Internally Displaced Persons*, IDPs) in Myanmar. Besonders schlecht sind die Bedingungen der

66.000 IDPs in den Camps im KIA-kontrollierten Gebiet, denn die Regierung ließ zwischen Mitte 2011 und Mitte 2013 nur zweimal internationale Hilfstransporte zu (Kachin Women's Association Thailand, 2013, S. 2).

Die meisten bewaffneten Gruppen legitimieren ihr Vorgehen als Kampf gegen Diskriminierung und für Menschenrechte. Sie sehen sich besonders durch hohe Raten von Armut und Analphabetismus, fehlende Infrastruktur wie Strom und Verkehrswege, Menschenrechtsverletzungen aufgrund von Zwangsarbeit, willkürliche Steuern, das Verbot in ethnischen Sprachen zu unterrichten und Zwangsumsiedlung durch die Regierung diskriminiert. Auch das Vorgehen des *tatmadaw*, wie sich dies beispielsweise in der „*four-cut*“-Strategie äußert, stellt in ihren Augen eine Verletzung der Menschenrechte dar (Sakhong, 2012, S. 28). Da bewaffnete Gruppen in enger Verbindung zu DorfbewohnerInnen und Dörfern stehen, von hier aus operieren und rekrutieren, zielt diese Strategie auf eine Unterbrechung der Verbindung zwischen Dörfern und bewaffneten Gruppen ab. Dörfer werden so von 1) Nahrungsmitteln, 2) Informationen, 3) Verkehrsmitteln und 4) Kommunikation abgeschnitten. Um den Austausch von Informationen zwischen Dörfern und bewaffneten Gruppen zu erschweren, dürfen in den ethnischen Gebieten beispielsweise keine Zeitungen in den ethnischen Sprachen publiziert werden, was dazu führt, dass diese Sprachen zunehmend eliminiert werden (Sakhong, 2012, S. 28). In einem Interview werden die Folgen der Militärstrategie für die Dorfgemeinschaften so beschrieben:

To cut the recruitment of new soldiers [for the ethnic resistance forces] for example, they [the *tatmadaw*] relocate villages. The villagers are therefore suffering terribly during the civil war; women, elders and children, especially, are suffering. Because of this cutting system, the ethnic states are so poor. (Chin-Friedensaktivist, persönliches Interview, November 2013)

DER FRIEDENSPROZESS IN MYANMAR: ENTWICKLUNGEN UND PERSPEKTIVEN

Seit Beginn der Friedensoffensive 2011 konnte das Verhandlungsteam der Regierung mit 14 bewaffneten Gruppen bilaterale Waffenstillstandsvereinbarungen schließen bzw. bestehende erneuern. Bereits seit Ende 2013 bemühte sich die Regierung um die Überführung der bilateralen Vereinbarungen in ein landesweites Waffenstillstandsabkommen (*nationwide ceasefire*). Besonders die KIO hatte jedoch angekündigt, dieses nicht zu unterzeichnen, da ihren Forderungen nach einem politischen Dialog und der Beendigung der Übergriffe durch das myanmarische Militär nicht nachgekommen worden war. Auch andere Gruppen stehen dem landesweiten Abkommen kritisch gegenüber und interpretieren dieses als nach außen gerichtete Strategie. Der UNFC begründet seine ablehnende Haltung beispielsweise so:

The nationwide ceasefire is a hot item. The government is saying that the ceasefire should come first and then we will work on the political solution. But signing a paper is very easy, so we [the UNFC members] have our doubts that with the ceasefire a political solution ... will come. (UNFC, persönliches Interview, Oktober 2013)

Auch andere AkteurInnen sind skeptisch, ob einer Waffenstillstandsvereinbarung auch ein politischer Dialog folgt: „The Burmese government is not sincere. They always say something and then do something else“ (General bewaffneter Gruppe, persönliches Interview, Oktober 2013).

Für die Bewertung der Handlungen der myanmarischen Regierung verfolgen die bewaffneten Gruppen aufmerksam die aktuellen Ereignisse im Kachin-Staat; so führten 2013 geschlossene Abkommen zwischen Regierung und KIO/A nicht zu einer Beendigung der Kämpfe. Dies stärkt das Misstrauen gegenüber der Regierung. Nur wenige Wochen nach dem letzten Abkommen im Oktober 2013, welches den Weg für weitere Verhandlungen bereiten sollte, kam es zu erneuten bewaffneten Auseinandersetzungen. KIO/A und ihnen nahestehende Organisationen sehen den Auslöser für die bewaffneten Übergriffe in dem Machtstreben von Militär und Regierung, die ihre Position durch die Kontrolle von Ressourcen und Land zu stärken beabsichtigen. Bewaffnete Gruppen der UNFC-Mitglieder beschreiben ihr Handeln ausschließlich als Reaktion auf das Regierungshandeln: „We just respond to their [the government’s] actions. They want to talk, we talk with them. They fight us, we fight back“ (Oberst bewaffneter Gruppe, persönliches Interview, Oktober 2013).

Eine große Sorge der Führungskreise bewaffneter Gruppen, wie der im UNFC vertretenen, besteht in ihrer eigenen Schwächung durch die Taktik der Regierung. Sie befürchten durch die bilateralen Verhandlungen mit RegierungsvertreterInnen, die einzelnen Personen oder Gruppen vor allem wirtschaftliche Zugeständnisse machen um sie zu überzeugen, geschwächt zu werden. Das erhöht die Gefahr, dass es den Widerstandsbewegungen nicht gelingt, mit einer Stimme zu sprechen und gemeinsam ihre politischen Ziele zu verfolgen. Um eine gemeinsame Position zu entwickeln und Vorbedingungen für die Unterzeichnung des landesweiten Waffenstillstandsabkommens zu formulieren, verständigten sich im Oktober 2013 16 bewaffnete Gruppen auf einer Konferenz in Laiza, dem Hauptquartier der KIA, auf einen gemeinsamen Standpunkt und gründeten das *Nationwide Ceasefire Coordination Team* (NCCT). Im Januar 2014 erarbeiteten diese bewaffneten Gruppen und ihre politischen Vertretungen auf einer Konferenz im KNLA-kontrollierten Gebiet den Entwurf eines landesweiten Waffenstillstandsabkommens, das wenige Tage später dem Verhandlungsteam der Regierung vorgelegt wurde. Als zentrale Bedingungen für die Unterzeichnung eines landesweiten Abkommens fordern die bewaffneten Gruppen, dass dieses Abkommen bereits den Rahmen und das Verfahren für einen politischen Dialog sowie die Themen Streitkräfte und Schutz der Zivilbevölkerung zu beinhalten habe (Ethnic Armed Organizations Conference, 2013, S. 2). Nur durch konkrete Vereinbarungen scheint es für die bewaffneten Gruppen möglich, ihre politischen Programme als durch Verhandlungen durchsetzbar wahrzunehmen.

Obwohl in den vergangenen Monaten zahlreiche Waffenstillstandsvereinbarungen neu unterzeichnet oder bestätigt wurden, führte dies bei den SkeptikerInnen des Friedensprozesses nicht zu einer Veränderung ihrer Perspektive auf Regierung und Militär. Denn es fehlt an konkreten Schritten und der Einhaltung von Vereinbarungen. In den Interviews (2012 und 2013) wurde die Friedensinitiative überwiegend als nach außen gerichtete Strategie interpretiert, um den globalen Norden zu besänftigen und InvestorInnen wie TouristInnen für Myanmar zu interessieren. Im nun folgenden Teil werde ich zeigen, dass die aktuellen Friedensverhandlungen in den

Führungskreisen bewaffneter Gruppen kaum als Chance zur Verbesserung ihrer politischen Situation wahrgenommen werden. In einer negativen Einschätzung wird die derzeitige Friedensinitiative in KNU-,¹¹ KIO- und UNFC-Führungskreisen basierend auf vorangegangenen Erfahrungen als Regierungsstrategie zur Marginalisierung der ethnischen Nationalitäten und zur Absicherung der ökonomischen Vormachtstellung von Regierung und Militär interpretiert.

MISSTRAUEN ALS HERAUSFORDERUNGEN FÜR DEN FRIEDEN

Im Verlauf des Artikels habe ich bereits darauf hingewiesen, dass sich die bewaffneten Gruppen, wie diese im UNFC vertreten sind, zwar an dem Friedensprozess beteiligen, diesem jedoch skeptisch gegenüberstehen. Ich argumentiere, dass die Zurückhaltung dieser Gruppen im Friedensprozess weniger darauf basiert, eine Kriegsökonomie aufrechterhalten zu wollen, als vielmehr darauf, dass aufgrund der jahrzehntelangen Konfliktgeschichte ein Misstrauen gegenüber der Regierung besteht. Solange die Verhandlungen zwischen Regierung und bewaffneten Gruppen zu keinen greifbaren Ergebnissen führen und die Regierung an ihrer Top-down-Strategie festhält, ist eine Niederlegung der Waffen somit auch den AnhängerInnen und KämpferInnen nicht vermittelbar. Die Waffen trotzdem niederzulegen, würde die Autorität der Führungskreise bei ihrer Anhängerschaft gefährden. Eine der größten Herausforderungen für den Friedensprozess stellt somit das anhaltende Misstrauen dar, dass politische Veränderungen im Sinne der bewaffneten Gruppen nicht durch Verhandlungen zu erreichen sind.

Ihr Misstrauen gegenüber der Regierung beschreibt die Führungsebene der KIO beispielsweise so: „In our hearts, we do not have trust. In the past they [the government] always agreed on paper, but their actions on the ground were different. Therefore, we do not believe them“ (hochrangiger KIO-Funktionär, persönliches Interview, Oktober 2013). Wichtiger als Worte sind für sie die Handlungen von Regierung und Armee. Besonders die aktuellen bewaffneten Auseinandersetzungen, aber auch (lang) zurückliegende Ereignisse bestimmen die Interpretation der gegenwärtigen Situation. Diese Interpretation macht es den bewaffneten Gruppen kaum möglich, der Reform- und Friedensstrategie der Regierung Vertrauen zu schenken. Sie beteiligen sich zwar an den Friedensgesprächen und beschäftigen sich intensiv mit einem zukünftigen föderalen Staatssystem. So arbeitet beispielsweise der UNFC an einer neuen Verfassung. Diese ist jedoch nur eine von zwei Strategien: „We are hoping for the best, but we are prepared for the worst“ (General bewaffneter Gruppe, persönliches Interview, Oktober 2013).

Die bewaffneten Gruppen der KNU und KIO interpretierten aktuelle und vergangene Ereignisse in den geführten Interviews häufig als eine Geschichte der Marginalisierung mit dem Versuch der Beseitigung regierungsfeindlicher Gruppen. Ein bedeutendes Ereignis für die KNU stellt der Sturz ihres Hauptquartiers Manerplaw 1995 durch die myanmarische Armee dar. Mehr als zwei Jahre, von 1992 bis 1994, hatte das Militär erfolglos versucht, Manerplaw zu erobern. Da die Eroberung in einer direk-

11 Innerhalb der KNU-Führung existieren unterschiedliche Ansichten über den erfolgversprechendsten Weg zur Erreichung der politischen Forderungen. So sind Softliner durchaus bereit, sich stärker auf die Friedensinitiative der Regierung einzulassen.

ten Auseinandersetzung misslang, wählte die damalige Militärregierung einen Hinterhalt und konnte mit Unterstützung der *Democratic Karen Buddhist Army* (DKBA) schließlich Manerplaw einnehmen. 1994 gründete der buddhistische Karen Mönch U Thuzana die *Democratic Karen Buddhist Organisation* (DKBO), nachdem er bereits ab Anfang der 1990er Jahre Zulauf von KNU- und KNLA-Angehörigen erhalten hatte. Die Gründung der DKBA/O kann dabei als Reaktion auf die christliche Dominanz innerhalb der KNU und deren autoritäre Führung gedeutet werden. Jedoch förderete die Militärregierung von Beginn an U Thuzana und die Gründung der DKBA als Verbündete der Regierung im Kampf gegen die KNU (South, 2009, S. 57) und schlug der DKBA einen Deal vor: Wenn es ihnen gelänge, Manerplaw zu erobern, erhielte die DKBA Autonomierechte im Karen-Staat. Angeführt von DKBA-Kämpfern, die als ehemalige KNLA-Angehörige die versteckten Wege und Schwachpunkte kannten, und getarnt in KNLA-Uniformen marschierten VertreterInnen der Militärregierung im Januar 1995 in das KNU-Hauptquartier ein (Karen Human Rights Group, 1995). Die Eroberung von Manerplaw war in der Erzählung der KNU nicht der erste Versuch ihrer Zerschlagung. Bereits 1961 unter General Ne Win war dieser Versuch unternommen worden: „For religious reasons they [the Myanmar government] want to wipe the Karens out. But they could not wipe us out in the past because there are more of us than they believe and they overestimated their strength“ (ehemaliger hochrangiger KNU-Funktionär, persönliches Interview, Oktober 2013).

Die Geschichte der gewaltsamen Beendigung von Widerstand hat jedoch nicht nur für die KNU eine Bedeutung, sondern auch für die Kachin. Die KIO und ihnen nahestehende Organisationen interpretieren die Angriffe auf KIA-Stützpunkte und das Wiederaufflammen der Kämpfe seit Mitte 2011 als eine systematische Strategie zur Schwächung der Kachin: „The enemy’s offensive against the Kachin since 2011 is a strategy of the *tatmadaw* to wipe out the Kachin“ (UNFC, persönliches Interview, Oktober 2013). In den geführten Interviews geben die KIO und ihnen nahestehende Organisationen an, dass die Kachin trotz der Übergriffe des *tatmadaw* an dem Waffenstillstand hätten festhalten wollen und die KIA erst Maßnahmen zur Selbstverteidigung ergriffen habe, nachdem zahlreiche KIA-KämpferInnen getötet worden waren und deutlich wurde, dass sich das Militär die Zurückdrängung der KIA zum Ziel gesetzt hatte. In Folge der Kampfhandlungen fühlten sich die Kachin in ihrer Existenz bedroht und der Konflikt weitete sich aus, indem sich das Narrativ der KIA/O zunehmend gesellschaftlich verankerte. Nach dem Ausbruch der Kampfhandlungen war es beispielsweise nicht länger das Ziel der *Kachin Baptist Convention* (KBC),¹² einen Waffenstillstand zu fördern, sondern die Freiheit der Kachin, sie beteten daher „for freedom, not ceasefire“ („Burma’s largest“, 2012). Seit dem Wiederaufflammen der Kämpfe erhielt die KIA verstärkt Zulauf und politische Forderungen radikalisierten sich; so existiert in KIO-Führungskreisen heute auch die Einschätzung, dass nur ein unabhängiger Kachin-Staat (und nicht mehr als Teil eines föderalen Staates) dauerhaft Freiheit und Sicherheit garantieren kann.

In den Interviews werden häufig Parallelen zwischen der KIA und der *Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army* (MNDAA) gezogen. So habe das Militär versucht

12 Die KBC ist eine christliche Organisation mit über 400.000 Mitgliedern. Sie unterstützt die Zivilbevölkerung in den Konfliktregionen und äußert sich öffentlich zu dem bewaffneten Konflikt im Kachin-Staat.

die KIA wie schon die MNDA, eine bewaffnete Gruppe der Kokang, zur Kapitulation zu zwingen. Im Gegensatz zu der MNDA sei bei der KIA dieser Versuch jedoch gescheitert. Das myanmarische Militär griff 2009 die MNDA an, die trotz der Unterstützung anderer Gruppen nur wenige Tage später gezwungen war, sich zu ergeben. Die myanmarische Regierung sei daher davon ausgegangen, dass eine Zerschlagung der KIA ebenso möglich sei: „They [the Myanmar government] crushed the Kokang within three days, so [they believed] they can crush the Kachin within ten days“ (UNFC-Vertreter, persönliches Interview, Oktober 2013). Aktuell zeigt sich die Angst vor der Zerschlagung von bewaffneten Gruppen darin, dass in Führungskreisen eine militärische Großoffensive wie gegen die *Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam* (LTTE) im Norden Sri Lankas für durchaus möglich gehalten wird. Es kursieren Informationen, wonach die Regierung von Myanmar den weitestgehenden Waffenstillstand nutzte, um besonders durch den Austausch mit Israel und Sri Lanka ihre Kenntnisse im Kampf gegen Widerstandsgruppen zu erweitern.

Bei ihrem Vorgehen werden Regierung und Militär überwiegend ökonomische Motive unterstellt. So zielten Regierung und Militär darauf ab, wichtige Investitionsstandorte unter ihre Kontrolle zu bringen, entweder durch Landnahme oder durch Waffengewalt. Eine Kachin-Friedensaktivistin fasst das Konfliktgeschehen so zusammen:

An investment site means a clash. Where there is an investment site in Kachin State, they [the tatmadaw] will just find an excuse to fight. All fighting is about clearing the area for investment projects. But investment only means extracting the natural resources. Without international help the whole country will be sold out soon, and after 2015 nothing will be left. (Kachin-Friedensaktivistin, persönliches Interview, November 2013)

Ein Großteil der aktuellen bewaffneten Auseinandersetzungen im Kachin-Staat findet entlang der 771 Kilometer langen Shwe Gaspipeline statt, die Öl und Gas aus dem Golf von Bengalen quer durch Myanmar nach China befördert. Zum Schutz der Pipeline wurden innerhalb von wenigen Monaten 6.000 zusätzliche Soldaten des myanmarischen Militärs in die Region gebracht (Shwe Gas Movement, 2012). Die Beschlagnehmung von Land in den Gebieten der ethnischen Nationalitäten wird derzeit als großes Problem thematisiert. Zwischen Regierung und Wirtschaftselite besteht häufig (noch) eine enge Verbindung, sodass der Regierung nahestehende Unternehmen mit deren Duldung Land konfiszieren, wie beispielsweise die Yuzana Company Limited. Deren Gründer, der Geschäftsmann U Htay Myint, verfügt über enge Beziehungen zum Militär bis hin zum ehemaligen Staatschef von Myanmar, Than Shwe. Im Kachin-Staat konfiszierte das Unternehmen in der Vergangenheit etwa 120.000 Hektar Land. Das Handeln von Regierung und Militär wird dabei als Versuch interpretiert, durch die Kontrolle von wirtschaftlich relevanten Gebieten ihre Machtposition dauerhaft zu sichern. Für die Menschen in den Waffenstillstandsregionen brachte der Friedensprozess allerdings positive Entwicklungen. So ist es in weiten Teilen des Karen-Staats beispielsweise für die Menschen dort möglich, sich frei und ohne Angst zu bewegen (South, 2014). Aber auch hier entsteht durch Landbeschlagnehmung für Wirtschaftsprojekte ein neues großes Problem für die dörflichen Gemeinschaften (Karen Human Rights Group, 2013). In einer pessimistischen Perspektive,

die besonders innerhalb der Führungskreise von KIO, KNU und UNFC sowie unter AktivistInnen kursiert, werden die aktuellen Friedensbemühungen in erster Linie als nach außen gerichtete Strategie interpretiert: „The Myanmar Peace Center and the government want to have an agreement to show the world that Myanmar is a safe environment for business and tourists“ (Chin-Friedensaktivist, persönliches Interview, November 2013). Zentral bei ihrer Interpretation der aktuellen Ereignisse sind ihre vorangegangenen Erfahrungen mit Regierung und Militär.

FAZIT

Der mögliche Erfolg des Friedensprozesses in Myanmar wird wesentlich durch das fehlende Vertrauen, das die Führungskreise bewaffneter Gruppen diesem entgegenbringen, in Frage gestellt. Den proklamierten Reformprozess der Regierung betrachten sie als Fortsetzung einer althergebrachten Strategie, die besonders auf die Marginalisierung der ethnischen Nationalitäten und die Sicherung der ökonomischen Vormachtstellung für Regierungs- und Militärangehörige abzielt. Die Friedensabkommen sollen in dieser Perspektive dazu dienen, die Widerstandsbewegungen in ein enges Korsett zu pressen: „The nationwide ceasefire is a strategy of the Burmese government to put us in a cage. So that we cannot move anywhere, we are locked in a small chicken cage“ (General bewaffneter Gruppe, persönliches Interview, Oktober 2013). Die Waffenstillstandsabkommen sollen die Widerstandsbewegungen zur Niederlegung der Waffen drängen, indem sie ihnen (minimale) politische und wirtschaftliche Teilhabe versprechen, jedoch ohne die Chance tiefgreifende politische Veränderungen umzusetzen.

Ich zeigte in dem vorliegenden Artikel, dass sich die bewaffneten Gruppen zwar an dem Friedensprozess beteiligen, letztendlich damit aber nur auf das Handeln der Regierung reagieren und ihre Gesprächsbereitschaft signalisieren. Ich argumentierte, dass die Führungskreise bewaffneter Gruppen nicht deshalb eine kritische Perspektive einnehmen, weil sie ökonomische Verluste befürchten, sondern weil es ihnen an Vertrauen fehlt. Nach Jahrzehnten der Militärherrschaft ist es eine besondere Herausforderung, dem Gesinnungswandel der Regierung zu vertrauen und bei dem ambitionierten Tempo des Reformprozesses den Anschluss nicht zu verlieren.

Lassen sich die Führungen der bewaffneten Gruppen auf das von der Regierung vorgegebene Tempo ein, laufen sie Gefahr ihre Legitimität gegenüber ihren AnhängerInnen nicht länger aufrechterhalten zu können. Führungspersönlichkeiten, die sich zu schnell auf den Reformprozess einlassen, geraten bei ihrer Anhängerschaft in Verdacht, durch ökonomische Vorteile korrumpiert worden zu sein. Dementsprechend erfährt der Friedensprozess bei SkeptikerInnen nicht durch die ökonomische Beteiligung mehr Glaubwürdigkeit, sondern nur durch eine politische. Erst durch eine politische Beteiligung können die bewaffneten Gruppen die Friedensverhandlungen als Chance zur Verbesserung ihrer Situation wahrnehmen. Weitere wirtschaftliche Zugeständnisse für einzelne Individuen und Gruppen würden nur die kritische Perspektive, in der die Regierung auf die Spaltung der ethnischen Nationalitäten abzielt, bestärken. Bereits bei vorherigen Waffenstillstandsvereinbarungen, wie beispielsweise zwischen KIO/A und Regierung, wurden wirtschaftliche Zugeständnisse über eine politische Regelung gestellt. Das Wiederaufflammen der Kämpfe im

Kachin-Staat zeigt jedoch, dass ohne eine politische Regelung die Gefahr bewaffneter Auseinandersetzungen bestehen bleibt. Um einen nachhaltigen Frieden in Myanmar zu erreichen, ist es hilfreich, der Perspektive der SkeptikerInnen Gehör zu schenken und den Top-down-Friedensprozess in einen solchen zu verwandeln, der einer Vielzahl von gesellschaftlichen und ethnischen Gruppen Gestaltungsmöglichkeiten einräumt. Nur so kann innerhalb der bewaffneten Gruppen die Perspektive eine Chance bekommen, dass durch eine Verhandlungslösung ihre Marginalisierung überwindbar und ihre politischen Forderungen realisierbar sind. Dazu muss die Regierung bereit sein, von *ihrem* Plan für die Zukunft Myanmars, der Strategie einer florierenden, disziplinierten Demokratie, abzuweichen und demokratische Verfahren bereits im Reformprozess umsetzen. Sonst besteht die Gefahr der Einführung (semi-)demokratischer Strukturen mit autokratischen Mitteln. Eine Beendigung des bewaffneten Konfliktes wäre so dauerhaft nicht zu erreichen. Erste Schritte auf diesem Weg könnten sein, die politische Regelung des Konfliktes zur Priorität zu erklären und Wirtschaftsprojekte in Gebieten mit unklarem Status bis zu einem Friedensvertrag auszusetzen. Besonders zum Schutz der Zivilbevölkerung, aber auch um Vertrauen aufzubauen, müssen Waffenstillstandsvereinbarungen eingehalten sowie deren Verletzungen sanktioniert werden. Das Vertrauen zwischen den Konfliktparteien muss wachsen. Dies erfordert die Bereitschaft von allen Parteien.



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DANKSAGUNG

Mein Dank gilt besonders Christoph Kowalewski, Wolfgang Trost, Thorsten Bonacker und Brigitte Schüssler für ihre Unterstützung bei meiner Feldforschung. Des Weiteren bedanke ich mich für wertvolle Hinweise bei zwei anonymen GutachterInnen.

Informal Conflict Management in Exclusivist Political Orders: Some Observations on Central Mindanao

Jeroen Adam & Boris Verbrugge

► Adam, J., & Verbrugge, B. (2014). Informal conflict management in exclusivist political orders: Some observations on Central Mindanao. *ASEAS – Austrian Journal of South-East Asian Studies*, 7(1), 61-74.

In the past decade, a range of international and national NGOs have pointed to the need to complement national-level negotiations with a support for alternative, informal institutions of conflict management in order to reach a sustainable peace in the conflict-affected regions of Central and Western Mindanao. This argument is based on emerging insights into the multi-layered conflict ecology in the region and the fact that classic statist diplomacy can only deal with this complexity to a limited extent. Based on an analysis of existing conflict management practices in the region, we would like to challenge some of the basic premises underlying this 'alternative' and informal approach. Our core argument is that in the case of Mindanao, assuming a rigid distinction between formal and informal actors and practices of conflict mediation is flawed and may actually be counterproductive, as it obscures how informal practices dominate purportedly formal mediation procedures. Moreover, it tends to underestimate how the local executive embodying state power plays a key role in allegedly 'informal' conflict management mechanisms.

Keywords: Conflict Management; Informality; Mindanao; Peace Studies; the Philippines

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In den letzten Jahren hat eine Reihe von internationalen und nationalen NROs darauf hingewiesen, dass Verhandlungen auf nationalstaatlicher Ebene durch alternative, informelle Institutionen des Konfliktmanagements unterstützt werden müssen, um nachhaltigen Frieden in den Konfliktregionen von Zentral- und West-Mindanao zu erreichen. Dieses Argument basiert auf jüngsten Einsichten über die Vielschichtigkeit der Konfliktdimensionen in der Region und dem Faktum, dass klassische nationalstaatliche Diplomatie im Umgang mit dieser Komplexität begrenzt ist. Basierend auf einer Analyse von bestehenden Praktiken des Konfliktmanagements in der Region möchten wir einige der grundlegenden Prämissen, die diesem „alternativen“ und informellen Ansatz zu Grunde liegen, in Frage stellen. Unser zentrales Argument ist, dass die Annahme einer rigiden Trennung zwischen formellen und informellen AkteurInnen und Praktiken der Konfliktmediation im Fall von Mindanao mangelhaft und möglicherweise sogar kontraproduktiv ist, weil sie verschleiert, wie informelle Praktiken vorgeblich formelle Mediationsprozesse dominieren. Zudem unterschätzt eine solche Trennung, wie die lokale Exekutive als Verkörperung von Staatsmacht eine Schlüsselrolle darin spielt, welche scheinbar „informellen“ Mechanismen des Konfliktmanagements geltend gemacht werden.

Schlagworte: Friedensforschung; Informalität; Konfliktmanagement; Mindanao; Philippinen

INTRODUCTION

The southern Philippine island of Mindanao faces one of the longest-running violent conflicts in the world. Starting in the late 1960s with clashes between Christian and Muslim armed militias, already by the early 1970s the conflict had escalated into a full-scale war between the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF, the main representative of the minority Muslim population at the time) and the Philippine army (Dañguiland & Gloria, 2000; McKenna, 1998, pp. 138–156). In later stages of the conflict, new rebel movements emerged, with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) in particular proving to be a serious contender to the traditional MNLF hegemony. Although the MNLF and the MILF are no longer officially at war with the Philippine state at the time of writing, sporadic outbursts of violence between the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and these rebel groups still occur on a regular basis. Furthermore, a counterinsurgency campaign is ongoing against the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), a small but highly mediatized terrorist group that rose to prominence after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. In addition, as recently as 2008, the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) were established as a radicalized breakaway faction from the MILF, disenchanted with the ongoing negotiations between the MILF and the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP).

This decades-long history of violence and confrontation coincided with protracted rounds of peace negotiations. Already in 1976, the Philippine state and the MNLF reached a ceasefire agreement, the so-called Tripoli agreement (Özderem, 2012). However, it was only following a plebiscite in 1989 that the Autonomous Region for Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) was created, albeit as a much smaller geographic entity than originally envisioned in the 1976 agreement. In 1996, a final peace agreement was signed between the MNLF and the GRP (Bertrand, 2000). This peace agreement provided for the disarmament and reintegration of MNLF fighters, although it did not manage to prevent further confrontations between MNLF factions and the AFP.¹ Meanwhile, soon after the 1996 agreement with the MNLF, preliminary talks started with the MILF (International Crisis Group, 2008). Despite some major setbacks (Williams, 2010), often followed by a period of open warfare, talks between the GRP and the MILF have now reached an advanced stage with the signing of the Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro (FAB) and four annexes, as recently as January 2014. While important challenges remain with regards to the further fine-tuning and implementation of this agreement, it has nonetheless enabled a rapprochement and a stabilization of relations between the MILF and the Philippine state.²

1 One recent example is the audacious attack by 200 MNLF fighters on the city of Zamboanga on 8 September 2013. These events should be understood against the background of the current talks between the GRP and the MILF, whereby some MNLF leaders feel anxious about their potential political sidelining in the future Bangsamoro autonomous region. This was in particular the case for a group of MNLF members around former ARMM Governor Nur Misuari who mainly originate from the island of Sulu. It needs to be stressed that other important MNLF leaders have condemned the attack and that there was no direct support among MNLF communities in mainland Mindanao (“Sema’s MNLF faction”, 2013).

2 The last big hurdle that remains is to write up a Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL) wherein the promulgations made within the FAB and the four annexes will be integrated and the institutional structure of the future Bangsamoro will be further refined. Considering the positive atmosphere that has surrounded the recent consultations between the MILF and the GRP, it is generally expected that this BBL will be finished

Notwithstanding the notable progress made in these negotiations, important questions remain with regards to their impact on the everyday security situation in Mindanao, where a broad variety of local conflicts continue to proliferate. This observation is related to critical insights that have emerged in recent years about the highly complex, multi-layered conflict ecology in the region (Adam, 2013; Lara & Champain, 2009). By tackling only one aspect of this conflict ecology, namely the 'master narrative' of Muslim struggles for autonomy, national-level statist diplomacy is inevitably limited in scope. For these reasons, a range of NGOs and international organizations are now pointing towards the need to complement these national-level negotiations with alternative conflict management practices that rely disproportionately on non-state, informal institutions of conflict management (Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, 2011; Human Development Network, 2005; The Asia Foundation [TAF], 2011). These informal institutions are said to be not only socially legitimized, but also better equipped to deal with localized violent disputes. Based on an analysis of existing conflict management practices in Mindanao,³ however, we would like to challenge some of the basic premises underlying this 'alternative' approach. Our core argument is that in the case of Mindanao, assuming a rigid distinction between formal and informal actors and practices of conflict mediation is not only unhelpful, but may even be counterproductive, as it obscures how informal practices dominate purportedly formal mediation procedures and, perhaps more fundamentally, how the local executive embodying state power plays a key role in allegedly 'informal' conflict management mechanisms.

In the following section, we will provide some critical observations regarding the complex conflict ecology in Western and Central Mindanao, and how a growing acceptance of this complexity is feeding into support for alternative, informal conflict management mechanisms. The third section will investigate the alleged shortcomings of 'formal' conflict mediation mechanisms. It will be argued that these 'formal' mechanisms in effect exhibit a high degree of informality, in the form of amicable settlement practices and a high degree of personal influence on the part of local executives. The fourth section will turn to a brief evaluation of three dispute settlement mechanisms that explicitly aim to transcend formal state structures by including non-state actors. It will be suggested that the local executive plays a key role in these allegedly 'informal' or hybrid mechanisms, both as a vital source of coercive power and legitimacy.

by early 2015 at the latest. The biggest difficulty will lie in the ratification by the Philippine Congress without invoking too many fundamental amendments that would weaken the BBL. In case of successful ratification, it is expected that before the ending of the Aquino administration in 2016, a new Bangsamoro will be installed which will incorporate the current ARMM.

3 For this article, we draw on an analysis of a diverse range of conflict management interventions in Western and Central Mindanao, with a specific focus on the province of North Cotabato. These different interventions, ranging from big international programs such as one supported by The Asia Foundation to localized initiatives operating on a limited geographical scale, have been researched over the past year throughout different fieldwork periods in the region. The methodology consists of a combination of in-depth interviews with different stakeholders, participant observation, and analysis of written documents (e.g., policy reports, evaluations, pamphlets).

COMPLEX CONFLICT ECOLOGIES AND THE RISE OF THE INFORMAL

In recent years, there has been growing awareness that armed confrontations between the AFP and Muslim armed groups over the specific interpretations and modalities of autonomy constitute only a minor portion of the actual violence (Lara & Champain, 2009, pp. 8–9; Torres, 2007). Instead, the majority of violent conflict in the region should be understood as part and parcel of struggles for control over the local political economy. Significant in this regard is the high incidence of what has been described as ‘warlord politics’, an ultimately coercive and oftentimes-violent form of electoral competition, often built around kinship networks. While this observation is by no means unique in the Philippine setting (Sidel, 1999), it is exceptional that this coercive form of political-electoral contestation interacts in highly complex ways “with a second form of political violence not encountered in other regions of the Philippines – that of the armed struggle for independence” (Kreuzer, 2005, p. 4). This results in a highly complex conflict ecology, as violent struggles play out between different kin-based groups, can obtain both an inter- and intra-religious framing, and result in an intricate web of small-scale, yet often protracted, violent disputes that do not necessarily follow the national framing of the conflict (Adam, 2013). Furthermore, rather than a neat dichotomy between the ‘local’ and ‘the national’, different scales of violence and oftentimes-coercive authority interact in highly complex ways wherein MNLF or MILF commanders deploy their capacity for violence in localized struggles over resources and political office. Ultimately, the causes of violence in the region are more diverse and complex than merely conflicting opinions on the legal status of an autonomous Muslim entity. As such, and without wanting to question its relevance, national-level diplomacy has clear limitations, as it targets only one particular aspect of this complex conflict ecology.

Based on this observation, a range of researchers, NGOs, and international organizations have pointed to the need to complement these national-level negotiations with a support for alternative, in particular non-state or informal, institutions of conflict management in order to reach true, sustainable peace in the region.⁴ This argument is underpinned by two broad rationales. First, unlike ‘statist’, formal, and distant national-level negotiations, informal institutions are considered to have strong social embeddedness and legitimacy. For instance, in a paper on civil society in Mindanao based on a case study in Pikit, North Cotabato, Neumann (2010) argues that local, civil-society based organizations and institutions are more effective and flexible in handling conflict and violence when compared to the many (failed) national, top-down efforts to implement peace in the region. The Institute for Autonomy and Governance at Notre Dame University in Cotabato City makes a similar point when it considers community-based conflict resolution and inter-faith dialogue as a fundamental part in building a ‘cultural basis’ for socially-embedded peace (Bacani & Mercado, 2009; Mendoza, 2010). In the 2005 Philippine Human Development Re-

4 Conflict management is understood as a range of different approaches and programs focused on containing violence during the actual conflict. This distinguishes conflict management from other activities such as conflict prevention or post-conflict reconciliation (World Bank, 2006). The strategies and institutions of conflict management we elaborate on in this article are in particular focused on a quick settlement of small-scale violent disputes.

port (Human Development Network, 2005), it is stated that “peace talks by themselves are unlikely to prosper” (p. 45) as these are only conducted by a selective group of “designated specialists” (p. 35). Therefore, it is important that these are supported by a broad popular constituency, consisting of a diversity of pro-peace civil society organizations that can monitor the peace process. A second rationale, which is stated in the same report, claims that these civil society organizations are better placed to deal with everyday violence and tensions at the micro-level of society. For this reason, national-level talks on the ‘secessionist question’ should be complemented with support for informal strategies and actors of conflict management, focused on everyday violence rooted in struggles over the local political economy. For instance, the Swiss-based Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (2011) makes a plea to actively support so-called “indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms” (p. 54) as these are better suited than formal local government units to settle disputes at the micro-level of society. This rationale also became apparent when studying the so-called hybrid coalition approach of conflict management deployed by The Asia Foundation in different conflict-affected places in Mindanao. The Asia Foundation is an American NGO and one of the most important players in the NGO landscape in Central and Western Mindanao where they have a widespread conflict management program through 13 partner organizations. When studying the basic rationale behind this program, some interesting issues can be noted. First of all, this approach is conceived of as a hybrid approach because it seeks to combine formal and informal actors and institutions of conflict management (TAF, 2011, p. 2). In everyday programs, however, the informal sphere is particularly emphasized as a resource from which very efficient mechanisms for conflict management can be derived. In general, it is argued that informal institutions and actors of conflict management have a stronger social embeddedness and legitimacy and are therefore more effective in settling and resolving local violent conflicts. This argument is also related with the assumption that formal institutions are ineffective in dealing with local disputes. Formal state institutions, apart from being subject to mismanagement and large-scale corruption, may be too slow and weak and therefore ineffective in conflict-affected regions in Mindanao (TAF, 2011, p. 25). This is then contrasted with the very flexible character of the informal institutions and actors, which do not require endless hearings, review processes, or the submission of different documents to formal courts.

Importantly, these arguments resonate with a broader, global tendency to down-scale strategies of conflict management and peace building and to include non-state actors and informal institutions within these strategies (Anderson, Olson, & Doughty, 2003; Lederach, 1997). This view is also shared by prominent international organizations including the UN Secretary General (2001), the World Bank (2006), and USAID (2001). The underlying arguments for this trend can be categorized into three broad streams. A first line stresses the restricted reach of conflict management initiatives within the formal state as they engage only elites through power-sharing initiatives. The best-known proponent of this argument is Jean Paul Lederach (1997) who criticizes “traditional statist diplomacy” (p. xvi) and proposes a more holistic approach that puts human relations at the center of analysis (see in particular Chapter 5 and 6). A second line of explanations stresses the limited capacity of the formal state to deliver sustainable resolutions to disputes in conflict-affected regions. Therefore, as

an alternative to – or in collaboration with – this weak state, alternative and non-state conflict management institutions should be supported. For instance, a study by Ken Menkhaus (2008) describes how in a northern Kenyan context characterized by weak state performance and chronic, low-intensity violence, an informal alliance sprang up, led by a women's market group which was instrumental in settling disputes. In the longer term, this informal alliance merged with the formal state resulting in a "civic-government partnership" (p. 26). According to Menkhaus, despite some shortcomings, the emergence of these sorts of partnerships has resulted in "impressive gains in public security and conflict management" (p. 33). A third line of arguments states that informal institutions of conflict management are more socially embedded and therefore more flexible and easier to apply compared to formal, state-led mechanisms which are considered to be more static and artificial. For this reason, it is more cost-efficient for international organizations to support informal dispute settlement mechanisms instead of investing in costly and time-consuming formal institutions. For instance, in the case of Somalia, Menkhaus (2006/2007) highlights organic sources of local governance in conflict management and dispute settlement and contrasts this with inorganic and top-down formal state building processes that are highly artificial, top-down, time-consuming, and ultimately bound to fail.

'FORMAL' CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AND THE UBIQUITY OF AMICABLE SETTLEMENT

Before problematizing the formal-informal dichotomy, it is important to note that the formal justice system in Mindanao is indeed curtailed by a range of factors, which limit access to formal adjudication for ordinary citizens. First of all, engaging the formal judiciary is expensive. Secondly, judicial procedures are notoriously slow, and judges often fall prey to intimidation or political pressure. Thirdly, accessibility for ordinary citizens, particularly those in the countryside, is hampered by mobility constraints. Due to these problems of inaccessibility, exclusivity, and illegitimacy of the formal justice system, in particular for the rural marginalized population (Franco, 2008, p. 1860), citizens in rural areas have long reverted to local, traditional methods to process disputes. While there is a great degree of variation in 'traditional' settlement practices, they are broadly known as 'amicable settlements'. Despite this significant degree of variation, some general observations can be made with regard to the process of amicable settlement (Latip, 2012; Libre, 2012). It typically involves mediation by a third party that commands an authoritative position in the community. Regarding settlement and punishment, some case studies mentioned dramatic solutions such as lashing or even the death penalty (Montillo-Burton, Matuan, Posingan, & Alovera, 2007), but the more common practice is a compensation payment by the offender. Where people have been killed in a dispute, this will typically be in the form of blood money, the actual amount of which depends on a variety of factors and is subject to negotiation. In some instances, however, the mediator unilaterally dictates the amount that needs to be paid. Traditional authorities, particularly the Council of Elders, are often imbued with a central role in amicable dispute settlement. They are referred to as a highly authoritative body rooted in the traditional clan system. Given their authoritative position, the scope of their interventions can

and often does transcend small conflicts, as elders also deal with major issues like rape or murder. However, defining traditional authority and traditional conflict settlement is difficult, all the more because traditional conflict management has become increasingly entangled with formal state institutions. The historical tradition of amicable settlement inspired former President Marcos to create the Katarungan Pambarangay or Barangay Justice through Presidential Decree 1508 (PD1508) in 1978 (Republic of the Philippines, 1978).⁵ After the end of martial law, Barangay Justice was enshrined in the Local Government Code. Formally, mediation in Barangay Justice takes place under the administrative supervision of the Lupon, a body composed of 10 to 20 residents appointed by and presided over by the village chairman. Any conflict within its jurisdiction should pass through the Katarungan Pambarangay; the village chairman will refer a dispute to the formal judiciary only where it is incapable or not mandated to intervene. Any settlement reached is also binding upon the conflicting parties. PD1508 was meant to recognize and as such reinforce the process of amicable settlement, which could represent a flexible, culturally sensitive, and discrete alternative for the slow and congested formal judiciary. Simultaneously, PD1508 was clearly geared at integrating amicable settlement within formal state institutions, and the village chairman came to occupy a pivotal position at the expense of other (traditional) political elites (Golub, 2003; Siliman, 1985). This did not mean that traditional-religious authority was completely sidelined. Instead, there is a kind of symbiosis – often defined in terms of ‘mutual respect’ – between traditional authorities and formal state authorities. The common practice is for the village chairman to ask the influential clans – or at least those supporting his/her administration – to endorse one or more representatives to the Lupon.

Before moving on to discuss more ‘informal’ mechanisms of conflict management, it is worthwhile to briefly consider another body first created by the Marcos regime (through Executive Order 727) and later reorganized by democratically elected governments: the Peace and Order Councils (Republic of the Philippines, 1981). These councils are organized at different levels of government, including the municipal and village level (in villages, it is called the Peace and Order *Committee*). They are composed of the counterparts of government agencies operating at the respective government level, and they are chaired by the chief executive (mayor or village chairman). Significantly, there is also a mandatory representation of civil society. In theory, the Municipal Peace and Order Committee addresses issues of security that concern the entire village or more. The legal mandate of the Peace and Order Councils/Committee (in its latest form, i.e., Executive Order 773) is heavily informed by counterinsurgency concerns, in particular against the communist New People’s Army (NPA). For instance, it literally states that it can impose sanctions against local chief executives supporting NPA rebels and even attempts to

monitor the provision of livelihood and infrastructure development programs and projects in the remote rural and indigenous population areas adopted to isolate them from the Communist rebels’ “Agitate/Arouse, Organize and Mobilize” and ideological, political and organization works. (Republic of the Philippines, 2009)

5 Barangay is the lowest administrative unit in the Philippines.

This preoccupation with counter-insurgency might hamper its work in terms of dispute settlement, since many of the conflicts involve people with (in)direct ties to a rebel movement. Furthermore, several respondents indicated that the effectiveness of the Peace and Order Councils/Committees depended on the willingness of the local executive to dispense vital resources. For example, in several instances respondents suggested that the local executive was using state resources to compensate victims of a local feud (so-called 'blood money') in an effort to appease the situation. Perhaps more importantly, the local executive commands what several respondents referred to as 'policing power'. This is in line with a more general, albeit crucial observation, namely that local executives in the Philippines command – partly as a result of American colonialism – a high degree of control over the local means of violence (Hedman & Sidel, 2000; Hutchcroft, 2000; Sidel, 1999). While these typically include private political armies, this control extends into the realms of the state-sanctioned means of violence, with local executives exerting a high degree of control over (barangay) police and even (para)military units operating within their jurisdiction. Furthermore, it has already been indicated earlier that several local executives cultivate ties with one of the rebel groups.

To summarize, supposedly informal amicable settlement procedures have long been 'colonized' by the formal sphere (read: the state). Meanwhile, existing formal procedures exhibit a high degree of 'informality': not only are they geared towards the amicable settlement of disputes through third-party intervention, there is also a high degree of personal influence on the part of a local executive that commands vital financial and coercive resources. This observation is particularly problematic in those localities marked by a high degree of political factionalism and even political feuding.

THE FORMAL IN THE INFORMAL: THE ROLE OF THE STATE IN ALTERNATIVE CONFLICT MANAGEMENT EFFORTS

Crucially, this tendency toward executive dominance is not limited to the formal sphere, but is also apparent in purportedly 'informal' mechanisms of conflict management. Some local government units have created structures to provide more room for informal (traditional) dispute settlement, e.g., the mayor's council in Upi, a municipality in the province of Maguindanao. This council is composed of two Muslim representatives, two indigenous representatives, and two Christian representatives (Husin, 2010). It was created per municipal ordinance by the mayor of Upi and was meant to strengthen formal mediation through the recognition and incorporation of traditional, more culturally sensitive mechanisms of conflict mediation. As the name suggests, the local executive in the person of the mayor retains a high degree of discretion over the mayor's council, and will be firmly in charge of the settlement process and the selection of council members.

Another example is that of NATULARAN MU,⁶ a local dispute settlement alliance composed of six conflict-affected barangays that was established in 2006 with support from Integral Development Services Philippines and the German Techni-

⁶ NATULARAN MU is an acronym which stands for the villages in Midsayap: Nabalawag, Tugal, Lower Glad, Rangeban, Nes, and Mudseng. All these villages are represented in this dispute settlement body.

cal Cooperation (HIPEC, 2011, pp. 94–95). This mechanism convenes the barangay captains in the volatile municipality of Midsayap, North Cotabato, and was meant to collaborate with various other stakeholders, including NGOs. Like the mayor's council in Upi, the municipal mayor also supported NATULARAN MU by recognizing it through municipal resolutions and the creation of a monitoring team. It should also be noted that this alliance was set up by Tubog Pulalan, a village chairman that had emerged as the local 'strongman' following years of violent competition between different political and electoral alliances, all of which cultivated ties with the Muslim rebel movements active in the area. 'Kumander' Tubog himself was also a known rebel commander who had first served in the MNLF before joining the MILF. Therefore, he already wielded significant coercive power before extending his grip over village politics. When he, his wife, and some of his close allies started to dominate barangay politics in the area, this coercive capacity was gradually absorbed and legitimated by the state, as Tubog started appointing several of his men as barangay police (also known as 'civilian volunteers'). Instead of perceiving this coercive capacity as a problem, some of the people engaged in NATULARAN MU emphasized that Tubog's consolidation of power was precisely the reason why he became president of the alliance. Soon after its establishment in early 2006, however, Tubog was killed on 19 April 2006, allegedly by one of his many rivals in Midsayap (Unson, 2006). Nonetheless, the case of NATULARAN MU and its leader, Tubog, is a potent illustration of the role of the local executive in conflict management, and how this is intimately related to their coercive capacity.

A final illustration of this mutual involvement of conflict management institutions and state politics comes from the barangay of Nabalawag, North Cotabato. Here, a youth organization – United Youth for Peace and Development (UNYPAD) with close ties to the MILF – played an important role in the settlement of a long-running violent feud among different families that revolved around land disputes that had escalated as part of a broader power struggle between two village chairmen. These chairmen acted simultaneously as commanders in the area. Killings and land grabbing by both sides had led to an overall climate of insecurity and distrust. UNYPAD members, with the assistance of The Asia Foundation, set up a Quick Response Team (QRT), which cleared the ground for negotiations between the two parties by approaching the family elders and commanders to hear their demands. Subsequently, the QRT met with the village chairman in order to establish a strategy for further negotiations between the parties and different stakeholders. By involving village officials, the municipal mayor, the MILF, and the Philippine military in the mediation process, the warring parties were eventually pushed towards an agreement (UNYPAD, 2007). When analyzing this intervention, two factors emerged as particularly important in explaining its success. First, several members of the UNYPAD QRT were members of or had connections to the village council, which tremendously reinforced their credibility and authority as mediators. This is closely related to a second observation, namely that the recognition and approval of the QRT's work by the municipal local government unit, the state security sector, and the MILF imbued the mediators not only with policing power, but also with vital credibility and legitimacy. On the downside, however, QRT members admitted that this support came at

a price, with its mediation work depending on the approval and support of existing elite networks and, to a lesser extent, also NGOs.

CONCLUSION

The entrance point of this article was the observation that in response to an increased understanding about the complex and multidimensional nature of violent conflict in Mindanao, a growing number of scholars and development practitioners have pinned their hopes on informal conflict management mechanisms that explicitly seek to include non-state actors and institutions in the mediation and settlement of conflicts. Through an analysis of existing formal and informal conflict management practices, we have attempted to illustrate how such a rigid distinction between formal and informal institutions is misleading. On the one hand, what is usually described as formal has significant informal traits. On the other hand, purportedly informal actors and institutions have intricate ties with the formal sphere and derive much of their authority, legitimacy, and policing power from the state as embodied by the local executive.

These observations about the dominant role of the local executive in conflict mediation are in line with the broader literature on state-society relations in the Philippines. There, it has been argued that control over (local) state institutions represents a vital source of coercive power, with the local executive retaining a high degree of control over state-sanctioned means of violence (Kreuzer, 2009; Sidel, 1999). Furthermore, access to the realms of the state also represents an important source of legitimacy, strengthening or even replacing more traditional sources of public authority (Abinales, 2000; Wong, 2006). Mindanao is no exception in this regard, as can be gauged from the fact that electoral competition has been claimed as one of the main causes of violent conflict in the region (Torres, 2007). While often thought of as a region marked by a weak state presence, it is more useful to understand this region as a highly exclusivist political order wherein dominant coalitions of elite players purposefully limit access to political authority and coercive resources (Kreuzer, 2009). While these coalitions are typically a hybrid of formal and informal authority, elected officials in control of state institutions have gradually emerged as kingmakers in this highly exclusivist political order, although they still have to negotiate with other authoritative actors. One of the key arenas of governance where these local elites manifest themselves and assert their authority is precisely in daily practices of conflict management.



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The research was supported by the Justice and Security Research Programme (JSRP), based at the London School of Economics and Political Science (<http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/jsrp/>).

Contested Land: An Analysis of Multi-Layered Conflicts in Jambi Province, Sumatra, Indonesia

Barbara Beckert, Christoph Dittrich, & Soeryo Adiwibowo

► Beckert, B., Dittrich, C., & Adiwibowo, S. (2014). Contested land: An analysis of multi-layered conflicts in Jambi province, Sumatra, Indonesia. *ASEAS – Austrian Journal of South-East Asian Studies*, 7(1), 75-92.

In the lowland areas of Sumatra, conflicts over land and natural resources are increasing as fundamental land use transformation processes take place and the region is gradually integrated into globalized markets. Set against the background of the conflict arena of Bungku village, Jambi province, this paper describes and analyzes the struggle for land between a group of indigenous people, the Batin Sembilan, and an oil palm company, PT Asiatic Persada. By highlighting the path dependency of land conflicts, the article shows that access to land results from concurring but ambivalent institutional regimes and power asymmetries, leading to an ostensible state of equilibrium in a post-frontier area.

Keywords: Access to Land; Indonesia; Jambi Province; Land Conflicts; Post-Frontier

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Grundlegende Veränderungen in der Landnutzung sowie die fortschreitende Einbindung in globalisierte Märkte führen in den Tieflandregionen Sumatras zu zunehmend gewalttätig ausgetragenen Konflikten um Land und natürliche Ressourcen. Vor dem Hintergrund der Konfliktarena von Bungku, einem Dorf in der Provinz Jambi, beschreibt und analysiert der Beitrag den Kampf um Land zwischen den indigenen Batin Sembilan und einem Palmölunternehmen, PT Asiatic Persada. Der Artikel zeigt anhand der Pfadabhängigkeit von Landkonflikten, dass Zugang zu Land aus der Gleichzeitigkeit und Ambivalenz institutioneller Systeme und Machtasymmetrien resultiert, was zu einem scheinbaren Gleichgewichtszustand in Post-Frontier-Regionen führt.

Schlagworte: Indonesien; Landkonflikte; Post-Frontier; Provinz Jambi; Zugang zu Land

SUMATRA – GLOBALLY INTEGRATED AND LOCALLY CONTESTED

The Indonesian island of Sumatra has been known for decades for its vast plantation industries, based on key cash crops like rubber, oil palm, and industrial timber (mainly gamelina, sengon, and acacia). Since the 1970s, the lowland rainforests of Central Sumatra have been largely converted into timber, rubber, and oil palm plantations, after the Indonesian government had assigned almost the entire area for logging. Between 1985 and 2008, Sumatra's forest resources had been cleared with an average speed of 542,000 hectares per year, resulting in a natural forest cover of only 29 percent in 2008, compared to 58 percent in 1985, and hence a strong increase in CO₂ emissions (WWF Indonesia, 2010, p. 15). Beside the conversion of forests into large-scale agro-industrial development projects, resource extraction (such as coal and gas exploration and exploitation) has been and still is a key development strategy (Jiwan, 2013, p. 73). As the Coordinating Ministry for Economic Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia (2011) states, the

Sumatra Economic Corridor is expected to become 'The Center for Production and Processing of Natural Resources as The Nation's Energy Reserves'. Sumatra's strategic location can propel it to become 'The Front Line of The National Economy into The European, African, South Asian, East Asian, and Australian Markets'. (p. 51)

With this economic policy and the integration of the region into globalized markets, fundamental land use related transition processes still take place and land prices substantially increase (Potter, 2001, p. 313). Combined with socio-economic change and high population growth rates (also due to in-migration from other parts of the Indonesian archipelago), these processes have contributed to socially and spatially fragmented land use patterns, consisting of patches of primary forest, jungle rubber, as well as rubber and oil palm plantations. Due to new actors entering the politico-economic stage, transformation takes place leading to new forms of re-territorialization (Tomlinson, 1999, pp. 148–149). Access to land becomes more and more contested as various actors with different economic intentions and socio-cultural backgrounds are getting involved in land claims. In this regard, Jambi province, Central Sumatra, stands as an example for a highly dynamic conflict arena¹ where borders between the local and the global become indistinct. Conflicts over land and other natural resources are becoming worse. In 2010, Zazali (2012, p. 12) counted approximately 100 land use and forestry conflicts of varying intensity in the province. Conflicts are escalating in intensity because of the growing range of parties involved, like communities, NGOs, corporations, and governmental institutions (Zazali, 2012, p. 12).

The present article has two objectives: Set against the background of the wider conflict arena of Bungku village, the paper will first describe and analyze land conflicts between a group of indigenous people, the Batin Sembilan,² and the interna-

1 Drawing on the understanding of Peluso and Watts (2001) "the environment is an arena of contested entitlements, a theater in which conflicts or claims over property, assets, labour, and the politics of recognition play themselves out" (p. 25). This approach thus highlights "the panoply of differentiated actors ... and the ways in which they operate in historically and culturally constituted fields of power" (p. 25).

2 The Batin Sembilan originate from nine founding brothers who settled along nine rivers in the

tional oil palm company PT Asiatic Persada. Particular attention is given to the path dependency of present land conflicts and thus the changes in land tenure regulations over time will be described in detail. Following the argument of Peluso and Lund (2011), the paper will secondly show that within this highly dynamic conflict arena of Bungku village “new frontiers of land control are being actively created” (p. 668). The advancement of the conventional frontier to a post-frontier concept will be intertwined with the “theory of access” (Ribot & Peluso, 2003). The theoretical concept will thus be applied to the empirical insights by showing that access to land is constantly contested, leading to an ostensible state of equilibrium in post-frontier areas.

THE CONCEPT OF ACCESS IN A POST-FRONTIER CONFLICT ARENA

The research interest in frontiers can be traced back to 1893 when Frederick Jackson Turner described the violent land seizure in North America in his book *The Significance of the Frontier in American History* (Turner, 1893). Geiger (2008) applied the term frontier to today’s state-territorialization projects and defines frontier as “an area remote from political centers, which holds strategic significance or economic potentials for human exploitation, and is contested by social formations of unequal power” (p. 94). According to Fold and Hirsch (2009), “the frontier is thus in part a metaphor for national development in its material and ideological senses, as well as in terms of spatial expansion and delimitation” (p. 95). However, frontiers are specifically localized spaces in which access to resources and control over territories, people, and cultural dominance are under contestation (Korf & Schetter, 2012, p. 166). According to Sato (2000, pp. 161–165), a frontier can therefore be conceptualized as a kind of in-between space, a space of spatial and temporal transitions, with “lands in between” and “people in between”. The dissolution of the conventional frontier as a zone of transition between forests and agricultural land into a “space of multifaceted development trajectories” (Fold & Hirsch, 2009, p. 95) is at the heart of today’s post-frontier debate (Peluso & Lund, 2011; Rindfuss et al., 2007). Fold and Hirsch (2009, p. 95) analyze post-frontiers as connected spaces as they are embedded in supra-local influences and processes of globalization and reflect the reshaping of frontier society, environment, and economy as well as the continuing significance of these areas in national development schemes. The transformation of an area, from a leading edge associated with people moving into a geographical area, to a more diverse post-frontier is in most cases not just a change in land-cover but also in the way of life (Rindfuss et al., 2007, p. 740). Once the “external frontier” is closed, “internal frontiers” emerge (Rindfuss et al., 2007, p. 740) which can be both symbolic and real. According to Peluso and Lund (2011), these “new frontiers of land control are being actively created, through struggles involving varied actors, contexts, and dynamics” (p. 668). As “‘new’ frontiers challenge, transform, or extinguish previous ones” (Peluso & Lund, 2011, p. 669), the landscape is turned into a dynamic post-frontier area which can be described as an “amalgam of spaces of newly emerging social and

Batanghari region, Jambi province (Colchester, Anderson, Firdaus, Hasibuan, & Chao, 2011, p. 9). First introduced by the Dutch, the term *Suku Anak Dalam* (‘Ethnic Group of the Children of the Interior’) is nowadays used by the local government to classify ethnic groups according to certain cultural characteristics (Hauser-Schäublin & Steinebach, 2014, p. 23). For further information, see Steinebach (2013, pp. 65–73).

environmental relations” (Fold & Hirsch, 2009, p. 96). This means that the development of the classical frontier is challenged by different actors gaining, maintaining, or losing access to land. This paper therefore draws on the “theory of access” by Ribot and Peluso (2003), who define access as the “ability to benefit from things” (p. 153). By focusing on ability rather than rights, the authors distinguish access from property and thereby draw attention to a wider range of social relationships that can enable or constrain people to benefit from resources (Ribot & Peluso, 2003, p. 154). Over time and scale, people and institutions are positioned differently in relation to access to land: “Different political-economic circumstances change the terms of access and may therefore change the specific individuals or groups most able to benefit from a set of resources” (Ribot & Peluso, 2003, p. 158). In short, access to land is affected by the “bundle of powers” different people hold and can draw on (Ribot & Peluso, 2003, p. 154). As they point out, it

is important to concurrently examine the larger contexts of such political economic relations. Policies, markets, technologies, knowledge, and even identities, constitute and are constituted by these broader social forces. Access analysis can be focused on the policy environments that enable and disable different actors to gain, maintain, or control resource access or the micro-dynamics of who benefits from resources and how. (Peluso & Ribot, 2003, p. 173)

MULTI-LAYERED CONFLICTS IN THE CONTESTED ARENA OF BUNGKU VILLAGE

Introducing the ‘Time Bombs’ of Bungku Village

Jambi province with a present population of about 3.2 million people (Badan Pusat Statistik [BPS] Provinsi Jambi, 2012, p. 129) is located on the east coast of Central Sumatra. There are three distinct regions: a marshy coastal peat area in the east, a more undulated area with mainly poor soil in the center, and the Barisan mountain range in the west. Empirical research was carried out in the central part of the province, in Batanghari, and in Sarolangun regency. These two regencies are amongst the least populated in Jambi province.³ The authors collected data in 2012 and 2013 in consecutive field visits with a total duration of ten months. Following a qualitative research approach, multifaceted research methods were applied, including participant observation, semi-structured household interviews, focus group discussions with key informants, Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) tools as well as expert interviews. Field research was conducted in seven villages in the two respective regencies as well as in Jambi city. Even though this paper mainly presents data obtained through secondary material analysis, the complexity of the local conflict arena could not have been revealed without intensive fieldwork. This paper thus presents a cutout of the dataset by analyzing the conflict arena of Bungku village, Batanghari regency. Bungku is of particular interest because the village illustrates the variety of land use conflicts and actor groups involved (see Figure 1). As one local farmer stated,

3 Population densities in Sarolangun as well as in Batanghari regency comprise 42 persons per square kilometer and 44 persons per square kilometer, respectively (BPS Provinsi Jambi, 2012, p. 129).

[i]n Bungku village four ‘time bombs’ already exploded, one after the other. Outsiders regard Bungku as a place of diamonds and pearls ... but these people do not know that Bungku actually is a place of 1001 problems. One bomb after the other explodes here and there ... This is not the land of 1001 nights, it is the land of 1001 problems. (Local farmer, personal communication, 21 March 2013, Bungku village, own translation)

This quote illustrates the severity of land conflicts on the village level as each ‘time bomb’ represents one major land conflict. Located 85 kilometers southwest from the provincial capital of Jambi city (see Figure 1), Bungku village was founded in the 1970s as a resettlement project for the indigenous semi-permanent Batin Sembilan group. In 2011, the village population comprised 2,864 households and a total population of 10,215 people (BPS Kabupaten Batanghari, 2012, p. 18). Bungku consists of five hamlets (*dusun*) and 32 neighborhoods (*Rukun Tetangga*, RT) (see Picture 1). The inhabitants are mainly peasant farmers cultivating rubber and oil palms as cash crops in addition to vegetables for their own consumption. Households hold about five hectares of land on average; major non-agrarian sources of income are from small businesses such as grocery shops, food stalls, and repair shops.



Picture 1: Main road of Bungku village. Taken by Barbara Beckert, 20 March 2013, Bungku village.

Until the 1980s, shifting cultivation, horticulture, the collection of non-timber forest products, and the cultivation of fruit trees were important livelihood sources, mainly for the indigenous Batin Sembilan population. With the establishment of

road connections and governmental resettlement schemes, the Batin Sembilan increasingly became sedentary and involved in growing and tapping rubber (Colchester et al., 2011, p. 9). Presently, the Batin Sembilan are outnumbered by migrants from Java and other parts of Sumatra.⁴ The total administrative village territory covers 77,000 hectares and most of this area is comprised of large concession areas: the ecosystem restoration concession of PT REKI (Restorasi Ekosistem Indonesia), the timber plantation of PT Wanakasita Nusantara/PT Agronusa Alam Sejahtera, and the PT Asiatic Persada oil palm plantation. Aside from the concession areas, 15,830 hectares of Bungku village are classified as forest reserve⁵ called *Taman Hutan Raya* (THR) *Sultan Thaha Syaifuddin* (see Figure 1).

PT REKI is located in the southern part of Bungku and is known as *Harapan*⁶ rainforest. It covers an area of more than 100,000 hectares and stretches from Jambi province to the neighboring province of South Sumatra. Until 2007, the area was legally logged by PT Asialog and PT Inhutani. In 2008 and 2010, an ecosystem restoration license (*Izin Usaha Pemanfaatan Hasil Hutan Kaya*, IUPHHK) was given to the company PT REKI for the southern and northern concession part. Being implemented as the first ecosystem restoration license in Indonesia, the Harapan rainforest concession was acquired through a joint initiative of national and international NGOs (such as Burung Indonesia, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, and BirdLife International) and is funded by various donors, including the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, and Nuclear Safety (BMU), Singapore Airlines, and others. The project serves as a pilot project for sustainable climate and forest conservation policy and aims to conserve and restore one of the few remaining tracts of lowland rainforest in Indonesia while at the same time promoting REDD⁷ (Hein, 2013, p. 15; Hein & Faust, 2014, p. 21). The Batin Sembilan do not have land tenure security as they do not hold title deeds issued by the National Land Agency (*Badan Pertanahan Nasional*, BPN), but instead draw on customary land rights (*hak ulayat or tanah adat*).⁸ PT REKI negotiated conservation agreements with the Batin Sembilan population, allowing them to use a parcel of land within the Harapan rainforest concession and to collect non-timber forest products (Hein & Faust, 2014, p. 23). However, an informal land trade started between customary leaders and migrants, leading to overlapping

4 Under the transmigration program, around 45,000 people were moved to the area, mainly from Java (Steinebach, 2013, p. 65), and today around 90 percent of the inhabitants are migrants (Hauser-Schäublin & Steinebach, 2014, p. 3). For further information on the Indonesian transmigration program, see Hardjono (1977, pp. 16–35) and Fearnside (1997, pp. 553–555).

5 A forest reserve, or *Taman Hutan Raya*, is defined as a nature conservation area in which the collection of plants and animals is only allowed under certain circumstances and has to contribute to research, science, educational purposes or has to support culture or tourism (Undang Undang No. 5/1990).

6 Harapan means 'hope' in Bahasa Indonesia.

7 Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation, REDD, is a United Nations backed scheme aiming to reduce land use-based green house gas emissions.

8 For a more detailed perspective on *adat* law, refer to Benda-Beckmann & Benda-Beckmann (2011).

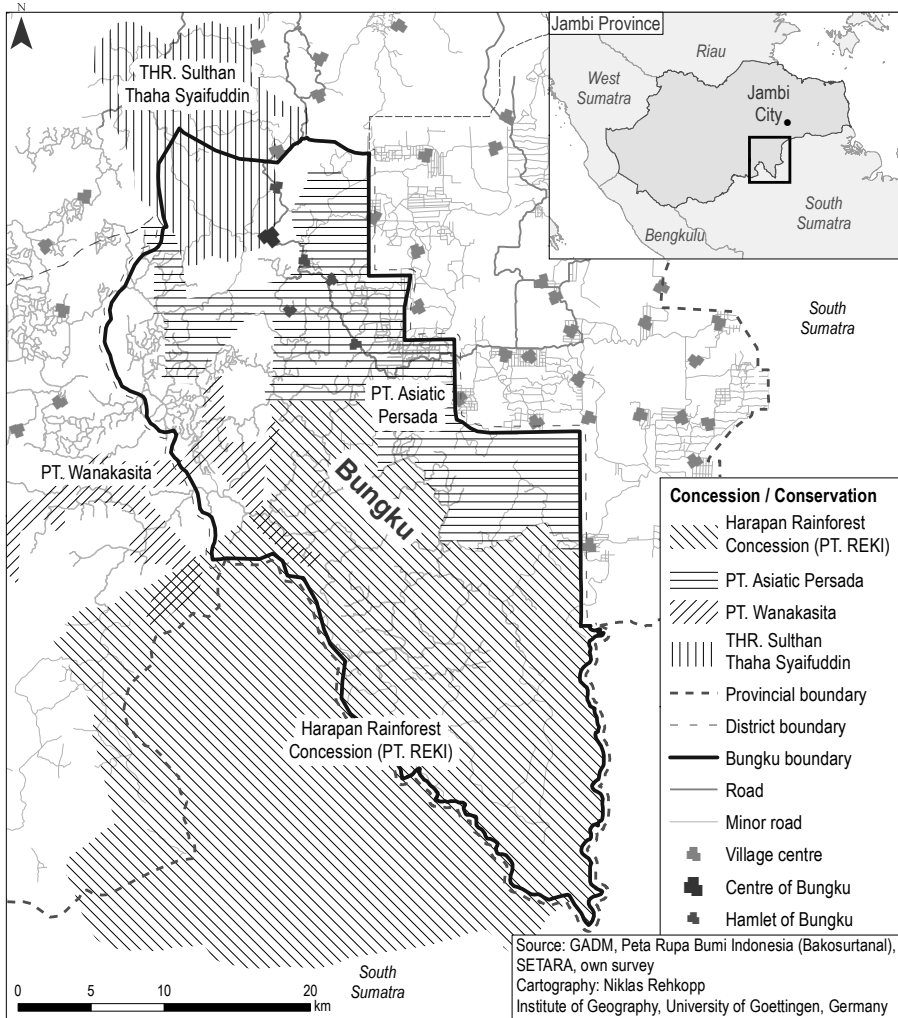


Figure 1: Map of Bungku village indicating major concession and conservation areas

land claims between PT REKI, the Batin Sembilan, and migrant communities. This resulted in massive land conflicts and illustrates the first ‘time bomb’ described in the quotation above.

The second ‘time bomb’ refers to the concession area of the companies PT Wanakasita Nusantara and PT Agronusa Alam Sejahtera, which spread across 28,000 hectares, where industrial timber (acacia and eucalyptus) for the pulp and paper industry is produced in large plantations. Due to management problems, sections of the concession remained undeveloped; villagers claimed that land, built houses, and cultivated rubber and oil palms. Today, these ‘irregular settlers’ ask to change the legal status of the concession from an industrial timber plantation (*Hutan Tanaman Industri*, HTI) to a ‘peoples’ plantation’ (*Hutan Tanaman Rakyat*, HTR). Under this community timber plantation program, launched in 2006, state forestland can be

allocated to local communities for a period of up to 100 years (Obidzinski & Dermawan, 2010, p. 339; van Noordwijk et al., 2007, p. 5).

The third ‘time bomb’ is referred to as the forest conservation area THR Sulthan Thaha Syaifuddin located in the northern part of Bungku (see Figure 1). It covers 15,830 hectares and was established in the 1990s (Steinebach, 2014, p. 18).⁹ This area, administered under the authority of the Ministry of Forestry, is heavily contested, as the official law enforcement is weak and undermined by illegal logging of smallholders, land sales, settlement activities, and land conversion into oil palm and rubber plantations.

The fourth ‘time bomb’ is represented by the longest on-going land conflict in Bungku: the conflict between the Batin Sembilan and the palm oil company PT Asiatic Persada. In the 1970s, the company held an extensive logging concession in the area. In 1986, the company PT BDU received the right to cultivation (*Hak Guna Usaha*, HGU) by the BPN to develop 20,000 hectares of plantation within this logging concession (Colchester et al., 2011, p. 5). Having started as a cocoa plantation, oil palms were not planted until the 1990s. In 1992, the company was named PT Asiatic Persada and in the following years, ownership changed several times until the company was sold to Wilmar International in 2006 (Colchester et al., 2011, p. 5). In 2013, the company was again sold to two companies: to the Indonesian-based company PT Agro Mandiri Semesta and the British Virgin Islands-based company Prima Fortune International Ltd. (Parker, 2013). As the plantation expanded into customary land of the semi-permanent Batin Sembilan, disputes and already existing conflicts intensified. Since 2008, small groups of Batin Sembilan have occupied land inside the PT Asiatic Persada plantation, claiming it as their customary and ancestral land. The parties could neither agree on financial compensation payments nor on any compensating land area, hence these Batin Sembilan groups have to earn their living by collecting loose palm fruits on PT Asiatic Persada’s plantation. In 2011, the land conflict escalated into violence when the police destroyed huts and houses erected by the Batin Sembilan within the plantation area of PT Asiatic Persada (Colchester et al., 2011, p. 46). In the meantime, the company started to dig a trench, five meters deep and wide, in order to protect the plantation from the intrusion of local people and to prevent the theft of palm fruits (see Picture 2). The unresolved conflict escalated again in late 2013 when the police destroyed 150 huts and houses of the Batin Sembilan on behalf of PT Asiatic Persada (Parker, 2013). In March 2014, a further level of escalation was reached when one villager was killed and five others injured during a clash with security forces of PT Asiatic Persada (Butler, 2014).

Land Conflicts and Path Dependency

The analysis shows a strong path dependency of land conflicts in Bungku village. Forest-dependent communities, such as the Malay-speaking Batin Sembilan (Colchester et al., 2011, p. 9), have played an important role in regional trade and barter activities throughout the past centuries. Hence, forest products have always been

⁹ However, during the Dutch colonial power, it was already designated as protected forest (*Boshwezen*) because of its rich diversity of Ironwood species, locally known as *Kayu Bulian* (*Eusideroxylon zwageri*) (Steinebach, 2014, p. 11).



Picture 2: A new frontier is set; trench designating the border of the oil palm plantation PT Asiatic Persada. Taken by Barbara Beckert, 26 September 2013, Bungku village.

important in sustaining livelihoods, traded for sandal wood, rattan, resins, natural dyes, and also gold. In the nineteenth century, these forest products were traded as far as India, the Arab World, and China (Locher-Scholten, 2003, p. 276). Until the present day, the Batin Sembilan follow the concept of collective customary land (*wilayah adat*).¹⁰ Historically, this land use system was combined with frequent movements on this land for economic and cultural reasons (Colchester et al., 2011, p. 9).

In the early twentieth century, Jambi province was characterized by dynamic land use transformation – a result of the expansion of the Dutch colonial power on the Indonesian archipelago accompanied by the introduction of plantation agriculture. Traditional social and land use systems rapidly changed with the adoption of para rubber, which was planted extensively by local smallholders. International demand for rubber increased due to the fast-growing automobile industry and high rubber prices. Rubber cultivation boomed from 1910 onwards with a heyday in the 1920s (Feintrenie & Levang, 2009, p. 326; Locher-Scholten, 2003, pp. 276–277). Oil palms were first introduced by the Dutch colonialists in 1848 and large-scale plantations

¹⁰ Since the Dutch colonization, several legal orders coexisted, leading to ambiguities and competition between codified state laws and customary laws (*hukum adat*) (Steinebach, 2013, p. 68). There is no consistent understanding or well-defined legal process for how customary land claims should be justified (Barr et al., 2006, p. 110). In general, the borders of customary territories run along rivers, and the collectively owned land is regularly redistributed among community members under the supervision of *adat* leaders. Land rights are inherited bilaterally and access to customary land is granted by customary authorities such as *adat* leaders (Hauser-Schäublin & Steinebach, 2014, p. 13).

were developed in Sumatra from 1911 onwards (Feintrenie & Levang, 2009, p. 331; Jiwan, 2013, p. 51). These plantations were mainly operated by private Dutch companies, who could afford the large financial and workforce inputs required to establish these operations (Jiwan, 2013, p. 51).

Following Indonesian independence in 1945, foreign companies were nationalized (van Gelder, 2004, p. 18). Land use schemes in Jambi province changed massively in the following decades, especially under Suharto's New Order regime, with the promotion of logging and the completion of the trans-Sumatra highway (Martini et al., 2010, p. 3). During the 1970s, virtually the entire forested area of Jambi was allocated as forestry concessions for the extraction of timber (Colchester et al., 2011, p. 12). At the peak of the logging boom in the 1980s, regional policy shifted towards the expansion of plantations with the implementation of large transmigration schemes. Bordering Bungku village, the state-owned company PT Perkebunan Nusantara VI developed a nucleus estate together with smallholdings for Javanese transmigrants with a total size of 30,000 hectares (Colchester et al., 2011, p. 12; Jiwan, 2013, p. 52). Suharto gave palm oil concessions to family members, political elites, and domestic conglomerates that had often been involved in the logging industry (Jiwan, 2013, p. 52; Yasmi, Guernier, & Colfer, 2009, p. 99).

Since the establishment of the road connections in the 1980s, the Batin Sembilan have increasingly settled and intensified growing and tapping rubber, but this has not changed their strong bonds to collective customary lands. They regard burial sites as evidence for their traditional land claims. By the 1980s, access to land had been restricted for local communities and indigenous groups. With the Basic Forestry Law, the Ministry of Forestry classified 143 million hectares of the Indonesian territory as forest estate (*kawasan hutan*) (Anderson, 2013, p. 246; Barr et al., 2006, p. 23), completely ignoring indigenous peoples' rights in these territories. In the "Suharto palm oil oligarchy" (Aditjondro, 2001), political actors were at the same time the main business players. The alignment of strong economic and political interests between the Indonesian palm oil business, the government, and Sino-Indonesian business people enabled the deprivation of indigenous rights by the oligarchy. During the Asian financial crisis in the late 1990s, the letter of intent with the International Monetary Fund liberalized the plantation sector and extensive investments of foreign companies followed. This market liberalization very much changed the Indonesian palm oil sector. Currently, private companies from Malaysia, Singapore, and the USA control about 60 percent of the plantation sector. However, today the same conglomerates and consolidated companies comprise the Indonesian palm oil sector, so that it is referred to as the "post-Suharto palm oil oligarchy" (Pichler & Pye, 2012, p. 146). The gradual process of a top-down development approach, which mainly benefitted Jakarta's elites, was superseded by a phase of political upheaval, leading to an atmosphere of institutional change. After the collapse of the Suharto regime, the period between 1999 and 2002 was characterized by rapid and far-reaching decentralization with a transfer of administrative and regulatory authority from the national government to the provincial, district, and municipal governments (Barr et al., 2006, p. 1). First and foremost, the effects of decentralization could be felt in the forestry sector. In 1999, with the introduction of Indonesia's regional autonomy law, the central government transferred considerable authority to district governments. With the imple-

mentation of a series of forestry sector reforms in which district governments and local communities were adjudged with a greater role in forest management, “district officials suddenly found that it was politically feasible to assert far-reaching administrative authority over forest resources located within their jurisdictions, and many moved aggressively to do so” (Barr et al., 2006, p. 2). Many large-scale concessions were granted at that time, new fees were imposed by district officials, and new district development strategies were formulated, most of them based on the exploitation of forest resources and often overlapping with concessions issued by the national government or with national parks and conservation areas. The rights of local communities and indigenous people were limited or extinguished (Jiwan, 2013, p. 55).¹¹ However, the political climate changed to the effect that forest-dependent communities were able to (re)assert claims over land and forest resources that they were displaced from during the New Order period:

Collectively, these actions reflected a widespread feeling that after 32 years of centralized control in the forestry sector, the time had now come for district and local actors to get their rightful share of the benefits associated with forest resources. (Barr et al., 2006, p. 2)

Even though the Indonesian Constitution recognizes the rights of indigenous peoples to their lands, economies, and systems of law, the Indonesian government has ignored these sections of the Constitution and interprets Indonesia’s founding law as granting the right to manage all natural resources to the benefit of the nation (Anderson, 2013, p. 246). Since 2002, the Ministry of Forestry rescinded much of the authority over forest administration that was granted earlier to district authorities and a process of recentralization took place (Barr et al., 2006, p. 2; Djogo & Syaf, 2004, p. 14).

The struggle over Indonesia’s rapidly diminishing primary forest resources is rooted in a long history of contradictory laws and regulations and an accompanying struggle of power between different actor groups.

As the land claims of local communities are weaker in forest areas, because the government claims all forest as state lands, it is often easier for companies to obtain large areas for conversion to oil palm plantations with minimal compensation, compared to establishing plantations in agricultural landscapes. (Anderson, 2013, p. 247)

In May 2013, the rights of customary communities were recognized and restored with a court ruling by the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Indonesia, declaring that customary forests (*hutan adat*) are no longer part of state-owned forests (*hutan negara*), which “fundamentally validates customary communities’ position in their scattered struggle over land, resources and territory” (Rachman, 2013, p. 1). First statements revealed the court decision’s potential to empower communities and their land claims. Whether or not they will be heard by the Ministry of Forestry remains unanswered.

11 This is embodied in the Forestry Law 41/1999 and the Plantation Act 18/2004 (Jiwan, 2013, p. 55).

A Violent Conflict Between the Batin Sembilan and PT Asiatic Persada

All these continuing political and societal dynamics have concrete impacts on Bungku's conflict arena and the PT Asiatic Persada conflict. The strong bonds of the Batin Sembilan population to their customary lands were never acknowledged by either of the concession companies (Colchester et al., 2011, pp. 5, 7). PT Asiatic Persada was developed as a nucleus estate palm oil concession in the 1990s without providing smallholdings for local communities.¹² This stands in stark contrast with the PT Perkebunan Nusantara VI transmigration project, which provided smallholdings, however, mainly for Javanese transmigrants. The Batin Sembilan population lost much of their customary land to the transmigration project in the eastern part of the PT Asiatic Persada concession and later to the Harapan rainforest conservation concession (PT REKI) in the southern part of Bungku (see Figure 1). Access to land is thus restricted and traditional livelihood sources are diminished.

The social structure of Bungku village massively changed during the last two decades due to in-migration from different parts of the Indonesian archipelago (mainly from Java and northern Sumatra). Marriages between Batin Sembilan and people of Javanese or Sundanese origin increasingly take place, leading to changes in the Batin Sembilan's concept of indigeneity. Their marriage patterns easily allow for the integration of 'foreigners' and promote anything but boundedness and exclusivity (Steinebach, 2013, p. 78). Therefore, all groups are claiming the same land as their ancestral land.

The PT Asiatic Persada conflict has never been solved and is rooted in a long history of inconsistencies, misunderstandings, and frictions related to the legal size of the right to cultivation (HGU) that was issued differently by different government institutions. These overlapping land claims are rooted in asymmetric webs of power creating new frontiers of land control. This situation was further aggravated by the fact that in 1999, the Batanghari regency was divided into two administrative units (Colchester et al., 2011, p. 12), which made it even harder to address problems related to access to land. Ongoing in-migration and population growth further increased pressure on land resources and contributed to exacerbating land conflicts. The two hectares of land, once given by the government to transmigrants as smallholding, are no longer sufficient to sustain their livelihoods due to population growth and family reunions.

The concept of scale¹³ (Brenner, 2008; Gibson, Ostrom, & Ahn, 2000) can be used to analyze the spatial and temporal dimensions of conflicts related to land resources in Jambi province. Due to the opening up of the Indonesian economy towards international markets, multinationals – backed by state authorities – increasingly enforce their interests and land claims against local communities. The interests of these multinational companies are challenged by the growing debate over human rights,

12 A forest inventory in 1987 showed that around 2,000 families farming 4,000 hectares with shifting cultivation lived inside the PT Asiatic Persada concession (Colchester et al., 2011, p. 11).

13 The concept of scale refers to the political significance of territorial reorganization. Scales are interpreted as socially produced facilitating power asymmetries, social polarization, and spatial disparities. According to Gibson et al. (2000), scale is defined as "the spatial, temporal, quantitative, or analytical dimensions used to measure and study any phenomenon" (p. 218).

conservation, and sustainability. The PT Asiatic Persada case demonstrates the major influence of international and national actors over land resources, and how local actors are able to link their interests with global discourses and arenas.¹⁴ From 2006 until 2013, PT Asiatic Persada belonged to Asia's leading agribusiness group, Wilmar International, with headquarters in Singapore. Wilmar International is a prominent member of the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO). As it is financed by the International Finance Corporation (IFC), several complaints by a consortium of NGOs were submitted to the IFC's Compliance Advisory Ombudsman (CAO) for not following RSPO standards. Since then, the conflict has been mediated by a joint team including local and international NGOs and the provincial government of Jambi (Chao, 2013, p. 198). In early 2013, however, Wilmar International sold PT Asiatic Persada to a non-IFC and non-RSPO member, PT Agro Mandiri Semesta and Prima Fortune International Ltd. By enforcing their company interests they circumvent compliance with RSPO rules.¹⁵ The recent eviction of 150 Batin Sembilan households in December 2013 does not align with a rapid conflict resolution by the new shareholders. Up to now, futile attempts of conflict resolution can be seen in the PT Asiatic Persada case. The conflict even escalated again in March 2014 when there was a clash between villagers of Bungku and PT Asiatic Persadas' security forces. The PT Asiatic Persada case shows how the action of differently positioned local, national, and international actors are connected to various global discourses. On the one side, the Batin Sembilan are fighting for access to land by following an indigenous rights discourse, and relating it to the international debate on the effectiveness of the RSPO. By taking up this indigeneity discourse, the Batin Sembilan are using scalar strategies in order to change existing power relations. Connecting it to the landless peasant movement, the Batin Sembilan are using the concept of indigeneity in order to reassert access to land. Interview partners reported on various NGOs varying in outreach capacity in the area of Bungku village, actively supporting the Batin Sembilan to claim land. This mix of actors in everyday negotiation processes further changes access to land and thus contributes to the creation of new frontiers. On the other side, Wilmar International is not willing to solve a decade of conflict and is trying to evade responsibility by selling the investment (Colchester, cited in Parker, 2013). Within the conflict arena of Bungku, other actors and discourses supervene, such as the conservation and REDD schemes, which stand vis-à-vis a strong peasant movement for landless farmers in the PT REKI area (Hein & Faust, 2014, p. 23).

CONCLUSION

The conflict arena of Bungku village has illustrated that access to land is subject to contestations and struggles resulting from concurring but ambivalent institutional regimes and power asymmetries. The case study shows how the Batin Sembilan en-

14 This also applies to other Indonesian provinces; see, for example, Adiwibowo's (2005) study on Central Sulawesi.

15 This is contradicted by a recently published "No Deforestation, No Peat, No Exploitation Policy" of Wilmar International, in which the company states to respect the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as well as to give or withhold 'Free, Prior, and Informed Consent' (FPIC) (Wilmar International Limited, 2013, p. 1).

gage with discourses at different scales such as indigeneity, RSPO, conservation, and peasant movements (Hein & Faust, 2014, p. 21; Steinebach, 2013, pp. 64, 79). The Batin Sembilan use indigeneity to enhance agency and empowerment,¹⁶ allowing for a transformation from marginalized victims to empowered actors in their struggle for land (Steinebach, 2013, p. 63). This is well-exemplified by the PT Asiatic Persada conflict, where indigenous resistance against a multinational player takes place. The four ‘time bombs’ analyzed against their historical trajectories, thus, translate into two main frontiers of land control. The conflict between local actors and PT Wanakasita Nusantara/PT Agronusa Alam Sejahtera and PT Asiatic Persada exemplifies how law enforcement is applied to private actors and shows the varying levels of success by local indigenous groups in gaining informal access to land. In the concession area of PT Wanakasita Nusantara/PT Agronusa Alam Sejahtera, law enforcement is significantly weaker compared to the PT Asiatic Persada concession and, consequently, access to land is slightly easier there for local actors. In the PT Asiatic Persada concession, law enforcement is guaranteed with the help of mobile police brigades, diminishing the access to land. The PT REKI and THR Sultan Thaha Syaifuddin case stand for conflicts related to conservational efforts of governmental and non-governmental organizations and the attempt of indigenous groups and local farmers to regain self-determination in regard to accessing local natural resources. To sum up, in all four land conflicts, “the moment’s ‘common sense’” (Peluso & Lund, 2011) is challenged by different actors, trying to enclose, exclude or territorialize it (Peluso & Lund, 2011, p. 669). This means that different actors perceive their understanding of the situation as the only truth, leading to the fact that multiple contested truths exist in parallel. These newly emerging social and environmental relations foster and accelerate a transformation process in which access to land is at the heart of today’s land contestations. These contestations can only be uncovered by dismantling the underlying power trajectories, leading to an ostensible state of equilibrium in this post-frontier area.



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16 In this context, agency is understood as the capacity to act (Barker, 2008, p. 474), whereas empowerment encompasses all strategies that enhance self-determination of individuals or groups.

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Naturkonzepte und indigene Identitätsentwürfe im Kontext ökologischer Konflikte in Kalimantan

Timo Duile

► Duile, T. (2014). Naturkonzepte und indigene Identitätsentwürfe im Kontext ökologischer Konflikte in Kalimantan. *ASEAS – Austrian Journal of South-East Asian Studies*, 7(1), 93-110.

In hegemonialen Diskursen, die sich gerade in ökonomischer Hinsicht als wirkmächtig erwiesen haben, erscheinen ökologische Konflikte meist als Konflikte um das adäquate Management von Ressourcen. Der epistemische Subtext dieser Herangehensweise an den Gegenstand „Umwelt“ basiert auf einem spezifischen Konzept von Natur, welches Natur als Materie, als das Andere der Kultur und des menschlichen Geistes begreift. Mit Bezug auf Philippe Descola soll in diesem Artikel gezeigt werden, dass sich die im Kontext indigener politischer Strategien revitalisierenden und neu ausgehandelten Naturkonzepte der Dayak auf der Insel Borneo von diesem hegemonialen Naturkonzept unterscheiden – auch wenn sich diese immer wieder auf Grundlagen der hegemonialen Episteme beziehen müssen, um in die globalen Diskurse eintreten zu können. Der Beitrag veranschaulicht diese epistemische Dimension ökologischer Konflikte, indem exemplarisch Publikationen von John Bamba, Direktor einer indigenen Organisation im indonesischen West-Kalimantan, analysiert werden. Es soll außerdem gezeigt werden, wie indigenes Wissen in seiner epistemischen Gesamtheit in hegemonialen Diskursen über lokales Wissen in Kalimantan ausgeblendet wird.

Schlagworte: Dayak; epistemische Konflikte; Kalimantan; lokales Wissen; Naturkonzepte

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In hegemonic discourses, which have been particularly influential in economic terms, environmental conflicts are mostly framed as conflicts about the adequate use and management of natural resources. However, the epistemic subtext of this approach is based on a specific concept of nature that takes nature as matter, as the opposition to culture or the human mind. With reference to Philippe Descola, this paper aims to show that Dayaknese concepts of nature on the island of Borneo, which are revitalized and negotiated within the context of indigenous political strategies, differ fundamentally from these hegemonic concepts – even though they have to refer to some hegemonic epistemic premises in order to enter global discourses. The article illustrates this epistemic dimension by analyzing statements of John Bamba, director of an indigenous organization in West Kalimantan, Indonesia. Furthermore, it demonstrates how indigenous knowledge in its epistemic totality is neglected by Western discourses on local knowledge in Kalimantan.

Keywords: Concepts of Nature; Dayak; Epistemic Conflicts; Kalimantan; Local Knowledge

EINLEITUNG

Was sind, im hegemonialen Diskurs des globalen Nordens, ökologische Konflikte? In Publikationen der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit (EZA) werden ökologische Konflikte in der Regel als Konflikte um das richtige Management von Ressourcen gedeutet, das die Kriterien einer wie auch immer definierten Nachhaltigkeit erfüllen sowie eine Einbindung in lokale, regionale und globale Märkte gewährleisten soll. Nachhaltige Entwicklung soll „wirtschaftlich leistungsfähig“ (Nuscheler, 2006, S. 382) sein, also etwas produzieren, das in internationale Märkte eingespeist werden kann (Momborg, 1993, S. 3). Im indonesischen Kalimantan beziehen sich Untersuchungen ökologischer Konflikte meist auf die Verunreinigungen durch Bergbau und Goldabbau, die nicht selten in Konflikt mit Naturschutzstrategien stehen (Eaton, 2005, S. 75–85), sowie auf die großflächige Umwandlung der Landschaft von tropischen Wäldern und kleinbäuerlicher Landwirtschaft in zunächst vor allem Kautschuk- und ab den 1980er Jahren in Palmölplantagen (Colchester et al., 2006). Für Kalimantan stellt die Expansion von Palmölplantagen aufgrund des enormen Flächenverbrauchs den folgenschwersten ökologischen Eingriff dar, der sich dort je ereignet hat. Aufgrund der hohen, auch politisch gewollten Nachfrage nach Palmöl (Dera, 2009, S. 18–24, 30), das als fast konkurrenzlos günstiges Pflanzenöl sowohl für die Lebensmittel- und Kosmetikproduktion als auch als Agrartreibstoff verwendet werden kann und in Diskursen um den Klimawandel immer wieder als marktfreundliche Lösung auftaucht (Houtard, 2010, S. 60–74), verfolgt die indonesische Regierung sehr ambitionierte Pläne, um den Anbau von Ölpalmen auch in den nächsten Jahren massiv auszuweiten (Caroko, Komarudin, Obidzinski, & Gunarso, 2011).

Diese sozial-ökologische Transformation verursacht eine ganze Reihe von Konfliktdimensionen. Nach Pye (2013, S. 2–3) lassen sich in der Kontroverse um den Palmölanbau drei Kategorien von Kritik herausarbeiten. Erstens richtet sich die Kritik gegen die Monokulturen, die die Biodiversität bedrohen. Zweitens wird bemängelt, dass es sich bei der Ausweitung der Palmölplantagen um eine Scheinlösung im Kampf gegen den Klimawandel handelt, da bei der Umwandlung von Torfmoorwäldern hohe Mengen an CO₂ freigesetzt werden. Drittens wird die Palmölindustrie für soziale Missstände kritisiert (Jiwan, 2013, S. 65). Sie greife zu (menschen)rechtswidrigen Mitteln bei der Akquise von Land, mache Kleinbauern und -bäuerinnen alleinig von einem Produkt abhängig, führe zu Nahrungsmittelknappheit und stelle lediglich prekäre Beschäftigungsverhältnisse für die ArbeiterInnen auf den Plantagen her.

Im Folgenden schlage ich vor, diese Konflikte unter einem weiteren problematischen Aspekt zu betrachten: Der jeweiligen Nutzung von „Natur“ liegt ein spezifischer Naturbegriff zu Grunde, dessen epistemologisch-ontologische Dimensionen in hegemonialen Diskursen reproduziert werden. Hegemonial werden im Folgenden diejenigen Diskurse genannt, die sich – im ökonomischen wie im ökologischen Sinne – als besonders wirkmächtig erwiesen haben. Hegemonial sind dann vor allem jene Begrifflichkeiten und Repräsentationen von Welt, die auf den Wissenssystemen und Ontologien der diskursiv und ökonomisch einflussreicheren AkteurInnen gründen. Daher ist die hegemoniale Episteme im Wesentlichen auch eine kapitalistische: Sie dient als legitimierender Unterbau für die Konzeption der Natur als das „Andere“, das vielfältigen Ausbeutungsstrategien zum Zwecke der Kapitalakkumulation unter-

worfen werden kann. In diesem hegemonialen Diskurs wird „Natur“ als das Andere des menschlichen Geistes betrachtet. Dabei handelt es sich um ein hierarchisches Oppositionspaar, in dem der menschliche Geist und die von ihm hervorgebrachte Kultur als höherwertig erscheint und Natur, verstanden als geistlose Materie, dem Geist unterworfen wird (McEvan, 2009, S. 123; Plumwood, 2003, S. 52–58). Der Ethnologe Philipp Descola (2011) bezeichnet diese Trennung als Naturalismus. Demgegenüber entwerfen indigene AktivistInnen alternative Naturkonzepte, welche sie als traditionell markieren und in denen „Natur“ nicht mehr als das schlechthin Andere des menschlichen Geistes oder der menschlichen Gesellschaft erscheint. Ein solch alternatives Naturverständnis mit Rückgriff auf „traditionelle“ Naturwahrnehmungsmuster wird von indonesischen IndigenenvertreterInnen und UmweltaktivistInnen in den letzten Jahren verstärkt als Grundlage einer politischen Strategie propagiert. In diesem Artikel sollen Hinweise entwickelt werden, wie die Weltwahrnehmung der Dayak in Descolas Schema analysiert werden kann. Anhand der Analyse von Publikationen John Bambas, Direktor der indigenen und palmölkritischen Nichtregierungsorganisation (NRO) *Institut Dayakologi* in West-Kalimantan, sowie von zwei exemplarischen Beiträgen aus der EZA wird gezeigt, wie die epistemischen Unterschiede, die den indigenen Naturkonzeptionen zugrunde liegen (in der Terminologie Descolas handelt es sich um eine alternative Ontologie), sich in diskursiver Form ausdrücken und dabei die bestehenden hegemonialen Naturkonzepte einerseits herausfordern und andererseits reproduzieren. Exemplarisch werden auch Interviews und Gespräche mit IndigenenvertreterInnen und UmweltaktivistInnen, die während eines Forschungsaufenthalts in West-Kalimantan zwischen November 2013 und März 2014 geführt wurden, in die Analyse integriert.

Mit der Analyse der epistemischen Differenz zwischen westlich-hegemonialen und indigenen Naturkonzepten soll der Artikel einen Beitrag dazu leisten, die eingangs umrissenen Dimensionen der Kontroverse um ökologische Konflikte in Borneo – besonders im Kontext des Palmölbooms – um eine epistemische „Tiefendimension“ zu erweitern: Es soll also nicht darum gehen, mit der vorgeschlagenen Dimension andere Kritikpunkte an der ökologischen Transformation Kalimantanans auszublenden, sondern diese um die Betrachtung von Differenzen in der Naturwahrnehmung und der Naturkonzepte zwischen ökonomisch, politisch und diskursiv mit ungleicher Macht ausgestatteten AkteurInnen zu ergänzen. Selbstverständlich können die Aussagen John Bambas sowie die exemplarischen Interviews mit Dayak in West-Kalimantan nicht als repräsentativ für alle Dayak angesehen werden, weil sich die Naturvorstellungen und -wahrnehmungen dieser heterogenen Gruppe besonders mit dem Grad ihrer Einbindung in Modernisierungskontexte verändern. Gerade diese Einbindung kann jedoch die Rückbesinnung auf „traditionelle“ Wahrnehmungsmuster hervorrufen, da insbesondere indigene Gruppen oft durch die sozial-ökologischen Folgen von Modernisierungsprozessen benachteiligt werden (Alcon, 2000, S. 3–12). Wenn von „westlichen“ Konzepten oder verschiedenen Epistemen die Rede ist, dann kommt diesen ebenso wenig wie den „Dayak-Konzepten“ ein ontologischer Wahrheitswert zu: Sie sollen vielmehr als begriffliches Instrumentarium benutzt werden, da diese beispielsweise von NRO-VertreterInnen, wie in weiterer Folge beispielhaft gezeigt wird, gegenübergestellt und dabei essenzialisiert werden (vgl. Bamba, 2008, 2010). Hier dagegen sollen sie dem Zweck dienen, Unterschiede in der Naturwahr-

nehmung begrifflich zu fassen und sie mit Rückgriff auf die Überlegungen Descolas idealtypisch gegenüberzustellen, um diskursive Konfliktlinien herauszuarbeiten.

Im Folgenden wird zunächst ein kurzer Überblick über die Transformation der Umwelt in Kalimantan und den dieser Transformation zugrunde liegenden hegemonialen Naturbegriff gegeben. Dieser soll dann in das Schema von Descola eingeordnet und die Unterschiede zu den indigenen Naturkonzepten deutlich gemacht werden. Schließlich wird das Einschreiben dieser alternativen Naturkonzepte in die hegemoniale Ordnung dargestellt, indem die Rezeption indigener Naturkonzepte in Kalimantan im Zuge der Diskurse um lokales Wissen analysiert wird.

DIE TRANSFORMATION DER UMWELT IN KALIMANTAN IM KONTEXT EINES HEGEMONIALEN NATURBEGRIFFS

Während der Hochphase des europäischen Imperialismus im 19. Jahrhundert wurde Borneo durch die Kolonialmächte Großbritannien und die Niederlande immer stärker in das Weltsystem integriert. Dabei wurden sowohl Produkte, die in Plantagen angebaut wurden, als auch Walderzeugnisse wie Rattan oder Guttapercha in regionale und globale Märkte eingebunden (Cleary & Eaton, 1992, S. 95). In der Kolonialzeit gelangten somit auch europäische Naturkonzeptionen in all ihren Facetten in den malaiischen Archipel. Dabei haben sich besonders kapitalistische Konzeptionen als wirkmächtig erwiesen, die Natur als das Andere des (weißen) menschlichen Geistes konzipierten, die als Rohstoff für die kapitalistische Inwertsetzung mit dem Zweck der Kapitalakkumulation zur Verfügung stand (zu kolonialen Herrschaftskonzeptionen über Natur, siehe Plumwood, 2003, S. 52–58). Da diese Naturkonzeptionen den Dekolonialisierungsprozess überdauerten und weiterhin wirkmächtig sind, kann hier in Bezug auf eine kritische Analyse von einer postkolonialen Perspektive auf den Begriff der Natur gesprochen werden.

Die Integration Borneos als peripheren Ort in das Weltsystem ging einher mit einer tiefgreifenden Transformation der Umwelt. Der Wald wurde in größerem Maße als Rohstofflieferant genutzt und erste Plantagen angelegt. Den massivsten Einbindungsschub in das Weltsystem erfuhr Kalimantan, der indonesische Teil der Insel, während der Suharto-Diktatur (1966–1998), als das Regime ab den 1970er Jahren Anreize für inländische und internationale Investitionen zur Ausbeutung der natürlichen Ressourcen schuf. Staatliche Investitionen in Infrastruktur und finanzielle Anreize trugen dazu ebenso bei wie Zwangsmaßnahmen (z.B. Umsiedlungen), mit denen lokale Widerstände gebrochen wurden. Neben Waldprodukten und Kautschuk spielten Palmölplantagen für die Landwirtschaft Borneos ab den 1980er Jahren eine immer größere Rolle. Profiteure dieser Wirtschaftszweige waren und sind neben Konglomeraten aus dem globalen Norden auch die einheimischen Palmöl-Oligarchien (Pichler & Pye, 2012, S. 145–147). Seit den 1980er Jahren wurden auf der Insel Borneo nach Angaben des World Wildlife Fund (World Wildlife Fund Deutschland, 2013) pro Jahr im Schnitt 860.000 Hektar Wald vernichtet, so dass heute nur noch etwa 50 Prozent Borneos (in Kalimantan weniger) mit Wald bedeckt sind und „das Ende des Tieflandregenwalds der Insel Borneo unmittelbar in Sicht“ (Klute, 2010, S. 222) ist. Unter der Regierung Yudhoyono (2004–2014) wurden die Anreize für ausländisches Kapital, in Palmölplantagen zu investieren, noch verstärkt (Dera, 2009, S. 30–32),

und die Beimischungsquoten für Agrokraftstoffe in der EU machen Palmöl noch attraktiver.¹ Allein in der Provinz West-Kalimantan wurden bis 2010 Genehmigungen für eine Fläche von über 1 Million Hektar für den Anbau von Palmölplantagen aus gegeben, von denen bereits 66 Prozent bepflanzt sind (Caroko et al., 2011, S. 2–3). Die ehrgeizigen Pläne der indonesischen Regierung sehen einen weiteren massiven Ausbau vor; bis 2020 sollen in West-Kalimantan über 5 Millionen Hektar mit Ölpalmen bepflanzt werden (Colchester et al., 2007, S. 27–28).

Die Ölpalme verändert wie keine andere Pflanze die Landschaft Borneos. Ökologische Konflikte in Kalimantan beschränken sich jedoch keineswegs auf die Palmölindustrie. Bereits lange vor dem Palmölboom wurde kleinbäuerlich und extensiv genutztes Land in Kautschukplantagen umgewandelt, und auch der Goldabbau und die massive Verschmutzung der Flüsse – insbesondere mit Quecksilber – oder der Kohleabbau stellen heute massive ökologische Probleme dar. Gemessen am Flächenverbrauch ist der Palmölanbau dennoch ein zentrales ökologisches Konfliktfeld in Kalimantan.

Die Einbindung in das ökonomische Weltsystem erfolgte auch mittels einer Einbindung in ein epistemisches Weltsystem, also in eine hegemoniale Wissensordnung, die auf einem spezifischen Naturbegriff beruht. Laut Wallerstein (2010, S. 69–81) ist eine bestimmte universalisierende Form von Wissen die Grundbedingung für das kapitalistische Weltsystem. Die universalisierende Naturwissenschaft stellt in diesem Zusammenhang ökonomisch verwertbares Wissen bereit und bildet die epistemische Grundlage für das moderne kapitalistische Weltsystem. Damit verbunden ist ein spezifisch naturwissenschaftlicher Naturbegriff, den ich in der Folge mit dem Begriff des Naturalismus, wie ihn Descola versteht, in Verbindung bringen möchte. Dieser Naturbegriff impliziert dabei nicht nur die Forderung, die Natur als Ressourcenreservoir möglichst effektiv auszubeuten, sondern drückt sich auch in einflussreichen Nachhaltigkeitsdiskursen aus, die, ausgehend von der globalen Ebene, die indonesische Politik erreicht haben (Arnscheidt, 2009, S. 125–156). Dementsprechend beruht das Konzept der nachhaltigen Entwicklung auf einem Technozentrismus (Eblinghaus & Stickler, 1992, S. 101–104), der Natur als das zu beherrschende Äußere begreift. Demgegenüber existieren jedoch auch alternative epistemische Ordnungen, die mit jener hegemonialen Ordnung diskursiv konkurrieren. Entlang von ökologischen Konflikten lassen sich dementsprechend epistemische Konflikte beobachten. Darunter werden Konflikte verstanden, die sich aufgrund verschiedener, das Wissen und die Wahrnehmung organisierender Strukturen ergeben. In diesem Fall liegt der hegemonialen Episteme die Prämisse zu Grunde, dass Natur und menschlicher Geist zwei qualitativ verschiedene Kategorien sind. Philippe Descola benutzt in seiner Untersuchung den Terminus der Ontologien, um diese Wahrnehmungs- und Wissenskonzepte abzugrenzen. Es geht dabei jedoch nicht um die Frage, wie das Sein ist, sondern wie das Sein durch epistemische Grundannahmen in der Wahrnehmung erscheint.

1 Palmöl wird jedoch auch in sehr vielen Kosmetika und Nahrungsmitteln verwendet, da es derzeit das billigste Pflanzenfett ist. Erst ab November 2014 muss nach einer EU-Richtlinie Palmöl als Bestandteil dieser Erzeugnisse ausdrücklich angeführt werden (Rettet den Regenwald, 2011).

ANDERE EPISTEMISCHE ORDNUNGEN – DESCOLAS „ONTOLOGIEN“ JENSEITS VON NATUR UND KULTUR

Ein selbstreflexiver Blick auf das eigene Denken wirft die Frage auf, ob es menschliche Gemeinschaften gibt, deren Denken und Wahrnehmen nicht von der uns vertrauten Gegenüberstellung von Kultur und Natur geprägt ist. Philippe Descola (2011), Ethnologe und Schüler von Claude Levi-Strauss, hat dazu eine umfangreiche Studie vorgelegt, die sich auf ethnographisches Material aus verschiedensten Regionen der Erde stützt. Descola zeigt auf, dass es grundlegende, das Denken ordnende Strukturen gibt – er nennt sie Ontologien – die unsere Wahrnehmungen und unser Wissen vom Seienden prägen und erst ermöglichen. Dabei ist der westliche Naturbegriff, der Natur als Materie vom menschlichen Geist scheidet, eine Besonderheit, auch wenn er uns im wahrsten Sinne des Wortes „natürlich“ erscheint.

Descola unterscheidet dabei zwischen vier Ontologien.² Alle diese Ontologien beruhen auf binären Oppositionen zwischen *Interioritäten* und *Physikalitäten*. Binäre Oppositionen³ sind für ihn demnach entscheidend, müssen jedoch nicht zwangsläufig zu einem westlichen Naturbegriff führen. Unter Interiorität subsumiert Descola alle Vorstellungen von einem Inneren, das sich durch Bewusstsein und Intentionalität auszeichnet – man könnte auch sagen, Interiorität ist das, was Entitäten in der Wahrnehmung als Subjekte erscheinen lässt.

Unter dem vagen Terminus »Interiorität« ist eine Reihe von Eigenschaften zu verstehen, die von allen Menschen erkannt werden und die sich zum Teil mit dem decken, die wir gewöhnlich Geist, Seele oder Bewusstsein nennen – Intentionalität, Subjektivität, Reflexivität, Affekte, die Fähigkeit zu bezeichnen oder zu träumen. ... Kurzum, es handelt sich um jenen universellen Glauben, daß es dem Sein innewohnende oder ihm entspringende Merkmale gibt, die unter normalen Umständen allein durch ihre Wirkung zu erkennen sind und von denen angenommen wird, daß sie für seine Identität, seine Dauer und einige seiner typischen Verhaltensweisen verantwortlich sind. (Descola, 2011, S. 181–182)

Dagegen bezeichnet der Terminus Physikalität das direkt greif- und wahrnehmbare einer Entität. Dieses Konzept lässt sich auf den Begriff der Materialität anwenden, ist allerdings nicht darauf beschränkt. Es bezieht sich auch auf die Substanz und die äußere Form einer Entität. Descola führt aus:

Die Physikalität ist also nicht die bloße Materialität der organischen oder abiotischen Körper, sondern die Gesamtheit der sichtbaren und greifbaren Ausdrucksformen, die die einer beliebigen Entität eigentümlichen Dispositionen

2 Ich werde hier nur auf den Naturalismus als diejenige hegemoniale Ontologie eingehen, auf die sich das kapitalistische Weltsystem stützt, sowie auf den Animismus als diejenige Ontologie, die wir bei den Dayak auf Borneo finden. Für die beiden anderen Ontologien, die Descola Totemismus und Analogismus nennt, siehe Descola, 2011, S. 219–258 sowie S. 301–344.

3 Descola widerspricht Derrida, wenn er schreibt, „daß, anders als eine beliebte Meinung es will, die binären Gesetze keine Erfindung des Abendlandes oder eine Fiktion der strukturalen Anthropologie sind, sondern bei vielen Gelegenheiten von allen Völkern reichlich verwendet werden und daß also weniger ihre Form in Frage gestellt werden muß als die eventuelle Universalität der Inhalte, die sie zerlegt“ (Descola, 2011, S. 189).

annehmen, wenn angenommen wird, daß sie aus den dieser Entität wesentlichen morphologischen und physiologischen Merkmale resultieren. (Descola, 2011, S. 182)

Aus der Kombination dieser Konzepte ergeben sich vier mögliche Ontologien, die die Wahrnehmung von Unterschieden und Gemeinsamkeiten der Dinge in der Welt strukturieren. Für Descola ist der Modus der *Identifikation* entscheidend (Descola, 2011, S. 176–194): Identifizieren sich Individuen mit anderen Entitäten, weil sie ihnen die gleiche Interiorität oder die gleiche Physikalität zuerkennen? In unserer Wahrnehmung, die Descola Naturalismus nennt, erkennen wir nur andere Menschen als uns ähnliche Entitäten an, weil wir nur ihnen eine Interiorität zuerkennen, von der wir annehmen, dass wir sie auch selbst besitzen. Innerhalb westlicher Gesellschaften finden sich natürlich auch Gegendiskurse, die „nicht mehr so eifrig eine Diskontinuität zwischen Menschen und Nichtmenschen behaupten“ (Descola, 2011, S. 269). Allerdings haben diese Diskurse kaum Ausdruck in hegemonialen Praktiken gefunden, und für die Praxis der kapitalistischen Warenproduktion ist die Trennung von Menschen und Nichtmenschen, also von Geist und Natur als Rohstoff, nach wie vor ein wichtiges Legitimationsmoment. Die Interiorität lässt sich in Konzepten von Seele, Bewusstsein oder Intentionalität begreifen; das heute aber am meisten verbreitete Konzept ist wohl dasjenige des rationalen Geistes. Dagegen begreifen wir die Dinge der Natur, also das Andere des rationalen Geistes, als bloße Materie, da wir ihnen nur eine Physikalität zugestehen. Der Mensch erscheint im Naturalismus einerseits als Naturwesen, da sein Körper Physikalität besitzt. Allen voran ist er aber Interiorität, rationaler Geist, Bewusstsein und selbstreflexive Intentionalität.

Descola nennt die Ontologie, die genau anders herum verfährt, Animismus. Nach dieser unterscheiden sich Entitäten der Welt nicht aufgrund der Interioritäten, sondern aufgrund der Physikalität: Es ist die Form, nach der im Animismus unterschieden wird: Haut, Federn, Schuppen, Rinde und die Gestalt sind es, nach denen unterschieden wird, während der Naturalismus all diese Dinge als gleich betrachtet, nämlich als Materie, die aus Atomen zusammengesetzt ist. Dingen, Pflanzen und besonders Tieren sowie Geistern werden im Animismus Interioritäten zugesprochen, wie sie auch Menschen besitzen. Dieses Denken führt dazu, dass den Entitäten, die uns als bloße Natur erscheinen, ein Bewusstsein oder eine Seele (daher der Begriff Animismus) zugesprochen wird, die sich prinzipiell nicht vom Bewusstsein oder von der Seele der Menschen unterscheidet. Beispielsweise erlaubt dies den Menschen zu den Tieren, aber auch den Tieren untereinander, Kommunikationsbeziehungen aufzubauen (Descola, 2011, S. 197). Des Weiteren haben Tiere und gelegentlich auch Pflanzen qua ihrer Interioritäten Einblick in die kulturbegründenden Normen wie Heiratsregeln oder Regeln, die generell das Verhalten zwischen den Subjekten und ihrer Gruppen reglementieren. Die Unterscheidung zwischen dem Ort der Kultur und dem Ort der Natur, also zwischen Haushalt/Dorf und dem Wald oder der Wildnis wird damit größtenteils aufgehoben (vgl. Descola, 2011, S. 63–98). In diesem Sinne sind auch die Ausführungen von Dayak-AktivistInnen zu verstehen, die darauf hinweisen, dass für sie die Natur ein „gemeinsames Haus“ für alle Lebewesen ist. Hier sei als Beispiel auf die Selbstdarstellung der Noyan-Dayak verwiesen: „Die Dayak betrachten die Natur als gemeinsames Haus für alle Geschöpfe, einschließlich

derer, die nicht sichtbar sind“ (The New Generation of Noyan, 2013, Übersetzung des Autors). Das Haus verweist hier auf den Ort der Kultur, an dem diese Lebewesen ebenso wie die Menschen teilhaben. Vor diesem Hintergrund erscheinen ökologische Konflikte dann auch als gesellschaftliche Konflikte – nicht, weil sie nur Menschen betreffen, sondern weil nicht-menschliche Entitäten als Teile der Gesellschaft angesehen werden. In der Selbstdarstellung der Dayak dient der Verweis auf diese andere Ontologie letztlich auch der politischen Strategie der Bestimmung des Dayak-Seins und dem Aufbau eines gegenhegemonialen Naturverständnisses.

ENTWURF TRADITIONELLER NATURKONZEPTE DER DAYAK IN BORNEO

Die Bezeichnung „Dayak“ ist ein Relikt aus der niederländischen Kolonialzeit und bezeichnet zunächst alle EinwohnerInnen Borneos, die sich nicht zum Islam bekennen, andere Muttersprachen als das Malaiische sprechen und meist „im Inneren“ der Insel leben. Die Dayak sind daher kulturell und linguistisch betrachtet eine überaus heterogene Gruppe, allein in West-Kalimantan hat das Institut Dayakologi (2011) 151 verschiedene Dayak-Sprachen gezählt. Trotz dieser Vielfalt soll im Folgenden gezeigt werden, dass es in verschiedenen Dayak-Gemeinschaften Konzepte gibt, die in das Descola'sche Schema des Animismus eingeordnet werden können. Diese Konzepte dienen NRO-AktivistInnen, beispielsweise aus Indigenen- aber auch aus Umwelt-NROs, in der Folge dazu, ein „traditionelles“/gegenhegemoniales Naturkonzept der BewohnerInnen Borneos zu entwerfen, das einem „westlichen“/hegemonialen entgegengestellt wird und zur Konstruktion einer gemeinsamen Identität als Dayak beiträgt.

Neben dieser idealtypischen Unterscheidung gibt es eine Reihe von Abstufungen, weil die verschiedenen Dayak-Gemeinschaften zu einem unterschiedlichen Grad in Modernisierungsprozesse eingebunden sind. Das macht sich zum Beispiel auch in der Strategie von Umwelt-NROs, die mit Indigenen zusammenarbeiten, bemerkbar. In einem Interview mit einem Vertreter des WWF in Pontianak hob dieser hervor, dass man zwischen den noch ursprünglich (*masih origen*) lebenden Dayak, denen es um Naturschutz gehe und jenen, die über politische und wirtschaftliche Verflechtungen in moderne Produktionspraktiken und Naturwahrnehmungskonzepte eingebunden seien, unterscheiden müsse. Somit werden die „traditionell“ lebenden Dayak Teil einer politisch-diskursiven Strategie: Sie sind die „echten“ Naturschützer, da sie über einen besonderen Zugang zur Natur verfügen. Der WWF kann das für seine Argumentationen nutzen, da die Ziele der Indigenen trotz eines „anderen“ Naturverständnisses mit den praktischen Zielen des WWF konform sind (Hermayani Putra, WWF West-Kalimantan, persönliches Interview, 7. Jänner 2014, Pontianak).

Inwiefern finden wir auf Borneo aber Konzeptionen von Natur, die einen Unterschied zu jenen Naturdiskursen aufweisen, die als Grundlage der kapitalistischen Umwandlung und Aneignung der Natur stehen? Seit der Kolonialzeit gibt es Aufzeichnungen von Forschenden, die Einblick in die Art und Weise geben, wie die Indigenen Borneos ihre Umwelt nutzen und wahrnehmen. Diese Untersuchungen können Aufschluss darüber geben, welche Ontologien im Sinne Descolas das Handeln und Denken der Menschen in Borneo in Bezug auf ihre Umwelt bestimmen und ob hier alternative Ordnungen die Wahrnehmung von Umwelt strukturieren.

Der Forschungsreisende Alfred Willem Nieuwenhuis (2009), der Borneo Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts bereiste, thematisierte in seinen umfangreichen Berichten immer wieder die Beziehung der Dayak zu den Tieren. Das Reh taucht dabei oft als Omentier auf; so musste beispielsweise eine Reise verschoben werden, weil Dayak beobachtet hatten, dass ein Reh über ein gerade erst angelegtes Feld gegangen war. Nieuwenhuis (2009, S. 44) deutet die Wahrnehmung des Rehs durch die Dayak zunächst als ein „böses Omen“. Das Tier erscheint als bloßes Zeichen, als Überbringer einer Botschaft, die nicht vom Tier selbst stammt und derer sich das Tier auch nicht bewusst ist. Ganz anders liest sich dagegen eine spätere Passage, in der das Reh wieder auftaucht:

Auch der Schrei des kidjang (Reh) rechts oder links vom Beobachter, zeigt an, ob ein Stück Urwald gefällt werden darf oder nicht. *Hat das Reh die Wahl gebilligt*, so muss das ganze Dorf 8 Nächte melo njaho. Man darf dann das Haus wohl verlassen, aber keinen Reis als Proviant mitnehmen und keine Nacht außerhalb des Hauses verbringen (sân). (Nieuwenhuis, 2009, S. 188, eigene Hervorhebung)

Hier erscheint das Reh als Subjekt, das darüber entscheiden darf, ob ein Waldstück gerodet werden darf oder nicht, es ist Teil der Gemeinschaft und steht mit dieser im Ritual oder durch Beobachtung in einer Kommunikationsbeziehung. Das Reh verfügt also über eine Interiorität und kann bewusste Entscheidungen treffen, die für die Menschen bindend sind. Wie man die Interpretation der Dayak bezüglich des Verhaltens des Tieres auch deuten mag, offensichtlich gibt es hier eine Interiorität, die mit den Dayak kommuniziert. Es ist entweder das Reh selbst, das einen Geist bzw. eine Interiorität besitzt, oder ein Geist, der die Physikalität des Rehs als Kommunikationsmittel nutzt.

Ähnliche Fälle schildert John Bamba, Direktor der NRO Institut Dayakologi, für die heutige Zeit. Im Interview hob er hervor, dass die Geister die Form von Tieren annehmen, um den Menschen zu erscheinen und dadurch mit ihnen zu kommunizieren. Die Tiere sind somit Verkörperungen von bloßen Interioritäten (*merupakan penjelmaan dari roh*). Die Interiorität des Tieres ist der Geist, der seine Form ändern kann, um Kommunikationsbeziehungen aufzubauen (John Bamba, persönliches Interview, 8. Jänner 2014, Pontianak). Diese Kommunikation ist besonders dann wichtig, wenn Land, auf das die Geister und Tiere auch ein Anrecht (*hak*) haben, umgewandelt wird, beispielsweise für ein Feld mit Trockenreis (*ladang*). Wird Land dagegen großflächig – etwa von InvestorInnen – in Palmölplantagen umgewandelt, werden solche Rituale nicht angewandt und die nicht sichtbaren BewohnerInnen ihrer Wohnstätte beraubt. Von ähnlichen Ritualen bei der Anlage von Feldern berichteten in Interviews auch die Bekati-Dayak, die neben Vögeln auch auf das Erscheinen von Schlangen und Gürteltieren achten. Sie kritisierten außerdem, dass bei der Anlage einer Palmölplantage südlich von Seluas (Kabupaten Bengkayang, West-Kalimantan) keine Rücksicht auf die Geister und Zeichen der Natur genommen wurde. Ein tödlicher Unfall, der sich auf der Plantage ereignete, ist nach Ansicht einiger Bauern die Folge dieser Missachtung der Rechte der dort wohnenden Geister (persönliches Gespräch, 10. Dezember 2013, Seluas). Neben der Tatsache, dass Tiere und Menschen sowie Tiere untereinander Kommunikationsbeziehungen aufbauen können, sind – wie der aus Zentral-Kalimantan stammende Forscher Yus Ngabut (2003) zeigt – auch

Metamorphosen der Form möglich, das heißt, bestimmte Menschen wie SchamanInnen können die Gestalt von Tieren annehmen und umgekehrt. Ein weiteres Beispiel aus Borneo zeigt jedoch, dass mitunter auch normale Menschen ihre Form in eine Tierform verändern können, wenn in diesem Fall auch unbeabsichtigt:

The Dayaks recognize the likeness of both these apes to men, but from this likeness they draw a conclusion contrary to that of Darwin. The contrast in view shows how two authorities considering the same fact can deduce from them exactly opposite theories. The evolutionists say that man is an ascendent of ape; the Land Dayaks say that the ape is a descendent of man. The orang-utan, they say, spring from a man who, become ashamed at some misdeed in the village, ran away into the jungle. He stayed there so long that he took the *form* of an orang-utan, and his children were like him. The wife, on this theory, is the missing link. (Geddes, 1961, S. 12, eigene Hervorhebung)

Der Ethnologe William Robert Geddes erhielt diese Erklärung von den Land-Dayak, bei denen er in den 1950er Jahren forschte. Nach deren Wahrnehmung sind die Orang-Utans bloß durch ihre Form und durch ihr habituelles Verhalten von den Menschen verschieden. Was den Orang-Utan ausmacht, ist seine Form und nicht, wie in der westlichen Wahrnehmung, die Tatsache, dass er der Natur angehört. Einen ähnlichen Fall, aus dem man auf eine gemeinsame Interiorität der Menschen und der Affen schließen kann, berichtete ein WWF-Mitarbeiter im Interview: Bei den Kantun-Dayak und Iban-Dayak gäbe es die Vorstellung, dass die Orang-Utans ihre Vorfahren sind (*orang utan itu adalah nenek moyang mereka*). Sie können diese natürlich nur in ihrer Interiorität sein. Dieser Glauben sei für die Strategie des WWF wichtig, da er den Dayak plausibel mache, warum die Tiere einen besonderen Schutz genießen müssen (Hermayani Putra, WWF West-Kalimantan, persönliches Interview, 7. Jänner 2014).

INDIGENE EPISTEME UND DAS EINSCHREIBEN IN HEGEMONIALE SYMBOLISCHE ORDNUNGEN

Das besonders seit der Suharto-Diktatur marginalisierte indigene Wissen erfährt im Zuge von Revitalisierungsprozessen der lokalen Kultur diskursive Aufwertungen. Dabei wird die lokale Kultur immer wieder neu entworfen und zwischen den AkteurInnen verhandelt. Um aber die Unterschiede des Lokalen in Bezug auf das Hegemonial-Globale zu markieren, bedienen sich (indigene) AkteurInnen auch alternativer Naturkonzeptionen. Im Zuge dieser Revitalisierungsprozesse wird nicht bloß die materielle Kultur Gegenstand der Identitätskonstruktionen. Die folgenden Beispiele aus Publikationen von John Bamba sollen verdeutlichen, dass sich gerade auch entlang ökologischer Konfliktlinien lokale Kulturen revitalisieren, indem sie ein eigenes Naturverständnis als Gegensatz zum westlich-hegemonialen Naturbegriff hervorheben, das in diesem Fall auf einer animistischen Ontologie beruht. Dabei beziehen sie sich zwar auf hegemoniale Naturvorstellungen, also auch auf den Naturalismus, indem sie zum Beispiel über den produktiven Rückgriff auf Nachhaltigkeitsterminologien Zugang zum hegemonialen Diskurs erhalten, der Natur in Opposition zur Gesellschaft stellt. Andererseits kann beobachtet werden, dass die oben angedeutete Ontologie

des Animismus ebenfalls für die politische Repräsentation der Dayak genutzt wird, mit der ein identitätsstiftender Gegenentwurf angeboten wird. Die Möglichkeiten dazu sind im formal demokratisierten Indonesien größer, da sich der Staat während der Suharto-Diktatur als Entwicklungsagentur verstand, die ein spezifisches Naturverständnis als Grundlage ihres Entwicklungsprogramms entwarf (zum Naturbegriff in der Pancasila, siehe beispielsweise Wandelt, 1989, S. 167–169) und alternative Konzepte als rückständig und unwissenschaftlich bekämpfte (Arnscheidt, 2009, S. 134).

In seinen Publikationen zeichnet Bamba oft eine Dichotomie zwischen der traditionellen Dayak-Kultur und der Moderne, wobei erstere positiv besetzt wird und sich durch einen naturnahen und umweltfreundlichen Lebensstil auszeichnet. Den modernen Lebensstil, vermittelt über Medien, macht er als die Ursache für zahlreiche moralische Missstände in den Dayak-Gemeinschaften aus und unterscheidet diesen von einem Leben „in harmony with nature“ (Bamba, 2000, S. 45). Diese zunächst simple Gegenüberstellung, wie sie für viele IndigenenvertreterInnen typisch ist, untermauert Bamba später mit dem Entwurf einer spezifisch indigenen Naturwahrnehmung, die zum Ausgangspunkt für politische Strategien werden kann.

In seinem Aufsatz „Seven Fortunes Versus Seven Calamities: Cultural Poverty From an Indigenous Peoples’ Perspective“ aus 2008 zeichnet Bamba zunächst diese Dichotomie nach, indem er sich auf den Nachhaltigkeitsdiskurs bezieht:

The Dayaks put sustainability as one of the most important considerations in their natural resource management system. This sustainability is inseparable from the biodiversity that has become characteristic of their resource management. ... The biodiversity sustains the resources they need in the long run and allows them to preserve their culture and traditions. (Bamba, 2008, S. 244)

Hier und an anderen Stellen greift Bamba auf das Management-Paradigma zurück. Die Aussage ist zunächst einmal nur, dass die Jalai-Dayak, mit denen Bamba sich in dem Aufsatz beschäftigt, ein besseres, da nachhaltiges, Management der Natur betreiben. Bamba greift hier sowohl auf techno- als auch auf ökozentristische Argumente zurück. Technozentristisch sind seine Argumente, weil es zunächst einmal nur um ein nachhaltiges Management natürlicher Ressourcen geht, das die Jalai beherrschen. Er argumentiert in seinem Aufsatz jedoch auch ökozentristisch, wenn er die Natürlichkeit (*organic*) dem von Menschen entworfenen (*inorganic*) gegenüberstellt und Ersteres zum Dayak-Prinzip erklärt (Bamba, 2008, S. 246–247). Indem er „Natur“ im Zentrum verortet, greift er Mechanismen der naturalistischen Ontologie auf, die Natur von Kultur scheidet. Er verortet die Dayak-Kultur jedoch auf der Seite der Natur, die hier zunächst als eine mächtige, Regeln für den Menschen stiftende Entität erscheint.

In weiterer Folge argumentiert Bamba zwar in der symbolischen Ordnung der Kultur-Natur-Dichotomie, transzendiert diese allerdings gleichzeitig, da die Argumente erkennbar von einer Tradition beeinflusst sind, die diese Dichotomie nicht kennt: „The Dayaks believe in nature’s revenge if humans go against the *adat*, which provides guidance and a path to life. *Adat* shows how to live in unity with nature“ (Bamba, 2008, S. 246). Mit dieser in einer romantischen Tradition verhafteten Sicht auf das *adat* der Dayak kann Bamba an ebendiese westlichen Diskurse anschließen. Einige Seiten später schreibt er: „*Adat* provides moral and ethical guidance to keep

human beings living in unity with nature“ (Bamba, 2008, S. 248). Bamba spricht nun nicht mehr davon, „in Harmonie“ mit Natur zu leben, sondern „in Einheit“. Dies wird erst verständlich, wenn wir den Begriff des *adat* näher betrachten. *Adat* ist hier zu verstehen als ein (Gewohnheits-)Rechtssystem, das menschliche Individuen und nicht-menschliche Natur in dieselbe symbolische Ordnung des Rechts ordnet, somit die Trennung zwischen Natur und Gesellschaft negiert. Die Natur bzw. die Entitäten, die der Natur zugeordnet werden, sind in dieser Vorstellung in das gleiche Rechtssystem des *adat* integriert, das somit Gültigkeit für Menschen, Tiere, Pflanzen und Geister gleichermaßen beansprucht. Da sie alle eine identische Interiorität besitzen, haben sie Einblick in diese Rechtsordnung. Die Verpflichtungen der nach der Form unterschiedlichen Entitäten sind reziprok. Bei Nichtbeachtung oder Übertretung der *Adat*-Regeln kann es zu Rache kommen. Dabei handelt es sich nicht um eine Rache der Natur im Sinne einer strafenden, mächtigen und überindividuellen Entität, sondern um eine Strafe von anderen Gemeinschaftsmitgliedern: Tiere, Pflanzen und Geister können Rache üben, wenn Menschen sich nicht an die Verpflichtungen des *adat* ihnen gegenüber halten.

In einer Überarbeitung des Artikels im Jahr 2010 argumentiert Bamba interessanterweise stärker innerhalb eines hegemonialen Naturverständnisses des Naturalismus, das im Sinne Descolas Natur den Menschen gegenüberstellt. In einem Kapitel, in dem er seine Gegenüberstellung von „naturality (organic) versus engineered (inorganic)“ (Bamba, 2010, S. 421) ausführt, schreibt er:

“Naturality” here should be understood as a philosophy to interact with nature based on its laws and carrying capacities. The ethic and moral behind it is that human beings should not exploit nature more than its capacity, and no matter how sophisticated, advanced and mighty the technologies and knowledge they have achieved, human beings cannot live without nature. The key words are “to manage and to maintain/preserve” nature at the same time, and these two actions are inseparable as prerequisites to avoid overexploitation and trespassing the limits of nature’s laws and capacities. (Bamba, 2010, S. 421)

Bamba verweist nun nicht mehr auf das *adat*, das Natur und Gesellschaft an die gleiche moralisch-ethische Ordnung bindet. Die hier zum Ausdruck kommende Moral ist vielmehr die eines angepassten Technozentrismus, der erkennt, dass die Kapazitäten der Umwelt für die kommenden Generationen bewahrt und nachhaltig gemanagt werden müssen (vgl. dazu Eblinghaus & Stickler, 1992, S. 104).

Dieses Einschreiben in hegemoniale Diskurse ist eine große Herausforderung für indigene AkteurInnen. Schon mit der Terminologie, die sich in Begriffen wie „Natur“ oder „Nachhaltigkeit“ ausdrückt, wird die symbolische Ordnung des Naturalismus reproduziert, die auf der Einmaligkeit des menschlichen Geistes fußt und in der die Natur als Materie dem menschlichen Geist als Interiorität gegenübergestellt wird. Innerhalb dieser epistemischen Konflikte stellt sich die Frage, ob der Aufsatz von Bamba von 2008 den epistemisch marginalisierten AkteurInnen die Gelegenheit gibt, sich in die hegemoniale symbolische Ordnung einzuschreiben und sie damit auch zu verändern, oder diese durch die Sprache reproduziert, wenn die Beiträge, um Zugang zum hegemonialen Diskurs zu erhalten, zunächst die hegemoniale sprachliche Ordnung verwenden. Im Interview verknüpfte Bamba die Frage, was Natur eigentlich ist

bzw. sein sollte, eng mit wirtschaftlichen Problematiken und verwies auf den kapitalistischen Charakter der Naturausbeutung (John Bamba, persönliches Interview, 5. Dezember 2013, Pontianak). Um auch ökonomische Freiräume zu schaffen, gründete das Institut Dayakologi eine Organisation, die Kleinkredite vergibt. Bamba führte aus, dass diese Kleinkredite jedoch nicht wie jene zu betrachten seien, die von Banken mit dem Ziel der Profitgenerierung vergeben werden. Der Kredit sei nur das Mittel, um den Menschen zu helfen, das Land wieder nach ökologischen – und „traditionellen“ – Kriterien zu bewirtschaften und so zum Beispiel ein weiteres Vordringen von Palmölmonokulturen zu verhindern. Die Menschen, die diese Kredite in Anspruch nehmen, müssten sich verpflichten, das erworbene Land nach ökologischen Kriterien zu bewirtschaften, wozu auch ein Verzicht auf den Anbau von Ölpalmen gehöre. Eine Ausnahme gäbe es nur für TransmigrantInnen, die bereits durch den Staat zum Anbau von Ölpalmen verpflichtet worden seien. Diesen Menschen, die er letztlich als Opfer der Ölpalmen sieht (*korban sawit*), wolle man keine Kredite vorenthalten, jedoch würden sie in Schulungen über die fatalen Folgen des Ölpalmenanbaus für die Ökologie unterrichtet, um diesen so weit wie möglich zu beenden. Generell verweist die Strategie Bambas auf eine Abkehr von kapitalistischen Verwertungsparadigmen: Im Mittelpunkt der Landnutzung sollte nicht die Produktion für globale Märkte stehen, sondern Subsistenzwirtschaft, um die lokale Nahrungsmittelproduktion sicher zu stellen und nachhaltige Landwirtschaft betreiben zu können. Nicht zuletzt können so auch alternative Naturwahrnehmungen erhalten bleiben, da im traditionell genutzten Land auch Raum für alle BewohnerInnen des „gemeinsamen Hauses“ der Natur vorhanden sei. Erst durch den Freiraum, der durch die Kleinkredite gewährt werden soll, kann ein epistemischer Freiraum geschaffen werden. Das Land ist (wieder) im Besitz der Indigenen, die es nach Maßgabe ihrer Naturkonzeption nutzen können. Die Frage nach Landbesitz ist dementsprechend in den letzten Jahren einer der Schwerpunkte des Institut Dayakologi geworden (Julia, ehemalige ID-Aktivistin, persönliches Interview, 20. März 2014, Pontianak).

LOKALES WISSEN: ÜBERSETZUNG DES LOKALEN IN DIE GLOBALEN NACHHALTIGKEITSDISKURSE DES NATURALISMUS

Die Rolle von hegemonialen Naturkonzepten drückt sich nicht zuletzt in Maßnahmen und im Denken der EZA aus, obwohl lokales Wissen immer stärker in diese Diskurse integriert wird. Dabei wird besonders den lokalen Kleinbauern und -bäuerinnen unterstellt, dass sie besser an die lokalen ökologischen Gegebenheiten angepasste Techniken entwickelt haben. Dem zugrunde liegt zunächst ein technozentrischer Naturbegriff: Natur muss nachhaltig und effektiv gemanagt werden. Natur ist das Andere des managenden menschlichen Geistes, ist Ressourcenreservoir und Sammelbegriff für die in der Umwelt vorliegenden Objekte, die als bloße Materie, eben als Ressourcen, betrachtet werden. Während das hegemoniale entwicklungspolitische Paradigma bis in die 1980er davon ausging, dass nur durch massive Kapitalinvestitionen und maximale Ressourcenausbeutung im Rahmen einer deregulierten Wirtschaft der wirtschaftliche *take-off* der Länder der globalen Peripherie bewerkstelligt werden könne (Zapf, 1997, S. 33), hat sich dieser Fokus mit dem Leitbild der nachhaltigen Entwicklung (Rauch, 2009, S. 75–76) zwar verschoben, die zugrunde liegende

Ontologie ist jedoch dieselbe geblieben. Anhand zweier Beispiele aus Borneo soll im Folgenden illustriert werden, wie Ansätze, die mit lokalem Wissen arbeiten, alternative Ontologien konsequent ignorieren und somit als Transmissionsriemen für das Projekt der Ausdehnung hegemonialer Wissensformen fungieren. Dabei markiert der Begriff des lokalen Wissens bestimmte Wissensformen als lokal (im Gegensatz zu global), um sie dann doch durch einen szientistisch-hegemonialen Diskurs zu repräsentieren. Lokales Wissen wird in diesem Sinne als *techné* verstanden, also auf seinen instrumentellen Aspekt begrenzt (vgl. Linkenbach, 2004, S. 234). Um Argumente für nachhaltiges Management vorzubringen, lassen EntwicklungsexpertInnen im globalen Norden Kleinbauern und -bäuerinnen und Indigene im globalen Süden sprechen, ohne dass eine tatsächlich eigene Artikulation dieser Menschen möglich ist, weil das lokale Wissen sogleich in die hegemoniale Episteme übersetzt wird. In der Regel gibt so der globale Norden die Sprache und die Ontologie vor. Christian Gönner (2000) schreibt dementsprechend in einer Studie zum Ressourcenmanagement in einem Dorf der Benuaq-Dayak: “there is a chance to *translate* indigenous knowledge into expert knowledge“ (S. 78, eigene Hervorhebung). Es ist diese *Übersetzung*, die das Moment der indigenen Episteme ausblenden kann. Im hegemonialen Diskurs wird Wissen nur aus dem Blickwinkel von ExpertInnen aus dem globalen Norden betrachtet, zu denen er sich selbst zählt. Er möchte zunächst feststellen, ob die bisher praktizierte Bewirtschaftungsweise nachhaltig *war*. Mit Blick auf die Benuaq bejaht Gönner dies und führt als Kriterium an, dass dieses System die Biodiversität erhalten habe (Gönner, 2000, S. 61–65). Daher habe das lokale Wissen den Beweis erbracht, dass mit ihm eine nachhaltige Nutzung des Ökosystems bewerkstelligt werden kann. Die zugrunde liegenden Prämissen sind für Gönner offensichtlich eine Marktanbindung, die nachhaltig zu organisieren ist: Das Dayak-Dorf muss als peripherer Ort im Weltsystem in dieses eingebunden werden, so dass aus ihm ein Mehrwert geschöpft werden kann, ohne dass die BewohnerInnen oder das Ökosystem dadurch überbeansprucht werden. Das lokale Wissen soll für eine weite Palette von Agrarprodukten sorgen, die nachhaltig bewirtschaftet werden, damit zum Beispiel Schwankungen am Markt, für den die Produkte bereitgestellt werden, ausgeglichen werden können (vgl. Gönner, 2000, S. iv). Es geht ihm darum, dass sich die Indigenen selbst versorgen und ihre Produkte an Märkte abführen können (Gönner, 2000, S. 70). Dieser ökonomische Subtext verlangt letztlich eine Betrachtung der Natur, in der diese auch als ökonomischer Faktor erscheint. Daher ist die Übersetzung des lokalen Wissens in eine Ontologie des Naturalismus notwendig. Diese Übersetzung ist Vereinnahmung des Lokalen und gleichzeitig exkludiert sie wesentliche Elemente dieses Wissens.

Sehr ähnliche Argumentationsmuster finden sich bei Momberg (1993). Mombergs Untersuchung über lokales Wissen und indigenes Ressourcenmanagement in West-Kalimantan entstand zu einer Zeit, in der sich die Diskurse um Nachhaltigkeit zu etablieren begannen und dabei Paradigmen, die Entwicklung durch wirtschaftliches Wachstum anstrebten, keineswegs ablösten (vgl. z.B. Wagner, 1993, S. 2–4). Ein „multidimensionaler Nachhaltigkeitsbegriff“ (Rauch, 2009, S. 76) wurde zum Leitbild, der u.a. einen umweltschonenden Entwicklungsprozess mit Wirtschaftswachstum zu verbinden suchte. Seitdem muss, beispielsweise auch für die deutsche Entwicklungszusammenarbeit, Wirtschaftswachstum nachhaltig sein (Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung, 2014). Jedoch konnte in dieser

Zeit nicht mehr übersehen werden, dass eine aggressiv auf Effizienz setzende Ressourcenausbeutung zu ökologischen Schäden führte. Momberg (1993) stellt in diesem Zusammenhang fest:

In West Kalimantan, as everywhere in the humid tropics, the misuse of forest resources is leading to rapid deforestation, affecting many indigenous forest communities, who have developed local forest- and agroforest management systems, for subsistence and market production. ... These systems ... might provide potential for sustainable development and conservation. ... The obvious source of new ideas and information lies in the knowledge systems of indigenous people for example the Dayaks of West Kalimantan. (S. 3)

Momberg stellt klar, dass es ihm nur um lokales Wissen geht, sofern es sich dabei um forstwirtschaftliche Managementsysteme handelt, die, wie bei Gönner, mit Marktintegration kombiniert werden können. Eine Analyse des lokalen Wissens soll helfen, diese Managementstrategien herauszuarbeiten, um die lokale Bevölkerung besser in Wirtschaftskreisläufe zu integrieren. Momberg führt aus, dass seine Analyse

includes the inventarization of land use systems and environment from a cognized and a western "scientific" perspective. The comparison of the cognized and "objective" environment should serve for a better understanding between farmers, and the change agents, and provide information on indigenous knowledge systems as potential for sustainable resource management. (Momberg, 1993, S. 3)

Auch hier ist die „emische Analyse“ ein Prozess der Trennung des praktischen Wissens von der lokalen Episteme und führt zu einer Überführung der lokalen Episteme in „objektives“ Wissen. Dieses Wissen erscheint aber nur deshalb objektiv, weil der Naturalismus als epistemische Grundlage angenommen wird. Die lokale Episteme wird dagegen von Beginn an ausgeblendet.

SCHLUSSFOLGERUNGEN

Anhand einiger Beispiele hat dieser Artikel gezeigt, dass ökologische Konflikte auch eine diskursive, mitunter epistemische oder, wie Descola es nennen würde, ontologische Dimension haben. Der im Westen entstandene Naturbegriff, der den Umgang mit Natur strukturiert, beruht auf einem ontologischen Konzept, das grundlegende Unterschiede zu jenem von indigenen Gemeinschaften am Beispiel der Dayak in Kalimantan, Indonesien, aufweist. Die uns vertraute Dichotomie zwischen Natur und menschlichem Geist ist dort erst durch den Import dieser Episteme bekannt; die indigene Welterfahrung dagegen lässt sich mit Descola als Animismus charakterisieren, der den Entitäten der Umwelt eine ähnliche Interiorität wie den Menschen zuspricht.

Seit dem Sturz Suhartos können in Indonesien vielfältige Revitalisierungsprozesse indigener Identität mit politischen Folgen (Davidson & Henly, 2007; Li, 2000; für West-Kalimantan, siehe beispielsweise Tanasaldy, 2012, S. 257–308), oft in Zusammenhang mit einer Revitalisierung des *adat* (Benda-Beckmann & Benda-Beckmann, 2011, S. 168) konstatiert werden, die auch indigene epistemische Ordnungen auf-

greifen, um die eigene Identität beispielsweise gegen umweltzerstörende Praktiken des Staates oder internationaler Unternehmen abzugrenzen. Neben AkteurInnen, die auf nationaler Ebene agieren (z.B. *Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara*, AMAN), haben sich lokale Indigenen-NROs etablieren können, wie beispielsweise das Institut Dayakologi, das seine Aktivitäten auf West-Kalimantan beschränkt. Wie am Beispiel der Äußerungen des Direktors dieses Instituts, John Bamba, gezeigt wurde, nehmen diese Stimmen eine ambivalente Rolle ein: Um sich in die hegemonialen Diskurse einzuschreiben, müssen sie sich in Sprechakten artikulieren, die der hegemonialen symbolischen Ordnung, das heißt vor allem dem Naturalismus Descolas, zugeordnet werden können. Gleichzeitig wurde gezeigt, dass eine sorgfältige Lektüre andere, den Äußerungen zugrunde liegende Ontologien freilegen kann, die die uns vertraute Dichotomie zwischen interioritätenloser Natur und menschlichem Geist (als einzige Interiorität) nicht kennen. Das indigene Identitätsverständnis, das sich für seine Konstitution unter anderem auf diese epistemische Differenz beruft, kann in der Folge für politische Strategien genutzt werden, beispielsweise in ökologischen Konflikten um die Expansion von Palmölplantagen.

Diese alternativen epistemischen Ordnungen spielen jedoch für ökonomisch ausgerichtete Ansätze der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit, die Natur als Ressourcen konzipieren muss, keine Rolle – daher wird mitunter, wie hier anhand zweier Beispiele gezeigt wurde, nur der instrumentelle Aspekt des lokalen Wissens betont. Wie an Beispielen aus der EZA gezeigt wurde, findet hier ein Übersetzungsprozess statt, der lokales Wissen nur als Phänomen betrachtet, das sogleich von westlichen ExpertInnen in die ihnen vertrauten Dichotomien und epistemischen Ordnungen gebracht wird.

Die uns mittlerweile vertrauten Konzepte von Nachhaltigkeit, Ressourcenmanagement oder lokalem Wissen sollten dementsprechend immer wieder auf ihre Prämissen hin untersucht werden. Letztlich würde ein angemessener Umgang mit Indigenen bedeuten, die eigenen Konzepte zu partikularisieren, sich also bewusst zu machen, dass die Art und Weise, wie wir über Natur sprechen und denken, eine historisch gewordene ist. In der Kontroverse um ökologische Konflikte wie jene um Palmöl müssen diese epistemischen Differenzen stärker betrachtet werden, da sie zwar nicht direkt sichtbar sind, aber als Basis einer westlichen epistemischen Hegemonie eng mit der Transformation der Landschaft verbunden ist: Jedem Eingriff liegt eine spezifische Weltauffassung zugrunde, und jeder Eingriff hat andererseits Auswirkungen auf die Weltwahrnehmung der AkteurInnen. Entfremdung, Anpassung und Revitalisierung alternativer Ontologie können dann mögliche, politisch und gesellschaftlich relevante Konsequenzen sein. Im Falle der Dayak in Kalimantan kann die Revitalisierung als Reaktion auf Entfremdungserfahrungen gedeutet werden, die letztlich vor allem eine politische Reaktion auf die ökonomische Marginalisierung darstellt.



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DANKSAGUNG

Dieses Forschungsvorhaben wird von der Universität Bonn und dem Deutschen Akademischen Austauschdienst (DAAD) gefördert.

Mobilization Potential and Democratization Processes of the Coalition for Clean and Fair Elections (Bersih) in Malaysia: An Interview With Hishamuddin Rais

Ying Hooi Khoo

► Khoo, Y. H. (2014). Mobilization potential and democratization processes of the Coalition for Clean and Fair Elections (Bersih) in Malaysia: An interview with Hishamuddin Rais. *ASEAS – Austrian Journal of South-East Asian Studies*, 7(1), 111-120.

In recent years, protests and popular mobilization have become pronounced elements in Malaysian politics. *Bersih* (clean) demonstrations are notably the most outstanding protest events in Malaysian history. Bersih is a group of 89 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) pushing for a thorough reform of the electoral process in Malaysia through rallies and demonstrations. Five opposition parties initiated the idea of Bersih in 2005 and included several NGOs in the 'project' later on. After the first Bersih street protests in November 2007 (Bersih 1.0), the political parties and the NGOs reached the 'compromise pact' that led to the formation of Bersih 2.0 in 2010 as a non-partisan movement free from any political interference. This interview explores the linkages to the broader democratization process in Malaysia from the perspective of Hishamuddin Rais (Isham), a prominent grassroots activist. Isham spent 20 years in political exile after the Baling student protest of 1974. He became active again in 1998 after the ouster of then Deputy Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, the current leader of the opposition coalition. Isham was a member of the Bersih Steering Committee for two years until he stepped down in 2012.

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In den letzten Jahren sind Proteste und öffentliche Mobilisierung zu ausgeprägten Elementen malaysischer Politik geworden. *Bersih* (saubere) Demonstrationen gehören zu den herausragenden Protestereignissen in der malaysischen Geschichte. Bersih ist eine Gruppe von 89 Nichtregierungsorganisationen (NROs), die durch Kundgebungen und Demonstrationen für eine umfassende Reform des Wahlprozesses in Malaysia kämpfen. Fünf Oppositionsparteien initiierten 2005 die Idee von Bersih und integrierten später einige NROs in das „Projekt“. Nach den ersten Bersih-Demonstrationen im November 2007 (Bersih 1.0) einigten sich die politischen Parteien und die NROs auf ein „Kompromissabkommen“, das 2010 zur Gründung von Bersih 2.0 als eine unabhängige Bewegung führte, die frei von politischer Beeinflussung ist. Dieses Interview untersucht die Verbindungen zum breiteren Demokratisierungsprozess in Malaysia aus der Perspektive des bekannten Aktivisten Hishamuddin Rais. Isham verbrachte nach dem großen Baling-Studentenprotest im Jahr 1974 20 Jahre im politischen Exil und ist erst seit dem Sturz im Jahr 1998 des damaligen Vize-Premierministers Anwar Ibrahim, der die aktuelle Oppositionskoalition anführt, wieder politisch aktiv. Bis 2012 war Isham zwei Jahre lang Mitglied des Bersih-Vorstandes.

YING HOOI KHOO: Thank you for agreeing to my interview,¹ Isham. Could you tell me how you got involved in the Bersih movement?

HISHAMUDDIN RAIS: At first, the Bersih Steering Committee asked me to help them with some posters, concepts, and the re-launching of the movement. I was not in the *Jawatankuasa Pemandu* (Steering Committee) at that time, merely a ‘contractor’. That was exactly what I did. That was at the very beginning during the re-launching from Bersih 1.0 to Bersih 2.0, where Dr. Dzul² and other opposition politicians officially passed the responsibility of Bersih 1.0 to Ambiga.³ I was there that night at the civic hall and I did stand-up comedy. Every now and then they called me when there was something that I could lend my support to. Finally, the *Jawatankuasa Pemandu* decided to rope me in. So from a ‘contractor’ I became the ‘owner’ of the Bersih 2.0.

KHOO: Why did you step down in 2012?

ISHAM: I left Bersih’s *Jawatankuasa Pemandu* three weeks before *Himpunan Kebangkitan Rakyat KL112*.⁴ I left because I did not want it to be seen as a ‘clash’ as I was organizing the Bersih protest at the same time as I was also organizing KL112 at Stadium Merdeka.

KHOO: What is your take on Bersih having been initially started as a politically motivated movement by oppositional political parties but later being changed into a non-partisan movement? How would you compare them?

ISHAM: Bersih has gone beyond the limitations of an NGO and become a mass movement. If Bersih were just an organization that sat in a room issuing press statements, Bersih would not be the Bersih of today. I think that Bersih became popular because Bersih opposition challenged (*melawan*) the state and Bersih moved to the streets. The street protests made Bersih a mass movement.

KHOO: What triggered the emergence of the Bersih movement?

ISHAM: The elections of 1999.⁵ There has always been talk about the elections being unfair. Personally, I have been writing about the ridiculousness of the election sys-

1 This interview was conducted as part of a dissertation on social movements and democratization in Malaysia at Bangsar, Kuala Lumpur, on 30 July 2013. .

2 Dr. Dzulkefly Ahmad was the former Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party (PAS) Member of Parliament for the Kuala Selangor constituency. He is now the Director of the PAS Research Centre.

3 Datuk Ambiga Sreenevasan was the former co-chairperson of Bersih 2.0. Maria Chin Abdullah replaced her in November 2013.

4 This rally was the final show of force from the oppositional *Pakatan Rakyat* (People’s Alliance) before the 13th general elections in 2013. It was dubbed KL112 as the rally was held on 12 January in the city center of Kuala Lumpur.

5 Malaysia’s 10th general election was held on 29 November 1999. The ruling *Barisan Nasional* (National Front) won 148 out of 193 parliamentary seats.

tem since 1999. So that is why after 2004,⁶ politicians felt that there was more to be done. At the very beginning of the formation of Bersih, the demand was mainly to clean up the repeated criticisms over the tainted electoral rolls. But when Bersih 2.0 was launched, eight demands were finally drafted. So instead of just cleaning up the electoral rolls, it now has bigger demands. So I think, as I look at it, a political party is a stakeholder in free and fair elections. Bersih is also a stakeholder but, as a popular movement, cannot be elected. That is the difference: Politicians are stakeholders and want to be elected to parliament. But Bersih is the rank and file, its supporters are stakeholders in general but they do not stand for parliament. So people in general trust Bersih more because it does not wear the politician's hat (*tidak memakai topi politician*).

KHOO: So do you think that the political system was more open in 2004 during former Prime Minister Tun Abdullah Badawi's⁷ period? Did you see his premiership as an opportunity?

ISHAM: Yes, there are many factors that come into play. The Abdullah leadership is one of the important factors and also, at the time, the changing of two different types of leadership in the post-Mahathir period. So the post-Mahathir atmosphere was slightly more relaxed. Abdullah Badawi, either by design or by his personality, was not aggressive. This transition period gave breathing space not only to Bersih, but to a lot of NGOs. So from 2004 to 2008, before the 12th general election, there was a kind of 'perestroika'. I have been describing Abdullah Badawi as the 'Gorbachev' of Malaysia. For example, Abdullah Badawi set up the Police Commission.⁸ This created hope and an atmosphere of democratization. People had high hopes for Abdullah Badawi, but he failed to deliver. That performance was reflected in 2008.⁹

KHOO: How would you describe Bersih's relationship and engagement with the Election Commission (EC) at the time?

ISHAM: I think there was no relationship. The EC was disrespectful towards the movement and the EC never treated Bersih seriously. As it is, you can see that none of the eight demands were taken seriously. As a matter of fact, not only the EC, but also the government does not accept the eight demands except for indelible ink (*dakwat kekal*).¹⁰ There have been so many excuses by the EC like their lack of staff (*tak cukup*

6 The 11th Malaysian general election was held on 21 March 2004. Barisan Nasional won 198 parliamentary seats versus the combined opposition parties' 20 seats, with one independent.

7 Abdullah Badawi's premiership lasted from 2003 to 2009.

8 Tun Abdullah Badawi established the Royal Commission to Enhance the Operation and Management of the Royal Malaysia Police in 2005. This Royal Commission made 125 recommendations in its 2005 report, which included setting up the Independent Police Complaints and Misconduct Commission (IP-CMC) that was rejected by the police numerous times.

9 The 12th general election was held on 8 March 2008 and is popularly known as the 'political tsunami', in which the Barisan Nasional only won 140 out of 222 parliamentary seats.

10 Many citizens complained that the indelible ink used during the elections could be washed off easily, and indeed, the EC later admitted that the ink used in the 13th general elections on 5 May 2013 was actually food coloring.

kakitangan) or that they have not been able to clean up the electoral rolls and many other excuses. Basically, they are not sincere and not willing to commit themselves, so I personally feel that the EC acts as part of the mechanism to defend the Barisan Nasional, the ruling party.

KHOO: Touching on the question of mobilization, what are, in your opinion, effective tactics to mobilize people in Malaysia?

ISHAM: First, the use of technology. That means using Facebook, blogs, and social media. That is clear. Second, we hold speeches (*ceramah*). I went all over the country from small meetings to large meetings to campaign this way. For two whole months before the Bersih 2.0 rally on 9 July 2011, almost every night there were programs. We went to big towns such as Johor Bahru, Batu Pahat, and Seremban. Then we went to smaller ones, like Felde.¹¹ Third is what we call 'publicity by accident'. It means that whenever our movement is attacked in the media, it gives us free publicity, for example, the 'assault' by *Utusan Malaysia* through inaccurate reporting.¹² In fact, this encourages people to come forward. So there are three tactics, social media, *ceramah*, and 'publicity by accident'.

KHOO: When you refer to ceramah, is it just Bersih itself or do you ride on the influence of politicians?

ISHAM: It depends. Sometimes the functions are just for Bersih, like Bersih Johor Bahru and Bersih Malacca. But sometimes we share (*tumpang*) the political party platform, although I personally always represented Bersih. We also campaign together with NGOs, usually with the *Solidariti Anak Muda Malaysia* (SAMM).¹³ That is specifically for mobilization. But at the same time, we also work closely with political parties, as this is very important. For example, the state of Selangor¹⁴ supports us with banners and buses. Our support mostly comes from the Pakatan Rakyat states. But at the same time, we also reached the understanding that the leadership of the political parties will make statements in support of the Bersih program. So Nik Aziz¹⁵ will make a statement, Anwar¹⁶ will make a statement, Lim Kit Siang¹⁷ will make a

11 Felde stands for Federal Land Development Authority; it is a land settlement agency to carry out projects for the development and settlement of land.

12 *Utusan Malaysia* is a Malay language newspaper in Malaysia. Its credibility has constantly been under criticism due to its bias towards Barisan Nasional in its reporting.

13 SAMM is an NGO, although some of the leaders are from political parties. It is intended to train and develop young Malaysians to build a better country. SAMM is the main organizer of the Occupy Padang Merbok Movement. This movement demanded the resignation of the EC chairman and his committee over the 13th general election results. The occupiers camped at Padang Merbok, near the parliament.

14 The opposition coalition Pakatan Rakyat won the state of Selangor from the ruling coalition Barisan Nasional during the 12th general elections in 2008.

15 Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat is the spiritual leader of the PAS.

16 Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim is the current leader of opposition and de facto leader of *Parti Keadilan Rakyat* (PKR).

17 Lim Kit Siang is a prominent leader of the *Democratic Action Party* (DAP).

statement. These are all concerted efforts. We also work with big NGOs on mobilization, for example, with *Himpunan Hijau*¹⁸ and the *National Felda Settlers' Children Association* (ANAK). These are big organizations that have mass support. If we go for the *ceramah*, we also invite them to come and to show support.

KHOO: Often, NGOs are very careful regarding relationships with politicians or even shy away. What is your take on this?

ISHAM: The thing is that, eventually, Bersih will decide. But let's be honest, in terms of organization and structure, only the political parties have the structure. In the small villages, they are the ones with structures. We have to work with them. So yes, there are some who have reservations, but we are only talking about the program of Bersih.

KHOO: You mentioned earlier, in the context of protest tactics, that the Bersih movement is most often associated with rallies. Do you think protests can actually cause political change?

ISHAM: Yes. When I planned Bersih 3.0 on 28 April 2012, it was with the understanding that elections would be held soon. Finally, the elections were not held. That is why we planned another demonstration, the *Himpunan Kebangkitan Rakyat KL112* in January 2013. Again, the elections were not held. But why do we plan this? I believe a mass protest will translate anger into votes; this is the tactic. Now they want to do a Bersih 4.0! I personally would not do it now because the next elections are four or five years away. So there will be loss of energy. You have to have the protests closer to the elections, so that the protests will translate into votes.

KHOO: Do you see the result of the 13th general elections on 5 May 2013 as a result of the protests?

ISHAM: You must understand that my analysis goes back to 2008. In 2007 and 2008, there were many protests, which culminated in the 2008 general election results. Prior to the election in 2013, we had Bersih 2.0, Bersih 3.0, the KL112, and also *Himpunan Hijau*. Three protests from *Himpunan Hijau*, one in Kuantan, one in Pengerang, and one in Raub. So from 2011 to 2013, there have constantly been protests. The election took place in May 2013; looking at the results, the protests have obviously been translated into votes.

KHOO: Bersih has used social media to reach the people. Do you think the tactic of going on the ground was effective? For example in the rural areas, were people aware of this movement?

ISHAM: Yes. You see, in rural areas, we distributed flyers, and in urban areas, we had flash mobs – so there are different ways and means. But in rural areas actually, in the

18 *Himpunan Hijau* is a Malaysian environmentalist movement protesting a proposed rare-earth processing plant in Kuantan, Pahang. The project is to be set up by the Australian company Lynas.

kampung (village), the political parties are very important because they are the only ones that have the links with these entities. So we have to work with them based on a common understanding of free and fair elections.

KHOO: Do you think that flash mobs are effective?

ISHAM: Flash mobs are effective if the protestors get arrested.

KHOO: What is the relationship of Bersih with the ruling coalition, Barisan Nasional?

ISHAM: Since Bersih stands for clean and fair elections in general, we always invite both sides, Pakatan Rakyat and Barisan Nasional. But so far, Barisan Nasional has not responded. They usually do not turn up – there was only one occasion, a debate on electoral reforms¹⁹ between Khairy²⁰ and Ambiga, organized by the *Sinar Harian*.²¹

KHOO: Considering that the Bersih movement has played an important role in the political discourse of the country as well as for democratic developments, how has the Bersih movement influenced the political process in Malaysia?

ISHAM: There are two things. Bersih 2.0 is very important because it was assaulted. There was a crisis in Kuala Lumpur. Certain places were barred. I personally was not allowed to enter Kuala Lumpur.²² And then, there was this *silat* (self-defense) group,²³ the counter-demonstrators. But people still turned up on the street. So the significance of Bersih 2.0 is that people crossed the boundaries of fear. In Malaysia, Bersih 2.0 is the demarcation line. People no longer fear street protests. Street protests are now part of the political discourse. After Bersih 2.0, they became part and parcel of the political process in Malaysia. The same thing also happened with Bersih 3.0. KL112 is an example of how half a million can demonstrate peacefully. So with Bersih 2.0 we crossed fear, and with Bersih 3.0 we proved that we are not scared. With KL112 we proved that we could come to the street peacefully. So that is the gain of the battle.

KHOO: In your view, what are the strengths of the Bersih movement?

ISHAM: I think the strength of the Bersih movement is that people understood that they were cheated. Suddenly, an organization comes out and tells them, okay, let's come together, we don't want to get cheated anymore. So that is why Bersih was

19 The debate entitled "Electoral Reform: Is Enough Being Done?" was held in The Club at Bukit Utama on 25 April 2012. The debates are available on YouTube at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IeAKJeN5wF8>.

20 Since 2008, Khairy Jamaluddin has been a Member of Parliament for the Rembau constituency. He is also the chairman of *Barisan Nasional Youth*.

21 Launched in 2006, *Sinar Harian* is a Malay-language daily newspaper and famously known for its relatively balanced reporting.

22 The police obtained a restriction order from the magistrate's court under Section 98 of the Criminal Procedure Code to bar 91 individuals from entering Kuala Lumpur on 9 July 2011.

23 This refers to the Malaysian *Silat Lincah* Organization (PSSLM) which reportedly threatened to 'wage war' against Bersih activists.

popular. Since the 1960s elections, people have known that they were cheated. So now, suddenly an organization said okay, this has turned into a common thing, so now people can come together and show solidarity.

KHOO: Do you think that the leadership is a key factor?

ISHAM: Yes, leadership is a factor. Because Bersih is multi-ethnic, it looks very competent. Ambiga is a lawyer and Pak Samad²⁴ is an icon. Together with other activists, Bersih is kind of a respectable organization, not the 'half past six type'.

KHOO: How about weaknesses?

ISHAM: The weakness is that it is big. It is bulky because it is a coalition. So it is difficult to have a unified opinion, to reach consensus. Let me tell you, for the decision to have the Bersih 2.0 protest, it took four meetings – four enlarged meetings. And there were a lot of arguments. That is the weakness; because everybody has an opinion. Being bulky, however, is also a strength when we look at the macro-level. But when it comes to the details, we have a lot of problems. I mean the strategies, whether we just want to wear yellow or whether we want to paint our house yellow, and all these ideas. It is because not all NGOs are for street protests. Some prefer press conferences and some argue for sending memorandums.

KHOO: So what do you think about this Bersih Tribunal?²⁵

ISHAM: I think it is a very good idea, but it is what I called the last shot. It is just part of what needed to be done. It is the concluding part because the demands during the protests were ignored. I just translated their documents and I personally think that the government will probably ignore it. Whatever the outcomes of the tribunal, you must understand, with the exception of online media, the media would probably not bother to touch such issues. But anywhere else around the world, if they have a tribunal like that, there would probably be debates on television. But no, it does not happen here. It will probably be only selected media that will produce such news.

KHOO: What are the prospects of the Bersih movement in Malaysia?

ISHAM: Well, there are seven more demands that have not been met. Probably we should also add the issues about the gerrymandering and the demarcation because these are the main flaws of our electoral system. The struggle (*perjuangan*) of Bersih should continue and I hope the new leadership will continue what the old leadership started.

24 Datuk A. Samad Said is former co-chairperson of Bersih 2.0 and he is a national laureate.

25 The Bersih People's Tribunal is a tribunal mooted as a response to the public outcry of electoral fraud and irregularities in Malaysia's 13th general election. It took place from 18–22 September 2013. Six renowned individuals – three from overseas and three from Malaysia – are members of the tribunal. The main aim of the tribunal was to investigate irregularities during the 2013 polls.

KHOO: The eight demands introduced by Bersih 2.0 also included democratic elements, e.g., to stop dirty politics. So how is Bersih 2.0 going to implement it, since some of these demands are very subjective?

ISHAM: Exactly. Yes, you are right. There are general concepts such as stopping dirty politics. They are not specific like indelible ink or extending the campaign period (*panjangkan waktu berkempen*). That is the generic; so I think the most important thing is to clean the electoral rolls, extend the campaign period, use indelible ink, and have media freedom. These are four original demands, implementable with the exception of *hentikan rasuah* (stop the corruption). So I think it is best to have a combination of the old demands and the new demands.

KHOO: How do you evaluate the relationship between the social movements, in this case the Bersih movement, with the democratization in Malaysia? Do you think the Bersih movement has managed to open up democratic space?

ISHAM: Yes, I think Bersih plays an important role in creating awareness, particularly among the younger generation. That was proven on 8 May 2013 at Kelana Jaya stadium where young people showed their anger because they felt cheated in the election of 5 May. They came out and protested and you could see the culmination of protest in many places from Ipoh over Kuala Lumpur to Penang. Thousands of people came to the grand finale at Padang Merbok. That shows that the demands for free and fair elections are particularly important among the younger generation. And if you had been there at the night of the Kelana Jaya, you would have noticed that some of them are not even of voting age. So I think if Bersih 4.0 is to come, it would probably be bigger than Bersih 2.0 and Bersih 3.0.

KHOO: My final question: Are you optimistic about the future of the Bersih movement?

ISHAM: Yes, I am. But the Bersih leadership must be clear about tactics and strategies. If the leadership is not clear, then it will fail. If the new leadership of Bersih is clear of what it aims for and how it is going to do it, then it will do all right.

KHOO: Thank you for your time, Isham.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to thank Hishamuddin Rais who willingly shared information and insights for this interview and the University of Malaya for a dissertation scholarship.

Intimidation Versus Inclusion: New Strategies in Indonesian Election Campaigning

Vera Altmeyer

► Altmeyer, V. (2014). Intimidation versus inclusion: New strategies in Indonesian election campaigning. *ASEAS – Austrian Journal of South-East Asian Studies*, 7(1), 121-132.

INTRODUCTION

This photo essay shows pictures from the 2012 gubernatorial campaigns in Jakarta, Indonesia.¹ It covers the two main pairs of candidates in the field: then-incumbent Governor Fauzi Bowo (Foke) and his running mate Nachrowi Ramli (Nara) versus challenger Joko Widodo (Jokowi) and his running mate Basuki Tjahaja Purnama. The photos give an impression of the great contrasts between the candidates and their respective campaigning styles.

Fauzi Bowo and Nachrowi Ramli relied primarily on typical strongman tactics including money politics, voter intimidation, ethnic and religious discrimination, and the mobilization of various allied groups from their patronage network, but also staged media events and expensive advertising. The team carried out two main kinds of public campaign events: The first consisted of staged media events mostly held at their media center for journalists only; the second type took place outdoors and usually involved VIP pavilions, a stage, and microphones to bridge the distance between speakers and voters. A lineup including local leaders, strongmen, and party allies delivered long-winded speeches of support and even the occasional threat of consequences for voters, should the election result be unfavorable. In addition, there were also closed-door events for selected audiences and widespread 'black campaigning' (discriminatory, illegal, or otherwise morally dubious strategies such as defamation, falsehoods, and personal attacks). Despite both teams having been accused of black campaigning, the attacks by the Foke-Nara campaign were perceived as more obvious, widespread, and often particularly nasty. It was a major part of their campaign strategy, particularly in the second, more aggressive election round. Pamphlets attacking the moderate Muslim and Javanese Jokowi or the Christian and Chinese-Indonesian Basuki were frequently distributed. Hate sermons against both candidates were frequently heard in conservative mosques, and social media such as Twitter were also utilized for the smear campaigns. This black campaigning was aimed at polarizing between a predominantly Muslim electorate and the non-Muslim minorities of Jakarta as well as between the local ethnic group Betawi and other ethnic groups, in particular Chinese-Indonesians.

¹ An extended version of this photo essay can be viewed at <http://infocus.asiaportal.info/2013/06/07/how-to-win-elections-in-indonesia-2/>

While Indonesian election campaigns are typically complex and may involve a wide range of other strategies as well, the abovementioned should be recognized rather as standard features than exceptions – especially when a powerful and rich incumbent is seeking reelection. A typical example of such an incumbent, Fauzi Bowo was expected to win an easy first-round victory. Yet, against all expectations, the radically different campaign strategy of challenger Joko Widodo resulted in a surprising lead in the first round and an even more pronounced victory in the second (first round: Jokowi-Basuki 43 percent versus Fauzi-Nara 34 percent, second round: JB 54 percent versus FN 46 percent).

Jokowi and Basuki combined strategic face-to-face campaigning with a marketing technique aimed at capturing media attention. They campaigned on a good governance agenda aspiring to provide services for the population, opposing ethnic and religious discrimination, and promoting the inclusion of the electorate in politics. Most of their events were held in Jakarta slums. While their arrival was often anticipated with a mixture of curiosity and skepticism, they usually managed to quickly create an atmosphere of excitement and even euphoria. They successfully portrayed themselves as down-to-earth candidates and easily struck up conversations with local residents, inquiring about their problems, listening patiently, and explaining their political program.

The fact that Fauzi-Nara still won 46 percent in the second round suggests that traditional strongman tactics continue to work well. However, Jokowi's success with his campaign style has already turned out to be more than a one-time fluke. It has enabled his rise from small-town mayor to Governor of Jakarta to top presidential candidate this year. The "phenomenon Jokowi" – as it is called in Indonesia – has resulted in the imitation of parts of his campaign style all across Indonesia. The Indonesian term *merakyat* (to mingle with the common people) has become almost synonymous with him. Joko Widodo has topped nationwide polls for the upcoming presidential election on 9 July 2014 and has been officially nominated by former president and *Partai Demokrasi Indonesia – Perjuangan* (Indonesian Democratic Party – Struggle) leader Megawati Sukarnoputri.

His chances of winning are considered to be very high: With his approach of including rather than intimidating the electorate, Joko Widodo hits the nerve of a population tired of being treated as the passive subjects of the state – something which has changed little in the 15 years since Indonesian democratization.

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Jokowi explains his program, including a health card and cheaper education. Instead of campaign shirts with party colors, he is wearing an informal checkered shirt, meant to represent the many different identity groups in Jakarta.



A few close campaign team members and party allies remain quietly at a distance. Only inconspicuous plain-clothes bodyguards stay close-by. There are no speeches by local leaders or party members.



Jokowi and Basuki occasionally stop to inquire about local problems. Here, a resident explains to Jokowi the flooding and sewage problems along the local canal.



Keeping physical and social distance from the population: Together with several VIPs, Nara (in the blue shirt on the right) sits in the back of the stage while waiting for his turn to speak. He is hardly visible to the audience, all dressed up in new campaign shirts.



Nara acknowledges the allies present and makes a few jokes, which occasionally lighten the otherwise tense mood. For the rest of his speech, the audience seems to be disinterested, skeptic, and uneasy.



Several men are wearing caps with the writing FBR (*Forum Betawi Rempug* or *Betawi Brotherhood Forum*) – a Jakarta organization with close ties to Fauzi-Nara, which is a powerful local actor that may be described as ethnic gang, local mafia, strongmen, and employer on the informal market. FBR presence at this event sends a clear and intimidating message.



This banner says, “The children of the police will vote for Foke-Nara”. Child (*anak*) here has a double meaning: It can refer to members of the police as well as to the client in a patron-client relationship. This is more than a mere statement of support – it can be read as a ‘friendly reminder’ for the local population to be on the ‘right’ side if they want to avoid trouble.



In stark contrast, the Jokowi-Basuki campaign creates a personal and lively atmosphere. People are laughing and joking as they follow the candidates through their neighborhood or pose for journalists' cameras with the 'rock 'n' roll' campaign gesture.



As an important result of these face-to-face events, the population feels genuinely respected and sometimes even honored because the candidates take time for personal discussions, as the Christian Basuki does here in a conversation with a pious Muslim man.



BOTH PAGES: After Nara's speech, the press is called over to take the key picture: central figures from allied groups – all men in the prime of life, several wearing expensive watches, seal rings, and sunglasses concealing their eyes. They also wear white caps and shirts with the "Task Force Against Money Politics" logo. Instead of posing with the campaign sign of one index finger (for ballot no. 1), they show a typical strongman gesture with their fist raised right into the cameras, conveying a picture open to interpretation.



To dispel accusations in this respect, the Fauzi-Nara campaign holds the event “Action Task Force Against Money Politics”. Again, a VIP pavilion is set up in the back. Speakers give their support from a small podium at a large distance from the audience; only selected press is allowed to come a little closer.



At the main Fauzi-Nara campaign event, first election round: Rhoma Irama, a famous singer and controversial Muslim preacher, just finished a performance with his band (a few weeks later, he sparked an outcry of protest when he preached in a Jakarta mosque that Muslims should not accept a non-Muslim leader like Basuki). After his performance, the usual range of prominent speakers followed, including high-ranking party officials such as Anas Urbaningrum (at the time still chairman of the Democratic Party, he later had to step down because of corruption allegations), Edhie Baskoro Yudhoyono (son of the incumbent president), and Wiranto (military commander during Soeharto's dictatorship).



The Jokowi-Basuki team tried not to make Basuki's Christian beliefs a topic of debate, but rather to portray Jokowi and Basuki as candidates for all religions and ethnicities in Jakarta. Jokowi also toured through the Jakarta Muslim communities and ate and talked with local Muslim leaders to portray himself in the media as a pious but moderate Muslim.



On the last day of campaigning, supporters of both teams assemble in central Jakarta. Suddenly, the Jokowi-Basuki campaign song starts playing and about 3,500 people start dancing and pull off their jackets and shirts, revealing the iconic checkered campaign shirt. This marks the peak of their campaign and sends a final key message to voters: Campaigning and politics can be done in a creative and positive way, and to make this work you should get involved and participate voluntarily. By contrast, Fauzi-Nara supporters distributed anti-Chinese flyers directed against Basuki at the same time and place.



The Jokowi-Basuki team managed to counter the aggressive negative campaigning by Foke-Nara, who tried to mobilize anti-Chinese sentiments and conservative Muslim ideas discriminating against other groups. Finally, Jokowi-Basuki even garnered around 48 percent of the Muslim vote and the vast majority of votes from all ethnic communities except for the local Betawi minority.



Fauzi Bowo on one of the last nights of second round campaigning: He speaks in front of rich Chinese-Indonesians at a distance of about 50 meters even to the first row, alone, on a huge and empty stage. Despite his aggressive anti-Chinese and anti-Christian mobilization, the upper class of the Chinese community was expected to dismiss this black campaigning as mere election rhetoric and not perceive it as a real threat. Five days later, 93 percent of Jakarta's Chinese-Indonesians voted against Fauzi Bowo a second time.



Book Review: Wintle, C. (2013). Colonial Collecting and Display. Encounters With Material Culture From the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

New York, NY: Berghahn Books. ISBN: 978-0-85745-941-1 (hbk.) ISBN 978-0-85745-942-8 (ebk.). i–xix + 244 pages.

► Kóczán-Vörös, V. (2014). Book Review: Wintle, C. (2013). Colonial collecting and display. Encounters with material culture from the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. *ASEAS – Austrian Journal of South-East Asian Studies*, 7(1), 133-136.

Claire Wintle's first book *Colonial Collecting and Display* approaches (post-) colonial theory from a new perspective, based on a focus on material culture: It seeks to 'decolonize' the written colonial discourse and adds new contexts to postcolonial critique by examining museum objects instead of textual sources. These commodities and personal belongings once used by indigenous peoples are studied as material marks on the world left by people who are excluded from the written modes of representations such as colonial archives or published documents (p. 3). The volume investigates the biography of a set of objects such as dishes, clothes, jewelry as well as zoomorphic and anthropomorphic figures made by the indigenous peoples of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands in the era of British colonization between 1858 and 1949. It follows their way through personal collections to their final place in the Brighton Museum, now called the Royal Pavilion and Museums, Brighton & Hove (RPMBH).

As a senior lecturer in the History of Art and Design at the University of Brighton, the author's research focuses on museums, imperialism, and decolonization, with special attention to the material culture of India and its neighboring islands, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. After several field studies in the area and having taken on the curator role of the exhibition *Temple, Man and Tuson: Collecting the Andaman and Nicobar Islands* in the Brighton Museum, the author gained sufficient first-hand experience and sources for her research. Yet, Claire Wintle emphasizes that her book is not an ethnographic study of the culture and peoples of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, but is an object-centered – that is, not text-focused – research of the colonial project (p. 11). Along with an emerging group of scholars – amongst others museologists and anthropologists such as Nicholas Thomas, Chris Gosden, and Chantal Knowles – the author emphasizes the importance of material culture in exploring the cultural, social, and economic processes of empire formation. The author raises one major question: What do a certain set of objects and its changing meaning reveal about imperial histories? Throughout her analysis, Wintle seeks to answer this question by investigating the factors that played a role in the biography of the collection displayed in RPMBH.

Using the example of a zoomorphic figure called *hentakoi*, the circumstances of production, use, and collection of the objects in the Andaman and Nicobar

Islands are examined. The author emphasizes the two-way nature of trade, arguing that although the attacks of British colonizers and indigenous hostility made encounters and product exchange difficult, the conflict softened with time. Hence, cooperation between the two parties slowly developed, whereby the sale of Andamanese objects to the colonizers can be considered as a creative and positive response to the new historical situation. A strong point the book makes is that even though it does not deny the negative elements of colonialism, it succeeds in highlighting the balance of colonial encounters.

By questioning the existence of an “average collector” (p. 60), Wintle makes a key argument in Chapter 2, where three different sets of objects are examined, which later formed the whole collection of the Brighton Museum. By introducing the three collectors’ different personalities, their degrees of professional responsibility, the levels of access to indigenous life, their personal status and individual tastes, Wintle points out how all these aspects influence the circumstances of collecting as well as the later career of the objects. Wintle discusses the scientific collection of Edward Horace Man, Richard Carnac Temple’s collection for professional status, and the gendered approach in Katharine Sara Tuson’s indigenous artifacts to show how the objects acquired different layers of meaning from the very beginning of their biographies.

Moving farther along this line, the next station of the collected objects is Victorian and Edwardian Britain, as the personal possessions of the returned (ex)colonial elite or as their donations to the Brighton Museum. A thorough social and cultural analysis offers insights into the preformed conceptions with which the museum visitors might have approached the collection (Chapter 3). This reception was formed by three major factors: by the pictorial depictions of this Asian colony on the pages of the *Illustrated London News* (ILN), by the Colonial and Indian Exhibition in 1886 where the Nicobar and Andaman Islands were brought to the fore as a curiosity, and finally by Arthur Conan Doyle’s popular Sherlock Holmes novella *The Sign of Four* (1890). In the latter, the villain is a savage and vicious native from the Andaman Islands, who commits the central murder of the plot. Wintle analyzes in detail how the character of the native Tonga encapsulates the image of exoticism as well as the colonial fear prevailing in Victorian society. Nevertheless, the native character of the Doyle-novella may also be interpreted as the negative manifestation of a *general* colonial feeling, but not – as Wintle suggests – as a *concrete* antipathy towards the Andaman Islands. It seems that she does not consider the possibility that Doyle simply searched for ‘something exotic’ for his plot. Owing to the illustrations of ILN and the Colonial Exhibition, his attention turned to the Andaman Islands – but only to find a geographical place for his plot. Wintle’s lack of information in this regard may be the consequence of her overprotection of this territory’s cultural heritage, signs of which can be occasionally perceived throughout the whole book. Yet, irrespective of Doyle’s intentions and writing methods, Claire Wintle is undoubtedly correct in her judgment that due to the *Sign of Four*, Victorian society was faced with a negative image of the Andaman Islands, which influenced the reception of the Brighton Museum’s collection, too.

In Chapter 4, it is made clear that the author of *Colonial Collecting and Display* certainly cannot – and does not want to – deny her museological vein: She examines

various paradigms according to which the Brighton Museum approached, organized, and presented the collection to the audience. From the professional viewpoint of an insider, she gives a gripping overview of how evolutionary, geographical, later on aesthetic, and finally thematic approaches led to continuous reconsiderations and reorganizations of the exhibition.

The scope of the book is limited to the year 1949; however, the final chapter studies potential contemporary postcolonial approaches to the display and interpretation of the objects.

In sum, *Colonial Collecting and Display* offers a fascinating overview of how material culture can serve as a mediator between peoples, cultures, and historical periods, and how attributed functions and meanings change and form people's knowledge and ideas about imperial histories. Claire Wintle presents her analysis of the colonial discourse in a three-layered way: Through the life of concrete objects (e.g., the *hentakoi* mentioned above), she offers insights into the colonial relations between Great Britain and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and into the whole colonial project.

Colonial Collecting and Display is a must read for anyone interested in the peoples and material culture of India as well as the Nicobar and Andaman Islands. Due to the detailed object descriptions and the museological approach, the book is particularly interesting for ethnographers and museum experts. Owing to the illustrations and a clear and lucid writing style, it also constitutes a fascinating read for those who simply have an interest in learning about colonial encounters from a unique and original point of view.

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Book Review: Mietzner, M. (Ed.) (2013). The Political Resurgence of the Military in Southeast Asia: Conflict and Leadership.

Abingdon, UK: Routledge. Reprint edition. ISBN: 978-041-5460354. i–xiv + 177 pages.

► Chen, K. (2014). Book Review: Mietzner, M. (Ed.) (2013). The political resurgence of the military in Southeast Asia: Conflict and leadership. *ASEAS – Austrian Journal of South-East Asian Studies*, 7(1), 137-140.

Since the early twenty-first century, some Southeast Asian countries (e.g., Thailand and Timor-Leste) have witnessed the political resurgence of militaries, especially military involvement in political institutions, economy, security, and society. The most significant case might be the Thai military coup in 2006. More research in the field of military resurgence is called for to extend the debate on the civil-military relations. *The Political Resurgence of the Military in Southeast Asia* is a timely exploration of the impact of militaries on politics in different geographical contexts and exposes the tensions and interconnections in civil-military relations in Southeast Asian countries.

The contributors to this wide-ranging volume stem from an array of disciplines, including history, political science, security studies, and Southeast Asian studies. In their opinion, the multifaceted aspects of the militaries' political resurgence are ignored by structuralist approaches to a large extent, such as specific ideology (i.e., communism or democracy), regime types (i.e., monarchy, military junta, or one-party state), historical background (i.e., independence through armed struggle, negotiated transition into nationhood, or absence of colonial rule), and economic development.

The volume features eight chapters. Chapter 1 illustrates the literature of military resurgence in Southeast Asia and outlines the book's content. Based on case studies of seven Southeast Asian countries (i.e., Thailand, Myanmar, Vietnam, the Philippines, Timor-Leste, Indonesia, and Singapore), Chapters 2 to 8 reveal the causes of military resurgence – failed civilian governance and the problematic leadership of paramount leaders determine the civil-military relations. In the case of Thailand, the struggle for democracy finally caused a vicious circle, “which in turn is used by the military to justify its coercive and political role in restoring order” (p. 59).

At the same time, the militaries show less respect for the citizenry and turn to strengthen “corporate identity and coherence” (p. 54), that is, fractionalization. In the case of the Philippines, since the current institutions are unable to handle the security issues and political conflicts, the military withdraws “its loyalty from a popularly elected chief executive” (p. 101) and enjoys more autonomy and political status to a large extent. In contrast, the Singaporean military “lacks the socio-political significance” (p. 164) and there is no obvious change in Singapore's civil-military relations, given that the civilian government in Singapore has remained stable since the 1960s.

The contributors also point out that the military dominance has its own limits. For example, there is increasing tension between high-ranking ex-officers and the new generation of officers, the newly established units, as well as the military. In the case of Timor-Leste, the rise of specialized paramilitary police units has threatened the advantages of the military.

The most significant chapter of this volume might be Chapter 2 entitled “The Armed Force of Burma”. As Marcus Mietzner suggests, “with the exception of Burma, Southeast Asian civil-military relations after 2001 have been shaped by the successes and failures of civilian governments” (p. 18). In the case of Myanmar, in addition to the variables of “failed civilian governance” and “problematic leadership of paramount leaders” (p. 19), another essential variable should be taken into account, that is, the long-term existence of ethnic-based militias, which makes the civil-military relation in Myanmar the most complicated in Southeast Asia.

Historically, most ethnic-based militias in Myanmar have established their own autonomous regions, some of which enjoy full autonomy in internal administration, while others have a semi-autonomous status. This weakens the Myanmar central government’s authority to a large extent. At the same time, the conversational tactics of the paramount leaders have caused a vicious circle: The *Tatmadaw* (Myanmar military) uses force to occupy the areas under the ethnic-based militias’ control, but none of the major ethnic-based militias has ever been entirely defeated. It is not surprising that the armed conflicts have lasted so many years in Myanmar, and the successes and failures of civilian governments had little impact on the *Tatmadaw*. By contrast, the rise and fall of ethnic-based militias have had more direct impact on the resurgence of the *Tatmadaw*. Indeed, insecurity caused by the tensions between militaries and ethnic-based militias is also one of the main reasons for military resurgence in Southeast Asia.

In Chapter 2, the *Tatmadaw* is considered to control the natural resources and the national economy. In fact, the dominance of the *Tatmadaw* has been exaggerated to some extent. For instance, the *Tatmadaw* is unable to implement and enforce rules in parts of Myanmar, especially in the border areas controlled by the ethnic-based militias. As a result, the *Tatmadaw* has lost control of a large portion of natural resources, such as precious gems, timber, and minerals in Kachin and Shan states, where ethnic-based militias are very active. As a consequence, there are frequent low-intensity armed conflicts between the *Tatmadaw* and ethnic-based militias. Moreover, the *Tatmadaw* cannot mobilize manpower from the entire nation, because the ethnic-based militias compete against the military over manpower resources. As a result, both the *Tatmadaw* and ethnic-based militias are suspected of recruiting child soldiers. It would be valuable for the editor and contributors to this volume to continue research on military resurgence and civil-military relations in Southeast Asia. If possible, it might be better to consider ethnic-based militias as a variable in military resurgence, which might make their arguments more inclusive.

From a context-sensitive perspective, *The Political Resurgence of the Military in Southeast Asia* addresses the militaries’ political influences in Southeast Asian countries and explores the tensions between civil-military relations and military resurgence. In short, this edited volume of essays provides a solid foundation for further

research on civil-military relations in Southeast Asia. It may be particularly valuable for academics, policy makers, and students seeking alternative perspectives on military resurgence and civil-military relations in Southeast Asia. At the same time, this volume will surely raise awareness of the importance of studying military resurgence in Southeast Asia and stimulate future discussion in academia and policy-making circles.

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Call for Papers

ASEAS

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The Sovereignty of Food and Health

The upcoming issue 8(1) of the Austrian Journal of South-East Asian Studies (ASEAS) will focus on the nexus of food and health in South-East Asia. Throughout the last decades, agricultural transformations have turned the region from a food-insecure one into one characterized by high export sales in staple foods as well as investments in modern food systems. Despite the region's achievements in food security, it is increasingly confronted with new challenges regarding the quality and the social distribution of foods.

Urbanization, industrialization, and economic integration consolidate global food regimes, reinforcing rural-urban divides and social disparities in and among South-East Asian societies. Interlinked with the global food crises, these trends expose certain societal groups to malnutrition and related health concerns. Mobile livelihoods as well as the 'traveling' of products and concepts in the region interrelate with the formation of consumer trends and practices. Industrial production and food engineering raise health concerns while influencing risk perceptions. At the same time, the capability to access healthy, 'modern' as well as adequate food becomes as much a political and geographical issue as an attribute of lifestyle, social status, and identity.

Despite being a success story in terms of food security, the structural conditions of food production, distribution, and marketing as well as the lived experience of consumption raise critical questions about the actual sovereignty of producers and consumers over food and bodily health along the food chain. These address the repercussions of the regional food regime on individual and collective rights as well as practices to produce and access healthy foods, to make eating choices, voice political claims, and evoke gendered social identities with regard to the food-health nexus.

This issue invites scholars from various disciplines to engage with the complex relationship of food and health through the lens of sovereignty. We would like to en-

courage conceptual or empirically based contributions that tackle and, ideally, cut across the following thematic blocs. Intersectional and cross-disciplinary approaches are encouraged.

The political economy of food and health:

- Policies and trade regulations on (alternative) agriculture, nutrition, and health (e.g. patenting of medical plants, global certification mechanisms, safety standards) and related social movements
- Body politics in science, government policies, and media (e.g. dieting, health industries)
- Industrial food and health risks (e.g. use of antibiotics)
- Concepts, lifestyles, and social practices of health and eating:
- Food sovereignty, health citizenship, and health literacy
- Perceptions and discourses of food, health, and body (e.g. food anxieties)
- Health, food, and special diets as translocal identity and belief systems (e.g. practices of vegetarian and other diets)
- Eating cultures (e.g. global cuisine, convenient products, child feeding)

Guest Editors: JUDITH EHLERT & CHRISTIANE VOSSEMER

Deadline **1 SEPTEMBER 2014**

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