FOCUS VIOLENCE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

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Rampant forms of violence increasingly take place not only in troubled areas but also in centers and metropoles. Such violence is no longer simply confined to local concerns or historical ruptures, but emerges instead in relation to modalities of power. The movement of people and expanding networks of actors and capital enables the notion of violence to transgress boundaries set by institutions, geography, state, and power. In some conditions, rather than sealing off the emergence of violence, the transition to democracy has opened the door for engineered violent confrontations to manifest out of cleavages that have been tempered by previous authoritarian rule. ASEAS 12(2) addresses violence in selected cases and on different scales. The contributions discuss how violence is practiced, how it (re)produces structures, and how it may eventually transform into non-violence. Violence is not simply an outcome of tensions but is a mechanism that actors and organizations deploy to stabilize their struggles, which eventually makes peacebuilding or democratic projects volatile. The articles in this issue feature police violence in the Philippines; intimate partner violence against women in Vietnam; Islamist online/offline mobilization strategies in Indonesia; the role of traditional actors in reconciliation processes in Timor-Leste; and gender security in the context of conflict management in Thailand's Deep South.

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Durable Violence in Southeast Asia: Machinery and Scale

Ario Seto, Gunnar Stange, & Susanne Schröter

On 9 October 2013, the member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) signed the declaration, "On the Elimination of Violence against Women and Elimination of Violence against Children in ASEAN", which was followed by a Regional Plan of Action (RPA) issued in February 2016. The action's very first step is to "develop ASEAN Guidelines on non-violent approaches to the nurture, care, and development of children in all settings" (ASEAN, 2017, p. 20). The prevention program is crafted as a framework for ASEAN nations to support the implementation of one of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals which "promises to strive for a better world that is just, equitable and inclusive" (ASEAN, 2017, p. 20). Such norms have gained urgency as, despite their progress in the development of institutional democratic practices as a means to provide security, Southeast Asian nations are struggling to counter the cycle of violence. A year before the RPA's publication, for example, the Indonesia Ulama Council (*Majelis Ulama Indonesia*) expressed its concern that the Indonesian government has failed to ensure non-violent content even in its high-school education programs, citing an example of a textbook, "Religious Teaching and Personality", which justifies Muslims killing the "unbeliever" (Susanto, 2015). Another alarming example relates to gender-based violence (GBV) with "14 percent of all women between the ages of 15 and 49 reported being raped" (The Asia Foundation, 2017, p. 3) in Timor-Leste. True (2017) finds that GBV in Asia has become a persistent form of violence because of its entanglement with "the national or subnational context," whereby structural gender inequality is embedded in the "inequality of access to resources or to public space and voice, legal discrimination in civil and family status, and societal attitudes that condone violence against women" (p. 221).

This conflicting illustration marks a call to investigate the durability of rampant violence in Southeast Asia, where violence has become a mundane reality (Arendt, 1970) of everyday life. To view violence as a prolonged and intergenerational reality that goes beyond a single disruption or some narrow temporality provides another method to observe the cycle of violence and how it emerges as a common practice. The normalcy or banality of violence could lead to a "crisis of chronicity" (Vigh, 2008), which endorses asymmetrical social relationships, orders, and power, and denies every notion of democratic life (see also Arendt, 1970). Against this background, everyday violence hinders the realization of ASEAN's (2017), above-referenced goal to create a "just, equitable and inclusive" (p. 20) world. One of the weaknesses in explaining such chronicity is, as the expert on security in Southeast Asia, Sidney Jones, observes in the

context of Indonesia, that activists, academics, and politicians deliver "time frames [of observation which] are too short" (Stange, 2019, p. 270). Responding to the shreds of evidence of chronic violence in Southeast Asia, this issue aims to survey how violence becomes self-generating or autopoietic. To look at how such mundane violence could be addressed, we invited scholars who have been continuously studying the durability of violence in their area of regional expertise to contribute to this issue.

The six research articles and one interview article in this issue represent extensive discussions of lingering violence in Southeast Asia. Peter Kreuzer's (2019) study on the deadly use of violence by the police in the Philippines shows that although the act has taken the spotlight under President Duterte's war on drugs campaign, it is not a new phenomenon since criminal enforcement in the country has a long history of extrajudicial (deadly) use of violence by the police. Helle Rydstrom (2019) presents a study of chronic violence against women in Vietnam, which has endured for generations to the point that members of society have begun to consider such abuse "normal". Observing Islamic fundamentalist social media influencers in Indonesia, Ario Seto (2019) argues that violent behavior is not simply sparked by discontent but is fostered by online and offline sociability of othering and bigotry.

Lúcio Sousa's (2019) study on the emergence of *lia-na'in* (master of words) as peacemakers in Timor-Leste describes how the state has turned to tradition and spirituality to mitigate centuries of violence while sourcing legitimacy to incite security and stability. Amporn Marddent's (2019) work highlights how Muslim women in Thailand's Deep South have become peacemakers, while they nonetheless face the challenge of recognition, as, first, their Salafi belief has been stereotyped as being inherently violent, and, second, as women's voices are not considered to be representative in a patriarchal society. In the research workshop section, Gunnar Stange, Patrick Sakdapolrak, Kwanchit Sasiwongsaroj, and Matthias Kourek (2019) report an imbalance in academic research in the field of forced migration studies in Southeast Asia that could signify indifference towards how internally displaced populations are treated and further victimized in structural violence. The issue, furthermore, features an interview by Gunnar Stange (2019) with the Jakarta based political analyst, Sidney Jones, on violence, religious extremism, and conflict dynamics in contemporary Indonesia. As a long-term observer of Indonesian politics, she warns of the dangers of "intolerant above-ground, non-clandestine organizations" (Stange, 2019, p. 270) for Indonesian democracy.

Although all the presented cases of violence are rooted in the region's heterogeneous colonial history, the contributors to this issue highlight how contemporary violence is augmented and amplified by post-independence socio-political dynamics. By doing so, the articles reveal that historically prolonged violence, or what we call the durability of rampant violence, is subdued by the dimensions of machinery and scale. The machinery could be "actors" (Kreuzer, 2019; Rydstrom, 2019; Seto, 2019; Sousa, 2019) or "the autopoietic of violence", which hinder peace or keep non-violent struggles from emerging (Marddent, 2019; Rydstrom, 2019; Sousa, 2019). The articles provide a common argument that violence becomes durable because the machinery is able to preserve it at different scales and in different arenas: across national and subnational geography (Kreuzer, 2019; Marddent, 2019; Seto 2019; Sousa, 2019), in private and public sphere (Marddent, 2019; Rydstrom, 2019; Seto, 2019), and in legal

and illegal practices (Kreuzer, 2019; Marddent, 2019). In articulating how its machinery and scale operate, this issue discusses violence in four constellations of practices and discourses: (1) when violent actors operate beyond the state's governmentality; (2) when violence is framed within an institutionalizing discourse; (3) when violence functions to delineate, or, on the contrary, strengthen, borders, and legitimizes respective claims; and (4) when violence hinders the establishment of non-violent discourses. Besides these four constellations, some articles in this issue also advise that the media has played a role in influencing both the scale of violence and how violence is observed. Before we discuss how the machinery and scale of violence operate corresponding with these constellations, we will look at the importance and the current need for deeper analysis of violence in Southeast Asia in the next section.

NORMALCY AND CHRONICITY OF VIOLENCE

Even democratic states with their established legal arms to steward order are not violence-proof. Della Porta's (1995) rigorous study of social movements in Italy and Germany in the 1960s shows that violence is part of a repertoire of political action and cannot be isolated to a certain ideology; actors socialized in non-violent environments can still fall into violence. Violence emerges in expressions that also advocate equal rights and peace, including left-wing movements. She contends that

> radical groups took advantage of the available resources in their environment to strengthen or reinforce their militancy, their decision to emphasize violence can be considered a rational choice. [...] But the choice of radicalization was also a contingent development, for it depended on the supply of resources available to each particular movement's organization: not surprisingly, the organizations that became most violent were those that lacked resources giving them access to the system (della Porta, 1995, p. 198).

She has also recently warned that "the availability (or lack) of material and symbolic resources affects the choice of radical repertoire" (della Porta, 2018, p. 464). Her work in connecting violence as radical acts to resource tapping and repertoire is helpful in invigorating observations of how violence becomes a durable problem and takes place in precipitating events and endures from time to time, including in various democratic realities.

The six articles in this issue correspondingly deliver similar observations about how the problem of resources and repertoires provides the texture of the violence currently enduring in Southeast Asia. However, we would like to extend the thesis. We propose that in some conditions, rather than sealing off the emergence of violence, the opening to democracy and the emerging economic stability have offered new arenas of resource tapping and have allowed engineered violent confrontations to manifest out of cleavages that were tempered by previous authoritarian rule (e.g., Stange & Patock, 2010). In this context, resources play a role not because of their scarcity, but because of their availability. The growth of ethnocentric paramilitary groups and radical Islamists in Southeast Asia (Hadiz, 2016; Wilson, 2010) are two fitting examples of such violence, particularly when violence has become a common

repertoire of action, which both the state and non-state actors engage to secure their political power as a means to accrue available resources. In this setting, evolving violence cannot be confined simply by empowering the state's agency of policing to maintain order, since, in some cases, the state and state actors are part of the competing groups seeking to secure the resource (e.g., Böhmelt, Bove, & Gleditsch, 2019; UNHCR, 2018).

The normalcy and chronicity of violence are sustained by the emerging ideology of development, through which the state regularly imposes indisputable security to maintain order to create political stability. Located between China and India, Southeast Asia is home to the world's fastest-growing economies, such as Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos, the Philippines, and Indonesia (OECD, 2019). A consequence of such economic development has been the introduction of cultural policies that are imagined to ensure national security and productivity, such as Vietnam's *Đổi Mới* (renovation) policy, Indonesia's *Pembangunan* (development) credo, and Thailand's National Culture Act. In these policies, economic development has become a prominent orientation, if not an ideology, for state actors to incite expeditious stability rather than creating a laborious public sphere. The cultural program therefore often asserts nationalist sentiments and unity as the moral resources of stability and the nation's betterment. This is where violence as a repertoire comes into play, as the state enacts strong policing to maintain order. In nonaggressive circumstances, power organizes people to internalize certain norms, such as how to be submissive to the government in the name of national unity, which is also enforced by the law and institutions of justice. Any dissatisfaction, then, is suppressed within normalcy or, as Foucault (1978) describes it, "a normalizing society is the historical outcome of a technology of power centered on life" (p. 144).

Such developments provide a new opportunity to investigate the 'old' violence beyond its colonial history (e.g., van Klinken, 2007; Scheper-Hughes & Bourgois, 2004). We believe that most cases of violence discussed in the articles of this issue render a postcolonial problem. However, we would like to add complexity by arguing that these nation-states have the agency to come to terms with their colonial pasts, practices, and repertoires of violence. Take the Philippines as an example: Boyce (1993, p. 131) examines that development strategies crafted during the Marcos era were unsustainable and created larger social gaps, such as landlordism as a product of problematic land rights, which are prone to armed violence conducted by local entrepreneurs. In Indonesia, Suharto's developmentalist regime imposed a military approach to suppress discontent in Aceh, Papua, and East Timor (McGibbon, 2004).

Investigating the state's relation and response to durable violence, then, involves a deeper view of how these policies influence the local historical contexts and current political contestation or discontent. Van Klinken (2007) argues that such examinations not only require continuous observation of political dynamics, but also cultural changes. Assessing the communal violence in the Moluccas in the early 2000s, he exemplifies that violence and conflicts in the Global South appear to be different than their counterparts in the Global North where the presence of the state and policing mechanism is more pronounced. Van Klinken (2007, pp. 9-10) warns that violence is not simply ideologically driven, but that contesting actors are entangled in "a struggle for power in a political system structured along lines of personal relationships rather

than formal rules" (p. 136). They are entangled in a historical patron-client loyalty rather than emancipatory expression, where they act opportunistically, rely on rumors rather than verified news, and have – to some degree – a relationship with state institutions. In such settings, violence becomes a lateral common reality for fostering state-building, as violence remains a powerful repertoire, both as the language of contestation and as that of the traditional relationships that configure social relations between actors and interest groups in Southeast Asian countries. Accordingly, violence transcends the emergence of the modern state. These actors also understand the notion of crisis differently than those in Western states. As van Klinken (2007) describes, "even in the midst of such security crises, many people were still conducting politics as usual, albeit in crisis mode and of a kind considered patently abnormal in the West" (p. 10).

Veena Das (2004) shares a similar observation in her study on the Indian state and extraordinary events, such as periods of communal violence. She finds that although violence as an event has ceased, the language of violence transcends the episode into the quotidian everyday life, while on the other hand, everyday life encounters provide the texture of violence. Das (2004), therefore, calls attention to the normalcy of violence as a durable reality. The presence of violence in everyday life is not simply a matter of practice, but also a subject of institutionalization. Based on their research on Hindu-Muslim violence and riots in a slum in Mumbai, Chatterji, and Mehta (2007) argue that the experience of violence as a "normalcy" is formed through patterns of state and institutional governance. This includes, among other practices, establishing government commissions to investigate the riots, the documentation of the riots in official narratives, the remaking of slum spaces, crafting redevelopment programs, and inviting other non-governmental actors, such as NGOs and civil society organization, to participate in these processes. With the rising complexity of rehabilitating everyday life, members of the community eventually lose their agency, which leads to another form of structural violence. While strong administrative states, such as those in the Global North, are trained to confine violence, ASEAN states' historical approach to violence appears to be rather one of indifference in the six cases presented here. Thus, when violence becomes an intergenerational reality, the question remains: How do Southeast Asians manage to live with it?

VIOLENT ACTORS AND THE STATE

The conditions of abnormality and normalcy have been important dimensions for discussions of violence since they have been related to how the state, regime, or authoritative class governs or controls the population. While modern states are expected to regulate the control of law and order, it is never the case that it has the full control of order (e.g., Tilly, 2003) and engenders a situation where the state confines its power to governmentality or to the authoritative legitimation of control (Foucault, 1991). Foucault (1991) asserts that, through its government, the administrative state takes on a posture of "apparatuses of security" (p. 102), which control social and political institutions to establish order and to avoid violence. Yet, the rise of democracy and the administrative state does not eliminate violence. On the other hand, Mbembe (2003) and Rojas-Perez (2017) underscore that the reign of governmentality

has consolidated power, which shapes "necropolitics" – the use of social and political power to dictate how some people may live and how some must die (Mbembe, 2003) – where the state dominates individuals' legitimate decision-making.

In a totalitarian state, the state's control of its citizens' lives is utterly decisive, whereby those deemed to threaten the state's policy or ideology will be systematically incarcerated and their living conditions reduced to "bare life" (Agamben, 2005). In other state formations, state control takes shape in the state's power to cancel a person's citizenship, and, thus, their administrative identity, to marginalize minorities to those deemed to be unfit for the majority, such as LGBTQ+ groups in many countries. At large, Bourdieu (1992) contends that, when violence is suspended, the relationship between the state and its citizens, or between the ruling class and the commons, remains volatile since the latter is organized within a cultural arrangement – "pact of symbolic nonaggression" (p. 145) – or dominated and legitimized by the first through "symbolic violence" (pp. 145, 167).

The contributions to this special issue provide evidence that extend these mentioned studies, showing how violence is durable because of its scaling ability to transcend the state-citizen boundary through which the actors involved have the capacity to operate *beyond* the state or the state's legal system. There are some patterns in how this could be observed. The first relates to cases in which the actors represent the state, or are part of the state machinery, and obtain the legal justification to define the action as the "zone of exception" (Agamben 2003). An exemplary case in this regard is Kreuzer's (2019) article, which depicts how the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Philippine National Police (PNP) have the authority to shoot and kill suspected drug dealers and users as well as other crime suspects. Although the state has denounced extrajudicial killings, President Duterte's drug war campaign and the 2016 Davao City bombing created the opportunity for the president to issue Proclamation No. 55 and Memorandum Order No. 3 released on 7 September 2016 on "violence suppression" leading to the legal approval of the use of deadly force in cases of suspected crime (Kerrigan, 2017, p. 423).

The availability of legal sources to prevent, or, on the contrary, to endure violence is decisive in shaping the actions of violent actors in the zone of exception. Marddent (2019) provides a case where violence endures in Thailand's Deep South because the non-violence values of the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325, which are being practiced by various actors including the state itself, is not accommodated in the new security policy. Although the state recognizes the role of UNSCR 1325 as a guideline to enforce peacebuilding, the military – as an element of the state – seems to be indifferent, upholding its own prescription of security, which centers on the use of force and, ultimately, the use of violence as a means of conflict management.

The second pattern of *beyondness* appears when attempts to counter violence are problematic because the actions are considered social practices and the violent situation is not recognized as an abnormality. Rydstrom's (2019) work, for example, problematizes how violence against women in Vietnam is a chronic practice that is justified by a cultural understanding of men's "hot temper", even though the state has clearly stated its intent to eradicate the "social evil". Similarly, Seto (2019) concludes that online hate speech and othering messages produced by Indonesian Islamic fundamentalists are difficult to counter since the prosecution of religiously justified

expressions such as those would be considered "anti-Islam" by the masses.

One of the consequences of the conditions in which violence could operate beyond the state is that the state has lost, to some degree, its legitimacy to govern. With the enduring rampant violence and public distrust of the state apparatus in Timor-Leste, Sousa (2019) exemplifies that, instead of applying formal legal procedures, customary law might help to foster the emergence of a non-violent environment. In such an example, the state apparatus does not have the power to follow up the legal case, for example against a cattle thief, as his ethnographic description shows. Even when the state is present and equipped with institutions to counter violence, violence might emerge as unintended consequences beyond its control. The contribution of Stange et al. (2019) highlights that, although internal displacement represents by far a larger challenge than cross-border displacement in Southeast Asia, scholarly attention in the past five years has mainly focused on the latter. Protracted crises as well as reoccurring natural disasters in the region, and their oftentimes short-lived repeated presence in the media, might just be another example of how structural violence can become a "normalcy".

The cases in this issue do not imply that violent actors are above the law, but problematize how state action is bounded by normative orders beyond the state's authority to govern. In this context, although the work of Foucault (1991) and Mbembe (2003) are helpful in identifying how the state responds to violence, the contributions exemplify that there are practices, or enduring mechanisms, such as the public acceptance of violence or discrepancy in terms of how victims are treated, that operate beyond the state. Sousa's (2019) work in this issue provides a critical case whereby the state, incapable of establishing an effective politics of reconciliation, has turned to the ritual of the sacred world to achieve legitimacy for its peacebuilding.

VIOLENCE FRAMED WITHIN AN INSTITUTIONALIZING DISCOURSE

The aforementioned enduring mechanism is related to how violence can become an everyday life normalcy, if not ritualized. Kreuzer (2019) shows that police officers' deadly use of force in election years seems to decline because they are busy preventing election violence. Ironically, it is through these elections that politicians who support, or are reluctant to end, the use of deadly force are elected. The relationship between violence and political cycles also emerges in Sousa's (2019) work. His case shows an example of how, after centuries of violence and obscure frictions between political factions, the legal discourse of peacebuilding might disappear from the repertoire of peacebuilding entirely.

The difficulty associated with fostering non-violence is, in some cases, the result of the embeddedness of violence in the regularizing practice. Rydstrom (2019) describes that even Vietnamese women, who are within the same cohort group of the victims, do not perceive male violence against women as an anomaly. Rydstrom's (2019) interlocutors explained that physical abuse against women is normalized within the male-female cosmology where women are expected to show feminine qualities of calm and indulgence to the adversity. Expressing an objection to domestic abuse could lead to a condition where society, even the same gender group, blames the victim. In one case, she exemplifies the experience of a victim who is blamed by

other women for inciting marital violence, as she had complained about her husband and was thereby perceived to have provoked him. Similarly, Seto (2019) shows that Islamic-fundamentalist violence in public space is a stick-and-carrot action to solicit religious obedience from fellow Muslims, who are rather relaxed in practicing Islam.

In Thailand, Marddent (2019) depicts that bureaucratic complexity has been unable to change the military understanding of security. In this notion of physical and armed "security", peace has been confined to the presence and absence of gunshots, instead of order and non-violence. On the other hand, from the perspective of the dissidents, the regularizing practice of violence is embedded in the actualization of identity, as violence is perceived to be a necessary performance to counter the Buddhist central government's oppressive assimilation policy.

Scheper-Hughes (2008) suggests that these cycles of violence represent a "continuum of violence", which denotes the interconnectedness of all forms of violence and can also lead to the emergence of "extraordinary violence that is authorized, public, visible, and rewarded" (p. 81). In this continuum, the affected societies understand the normalcy of violence within a register of institutionalizing discourses: violence is placed within rudimentary notions of security (Marddent, 2019), armed encounters (Kreuzer, 2019), displacement (Stange et.al, 2019), forces of cosmology (*Dương-Âm*, Yang and Yin in Chinese, Rydstrom, 2019), and within the religious discipline necessary to prevent evil (Seto, 2019).

Accordingly, the emergence of a new order that could establish non-violent values would first need to contest these discourses. Marddent (2019) exemplifies that while the state has failed in securing the ecology of non-violence, grassroots women's movements rely on Salafi discourses to provide applicable methods of peace. Yet, they remain at the periphery of peacebuilding efforts since Salafism is generally viewed as a violent discourse. Her case is therefore indicative of a stuck-in-the moment episode, in which peacebuilding actors struggle to gain recognition of their value in the negotiations. This presents a double-edged problem. First, the common perspective is that Islamic communities in Thailand's Deep South, which includes the peacebuilding actors, are the usual suspects in the region's uprising. The recognition of Salafi actors as peacemakers will tarnish this common knowledge and alter the historical record that the Thai Muslim community is a violent rebellious group – a political stance that is problematic for the Thai government and its military, whose memory glorifies the fallen soldiers in the region. Moreover, international NGOs in the region would also need to shift their understanding beyond global notions of Salafism as a threat to democracy if Salafi actors are to be welcomed into the peacebuilding discourse. Second, if Muslim women's voices are to be included, they would first need to be accepted within the patriarchal society.

An exemplary disruptive method to end the cycle of violence emerges from Sousa's (2019) work in Timor-Leste. Since the nation has been in a constant state of violence stemming from 400 years of Portuguese colonialization, 25 years of Indonesian occupation, and early-independence civil conflicts, political elites have partly delegitimized politicians' historical accounts and have turned towards rural-based narratives. In this peacebuilding endeavor, the traditional leader *lia na`in* plays the role as the personification of peacebuilding to deliver an oral history of the young nation. In that way, the political elites are also able to present a party that is less

entangled with the nation's violent history. Yet, he posits this new development carefully against the background of concerns about whether the *lia na`in*'s presence in state ceremonies has become a performative ritual (spiritual discourse), rather than an institutionalization of reconciliation.

BORDERS AND CLAIMS

The two previous constellations, namely the matters of beyondness and institutionalizing discourse, are related to the borders of social boundaries. As mentioned earlier, democratic opening and economic growth are often viewed as factors that help to secure development. As economic growth persists regardless of the lingering violence, there is no urgency from the state to provide comprehensive non-violent solutions to overcome discontent. This problem is well annunciated in the articles where violence takes place between those juxtaposed in social boundaries, such as the relationship between center and periphery (Marddent, 2019), against a minority or marginalized group (Marddent, 2019; Rydstrom, 2019), and political groups (Kreuzer, 2019; Seto, 2019; Sousa, 2019). In these boundaries, violence takes place because a group of actors can initiate claims to denounce the recognition toward others. Claims are important to frame the act of violence. Seto's (2019) article shows that declarations of war could be enacted by fundamentalist Muslims upholding a physical "jihad" ideology, which is perceived as their operable definition of war against fellow citizens who deviate from scriptural religious norms. The insurgencies in Thailand's Deep South also exemplify similar patterns; while the locals view their actions as political expressions of social justice and identity, the center views the actions as violent contestations of national integrity. Even in a country where its political geography and ethnic diversity are relatively small, such as Timor-Leste, violence could emerge among groups with virtual rather than actual distinctions as Sousa (2019) exemplifies with the conflicts between East Timorese Westerners and East Timorese Easterners. Every state-building project offers an arena for the struggle of recognition. Accordingly, any democratic opening provides the affordance for the ontological problem of conflict.

Anthony Giddens (1987) examines the nation-state as a "bordered power container", the boundaries of which mark not only administrative provisions but also entails the authority to govern power which includes the capacity for waging war, extracting resources, policing deviance, maintaining legitimacy, and pacifying the state. Such a view of power is, however, a slippery slope since the nation is a top-down bracket of diversity. Thus, the nation has an enduring tension between identity and discontent. In this setting, claims of justified violence are used to enact identity with which the declaration of conflict or war, as a claim of defending something rightful, has become a legal justification rather than an action of total control which exerts power as Giddens (1987) had hoped.

Such conflicts also render the tensions between the center and the periphery. This can range from the belief that the central government is failing to recognize the periphery's needs or to ensure the equal distribution of wealth or power, as the contributions by Marddent (2019) and Sousa (2019) show. It is often the case that the center simply views violence as a problem of identity, rather than of social justice. In

such cases, the center only appraises social issues under the guise of whether they might hamper economic development. To note, although not discussed in this issue, such chronic violence also can be found in Indonesia's Papua provinces and in the case of the Rohingya in Myanmar. Prolonged conflicts preserve contentious politics where the conflicts also show how violence can become a currency (e.g., Liow, 2016; McCargo, 2014). While the centers urge national stability to create an environment conducive to economic development, resistance and liberation movements in the periphery view that it is only from severe violence that they can create leverage for their demands. The reaction to this is often a military solution that will only increase the severity of violence (Marddent, 2019).

When claims of a right to violence cannot be broken, it risks prolonging the act of violence in other forms of violence. Kreuzer's (2019) research finds that the lethality levels of police departments' use of deadly force were evident during the pre-Duterte period as well as during his presidency. Yet, through his rhetoric on the war on drugs, Duterte has gained a certain political spotlight, which helped him win the campaign (Curato, 2017). From her interviews, Marddent (2019) found that local Malay Muslims view armed violence as a "security industry." This is exemplified in this issue's interview with Sidney Jones (Stange, 2019) and her criticism of the Indonesian government's single-sided development approach to conflict management in Papua, which she contends has led to a deep entrenchment of structural violence in the region. Such settings provide violent actors with the possibility to control the scale and spatiality of violence. The risk, then, is a rollback of the pro-democratic progress that can be observed in Southeast Asia in recent years.

At the same time, such processes of accumulation have convoluted the goal of enacting violence. Along the course of prolonged violence, actions follow various trajectories and goals are adjusted. In such settings, violence becomes a practice rather than deviant behavior, posing the risk of becoming a collective mundane experience as previously discussed. This view is an invitation to contest Riches' (1986) argument, which laments that violent actors always have choices, as they have chosen the conduct for they have calculated that it would be advantageous in dealing with the opponent. Emerging nation-states have been pacified by the opening of democracy. Yet, there are practices that are retained within their political regularities that prevent the total emergence of a non-violent environment.

PEACEBUILDING AND ITS DISCOURSES OF ORIGIN

The durability of violence impacts the creation of non-violent initiatives. When the state and its legal system displays its weakness in delivering non-violent spaces, non-violent spaces might emerge unexpectedly from below as the contributions by Rydstrom (2019), Marddent (2019), and Sousa (2019) show. Rydstrom (2019) underlines that there is a connection between the effective local movement of "Say No to Violence" (*Nói Không với Bạo lực*) in Vietnam to the larger global initiative of "Say NO – UniTE to End Violence against Women" sponsored by the UN. In the case of peacebuilding in Thailand's Deep South, Marddent (2019) depicts that Salafism, as a global religious discourse, has played a role in inciting one of the most effective approaches to peacebuilding. She acknowledges that Salafi actors have initiated education circles

to teach "spiritual healing" in mainstreaming life-security discourses. Spirituality also appears in Sousa's (2019) work. While the Timorese doubt the state's historical narrative because of its victors' bias, it turns to the *lia-na'in*, the guardian of the sacred houses in the mountains, as a source of legitimacy in recounting the history of the nation, even though the latter hardly appeared as an authority on the national scale in the history of Timor-Leste.

These three anthropological works advise that peacebuilding requires a convincing discourse of origin. In Marddent's (2019) and Sousa's (2019) cases, spirituality becomes convincing because the people have witnessed that the "rational" governmental approach to violence has not been working for decades. And when it does work, it simply delivers the status quo. Marddent's (2019) interlocutors believe that the Islamic notion of patience (*sabr*) provides a practice that is helpful for ending the cycle of violence because it is a practice to find inner peace. In Timor-Leste, *lia na ʾin*'s blessing is viewed as a spiritual union of the nation and its ancestors and "represents a unity between the people and the politicians as the personification of the state in the post-conflict nation" (Sousa, 2019 p. 218). In these cases, the spirit overcomes political differences. While Malay Muslims in Thailand and the Timorese seek out non-violent practices through their cosmologies, Vietnamese women did the opposite as their cosmology normalizes violence against women. In search of security, they sourced their narrative from global awareness movements. The effort to end violence against women became a convincing public discourse not simply because local women had demanded it, but because it found support in massive efforts from local organizations and NGOs along with the global #MeToo movement to recognize the problem (Rydstrom, 2019).

Different from the previously mentioned discourses of peacebuilding, the work of Stange et al. (2019) shows that those who are displaced by natural disasters often only gain national, and not international, attention because natural disasters are often considered a national problem with the victims 'only' internally displaced. By contrast, refugees classified as asylum seekers and stateless persons gain more academic attention because their mobility concerns at least two states.

MEDIA

Most of the articles in this issue address the role that media has played in the creation of violence and non-violent initiatives. As mentioned earlier, the national awareness to end abuse against women in Vietnam has seized on the crucial momentum of the #MeToo movement (Rydstrom, 2019). Sousa (2019) also notes that media has a certain interest in covering official ceremonies, such as with *Dada Ikas* (withdrawing the oath) and *Loke Dalan* (opening the way), when *lia na ʾin* are present. On the contrary, Seto (2019) presents a case that digital media becomes a useful scape for Indonesian Islamic fundamentalists to encroach on public space and to gain new followers. It is exactly because of the circulation of problematic online content, such as bigotry and hate speech, that the Islamists could defeat the Christian incumbent in Jakarta's Gubernatorial election, even though the latter was predicted to win.

The outstanding work of Kreuzer (2019) in this issue demonstrates that the role of media is not confined to the representation of actors, but as the source of verifiable

quantitative data. Since the state does not provide credible data, he mined reports of the use of deadly force by police from various news sites. With such a rich data set, he imposes that violence should be measured to observe its intensity and its lethality. In one of his findings, he exemplifies that "given a large number of armed encounters, the absence or extraordinarily low numbers of killed or wounded police-officers, signals [actually] excessive violence" (Kreuzer, 2019, p. 153).

CONCLUSION

Throughout the articles in this issue, we seek to reconstruct the current contours of violence in Southeast Asia. The articles in these issues advise that durable violence operates through machinery, may that be through the state apparatus (Kreuzer, 2019; Marddent, 2019), (legal) discourse (Kreuzer, 2019; Marddent, 2019; Stange et al., 2019), cultural praxis (Rydstrom, 2019), or unresolved frictions of civil groups (Seto, 2019; Sousa, 2019). These machineries operate in certain constellations through which violence could be reproduced as repertoires and a problem of resources. Thus, violence could be studied through inquiries that focus on: (1) questions of how violence creates new opportunities in institutionalizing movements and networks; (2) how violence is institutionalized; (3) the transferability of ideologies and violent discourses across spatial and temporal boundaries; (4) the weakness of civil society; (5) the ambiguous role of the state; and (6) the precarious transformations that transpire when political orders are being contested.

It is against the background of durability that questions about the scale and transferability of violence emerges, which requires investigations of the stewardship of local culture, institution, and power. This issue, therefore, seeks to initiate a discussion of how violence operates on different scales through possible machinery. Violence in this context is not simply an outcome of tension but a mechanism that actors and organizations deploy to stabilize their struggles, which eventually makes peacebuilding or democratic projects volatile.

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Police Use of Deadly Force in the Philippines: Comparing Levels and Patterns Before and Since Duterte

Peter Kreuzer

This article provides a detailed analysis of pre-Duterte and Duterte police use of deadly force in the Philippines. It first develops a set of indicators that allow for assessing the magnitude of police use of deadly force in "armed encounters", its relation to the threat environments in which the police operate, and the lethality of such violence. Then, based on a self-developed dataset for the pre-Duterte decade and the ABS-CBN dataset on Duterte period police killings, it establishes the past and current patterns of police use of deadly force. The analysis shows that in the past decade as under Duterte inter-provincial spatial and temporal variation of police use of deadly force has been very high. Differences in the threat environment play only a minor role in explaining this variation. Differences in sub-national units' reactions to the Duterte campaign mirror those in police use of deadly force during the earlier decade, signaling strong path-dependency. Lethality-levels have been outstanding in both periods despite dramatically differing levels of lethal violence. Clearly, Philippine police tended to shoot-to-kill already before Duterte granted them a carte blanche.

Keywords: Duterte; Philippines; Police Killings; Police Use of Force; Police Violence

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INTRODUCTION

The history of the modern Philippines is also a history of political violence that comes in many forms. The Philippines still harbors a revolutionary movement that challenges the state. The long-standing ethnopolitical armed conflict seems currently to be coming to an end after half a century of intermittent fighting. Further, the Philippines stands out with respect to less prominent forms of political violence in Southeast Asia. Despite being the oldest democracy in the region, Philippine elections are regularly accompanied by the killing of officeholders, candidates, and political supporters; not to mention that the Philippines are the regional front-runner with respect to killed journalists, political activists, and human rights defenders. Finally, one should also mention that the Philippines have by far the highest homicide rate in Southeast Asia. Taken together, these observations signal that by regional standards the Philippines seem to have a multidimensional problem of violence.

Whereas the spatial and temporal patterns of most of the above-mentioned forms of violence are fairly well documented, police use of deadly force against criminal suspects has escaped public and scholarly attention almost completely in the past.

This has only changed recently, when Rodrigo Duterte instigated a vast anti-drug-crime campaign as he took over as president of the Philippines on 30 June 2016. Reports on campaign-like killings of criminal suspects focused almost completely on the dirty work of death squads that were generally perceived to have been instigated and led by local politicians and manned to a significant extent by moonlighting policemen. This made the everyday violence perpetrated by the police under the label of "armed encounter" largely invisible in the media. With the Philippine National Police (PNP) proudly reporting success measured not only by the number of arrests, but also by the number of suspects killed in "legitimate encounters", police use of deadly force became a prominent subject of public discourse.

Yet, attention is mostly focused on the obvious, on the monstrous phenomenon that catches the eye. A number of questions are largely left unanswered: What was the magnitude of police use of deadly force before Duterte? What did its spatial dispersal look like? How much did violent police behavior increase under Duterte as compared to earlier police use of force? Do we see much path-dependency, or do sub-national units react differently from what might be expected on account of their past records of police violence? To what extent do magnitude as well as spatial and temporal variations of violence relate to objective factors of threat and danger to which policemen are exposed to different degrees in varying environments? And, how many of the killings do not result from self-defense, but must be categorized as extra-judicial killings? Some of these questions have been left unanswered for lack of empirical data, others for want of a suitable approach.

When answers are provided these are generally based on analyses of a small number of cases. Whether these are representative of the general situation or rather exceptions is as unclear as whether there is one general pattern of police use of deadly force and not an array of different local patterns.

This article intends to fill these gaps by providing a comprehensive analysis of armed encounters between the PNP and (supposedly) armed suspects on the sub-national level from 2006 until 2018. Spatial and temporal analyses allow for the creation of a detailed map of such violence that uncovers patterns that are lost in works based on small samples of rather prominent cases, as for example studies on earlier vigilantism in Davao under Duterte, in Cebu City under mayor Tomas Osmeña, or in other cities and municipalities (Human Rights Watch, 2009). These patterns also escape most analyses of current police violence under Duterte that tend to miss the extraordinary spatial and temporal variation in the concrete patterns police deadly use of force takes in the various provinces of the Philippines.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows. Section two summarizes literature on police violence in the Philippines. Section three introduces the concepts and indicators that I use to analyze police violence. Section four describes the datasets used in the analysis. Finally, in section five I investigate the temporal and spatial patterns of pre-Duterte and Duterte police violence as well as the role of the threat and the lethality of PNP use of deadly force.

POLICE VIOLENCE IN THE PHILIPPINES: A SHORT OVERVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Even though police use of deadly force is a regularly reported by Philippine media, it has been largely ignored by social scientific research. In general, it has been subsumed

under the broader heading of extralegal, summary, and arbitrary executions by human rights groups, as for example by the Free Legal Assistance Group (2007) and the special report of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Philip Alston (2008a, 2008b, 2009), which, however, gave prominence to violence exerted against journalists, human rights defenders, and social activists (see also, Parreño, 2011). Studies that focused on violence against suspected criminals focused exclusively on the phenomenon of death squad killings (Breuil & Rozema, 2009; Human Rights Watch, 2009; Picardal, 2016). Karapatan, a left-wing NGO that provides the most comprehensive account of state-perpetrated violence likewise does not cover fatal violence against criminal suspects in its statistics[1]. One of the first studies to explicitly take note of this specific form of violence was a study on the role of violence in upholding domination by political families in Pampanga (Kreuzer, 2012) that established a typology of "top-down violence" that included police shoot-outs as a distinct category (Kreuzer, 2012, pp. 24-26). Even prominent "armed encounters" as the one in Atimonan (Quezon province) in 2013, in which 13 suspected members of a drug syndicate were summarily killed by combined forces of the PNP and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) at a checkpoint, did not elicit serious scientific interest, even though in this case a forensic report by the Philippine National Bureau of Investigation concluded: "The apparent objective of the operation was to kill all the victims" (National Bureau of Investigation, 2013, p. 49).

It is no exaggeration to argue that scholarly research on police killings in the Philippines started with the Duterte campaign in 2016. In late 2016, Reyes (2016) and Curato (2016) offered two analyses that both focus on the phenomenological side of the current campaign. Both address the seeming paradox that a policy that victimizes thousands of people apparently has enduring public support. Whereas Curato (2016) links this to penal populism, Reyes (2016) conceives of police killings as spectacles of violence conveying the message that certain people do not belong to the people and can (or should) be killed in order to "enhance personal safety, public safety and law and order, which is very appealing to ordinary people who experienced insecurity in their daily lives" (Reyes, 2016, p. 118). Sheila Coronel (2017) sets out from a different vantage point that focuses closely on the economic logic underlying police perpetrated killings of suspects. She argues that, under Duterte, police-officers are rewarded with money and promotions if they meet the president's demands; theft of victims' belongings during police operations is tolerated as is extortion from drug suspects. She concludes that to many police officers, the drug-war has become a thriving business. Linking the present to reports of past police involvement in crime, she also argues that police officers directly profit from the new opportunities to neutralize opponents in various spheres of illegal business. According to her, "Duterte's drug war was waged by a police force accustomed to extortion and execution", a force that embraced the opportunity provided by Duterte's policy "as entrepreneurs looking for maximum gain" (Coronel, 2017, p. 189). Her argument is given a further twist by Jensen and Hapal (2018). They provide an analysis of past and present police practice in the largest *barangay*[2] of the Philippines, located in Quezon City, that harbors

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1   http://www.karapatan.org

2   Smallest administrative division in the Philippines.

a large community of urban poor. They argue that violent police coercion should be interpreted as a specific activity in exchange relationships that link the police to the (poor) local communities. In the past, selective extralegal killings provided the iron fist behind a normally smoothly working system that allowed police officers to extort money from suspects in exchange for release. Duterte's war on drugs "reconfigured the parameters of these relationships" to the advantage of the police, as "the price of survival seems to have gone up significantly" (Jensen & Hapal, 2018, pp. 57-58).

While these studies are insightful with respect to certain dynamics driving police violence, it is still largely unclear in how far the observed patterns are representative for the Philippines. Further, the extent as well as the temporal and spatial variation of pre-Duterte police use of deadly force is not dealt with.

In June 2018, David, Mendoza, Atun, Cossid, and Soriano (2018) published the first quantitative analysis of the lethal violence associated with the anti-drug campaign from May 2016 to September 2017. Their core results closely tally the analysis below. My analysis goes further in two respects: It extends to July 2018 and includes the provincial level, whereas David et al.'s (2018) analysis focuses on the regional level only. They conclude that lethal police (and vigilante) violence is distributed highly unevenly with the vast majority of killings happening in the National Capital Region (NCR)[3] and the directly adjacent regions 3 and 4a (see, Figure 1). Like the ABS-CBN News (n.d.) dataset employed in this study (see below), David et al. (2018) only list the numbers of suspects killed but neither the number of the suspects wounded nor the police officers killed or wounded. Their dataset further does not allow to draw any conclusions about continuity and change from pre-Duterte to Duterte-period police use of deadly force.

INDICATORS FOR MEASURING AND EVALUATING POLICE USE OF (DEADLY) FORCE

Indicators for three core dimensions of police violence that allow for a fairly comprehensive mapping will be established: indicators for measuring magnitude, threat level to which police officers are exposed, and lethality of police violence. These rest on initial efforts of Paul Chevigny (1990, 1991), which, however, have only sporadically been used in research on police violence during the past decades.

A first scale for measuring the magnitude of police violence parallels the one used for measuring crime: police use of deadly force in relation to population (suspects killed per million inhabitants). A second scale, number of suspects killed divided by criminal killings, takes into account the abstract threat faced by police officers depending on the environment in which they operate. It assumes that police officers who operate in a dangerous environment (based on the ratio of murder and homicides per million population) will be more prone to use potentially deadly force than police officers who operate in peaceful environments. This second indicator of the relative magnitude of police violence already factors in one core explanation or justification for lethal police violence: the potential threat to which police officers are exposed. In so far it serves a dual purpose: to establish a relative scale for magnitude and simultaneously provide an answer to the question of whether police violence is a reaction to the objective threat level of the environment.

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3   That is, Metropolitan Manila.

This dimension of 'threat' can be further specified by focusing on the direct threat experienced by police officers in a given environment, that is, the number of police officers that have been or are currently victimized in encounters in relation to the size of the police force (police officers killed/police force). This scale can be broadened by also considering how many police officers have been wounded in armed encounters (police officers wounded/police force).

The final two scales focus on the levels of lethality of police use of force in armed encounters. Here the core assumptions come, on the one hand, from the legal frameworks for police use of force that stress that use of force has to be reasonable and is legitimate only to avert imminent threats to the lives and well-being of the police officers or other persons. On the other hand, if police shoot-to-kill only in situations of self-defense in armed encounters, and when reports regularly state that suspects fired first, then one should assume a certain number of killed or wounded victims on the side of the police too. These two assumptions can be translated into two indicators for the lethality of police violence. First, given a large number of armed encounters, the absence or extraordinarily low numbers of killed or wounded police-officers signals excessive violence. This makes the ratio of suspects killed to police officers killed in such encounters a strong indicator for or against the assumption of extralegal killings as a prevalent police-practice. A second indicator for assessing the lethality of police use of force operationalizes the duty to apply only the minimum requirement of force necessary to subdue the threat. If this is the case, the number of suspects wounded should be higher than the number of suspects killed, given a sufficient number of cases. Otherwise, as Chevigny (1991) argues, one should "infer that deadly force is being abused" (p. 191). This leaves us with the following five indicators for the categorization and evaluation of police use of lethal force:

Indicator	Measurement
Absolute magnitude	$\dfrac{\text{suspects killed}}{\text{million population}}$
Relative magnitude Abstract threat	$\dfrac{\text{suspects killed}}{\text{criminal killings}}$
Concrete threat	$\dfrac{\text{killed police officers}}{\text{size of police force}}$
Lethality and threat	$\dfrac{\text{suspects killed}}{\text{police officers killed}}$
Lethality as expression of shoot-to-kill practice	$\dfrac{\text{suspects killed}}{\text{suspects wounded}}$

Table 1. Indicators of Police Use of Deadly Force.

A SHORT INTRODUCTION TO THE DATASETS

For the analysis of Duterte period police violence in armed encounters, I rely on a dataset established by ABS-CBN News (n.d.). While being by far the most detailed and

precise documentation of current police-violence since May 2016, it neither allows for a comparison of police deadly to non-deadly use of violence, nor does it allow an assessment of the threat to which police officers are exposed in such encounters as it only documents the number of suspects killed by the police, but not the victims on the side of the police, nor does it document armed encounters in which nobody is hurt or killed. One small remedy for this problem is a detailed analysis of the data for one province, Bulacan, for which a high-quality dataset based on the provincial PNP operation reports was established.

The dataset used for the analysis of the pre-Duterte decade from 2006 to 2015 has been developed during the past years by the author. Similar to the ABS-CBN News (n.d.) dataset or the The Washington Post (n.d.) and The Guardian (n.d.) datasets on police violence in the United States, it relies on extensive online media research in both English and Filipino, covering not only national, but also local media.

Coded were 11 regions of the Philippines. The regions are broadly representative for the regional variation of the Philippines, with a slight overrepresentation of highly urbanized areas and the Luzon island group due to the inclusion of the NCR that, with nearly 13 million inhabitants, is by far the largest urban agglomeration in the Philippines. The dataset includes regions that encompass approximately 70% of the Philippine population. In order to ensure comparability of the data, the analysis below will only cover those regions that have been included in both datasets, that is, the NCR; regions 1, 3, 4a, and 4b belonging to the island group Luzon; regions 6, 7, and 8 belonging to the Visayas island group; and regions 10 and 11, both of which belong to the Mindanao island group. The initial search was performed as a Google search with the search term "police shoot-out" in various spellings and the provincial name on an annual basis. In many cases the names of cities were also utilized, especially, when these were self-governing and not part of the adjacent or surrounding province, as in the cases of Angeles City (surrounding province: Pampanga) or Olongapo (adjacent to Zambales province). Sources encompass a total of 65 national and local news-outlets. Wherever possible, a second search of the archives of individual newspapers was conducted with the same search terms. By including local outlets like the Mindanao Times, Panay News, the Visayan Daily Star, or Tarlac Today, chances were maximized to detect also those cases that escaped the attention of the national media, like the Philippine Daily Inquirer, the Manila Standard, or the Philippine Star. Coding was by province and year. Four categories for coding the individual incidents were applied: suspects killed; suspects wounded; police-officers killed; and police officers wounded. News that reported shoot-outs with no victims were also included.[4] As the PNP does not provide any data on police shoot-outs or the number of victims, corroboration of the data is problematic. However, the provincial PNP of Bulacan province has for the past years provided detailed accounts for all its major operations that run into several hundred pagers for each year (Bulacan Philippine National Police, n.d.).[5] A

4   For further details on the datasets, the news-media, and the coding, see the electronic appendix at: https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/CBR3G3.

5   This source has been discontinued in July 2019. The content was erased shortly afterwards. Since September 2019, the website is "under construction". The most recent version that can still be accessed via the internet archive WayBack Machine provides data to April 2019. The shift in policy seems to have been triggered by an Amnesty International Report (2019, p. 10) claiming that Central Luzon and specifically

comparison (Table 2) shows that the results of the media analysis closely fit the numbers of suspects killed in armed encounters as reported by the provincial police. The extraordinarily low number reported by the PNP for 2013 may be a result of a different "publication policy" of the then provincial police director. This hypothesis would fit a drastic change in spring 2018, when the formerly detailed reporting was temporarily discontinued after a new police director took office. Initially, the Bulacan PNP shifted to news provided by the Philippine News Agency that omitted many of the Bulacan operations. It is only since the end of July 2018 that the provincial news by the local PNP is back with considerable detail on police operations.

	2012	2013	2014	2015
Bulacan PNP	17	2	15	40
Own data	19	7	13	38

Table 2. Police Use of Deadly Force 2012-2015 in Bulacan. (Bulacan Philippine National Police, n.d.; own compilation).

DETAILING PHILIPPINE POLICE VIOLENCE

The indicators established above will now be applied to the two datasets on Philippine police-violence. First, I will provide an analysis of the magnitude of police encounter-violence that also allows for a mapping of temporal and spatial variation on the provincial level. Then, I will analyze whether threat provides a plausible explanation for police use of deadly force, followed by an account of the lethality of police violence. Finally, I will place Duterte and pre-Duterte police violence in international comparison to assess its 'severity'.

Sub-National Magnitudes of Police Use of Deadly Force Before and Under Duterte

A detailed analysis of available data for the two periods before and under Duterte yields three types of key information: first, the change in overall numbers; second, variation in sub-national magnitude of violence during the two phases; and third, the relationship between the pre-Duterte and Duterte ranking of provinces and cities with respect to deadly police violence.

In the 11 regions analyzed, a total of 1,744 suspects were killed by the police in armed encounters in the decade from 2006 to 2015 (Figure 1). However, this violence was split very unevenly across the various regional and sub-regional units. Adjusted to population, the highest levels of deadly police violence could be observed in the NCR and the directly adjoining regions 3 and 4a. However, even within these regions, variation was high with outstanding levels for Manila and Quezon City.

The corresponding number to the 174 suspects killed per year in the sample regions from 2006 to 2015 is a staggering 1,202 persons killed per year for the first 25 months under Duterte (with a total 2,506 suspects killed from July 2016 to July 2018

Bulacan province have become the "epicenter of killings" in the Philippines directly implicating provincial police director Bersaluna of complicity.

in the 11 regions; Figure 2), based on the ABS-CBN News (n.d.) data. This is a rise by 590%. Yet, the distribution of violence remained rather stable. The vast majority of police use of deadly force adjusted to population occurred in the same regions: the NCR and the adjacent regions 3 and 4a. Again, within-region variation is high.
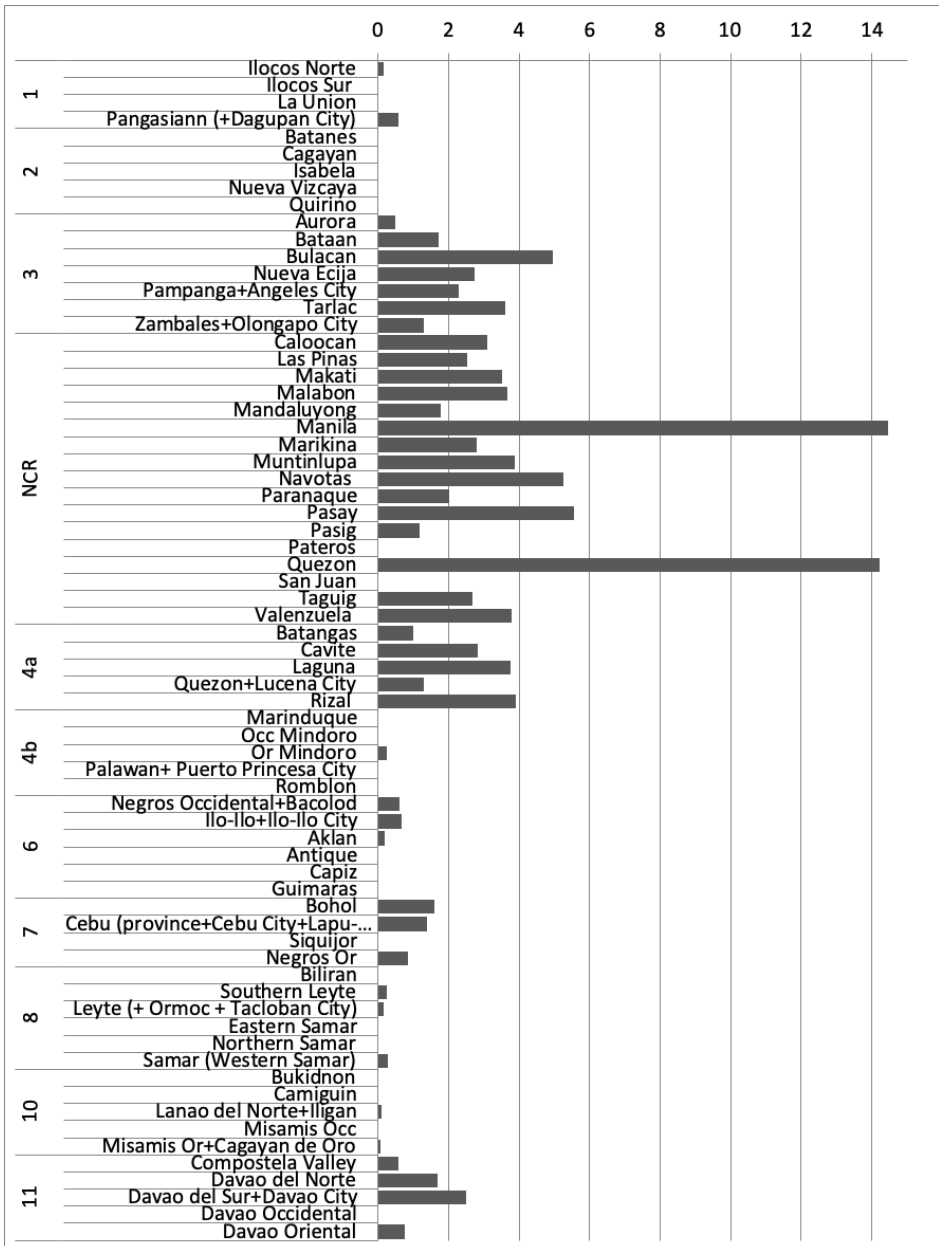
Figure 1. Suspects Killed per Year per Million Population 2006-2015. (Own compilation).
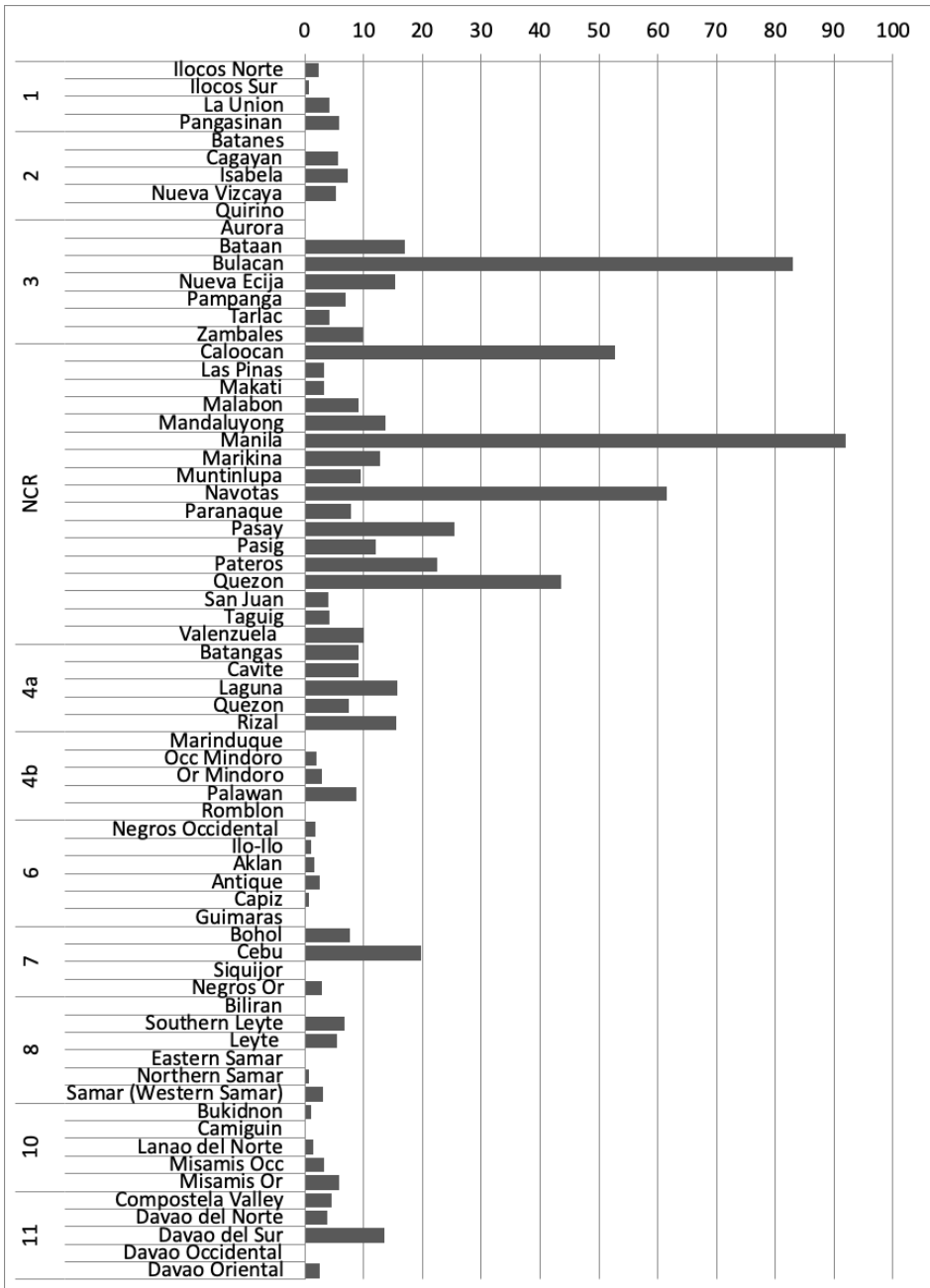
Figure 2. Suspects Killed per Year per Million Population from July 2016 to July 2018.
ABS-CBN News, n.d.; dataset and 2015 census by Philippine Statistics Authority, 2016; own
compilation).

Despite some variation between pre-Duterte and Duterte patterns of police use of deadly force, overall path-dependency is very strong. The Spearman rank correlation coefficient reveals a high and statistically highly significant correlation between pre-Duterte and Duterte violence levels (rs=0.728; n=69; p<0.000001).[6] Put simply, this means that while levels of violence changed dramatically, in general, the sub-regional units reacted as could be expected on the basis of their prior patterns. The scatterplot[7] further reveals a broad variation in the reaction to Duterte's war on drugs amongst those units that had the lowest levels of police violence during the preceding decade (Figure 3). Nine of them did not react at all: from Batanes, the northernmost province of the Philippines, to Quirino, Marinduque, Romblon, Guimaras, Siquijor, Eastern Samar, and Camiguin to Davao Occidental at the southern end of Mindanao. All of them are rather small and remote areas with rather small numbers of inhabitants. This also holds true, albeit to a lesser degree, for the following units of Capiz (6), Ilocos Sur (7), and Northern Samar (8) that also reacted rather weakly to the Duterte-campaign. Variation among the others is very strong, with one (Pateros in the NCR) rising from zero before to one of the top-scorers under Duterte.
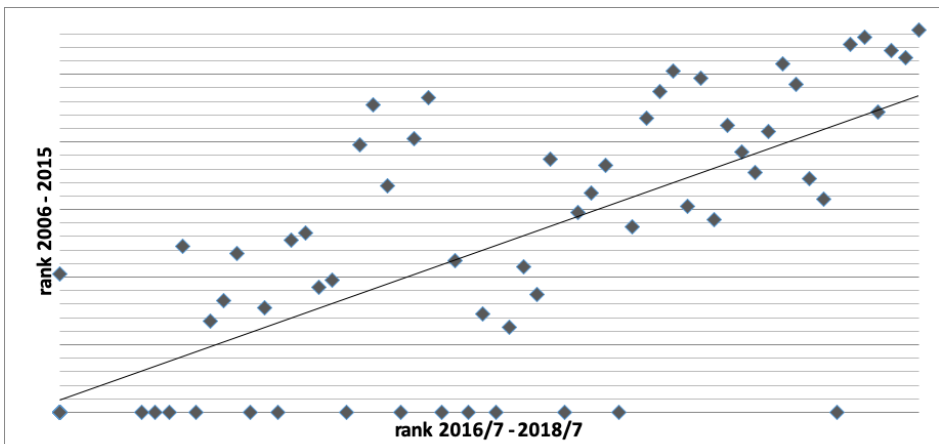
Figure 3. Comparing the Ranks With Respect to Suspects Killed per Million Population per Year 2006-2015 and from July 2016 to July 2018. (Own calculation).

This suggests that peripheral location may be one factor that explains lackluster response to the Duterte campaign. However, a number of provinces near or component cities of the NCR also reacted rather hesitantly (Las Pinas, Taguig, and Makati City, all in the NCR, or Tarlac in region 3), whereas other rather peripheral areas that earlier had exhibited low levels of violence before Duterte reacted vigorously (e.g., La Union, Isabela, Palawan).

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6   The Spearman rank correlation coefficient is the numerical expression of the relationship between two rank orders. It measures the strength and direction of this relationship. The maximum value of 1 signals a perfect positive and -1 a perfect negative correlation of the ranks of the two variables. Values around 0 indicate a lack of correlation between the rank-orders of the two variables.

7   Tied ranks at the lowest levels (0) have been adjusted to 0 with a similar reduction of all corresponding ranks.

These preliminary results signal that explanations for police violence must go beyond uniform assumptions for the Philippines or the PNP. They show that there were options for local executives and police commanders to resist or at least dilute the Duterte government's centrally propagated policy advocating the killing of suspects.

Before turning to the temporal variation in police use of deadly force, it should be analyzed whether police officers' use of deadly violence varied with the danger emanating from the environment in which they operate. This ratio had to be established on the regional level as there are no data on murder and homicide available for the past decade on the sub-regional level.

Data on murder and homicide are only available for the years 2006 and 2014 on the regional level. The corresponding Spearman rank correlation shows a rather surprising result: a negative (albeit non-significant) correlation (rs=-0.5364; n=11; p two-tailed=0.088). A similar correlation for the year 2017 yields no correlation at all (rs=-0.1091; n=11; p two-tailed=0.749). Even though data availability with respect to this dimension is only partially satisfying, it suffices to discount the assumption that higher levels of police violence are a result of police officers having to work in a more threatening environment.

Temporal Variation of Deadly Police Use of Force

Another important result of the analysis of the Philippine data on deadly police violence refers to temporal variation. While there are various different temporal patterns of variation with respect to deadly police violence on the sub-regional level, they add up to a wave-like pattern both for the decade before and the first 25 months under Duterte (Figures 4 and 5).

Whereas in the decade before Duterte the consecutive waves entail an underlying rise of deadly police violence of more than 120%, the Duterte period police campaign against drug-related crime until July 2018 saw an overall decline of deadly police violence from its initial heights during the first few months after Duterte's inauguration as president. Yet, even during the second year from August 2017 to July 2018, deadly
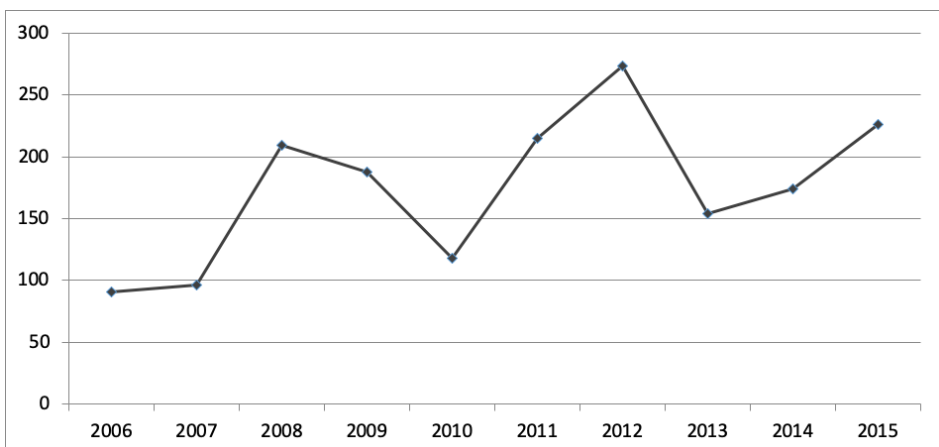
Figure 4. Suspects killed per Year 2006-2015. (Own compilation).
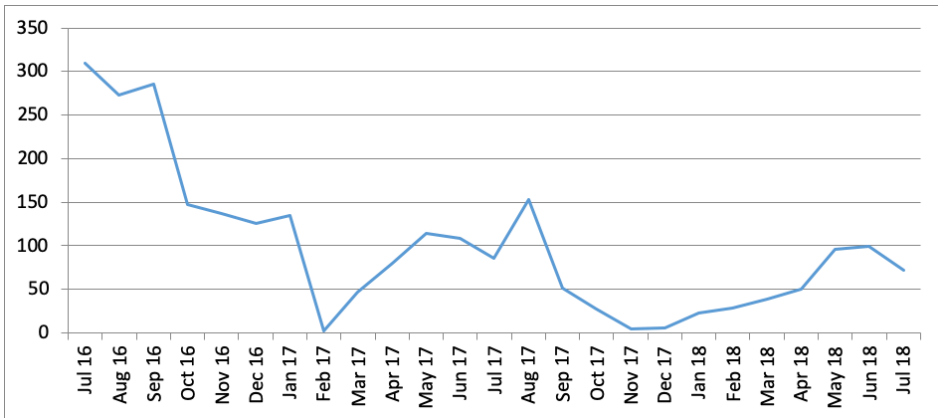
Figure 5. Suspects Killed per Month From July 2016 to July 2018. (ABS-CBN News, n.d.).

police violence was still substantially higher than during any of the pre-Duterte years. Despite this caveat, it is important to note that current levels of police use of deadly force are slowly diminishing even though the rhetoric of the government's anti-drug-crime campaign has not changed.

Considering the short-term spikes and the long-term pre-Duterte trend of rising police violence, it is clear that Duterte 'only' amplified a pre-existing trend of enhanced police use of deadly force. The low tides in the years 2007, 2010, and 2013 suggest that under 'normal' circumstances there may be a link between the Philippine electoral cycle and deadly police use of force, as all three years have been election years, during which the police has been busy in preventing election violence during the periods preceding and succeeding the elections.

Underlying these cumulative trends are various types of temporal variation at the local level that defy a uniform explanation. They again point to the need to take a closer look at local-level politics as a potentially crucial dimension for the explanation of both the magnitude of police use of deadly force and its variation.

The Influence of Environmental Threat on Police Use of Deadly Force

As detailed in the introduction, at first sight it seems sensible that police use of deadly force should depend on the type of environment in which the police operate. Environments characterized by higher levels of threat to the life and well-being of the police officers should elicit higher levels of deadly police violence, as police officers should tend to resort to violence in a number of situations that would warrant non-violent strategies in more peaceful environments. This abstract 'threat hypothesis' has already been tested and discounted above. Clearly, in the Philippines higher levels of deadly crime (murder and homicide) are not associated with higher levels of use of deadly force by a police force that reacts to a more hostile environment.

A second and more precise option for evaluating the relevance of threat for police behavior is to establish the ratio of police officers killed in relation to the strength of the police force, on the one hand, and correlate this with the respective ratio of police use of deadly force against suspects, on the other hand. This is possible only for the
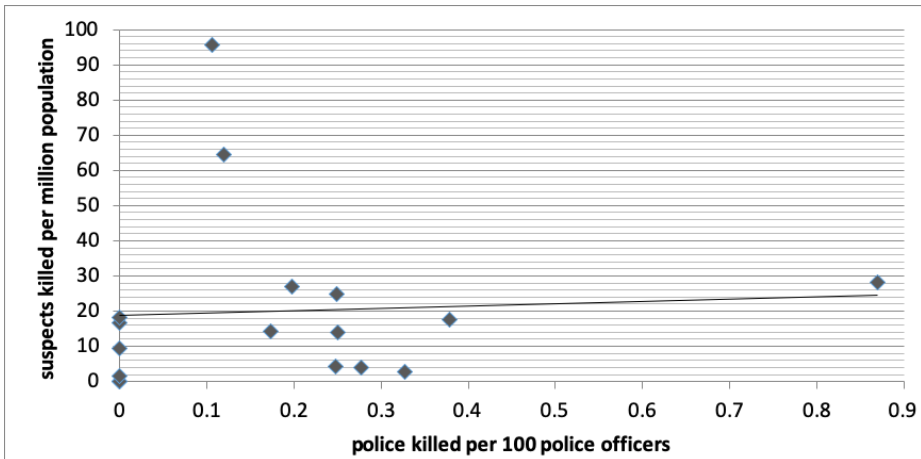
Figure 6. Relation Between Police Use of Deadly Force and Direct Threat to the Life of Police Officers in the NCR 2011-2015. (National Competitiveness Council Philippines, n.d.; own compilation).

component segments of the NCR for the years 2011 to 2015. However, a Spearman rank correlation only shows a very weak and statistically not significant positive relationship (rs=0.2519; n=17; p two-tailed=0.328). The scatterplot (Figure 6) likewise shows no relation between these two variables.

Given the rudimentary data, all that can be said is that police tend to use higher levels of deadly violence if there has been at least one victim on the side of the police during the past years.

Clearly there is significant need for additional research about the relationship between threat experienced by the police and their predilection to use deadly violence. The rough analysis above suggests that police threat-experience is no predictor of police use of deadly force against suspects.

The Lethality of Philippine Police Violence Before and Under Duterte

While information on the magnitude of police violence provides initial indicators for assessing whether such violence is excessive and may be characterized as masked extra-legal killing, this question is best dealt with by analyzing the precise patterns of police shoot-outs with respect to the numbers and ratios of victims on both sides. Unfortunately, the ABS-CBN News (n.d.) dataset does not provide the necessary data for the Duterte period as it only documents suspects killed. Therefore, the following analysis is confined to pre-Duterte armed police-encounters. However, an illustrative analysis will be added on the province of Bulacan, as the provincial police of Bulacan reports in detail on its daily operations, which allows for the establishment of a respective dataset.

As argued above, an initial indicator of the lethality of police violence is the ratio between suspects and police officers killed in so-called armed encounters. If encounters are 'real' and suspects actually target police officers, as is regularly asserted in police depictions of the incidents, then one should expect a non-trivial number of

victims on the police side. However, for the overall set of 69 provinces and cities the online search could document a total of 1,744 suspects killed, whereas only 50 police officers died in the encounters (or a ratio of 34.88 suspects killed for each victimized police officer) in the ten years from 2006 to 2015. This already excessive ratio hides extreme cases like Bulacan province (146/1), Manila City (243/3), Quezon City (391/4), Rizal (98/1), or Davao del Sur including Davao City (51/0). There were a total of 43 provinces with no victims on the police side, of which 24 had also no reports on suspects killed. These results illustrate that there is a clear problem of excessive police violence, which, however, is not uniformly present in the Philippines but concentrated in some regions.

An even more obvious proof of a regionally established shoot-to-kill policy is provided by the analysis of the relationship between suspects killed and wounded by the police. As argued above, the numbers of wounded must in any case exceed the number of killed, if one is to assume that police officers make use of reasonable force to avert imminent danger. However, the actual overall ratio for the ten years from 2006 to 2015 stands at 1,744 suspects killed against only 96 wounded or a staggering 18.2 killed suspects for each wounded. Again, the overall number masks dramatic differences on the local level. Extreme cases are again Bulacan (146/3), Rizal (98/1), Davao del Sur including Davao City (51/0), but also Laguna (101/3) and Caloocan (46/1), Pampanga including Angeles City (54/0), or Tarlac (46/0). There is not a single province with more reported suspects wounded than killed.

These results show that although the absolute number of police deadly use of force was much lower before Duterte's anti-drug campaign, the past "legal encounters" were already utilized as a legally masked means to kill suspects, or one might say as the administering of an 'informal death penalty'.

This continued unabated under Duterte as the scarce information provided by the PNP suggests. The PNP reported 68 police officers killed and 184 wounded for the period from 1 July 2016 to 26 July 2017. For the same period, they reported 3,451 "drug personalities who died in anti-drug operations" (Philippine National Police, n.d.). While these data only comprise the drug-war related shootings, the ratio of 50.75 suspects killed for each police officer killed is worse than the corresponding ratio of pre-Duterte police violence. An analysis of the operation reports of the Bulacan PNP for the year from June 2017 to May 2018 reveals a total of 250 suspects killed in police operations (including August 2018 the number rises to 291). However, the reports only mention two suspects wounded. In the same period, one police officer was killed and three reportedly wounded. This makes for a ratio of 250/1 for suspects to police officers killed and a ratio of 125/1 for suspects killed to wounded. While one may at first sight assume that non-fatal injuries have been underreported, this most probably is not the case as even slight injuries of police officers were reported. Of the three injured policemen (all in one encounter) one was reportedly shot in the foot, whereas another "sustained minor injury on its [sic] right eyebrow" and the third "a minor injury on his left eyelid" (Bulacan Philippine National Police, 2017). The Bulacan PNP data reveal a further important detail on deadly police use of force: There is an almost complete separation between operations in which all suspects are killed and operations in which the suspects are arrested, but none is killed or wounded. Operations with mixed results are almost completely absent. This suggests that at least in

Bulacan and during the Duterte presidency it is generally decided in advance whether an operation aims at arresting or killing the target persons. One final stunning point should be mentioned: In Bulacan more people have been killed by the police than killed intentionally otherwise (188/181) – at least for the ten months from September 2017 to May 2018 and the month of August 2018.

CONCLUSION AND OUTLOOK

This article provided a comprehensive analysis of deadly police violence in the Philippines. It established detailed data for the analysis and comparison of pre-Duterte and Duterte violence that also allow for a comparison to other countries.

The past two years of police violence under Duterte brought a dramatic rise in violence. However, the temporal analysis showed that this violence evolved in slowly abating waves following the initial climax during the first months after Duterte's inauguration as president. This suggests that even under a strongman-president as Duterte the Philippines may return to the much lower levels of deadly police violence in the next years. The slow, but fairly constant, rise of police violence during the earlier decade from 2006 to 2015 demonstrated that the dramatic increase in deadly police violence under Duterte was based on a longer trend that may have facilitated the quick response to Duterte's 'invitation to kill' suspects.

The analysis of sub-national data revealed a huge amount of variation between sub-national units and fairly high levels of path-dependency of sub-national units. Those that had high levels of police use of deadly force before reacted more strongly under Duterte, whereas others hardly reacted at all. These differences did not correspond to levels of murder and homicide. This suggests that variations of the threat factor emanating from different environments in which police officers operate does not play an important role in explaining different levels of police use of deadly force.

Taken together, these results suggest the need for further analysis that takes into account the provincial level and below. The host of variation in reaction to Duterte's 'license-to-kill' and the at times significant variation of police violence in single units over time suggests that local political determinants should be given additional attention in research. In the Philippine context of "bossism" (Sidel, 1999), one obvious starting point would be the analysis of the attitudes of local chief executives, their relationship to the municipal and provincial police directors,[8] and the dynamics of electoral political competition at the local level. Coronel's (2017) and Jensen and Hapal's (2018) focus on the (most probably uneven) entanglement of local politicians and police in illegal business might provide an alternative angle which may allow for

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8   This seems a crucial vantage point as in actual practice local executives wield enormous influence over the local police at their respective levels, an influence only insufficiently visible in the already rather broad powers granted by Section 51 of Republic Act No. 6975 (Congress of the Philippines, 1990) that inter alia grants the following powers to local executives: to choose the local police director from a shortlist; to exercise operational supervision and control of PNP units; to impose disciplinary penalties for minor offenses committed by members of the PNP; to recommend the transfer, reassignment, or detail of PNP members as well as recommend the appointment of new members of the PNP. These powers have been further strengthened in the past decades by the PNP Reform Act (No. 8551, Sections 62, 63; Congress of the Philippines, 1998). In addition, the local government units shoulder a non-trifling part of the operating expenses of the local PNP units.

making sense of the overall magnitude of police use of deadly force as compared to the Philippines' neighbors and its subnational spatial and temporal variation.

The final dimension analyzed was the lethality of police violence before and during the Duterte presidency. Despite huge differences in the magnitude of police violence in armed encounters, the Philippines (or, more precisely, many regions of the Philippines) have been outstanding both before and under Duterte. In both periods, the ratios of suspects killed per police officer killed and suspects killed per suspect wounded clearly show that in most regions the PNP takes no risk when confronting suspects and shoots-to-kill instead of applying the minimum amount of force necessary to overcome resistance. In the rather calm decade before Duterte, the lethality rate stood at 18.2 suspects killed for any single suspect wounded and at 125 for Bulacan in the year from June 2017 to May 2018. This is much worse than the respective data for Mexico, a country engulfed in a notorious war on drugs. There, the respective ratio of suspects killed to wounded stood at 6.6 on average for the years 2008 to 2014 (Forné, Correa, & Rivas, n.d.).

This article aimed at laying the foundation for and stimulating more research on police violence in the Philippines that goes beyond the preoccupation with the current surge under Rodrigo Duterte. It showed that crucial dimensions of present-day police violence have their precursors in past practices. Most importantly, this article established that it is problematic to analyze police violence as if it were a rather uniform phenomenon given the huge amount of spatial and temporal variation before and during the Duterte presidency. Future research should especially focus on the catalysts at the local level that may either amplify or inhibit such violence. It should also focus on explanations for the extraordinarily high lethality rate of Philippine police use of force in 'armed encounters' which could be ascertained irrespective of the actual magnitude of such violence. Finally, it is important to add a comparative perspective to this research that aims at relating the Philippines to other countries in order to better establish a yardstick for evaluating the past and present seriousness of the problem of police use of deadly force.

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Machinery of Male Violence: Embodied Properties and Chronic Crisis amongst Partners in Vietnam

Helle Rydstrom

This article takes the notion of crisis as a helpful analytical entry point to unfold the temporalities and modalities of the machinery of violence as manifested in men's abuse of their female partners in Vietnam. Based on ethnographic research I conducted over the years, the article argues that some types of crises might be episodic, and thus a bracketing of daily life, while others, such as intimate partner violence, might settle as a crisis of chronicity; as a condition of prolonged difficulties and pain that surreptitiously becomes a new 'normal'. The machinery of violence, the article shows, refers to processes of symbolic and material transformations of a targeted woman, shaped in accordance with a perpetrator's essentialist imaginations about her embodied properties (e.g., gender, sexuality, age, ethnicity, and bodyableness). Such violence is invigorated by a patrilineal organization of society and a systemic permissiveness to male-to-female abuse. A battered woman is confined to an interregnum; a space in which the laws of protection do not apply and male violence is perpetrated with impunity. Yet, men's violence against their female partners also is combatted and resisted in Vietnamese society.

Keywords: Body; Gender; Intimate Partner Violence; Masculinity; Vietnam

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INTRODUCTION

In brutally crossing boundaries, the forces of violence are not unlike machinery. The ubiquitous ways in which violence inflicts damage upon those it is imposed resembles the menacing drive of a persisting engine. Yet, this is machinery without any ontological status because violence, as Hannah Arendt (1970) has reminded us, has no essence. Violence emerges as an instrumental means that needs justification through the ends it pursues, because the application of violent techniques "like all other tools, are designed and used for the purpose of multiplying natural strength" (Arendt, 1970, p. 46; see also, Schmidt & Schroder, 2001). The repertoires and techniques of abuse applied in direct violent encounters differ in character. The tools of violence are designed as the result of fantasies about a target's embodied properties including gender, sexuality, age, ethnicity, class, and bodyableness.

In this article, I focus on men's violence against their female partners, as a gendered and sexualized machinery of male violence.[1] I am considering how a

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1 During various periods of anthropological fieldwork conducted in Vietnam, I have collected eth-

number of body typologies come into play when a woman or anybody else is violated as vehicles for processes of transformation of the phenomenological human body into an object of abuse; into dehumanized naked corporeality (Agamben, 1998, 2005; Mbembe, 2003; Rydstrom, 2012, 2015).[2] The World Health Organization (WHO) (2017) estimates that 35% of all women across the globe have experienced physical and/or sexual violence and intimate partner or non-partner sexual violence. 30% of this violence is perpetrated by an intimate male partner, while 38% of all murders of women are committed by a partner (see also, True, 2012).[3] In times of war, conflict, and catastrophes, intimate partner violence might be fueled, while violence against the female population in public spheres might increase.[4]

In obscuring the line between natality and mortality, violence exacerbates precariousness and insecurity. Violence ruins the foundation of lifeworlds (Stoler, 2013) by impairing the possibility for a return to how life used to be; hampering agency (Das & Kleinman, 2000; Kleinman, 2000); and imprinting a "poisonous knowledge" (Das, 2000, 2007) about the realities and perils of harm. The rupturing powers of violence provoke a state of crisis for the survivor, her household, and by extension for society at large (see United Nations Vietnam, 2012; World Health Organization, 2017). Crisis is a notion that provides a helpful analytical entry to unfold the modalities and temporalities of the machinery of violence, as manifested in men's violence against their female partners and the ruination it impacts on lifeworlds. While some types of crises are episodic and thus reduced to a bracketing of daily life, other types of crises grow into a more permanent condition (Rydstrom, 2019). Men's violence against their female partners epitomizes how a specific type of crisis can transmute into a "crisis of chronicity" (Vigh, 2008), which, however, can be challenged and even curbed (Roitman, 2014).

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nographic data on gendered and sexualized violence by unravelling the hierarchies, privileges, and powers with which gender based violence is imbued. Thus, from 1994 to 1995, I carried out fieldwork in a northern rural commune, which I call Thinh Tri, to study gender socialization. When conducting a second round of fieldwork in Thinh Tri from 2000 to 2001, I focused on violence and sexuality from an intergenerational perspective. In 2004, 2006, 2012-2013, and 2016, I carried out fieldwork in the larger region of Hanoi and in a northern semi-rural area, which I refer to as Quang Vinh, to study gender and harm. From 2004 to 2011, I was the Swedish coordinator of the *Rural Families in Transitional Vietnam* project under the frame of which data were collected in 1,100 households in the North, Center, and South of Vietnam. In 2015, I conducted fieldwork in coastal Vietnam in a community, which I call Long Lanh, to study climate disasters, gender and violence. In 2018 and 2019, I carried out fieldwork to examine the gendering of labor and harm in the industrial zones of northern Vietnam. All names of persons and communities are pseudonyms to protect the anonymity of those involved in my research.

2 "The term 'violence against women'", the United Nations (UN) (1993) Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women reads, "means any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life".

3 "Violence", according to the World Health Organization (2002, p. 5), "is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against … another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development or deprivation."

4 "Intimate Partner Violence" (IPV) is a term which avoids any a priori gender categorization of perpetrator and victim in defining IPV as "an intimate partner or ex-partner that causes physical, sexual or psychological harm, including physical aggression, sexual coercion, psychological abuse and controlling behaviors" (World Health Organization, 2017).

To explore the ways in which the machinery of male violence is intrinsically gendered and sexualized, I consider various components that together provide the conditions which allow for the perpetuation of men's violence against their female partners. Hence, I will first, outline how violence manipulates the human body; second, introduce figures and debates on male-to-female violence in the Vietnamese context; third, address a masculinized organization of social life as a framework for male powers, privileges, and abuse; and last, highlight how men's violence against women and girls in the Vietnamese context is rejected and combatted.

DEHUMANIZED BODIES

Men's violence against their female partners is shaped through a perpetrator's essentialist and stereotypical fantasies about a woman's embodied properties (e.g., gender, sexuality, age, ethnicity, and bodyableness) (Rydstrom, 2012, 2015). The processes through which human beings are reduced to an object of abuse, a naked corporeality, or what Giorgio Agamben (1998) has conceptualized as "bare life", are tied to the ways in which a sovereign power takes biological life as its target, as corporeality upon which violence and death can be enacted (see also, Foucault, 1978; Mbembe, 2003). How lives are attempted to be laid bare by the means of violence, I argue, refer to symbolic and tangible processes of transformation undergone by the abused body (Rydstrom, 2012, 2015, 2017).

Violence is a direct attack on the physical and mental integrity of the *phenomenological body*; the first body typology, which is the foundation for our being-in-the-world and how we sense, feel, perceive, think, experience, and remember (Bourdieu, 1992; Grosz, 1994; Merleau-Ponty, 1996; Rydstrom, 2015). This body incorporates our life story and memories, including "poisonous knowledge" about pain and agony (Das, 1997, 2000; Scarry, 1985; Valéry, 1990). The *surface of the human body* materializes as a second body typology, as corporeality that meets the 'outside world'. This body is rendered intelligible and categorized by others due to its physical appearance, properties, and qualities (Merleau-Ponty, 1996; Rydstrom, 2015; Valéry, 1990). It emerges as a site upon which discursive socio-cultural powers operate in accordance with ideas about gender, sexuality, age, ethnicity, class, and bodyableness to establish ideas about privileges, hierarchies, and rights (Foucault, 1978; Grosz, 1994; Rydstrom, 2015).

The *violated body* is a third body typology, which concerns the ways in which the infliction of violence involves "thingification" (Barad, 2003) of the phenomenological body through the design of abusive techniques and repertoires of abuse. This body is wrought physically, mentally, and ethically as a result of the destructive ways in which a perpetrator transgresses the boundaries of the body and mind. Stereotypical and essentialist imaginations lie behind the dehumanization of the person upon whom the violence is perpetrated (Agamben, 1998; Butler, 2010; Rydstrom, 2015). *The body of fantasies* refers to a fourth body typology which appears as the vector of a "field of immanence of desire" (Deleuze & Guattari, 2002, p. 154). Such desires are modelled in accordance with fantasies about superiority over the bodies of others due to their gender, sexuality, age, ethnicity, class, and bodyableness. This body typology concerns the ways in which the distribution and projection of imaginations, including those which are profoundly violent, inform differentiated and specialized forms of harm (Braidotti, 1994; Deleuze & Guattari, 2002; Rydstrom, 2015).

These symbolic and corporeal body typologies are intimately intertwined with one another as volatile and dynamic processes that come into play when human bodies are subjected to the intrusive and destructive powers of a machinery of violence (Rydstrom, 2012, 2015, 2017, 2019). These processes result in the configuration of the emblematic figure which Agamben (1998) has conceptualized as *homo sacer.* Banned from society by a sovereign power, *homo sacer* is included by exclusion, captured in a space of impunity where it is "permitted to kill without committing homicide and without celebrating a sacrifice, and sacred life [i.e. *homo sacer*]—that is, life that may be killed but not sacrificed—is the life that has been captured in this sphere" (Agamben, 1998, p. 83; italics removed). Manipulated by techniques of violence, an abused woman is caught in a "zone of exception"; a space in which the rule of law does not apply and impunity prevails (Agamben, 1998; Mbembe, 2003; Rydstrom, 2012, 2015, 2017). Here, female life is defined by a machinery of male violence, which truncates the possibilities for agency and the potentialities for positive change (Vigh, 2008).

CRISIS OF CHRONICITY

As decisive moments, which forcefully can differentiate, select, and separate, crises can be seen as "conditions that make outcomes unpredictable" (Habermas, 1992/1976, p. 1). The term *crisis* is a Latinized form of the Greek *krisis,* which refers to "a turning point in a disease" (etymonline.com, n.d.; Merriam-Webster Dictionary, n.d.). For this reason, a crisis tends to be associated with a figurative purification, *catharsis,* understood in terms of an avenue to a new beginning (Endres & Six-Hohenbalken, 2014; Vigh, 2008; Walby, 2015). A crisis could lead to renewal, but it might as well open to a path fraught with difficulties and suffering (see, etymonline.com, n.d.; Merriam-Webster Dictionary, n.d.).

In disrupting coherency and augmenting uncertainty for future prospects (Habermas, 1992), a crisis could swiftly change from a *state of emergency* (Benjamin, 1999/1968) into a condition of *ahistorical permanence* (Bhabha, 1994). An episodic interaction of sudden harm might lead to repeated abuse (Das, 2000; True, 2012). Repeated intimate partner violence can over time transmute into a banality of daily life (Arendt, 1970; Rydstrom, 2017), and in doing so morph from a momentary crisis into a *crisis of chronicity* (Vigh, 2008). Such a crisis is characterized by stillness in the sense that "the crisis consists precisely in the fact that the old is dying and the new cannot be born; in this interregnum a great variety of morbid symptoms appear" (Gramsci, 1971, pp. 275-276). Approaching crisis as a chronic condition might appear as if it neither had a beginning nor an end (Roitman, 2014) as if freed "from its temporal confines" (Vigh, 2008, p. 9).

A crisis determined by a machinery of male violence precisely is characterized by not appearing as coming to a closure anytime soon. Temporality needs to be approached as a subjective phenomenon to capture the modalities and intensities by which specific types of crises are composed. In some tempo-spatial pockets, a crisis might pass quickly, while in others it might compartmentalize as a permanent situation, as if separated from predominant understandings of the progression of time. Repeated violence can create a parallel crisis universe, a zone of alternative tempi and speeds in which time seems to have stopped and the horizon been blurred. That is an

interregnum, an ahistorical permanence (Gramsci, 1971), in which there is no return to how life used to be prior to the violence and a violence-free life seems out of reach (Rydstrom, 2015, 2017, 2019).

REITERATED VIOLENCE

Gathering around small plastic tables squeezed into the shade of a cluster of trees for protection against the blistering morning sun, a group of men from Long Lanh in central coastal Vietnam were sharing their experiences of intimate partner violence. Several of the men told how they used to be abusive against their female partners and how they eventually had ended their violent behavior. One of the men, Van, suddenly stated that "women also beat men" (*phụ nữ cũng đánh đàn ông chứ*). This was not the first time that a man in the Vietnamese context had let me (a female researcher) know that not only men but also women are violent.[5]

Violence is harmful to anyone and abuse against boys and men renders the risk of being overlooked if gendered violence is equalized with women. The comment, however, does not reflect the realities on the ground in Vietnam, or anywhere else, but rather appears as a way of dealing with a legally, morally, and emotionally loaded problem (Kimmel, 2002). Joan Kelly and Michael Johnson (2008) thus have observed that "when advocates for men claim that domestic violence is perpetrated equally by men and women … they are describing situational couple violence, not coercive controlling violence" (p. 481). Kelly and Johnson (2008) have defined "coercive controlling violence", which is in the fore of my discussion, as various combinations of physical intimidation, asserting male privilege, coercion, and threats, emotional abuse, isolation, use of children, economic abuse as well as belittling, denying, and blaming a partner.

The symmetry argument, reflected in Van's comment, has been rebutted by figures on gender-based violence provided by various international organizations. According to the WHO (2017), statistics on male intimate partner violence vary from 23.2% in high-income countries to 24.6% in the Western Pacific, 37% in the Eastern Mediterranean region, and 37.7% in Southeast Asia. Mirroring such numbers, a study conducted by United Nations Women Vietnam (2012) shows that 34% of ever-partnered women in the Vietnamese context reported "lifetime experience of physical and/or sexual violence, with 9% experiencing physical and/or sexual violence in the last 12 months" (p. 13). These startlingly high numbers indicate that men's violence against their female partners is a problem of "pandemic" proportions (United Nations, 2018; United Nations Women, 2018), and the most prevalent human rights violation experienced by women and girls in the world today (United Nations Statistics Division, 2015; United Nations Population Fund, 2019).

According to a study carried out by Kathryn Yount et al. (2016) in northern Vietnam on intimate partner violence, 36.6% out of 522 interviewed men (18-51 years) reported that they had perpetrated some form of abuse, especially physical violence against their wife. A minority of respondents, only 0.2% of the interviewed men, said

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5   The comment resonates with the symmetry debate which erupted in the 1990s, when men's organizations, especially in the USA, claimed that despite statistics intimate partner violence is experienced in equal proportions by both women and men (Kimmel, 2002).

that they had perpetrated sexual violence against their wife. In the same study, 12% out of 533 interviewed married women (18-51 years), however, reported that they had experienced sexual violence committed by their husband.[6]

Discrepancies in men's and women's reporting of sexual violence resemble earlier findings in Vietnam, according to which sexual violence "was seen as a problem to be tolerated by female focus groups, while the male groups did not consider it to be a serious issue" (World Bank 1999, p. 2). Hence, the conviction rate of men who have perpetrated violence against their female partners is remarkably low. While about 43% of violent crimes are referred to the police, only 12% of reported cases result in criminal charges, and as few as 1% of reported cases of men's violence against women lead to conviction (Duvvury, Carney, & Minh/United Nations Women, 2012; Khuyên, 2016).[7] Such findings epitomize how violence against women has become an inte-grated, and in that sense ordinary dimension of female life, which holds power to turn life into a chronic crisis defined by insecurity and danger (Arendt, 1970; Rydstrom, 2003b, 2017, 2019; Vigh, 2008).

In the Vietnamese context, men's violence against their female partners frequently has been associated with Vietnam's opening into the global economy; with the intro-duction of the *Đổi Mới* (renovation) policy in 1986 (Le, 1992, p. 263; Ljunggren, 1993). In the wake of the *Đổi Mới* policy in December 1995, the Vietnamese government launched Resolution 87 as a means to eliminate any "social evils" (*tệ nạn xã hội*); a label which refers both to illicit activities as well as morally condemned behaviors such as domestic violence, gambling, and drug addiction (Koh, 2001; Marr, 1981; Nguyen-vo, 2008; Rydstrom, 2006; Vijeyarasa, 2010). Jayne Werner (2008) has dis-cussed how social issues with the introduction of the *Đổi Mới* policy increasingly have been defined as household problems and individual concerns. Well-socialized citizens would promote "equality of men and women" (*nam nữ bình đẳng*) (Hoang, 2002) and engage in the building of a "happy and harmonious family life" (*gia đình hạnh phúc hòa thuận*) which would not suffer from any conflicts or crises (Drummond & Rydstrom, 2004; Leskhowich, 2008; Rydstrom, 2003a, 2003b, 2009, 2017).

SILENCING MEN'S VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

International attention to men's violence against women, as highlighted by the United Nations General Assembly's Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (launched in 1993) and the Beijing Declaration (adopted in 1995 by the Fourth World Conference on Women, see United Nations, 1995), provide the backdrop for debates on men's violence against women in Vietnam. Prior to the intro-duction of the *Đổi Mới* policy, men's violence against women was not recognized as a problem (Khuat, 2004). The tendency to silence men's violence against women thus prompted Le Thi Quy (1992), an official voice of the National Women's Union (*Hội Phụ Nữ*),[8] to introduce the term "family violence" (*bạo lực gia đình*) and to explain the

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6   For a definition of sexual violence, see World Health Organization (2017).

7   See also, General Statistics Office of Vietnam, 2010; Schuler, Lenzi, Hoang, Vu, Yount, & Trang, 2014; Vietnam Women's Union, 2017; Yount et al., 2016.

8   As one of the mass organizations, the Union is responsible for identifying women-specific problems in the household and in society at large (Endres, 1999; Rydstrom, 2016; Waibel & Glück, 2013).

visible as well as invisible harm violence inflicts upon women (see also, Pistor & Le, 2014). Following Le Thi Quy (1992), Le Thi Nham Tuyet and Ho Thi Phuong Tien (1996) highlighted the invisible features of male-to-female violence, while Doan Bao Chau (1998) drew attention to a public neglect of the silent female suffering caused by men's physical and sexual abuse (see also Le, 1998). Thus, these voices identified how corporeal properties of gender and sexuality in intersection with other parameters such as age inform male violence.

The study *Gender-Based Violence: The Case of Vietnam* (World Bank, 1999) provided an early empirical overview of the prevalence of men's abuse of women in Vietnam, and even indicated that the onus for male-to-female violence tended to be placed on the abused woman. In 2010, on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (November 25), the General Statistics Office of Vietnam (GSO) published the large-scaled national study, *Keeping Silent is Dying: Results from the National Study on Domestic Violence against Women in Viet Nam,* which offered novel quantitative as well as qualitative insights into the ways in which men's violence against their female partners harmed women, ruined their lifeworlds, limited their participation in social and economic life, and sometimes even cost them their lives. The study indicates that women who have been subjected to a male partner's violence feel ashamed and worried about "losing face" (*mất mặt*) because of what they see as an inability to manage their family and marriage well. They would thus remain silent about the abuse and "endure the suffering" (*chịu đau khổ*). Sexually abused women even stated that there would be no solutions to end such abuse because of a wife's assumed obligation to satisfy her husband sexually. Some women, though, told in the report that they had encouraged their husband to consult sex workers and thereby transfer the problem to another realm (General Statistics Office of Vietnam, 2010, p. 92; see also Horton & Rydstrom, 2011).[9]

Vietnam's #MeToo movement has evolved as an attempt to interrupt the machinery of male violence and, in doing so, even the crisis of chronicity in which an abused woman is caught. The movement in Vietnam corresponds with a current global social media movement, which efficiently has drawn public attention to men's sexual abuse of women, called for recognition of the harm such violence inflicts upon women, and for legal punishment of sexual violence perpetrators. Under the hashtag *#ngungimlang/#ngừngimlặng* (stop staying silent), the tendency to mute and neglect men's violence against women has been critically debated on social media. In addition, female survivors of sexual violence have shared their testimonies on being sexually abused in the domain of the home or at the workplace (see also "Phong trào #MeToo liệu", 2018; "#MeToo, Vietnam", 2018; "Vietnam's #MeToo Movement Begins", 2018).

FROM LAWS TO PRACTICES

While an elaborated legislation on the prevention of violence is in place in Vietnam (Schuler et al., 2014; Yount et al., 2016), the law does not necessarily prevent violence taking place at home. The gap between the letter of the law to prevent and combat violence against women and the implementation of the law was epitomized at the

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9   These comments accord with my own data from Vietnam.

Smiling Tears (*Nước Mắt Cười*) exhibition held in Hanoi in 2012 ("Everyday Items Used for", 2012). Focus at the exhibition was on men's violence against their female partners, and the explicitness of the exhibition was horrifying. Tools used by men to maltreat and injure their female partners were on display, including a saucepan and batons. In addition to these instruments of brutality, female survivors of partner violence shared their experiences of being abused and even told about the energy they had been able to muster to leave an abusive partner and terminate a life impaired by a crisis of chronicity encroached by a gendered and sexualized machinery of male violence (see also, Kwiatkowski, 2008, 2011; Rydstrom, 2003b, 2006, 2017).

According to the *Keeping Silent is Dying* report (General Statistics Office of Vietnam, 2010)

> it is of paramount importance to strengthen the enforcement and implementation of existing policies and legal frameworks related to violence prevention and response through enhancing the capacities of duty bearers (the National Assembly, the Government of Viet Nam and mass organizations) at all levels and developing structured multi-sectoral coordination mechanisms to improve the coherence of policies, laws and programs related to violence (p. 111).

Vietnam ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1982 and both the Penal Code of 1999 (No. 15/1999/QH10) as well as the Law on Marriage and Family of 2000 stipulate that the use of violence is prohibited. According to the Civil Code of 2005 (No. 33-2005-QH11) (National Assembly of Vietnam, 2005), the civil rights of a person entitles that person to request the court or other relevant agencies to protect them (Art. 9). In 2006, the National Assembly debated the draft law on preventing domestic violence, which was passed in 2007 as the Law on Domestic Violence Prevention and Control (No. 02/2007/QH12) (National Assembly of Vietnam, 2007). With the new law an important step was taken in the prevention and combat of violence in the household, and beyond. While the law does not call for criminal sanctions, it does encourage civil solutions, including reconciliation with the aid of third party mediators such as kin, health care clinics, or local reconciliation units; fines; prohibition orders; and the re-education of male perpetrators (see also, Duvvury, Carney, & Minh/United Nations Women, 2012; Kwiatkowski, 2008, 2011; Nguyen & Rydstrom, 2018; Rydstrom, 2017, 2019).

SCALES OF HARM

When domestic violence breaches the criminal law, Article 104 under the Penal Code of 1999 (No. 15/1999/QH10) may apply (see also, United Nations Women, Vietnam, 2012). The seriousness of violence is defined in accordance with a number of stipulated infirmity rates required for an action to be a criminal act.[10] Regarding the seriousness of abuse, Article 104 (Penal Code) (National Assembly of Vietnam, 1999) clarifies that

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10   For details on the infirmity rate, see National Assembly of Vietnam (1999).

those who intentionally injure or causes harm to the health of other persons with an infirmity rate of between 11% and 30% ...[11], shall be sentenced to non-custodial reform for up to three years or between six months and three years of imprisonment.

The infirmity rate is determined by a medical examiner who issues a certificate to verify the level of harm. Such a document, however, does not always come without a cost. Those women who cannot afford a certificate or those who find unauthorized fees unacceptable will not be able to obtain the needed certificate (Borgstrom, 2012; General Statistics Office of Vietnam, 2010; Hakkarainen, 2014; Vian, Brinkerhoff, Feeley, Salomon, & Vien, 2012).

The infirmity rate sheds light on how the gravity of men's violence against women is understood legally at a systemic level and even how a culture of impunity is facilitated. When female bodies are manipulated from phenomenological fellow human beings into objects of abuse, into naked life, by the aid of repertoires and techniques of abuse, local authorities are in charge of determining the scale of harm. Serious cases of male-to-female violence are those which lead to hospitalization and/or have lethal consequences, according to a representative from the women's union from the northern Quang Vinh area. Local women's union units, health care clinics, and reconciliation units might dismiss a case of violence because the damage is determined to fall under the 11% infirmity limit. As it is both tedious and costly in terms of time, money, and dignity to approach relevant agencies to pursue a legal procedure, much abuse is never registered, thus not recognized, but rendered silent as an individualized problem and a chronic crisis to endure (General Statistics Office of Vietnam, 2010; Nguyen, 2011; Nguyen & Rydstrom, 2018; Rydstrom, 2003b, 2017; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2011).

The power to define violence can in itself be seen as a kind of harm, as a violence which "is built into the structure and shows up as unequal power and consequently as unequal life chances" (Galtung, 1969, p. 171). As a nexus of various societal inequalities (Farmer, 2004), this kind of violence is symbolically shaped and operates throughout the societal system as systemic harm (Nguyen & Rydstrom, 2018). Systemic harm fosters a machinery of male violence through larger socio-economic, cultural, and political structures as these serve to establish a political discourse of permissiveness and a culture of impunity (Derrida, 1990; Nguyen & Rydstrom, 2018). Systemic harm is intertwined with men's violence against women on the ground, as two types of violence in a socio-cultural continuum of harm. These types of violence capitalize upon and might even galvanize one another as "rebounding violence", which thus refers to a dialectical relation between these two levels of violence and how they perpetually interact with and inform one another (Bloch, 1992; Nguyen & Rydstrom, 2018). These dynamics of violence condition the production and reproduction of gender-based abuse as a justified practice, which is reduced to a banal dimension of the ordinary (Arendt, 1970).

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11   That is, "or under 11% but in one of the following circumstances". These include, amongst others, using weapons, causing harm to more than one person, causing minor permanent damage to the victims, committing the crime more than once or against children, pregnant women, and other people considered to be weak, or against parents. For details, see National Assembly of Vietnam (1999).

PATRILINY, MASCULINITY, AND VIOLENCE

Patriliny informs social organization in the household and by extension society at large (King & Stone, 2010; Sandgren, 2009). In addition to a gender perspective, which provides a lens for critical assessments of how socio-cultural logics produce particular images, narratives, and practices with regard to men and women, the machinery of male violence encourages a focus on masculinity (Bourdieu, 2001; Butler, 2004; Schrock & Schwalbe, 2009). Even though not all men agree with an influential type of masculinity, they are under pressure to conform to influential ideas about men, maleness, and masculinity as are women to assumptions about women, femaleness, and femininity (Connell, 1987; Hearn, 1998; Horton, 2014; Horton & Rydstrom, 2011).

The patrilineal and heterosexual family remains common in Vietnamese society despite an increase in same-sex partnerships, single-headed households, and co-habitation prior to marriage (Braemer, 2014; Horton, 2014; Newton, 2012; Nguyen, 2015; Rydstrom 2016). The "pillar of the house" (*trụ cột gia đình;* literally the pillar of the family) is a role which the most senior male (in terms of age and status) of a household is supposed to hold. The continuation of the patrilineage is considered critical and male progeny therefore valued. As "inside lineage" (*họ nội*), sons enjoy privileges and powers which daughters do not. Descent traced along the male line means that daughters come to stand in a position of exteriority to the patrilineage as "outside lineage" (*họ ngoại*) (Rydstrom, 2003a, 2003b; Bourdieu, 2001; Sandgren, 2009).

A dichotomic and ontological way of rendering men and women meaningful prevails in Vietnamese society, meaning that men generally are associated with masculinity and women with femininity. Considered as the result of the merging of "physiology" (*sinh lý học*), "psychology" (*tâm lý*), and a person's "character" (*tính cách*), male bodies are understood as being related to the forces of *Dương* (Yang in Chinese) and female bodies with the forces of *Âm* (Yin in Chinese). The forces of *Dương* would make a man "hot" (*nóng;* also meaning bad tempered), while a female body would be "cold" (*lạnh*) due to the forces of *Âm* (see also, Sandgren, 2009). "Hot" bodies are associated with active and centripetal energies, or masculinity, and "cold" bodies with passive and centrifugal energies, or femininity. These two forces of the phenomenological body would ideally complement one another and ensure harmony in the household and by extension in society (Jamieson, 1993; Leshkowich, 2008; Ngo, 2004).

Women's inferior position is expected to be balanced through a sociality of femininity that is called *tình cảm* (sentiments/emotions/feelings) and the various qualities of which it is composed, including "respect" (*kính*), "self-denial" (*nhường*), "endurance" (*chịu*), and "holding back oneself" (*nhịn*). Even though, *tình cảm* also is appreciated in men, *tình cảm* is associated with female capacities thanks to which they can verify their "good morality" (*đạo đức tốt*) and navigate the asymmetrical reciprocity inherent to the patriliny.[12] The qualities associated with *tình cảm* ideally stimulate the fostering of "happy and harmonious family life" (*gia đình hạnh phúc hòa thuận*) (Rydstrom, 2003b, 2009, 2010, 2017).

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12   Such a gendered asymmetrical reciprocity, furthermore, is illustrated by Confucian dictums such as the Four Virtues (*Tứ đức*), which dictate female behavior beyond *tình cảm* (Ngo, 2004). For a discussion of gendered asymmetrical reciprocity, see also Young (1997).

An official representative of the women's union in Quang Vinh, for example, emphasized that women need to be aware of the social hierarchies and behave accordingly.[13] In daily life, women are expected to navigate a patrilineal hierarchy and manage ideals regarding family happiness by practicing *tình cảm.* This capacity is recognized as a critical means by which women can attempt to prevent the "rice" from "boiling" (*sôi*); or more precisely hinder a male partner from being "enraged"/"mad" (*nổi khùng*) and maybe even from becoming violent (Rydstrom, 2003b, 2009, 2010, 2017).

HIERARCHIES, ENERGIES, AND POWERS

Composed of gendered energies, the phenomenological body interlocks with a patriliny, which creates "openings towards violence [and] towards misogyny" (Connell, 1987, pp. 185-186). This was illustrated by a Thinh Tri Health Care Clinic worker in northern Vietnam, who explained that "due to their hot character and hard work it is normal that men get angry". "Hot characters" contain "hot" blood which produces "strength" (*mạnh mẽ*) and "energy" (*năng lượng*) in men and boys. This does not only mean that they might be aggressive but even could "explode" (*hăng lên*) (see also, Dao, Hoang, & Kanthoul, 2012; General Statistics Office of Vietnam, 2010; Horton & Rydstrom, 2011; Martin, 2013; Pells, Wilson, & Nguyen, 2016; Yount et al., 2016).

In a similar vein, a Thinh Tri nurse explained that "women should hold back themselves and ... not explode". If women were exploding, a conflict could easily escalate, and women are therefore expected to remain calm, or stay cool, if a partner becomes hot tempered. Not all women, however, are willing to cool down a "hot" partner by "enduring suffering". Bian, a young woman in her early twenties from northern Quang Vinh, for example, related how throughout her childhood she had witnessed violent encounters between her parents, thus remembering that,

> my father had extramarital affairs and my mother knew about it. When she complained, my father beat her. He did so instead of explaining and talking with her. But women talk too much. For instance, my mother brought up his extramarital affairs even if we were having a good time. Women often criticize [their husband]".

Even though Bian emphasized that she finds men's violence against women unacceptable, she also held her mother accountable for the repeated incidents of violence between her parents. Placing the responsibility for the violence to which women are subjected on the abused woman is not uncommon, as indicated by a male interviewee in the *Keeping Silent is Dying* study, who suggested that "women are often mean and often fuss about small things. That is why violence occurs. The main cause of conflict in the family is women" (General Statistics Office of Vietnam, 2010, p. 76). What is criticized as a woman's "grumbling"/"complaning" (*càm ràm*) attitude frequently is referred to as a reason for men's violence against their female partners. In this vein, Hiep from northern Vietnam stated that women do not understand their husband

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13   This statement resembles the Confucian dictum "Showing respect for the superior and self-denial for the inferior" (*Biết kính trên nhường dưới*).

because they "have big mouths and talk too much" (see also, Dao et al., 2012; Horton & Rydstrom, 2011; Rydstrom, 2003b, 2006, 2010; Trinh, 2008; Yount et al., 2016).

Women who do not act with *tình cảm* tend to be looked down upon as incapable of balancing a "hot" partner by "cooling" him down appropriately. Such assumed feminine 'flaws' are frequently taken as justification for a man's beating of his wife by men, women, and even by official representatives. Thus, a woman who "grumbles/complains" would often be condemned in the Vietnamese context for her lack of ability to stimulate harmony in the household by showing *tình cảm* appropriately (Rydstrom, 2003a, 2003b, 2017; see also, Kwiatkowski, 2008, 2011; Yount & Krause, 2017).

Oanh, a woman in her late thirties who lives in central coastal Long Lanh, recalled an incident of abuse which she at the same time minimized by saying, "I was beaten once by my husband because I complained. It was not a big thing. He was drunk and hot-tempered and then he beat me". Oanh's comment illuminates how a man's violence against his female partner is downplayed and thereby serves to surreptitiously transform abuse into a common and even expected male practice. Giang, who also lives in Long Lanh and is about twice as old as Oanh, related in a similar vein how she had begun to "grumble/complain" due to the extramarital affairs of her husband and how the confrontations had resulted in him abusing her. On these occasions, Giang would flee to her parent's place together with the couple's children, but she would always return. After a particularly terrifying incident of abuse, Giang and her children, however, left and stayed to reside with her parents (Rydstrom, 2019).

Uyen, who lives in the same community as Oanh and Giang, belongs to the same age bracket as Oanh. Independently of Oanh and Giang, Uyen reiterated ideas about how women's behavior fuels conflict and violence in a marriage. She thus explained that her husband's violence had been spurred by what she saw as her "grumbling/complaining" behavior and "provoking" (*khiêu khích*) attitude (Nguyen & Rydstrom, 2018; Rydstrom, 2017, 2019). After getting married, Uyen's husband became violent, and she was, as she remembered, "hit many times". Also, Uyen would escape her husband's violence by fleeing to her parents' home where she would find safety. Uyen, however, was determined to divorce her abusive husband and therefore gathered information from the authorities about how to initiate a divorce process. The divorce plans, though, were put to rest due to the advice of close kin and neighbors, who suggested that she should not leave her husband but rather stay for the sake of their children. Blaming the survivor of violence for the abuse appears as a strategy, albeit self-destructive, which is employed by women to cope with the forces of a machinery of male violence and the ways in which it determines life as a chronic crisis.

CRISIS OF CHRONICITY INTERRUPTED

While men's violence against women in the Vietnamese context has mainly been restricted to the realm of the household, recent reports indicate a surge in the abuse of women in public spaces. Recordings shared on social media have caused alarm in Vietnamese society, including a clip which showed how a woman was beaten by her husband in central Hanoi, in close proximity to a cafeteria, and another one from the International Airport in Hanoi, which displayed how two men attacked a young woman on Vietnamese Women's Day (20 October). Another video clip showed how

a mixed group of young boys and girls were beating up girls on the streets in the province of Nghe An and in Ho Chi Minh City (i.e., former Saigon). Hoang Giang Son of the Institute for Studies of Society, Economy, and Environment (iSEE), a Hanoi-based NGO, concluded in connection with these incidents that "violence against humans, particularly against women, is escalating in our society" (Khuyên, 2016). Conveying footage of male-to-female violence to a global audience through social media platforms elucidates how secondary virtual types of abuse and humiliation can be added to first grade direct physical violence. Social media, however, at the same time has become an important means for international and national agencies as well as NGOs devoted to prevent men's violence against women in the domestic and public spheres. Social media offer a platform from which agencies and organizations can provide information to abused women to break their isolation and escape a crisis of chronicity. Organizations and agencies such as the Vietnam Women's Union have set up hotlines and platforms such as the Facebook page called "Families without Violence" (*Gia đình Không Bạo lực*) to reach out to women to inform them about anti-violence legislation, rights, and programs aimed at combatting men's violence against women (Domestic Violence in Vietnam, 2016; see also, Rydstrom, 2017, 2019).

As part of the international November campaign "Say NO – UniTE to End Violence against Women" launched by the UN Women, various activities have been initiated in Vietnam to mark opposition to men's violence against women. In 2016, for example, Vietnamese NGOs and institutes dedicated to mobilizing resistance against male-to-female violence organized events, lectures, and meetings as part of the national campaign "Say No to Violence" (*Nói Không với Bạo lực*). The "Say NO – UniTE to End Violence against Women" annual campaign has gained traction and broad public support in Vietnamese society. Many women – and men – wear clothes in the campaign's signature color orange when attending demonstrations and activities to end men's violence against women during the campaign month. The following year, in 2017, in connection with the UN Women "Say NO – UniTE to End Violence against Women" campaign, a large event called "Zumba Festival: Love's Steps" was held in the Thong Nhat Park in Hanoi. Thousands of girls and women participated in the demonstration, which encouraged female survivors to voice their experiences of male violence as a way of ending the silencing of male-to-female abuse.[14]

Such initiatives have become recurrent annual activities, as illustrated by the #HearMeToo campaign of 2018 (Doan, 2018). In response to the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence Campaign 2018, the UN Secretary-General's UNiTE Orange the World Campaign, the UN Women, and the UN's Gender Thematic Group, social media and videos were used to disseminate information across the country about men's violence against women. A national workshop on gender-based violence prevention and Safe City models was organized by the UN Women and the Department of Labor, Invalids, and Social Affairs (MOLISA) in Ho Chi Minh City to develop strategies aimed at tackling the problem of men's violence against women in

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14   The Zumba event was launched by the Center for Studies and Applied Sciences in Gender, Family, Women, and Adolescents (CSAGA) in collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Department of Gender Equality under the Ministry of Labor, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA), and Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union in Hanoi amongst others. Even international NGOs and agencies supported the initiative (Dance Campaign aims to Stop, 2017, December 3).

the home as well as in urban spaces. The workshop selected "Safer Cities for Women and Girls" as the action theme of the Vietnam Women's Union for the year of 2019, which might imply that the movement is driven by women located in the cities. While the majority of Vietnamese women live in the countryside, bridging between experiences from urban and rural spaces plays an important role in promulgating the impact and success of the anti-violence campaigns (United Nations Women, 2018).

CONCLUSIONS

Masculinized social structures and the ways in which these create a framework for the production of systemic harm are reciprocally connected with male-to-female violence perpetrated on the ground. In a patrilineally organized universe, where women are rendered inferior and men superior, the machinery of male violence is enforced to multiply strength in highly gendered and sexualized ways (Arendt, 1970). The design of repertoires, techniques, and tools implemented by men to harm a female partner is inseparable from masculinized hierarchies, privileges, and powers, as configured in the Vietnamese context.

The violence imposed by a man upon his female partner is shaped in specific encounters, I have argued, when a perpetrator's essentialist and stereotypical fantasies about a woman's embodied properties (i.e., gender, sexuality, age, ethnicity, class, and bodyableness) degrade the female phenomenological body into a corporeal object of abuse through processes of transformation between the first, second, third, and fourth body typologies. The male machinery of violence attempts to reduce the female body into "naked life" as the result of a process of what I have referred to as "thingification". A battered woman is in this sense dehumanized and constrained to a "zone of exception" (Agamben, 1998) where the laws of protection do not apply and male violence is perpetrated with impunity (Mbembe, 2003; Rydstrom, 2012, 2015, 2017).

Repeated violence inflicted by a man upon his female partner confines life to a tempo-spatial "interregnum" (Gramsci, 1971); into a "crisis of chronicity" (Vigh, 2008), which impedes agency and the possibilities for positive change. A "poisonous knowledge" about the realities of violence and the perils of harm thus holds power to ruin the very foundation of the lifeworld of an abused woman (Stoler, 2013). Yet, women do not passively comply with a violent male partner. As I have discussed, abused women resist and counter the violence to which they are subjected and the pain and damage they have experienced. Vietnamese agencies as well as national and international organizations offer support to abused women and raise public awareness about a severe and dehumanizing problem that has been, and even continues to be, silenced. In dealing directly with the ways in which a gendered and sexualized machinery of male violence manufactures a crisis of chronicity, organizational initiatives can provide critical support to abused women. Empowered women – anywhere in the world – might be able to eschew the stillness imbued in a crisis of chronicity defined by male violence. "Making time moving again" means to turn a crisis of permanency into a bracket which eventually could provide a path to positive change; a *catharsis* that might lead to healing and renewal beyond a life framed by a harmful machinery of male violence.

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Islamist Buzzers: Message Flooding, Offline Outreach, and Astroturfing

Ario Seto

Based on ethnographic research on Islamist buzzers – social media political operators tasked with making particular online conversation subjects trend – in Indonesia, this article details the process of how the proliferation of insensitive message in both the online and offline realms plays a role in mobilizing those sympathetic to religious fundamentalism. As this research shows, the interviewed buzzers were one of the driving forces behind the massive success of the fundamentalist Islamic Defenders Front (*Front Pembela Islam*, FPI) as they mobilized people to participate in the organization's political rallies between 2016 and 2017. Driven by altruistic volunteerism and sense of community, these actors go beyond their duty as click-farmers. They maintain regular contact with sympathizers and convincing them to revive broken weblinks, hang banners on streets as part of astroturfing campaigns and gather masses to attend offline events. Detailing the activity and spatiality of buzzers in crafting new online and offline spaces as part of their innovative bottom-up propaganda management, this research concludes that right-wing political mobilization and radicalization are not simply the product of ideology but are catalyzed by technically and socially tedious, mediated messaging campaigns.

Keywords: Astroturfing; Hate Speech; Islam; Right-wing Politics; Social Media Buzzer

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INTRODUCTION

In March 2018, two unrelated events provided evidence that the circulation of problematic social media messages – violent and derogatory remarks, online radicalization, hoaxes, hate speech, defamation, bigotry, fundamentalist expression, and fake news among numerous other forms – is no longer random but has become increasingly institutionalized. In the Global North, the Cambridge Analytica scandal, that the *New York Times* broke, highlighted how a British political consulting company was able to exploit social media users' data and behavior for the benefit of Republican Party campaigns in the United States (Rosenberg, Confessore, & Cadwalladr, 2018). In the Global South, the Indonesian government cracked down on the Indonesian Muslim Cyber Army (MCA), a cyber-jihadist network, for its role in spreading hate speech (Lindsey, 2018). While Cambridge Analytica exploits users' data without their approval to create a specific demographic data as sources for target campaigns, MCA is a network of paid click-farmers who worked for a number of political figures in Indonesia to generate hate speech and derogatory attacks on their opponents. Despite their contrasting ideologies and different operational structures, both

nonetheless share the goal of using social media as a space to shape and manipulate public opinion.

At the same time, there is a problem with our current understanding of how such circulations ought to be countered. Take the "Christchurch Call to Action", initiated by New Zealand Prime minister Jacinda Ardern and French president Emmanuel Macron, as an example. The call was signed by global leaders gathered in Paris on 15 March 2019, as a collaborative effort between governments and digital media companies to fight online radicalization (Fiegerman, 2019), two months after the streamed-live-on-Facebook right-wing terrorist attack on mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand. In response, the four tech giants Facebook, Google, Microsoft, and Twitter pledged to implement nine steps to end "violent extremist content" (Microsoft Corporate Blogs, 2019), including greater online monitoring efforts against online posts or contents that presumably are inciting hate and bigotry. These strategies are neither previously unknown nor groundbreaking. At the same time, with the enduring rise and complexity of online-based extremism (i.e., Badawy & Ferrara, 2018; Scrivens, Davies, & Frank, 2018), there is a pressing need for deeper studies on the entanglement between social media communication and the troubling developments of extremism, right-wing politics, fundamentalism, and bigotry.

The findings described in this article therefore suggest that our observation should move beyond message circulation and establish a deeper knowledge of how the actors engaged in mediated violence generate problematic messages despite censorship and, particularly, of how social media could actually animate people from online chats to take action in the offline realm. I argue in this paper that the Christchurch initiative and the use of online monitoring to tackle the widening circulation of problematic messages might not be the panacea the world is seeking, as online message circulation is not the sole driver of corporeal actions, since the opposing actors are also consolidating themselves in the offline sphere.

Observing the mass mobilization of the Indonesian right-wing fundamentalist Islamic Defenders Front (*Front Pembela Islam*, FPI) rallies in 2016 and 2017, this research reveals that discourse mobilization is the result of the technical and publicity capabilities of buzzers – social media users tasked with proliferating particular online conversation subjects across the online scape to make them trend – who operate not solely online but offline as well.[1] Drawing on ethnographic research, including participant observation and in-depth interviews with eleven interlocutors[2] conducted between February 2017 and April 2018 in Jakarta, Indonesia, this article shows that, through sockpuppeting and astroturfing campaigns before the rallies even began, FPI buzzers' activities fostered the online and offline sociability necessary for right-wing political mobilization, fundamentalism, and violent actions.

Before detailing the role of buzzers as mobilization actors, the next section provides an overview of FPI's practices to contextualize the sociability in which the

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1 The FPI is not an underground organization and is also not categorized as a radical terrorist group, but it is under police surveillance (interview with AA, a police officer responsible for the surveillance, 3 January 2018). The organization advocates Sharia law in Indonesia, with a fundamentalist interpretation of Islam citing both Wahhabi and Salafi schools. In this article, FPI actors will be referred to as Islamists, conservatives, and fundamentalists.

2 The names of the interlocutors interviewed for this research have been changed to assure confidentiality.

buzzers are operating. The third section details the altruistic operation of the buzzers followed by their view of voluntarism. Taken together, the article describes how Islamist buzzers and their agenda-setting strategies craft communities on which they could then draw to garner support for their activities and organization, and how a fundamentalist political view with violent messaging could become publicly accepted in everyday life via the social media arena.

VIOLENCE AS REGULARITY

It was not yet eight in the morning when several waves of masses were pulling toward the Istiqlal Jakarta Grand Mosque on Saturday, 11 February 2017, to participate in the fourth *#aksiBelaIslam* rally. As thousands of people, spanning various ages and genders, flooded the streets, the traffic had jammed the Senen Market district where I joined one of the groups, 1.8 km away from the mosque. Several other groups had arrived on large busses that cost around IDR 4 million (USD 280) a day, which is not cheap given that the 2017 provincial minimum wage in Jakarta was IDR 3,355,750 (USD 238). Some of the busses had out-of-town license plates.

The rallies broke out after an edited video of the then-Jakarta Governor Basuki 'Ahok' Tjahaja Purnama's speech during an official visit on 27 September 2016 went viral. In the speech, he pleaded with the audience that they should not allow themselves "to be misled" by his political opponents who cited verse fifty-one of Al-Ma'idah as the Quranic injunction for Muslims to avoid voting for a non-Muslim leader for public office. The verse suggests that a non-Muslim might lack the competencies to administer Islam-related public affairs. Buni Yani, an independent journalist, had edited the recorded speech to create the perception that Ahok's remarks were directed at the Quran, claiming that Muslims were "being fooled by it."[3] As the edited video went viral, many Muslims, including members of FPI, declared the speech religious defamation and disregarded the transcription of the original speech.

Between October 2016 and May 2017, FPI managed to organize seven protest rallies dubbed the "action to defend Islam" (*aksi bela Islam*) as a public pressure campaign to push the state to legally prosecute Ahok for blasphemy.[4] Rally participants had created "#BelaIslam" (defend Islam) and "#aksiBelaIslam" (action to defend Islam) on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook. They also uploaded pictures of the rallies which garnered national and international media coverage (Pamungkas & Octaviani, 2017).

It was a political time. The rallies took place just several weeks before the first round of the Jakarta gubernatorial election in February 2017. In early polls, Ahok had been leading his two opponents, Anies Baswedan and Agus Harimurti Yudhoyono. Baswedan had been appointed Minister of Education in 2014 and came from a recognized political family in Islamic communities. Agus Yudhoyono, the son of the sixth

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3   Basuki was found guilty of insulting Islam by the North Jakarta district court on 9 May 2017 and was sentenced to two years in prison, despite the state prosecutor's recommendation of probation.

4   The seven rallies took place between 2016 and 2017 with the following dates: Aksi Bela Islam I on 14 October 2016; Aksi Bela Islam II on 4 November 2016; Aksi Bela Islam III, 2 December 2016; Aksi Bela Islam IV on 11 February 2017; Aksi Bela Islam V on 21 February 2017; Aksi Bela Islam VI on 31 March 2017; Aksi Bela Islam VII on 5 May 2017.

Indonesian president, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, had been an army major before taking early retirement.

Before the election period started, FPI had continuously objected to Ahok's gubernatorial leadership for, among others, three reasons. First, Ahok is a Christian of Indonesian-Chinese descent, and FPI leaders pushed the case that Muslims could only vote for a non-Muslim leader in exceptional circumstances, for instance, when they are the minority population (Aziza, 2017). Additionally, the Indonesian-Chinese ethnic group has long been stereotypically and historically accused of promoting the People's Republic of China's communist ideology (Purdey, 2005), which is considered to be hostile towards religion because of its preference for atheism. FPI founder and leader, Habib Rizieq Shihab, capitalized on this mistrust, diligently tweeting during the election period alleging that the Chinese ethnic group would bring Communism back to Indonesia (Redaksi Eramuslim, 2016b). Second, Ahok often accused FPI of managing local thugs and taking money from street vendors (Aisyah, 2013). Third, as part of the gentrification agenda, Ahok had conducted forced evictions against several neighborhoods of the urban poor, FPI's strong support base (Alatas, 2016). Against this background, Yani's edited viral video presented a window of opportunity for Shihab to commence a political campaign to legally block Ahok's candidacy.

Persistent in advocating for Sharia law in Indonesia and scriptural in its interpretation of the Quran, FPI had ascended out of distinct political circumstances in 1998 during the power transition after the fall of the three-decade-long Suharto authoritarian military regime and its nationalistic doctrine (Hasan, 2006, pp. 14-16; Hasani & Naipospos, 2010; Wilson, 2008, 2014). In 1998, as a result of the growing severity of the economic crisis, students began to publicly express their objections to Suharto's nepotism and his corrupt government. In May, protests-turned-riots and mass violence took place in different cities alongside increased civil aggression towards the military and the police in response to the shooting deaths of several activists. The chaos resulted in Suharto's resignation.

Following his resignation, the People's Consultative Assembly of the Republic of Indonesia (*Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat Republik Indonesia*, MPR-RI) immediately arranged a special session (*Sidang Istimewa*) in order to organize a non-scheduled presidential election and to make the necessary political decisions to secure a functioning governing state until the election. To secure the session and avoid further direct confrontation between the military and civilians, the military began to recruit civilians, including those from Islamic groups, as security volunteers organized under Voluntary Security Forces (*Pasukan Pengamanan Swakarsa*, Pam Swakarsa). To counter the left-leaning student protesters who demanded that all Suharto's appointed politicians resign, the volunteers acted as a paramilitary group and human barricades during the special session between 10 and 13 November 1998 (Beittinger-Lee, 2009, pp. 170-173; Hasan, 2006, p. 16; Sidel, 2006, p. 139). Some proposed *jihad* to fight the student protesters who were accused of destabilizing the government (Hasan, 2006, p. 100; Jahroni, 2008; Sidel, 2006, p. 139).[5]

With the declining popularity of Suharto's nationalist doctrine, Pam Swakarsa

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5   See also reports from Tempo Magazine ("Berjihad Mendukung Sidang", 1998; "Kivlan Zen Tantang Wiranto", 2004).

eventually marked the consolidation of various Islamic groups in the post-Suharto era and emerged as a "petri dish" for those advocating a Salafi ideology (Hasan, 2006, pp. 100-101). It also incubated various pious Islamic circles' transformation into paramilitary groups (Schröter, 2003, pp. 39-41). Misbahul Anam and Rizieq Shihab, two fundamentalist Islamic leaders whose followers had participated in Pam Swakarsa (Hasan, 2006, pp. 14-16), founded FPI on 17 August 1998 as an organization to bring scriptural Islamic values to public life (Amal & Panggabean, 2004; Yunanto, 2003).

Although framing itself as a *dawah*[6] organization, FPI is also publicly known for its organized and violent "sweeping operations", in which establishments considered to provide lewd services, such as those involving unlicensed alcohol sales, drugs, prostitution, and gambling, are raided, vandalized, and their owners are intimidated (Lukens-Bull, 2013, p. 128; Prajuli, 2012; Rahman & Dja'far, 2009; Syaefudin, 2014). Shihab stated that such businesses ensure only social deviance which are the product of Western secularism (*sekularisme*), pluralism (*pluralisme*), and liberalism (*liberalisme*), shortened as "*sepilis*". The acronym is a homophone to syphilis, which is intended to mock and to draw an equivalency between sexually transmitted diseases and Western culture and capitalism – which has been blamed as the culprit of economic crisis in 1997 and 1998 (Gunadha & Sari, 2018). Accordingly, over the years FPI claimed that such vigilantism is an expected outcome of upholding the Muslim duty to promote good and prevent evil (*amar ma'ruf nahi mungkar*, commanding virtue and forbidding vice, see Wilson, 2008, p. 202).

In its raids and acts of vigilantism, FPI is not hesitant to incur casualties. Only three months after its initiation, it launched a raid against illegal gambling in the Ketapang area of Jakarta on 22 November 1998. The raid became an uncontrollable riot after rumors circulated that the Christian Ambonese ethnic-based gang, which had been suspected of having backed illegal gambling in the city, had launched a counter attack and burned down mosques (Azca, 2006; van Klinken, 2007). The riot ended with 14 people killed, some of whom were even burned alive (Azca, 2006), while 13 churches were torched (Azca, 2006; van Klinken, 2006, p. 130).

On 24 May 1999, FPI took a university student hostage for taking down its street banner which stated: "Alert! Zionism and Communism penetrate all aspects of life!" (Indarti, 2012). The banner's location was not random since it was hung in front of Tarumanegara University, where many of the students are of visible Chinese descent.[7] FPI also injured two police officers in April 2006, when it ransacked the Playboy Magazine office for the magazine's pornographic contents, injured several participants of the National Alliance for Religious and Belief Freedom parade (*Aliansi*

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6   *Dawah* literary means "call". It is a practice of conveying the message of Islam to non-Muslims, or calling Muslims to return to the purer form of Islam practiced by Muhammad and his early followers (Hasan 2006, pp. 32, 141).

7   As mentioned earlier, the Chinese-Indonesian ethnic group has been accused of being the ideological agent of the People's Republic of China's Communism since 1960s. In 1966, General Suharto took over the presidency by ousting President Sukarno and blamed the Indonesian Communist Party for economic crisis, political instability, and a coup attempt against Sukarno. The event was followed by a great purge against the communists and stigmatization of people of Chinese-descent being related to the Chinese government's Communism (Purdey, 2005). Many Indonesian Muslims view their fellow Palestinian Muslims as victims of the State of Israel, which occupies Palestinian land. FPI vies that both communist and nationalistic/Zionist movement to establish a Jewish state are the enemy of Islam.

Kebangsaan untuk Kebebasan Beragama dan Berkeyakinan) (Indarti, 2012), killed three members of the Ahmadiyya community in West Java in February 2011 (Bush, 2015, p. 242),[8] and injured eleven police officers during a protest in October 2014 (Awaludin, 2014). In organizing their raids, FPI often invites the masses to join, and it is difficult for the police to charge the organization with crimes since the perpetrators are simply members of masses sympathetic to FPI, often unidentified persons.

The FPI maintains its organizational growth by diligently recruiting the urban poor and unemployed young men to its ranks (Hasan, 2006; Mudhoffir, 2017; Wilson, 2008, p. 202, 2010, 2014, 2015). In 2014, it claimed to have seven million registered members nationally (Megiza, 2014). With its growing members and sympathizers (*simpatisan*), FPI has tapped into the informal economy by operating as a hoodlum organization that is suspected of having patron-client relationships with both politicians and corrupt police officers in the racketeering business (Petrů, 2015; Sidel, 2006, p. 139; Wilson, 2008, p. 202, 2015). Such claims of religious vigilantism, along with its political and underground business networks that employ many of the urban poor, and the organization's general mass popularity (Budiman, 2017) makes prosecuting FPI politically treacherous as any prosecutor or investigator will appear to be anti-Islamic. At the same time, they would also have to answer to various political elites (Petrů, 2015, p. 71). Accordingly, when Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia was banned in May 2018 as part of a government crackdown on Islamist organizations, FPI was spared (Hariyanto, 2018).

Regardless of the dark side of FPI activities, the organization is still religiously meaningful for its members and sympathizers. Beyond economic and political reasons, some repentant thugs actually found atonement in FPI's activities (Bamualim, 2011). During the #aksiBelaIslam rallies, I also observed that, contrary to the depiction of FPI as an urban poor-based hoodlum organization, many participants came from the middle class and were not the financially precarious. The FPI's Red Crescent medical team, for example, consisted of volunteer doctors and nurses.

Some FPI supporters had also organized themselves as a collective with their own resources, such as those involved in the FPI Women Group who had organized the soup kitchens for almost every single rally in the series. Tasya, a mother of three who works in finance and was in charge of cooking for one of the kitchens to support the 11 February rally, explained to me that she and her friends had taken the initiative to raise money, collect donations, and cook for the rally participants. She alluded that providing meals for her fellow protesters has given her a sense of belonging to the Islamic community (*ummah*).

She had also brought her children to the rally that day to "teach them about Islamic values" and to stand by a leader of society (*pemimpin masyarakat*) – in this context Shihab – who "defends Islamic values" (interview, 11 February 2017). On our way home from the rally, my group was stopped by an elderly couple riding a motorcycle who offered us spring rolls from a street food cart.[9] "Please take as much as you like", said the couple who ended up paying a not insignificant USD 17,60 for all

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8   FPI believes that the Ahmadiyya community is deviating from Islamic teachings (International Crisis Group, 2008).

9   On 11 February 2017, I joined the rally with the interlocutors' peer group from the local mosque where I stayed in Jakarta.

the rolls. Moved by the couple's altruism, the food vendor gave us each a free cup of mineral water.

In these instances, it seems unavoidable to take account of the dimension of altruism and sense of community at FPI events. The possibility of having the experience of being in the community becomes FPI's pull factor for the masses. It is, as the following section details, engineered through multi-layered activities organized by mobilizing actors, who at the same time continually maintain the delivery of scripturalist and fundamentalist Islamic messages.

THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA BUZZERS

The Pancoran Barat sub-district in South Jakarta is one of the loyal bases of FPI support. The three km² area is just a few hundred meters away from the Gatot Subroto economic district's skyscrapers. On the Pasar Minggu Street side, there are two prominent central mosques (*masjid jami*): Jami Al Munawwar Mosque and Jami Ikhwanul Muslimin Mosque. Both regularly host local and Middle Eastern Wahhabi guest preachers, although some members of the *ummah* also come from Salafi study circles.[10] Both mosques regularly organize religious events, such as recitation circles and public sermons, with participants flooding to the street. On the west side of the neighborhood is Mampang Prapatan Street, and on one of its corners is the Islamic and Arabic College (*Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Islam dan Arab*/LIPIA), a Saudi sponsored college that has played a major role in the spread of Wahhabism in Indonesia and where Shihab also studied (Hasan, 2006, pp. 47-49).[11]

Like typical aged urban middle-class neighborhoods in Jakarta, it is filled with conjoining houses in the 1970s architectural style with a garage, a small garden, and three bedrooms. Going deeper into the neighborhood, there are alleys where smaller row houses are located. The alleys are around 1.5-meter-wide, cramped with parked motorcycles during the day. People know each other in this neighborhood. In these alleys, it is common to hear prayers played from YouTube and blasted from one of the houses' speakers.

Outside the alleys, several street corners had been adorned with PVC banners that declared the community's support for FPI. Some banners warned Muslims to only vote for Muslim governors. The banners varied in size. The largest banner I spotted was 6x4 meters, which would cost about USD 335 (IDR 4.8 million), again, an amount above the minimum wage in Jakarta. According to the local neighborhood watch (*Ketua Rukun Tangga*), the neighborhood youngsters (*pemuda*) had put the banner up.

It was Andika, 27, who had printed the banner. He has a bachelor's degree in economics from a nearby private university. He works in a human resource department in a private electricity maintenance company and earns about USD 279 (IDR 4 million) a month. His parents moved to this neighborhood from central Java in the 1970s. He and his siblings went to a secular public school a few hundred meters from their house. He prays five times a day and has been participating regularly in the

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10   Interview with Andika, 20 April 2018. For the difference between the Wahhabi and the Salafi schools, particularly in social media representation, see Ammar & Xu (2018, pp. 51-56).

11   Habib Rizieq Shihab later continued his studies at Dirasah Islamiyah Department, Tarbiyah Faculty, King Saud University (Hasan, 2006, pp. 15, 47).

neighborhood's Quran recitation and study circle (*pengajian*) since he was a child. For the youngsters in Pancoran Barat, religiosity is part of their socialization and routine. They go to the mosque together and during their childhood had played soccer in its parking lot. For them, the mosque is also a community center.

"Well, it is a good organization, why not join it", he answered when I asked about his motive for joining the FPI. When asked how he defined "good", he pointed to how FPI manages to "act fast" (*gerak cepat*) in tackling vice and practices that are "contradictory to Islamic teaching" (interview, 9 February 2017). He rejected the view that FPI is a vigilante group since most of the time it coordinates its raids with the police, something FPI has also claimed.[12] He also underscored that FPI regularly ran blood drives and other charity events at his mosque.

"Joining" is an ambiguous term of membership in FPI. Events like rallies, organized public prayers, public talks, or learning circles (*majlis taklim*) are open to the public and no ID card is required. Many regular participants and FPI sympathizers at these activities are not registered. For organizational meetings, however, an ID card must be worn as a nametag, which also determines if a person will be allowed to enter the mosque or the meeting place. As a volunteer with the FPI's Media Team, a working group under the FPI's Struggle Wing (*Sayap Juang*), Andika has to be registered as a member.

His designated task as a member of the Media Team is to make viral FPI's online posts. "Each neighborhood has somebody like me", he claims. During the rally on 11 February 2017, I met with six of his friends: Bahar, Candra, Dilman, Ersha, Fahrul, and Gege, each of whom operates in a different geographical area in Andika's neighboring districts. Besides Ersha, they are young men in their twenties. Candra and Dilman graduated from polytechnic high schools, and the rest have bachelor's degrees. All of them have permanent jobs.

Andika and several of his friends from the Media Team are examples of "buzzers" who volunteer with FPI. Buzzer is the Indonesian popular term for the machinery of political social media influencers. The term derives from Yahoo!Messenger, a digital instant messaging client that was popular in Indonesia in the 1990s and early 2000s. Among users, buzzing was a convention that was used to start a conversation by sending an emoji or graphic message to capture the attention of the person with whom a conversation starter wanted to chat. It is similar to a "wave" in Facebook messenger or a "nudge" in Microsoft Messenger.

Buzzers have two significant roles in FPI operations. First, as the name hints, they have to create buzz around a certain subject by making its hashtag go viral across various social media platforms. Second, buzzers are informally expected to convey the messages circulating in the online scape to the public in the offline realm while mobilizing those sympathetic to FPI's cause to participate in the organization's activities.

Viral Buzzing

A social media influencer is a micro-celebrity who has a large number of media followers through whom s/he can ensure that a certain topic of online conversation with

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12   As an illustration, the FPI Depok branch leader, Idrus Al Gadri, once stated that FPI prefers to engage in peaceful activity, but the law and the police department are failing in eliminating illegal alcohol trade and prostitution (Rahman & Dja'far, 2009, p. 3).

a specific generated hashtag will trend. A buzzer could be a social media influencer[13], or a sockpuppeteer. As a sockpuppeteer, the buzzer's task is to create the perception that there are people in the online public space who are interested in and convinced of FPI's posts or narratives. FPI leaders, such as Shihab and Anam, are the face of the organization with the authority to speak on behalf of the organization and to interpret Islamic teaching within a certain discourse. A buzzer is the person who ensures their messages are being discussed by the online public. Similar to "buzz marketing" (Thomas, 2004), they keep FPI messaging accessible to the general public and afloat.

In the realm of social media trends, buzzers understand that a one-man-show would be unlikely to gain enough public attention. There are three steps to deal with this challenge. First, a buzzer's facile responsibility is to "farm clicks", that is, to give "heart" to FPI's Instagram posts, to "like" them on Facebook, and to share Twitter comments from Shihab or other members of the organization's leadership. Andika explained that one buzzer could easily operate at least four different Facebook accounts on one smartphone, with the first logged-in on the regular Facebook app, the second on Facebook Lite, and the other two on different browsers. Shihab or FPI would then only need 25 buzzers to get 100 likes on a post. A buzzer, in his experience, could administer at least ten accounts on the same platform.

The accumulative count of hearts, likes, or re-shares will push the post into the social media platforms' top-trending lists, since Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook regularly suggest popular trending posts for their users to read. Without the initial like farming, a post will be considered by the platform's algorithm as unattractive for users and will not appear among the trending topics. Accumulating hearts, likes, and retweets therefore acts as a hack against the platforms' algorithms by giving the impression that there is a large number of users discussing or indicating interest in the post, even if these users might be the same person. Making the post trend, therefore, is the initial step for FPI leaders to buzz their message to gain public attention and convey their message to a larger audience.

As it would be time consuming, buzzers actually hardly read the posts they like or share. They also rarely write their own posts, comments, or opinions as they take turns in creating memes or posting content. If they do, and this is the second regular task of a buzzer, it will be short just to keep the post updated with a good response count. One buzzer will write a certain post, while the rest of the group is tasked with commenting on the post to ensure that it continues to trend because of its high comment frequency. Similar to accumulating likes, the goal is to trick the platforms' algorithm and to manipulate public perception by creating the impression that people are actively discussing a certain hashtag on social media.

Buzzers typically have a list of comments and memes saved on their phone in case they need to post a comment quickly. Copying and pasting a comment is a time-saving practice when a buzzer needs to type a comment for ten different accounts. For example, on one occasion during our interview, Fahrul pasted the following comment on a post from another fellow buzzer: "voice of the people, justice will side with Muslims [*suara rakyat, keadilan akan memenangkan umat Islam*]". The comment then acts as pseudo-chat providing visual evidence or impression for others that they are not alone

13   For example, @mas__piyuuu with his more than 60,000 Twitter followers, as of 6 November 2019.

in reading the post and that there are other people who are agreeing with the opinion expressed in the post. In internet culture, such practice is known as "sock-puppeting" (Bu, Xia, & Wang, 2013). As such, buzzers as post commentators have been working as an initial pseudo-public for FPI to attract attention from other social media users. The role of buzzers in maintaining such regular chat flow on social media becomes significant as the FPI's prominent leaders, because of their already demanding schedules, might not be able to be active in online chat themselves. Such effort is a strategy to keep FPI's discourse continuously present in the public's everyday life.

Consequently, maintaining FPI's constant online public presence becomes the third online task of a buzzer; this is to ensure that FPI's posts stay viral to enact the space for FPI sympathizers. Andika mentioned the term "flooding the timeline" (*membanjiri* timeline) to denote what in economic or communication studies is understood as viral marketing. The goal of this task is to keep any online material related to FPI messages available to the public while avoiding censorship or broken weblinks. Keeping FPI's social media post trending and alive is a strategy to make FPI's discourse constantly accessible to the public.

For example, Andika and his networks regularly posted *dawah* videos from Bahar 'Smith' Sumayit and Abdul Somad, who are controversial Islamic preachers and FPI loyalists. Both are prominent FPI-affiliated preachers who travel extensively around Indonesia, record their speeches, sermons, and public Q&A, and upload their videos to YouTube. Besides actively participating in FPI raids, Smith is popularly known for using crass language in describing religious deviance while verbally defaming those whom he considers less pious as they have contrasting opinions. During a public talk on 17 November 2018, for example, he blatantly said that Joko Widodo, the Indonesian president and his political opponent, is "a traitor of the people" who "menstruates like a sissy" (Sutrisno, 2018). Somad is well known in the FPI circle for endorsing jihadism. In one of his speeches, he stated that "suicide bombers are not suicidal, but martyrs" (Pratama, 2018). He also stated in 2016 that "Satan dwells in every crucifix" (Paat & Yasmin, 2019).

Andika explained that although Smith and Somad often deliver symbolically violent messages or derogatory speeches, they are popular among Muslim audience because of their humorous sermons, including their amusing mockery of those who are not in line with their values. Nevertheless, since their statements often violate YouTube's or Instagram's policies, their videos are regularly banned from these platforms. To counter such censorship, Andika and his friends will upload the same video with different titles, at different times and occasions. "When one [online video link] is dead, we will already have another copy to upload", he explained (interview, 9 February 2017). That way, the same video will always be on the internet.

The large circulation of such problematic religious posts is possible since Islamic fundamentalist buzzers such as Andika and his peers are persistent in their work. As a buzzer might not always be on stand-by to monitor the link, the work has to be collective. "If one video goes down, one of us will upload the other. Whoever has a free hand has to do so. Then we will have the video streaming for another day. If that one is taken down, we will continue to do the same. But we have other ways [read: channels] too, there is WhatsApp and Telegram. Then our team could just circulate it to other chat groups", Fahrul said (interview, 9 February 2017). With such intensity to maintain

the chat flow and content circulation, the task of being a member of FPI Media Team has become a labor-intensive routine. In our interviews, my interlocutors checked their phones regularly within minutes, an embodied habitus they could not resist.

Buzzers are diligent viral marketers. Their pseudo conversation with the public and their efforts to keep the related online visual material afloat could be regarded as classical agenda-setting strategies (see, McCombs, Shaw, & Weaver, 2014; Yang, Chen, Maity, & Ferrara, 2016). By keeping FPI's posts "up trending", they propagate obtrusive hate speech, social exclusion, and other problematic messages to acquaint the public with symbolic violence and various forms of othering.[14] Mocking the opposition as "sepilis", or "sissies", or connoting jihadism as heroism, becomes a regular media content for those sympathetic to FPI's cause. As a normalization of problematic social media messages, the regular circulation incites a familiarization of the bigotry expressions among FPI's audience. Studies (e.g., Archetti, 2015) on radicalism and fundamentalism show that the effort to counter the movement by overwriting the fundamentalists' narrative is fruitless since they are loyal to their own. To counter such challenges, several studies suggest that scholars should detail the actors' online and offline sociability (Ducol, 2015) and look at how such actors form community identity (Archetti, 2015; Lim, 2005) as a configuration of radicalism and fundamentalism. If identity and sociability are to be taken into account as dimensions of radicalization or fundamentalism, then it is important to identify the actors who shape and manage collective identity on daily basis. In such formations, buzzers should no longer be viewed simply as digital mercenaries, but as actors who craft the community's reference group in maintaining fundamentalist's online sociability by soliciting the public's attention through their regular chats and comments. As operators, FPI buzzers are the guardians of the formation of fundamentalist Islamic associative norms which eventually make the presence of FPI in the public relevant.

When he could not have his hand on the action, Andika would ask some of his friends, although they are not FPI members, for help (*minta tolong*) to revive the broken link with another, live, video link. Such practice is possible because friends perceive that they are in a common fellowship under Islam, or simply just because they are friends and ought to help. Such decentralized network management, which relies on individual capability-based contribution and solidarity, actually echoed what Bennett and Segerberg (2013) denote as "connective action". Although dealing with a completely different case study – Bennet and Segerberg's actors were involved in pro-democratic campaigns – Andika's network applies similar modes of operation through which they accomplish their "movement's" goal by engaging with their personal networks while executing bottom-up contributions. They make sure that FPI's posts and videos are always available for the online public, with the person who executes the task not necessarily having to be a member of the organization and without needing direct operational guidance from the organization. As a daily operation, keeping the video viral does not need oversight from FPI's Media Team.

A by-product of such collective media practice is a sense of collectivity that strengthens the feeling of solidarity among buzzers and their peers. The sense of collectivity plays a crucial role in forming solidarity among FPI buzzers to the degree

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14   On agenda setting and obtrusiveness, see Shafi (2017).

that they do not consider themselves to be buzzers since the term is connotatively related to a paid job. Instead, they view themselves simply as "persons helping around [*bantu-bantu*] to spread the information" (interview with Bahar, Andika, Gege, and Fahrul, 5 March 2017). Andika and his network are not members of the Muslim Cyber Army (MCA), a group of paid buzzers from whom they seek to distance themselves (interview with Bahar, Andika, Gege, and Fahrul, 5 March 2017). While justifying their activities as a materialization of the spiritual call, they look down on those who do the same for economic reasons, like those working with the MCA network. Such pride became very apparent after MCA members were arrested for hate speech in late March 2018. "They got paid. [That is why they got caught]. We do this from the heart [*dibayar sih, kalau kita kan pakai hati*]", Fahrul commented on the arrest of MCA members (interview, 20 April 2018). This sense of collectivity and group solidarity has also encouraged buzzers to go offline as will be shown in the following section.

Astroturfing and Banner Spatiality

The second role of FPI's buzzers is to independently organize community outreach. "Most of us [the people] have handphones [read: smartphones], but sometimes they do not really read or people have limited internet data quotas, so we need to disseminate the information when we meet the person", explained Andika about the role of buzzers in offline space (interview, 18 August 2017). For them, making online news go viral does not make offline persuasion irrelevant. Similar to Bode's (2016) findings in the US that there is a discrepancy between "learning politics" from social media and actualization, in the FPI buzzers' experience, news or post updates alone cannot mobilize people.

The first #aksiBelaIslam rally took place on 14 October 2016. It was symbolically initiated after a Friday prayer as a religious movement. The third rally was even organized as a mass Friday prayer in Jakarta's National Square on 2 December 2016, which was later claimed by Islamic fundamentalist media outlets as the world's largest Friday prayer (Redaksi Eramuslim, 2016a). Before these rallies, several *khatib* (preachers) sympathetic to FPI's cause had urged the *ummah* to join the rally in their Friday service sermons (interview with Habib Muchsin Alatas, 17 February 2017). It was the buzzers' role to persuade the preacher in their neighborhood face-to-face to support the rallies. When encountering a disagreement, or when the preacher refused to endorse FPI's rallies, FPI buzzers would ask the preacher to simply announce the upcoming rally to the *ummah.* Rather than it being the preacher's responsibility to urge people to participate, it would then become the *ummah's* decision as to whether they would join the rally. Having the rallies on Fridays is not only symbolic, but also organizationally advantageous since buzzers can effectively mobilize masses which have already flocked in mosques. Fahrul explained, "It is not difficult [to gather masses], we do not even use megaphone. We simply ask them directly [face-to-face] after the prayer, who wants to come should go together" (interview, 5 March 2017).

The FPI buzzers interviewed for this study stated that FPI has no definite "rules" (*aturan*) or "guidance" (*arahan*) advising them to organize offline initiatives to gather people to join FPI events, but such practices were already common when they joined FPI (interview with Bahar, Andika, Candra, Dilman and Ersha, Fahrul, and Gege, 5 March 2017). Fahrul recounted that the discipline as a field operator to mobilize

masses, or in his expression to "gather fellow Muslims", was actually "activated" (*mulai*) through the regularities of his online chats when he invited his followers to join FPI events (interview, 18 August 2017).[15] Before any of the events, fellow media officers would share information about how many people would come with them to the event. This information was shared initially simply for organizational reasons in order to calculate how many people would be in attendance. Over the course of time, however, the numbers became status symbols. The more people a buzzer could gather to participate in the event, the higher the recognition and respect s/he will receive from other FPI members.

Besides sharing the information about the number of expected participants, buzzers will also send a picture of a banner from the local neighborhood stating that the local neighborhood is supporting or participating in an FPI event. During the time of the #aksiBelaIslam rallies, banners with statements such as "We, the community of [name of the neighborhood] supports FPI and Habib Rizieq Shihab" were commonly found in Pancoran Barat area and its neighboring districts. Such banners were hardly the products of a community effort, but rather attributable to the buzzers themselves. During the early years, there was indeed a coordinated effort by the FPI Media Team to hang banners; today, most buzzers carry out the initiatives on their own which includes designing, collecting donations from the local community to print the banner, and hanging the banner themselves.

Beyond its role as a physical artifact of the ideology, offline banners and their digital versions are generated representations of claims to source legitimation that there are public supports for FPI's actions. For example, one of the banners Andika had printed states: "The steward and congregation of Jami' Baiturrahim Mosque is supporting Habib Rizieq Shyihab's [*sic*] struggle [*Pengurus dan Jamaah Masjid Jami' Mendukung Perjuangan Habib Rizieq Syihab* [sic]]" (Figure 1). A sentence in smaller font above the line as a header says: "Defending the Ulama until we die [*Bela Ulama Harga Mati*]".[16] Thus, hanging banners is important for two reasons. First, the banner works internally as a sign of visual solidarity for FPI sympathizers, signifying that they are not alone, and that expressing sympathy for FPI activities is not an isolated phenomenon. As such, it creates an impression among those who are already sympathetic to FPI's cause that the organization is gaining collective support. Second, the banners function as public awareness campaigns, representing the continual presence of the organization and its fundamentalist discourse in the offline space. Taken together, since the banners are very visible on the street and pictures of them will be posted on FPI-related social media accounts, they become a signifier of a claim that seeks to influence public perception in obtrusive messaging that there is a local initiative to support FPI and that there is a growing number of neighborhoods supporting it. Among political and communication strategists, these sets of constructed visual evidence and claims of mass support are known as astroturfing.

Astroturfing is an effort to manipulate public perception by fabricating visual evidence, like the FPI banners or high-traffic online chats, as a signifier that there is an

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15   "*Dimulainya dari situlah, kita sudah sering chat. Kan mengajak ke jalan Islam agama kita* [It was started from that (online practices), we had already chatted regularly, and invited people to the path of Islam, our religion]."

16   The literal translation is "Defending Ulama costs life".

emerging or growing grassroots support – the product of bottom-up aspirations – for a certain organization, individual, cause, discourse, policy, or product, where in reality such support is actually minimal or non-existent. The visual sign is expected to attract larger public awareness to the issue. As grassroots movements frequently claim to represent people's aspirations, such messaging, which hides the identity of the actual sponsor or organization, is more appealing to a public that could have directly rejected the propagation. Because such operations fake the existence of grassroots aspirations, the actions are referred to as "astroturfing" after AstroTurf, a brand of artificial grass. With its symbolic meaning of grassroots presence, taking down an FPI banner, therefore, is considered to be an act against the presence of the Islamic community. This is also why one of the FPI's very first acts of violence, described in the previous section above, occurred only after one of their banners was taken down.

Figure 1. One of Andika's banners. (Own documentation, Jalan Mampang Prapatan XIV, Jakarta, 18 August 2017).

Andika's banner was raised about 800 meters away from his mosque.[17] Deciding on the location for a banner requires careful calculation.[18] Since a mosque normally has other banners related to its regular activities, it would be counter-productive to

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17   The banner is situated between point 3 and point 6 on Figure 2 (calculated with OpenStreetMap. GPS Data Source: https://osm.li/5yB).

18   Interviews with Bahar, Andika, Candra, Dilman and Ersha, Fahrul, and Gege, 11 February 2017; with Andika and Fahrul, 19 February and 18 August 2017; with Ersha, 19 and 20 February 2017.

hang FPI banner nearby. Too many banners will only result in information overload and confusion for the readers. Thus, the FPI banner should stand alone to attract public attention, but still ought to be near the mosque. A common location is public space that people frequently pass, such as at the nearest street corner. Buzzers will also check this spot from time to time to see whether a new banner has been raised near their own. If that was the case, the other banner would need to be taken down, since the presence of another banner is considered to distract the reader's focus from the FPI banner.

1: Location of several vertical banners (*umbul-umbul*) from Andika's Islamic study club.
2: Location of a banner advertising an event organized by Andika's Islamic study club.
3: Grand Mosque Sub-districts (Masjid Raya), Andika's mosque for Friday prayers.
4: Location of the first banner which signifies that a person is entering a community.
5: Location of the second banner that declares the community's support for FPI.
6: Community mosque, Andika's daily mosque.
☪: Other mosques.

Figure 2. The location of the banners and the related mosques. (Own mapping, drawn with Maperitive).[19]

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19   The map covers an area of around 2 x 1 km (calculated with OpenStreetMap).

To increase the emotional connections, banners are best positioned between two mosques to mark a connecting route between them. Accordingly, as virtual corridors, they act as "availability heuristics" (Fuller, 2004) which become constant reminders of the FPI's current public engagements and the narrative it circulates on social media. Although these mosques might have different schools of thought, the banners denote the commonalities between the *ummah* as fellow Muslims. They create an offline path that forms urban street corridors (Figure 2) or a religious mental alley that leads the *ummah* from one mosque to another within FPI's labyrinth of mosques. In short, the role of banners is important for the FPI not only as a signifier of public presence, but also to show how the masses will be physically moved and mobilized.

Displaying a banner in Indonesia is actually regulated by law.[20] However, state monitoring is rather a form of cherry-picking as it applies only to business advertisements and party-based political campaigns. While advertising banners are taxable and regulated provincially,[21] party-based political campaign banners are regulated by the National Election Commission (*Komisi Pemilihan Umum*)[22]. FPI banners and posters are neither advertising nor political campaigns and fall under the category of informational public displays of a civil society organization, which is hardly regulated.[23]

Visually seeing a banner seems mundane, but the unregulated display provides flexibility for buzzers to expand their propaganda spatiality. This was also evident during the 2017 Jakarta gubernatorial campaign, when some banners claimed that those who voted for Ahok would be denied an Islamic funeral (Batubara, 2017). Such banners conveyed messages of exclusion and acted as a form of symbolic violence in the public space against those who supported the democratic freedom to vote. What threatens democracy, then, is not the #aksiBelaIslam rallies, but the continual presence of FPI messages in public space that conveys violent models of religious interpretation. With their chats, comments, post circulations, and banners, buzzers function as a machinery of violent actors while ensuring the normalization of anti-social behavior among the public through which a radical mind and sociability is shaped.

CONCLUSION

Recent studies suggest that there is a relationship between the rise of right-wing

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20   The main legal reference for displaying a banner in public space is the *Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 40 Tahun 1999 tentang Pers* (Law No.40/1999 on Press), particularly articles 5 and 13, which stipulate that any commercial displays or mass communication shall refrain from offending people of different religions, ethnicities, and races.

21   For example, *Peraturan Daerah Khusus Ibukota Jakarta Nomor 9 Tahun 2014 tentang Penyelenggaraan Reklame* (Provincial Regulation for the Special Capital Region of Jakarta No. 9/2014 on Billboards).

22   See *Peraturan Komisi Pemilihan Umum Nomor 23 Tahun 2018 tentang Kampanye Pemilihan Umum* (General Elections Commission Regulation No. 23/2018 concerning General Election Campaigns).

23   There is no specific regulation for civil society organization's mass communications. The main legal reference to regulate the matter is the *Peraturan Pemerintah Pengganti Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 2 Tahun 2017 tentang Perubahan atas Undang-Undang Nomor 17 Tahun 2013 tentang Organisasi Kemasyarakatan* (*Interim Emergency Law* [literally: Government Regulation in Lieu of Statue] No.2/2017, Concerning the Amendment to the Law No. 17/2013 on Civil Society Organization), particularly article 59, which states a general provision that civil organizations are forbidden from engaging in "hostile activities towards tribes, religions, races or classes".

politics, be it conservatism or religious fundamentalism, and identity construction (Lim, 2009), community (Archetti, 2015), actors' sociability (Ducol, 2015; Huey, 2015), patron-client relations in political economy (Mudhoffir, 2017; Petrů, 2015; Wilson, 2015), the operation of charismatic leadership (Gendron, 2017), and mobilization through social media (Howard & Hussain, 2011; Messing & Westwood, 2014; Timberg, 2016). These are calls to detail the operations of right-wing and fundamentalist online machinery associated with how the radical mind and violence take shape. The continuity of FPI's raids over the course of its twenty-year history and the series of #aksiBelaIslam rallies underscore how the organization has mastered mass mobilization and has acquired the resources necessary to manage a regular show of force. This paper, accordingly, details the role of buzzers as social media influencers who normalize anti-social behavior in the online scape and mobilize people by transforming online narratives into offline spaces. This, in turn, establishes the ecology for FPI's expansion.

Although FPI leaders play the role of the charismatic leaders at the center, their persona is crafted through continuous labor of publicity that relies on the technically capable buzzers as the supporting actors who also shape and mobilize the community of supporters. FPI buzzers are innovative in creating from-below initiatives through which knowledge of mass communication becomes part of the organizational culture, such as was the case with the printing of banners as astroturfing and regularly approach the potential *ummah* after Friday prayers. Detailing the technicalities of the presence of FPI's online-to-offline messages, such as reviving broken weblinks to raising banners, is crucial to understanding the agency of FPI actors and their capacity to expand their media spatiality.

The regular activities of FPI buzzers in the everyday life also exemplify that it is also necessary to reconsider the popular assumption that buzzers are simply paid digital mercenaries in the service of a master but not a message. Beyond the scope of political and economic motives, operators like Andika and his fellows did not receive any salary from the organization and perform their duty as a collective with the confidence that their actions are a representation of Islamic voices. Their personal gain is a spiritual one – may that be religious altruism or a secure feeling of having a stable Islamic community. Altruism as an experience becomes stronger since in return, as a result of their effort, there is an emerging presence of public support, which in their view justifies their actions.

Assessing such experience, they also believe that the events around the series of rallies took place within the norms of political communication, and that violent content and othering posts were acceptable within that frame. Telling them that their established practices are anti-democratic is confusing to them. In sum, rather than taking the path to determine whether FPI success in mass mobilization is the outcome of ideology or politics, this paper argues that although the development of Islamist solidarity and political Islam among the sympathizers might be ideological, it most certainly emerges from technical procedures and organizational management. The practice is neither emotional nor impulsive; it requires discipline and integrity.

The activities of FPI buzzers as part of fundamentalist agenda setting, albeit from-below, detailed in this study could raise the concern of echoing the positivistic approach of cultivation theory (Morgan, Shanahan, & Signorielli, 2015) as this article

has not discussed the audience's agency in decoding the messages. The ability of FPI buzzers in gathering new participants through strategies of publicity and persuasion in the offline space, however, undeniably shows such a tendency. The crucial issue to highlight here is to understand the technical role of buzzers as the machinery of violence in mundane everyday life as it precipitates mobilization and how the masses can be threaded together.

Consequently, the counter action to wide-spreading religious fundamentalism should also be organizational. Promoting secularism or the offering of a counter ideological narrative would be fruitless since FPI buzzers are already convinced that they are speaking on behalf of the greater good of all Muslims. It is then crucial for democratic actors to counter fundamentalism by contesting FPI's mediated charisma by offering Islamic communities new charismatic leaders who promote democratic values using hip tropes, like Somad and Smith, while providing an equally strong buzzer network. Democratic discourses need more space making activists; and those activists need the discipline and integrity of buzzers like Andika and his networks.

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State Appropriation of Traditional Actors and Oral Narratives in Timor-Leste

Lúcio Sousa

In Timor-Leste, the *lia na`in* (lian = word; na`in = lord, master) – leaders of customary practice – are becoming key to tradition, to "*kultura*" (culture), an emerging area of public cultural policies. Traditionally associated with the local communities and the mountains, they are the ones that know and pronounce the words that uncover the origin of the world, and the relationship between mankind, nature, and ancestors. Since 20 May 2002, when political power was handed from the United Nations to the Timorese authorities, several episodes have illustrated that the involvement of the *lia na`in* has shifted from their traditional local contexts to national ones. From small-scale sociopolitical agents, the *lia na`in* became a resource as buffers of conflict or of reconciliation, as council members of the *suco,* the smallest administrative division, and as actors in national state ceremonies, taking part in the process of (re)creating the nation's cultural identity. The purpose of this article is to discuss the role assigned to *lia na`in* in state affairs and the nation, particularly the role concerning conflict resolution. The argument, I propose, is that the participation of the *lia na`in*, as a ritual authority, in state-sponsored ceremonies has become a major resource of credibility to the new national authorities.

Keywords: Nation Building; Oral Tradition; Peacebuilding; Political Legitimacy, Timor-Leste

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INTRODUCTION: SCALE OF IDEOLOGIES

The *lia na`in* of Timor-Leste is traditionally associated with the local community, the small-scale locality framed by parochial sociopolitical traditional power structures in which they have a particular ritual role. They are the ones that know and pronounce through words the mythical stories that uncover the origin of the world, and the relationship between mankind, nature, and ancestors. In this sense, they play a major role in the flow of life, of people, animals, and plants (Fox, 1980). They deal with the *lulik* (sacred or forbidden), a major potency rooted in the local beliefs. They do this through words that are part of ritual knowledge and also a power, with the ability to either foster or manage violent threats and promote peace. Towards outsiders, the *lia na`in* usually have depicted themselves as a voice in the silence, in the shadow (Traube, 1986), the peripheral interior realm versus the exterior, the center, the government, the secular power (Sousa, 2009; Traube, 1986).

The realm of these men is the small-scale traditional locality in the mountains, where most of the *uma lulik*, the sacred houses, a major cultural and identity reference for East Timorese, are located. Its opposite pole is the big scale

theater of the capital city, Dili, in the littoral plains. As the first is associated with traditional powers, the city is associated with modernity, the government, and the state (Hicks, 2007; Sousa, 2009). These different scales are bound by contrasting ideologies of precedence as both poles have centripetal imaginary forces in the relationship. The mutual intelligibility between the mountains and the cities, the local communities and the state, is not just part of imagined constructions of "community", or "nation" (Anderson, 2003), they are essential in the social and political negotiation process of framing the new state (Silva, 2014). They are part of the production of the "ideologies of scale" (Tsing, 2000), from two different perspectives, one seen from the mountains, the other from the capital.

The emergence of the *lia na`in* from its highland locality into the Timor-Leste national political arena cannot be separated from the process of (re)creating the nation's cultural identity as a political means to foster the identity and union of the young state (Sousa, 2016), particularly in the process of reconciliation and in the context of political and military crisis. They are deemed as leaders of customary practice, associated with "ritual power", the "traditional values" (Trindade, 2008, p. 28), and as such, "most importantly, attention should be given to traditional East Timorese leaders and customary practice [sic]. Ways of integrating local traditions into the nation's political and legal/practice system should be explored" (Soares, 2003, p. 275). This resurgence is part of an ongoing adaptation and dynamism. As stated by Palmer (2007), "The resurgence of customary laws and traditions is not about 'going back' … but is about recognizing the ongoing adaption and dynamism which informs the customary law-making processes at work in people's everyday lives" (p. 36). This is what Viegas and Feijó`s (2018) have referred to as "cohabitation", a process to overcome what Trindade (2008) considered as paradigms in conflict.

The question is, then, whether *lia na`in*'s participation in state ceremonies is a form of Timor-Leste's "domestication of ceremonies" as referred to by Pemberton (1994) concerning the way in which the Suharto regime incorporated traditional art (*kesenian*) in Indonesia. Or, as stated by Hohe (2002) about Timor-Leste, are *lia na`in* merely a "ceremonial colour, 'folklore' or an obstacle to liberal values" (p. 570)? Although the participation of the *lia na`in* in state ceremonies reveals a degree of integration of small-scale agents in the larger scale of the nation, it has, above all, a legitimizing purpose for the state and its agents. Nevertheless, I argue that the participation of the *lia na`in* and their ritual performance provide a significant role in national contexts. This can be compared to the situation discussed by May (2004) in the case of Papua New Guinea[1], where in the mid-1990s, traditional authority was "(re)discovered" and political discourse on "chiefs" emerged, aiming at restricting local level government. The appropriation and incorporation of the *lia na`in* can be understood as part of what I would call, adapting Silva's (2016) idea of "economic pedagogy", a "political pedagogy", in which through mimicry the state appropriates the action of local practitioners for its advantage.

This paper is based on extensive ethnographic field research in Timor-Leste between 2002 and 2014, in which I had also the opportunity to live one year in a

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1 I do not discuss here the fact that, in a local context, the *lia na`in* do not consider themselves to have a higher status because of their participation at national level events.

mountainous village. The next section delivers a brief and simplified historical overview of the four centuries of conflict which took place in Timor-Leste. The third section discuss the related Timor-Leste literatures on *lia na`in*, followed by the fourth section in which I provide three examples where the *lia na`in* play roles in different scales in reconciliation ceremonies. My research focus was the maintenance of ritual practices and its social actors and social structures amidst the changes that have overcome the country. Although the bulk of my research was conducted in a local community, I also included Bobonaro, Maliana, and Dili as parts of my research field areas. This work delivers an anthropological perspective that considers the ideological scale, this is, the conception of the difference between the two perspectives (the mountains and the capital), as a unit of analysis and a heuristic tool.

ENDURING VIOLENCE IN TIMOR-LESTE

Timor-Leste is a small, young country located in Southeast Asia. For around 400 years it was a Portuguese colony, but the occupation of the territory began effectively after 1912, following the defeat of the last great native revolt, the Manufahi Rebellion led by Dom Boaventura da Costa (Pelissier, 2007; Sousa, 2016). Portuguese rule was based on a fragile relationship with the kingdoms of Timor, which shifted between a volatile and ambivalent alliance. The rebellions united several kingdoms, that could, over time, change their alliance to the Portuguese authorities, or among themselves (Durand, 2011; Pelissier, 2007; Roque, 2010).

Despite Portuguese neutrality in World War II, Portuguese Timor was occupied by the Japanese in 1945, making the island into a battleground between the Australian forces, who used guerrilla tactics and were supported by some Portuguese and Timorese, and Japanese forces employing "black columns" battalions composed of Dutch West Timor natives. Such involvement of the natives in global events shows the extent to which the war was indigenized (Tsuchiya, 2018). It is estimated that 40,000 Timorese died during this period (Figueiredo, 2011).

The last rebellion during Portuguese rule, the Viqueque Rebellion, took place in 1959 and was violently repressed, despite taking place in a remote location (Gunter, 2008). However, unlike other Portuguese colonies, there was no armed struggle for liberation in Portuguese Timor. The decolonization of Timor-Leste only began after the Carnation Revolution in Portugal took place on 25 April 1974, and political parties emerged in East Timor. In this transition process, civil war broke out in August 1975 between the then-conservative Timorese Democratic Union (UDT), which supported further presence of the then Portuguese government, and the leftist Revolutionary Front for an Independent Timor-Leste (FRETILIN), which demanded total independence. The civil war resulted in the withdrawal of the Portuguese authorities to the nearby island of Ataúro. They soon returned to Portugal, while the UDT members fled to nearby Indonesian Timor. The situation gave FRETILIN the upper hand leading to the country's declaration of independence on 28 November 1975.

During this time, the Indonesian military saw the absence of power and transition process as an opportunity to occupy Timor-Leste and already had invaded the western border. The Indonesian military eventually besieged the capital city of Dili on 7 December 1975. During the following 20 years of occupation, Indonesia faced fierce

resistance from East Timorese led by the Armed Forces for the National Liberation of Timor-Leste (Forças Armadas da Libertação Nacional de Timor-Leste/FALINTIL). The war against the Indonesian invasion marks the "militarization of Timorese society" (Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation in East Timor [CVAR] 2013, p. 362). Timor-Leste became one of the world's rare cases where violence truly was endemic, and most of the society was involved in the war. CVAR (2013, p. 502) estimates that war and starvation claimed at least 183,000 lives. The violent tensions attracted massive global attention when the footage of British journalist Max Stahl documented the 1991 military attack on the peaceful civil protest in the Santa Cruz cemetery in Dili, during which 200 people were killed (Gunn, 1999). From-below, however, the peacebuilding effort was ceaseless with Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo, the Bishop of Dili, and Ramos Horta initiating various dialogue forums to end Indonesian military oppression and structural violence. Their efforts were internationally recognized with the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1996.

In 1999, after the United Nations-mediated negotiations between the Indonesian and Portuguese governments, a referendum was set to decide Timor-Leste's future. There were two options: either make the entity an autonomous province or an independent state. Preceding the referendum, again, Timor-Leste plunged into severe violence because of agitation from pro-Indonesian militias and Indonesian soldiers (Durand, 2011). Following the referendum, which resulted in a majority vote (78.5%) for an independent state, the Indonesian military and militia retaliations murdered over 2,000 Timorese – the victims being mostly those who supported independence. More than 550,000 people were forced to flee, including 250,000 people who were relocated to the Indonesian province of West Timor. Seventy percent of the country's major infrastructure was destroyed and villages raided (CVAR, 2013, pp. 299-300). Peace could only be restored after the intervention of the International Force East Timor (INTERFET) – an international joint military intervention force organized by the UN and led by Australia.

On 20 May 2002, two years after the transition government United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) had been installed, power was eventually transferred to the Timorese authorities. Xanana Gusmão, the historic leader of the FALINTIL, captured by Indonesian authorities in 1992 and released in 1999, became president, and, Mário Alkatiri, the leader of FRETILIN, who had been abroad in exile, became the appointed prime minister.

THE EMERGENCE OF THE *LIA NA`IN*

During the Portuguese colonial period, the *liurais*, or the local kings, were the main focus of local political partners within the Portuguese administration, particularly after the 1912 rebellion when many of these kings were replaced with those loyal to the colonial administration. The figure of the *lia na`in* is rather absent from the 19th century literature (Castro, 1867; França, 1890). However, there are references to the existence of the "*dato luli*", the noble lord of the sacred, or "*railuli*", the caregiver of the sacred land, the caretakers of the "*uma lulik*", and the one who speaks with the "*luli*", the sacred or forbidden (Castro, 1867, p. 317). Forbes (1885, pp. 446-447) also mentions the "*Dato-luli*", who, according to him, were of paramount relevance in

local ritual processes, both in peace and in war times, giving a description of such a performance: "The *Dato-luli*, then in front of the great stone, invokes the Spirits of their dead, Maromak of the heavens, and Him of the earth" (p. 467).

One of the first references to the term can be found in Rafael das Dores' (1907) dictionary of Tetum-Portuguese, which defines *lia na`in* succinctly as "orator" (p. 156). It is not until half a century later, in the 1950s and 1960s, that the *lia na`in* comes to the fore, emerging in several ethnographic works that started to emerge as anthologies of oral traditions (e.g., Pascoal, 1967; Sá, 1961). Sá (1961) mentions, briefly, that "they are the masters of the word, the classics of their oral literature" (p. XXV). A more detail description of *lia na`in*'s role in society can be found in Pascoal's (1967) work:

> [The *lia na`in* are those who] ... know how to tell myths and how to challenge genealogies – myths and genealogies which, for them and the rest of the people, constitute history, however implausible and however mixed-up or non-existent their sense of time might be.

> Holders of the voice of the past, on the one hand, the *lia na`in* cannot allow it to be silenced, while on the other, to uphold their function, they strive to prevent it from becoming commonplace. This cautious protection has done much to contribute towards the mystery in which it is shrouded. The *lia na`in* is a kind of living, precious book, which makes them a focus of attention for the entire population. For the pagan mob, when it comes to their beliefs, they are the supreme source of credibility. Their testimony is immutable truth. They have a separate place in the clan's hierarchy. (p.15)

To note, Pascoal's work contains biographies of the narrators and the *lia na`in*. The distinction between narrators and *lia na`in* is pertinent as it identifies the difference between the types of narratives concerned, myths, legends, and 'mestizo' stories, as well as the ability to tell them. According to Pascoal (1967, pp. 367-370), the *lia na`in* are those who have the knowledge and right to express those most revered words, but they can also be guardians of the *lulik*, or they can also be *suco*[2] leaders. This echoes the description provided by Forbes (1885) which draws attention to the complexity of the role of *lia na`in* as *lulik na`in* (lord of the sacred), as someone who deals with the sacred, and, in modern context, act as *suco* leader, and as such form part of the state administrative structure. Such relations between the *lia na`in* and local state power structures was not, however, further pursued by other authors.

In fact, the common image of the *lia na`in* in the 20th century would, above all, continued as a representative of Timorese culture, embellished in photos as an old man with a quiet posture, like in Cinatti's (1964) description:

> In each group of villages, united by kinship and equal political leadership, there is an individual whose functions give him the right to speak in public, on occasions of social relevance. Known by the term "lord of the word," he renews the great Timorese traditions, recounting the deeds of the ancestors and reciting the poetic allegories in which the worlds of the living and the dead are structured. (p. 8)

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2   Administrative unit. There are currently 442 *sucos* in Timor-Leste (Timor-Leste Ministry of Finance, 2019).

Anthropological works in the 1960s and 1970s describe these men as ritual authorities, but do not discuss their practical role in mundane worldly affairs, including politics (Clamagirand, 1982; Hicks, 1976/2004; Traube, 1986). Such descriptions contrast with my findings that reveal the diversity of the roles these authorities fulfill, which to some degree echoes Pascoal's (1967) insights about the roles of *lia na `in* and the overlapping of their functions in society. Understanding the complexity of the duties of *lia na `in* is significant because this provides insights into the relevance of the presence of these men in small scale communities, where relationships and social transactions, particularly kinship, have a profound effect on peacebuilding and the current political situation in Timor-Leste.

I conducted my research in a small Bunak-speaking community in the Bobonaro area (see also, Sousa, 2010a). The *lia na `in*, or *lal gomo* in Bunak, can have official or non-official status. The official status exists when some men hold a particular office in the local social-political structure and can perform the recitation of the oral history and sacred words. Such status, however, becomes problematic when the holders of office do not know how to perform their roles. In such cases, they can delegate the task to someone who knows, usually a member of one of the sacred houses (*deu po `*), to do the recitations. In the village of Tapo, for example, each one of the 18 sacred houses has a *matas*, the head of the sacred house, who could conduct the recitation. But, the *matas* can also be an *okul gomo*, a lord of the ritual, performing in his sacred house or at community rituals. In the local traditional structure of authority, there are offices that also need to be prepared to speak the words, namely the three *matas gonion*, an office associated with inner power and attributed to the three main sacred houses, represented each by their respective *matas*, or the office of *bei*, the leaders of the external power, held by four houses (Sousa, 2010a).

Once chosen, the delegated novice *matas* is expected to go to 'school' to learn the sacred words that will be essential in exercising his authority in a ritual and social context. A similar procedure is followed with the offices of *bei gonion* and with their use of the word in community rituals. When a *matas* does not know the words, he may delegate his capacity to another person, thus revealing a *lal gomo* who, even without the office, performs the event.

Thus, in such a case, *lia na `in* is not a minor reproducer of legends and myths, a voice of the past, who recalls the ancestors. The "stories" mastered by the *lia na `in*, either from the sacred house or from the community, and from the world, are essential as they are narratives that legitimate the (re)production of social and ritual precedence and hierarchy within the framework of social mechanisms, such as kinship, the sacred houses, and community power structures and those responsible for them. Turning again to the performances of *lia na `in*, in the village of Tapo, the example of the *magalia*, the narrative of the path of the House, illustrates the argument. The *magalia* recalls the history of the sacred house, performed at the time of its reconstruction (I participated in two in 2003). This recitation recounts the journey and arrival of the ancestors, and the relations that they established with others (Berthe, 1972). This "topogeny" (Fox, 1997) justifies the institution of precedence among the sacred houses and the offices that each has in the community traditional structure. This can lead to disagreement, as sometimes there are conflicting perspectives. In another recitation in 2006, during the construction of a sacred house in

Oeleu, another *suco* close to Tapo, I witnessed such conflict. All seemed well until the moment one of the *matas* recounted a different path to the ancestor of the house, which led to an interruption of the recitation and discussion. Immediately, they demanded me to stop recording the recitation ritual.

Let us now turn to the national scale. The *lia na`in* emerged in the national context mainly after 1999, or right after the independence referendum. Their presence was symbolically acknowledged through their participation in the 20 May 2002 ceremonies held at Tasi Tolo, in Dili, when governmental power was passed from the United Nations to the Timorese authorities. In the ceremonies, representatives of the 13 districts performed the recitation of the oral narratives about the origins and greeting of the nation in the allocated two minutes presentation for each. During the selection and first meeting of the representatives of Bobonaro district, I noted that one of the main concerns of those men was who would do the translation and how accurate it would be. The presentation in Dili eventually did not have any translator.

At the same time, in Bobonaro, an assemblage of *lia na`in* also addressed the new nation represented by the new flag (Sousa, 2010b). The walk of the flag, already described by Traube (1980) as the way in which the Portuguese flag arrived, depicted in oral narrative, was now performed for the Timorese flag. After these ceremonies, all the *sucos* would receive their flags. However, in Tapo, as also in some other cases, the national flag is not kept in the *suco* office, the official administration of the state, but in one of the sacred houses. Accordingly, when taken to official state ceremonies, the flag is taken by a traditional leader from another sacred house that executes this function. Such location denotes that the traditional central institution of the village, the sacred houses and their caretakers, are given the symbol of the nation to place in their care.

The framework for the new state and the acknowledgement of the role of "norms and customs" in its order is the 2002 national constitution: "The state shall recognize and value the norms and customs of Timor-Leste that are not contrary to the Constitution and any legislation dealing specifically with customary law" (The Constituent Assembly of the Democratic Republic of East Timor, 2002, Section 2, Point 4). The *lia na`in* are formally recognized in the Law of *Sucos* (Democratic Republic of East Timor, 2016), where the role of the *lia na`in* in the local context is acknowledged through three different articles. Article 10 positions the *lia na`in* as part of the structure of the *suco* council, in which they participate jointly with the head of the *suco*, the village chiefs, the delegate of each *suco* village, and a women's and youth representative. Historically, this new administrative position for the *lia na`in* is significant since Article 5, Point 1.d explains that the *suco* now has specific duties regarding tradition, that is, "defend, ensure and promote the traditional customs and practices of the community". Such duties are followed by the expected competencies of the *suco*:

> a) Promote the resolution of conflicts that arise between community members or between Aldeias [sub-villages], in accordance with the traditions and practices of the community and the respect for the principle of equality; b) To promote and defend the *Knua*[3] as fundamental elements of cultural identity of

the Timorese People; c) Preserve the existence of the *uma-lulik* or *uma-lysan* in the community; d) Collaborate in the organization of festivities, ceremonies, rituals and other activities for the affirmation of the traditions, practices and customs that form the identity of the community's customs, without prejudice to the demands that are proper of the social and economic development of the community; e) Promote the holding of activities for the inter-generational transmission of practices, traditions and customs of the local community (Democratic Republic of East Timor, 2016, Article 6, Paragraph 1).

With the formalization of the *suco* and its council as recognized authorities, the "centrality" of the *suco* in the construction of the political community in Timor-Leste becomes paramount. After a long period of militarization of Timor-Leste, as previously described, the law marks the importance of civil society in from-below state building, no longer simply being accorded a role as passive citizen who becomes the object of political change (Brown, 2015).

THE *LIA NA`IN* AND THE NATION: CONFLICT AND RECONCILIATION

The recognition of *lia na`in*'s role through the *Suco* Law is not an abrupt development. Over the course of fifteen years after the independence of Timor-Leste in 1999, their capacity to mediate conflicting sides has become increasingly essential in post-conflict society and in the general reconciliation process. They became actors that emerged as bridges in reconciliation processes in the country where local and national scales intersect. In the following section, I discuss three examples for this.

Customary Rule of Law in the Mountains

The events of 1999 were critical to the existence of Timor-Leste. After the announcement of the referendum's results, deadly violence and destruction spread around the country. Around 250,000 people fled, many of whom were former Indonesian civil servants and their families, but also many others whom the militias randomly collected and deported to West Timor, Indonesia (CVAR, 2013; Molnar, 2010). In the late months of 1999 to 2000, about 200,000 of these refugees returned to Timor-Leste. Dealing with the reconciliation process, namely between those affiliated with the autonomy movement – in particular former militias – and Indonesia, the *lia na`in* had a major role in the process of conflict resolution and local reconciliation (CVAR, 2013). According to my interlocutors, their narrative was viewed by Timorese as more credible than that of the state because they were representatives of an order associated with the ancestors, and because they are the ones who traditionally solve disputes in the communities. In 2000, a mountain sub-district leader told me that he usually called the *lia na`in* to resolve disputes, not only related to the process of reconciliation, but related to other issues like stealing or *suco* borders quarrels, claiming that sanctioning of a supernatural nature commanded greater respect than the state. This was the best way to solve small problems that presumably could become more problematic on a larger scale.

The articulation between tradition and the new state structure, however, is not always easy. In 2003, I attended a ritual at Oeleu concerning a case of cow theft by

a young man in a neighboring *suco*. To amend the sin of the crime the sacred house of the perpetrator declared that not only should money of the amount of the stolen cattle be paid to the claimant, but that the perpetrator should also provide a buffalo for sacrifice. A public ritual was staged at the sacred village site, involving the representatives of both *sucos*. This was seen as a traditional way to solve the problem and establish peace between the two villages. The new district administrator and the police chief also attended the ceremony. They were invited to publicly affirm that the dispute was solved. They stood apart during the entire ceremony, but when the major ritual acts were completed in the afternoon, they called the young man into a house and questioned him. This sparked a turmoil because, to the traditional leaders, the problem, or the criminal case, should have been closed when the ritual was completed. For the new authorities, however, there was also the need to mark their presence and register the fact because they were representing the state.

Customary Power in the Reconciliation Process

Tradition, or customary power (*lisan*), and its representatives, the *lia na`in,* acquired a national relevance as they conducted ritual acts during the local hearings that were part of the reconciliation process carried out by the CVAR. The CVAR was established in 2001 to inquire into the human rights violations that took place between April 1974 and October 1999. These acts, performances that involved the sharing of areca and betel, and other goods as well as words, in concrete settings, are local-scale events, but affected the national scale and have prevented further violence, both locally and nationally. Nevertheless, if the *lia na`in* and their ritual knowledge were instrumental, there were still difficulties when the scale of relations was shattered by different groups from different localities and different *lisan* practices: "*Lisan* played a significant part in about three-quarters of CRP [Community Reconciliation Process] hearings. One of the reasons for the absence of *lisan* in the remaining cases was that the CRP sometimes involved parties belonging to different *lisan* groups" (CVAR, 2013, p. 2455).

In 2006, another event would bring violence to Timor-Leste on a scale that few had anticipated. In May 2006, 600 soldiers who had protested regional discrimination in promotions were sacked from the Timor-Leste Forces of Defense (FDTL), mainly those from the West Zone, or the origin area of the Kaladis group. During this conflict, there was a strong social perception of two distinctive regional groups of citizens in Timor-Leste, namely the *Firakus* (Easterners, or those who dwell in the east part of the island) and *Kaladis* (the Westerners). As I witnessed the chaos, forced migrants also fled following this pattern of polarization. Fighting broke out in Dili, resulting in 60 deaths and 180,000 internally displaced people (Lusa, 2006). The conflict grew as distrust between political factions mounted and political elites started to blame each other for the social unrest. As the nation was facing political crisis, riots also erupted across the country. The situation once again led to the intervention of an Australian military force, which remained in the country for about two years (Seixas, 2010).

This first post-colonial war in Timor-Leste (Seixas, 2010) led to Mari Alkatiri's resignation as prime minister in June 2006. In 2007, following the parliamentary and presidential elections, Ramos Horta became president, and Xanana Gusmão, the

head of a new party, the National Congress for Timorese Reconstruction (Congresso Nacional de Reconstrução de Timor, CNRT), became the appointed prime minister. The new government nevertheless could not end the conflict. In 2008, President Ramos Horta was shot by rebels. Following the attack, President Gusmão declared a 48-hour state of emergency, including a curfew. The attack led to a military counter-operation resulting in the death of the rebel leader, Alfredo Reinaldo (Kingsbury, 2009, p. 190).

During my stay at that time, many people in Dili and the mountain area told me that the war would not be over unless the authorities assembled the *lia na`in* from each one of the 13 districts to resolve the national unrest by bridging the differences among political parties, party leaders, and their supporters. This assembly eventually took place in Dili in December 2006. Nevertheless, Braithwaite, Charlesworth, and Soares (2012) reported that while the ceremonial discussion was "attended by the political elite, there appeared very little public engagement and no sense of an outcome, let alone any kind of binding compact between parties" (p. 228). My informants explained that such a state of affairs came about because the youth and politicians no longer respect the "old ways and beliefs".

The president of Timor-Leste, Ramos Horta, was seriously wounded in the attack but recovered. After this period of crisis, the state promoted a unity program of peacebuilding and development, namely "*ita uma deit*" (only one house) – one house being synonymous with one country. During my visit in 2010, the walls of Dili were already covered with paintings made by different groups of young artists sponsored by state institutions, which depicted symbolic images of the union and inseparableness of all the Timorese, like the Portuguese word *unidade* (unity) or, more elaborately expressed in a traditional couplet, characteristic of oral narratives: "*hun ida, abut ida hamutuk mai ita halao desenvolve domin dame no paz*" (one origin, one root, together we will develop love and peace). In this peace building program, the *lia na`in* were called upon to bless – thus legitimizing – the new national economic and political undertakings. In 2008, for example, an "association of *lia na`in*", on the behalf of the united East Timorese people, granted Xanana Gusmão the authority to negotiate the country's minerals (La`o Hamutuk, 2013). Unlike the *suco* council, which emerged from a traditional institution, this "association of *lia na`in*", however, is not a traditional one. As matter of fact, La`o Hamutuk (2013), the Timor-Leste Institute for Development Monitoring and Analysis, explains that the association was founded by the state's Secretariat for Natural Resources. Although the association is relatively unknown until today, it marks how the state views the importance of such traditional leadership in political conduct. Their blessing symbolizes people's legitimation, which represents unity between the people and the politicians as the personification of the state in the post-conflict nation.

Aside from a scale of space, there is also a temporal scale that emerged in Timor-Leste's efforts to reconcile what are considered to be unresolved conflicts. In fact, a structural time of memory that persists around the violence of the past and the divisions of the Timorese were addressed in 2012, the year that marked the 100th anniversary of the 1912 Manufahi Rebellion.[4] In the anniversary, a statue dedicated

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4   I did not participate in this ceremony, but in 2013, I had the opportunity to interview the local repre-

to the *liurai* Dom Boaventura da Costa was inaugurated in Same. The ceremony was considered a moment of national reconciliation. The close relationship between old conflicts (the 1912 Manufahi Rebellion) and the present (the 2006 Timor-Leste crisis) is relevant as it allows the reasons for the division to be left behind while giving the current actors a role to play in resolving them.

For the ceremony, once again, the *lia na`in* from every district in the country were invited. They were not only to fulfill their traditional role of paying tribute to and appeasing the ancestors, but also to talk about cementing national unity in the present. As one participant explained to me in Maliana in 2013, going to the site had allowed peace to come and the conflicts to reach closure. He explained that the 1912 rebellion had not only caused a lot of deaths, but also many women had been brought and incorporated into the sacred houses of those who won. These facts needed to be mutually acknowledged between all parties, in this case all districts of Timor-Leste, so that they could be forgiven by sharing these memories. The formal organizers of the event said:

> The commemoration of 100 years of the Manufahi Rebellion, which is being celebrated in Same, shall begin with a traditional ceremony, "*Nahe Biti Boot*", performed by the traditional leaders of the 13 districts. The ceremony aims to cleanse all the sins the ancients left at the time of the Manufahi Rebellion. The deputy prime-minister, Fernando La Sama de Araújo, representing the government, introduced this traditional ceremony, saying that, in the past, our grandparents had harbored old hatreds which this ritual ceremony now aimed to redeem, uniting all Timorese in the promotion and development of Timor-Leste. (CJITL/Benny, 2012)

The ceremony connecting two periods in Timorese history was an enactment of unity among people and ancestors, claiming a common identity.

Customary on Demand

The last example involves, again, the 2006 conflict, and it recalls the power of words in Timor-Leste. After the general elections on 22 June 2017, the newly elected prime minister, Mari Alkatiri, held a ceremony in Dili outside the Government Palace on 27 September 2017. The purpose of this ceremony was to withdraw his own words, pronounced on 26 June 2006, when, after his resignation, he swore never to take up the post again. The event illustrates the relations that are being woven between individuals who represent the state and tradition, particularly *lia na`in*.

The ceremony, once again involving representatives from the various districts (but not all), was named '*Dada Ikas*' (withdrawing the oath) and '*Loke Dalan*' (opening the way) and was extensively covered by the media. The result of the final divination process of the livers of three sacrificed roosters as declared by the *lia na`in* in the ceremony was that "the road will be long, but straight" (Manu-Teen Lulik Loke, 2017). Mari Alkatiri acknowledged that "they were unanimous in saying that the

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sentatives from Maliana and Bobonaro districts about their experience in participating in the ceremony and how it has become meaningful for them.

road is open, but also that I have to walk carefully because there are always obstacles ahead" ("PM Timorense Regressa 11 Anos", 2017). Nevertheless, the obstacles were paramount, and after turbulent months with Mari Alkatiri's government program rejected and him being unable to implement his budget proposal, the President of Timor-Leste, Francisco Guterres, dissolved the parliament in January 2018, followed by new elections (European Union, 2018, pp. 6-7).

CONCLUSION

The Timorese state is coming to terms with tradition while struggling to find new ways for nation and peace building in a post 'militarized' society. The *lia na`in* have played a significant role in this post-conflict society. They are helping to restore order and promote peace, especially in places where state institutions and law enforcement have been weak, and there has been huge distrust between various segments of society which previously had been polarized, even militarized, in political conflicts.

It recognizes the important role of tradition in local contexts, namely in the resolution of local disputes. In the process, the state formally acknowledges the figure of the *lia na`in* in the administrative structure of the *suco*, with a consultative position. However, their role is attached to mainly ceremonies and rituals to be performed in a local context and within local politics. The relevance of local customary law in general is confirmed by recent studies (Graça & Menezes, 2017) and is manifest in the ongoing process of local consultation with traditional authorities, namely *lia na`in*, undertaken by the government in several districts of the country.

On the national scale, *lia na`in* are obviously involved in the discourse of conflict resolution. However, it should be further questioned whether the state's legal formal recognition of their presence is also part of a process of the state's incorporation of traditional actors as part of a top-down peace building. The *lia na`in* and their narration capability and oratory skills reflect a 'local wisdom' of creative peace building in a young nation as it plays a role on local and temporal scales. But once it is appropriated by the state – through the law, state invitations, associations – it may lose its meaning.

Similar to the local context, the ceremonies performed at state events strive to deliver the idea of a symbolic whole: The *lia na`in* are from the 13 districts, or at least the material and symbolic supplies, like the baskets for the areca and betel, would be used in this number, symbolizing the presence of all regions. In Dili, the capital, there are currently two main *lia na`in* who have performed on behalf of the entire country. These performances are, according to Silva (2019), being "spectacularized" (Silva, 2019), very much like Acciaioli (1985) claims concerning the appropriation of *adat* (customs) in Indonesia. The presence manifests the symbolic links of the mountain and the capital, encompassing the scales of the local and the national. Another scale that is being addressed is the temporal scale; tying the past and the present denotes that a particular event has historical importance and is an arena of contestation. The temporal scale underlies the need to link common purposes and overcome contemporary divisions.

I can say that the state recognizes the need for the idea of the whole, the assemblage of these small scale "localized territorialities" (Santos, 2001) in the scale of

national undertakings, namely the resolution of conflict (I do not discuss here the outcome of the events). But this is also a way to integrate these actors, recognizing the existence of such diversity but also showing the capacity of the state to assign them a role, even if this seems mainly aesthetic. It concedes the small-scale intervention at *suco* level in the resolution of local disputes and in the process of local reconciliation. The need for the presence of *lia na`in* at national events reveals the fabric of a state, which indicates that, in scales of space and time, synchronically and diachronically, the state needs its symbolic local agents to, as Pascoal (1967) asserts, establish their "credibility".

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Religious Discourse and Gender Security in Southern Thailand

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This article describes the complexity of applying human security through the notion of gender equality in southern Thailand where violent conflict has been prevalent for nearly half a century in a Malay-Muslim-dominated society. It explores how the concepts of gender and security have been interpreted in Malay-Muslim leaders' outlooks. To define security more broadly, the article surveys the various notions of peacebuilding dealing with comprehensive human security and any security threat, thus not limited to state of war or physical violence only. In the prolonged armed violence and conflict, like that faced in Thailand's *Deep South*, women's security and their role in peacebuilding emerge as pertinent concerns. The discontinuities within the narratives of women and security highlight a divergence connected to personal-political imaginations of conflict whereby subtle variations in violent conflict can be seen as the products of different policy prescriptions, local cultural norms, and the project outcomes of women groups supported by governmental organizations and national and international donors. Thus, in order to reflect upon how contemporary security notions are framed, gendered security perceptions ought to be considered as they signify the exercise of peacebuilding programs in the local context. Persistent advocacy of gender equality is about cultural change, which eventually becomes a modality for non-violent society.

Keywords: Cultural Change; Deep South of Thailand; Gender Security; Malay-Muslim Women; Peacebuilding;

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INTRODUCTION

Members of civil society organizations in Pattani[1], Thailand, have been critical of the government's attempts to generate *peace* as it only translated within the goal of defeating the insurgency. In such peacebuilding scenarios, women, who are not part of the insurgency, are entirely ignored. Nevertheless, studies underscore that violence in the region affects women both directly and indirectly. They have been killed, injured, traumatized, sexually harassed, and have experienced emotional and economic suffering as the conflict persisted (Abuza, 2011; International Crisis Group, 2012; Marddent, 2006). Parallel to the challenge of the implementation process and policy on gender equality and women's empowerment by state and international agencies, especially within the framework of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda, this paper shows that there is an

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1 In this study, I use both *Patani* and *Pattani*. The former term is chosen to refer to the region, while the latter is used as the name of a province in the south of Thailand.

attempt to promote a bottom-up peacebuilding perspective in conflict ridden areas of South Thailand as women and members of civil society organizations interviewed for this paper described the experiences and knowledge they value.

According to the gendered aspects of the WPS agenda (Pratt & Richter-Devroe, 2011), civil society organizations, especially women's groups, are the main strategic actors to push for the discussion of women's experiences in armed conflict. The WPS agenda addresses three main themes: (1) Women and girls in war and armed conflict demand to be protected from sexual and gender-based violence; (2) Women must have a role in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and peacebuilding; (3) Local actors, member states, and the United Nations (UN) system need to adopt a gender perspective in peace operations, negotiations, and agreements. In the region, women's movements are tra-ditional actors or grassroots peace activists, who are critical of military solutions (Deep South Watch, 2014; Tissamana, 2017, pp. 102-115) which have been adopted through a state-centric security approach. Their involvement in the peacebuilding movement has a long history. Several groups of Muslim women in the South have become involved in political reform to ensure peacebuilding after the uprising against the military dictator-ship on 14 October 1973 and the massacre of the student movement on 6 October 1976.

This paper accordingly explores the discourses of violence and the peacebuilding perspectives of locals in Thailand's Deep South in order to understand women's par-ticipation in peacebuilding and how they position the violence they experience and potential solutions. This paper aims to draw attention to the effort of local peacebuild-ing amidst the complexity of policy formulations from international gender-sensitive peacebuilding and development programs. The subjects in this study are not only con-fronted with violent conflict, but they are also tackling discriminatory gender norms within their own culture. Thus, while international agencies need to pay close atten-tion to their perspectives on what is causing violence and how it can be addressed, this paper highlights the degree to which Malay-Muslim women are also trying to work with their own communities to lessen the impact that strict Islamic teaching has on their ability to live in a peaceful society.

This ethnographic study employs a qualitative research framework for data collec-tion and analysis. The method involves extensive fieldwork among women's groups and local communities in the research area – Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat Provinces – through participant observation. This method facilitated my immersion in how these women perceive their culture. Sixty-two informants participated in interviews, conver-sations, and focus group discussions; this includes 5 women who have been the victims of violence, 16 women who tackle sexual and gender-based violence in the Muslim community, 11 male and female religious leaders, 8 government staff, 2 professional peacebuilders, 2 human rights defenders and analysts, 2 scholars, and 16 male and female youth. Before detailing women's efforts and perspective on human security as a means of conflict resolution in the impacted regions, I will first briefly describe the conflict in Thailand's Deep South and then describe the various international agendas as peacebuilding discourses that have been implemented in the regions.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CONFLICT AND THE TERMINOLOGY PROBLEM

The southern region of Thailand has had a long history of political contestations.

It was once home to the sovereign Kingdom of Patani, which was international-ly recognized, for instance, in diplomatic and trade missions to China in the 16th century (Teeuw & Wyatt, 1970, p. 1). Tributary relationship between Thailand, for-merly known as Siam, and Patani lasted from the mid-13th century to the late 18th century. According to Aphornsuvan (2007, p.16), Patani leaders enjoyed greater freedom to rule the kingdom during the time when Siamese rulers were preoccu-pied with other security issues, such as the wars with Burma in the 15th century and Cambodia in the 14th century. During these periods of subordination, whenever the Siamese royal government was weakened, Patani's rulers revolted by refusing to send tribute.

By the mid-17th century, the Siamese Kingdom was in political chaos and later defeated by the neighboring Konbaung dynasty of Burma in 1767. In such a del-icate security situation, General Taksin managed to regroup the followers, built a new political center at Thonburi, and was crowned as King of Siam in December 1767. King Rama I later on marked a period of the nation's golden era with strong central government, during which Siam's trade advanced and stability was imposed through military control. In 1785, King Rama I asserted renewed sovereignty over Patani. Siam's troops attacked Patani and destroyed the sultan's palace (Keyes, 2009, pp. 19-42). The tributary system was ended during the reign of King Rama II, who divided Patani into seven Malay principalities, which included Patani, Saiburi, Yala, Yaring, Raman, Ra-ngae, and Nong Chick. Of these, only Nong Chick had a Buddhist ruler. Since the 1900s, the leaders of Siam united the South into the provinces of Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat – divisions that exist until today.

During the 19th century, with the arrival of the French and British colonial pow-ers, Bangkok, again, tightened its control over Patani. Throughout the century, the political status of the Malay Peninsula sultanates, including Patani, became increas-ingly squeezed between an expanding British colonial rule and a rapidly modernizing Siam (Baker & Phongpaichit, 2009, pp. 69-70). In 1909, through the Anglo-Siamese Treaty between Siam and Britain, Patani was annexed to be governed directly under Thai hegemony. This resulted in the official incorporation of the southern Patani border into the Thai state.

This border arrangement, which still exists as the current borders of the Thai modern state, has since then been disputed by the local Malay aristocracy who objected to the Thai government's control of the southern region (Bunnag, 1977). Tensions worsened when the Thai central government enacted the National Culture Act in 1939, which contained detailed codes of behavior (Aphornsuvan, 2007, p. 35) intended to 'civilize' Thais by forming a unified national culture for those dwelling within the Thai state's border. With the implementation of the act, the Thai state aimed to spread central Thai cultural traits and Theravada Buddhism throughout the whole country as a policy of assimilation. Consequently, despite the fact that over 70% of the population in the Deep South are Malay Muslims, Patani people were forced to adopt Buddhist culture which had been introduced by Bangkok's Buddhist-centric government (Bajunid, 1992; Scupin, 1998, p. 229). The forced imposition of Thai culture on Malay Muslims led to violent separatist insurgencies in which those who envision themselves to be part of the Patani people fight for independence from Thailand (von Feigenblatt, 2009).

Following the Second World War, violence in the Patani region increased dramatically. The Islamic scholar and the first president of the Provincial Islamic Council of Pattani, Haji Sulong, started the first major independence movement in the 1940s and early 1950s (Aphornsuvan, 2004; Lamey, 2013, p. 3). He called on the Patani people to engage in civil disobedience and a petition campaign. Haji Sulong authored the seven-point demand of Malay Muslims that was presented to a commission of inquiry convened by the central government to investigate the circumstances of the locals at a time of growing Malay-Muslim nationalism and resistance to central government authority in the region.[2] His arrest and imprisonment in 1948 led to a series of violent eruptions before he was made to disappear by security forces in 1954 (Aphornsuvan, 2007, pp. 52-53; Ockey, 2011, pp. 112-117). Since the 1950s, the tension in the region has been characterized by continuous armed violence, whereby Thai security forces' counter-reaction has alienated the Malay-Muslim community and conversely led some local Muslims to engage in militancy (Dorairajoo, 2009).

In January 2004, the violence in Thailand's Deep South took a new turn when Malay-Muslim insurgents raided a military camp in Narathiwat and drew on an ethno-regionalist narrative to perpetuate a new wave of violent conflict in the south of Thailand (Liow & Pathan, 2010). Their claim to religious justification marks a new form of separatist movement in which religious rhetoric increasingly plays a central role in violent insurgencies' political discourse (McCargo, 2009). The entanglement between religious solidarity and violence becomes even more complex since the collective memory of the military atrocities, particularly of those that took place at Krue Ze Mosque and the following Tak Bai tragedy, against Muslim civilians is well alive among the locals. In April 2004, the military raided Pattani's historic Krue Ze mosque to arrest a group of militant Malay Muslims who were suspected to have attacked the police station. The raid resulted in the death of 32 men, with one civilian victim who happened to be in the mosque. The Tak Bai incident followed when a crowd of 2,000 protestors gathered at the police station in Tak Bai district, Narathiwat, to seek the release of six people arrested on suspicion of having stolen guns from defense volunteers. Police and military forces used fire trucks and live ammunition to control the situation, in the course of which more than 80 Malay men were killed as a result of ill treatment (Harish & Liow, 2007, pp. 161-184). These series of conflicts involving the deaths of Muslim civilians have generated long-lasting traumatic memories among the Malay Muslims in the region until today.[3]

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2   The demands were: (1) The government of Siam should have a person of high rank possessing full power to govern the four provinces of Patani, Yala, Narathiwat, and Satul, and this person should be a Muslim born within one of the provinces and elected by the populace. The person in this position should be retained without being replaced; (2) All of the taxes obtained within the four provinces should be spent only within the provinces; (3) The government should support education in the Malay medium up to the fourth grade in parish schools within the four provinces; (4) 80% of the government officials within the four provinces should be Muslims born within the provinces; (5) The government should use the Malay language within government offices alongside the Siamese language; (6) The government should allow the Islamic Council to establish laws pertaining to the customs and ceremonies of Islam with the agreement of the high official; (7) The government should separate the religious court from the civil court in the four provinces, with full authority to conduct cases (Syukri, 2005, pp. 89-90).

3   Interview with several women and several youths who are members of families of the victims; Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat, 12-13 September 2018, 10-12 May 2010, and 24-26 December 2004.

The historical tensions in Thai-Patani relations between the central government and the Deep South and the reluctance to recognize the region as a sovereign state have created a situation of chronic controversy concerning nation-state issues in the region, which Winichakul (1994) calls the "geo-body problem" of the nation. He asserts that the *Melayu Patani*, or the ethnic Malays and the Malay-speaking Muslims, struggle over the notion of "Thai-ness" (*kwaampenthai*) because of the conceptions of Thai chauvinism and geo-body that emerged from a homogenous conception of national culture based on a unitary nation-state (Winichakul, 1994, pp. 3-5).[4]

Such tensions lead to enduring violence since the state relies on military force to secure order. This is evident from how the state has organized the machinery of occupation between the government and the military in these provinces, where the government machinery of the occupying power is divided between the government and military through security agencies and military forces. Accordingly, in assessing the notion of security in the region, the state is applying military terminologies by classifying the conflict as "unrest" and "insurgency" (Buranajaroenkij, 2017, p. 19). "Unrest" is a key term that the government uses to point to the risk it faces in the region along with the region's social instability. As it creates a division of 'us-versus-them', the state's evocation of the term has been criticized by human rights activists in the region. Women activists have been rejecting the term as it can only be applied in respect to a paternalistic central control policy, and therefore does not address all conflict-affected dimensions, including the comprehensive notion of human security, which locals and women have to endure (International Committee of the Red Cross, 2008; Paulus & Vashakmadze, 2009).

Women and human rights activists contend that the term "unrest" is a simplification of the depicted situation since violence in the region has become more complex and affected larger concerns, including women's well-being, domestic violence, child marriage, discrimination against widows, and enduring sexual and gender-based violence. Accordingly, beyond the scope of the military's understanding focused on a binary situation of stability and unrest, "unrest" has significant consequences for those living within it. For example, armed violence as a product of masculinity (Bjarnegård & Melander, 2011) often leads to other forms of violence such as against women and children (Ezard, 2014), and thus any security notion should set its concerns on human security (Tripp, 2013) as the product of a non-violent ecology rather than simply exercising armed or political security.

A report from the Southern Border Provinces Administration Centre (SBPAC)[5] shows a staggering number of women who were victimized in unarmed conflict conditions from 2004 to 2017, with 513 killed and 1,704 injured as a result of shootings or bombings (Buranajaroenkij, 2019, pp. 67- 80). The National Human Rights

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4   To add to the complexity, the Patani region remains, until today, a poor region with substantially less economic development than other parts of Thailand's South (Bank of Thailand, 2006; World Bank, 2019).

5   SBPAC was established in 1981 to monitor the work of civilian government agencies, implement policy, train and discipline the officials posted to the region, and coordinate with security forces in Thailand's Deep South. These include the Office of the National Security Council (NSC) and the Internal Security Operations Command (ISOC). SBPAC, NSC, and ISOC, which are responsible for devising and implementing policy in the region, are led formally by the Prime Minister. In practice, however, the Prime Minister exercises little direct oversight (International Crisis Group, 2012).

Commission of Thailand (2018) reports that in some rape cases, the victims were even forced to marry the perpetrators of sexual assault as mediation process to settle the suit. At the same time, since separatists have mainstreamed religious discourse into everyday life, religious conservatism has dominated the region, and a recent report from the Southern Women Network Overcoming Violence (2018) shows that the stories and numbers of violent incidents against women have largely gone unreported due to stigma and social pressure, although the number of incidents of domestic violence is annually increasing in the Muslim community.

Because of perceived cultural norms, less particular concern has addressed gender-based violence. Studies on and programs for women in conflict situations in this region tend to have a limited focus on the quantitative and visible involvement of women in peacebuilding as part of grassroots training and programming by foreign actors as well as actors from Thailand's central region (Asia Foundation, 2012; Buranajaroenkij, 2017, 2019; UNDP, 2016; UN Women, 2012, 2018). Programs for civil society and communities in this region leave religious and socially sensitive issues to the religious leaders' accountabilities; although in many cases the religious scholars are indeed sensitive to gender issues. Therefore, when issues of gender-based violence are addressed, the state and civil society actors associate them primarily with the predominant culture of the Muslim community and religious interpretation, which, they contend, marginalized women.

Public outcry for Muslim religious authorities to address such issues has nevertheless met a dead end. Such approaches fail because, on the one hand, they fail to account for the complexities of violence that women in this area face as part of the ongoing conflict, while on the other hand they offer simplistic solutions to how the violence could be addressed by disentangling it from the larger conflict situation and connecting it to gender as well as values of a conservative Muslim society.

SEVERAL OPERATING GLOBAL PEACEBUILDING DISCOURSES

It was not only once or twice during my field research (2004-2007, 2009-2010, and 2014-2019) in Thailand's Deep South that the locals expressed their complaints about the top-down approach that characterizes policies meant to address the conflict, particularly the martial law order and the 2005 emergency (International Commission of Jurists, 2010). At this time, the locals had recognized the prolonged violent situation as an armed conflict was the outcome of *utsahakam kwam mankong* (security industry). Because of the top down, security-based machinery of the state, people in Patani criticized that the cost of the violent conflict had emerged as a profitable benefit for several sectors, especially the Thai belligerents and the aristocracies on both sides. Moreover, many local people felt they were living within *utsahakam kwam mankong*, whereby their voices were being marginalized and they were being victimized as 'others' in the wake of conflict. The feeling of otherness is prominent among Malay Muslims who constitute a non-Buddhist minority as well as among those who embrace a non-Thai culture.

"The others" is used among the Malay Muslims to define their own identity in relation to others. In this regard, they are referring to the dominant Thai social, cultural, and other kinds of identity constructions. To note, since 2004 there has also

been a nostalgic revival of Thai nationalism, which includes propaganda songs and cultural performances to show that the state still plays a decisive role in the policy of assimilation (Jory, 2007, pp. 129-146). Such a sense of otherness, when entangled with such expressions of a sense of belonging and nationalism, could hinder local participation in the peacebuilding project. The structural othering could also be seen in the dispute of regional naming. While the state addresses the region as 'Pattani', the insurgency movement uses 'Pattani' to describe the narrative of its origins and individuality, and to show how it is not dependent on a center in Bangkok. According to Satha-Anand (1992, pp. 1-38), the term "Pattani" actually best reflects a specific political and cultural territory. The state's deliberate word selection is, however, also not without a reason. It shows the historical control of the central government since it has been using the term 'Pattani' as a unit of administration since 1906 (Chonlaworn, 2014, pp. 527-546). Such disagreement shows how the state disregards the agency of local Malay Patani people in constructing their own identity. Panjor (2015) argues that, beyond its administrative function, region naming is a form of state's centralistic control of local political identity that defies or contains local political aspirations. Consequently, the term has political and cultural connotations.

Among local women, the problem of identity is also related to how their "women-ness" is defined through various global discourses. There are currently four discourses of peacebuilding that accommodate women's participation in the process: the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 and its Women, Peace and Security Agenda (WPS), the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Among these discourses, the WPS agenda has become today's main source and tool to advanced women's participation in the peacebuilding process in Thailand's Deep South. The WPS was initiated as part of the UNSCR 1325 on 31 October 2000 (Chinkin, 1994, pp. 326-341). As a UN-based resolution, WPS is a global normative order on security discourse. UNSCR 1325 and WPS impose a global political agenda on policy support for gender equality. On the global level, its mainstreaming centers on four pillars, namely (1) women's participation in conflict resolution and peace processes; (2) gender mainstreaming in conflict-prevention initiatives; (3) the protection of women's rights and bodies in times of peace and war; and (4) relief and recovery, especially for survivors of sexual violence. At the national level, UNSCR 1325 provides guidelines to governments and non-governmental actors that outline their responsibilities in order to comply with the WPS agenda (George, 2016, pp. 376-377). The UN believes, as supported by a study by Krause, Krause, & Bränfors, 2018, that when women participate in peace negotiations, there will be an increase in the durability and the quality of peace.

Research on the WPS has invigorated the agenda extensively, such as issues on policy prescription and redefinition of the idea of peace, conflict, gender, and security. These studies investigate how the implementation of peace resolutions could relate to certain gender norms. For example, Goldstein (2001) discusses how the gendering of war has been constructed, emphasizing the degree to which men have been socialized with hierarchies, such as in the armies, more extensively than women in wartime. Thus, men are trained with hierarchical power through wars, while women actively oppose war. Several studies, however, criticize the WPS agenda for

its simplicity. Ní Aoláin (2016, pp. 275-292) highlights the applicability of the WPS agenda in an era of a new pattern of war in which security strategies have focused specifically on counterterrorism and extremism, where women are only marginal actors and their voices of peacebuilding play a role only in marginal spaces. Jauhola's work (2016) contributes to the marginalized subjects of women, peace, and security by exploring the ways in which the WPS is predicated on the construct of the 'good woman'. The realities of war and conflict in the Global South also deliver a further criticism to the UNSCR 1325 and the WPS agenda. Basu (2016, pp. 362-374) criticizes the implementation of both, contending that UN's discourses on peacebuilding and conflict resolution have been primarily developed based on values of the Global North. Thus, she calls for the contributions of the Global South to be brought into consideration in both the implementation and non-implementation of the WPS resolutions. By doing so, she argues that the UNSCR 1325 needs to invite actors from the Global South to also write the implementation guidance document as follow-up resolutions and to further broaden the discourse on women, peace, and security.

The Thai government has signed the international agenda, but it does not yet have a National Action Plan (NAP) to steward the UNSCR 1325 implementation. Regardless of such a limitation, there are already some local efforts to incorporate a WPS agenda in the establishment of meetings with grassroots women's organizations. Through various interviews, my interlocutors, who are members of women's NGOs in the conflict areas and civil society leaders, expressed that the steps in the WPS agenda have led to pragmatic actions in their efforts to craft the country's policies on gender and security. On the practical level, to deepen the application of the WPS, the Thai government has relied on women's groups comprised of those whose husbands have been killed or are missing in the region. At the same time, several international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) have joined forces with women's non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Thailand to persuade the government to also advocate the older, already-existing peace discourses to further support the WPS agenda, such as the 1979 CEDAW and the 1995 Beijing UN Women's Conference Platform for Action.[6]

In Thailand, the WPS agenda was adopted in collaboration between the Thai Ministry of Social Development and Human Security and UN Women (Government Prioritizes UN Policy, 2015; UN Women Asia and the Pacific, 2016). Since it was adopted, some women leaders, including those from UN Women, the National Human Rights Commission of Thailand (NHRCT), the SBPAC, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Office of Women's Affairs and Family Development (OWAFD) under the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, have been pushing for the UNSCR 1325 to be implemented in domestic activities. On the other hand, the practitioners, international observers, diplomats, and activists that I have interviewed, all view that unlike the UNSRC 1325, the WPS actually offers strategies on the prevention of violence and protection issues that are already effective for peacebuilders to apply in the field. Thus, the WPS has been proven to be able to be used as the core tool of peace processes while helping the state to better advance international humanitarian law and Thailand's Internal Security Act (ISA). For example,

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6   See, True's (2016) discussion paper on women's inclusion in the peace process. The Foundation for Women has provided training and training manuals to educate women in conflict areas to understand and apply CEDAW and UNSCR on WPS to advance gender equality since 2008 (Sakrobanek, 2008).

government and international actors, especially the ASEAN commission and key stakeholders, can restore people's confidence in peacebuilding by undertaking concrete steps, such as annual budgeting programs to support women's forums that are likely to result in increased confidence among key groups to agree upon action points and ways in accelerating the implementation of WPS agenda.

These practical engagements, apart from the absence of a NAP, have turned women and their organizations into recognized actors whose agency has an impact on building a stronger comprehensive set of peacebuilding implementation steps. For example, the Thai government has implemented conflict resolution by establishing security goals based on a national political blueprint strategy, in which it has initiated a program of monetary compensation and rehabilitation processes as one of the initial steps in the peacebuilding process. Beyond financial means, such steps are symbolically pivotal since they raise the issue of recognition, whereby the impact the conflict has had on women is taken into consideration. To date, most women who are conflict-related victims have been compensated by the government (International Crisis Group, 2012).

The local Malay-Muslim women, who were direct victims, have also taken a greater role as peacemakers by becoming leaders of local women's groups. Their agency is being recognized by the state and INGOs. For example, they have travelled more frequently from their villages to the cities to attend workshops and meetings and to participate in dialogue forums. They have taken on leading roles in conflict prevention and peacemaking, although, again, Thailand does not have a national action plan for the implementation of UNSCR 1325.[7]

This is where complications emerge. Women leaders in the networks of civil societies in Thailand's Deep South understand this global agenda as an imposed, top-down agenda through which the state is attempting to implement a certain standard on women groups. Some civil society members in Pattani province also believe, however, that the ISA, although it has adopted some notions of an international legal framework, is often used to empower executive authority and security forces, which undermine the rights of citizens. At the same time, the government has actually attempted to avoid any internationalization of the conflict in the Deep South of Thailand, which explains the absence of a NAP. As the Thai government has classified the conflict as unrest in the context of riot and insurgency, it primarily centers the WPS agenda only in a larger discourse of national security. The state tends to recognize conflict situations in the region as internal disturbances and tensions; in this discourse, violence is explained as isolated, sporadic acts, and a matter of domestic politics (Lamey, 2013). When the state developed a plan to address security, a woman human rights defender, Angkhana Neelapaijit, criticized the government and local leaders' handling of the situation in the region without a gender dimension.[8] She expressed that the state should close the gap between commitment and action in the form of non-violence policies. Such policies to security, however, will consequently withdraw any abundant presence of armed forces in the region. Angkhana further noted that the lack of

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7   See also, Peace Women (2018). Additionally, while Thailand's NAP includes WPS implementation frameworks, Thailand has not established actions to be implemented in cooperation with civil society. The Thai military government, on the other hand, establishes its own security goals based on the 20-year national political blueprint strategy (The National Blueprint Strategy, 2018).

8   Interview, Nakhon Si Thammarat, 8 August 2018, and Pattani, 6 December 2019.

political will to actually implement a change through a NAP supporting the UNSCR 1325 remains a key issue to advance the goals of the peace process.

On the other hand, according to group discussions I attended in October 2018 on state agencies' monitoring of the WPS, UNSCR 1325 is currently not being upheld by the central government as it has implemented another new security policy for the region that does not accommodate the non-violence values of UNSCR 1325. Women officials from both the Office of Women's Affairs and Family Development (OWAFD) under Thailand's Ministry of Social Development and Human Security and SBPAC representatives admitted the lapse. Such discrepancy between policy and action arises because UNSCR 1325 is a legally binding resolution for UN Charter signatory states (Initiative on Quiet Diplomacy, 2010, pp. 36-37) and is not an organic product of all involved actors.

Apart from WPS, these women activists also have implemented several other related resolutions, which address matters on the individual level or in the private sphere (Kirby & Shepherd, 2016, pp. 249-254). In 2015, for example, the international community endorsed another normative framework, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, commonly known as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This global instrument formally recognizes gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls as a distinct development goal. The SDGs number 5 and 16 (further, SDG 5 and SDG 16)[9] in particular aim at achieving gender equality and empowering of all women and girls, including a call to end all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls in the public and private spheres, to eliminate harmful practices, to value domestic work, and to ensure women's political and economic participation as well as sexual and reproductive health respectively (Lee & Pollitzer, 2016). I attended several small women peacebuilding forums on the overlapping forms of gender justice and protection mechanisms for women's rights (in Pattani, Narathiwat, and Bangkok in March, August, and December 2018). The present local and international scholars, INGO professionals, Thai, and Malay-Muslim women's rights activists and a national human rights commissioner, who have been working on women's right protection with civil society and women groups in the Deep South of Thailand, criticized the government's policy tool as being incapable of achieving the state's goal of a gender-based justice arrangement. The problem is that, although the state has ratified the agreement, the current government has attempted to merely uphold their accountability to the SDGs by crafting a 20-year governmental strategic plan rather than implementing all mechanisms to enact a gender-inclusive security policy, particularly those outlined in UNSCR 1325.

Dealing with two discourses, the UNSCR 1325 and the SDGs, the Thai government, through its representative state agencies like the OWAFD and the Sub-Committee on Women, Peace and Security, has discussed in various international forums in Bangkok, which I attended, to consolidate the efforts of integrating these global gender perspectives through learning from local women's best-practices. Members of the civil society network who work on peacebuilding issues with several organizations have, hence, attempted to create another space and provide the resources to push for larger engagement of Muslim women's group.

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9   SDG 5 aims at achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls, while SDG 16 promotes peaceful and sustainable societies for sustainable development; access to justice for all; and effective, accountable and inclusive institutions for all (United Nations General Assembly, 2015).

One of the greatest challenges to craft a NAP and for supporting the consolidation of women's activism is, however, the synchronicity between elements of the state themselves. My interlocutors stated that such a problem persists because the state is unwilling to accommodate the resolution into a NAP.[10] As previously mentioned, the representation of the state in the Deep South has been divided into civilian government, on the one hand, and military control, on the other hand. Such unwillingness seems to be rooted in a complex set of interrelated issues, particularly in terms of the permanent State of Emergency under martial law (e.g., Jitpiromrsi & McCargo, 2008; The Asian Human Rights Commission, 2009).

Thus, while the civilian government actively supports a discourse on the consolidation of efforts, the military government does not prioritize citizen protection or any from-below initiatives due to the martial law in the Deep South that was imposed following the 2014 military coup.[11] Moreover, reports from international organizations contend that the military government, the National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO), is failing to promote human rights in general (Human Rights Watch, 2017; International Crisis Group, 2016). This situation shows how different understandings of the notion of security could lead to a deadlock. Such a deadlock can become a potential blowback to any peacebuilding effort since it prolongs the status quo on security (see also, Liow, 2006; von Feigenblatt, 2011).

Responding to such an incoherent plan, and to strengthen the implementation of UNSCR 1325, SDG 5, and SDG 16, women's groups have demanded that the Thai government deconstruct the notion of security – as part of a larger notion of non-violent society – and go beyond its current focus on state security (Thailand Universal Periodic Review, 2017; Universal Periodic Review Info, 2017). The goal is that, by incorporating grassroots women's voices on security, which could be directly applied within the community, the Thai government could effectively implement the WPS resolution. Such efforts have been fruitful since several national forums commenced in 2015 and 2016, organized in Bangkok and Songkhla, respectively. In these initiatives, along with scholars and state officers of the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, a large number of women from different networks were invited, including the leaders from Islamic communities, such as the Peace Agenda of Women (PAOW), a network of 23 women's organizations. Through these forums, the Thai government also aims to endow grassroots women with a basic knowledge of SCR 1325 (Government Prioritizes UN Policy, 2015). Apart from the bureaucratic complexity, this development on various international discourses on WPS that are currently taking place in the Deep South show that there is a national recognition of the added value that women can bring to peace implementation in partnership with the UN and state agencies, even though women do not understand all the technical matters in relation to a dominant strategic plan for SCR 1325.[12]

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10   The Thai government announced the finalization of the National Action Plan (NAP) for Women, Peace and Security. However, no timeline or budget has specifically been allocated to the NAP (Peace Women, 2018).

11   Thailand's recent general election results in May 2019 entail that the NCPO continues to maintain their power over an elected parliament since the military coup in 2014 (McCargo, 2019, pp. 153-222).

12   Interviews with two scholars from the Prince of Songkla University, Pattani Campus, who attended the forum as observers, Pattani, 10 December 2016.

PEACEBUILDING FROM BELOW: SALAFI DISCOURSE AND WOMEN'S CONSOLIDATION

To tackle the bureaucratic complexities and the limitation of the state's notion of security, women's rights activists, practitioners, and academics aim to broaden the security framework for women in the Deep South. They have sought to conceptualize more holistic notions of peacekeeping, particularly notions that members of grassroots organizations could acknowledge and practice. A leader of the Southern Women Network Overcoming Violence, Rosidah Pusu, has complained to SBPAC that the government needs to work on female violence in order to gain larger support from the local community. In this call for a broader framework of security that goes beyond ending the insurgency, Malay-Muslim women have found themselves actively involved in civil society activities as representatives of sensitive and women's issues. Local Muslim women have consolidated the peacebuilding effort through the Council of Muslim Women's Organization Cooperation for Peace (CMCP) – a network of 21 Muslim women's organizations which was established in 2011.[13] As more local – and specifically women – actors have become involved in the peacebuilding process, my research indicates that a new notion of security has gained a foothold in the region, this is peace which draws on the Islamic traditional framework.

Applying the theological approach of Salafism, CMCP aims to apply a purified belief and practices to strengthen a peaceful society in Patani region. It holds a *multaqa Muslimah* (Muslim women congress) as an annual activity. CMCP claims that for peacebuilding goals to succeed in the region, a campaign for structural reform is necessary to secure women's presence in the peacebuilding process and to generate social recognition of women's roles in the traditional Islamic patriarchal society. They do not dismiss religious discourse in this matter. Instead, they attempt to find an alternative path to build peace in society by using their professional platform as religious intellectuals. Hamidah Adae, the group's leader and one of my main interlocutors, has played a significant role as an advisor for the network of the Southern Muslim Women's Association (SMWA). Hamidah became deeply involved with the women's network after her retirement from the College of Islamic Studies of Prince of Songkhla University in 2011. She often delivers speeches and shares her religious knowledge of Islamic peace concepts with students and villagers.

Since the group emerged, a more religious model, based on the Islamic culture of peace and non-violence, has gained prominence. As a *halaqah*, an Islamic study circle, the group differs from those sponsored by the state or international NGOs. CMCP's members gather in houses or university meeting rooms in which they establish their own space. Hamidah and other group leaders, such as Maraim 'kak Yae' Samoh[14], act as the consultant of each *halaqah*. Through group intervention specifically targeted at healing the mental wounds of conflict through the adoption of a spiritual approach, they personally coach the members in dealing with their trauma. This spiritual approach as a healing method is important since women in conflict

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13   Their local cleric is Dr. Ismail Lutfi Chapakiya, the rector of Fatoni University, who published a book to promote peacebuilding from a religious perspective entitled *Islam Sassanha Haeng Santiphap* (*Islam the Religion of Peace* (2011).

14   Maraim 'kak Yae' Samoh is active in the Social Action Party (*Phak Kit Sangkhom*) since 1976.

areas revealed that many people have been drawn into the insurgency, neither for the liberation of the region nor for religious reasons, but in a quest for personal revenge after their family members were arrested, tortured, and stereotyped as murderous Malays by security forces.

Accordingly, alongside the political steps towards conflict resolution– such as the WPS agenda and UNSCR 1325 – as operable methods to overcome political grievance, the spiritual narrative of peacebuilding should also be recognized as an effective approach in the peacebuilding process. It provides a normative justification for peace that could change the actors' worldview. The *halaqah* group applies the pedagogy of persuasion to establish a peaceful space for women, students, and lecturers. This approach also aims at the attainment of inner peace. In their *halaqah*, participants assert the importance of reciting the Qur'anic verses regarding inner and outer peace (chapter 60, verse 7) and non-violence (chapter 4, verse 29). They also repeatedly brought the historical example of ethical and strategic acts of non-violence, such as the Treaty of Hudabiyya, which is seen to exemplify concessions on the part of the Prophet in order to secure peace.[15] Seventeen CMCP members also attribute the act of non-violence to the avoidance of confrontation and quest for a peaceful co-existence by referencing the time when the Prophet Muhammad sent Muslims to the Christian King in Ethiopia to seek asylum from persecution by the Meccans.[16]

While the ethical subjects and the Prophet's exemplary decisions are taken as ideological references, members of CMCP also undergo a transitional phase through different dimensions by reflecting on their own lives and traumatic narratives. For example, they have to learn the notion of peace within the context of *sulh*, or peaceful resolution, in oneself. They refer to *sulh* in Ibn Qayyim's interpretation, in which the term appears as the key concept of peace and reconciliation and the opposite of conflict and war.[17] In this notion of reconciliation, CMCP members also mention the idea of patience (*sabr*) as a tool for succeeding in finding inner peace and for supporting conflict transformation processes, where the internal struggle with oneself as the 'greater jihad' is important as the main narrative of self-transformation. These applications of Islamic narratives of peace are crucial, according to my interlocutor, to end the personal and emotional impulse of revenge.

As one of the pressing issues to be addressed in peacebuilding is to break down the entanglement between the various conceptualizations of peacebuilding and reconciliation to practical implementation, CMCP also urges their members to be actively involved in promoting women's participation in peacebuilding in cooperation with other grassroots women and the state. This includes urging their members to take membership in women's organizations that can play an important role in maintaining the social and political fabric of their communities, such as the above-mentioned Southern Women Network Overcoming Violence and Peace Agenda of Women

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15   A peace treaty was signed between the Muslims of Medinah and the Quraysh tribe as the Mecca opposition in 628. The treaty came about as the Quraysh did not grant Muslims access to the holy site in Mecca. In order to make peace and decrease tensions between the two cities, the treaty enabled the Muslim community to perform their pilgrimage the following years (Armstrong, 2007, pp. 175-181).

16   Interview with two women scholars in Pattani, 8 December 2018.

17   Ibn Qayyim employs the salafi hermeneutic and follows Ibn Taymiyya's exegesis on different issues (Moustafa, 2017, pp. 1-43).

(PAOW). PAOW was established by local women leaders with the assistance of both national and international donors and has gathered different groups from the Chinese and Malay ethnic communities. As an interethnic and interreligious organization, PAOW has a significant role as the link between current peace negotiations and the current women's peace network.

One of PAOW's achievements, as my interviews with its leaders reveal, was the implementation of safety zones in 2005, which were agreed upon by the Thai military government and the *Mara Patani* (*Majlis Syura Patani*, the Patani Consultative Council), a coalition of several Patani Malay separatist groups.[18] Today, POAW's concept of safety zone is still the most referenced strategy on the issue of women's participation in peace processes from the Thai government, the Mara Patani, local human rights activists, and groups of academics (Peace Survey, 2019). Buranajaroenkij's (2017, p. 12) study finds that PAOW has been influential in the conflict area in promoting the idea of resistance against violence while urging women to take a social role as "peace-makers". The PAOW advocates that those who have limited access to justice should increase women's public representation by mobilizing women in the public arena. It was able to deliver tangible results and increase women's representation at the peace negotiation table. In my observation, today, PAOW has become the most preferable representative of actors in civil society to advocate women's involvement in peace-building, particularly as a middleperson who can invite various conflicting parties to a dialog forum. Because of its effective civil society organization and strategic integration of women into public affairs, various parties in the conflict area consider members of PAOW as influential actors in the peacebuilding process.

Regardless of its success, PAOW is facing numerous challenges. Abdulsomad's (2017) study on women's participation in the Pattani peace process finds that one of the obstacles to PAOW's gender-inclusive participation is a lack of political literacy. Thus, she argues, the meaningful participation of women at the negotiating table, which is one of the most fundamental components of the WPS agenda, is largely unattainable. To this, my interlocutors responded that cultural gender practices have caused the difficulties to attain political literacy. My PAOW interlocutors explained that political knowledge and skills in politics are still largely men's domain. At the same time, meaningful participation in the ceasefire negotiation is often still regarded as the sphere of (male) security actors.[19] It is understood as the responsibility of men from different parties on the battlefield.

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18   In 2013, the first formal peace talk was initiated by Yingluck Shinawatra's government. It acknowledged the need for a political solution to the conflict. Dialog parties involved only the Thai government and the most powerful separatist group, *Barisan Revolusi Nasional* (BRN, National Revolutionary Front). The second round in 2015 was followed by the military. This time, talks were held with Mara Patani as a new actor but without BRN at the table (Pathan, 2019). Scholars argue that talks that do not include the BRN are meaningless because the people who are able to control the fighters are not at the negotiating table. The BRN refuses to join the peace talks unless some conditions are fulfilled. These include the release of political prisoners, amnesty for the BRN delegation, and an impartial international third party to mediate the talks (International Crisis Group, 2016). The government has been avoiding the internationalization of the conflict which could lead to foreign involvement (McDermott, 2013).

19   The call for safety zones has been adopted by women representatives as a security notion in the Deep South to promote peace. The panel that represents Malay-Muslim separatist leaders in exile had proposed to launch a limited ceasefire in the conflict area to enhance the peaceful resolution (International Crisis Group, 2016).

There is also an inherent stereotype of women's security within certain spaces. For example, groups of women's rights advocates and members of civil society, with whom I have cooperated for advancing gender equality in Muslim dominated areas, express that PAOW's suggested safety zones agreement and the peacebuilding efforts in Patani are actually less gender-sensitive than expected. The safety zone concept with its focus on removing the conflict from certain spaces, such as markets, places of worship, and schools, has not raised gender security in larger public spaces.[20] The choices to secure these spaces are based on the common stereotype of where women conduct their activities, and are hardly about ensuring human security in general. With such a lack of comprehensiveness in implementing the WPS agenda, the proposed idea of women as peacemakers continues to position the role of women in the peacebuilding process as supporting an agenda developed by men. PAOW has also been criticized by other women's groups because they have been neglecting other important issues, especially ending torture, extrajudicial killings, and sexual as well as gender-based violence (women's forum in Narathiwat, 24 March 2017).

Furthermore, women leaders in PAOW, such as Soraya Jamjuree and Patimoh Poh-etae-da-o, who are acknowledged by the state and international agencies such as OWAFD and UN Women as representatives of the women's group to become the driving force for women participation in the peace process, have raised two key normative issues in our several interviews. First, mainstreaming Salafi peace discourse is challenging because Salafism has often been blamed for religious fundamentalism that has deepened the conflict. The term Salafi is a sensitive tin in Thailand since it is related to religious fundamentalism and rebellious movements against a secular state; although this is not the case in southern Thailand. Followers and leaders of the Salafi movement, thus, rather prefer to identify themselves as *ahli sunnah wal jammah*.

Salafism as one of the Islamic reformist movements has urged Muslims to return to and strictly follow the sacred sources and to purify Islamic ideas and practices from later innovations (*bid'ah*). Such fundamentalist views have often been assessed as exclusively religious and incompatible with the spirit of democratic dialog. Thailand's Salafi movement, however, has advocated peace for social change through *tarbiyyah* (education) by working within the Thai constitutional framework. In Pattani, Salafi women's groups are highly influenced by the teachings of the well-known traditionalist orthodox religious leader Ismail Lutfi Chapakia who is the founding rector of Fatoni University and an avid promoter of peacebuilding. As a local, he is also the most respected contemporary religious leader of the Saudi style of Salafism in Thailand to provide a religious narrative of peace (Liow, 2011, pp. 29-58; Yahprung, 2014).

Women's activism requires a reconstruction of the practiced norms of women's position in the Islamic society and their roles within the household. Hence, although PAOW was successful in bringing various actors to peace negotiations, it has since

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20   I am the main author of a joint CEDAW shadow report entitled "The Situation of the Rights of Malay-Muslim Women in Southern Thailand". It was submitted to the CEDAW committee and written by the PATANI Working Group for Monitoring of International Mechanisms (2017). The working group is mainly comprised of local advocates, members of civil society, academics, human rights activists, and lawyers from a collective of 14 organizations and networks. The report focuses primarily on the issues faced by Muslim women in Thailand's Deep South in general, but also on security issues they face in public spaces.

been prevented, if not excluded, from participating in the formal peace dialog because women in general are not viewed as representatives in the traditionally patriarchal Islamic society.

Due to the tendency of women to be favorable towards the peace project, women's groups have taken on new tasks and responsibilities. They are key partners on the ground to support and advocate peace policies and their related strategies. Accordingly, in this context, WPS should be understood as a part of the peacekeeping process in which the formal participation of women and their representation are highlighted. Women's groups have an important role to play not only in preserving existing social norms but also in changing traditional social roles during a time of conflict. In many forums I have attended, the contention was raised that the enduring conflict has changed traditional roles, and particularly how it has opened new spaces for women to redefine social norms and gender relations. When Malay-Muslim women acquire new social status through new responsibilities, it challenges existing social norms about women's roles in civil society. For example, as their husbands had died because of the armed conflict, many women became the sole recognized caregiver of the family replacing male dominance. Yet, the voices of these women-victims are not united in public affairs because there is an absence of a unifying forum. Accordingly, as a collective, women's groups lack the legitimacy to participate in peacebuilding discussions and are undermined by their male counterparts. This situation hinders their advancement towards increased participation.

Disagreement also emerges between activists. Although both share a common goal on delivering a gender equality narrative to the public, PAOW leaders like Soraya and Patimoh do not share the same strategy and trajectory in advancing the gender discourse. Soraya expressed that Malay-Muslim women are expected to firstly finish household chores and receive permission from their husbands before they leave their homes to engage in public affairs. Thus, she views that women's activism as peacebuilding engagement without completing these requirements could evoke a rupture in tradition.

Patimoh, the director of the women's advocacy group We Peace, by contrast, tends to focus on changing the gender norms in which Soraya operates. Patimoh and her team urge for greater women's participation in the political sphere. Women should not have to ask for permission as they have already earned a seat at the negotiating table. In her argument, household tasks need to be shared with male family members because women are now sharing the role of peace keepers. Patimoh highlights her activities on gender-based violence, women's human rights, and their inclusion in politics. She chooses to adopt the tool of changing social norms rather than playing by them. By working with the government and receiving funds from national and international donors, her group's activities frequently include both men and women. She has been criticized by women in the network and local religious leaders for risking Malay-Muslim women's religiosity as they work in a mixed-sex context. An ideal situation would be if local men could also recognize the importance of their wives' activism. For example, in the case of kak Yae, her candidacy for the Social Action Party right after her graduation from a university in Malaysia was encouraged by her husband and male local Malay politicians (Marddent, 2017, pp. 229-246).

FUTURE CHALLENGE: MAKING GENDER NORMS WORK

Women's groups and Deep South civil society organizations have been studying the peace process in neighboring countries, such as in Mindanao, the Philippines, and in Aceh, Indonesia. They found that the WPS agenda and related tools have been successfully applied and implemented, particularly through NAPs for those areas.[21] Therefore, women's groups and a few other activists in Patani are trying to apply the models of peace resolution from those two areas as a means to encourage the main-streaming of gender equality norms as an intermediate step for the peace process.[22] The question is then: Which gender norms could be applied – or which are even suitable – in the context of the conflict in Thailand's Deep South?

Although gender relations vary depending on culture and other aspects, it is accepted among theorists that gender is a set of discourses that represent and construct the social meaning of being a woman or a man (Connell, 1990). Gender discourses also affect how men and women are positioned in conflict areas, as con-figurations of gender security are also operationalized in the local context. Here, the work of Yaliwe Clarke (2013), who has intensively researched a range of civil society organizations in military societies with a state-centric approach to security in the south of Africa, is essential. She develops analytic perspectives around the meaning of gendered security for women, and therefore argues that security should be focused on "collective security" through which women are also ascribed the right to being "secure". She proposes that legislation simply does not change norms; norms would likely change through dialog and learning spaces as well as through arguments and agreements that would encourage the change (Björnberg, 2012). Clarke's (2013, p. 89) perspective on gender and security traces the debates concerning women's situated knowledge and the essential aspect of peaceful femininities.

In conflict areas, she underscores the role of militarized patriarchal gender iden-tities and the place of subservient masculinities and femininities as root causes of war. In her analysis, the ways in which the complex relationship between gendered capitalist processes and militarism has impacted women are particularly important (Clarke, 2013, pp. 88-90). Consequently, security in the feminist security framework has expanded beyond state security to human security. To reconceptualize violence from the perspective of feminist scholarship, violence at home and in war ought to be considered equal violations of human – particularly women's – security. Thus, if we follow Clarke's approach, gender norms in the security narrative of Thailand's Deep South need to be viewed from the two main subject positions of women: (1) as victims of conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence; and (2) as agents of change.

This paper has exemplified how local women leaders have attempted to catalyze a security discourse that is akin to what Clarke (2013) identifies as being essential for a gender-sensitive concept of security. In relation to the comprehensive concept of collective human security, women have already proposed extending the scope of the agenda to create peace and stability for individuals and society. They also put

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21   Countries that have adopted a NAP in support of UNSCR 1325 are currently on the list of Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (2019).

22   Discussion with two human rights analysts and human rights defenders, Bangkok, 6 July and 10 Sep-tember 2018.

high consideration on the designs offered by the state and the UN while also having attempted to navigate these powerful sets of permissible and reproducible hierarchical ordering policies with pragmatic peacebuilding steps. In this endeavor they have used Salafism as a peacebuilding narrative and have shown how a fundamentalist religious narrative could support a peacebuilding effort in a secular state.

The complexity arises, then, not only from the dimension of participation, but the contestation of norms as they are negotiated with their religious and traditional values as well as the tools the state makes available to them in their attempts to create an alternative setting for peacebuilding. For example, from the critical point of view of women activists in the region, the WPS agenda might be the step needed for including more women from grassroots levels, but the state's implementation of the agenda, specifically its failure to include it in a NAP, fails to be transformative. Thus, women leaders have to navigate both the patriarchal culture and the structural setting of religious society and the state's failure to consider their voices in their policies to address what they term "unrest". They further criticize the state's implementation of the WPS agenda as it does not aim at structural change in the region but supports gender inequality. Thus, women's meaningful participation in peace processes has become stuck or entangled not only within state agendas and global bureaucracy of norms, but also on the ladder of existing local social norms.

To breakdown traditional structures and the militarization of society, local women peacebuilders confront the obstacle of inequalities with socio-cultural spaces that attempt to address the difficulties women face in trying to obtain a seat at the negotiating table. The masculine 'heroes', the Thai military government, and the current opposition party, Mara Patani, have been officially ascribed a peacekeeping role. This is intimately connected to the traditionally gendered norms that promote the power of men over women. Proposals made by women are only seen as symbolic, as women cannot be a part of the formal decision-making process. Moreover, the collective forms of development remain in managing the existing situation of women in conflict areas. Nevertheless, women are busy working on the ground. Their time is occupied not only by taking care of family members but also by running projects and mobilizing women in the communities to get engaged – no matter how limited – in peace forums.

During the ongoing conflict in the southernmost provinces of Thailand, consideration of gender and contextual aspects are fundamental dimensions that all stakeholders should address to reach a gendered solution to both war and peace. In relation to the WPS agenda, it still has a clear aspiration towards deconstructing patriarchal gender orders in favor of equality. Social norms enable gender discrimination, and this, in turn, limits women's abilities to engage in the formal level of peace processes. If significant steps forward are to be made in taking a gender-based approach to the issue of security, the notion of equality and meaningful participation of women in human and social security are crucial matters that need to be addressed in the relationship between gender and security.

CONCLUSION

In order to address gender-sensitivity in peace processes, local women are pushing for a public discourse on women's peace policy, including the UNSCR 1325

and subsequent resolutions[23], the CEDAW, SDG 5, and SDG 16 in particular. They accordingly hope to join negotiations as part of the state's top-down peacebuilding policy and carve out a space for more bottom-up and gender-sensitive peacebuilding processes while also reconceptualizing local norms in order to formally guarantee more gender freedom. The WPS agenda, UNSCR 1325, and its related mechanisms will not be able to deliver greater peacebuilding success if these are only interpreted as a means to fit women into the current peace and security paradigm, rather than as opportunities for assessing and redefining peace and security through a gender perspective.

In Thailand's Deep South, the meaningful participation of women in peace processes has been wedged between the state's top-down agenda and the hierarchy of local social norms that often put women in marginalized positions: on one hand, men's dominant military notion of security and, on the other hand, religious and traditional discourses about the role of women in society. Thus, in order to create a collective notion of security, it is necessary to address the sources of inequality and to identify the decision-making institutions in conflict resolution. Efforts to strengthen women's participation in conflict resolution should go beyond the evaluation of participation rates; they should also recognize their role as agents in delivering both formal and informal peacemaking policies. Accordingly, evaluating women's participation in the peacebuilding process should also pay attention to the implementation of the WPS agenda as well as other related mechanisms, and look at how they are consequently contested. This paper provides examples of how women actors' sense of ownership in the peacebuilding agendas is also diverse. Women belong to different agencies, and this means that they are associated with different groups and networks. Moreover, as the differences between the PAOW, CMCP, Soraya's, and Patimoh's circles show, they have various means and strategies to achieve their conceptualization of peace. There is, therefore, no one-size fits all policy for engaging women in the peacebuilding process. Conflict resolution in Patani is challenging; there are multiple points of view, and when certain policies and local norms are inconsistent in providing a space for women, they place women on a lower step in the hierarchy than men. This is primarily the result of how women are positioned in a specific context, this is the home.

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23   These are resolutions 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009), 1960 (2010), 2106 (2013), 2122 (2013), 2242 (2015), 2467 (2019), and 2493 (2019) (UN Women, 2019).

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Forced Migration in Southeast Asia – A Brief Overview of Current Research

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Southeast Asian countries host significant numbers of forcibly displaced populations, both within countries and across borders. This brief review paper provides a basic overview on recent forced migration research in Southeast Asia for the period 2013 to 2018. To this end, a keyword search with two predefined sets of search terms was carried out in the Web of Science database in September 2018. The identified research literature corpus was then analyzed regarding persons of concern, study site(s) (country/ies) as well as main drivers of migration. The results show that the major part of studies focuses on refugees and asylum seekers in the region's main host countries, namely Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia. This correspondence between current research trends and the distribution of refugees and asylum seekers in Southeast Asia could, however, not be identified for internally displaced persons (IDPs). Although Southeast Asian countries account for a substantial share of worldwide IDPs, only a very limited number of identified studies focus on this group of persons of concern.

Keywords: Current Research; Forced Migration; Persons of Concern; Southeast Asia

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INTRODUCTION

Southeast Asia is currently facing its second largest refugee crisis since the so-called boat people crisis in Indochina from the mid 1970s until the mid 1990s (Pugh, 2004). The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates that since August 2017 more than 723,000 people belonging to the religious and ethnic minority of the Rohingya have been forcibly displaced by systematic violence committed by state and non-state actors to neighboring Bangladesh alone (UNHCR, 2018a). Another, related recent crisis was the so-called 'Bay of Bengal and Andaman Sea Crisis'. From 2013 to 2015, an estimated 1,800 people from Myanmar and Bangladesh died at sea trying to reach Malaysia or Indonesia by boat (UNHCR, 2016). In 2017, Southeast Asia hosted 3.37 million "persons of concern"[1], of which approximately 1.46 million were refugees, 74,416 asylum seekers, 1.17 million stateless, and 665,051 internally displaced persons (IDPs) (UNHCR, 2018c, p. 69). However, only two countries (Myanmar and the Philippines) officially reported numbers on IDPs to the UNHCR. The Internal

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1 Persons of concern to the UNHCR include asylum seekers, internally displaced persons, refugees, and stateless persons (UNHCR, 2018b).

Displacement Monitoring Center (IDMC) has estimated the number of IDPs due to armed conflicts and natural disasters at 5,863,894 for 2017 (IDMC, 2018).

Most of the member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) have not signed the 1951 Geneva Convention and its 1967 Protocol. Only Cambodia, the Philippines, and Timor-Leste, a soon to become ASEAN member state, are signatory parties. Hence, most of Southeast Asia is, in fact, not part of the international refugee regime. According to the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration "every person has the right to seek and receive asylum in another State in accordance with the laws of such State and applicable international agreements" (ASEAN, 2013, p. 6). Yet, the reference to the legal frameworks – or rather non-existing protection frameworks – of the member states renders this right largely meaningless. Thus far, the member states' way to address the issue of forced migration has been rather unilateral. This is mainly due to ASEAN's very strong norms of cooperation, namely respect of state sovereignty, non-interference in the international affairs of member states, consultation, and consensus (Amer, 2009). At this point, it is rather unlikely that ASEAN, and the region as such, will decide to adopt a joint regional framework on forced migration any time soon (Petcharamesree, 2016).

As Southeast Asian countries host considerable and growing numbers of forcibly displaced persons, there is also an increased number of research contributions on Southeast Asia from the emerging field of forced migration studies (McConnachie, 2014). However, thus far, no systematic attempt to identify current research trends in the field has been undertaken. This contribution addresses this research gap by providing a brief overview of findings from a scientific literature review that aims at identifying recent contributions in forced migration research in Southeast Asia from 2013 to 2018. The article proceeds as follows. Firstly, we will discuss how we framed the concept of forced migration for the literature review. Secondly, we will outline the conduct of the literature search as well as the inclusion and exclusion criteria applied to define the review literature corpus (see appendix). Thirdly, we will discuss the identified research literature corpus according to persons of concern, study site(s) (country/ies), and main drivers of migration. The paper intends to offer a brief overview and a bibliography of recent research developments in the field of forced migration studies in Southeast Asia for researchers and practitioners (see appendix).

CONCEPTUALIZING FORCED MIGRATION (STUDIES)

In its latest *Global Trends in Forced Displacement* report, the UNHCR (2019, p. 2) concluded that with 70.8 million people, the global forcibly displaced population remained again at a record high, with numbers constantly rising since 2011. Against this backdrop of an ever-increasing number of people that are forcibly displaced worldwide, forced migration studies constitute a rapidly growing field of research that is shaped by a multitude of disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives.

Albeit refugee and forced migration studies only began to emerge as a distinct field of research in the 1980s, research in the Humanities and Social Sciences goes back much further in its endeavor to decipher the complex nature and needs of forcibly displaced populations. However, as pointed out by Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, Loescher, Long, & Sigona (2014, p. 2), what distinguishes early research on forced migration

movements, for example in the post-Second World War period, and research under-taken from the 1970s onwards was the frank way in which researchers started to be critical in their analyses of states and intergovernmental agencies. At the same time, growing numbers of refugees and asylum seekers in Europe, the US, and Canada as well as the increase in protracted refugee situations from Southeast Asia to Central America led to increased scholarly as well as political interest. This resulted in the establishment of new (research) institutions dedicated to the study of forced migration and an increased availability of respective research funding accordingly (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh et al., 2014, p. 3).

In his influential working paper *Conceptualising Forced Migration* David Turton (2003) reminds the reader that, on the one hand, there are compelling reasons for separating out forced migrants "because they pose a problem for us of response: how do we respond to the stranger in distress?" (p. 16). On the other hand, Turton (2003) warns of the dangers of lumping "people together into categories according to the degree or amount of choice open to them" (p. 16) as this categorization rather vic-timizes people and turns a blind eye to the agency by which they navigate their lives under highly restrained circumstances. Although the conceptualization and catego-rization of forced migration remains highly problematic and politically laden, the authors of this paper consider people that must flee their homes due to conflicts, persecution, torture, other human rights violation, poverty, disasters etc. as forced migrants. Furthermore, the authors are convinced that

> the distinction between voluntary and forced migration continues to be of rel-evance. It still constitutes an essential element in the distinction of asylum and immigration policy and the persons they respectively concern. Migration as a general phenomenon relates to a variety of situations engaging forced and vol-untary decisions. Elements of choice and coercion can be overlapping but in the case of refugees and other displaced persons, compelling factors are deci-sive. (UNESCO, 2008, p. 30)

As most research contributions in the field of forced migration studies follow the categorizations of persons of concern used by the UNHCR (2018b), this scien-tific literature review includes studies that are explicitly concerned with refugees and asylum seekers, internally displaced persons (IDPs) as well as stateless persons. Furthermore, the research also includes studies on human trafficking as it is highly prevalent in Southeast Asia (Renshaw, 2015; Ullah & Hossain, 2011) and oftentimes involves compelling elements of force (Marinova, 2017).

METHOD

The scientific articles retrieved for this literature review were identified by a keyword search in the Web of Science database[2] using two sets of key terms.[3] The first set com-

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2   See, http://www.webofknowledge.com

3   We only used the Web of Science database as its coverage of peer-reviewed journal publications is simi-lar to that of Scopus (https://www.scopus.com/home.uri) (Harzing & Alakangas, 2015, p. 801).

prised "Southeast Asia" and all countries in the region (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Philippines, Thailand, Timor Leste/East Timor, and Vietnam). The second set included "persons of concern" (asylum seekers, internally displaced persons (IDP), stateless, refugees), the research field in question "forced migration" and "human trafficking". For the database search, each key term in the first set was combined with each key term in the second set. The database search focused on scientific research papers published from January 2013 until September 2018. The chosen time frame reflects our attempt to provide a brief overview of recent research publications in the field. Only peer-reviewed publications in English language were included, as English language publications are the most widely accessible in the international scientific community. The database research identified a total of 217 studies for the above-mentioned period (see Appendix: Scientific review literature corpus). The identified research literature corpus was then analyzed regarding the criteria persons of concern, study site(s) (country/ies), and main drivers of migration.

RESULTS

The published research on forced migration in Southeast Asia shows a quantitative upward trend (see figure 1).[4] The number of publications has increased continuously from 20 papers in 2013 to 67 papers in 2017. As the literature search process ended in September 2018, not all publications of 2018 (46) could be included in the literature review. More than half of all publications (134) focus on refugees and asylum seekers. Forty-seven papers deal with stateless people and 40 papers with human trafficking and or smuggling. Despite the above-mentioned significantly high share of Southeast Asia's IDPs in the overall number of worldwide IDPs, only 14 publications focus on this group of persons of concern.
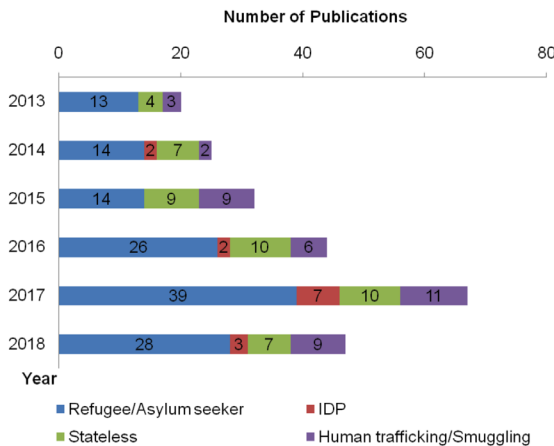

Figure 1. Number of publications by persons of concern. Own calculation based on Web of Science Database research results.

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4   Please note that figures 1 to 3 include multiple counts as a number of studies focused on more than one group of persons of concern, had multiple country foci, and identified more than one main driver of migration.

Figure 2 illustrates the country focus of the research papers by persons of concern. By far, most of the papers (90) discuss research that had been carried out in Thailand with a clear focus on refugees and asylum seekers. Forty-three papers focus on developments in Malaysia and 35 papers on Indonesia accordingly. Also, here, the majority of studies focused on refugees and asylum seekers. The distribution of research on refugees and asylum seekers in the three countries corresponds with the fact that Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia host the highest numbers of refugees and asylum seekers in Southeast Asia. Only five publications in the literature corpus referred to Southeast Asia as an analytical unit. This reflects the lacking regional cooperation in the field of forced migration, as discussed in the introduction. None of the publications under scrutiny addressed forced migration issues in Brunei, despite the fact that there are more than 20,000 people under the UNHCR's statelessness mandate in the country (UNHCR, 2019, p. 65). Although Australia, Bangladesh, and China are not part of Southeast Asia, they were included in the country segregation list as their important role for transnational forced migration movements (Bangladesh and China) as well the regional (forced) migration regime (Australia) was reflected in the identified body of literature.
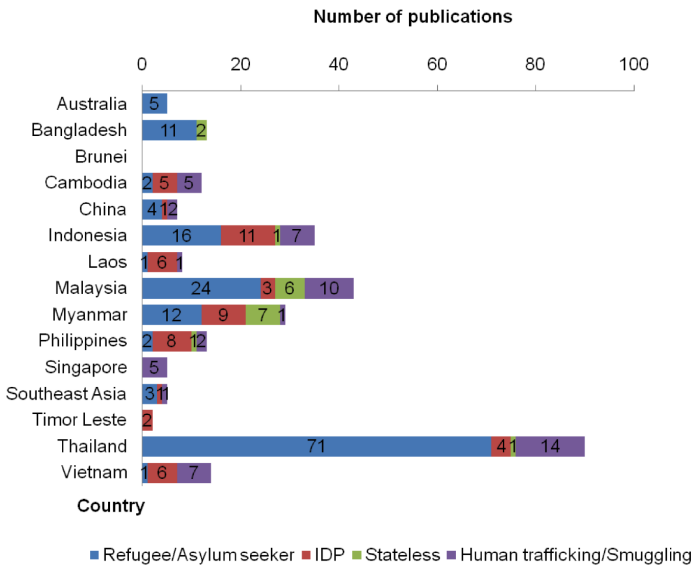
Figure 2. Number of publications by country focus and persons of concern. Own calculation based on Web of Science Database research results.

Figure 3 illustrates the main drivers of migration in the research papers by year of publication. Here, we only included those studies in which the author(s) clearly identified drivers of migration for the context of their investigation and clustered them into the three categories conflict, disaster, and development. Between 2013 and 2018, studies that focused on populations that were forcibly displaced by conflict dynamics feature most prominently.
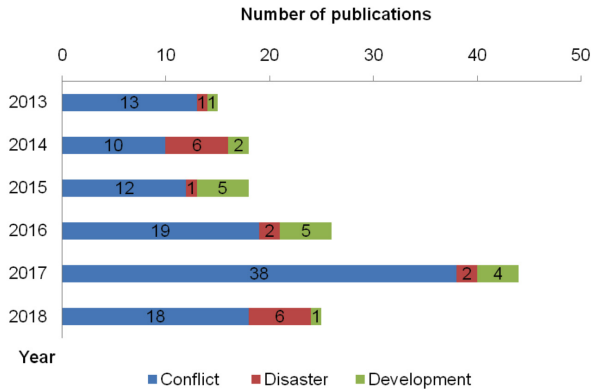
Number of publications

Figure 3. Number of publications by main driver of migration. Own calculation based on Web of Science Database research results.

All in all, 110 publications identified conflict as the main cause for displacement. Disasters and development (projects) were identified as major causes of displacement in 18 studies each. This contrasts with the fact that disasters are by far the main drivers of forced migration in Southeast Asia. For example, between 2013 and 2017, the Philippines reported more than 20 million new displacements due to natural disasters. (Internal Displacement Monitoring Center, 2018)

CONCLUSION

Research on forced migration in Southeast Asia has clearly increased from 2013 to 2017. This corresponds with the rising number of forcibly displaced populations in the region. The results show that the major part of studies under review focuses on refugees and asylum seekers in Southeast Asia's main host countries, namely Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia. This correspondence between current research developments and the distribution of refugees and asylum seekers in Southeast Asia could, however, not be identified for the significantly high numbers of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and stateless persons in the region. This is especially true for IDPs. Although Southeast Asian countries account for a substantial share of worldwide IDPs, only a very limited number of the identified studies focus on this group of persons of concern. This might be explained by the fact that most internal displacement in the region is caused by natural disasters and are oftentimes of only short duration (Black et al., 2011). Nevertheless, future research should put more focus on IDPs in order to deepen the understanding of their specific conditions and needs for recovery and rehabilitation.

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APPENDIX: SCIENTIFIC REVIEW LITERATURE CORPUS

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"The Danger of Intolerant Above-ground, Non-clandestine Organizations is Bigger for Indonesia Than Violent Extremism": An Interview with Sidney Jones on Religious Extremism, Political Violence and Conflict Dynamics in Indonesia

Gunnar Stange

Sidney Jones is director of the Jakarta-based *Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict* (IPAC). From 2002 to 2013, she worked with the International Crisis Group, first as Southeast Asia project director, then from 2007 as senior adviser to the Asia program. Before that she worked for the Ford Foundation, Amnesty International, and Human Rights Watch. She is an expert on security in Southeast Asia, particularly Islamic terrorist movements in Indonesia. Jones has analyzed and extensively written on separatist conflicts (Aceh, Papua, Mindanao), communal conflicts (Poso, Moluccas), and ethnic conflict (Kalimantan) in Indonesia. She also has studied Islamic radicalism, producing reports on the Islamist terrorist network Jemaah Islamiyah and its operations in Indonesia and the Philippines, as well as issues of security sector reform and decentralization in Indonesia. This interview was conducted and recorded at IPAC office in Jakarta on 20 August 2019. It focuses on questions of religious extremism, political violence, and conflict dynamics in contemporary Indonesia.

Keywords: Conflict Analysis; Conflict Transformation; Indonesia; Radicalization; Violence

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GUNNAR STANGE: *First of all, thank you very much for taking the time for this interview. What is your motivation for your work with IPAC?*[1]

SIDNEY JONES: It has changed over time, I think. When I first came to Indonesia in 1977, I had no background on Asia, let alone Southeast Asia or Indonesia. I worked with the Ford Foundation. It was the most fantastic job imaginable because I was giving grants in the fields of Islamic education, public interest NGOs, preservation of the traditional arts, assistance to provincial law faculties. And then, nine years later, I left to work with Amnesty International (AI) for a variety of reasons; it was the Islamic dissidents I was particularly interested in, especially those who were arrested under the Suharto government for wanting to establish

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1   IPAC was founded in 2013 as an Indonesian NGO after the International Crisis Group (ICG) discontinued its Indonesia program. IPAC (2013) mainly focuses on Indonesia, Timor-Leste, and the southern Philippines in its "mission is to explain the dynamics of conflict – why it started, how it changed, what drives it, who benefits – and get that information quickly to people who can use it to bring about positive change" (n.p.).

an Islamic state. In a way, it was in Amnesty International that the marriage of interest in human rights and in Islamic extremism came together. My current interest is more to understand Islamist extremists' networks after they had been arrested, but not to get them released, although I want to ensure that they are treated properly.

After 4 years at Amnesty International and nearly 16 years at Human Rights Watch, I was finding that a human-rights-focus alone was too constricting. It did not allow you to actually get the nuances of what was taking place, especially in conflict affected areas like Aceh[2]. I wanted to look at the conflict more generally and wanted to understand it in more than just human rights terms. That was one of many reasons that I left Human Rights Watch. And then, this opening came up with the International Crisis Group (ICG). Back then, in 2002, the Singaporeans and the Malaysians had started a crackdown on extremists. They all were mentioning this organization *Jemaah Islamiya* and the name Abu Bakar Ba'asyir. I said I know those names as I was working on these cases at Amnesty International. In my files, I had the original trial documents of Abu Bakar Ba'asyir in 1983.[3] So, I asked ICG if they were interested in a paper on the antecedents of these cases, and they said yes. That paper came out two months before the Bali bombing.[4] It became a kind of reference point. That is how it all began.

STANGE: *Do you intend to affect change with your work?*

JONES: Yes, and I think we can. You cannot transform a society overnight. But what you do is you take broad objectives and then you break them down into doable parts. If you think about it in that way, I think you can affect change. Even if it is something as relatively small as bringing a group interested in reintegration into contact with a group that conducted reintegration successfully somewhere else. Even just by having standards in your own research where you insist that people doublecheck their sources. That can actually have a transformative change down the line. On the extremism side, we are doing a lot of training with senior police officers. We can take policy ideas and give them directly to people who are in responsible positions. There was one project we did on West Kalimantan before the local elections in June 2018. Because of identity politics the tensions between Dayak Christians and Malay Muslims were rising to a point that there was a serious possibility of violence. One of the police [officers] took the report[5] and the introduction and recommendations and ensured that every police station in Kalimantan had a copy. Because of the warnings in the report, they increased temporarily the number of police officers in Pontianak[6] and the surrounding areas. We do not know about cause and effect, but fact is that violence did not transpire. I think that is impact.

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2   In the northern-most Indonesian province of Aceh, a thirty-year armed conflict between the Indonesian government and the Free Aceh Movement (*Gerakan Aceh Merdeka*, GAM) was finally ended in August 2005 by a peace agreement between the conflicting parties (Aspinall, 2009).

3   The radical Islamic cleric Ba'asyir is one of the co-founders of the clandestine Islamist terrorist network *Jemaah Islamiyah* that is responsible for major bomb attacks in Indonesia during the early 2000s (ICG, 2003).

4   See, ICG (2002).

5   See, Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (2018).

6   Pontianak is the capital of the Indonesian province West Kalimantan.

STANGE: *If we look at the results of this year's Indonesian general elections,[7] it seems that Indonesia is deeply divided between those who favor a rather conservative and even autocratic style of politics and those who want Indonesia to be an open and pluralist society. How do you think this affects the political climate in Indonesia?*

JONES: There were certainly a lot of tensions around the election time, but it dissipated remarkably speedily after the elections were over. It does not mean that the divisions are not there but the saving grace about Indonesia is that the divisions are all cross-cutting. It means you are divided on one issue, but you are aligned on the principle 'the enemy of my enemy is my friend' on another issue. So, you do not get the kind of polarization that would come if the only division was conservative versus moderate Islam. That is one dividing line, but we also have the Java/off-Java dividing line, which was very evident in the elections. We also have majority/minority divisions. We have age divisions, we have gender divisions, and within each camp of opposing groups there are all those internal divisions. They spend as much time fighting each other as they do fighting whatever external enemy happens to be there. I think, broadly speaking, it is true that Indonesia has become more socially conservative over time. It is also true that the political power of majoritarian Islam has increased. That is very clear from survey data now. That has consequences for Indonesia going forward. But it is also the case that finally there is a backlash against that. One of the forms that the backlash takes is the mobilization, particularly of *Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU)[8] into a much more dynamic organization that sees one of its roles as fighting extremism. I remember about ten years ago I was talking to one man with an NU background who was kind of despairing of the fact that NU was depending on its cultural inheritance rather than actively recruiting people for its survival as an organization. At the time, they were losing members to Salafi organizations such as *Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia* (HTI)[9] to more militant organizations that had a greater appeal. He said at this point, we have to learn how to be militantly moderate. And that is what is happening now. Now, we are working on a paper that is looking at the paramilitary part of *Ansor*, *Banser*, and how they now have indoctrination programs and military training.[10] They have kind of taken a leaf from the model of militant organizations and are applying it to their model. One of the consequences is perhaps an increased risk of violence between those paramilitary groups.

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7   General elections were held on 17 April 2019. Incumbent president Joko Widodo, known as Jokowi and considered to represent a multi-religious and pluralist vision of Indonesia, won the race with 55.5% of the popular vote against his sole competitor Prabowo Subianto, representing a rather Islamic conservative and authoritarian vision of the country. After the official results of the race were publicly announced in May 2019, supporters of Prabowo started rioting in the streets of Jakarta accusing election officials of widespread fraud. (Suhartono & Victor, 2019)

8   NU is the largest Islamic mass organization in Indonesia deeply rooted in the Javanese tradition of Islam. It claims to have more than 40 million members. (see, Bush, 2009)

9   Hizbut Tahrir was one of the leading radical Islamic organizations in Indonesia. It was banned in 2017 by a decree signed by President Joko Widodo for opposing the state ideology Pancasila and seeking to establish a caliphate. (see, Osman, 2018)

10   *Gerakan Pemuda Ansor* (GP Ansor) is an Indonesian Islamic youth movement affiliated with NU. Banser (*Barisan Ansor Serba Guna*, Multipurpose Ansor Front) is a militia organization and the military wing of Ansor. (see, Ronika, Syamsuddin, & Kuswanjono, 2019)

STANGE: *Would you say that Indonesian society has become more violent or has Indonesian society become more ready to accept violence as a political means?*

JONES: It depends what you are comparing it to. If you compare it to the killings in 1965/66, no. The problem of looking at Indonesia is that most people's time frames are too short now. We did a study looking at the attitudes of Indonesian students studying in Turkey and Egypt toward the developments in those countries in 2015 just after Mursi had fallen and as Erdogan was becoming more authoritarian in Turkey. What was shocking was that these kids were not remembering 1998. We were in a generation that had grown up and reached their maturity after the transformation from the New Order that had taken place. The only system they knew was democracy. They could not relate developments in Turkey or Egypt to what had been happening in Indonesia. They did not remember it. I think there is a lot of people now that see Indonesia becoming more authoritarian. And there are some worrying indications. This includes people who do not remember the New Order. Those people who do remember the New Order and are seeing danger signs deserve more attention perhaps because they understand what these indicators can lead to. For example, there are many of us who thought the banning of HTI was not a good idea. I do not think that the banning of the *Front Pembela Islam* (FPI, Islamic Defenders Front)[11] is a good idea. What you should do, you arrest the people who are committing crimes, but you do not suddenly ban associations. That can become a tool that people can use against anybody, any organization that they dislike. I think this is a potentially authoritarian tool. It is not necessarily being used yet in an authoritarian way, but it is certainly a danger sign.

STANGE: *Speaking of potential outbreaks of violence, against the backdrop of the 2018 Surabaya bombings, how likely do you think it is that Indonesia will be seeing another wave of terrorist attacks in the near future?*

JONES: I think the danger of intolerant, above-ground, non-clandestine organizations is bigger for Indonesia than violent extremism. I think the terrorism problem is being managed, but partly because Indonesia is not that conducive to the growth of terrorist organizations more generally. It is not under occupation. It does not have a repressive government; it is not a Muslim minority situation where Muslims are being persecuted. There is not a sense of injustice or grievance. We don't have internal conflicts – as in Ambon and Poso – that are leading to that idea that Muslims are the victims. And, there are no nasty neighbors stirring things up. Why should there be terrorism? In some ways the question is why is there terrorism at all? It is manageable, but I would not attribute it all to good law enforcement. That is a factor, but that is not the whole story.

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11   FPI is an Indonesian Islamist civil society organization that was founded in 1998. It positions itself as Islamic moral police and is notorious for vigilante actions against people, organizations, and places that its members consider morally unacceptable according to their interpretation of Islamic values. (see also, Seto, 2019, in this issue)

STANGE: *Moving on to a related topic that has been hotly debated in recent years, why do you think the otherwise quite capable Indonesian security sector fails time and again to protect religious minorities against assaults and guarantee religious freedom? Do you think that there is a rationale behind it?*

JONES: It is very significant that 97% of minorities in Indonesia voted for Jokowi as opposed to Prabowo because they think that conservative Islam is turning them into second class citizens. The majoritarian flavor of some speeches and stances of some mass organizations have come to the point where it is now impossible for any Christian to ever be considered as president, head of the armed forces, or senior leader of almost any organization related to security. The idea that Muslim majority areas have to be ruled by Muslims has taken real root. I should say that in Eastern Indonesia the same idea has taken hold among Christians, and there are very similar incidents of local communities refusing to have mosques build and so on. But, of course, the scale is overwhelmingly different, and even if those incidents take place it does not swage the fears of minorities that live on Java or the major islands that their continued rights as citizens of Indonesia are in jeopardy. I think there are several reasons why the state has not come to the protection of non-Muslim citizens. One of them has to do with the transformations that took place in 2005 that allowed direct local elections.

When it became possible to elect figures directly at a local level in Muslim majority areas, it gave real power to civil society actors who represented hardline Muslim organizations to actually affect political campaigns. I think 2005 was a real turning point. I also think that the Ambon and Poso conflicts were a real turning point, the first real turning point in post-Suharto Indonesia,[12] because both of the conflicts were the first time when Muslims saw Christians as a serious threat to their survival. And, in both conflicts, there were more Muslims killed than Christians. It is a fact that a lot of people outside Indonesia do not realize that. They have that vision of extremist Muslims massacring Christians. It happened, but there were more on the other side that took place. I think that transformed the attitudes of many Muslim organizations to a majoritarian stand: "This is our country. We have to defend it. If we don't, our survival could be at stake."

Additionally, the success of the fundamentalist Islamic *Partai Keadilan Sejahtera* (PKS, Prosperous Justice Party) in its initial ventures into politics actually convinced people that an Islamic agenda in the polls could succeed. Even though, by and large, Islamic parties have not been successful. All of the advances in the political have taken place from civil society organizations operating from outside the political sphere. But, all of that combined reinforced this feeling, even within the security forces, that their allies that they needed to partner with were on the Islamic side and not on the minority side. It violates every element of the basis on which Indonesia was founded. I still think there are many in Indonesia who see a broader inclusive society as desirable and something that should be maintained.

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12 For a detailed study on the communal violence on the Maluku Islands between 1999 and 2002, see Schulze (2017).

But I think there is no question that they have lost ground. At one of my lectures at a police institute, I talked to Indonesian police sitting around the table after a brutal incident that involved mob action in which three Ahmadis were beaten to death.[13] I asked, "Why don't you arrest these people when they commit crime?" Three hands went up. The first one said, "We did not get any instructions from above". The Indonesian Police is a very centralized organization, and it is true, nobody dares to move unless it comes down from the top. The second one said, "If we go against them, they will come after us." So, the mob situation was another factor. The third comment was, "We still use them as partners". That is true. For example, in one case the police hired the FPI to sit in a court room when one of the extremists was being tried. So, there was no room for that guy's own supporters to be in the court room. It was full of white-robed people, but they were all opposed to the person being tried.

STANGE: *In how far do you think has decentralization affected conflict management in Indonesia?*

JONES: Decentralization has thrown up all sorts of possibilities for conflict, particularly through the role of *pemekaran* (expansion; the possibility to form new districts and provinces) and this process of dividing existing districts or provinces into smaller units. In many areas of Indonesia, particularly eastern Indonesia – Sulawesi, Kalimantan, Papua, Maluku – *pemekaran* is effectively dividing up Indonesia by ethnic groups. When you have a district that is multi-ethnic, and there is one dominant ethnic group, the number two ethnic group can become the dominant majority, if they have a specific geographic territory where they are dominant, once they split off. As long as they can pay the people you need to pay, because it is a very corrupt process, you can get your district. Only fairly recently, there was a moratorium placed on the creation of new districts and new provinces. I don't think that there is any way that decentralization can end up contributing to better management of conflict. It is exactly the opposite.

STANGE: *Moving on to Papua, do you see signs that Jokowi will use the relative freedom of his last term to attempt bringing the conflict in Papua to a lasting solution?*

JONES: No. Even if he wanted to, it is not possible. But I do not think he wants to. I do not think that this aspect of it plays any role in his thinking. Like any other president before him, he believes it even more that infrastructure and economic development will solve the political problem. That is why he will go there and support the Trans-Papua Highway[14]. There is no understanding that money will not buy you peace. They did not learn any lessons from East Timor, and they did not learn any lessons from Aceh. The conflict in Papua is not a single conflict. It is multiple conflicts on multiple levels in multiple areas of Papua.

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13   On 6 February 2011, 1,500 Muslim rioters surrounded an Ahmadi neighborhood in Cikeusik, Banten province. Three Ahmadis were beaten to death and five were injured, with police officers witnessing the scene without interfering. (Human Rights Watch, 2013, p. 1)

14   The Trans-Papua Highway consists of 12 partly unfinished road segments across Papua and West Papua provinces with a total length of 4,325 kilometers (see, Sloan et al., 2019).

I think the idea of UP4B[15] was a correct one, that you should have in the government one person responsible to the president who is the strategist on Papua policy. But, unlike UP4B, that person needs authority and a budget with a veto power over line ministries to actually effect policy change in Papua. But there is an assumption, which is wrong, that if only the Javanese would go away, Papuans would be able to solve problems by themselves. That is not the case. *Papuanization* in terms of putting Papuans in charge of local government has only increased corruption, has only increased *sukuization*[16] in terms of clan structures, and has only increased mismanagement and bad governance. It does not bode well for what would happen if you gave them even more authority. What you need is a combination of papuanization and oversight from Jakarta. One of the things that happened with the Special Autonomy Law for Papua is basically that Jakarta threw up its hands saying, we give you all that money and you do what you like with it, and we hope you will not be doing very much with it because it is actually in our interest that you mess it up.

There is all of this talk about dialogue. I do not think the preconditions for having a useful dialogue are present. I think the idea of this *Jaringan Damai Papua* (JDP)[17] under Muridan Satrio Widjojo, the late wonderful LIPI[18] scholar, who helped to draft that Papua Road Map,[19] was absolutely right. What you need is to build a united voice in Papua that can articulate specific goals that then be presented to the government as expressing the will of Papuans. And his vision was to have public consultations across different parts of Papua and then frame the results in a way that would provide guidelines for different policies. The problem was it got hijacked by Papuans who were more interested in their own interests than actually trying to craft a single voice. I don't see how it is possible to be optimistic about Papua.

Stange: *When it comes to violent conflict in Indonesia, where do you see the country in five years?*

Jones: I will not answer this because every prediction that I have made about this country has been wrong. It really is hard because Indonesia defies prediction. It is a country that never meets people's hopes, but it also never falls into your worst fears. It goes its own way in a way that suddenly throws up people. Who heard of Jokowi two years before he was elected? I do not know what is going to happen.

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

Jones: You are welcome.

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15   *Unit Percepatan Pembangunan Provinsi Papua dan Provinsi Papua Barat* (Unit for the Acceleration of Development in Papua and West Papua).

16   The term *suku* means people or ethnic group.

17   Established in 2010, the Papua Peace Network facilitates dialogue between Papuans and the Indonesian government (Pamungkas, 2017).

18   *Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia* (Indonesian Institute of Sciences).

19   The Papua Road Map was drawn up by a team of LIPI scholars in 2008, a model for the solution of conflict in Papua that adopted a justice approach based on recognition, development, dialog, and reconciliation (Widjojo, 2008).

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