SOUTHEAST ASIAN STUDIES

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CONTENTS

Thai Adaptations of the Javanese *Panji* in Cosmopolitan Ayutthaya

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This article considers the curious case study of Thai literary networks in the late Ayutthaya, the networks' adoption and adaptations of the Javanese *Panji* epic, and what these innovations reveal about the form of cosmopolitanism that existed until the late Bangkok period. While windows into what we refer to as Siamese cosmopolitanism have been reconstructed by historians in accounts of Persian, Portuguese, Dutch, French, Chinese, and Japanese mercantile networks, our treatment of this important topic expands the units of analysis to include Thai literary networks. Davisakd Puaksom's excellent doctoral dissertation piqued our interest in *Panji*'s Siamese adoptions and adaptations, but we set ourselves the task of exploring the utility of Ronit Ricci's *Islam Translated*, which analyzes Tamil, Javanese, and Malay sources for Thai studies. We pursue a comparative approach to Southeast Asian historiography in ways that increase the dialogue between Thai studies specialists and members of the Malay Studies Guild. Having described the most important Thai version of this Javanese epic produced by Siamese literary networks from the Ayutthaya through to the late Bangkok period, we consider the principal historical personalities and processes that brought *Panji* to cosmopolitan Ayutthaya. After providing details about the presence of Javanese individuals and influences in both Ayutthaya and Patani, we introduce insights provided by literary scholars and historians concerning the notoriously ambiguous terms "Java/Jawah/Javanese" and "Malay/Melayu." These form the foundation for putting forward arguments about Ayutthaya having fostered forms of cosmopolitanism resembling the fluid linguistic and cultural milieu that flourished in other Southeast Asian port polities.

Keywords: *Panji*, *Inao*, Siamese cosmopolitanism, Javanese, Bangkok, Ayutthaya, Melaka, Thailand

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Introduction

This article considers the case study of adoptions and adaptations of the Javanese *Panji* epic by literary networks, and what they reveal about the form of cosmopolitanism that once existed in Siam. In recent decades there have been a number of contributions examining the cultural, linguistic, and religious diversity of Ayutthaya from the early sixteenth century. We limit ourselves to the late Ayutthaya and early Bangkok periods, which ended in 1851 with the death of Rama III (r. 1824–51). Historians have provided accounts of Persian, Portuguese, Dutch, French, Chinese, and Japanese mercantile networks with whom various religious entrepreneurs were associated, as well as mercenaries.[1] While studies based on this range of foreign sources and subjects have provided valuable windows into Siamese cosmopolitanism, there is a need to expand the units of analysis within Thai studies. Furthermore, by considering translations of this Javanese epic by Siamese literary networks, we seek to increase interest in "Javanese" and "Malay" actors and influences on cultural, linguistic, and—to a lesser extent religious—cosmopolitanism during this period.

Our awareness of, and interest in, translations of the *Panji* epic by Thai literary networks began when we encountered the excellent doctoral dissertation by Davisakd Puaksom (2008). The decision to specifically consider the role of literary networks in Ayutthaya was inspired by Ronit Ricci's groundbreaking *Islam Translated* (2011). Ricci points out that there were various networks across the Indian Ocean, which forged connections between a wide range of individuals and communities. While Muslim trading guilds and Sufi brotherhoods played important roles in Islam's South and Southeast Asian expansion, Ricci argues that literary networks also connected ethnically and linguistically diverse Muslims. This was through the texts they adopted and adapted, which introduced and sustained a "complex web of prior texts and new interpretations that were crucial to the establishment of both local and global Islamic identities." Islamic literary networks produced "stories, poems, genealogies, histories, and treatises on a broad range of topics" (Ricci 2011, 2). According to Ricci, Javanese, Tamil, and Malay translations of the Arabic text *Book of One Thousand Questions* serve as a paradigm for "considering how translation and conversion have been historically intertwined" and how the circulation of

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1) For an analysis of Ayutthaya's Persian presence, see Marcinkowski (2000; 2004; 2012) and Chularatana (2017). On the French presence in Ayutthaya, see Smithies (1998). Those interested in the Portuguese may consult Smith (2011) and Rosa (2015). Readers wishing to read about the Dutch could consult Ruangsilp (2007) and Borschberg (2014; 2020). On the Japanese in Ayutthaya, see Ishii (1971). For a general treatment of the range of foreigners present in Siamese courts, see Dhirawat na Pombejra (2001).

vernacular translations of Islamic texts such as these helped "shape and maintain an Arabic cosmopolitan sphere in South and Southeast Asia."

In addition to intentionally moving beyond European contributions to what Edward Van Roy (2017) has referred to as the "Siamese melting pot," the utility of Ricci's attention to literary networks to our treatment of Siamese cosmopolitanism is motivated by a desire to contribute to approaches to Thai studies associated with Chris Baker and Pasuk Phongpaichit. Besides having produced a series of seminal empirical contributions, conceptually Baker and Pasuk have demonstrated that Ayutthaya was both a maritime city-state that rose from the sea—not the land—and a predominantly urban—rather than agrarian—polity involved in commerce and manufacturing (Baker 2003; Baker and Pasuk 2017c). A corollary of Ayutthaya's port being critical to its financial prosperity and political power was that it closely resembled port cities in the Malay World. Therefore, we also wish to increase the awareness of Southeast Asian studies involved in a comparative approach to Southeast Asian historiography—specifically between Thai studies specialists and members of the Malay Studies Guild.[2]

Having clarified our specific objective, and the questions we seek to answer about what translations of *Panji* by Thai literary networks reveal about the cosmopolitan milieu in which they operated, we introduce a mix of empirical and conceptual material. We begin by describing the most important Thai version of this Javanese epic by Siamese literary networks from the late Ayutthaya period. This is followed by a discussion of what we regard as the principal historical personalities and processes through which this epic arrived in cosmopolitan Siam, arguing that waves of "Javanese" influences came to this port polity from various directions before the dramatic increase in Malay prisoners of war following the first campaigns in south Thailand led by Rama I in 1786 (Bradley 2012). After providing details about the presence of Javanese individuals and influences in both Ayutthaya and Patani during the late Ayutthaya period, we introduce analyses by literary scholars and historians about the notorious ambiguity of the toponym "Java/Jawah" and ethnonyms "Malay/Melayu" and "Javanese/Jawi." These form the foundation for arguing about the ways that Ayutthaya produced forms of cosmopolitanism that resembled the fluid linguistic and cultural milieu that flourished in other Southeast Asian port polities.

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2) Area studies specialists will be aware of publications filling this gap by pursuing an intentionally comparative approach. On synergies between Thai and Malay studies, see Andaya (1999; 2017), Montesano and Jory (2008), Jory and Saengthong (2009), Joll (2011), and Borschberg (2014, 95–145; 2020).

Panji's Siamese Incarnations

This section describes *Inao*, the best-known Thai versions of the Javanese *Panji* epic, produced in Siamese literary networks between the late Ayutthaya and early Bangkok periods.[3]   The titles of the two most popular Thai versions are: *Inao Lek* (The lesser *Inao*), also known as *Dalang*; and *Inao Yai* (The greater *Inao*).   They were composed in Ayutthaya by Princess Kunthon and Princess Mongkut, daughters of King Borommakot (r. 1733–58) (Davisakd 2008, 73).   As described below, these Thai literary productions are best regarded as the end product of a series of oral narrations—most of which might have been through (female) storytellers—rather than written manuscripts.   As independent and innovative literary creations based on a range of non-Thai sources, *Inao* diverges in several respects from the Javanese *Panji*.   Nevertheless, resemblances remain.   The following synopsis of the story line is provided by James Brandon:

> Prince Inao has been betrothed since childhood to Princess Busba, daughter of his uncle, King of Daha.[4]   Inao, however, has fallen in love with another princess and refuses to carry out his obligation. . . . He goes to live with his new bride at the court of her father [King of Manya].   The King of Daha is deeply incensed.   He offers Busba's hand in marriage to the first person who requests it.   Immediately Choraka [a crude and repulsive warrior] asks to marry her.   It is too late for the king to withdraw his rash offer.   He is about to order Busba to marry Choraka when the King of Kamankunin appears to press his suit.   When told she is already promised to Choraka, the king gathers his army and attacks Daha.   Inao [as his nephew] is obliged to come to Daha's defense.   He does so, but with great reluctance.   He is made commander-in-chief of Daha's armies, and leads the armies to victory.   When the king invites him to visit the palace to be honored, Inao cannot refuse.   During his visit he sees Busba for the first time.   She is ravishingly beautiful.   His passion is aroused.   He curses himself for having rejected her.   He finds every reason he can to remain at the palace.   As the day for Busba's marriage to Choraka approaches, Inao falls into deep melancholy. Finally he retires to the forest to compose himself and to gain peace of mind.   In time, Inao emerges from the forest strengthened with magic powers.   He overcomes innumerable obstacles, finally defeats all his enemies, and makes Busba his bride. (Brandon 1967, 106–107)

Some interesting details about *Inao* provided by Supeena Adler (2014) are that he is a "handsome young king who likes to watch theatre, who has many wives, who wins every war, and has a nonchalant lifestyle."   Topics dealt with in the text include his travels, power, protection from gods, and—most important—his desire to get what he wants.

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3) This precludes the introduction of some fascinating material about connections between Siam and Java from the reign of Rama V, or King Chulalongkorn (r. 1868–1910), to immediately after the coup that brought an end to the absolute monarchy, when Prince Paribatra lived in exile in the Siamese palace in Bandung, West Java.   For more on this period, see Davisakd (2008, esp. pp. 183–225).

4) Robson notes that the prince also bore the title "Raden Ino," or "Inu," which might have been connected with the title "Rakryan i Hino," referring to a (royal) heir apparent (Robson 1996, 41).

Regardless of the impact of his actions on his family, friends, and palaces, he alone is able to "conquer chaos and bring peace back to the world" (Adler 2014, 85). Given that the story's narrative arc centers on the royalty, Adler argues that *Inao* communicated what people at the time wanted to "hear about the king's life," including the power of the king to "bring back peace." Notably absent are anachronistic concerns about the often "unacceptable and even unethical behaviors of King Inao." Indeed, Siamese monarchs are presented as people who can do no wrong. The story had political utility for two reasons: it concerns an administrative union under one sovereign ruler; and the central—and richly metaphorical—motif is the sexual union between the prince of Kuripan and the princess of Daha (Robson 1996, 42).

The popularity of *Inao* in the late Ayutthaya period is illustrated by assertions that King Suriyamarin (r. 1758–67) was so obsessed with *Inao* that in the final stages of the Burmese siege of Ayutthaya he was watching this drama (Adler 2014, 85). How was *Inao* celebrated in literary networks during the short-lived Thonburi (1782–92) and early Bangkok periods? The answer to this question can be provided by scenes from *Inao* being included on murals painted on the walls of royal dwellings. These included projects associated with Princess Thepsudawadi, born in the late Ayutthaya period. She was the elder sister of the first monarch of the Chakri dynasty, Rama I (r. 1782–1809), who commissioned a new version of *Inao* based on his memory; this was completed by a committee of court poets he personally presided over. His manuscript consisted of "9,870 stanzas in *klon* meter" (described below). Stuart Robson (1996, 51) notes that the manuscript included many Javanese and Melayu lexical elements.[5] A second version of the story was a rather fragmented manuscript consisting of 1,772 stanzas—also in *klon* verse (Davisakd 2008, 44). During the reign of Rama II (r. 1809–24), the publication of another version of *Inao* (not *Dalang*) was undertaken—widely regarded as the best extant Thai version. Court artists such as Sunthorn Phu (a famous poet during the reigns of Rama I through Rama IV) and choreographer Luang Pitak Montri developed *Inao* into a dance drama (Adler 2014, 83). Since the mid-1700s, when it was first performed, *Inao* has enjoyed spectacular success. According to Davisakd, Thai poets commented that after witnessing its "mesmerizing dance," ordinary men "want to die no more." Its popularity is, in part, explained by its offering a story of "pleasure and desire," which contrasted with the morality of "traditional literary works influenced by the Buddhist texts" (Davisakd 2008, 69). Adler (2014, 81) adds that, in contrast with the Thai transla-

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5) An example is the change from *Ino* to *Inao*. Robson notes that this change is common in the final syllable of Malay words that have found their way into the Thai lexicon, and that these words are also rendered in a rising tone (Robson 1996, 51).

Fig. 1 Shadow Puppets in *Inao* Mural from Wat Somanat
Source: Davisakd (2008, 144).

tion of the *Ramayana* (*Ramakien*), *Inao* was intimately concerned with the "everyday lives of . . . Thai royalty." While the reign of Rama IV, or King Mongkut (r. 1851–68), falls outside the purview of the early Bangkok period, scenes from *Inao* could be seen in murals on the walls of the ordination hall in Wat Somanat Rajawarawihara to commemorate Princess Somanat (see Fig. 1 [above] and Fig. 2 [below]). She was not only one of Rama IV's favorite queens but also a former court dancer (Chonhacha 1995).[6] The murals juxtapose Thai architectural tropes, Thai dancers, men dressed in Javanese sarongs, and Javanese shadow puppetry.

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  6) For more on Thai temple murals, including those of Wat Somanat, see Jaiser (2009a; 2009b).

Fig. 2   Cockfighting Scene from *Inao* Mural in Wat Somanat
Source: Davisakd (2008, 66).

Inao's Multipolar Origins

Having provided readers with a brief introduction to *Panji*'s Siamese incarnation, we turn to critically evaluating proposals by historians of Southeast Asian literature about what these literary productions tell us about Siamese cosmopolitanism. It needs to be stated at the outset that our objective is not to pinpoint the origins of *Inao*. To paraphrase Davisakd, this would be a misguided and ultimately pointless project doomed to failure. While no one quibbles with claims that *Panji* originated in "Java," Thai adaptations were based on versions "widely disseminated in oral and written forms throughout Southeast Asia" (Davisakd 2008, 103).[7] We present material in (roughly) chronological order, beginning with arguments put forward by Brandon (1967) about the agency of Angkor. We make the important point that *Panji* is one of a number of literary works that were incorporated in the Thai literary corpus, and summarize proposals made by Malay and Javanese literary scholars. Debates concerning the origins of *Panji* in Ayutthaya and the cultural identity of actors involved in its transmission will be dealt with in the sections that follow. These will involve discussions of "Malay" and "Javanese" cultural influences between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries in both Ayutthaya and (equally cosmo-

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7)   On this point Robson agrees, citing slim evidence for contacts between Java and Siam (1996, 51).

politan) Patani (Reid 2012).[8]

We begin by considering the historical personalities and processes through which this Javanese epic was adopted and adapted in Siamese literary networks. Brandon (1967) made his arguments at a time when the ideas of George Coedès (1968) were becoming more popular in anglophone scholarship. Brandon argued that the decline of the perform-ing arts in India from around the ninth century meant that they "contributed nothing" to the development of the performing arts in Southeast Asia. Nonetheless, over the centuries that followed, "dance, music, and drama" all flourished as Indian influences became "assimilated and incorporated into national, and in some cases regional, styles of performance." These developed in different directions in line with local national cul-ture, but there continued to be a "great deal of contact between the royal courts of this period," and "theatre of one country [*sic*] often influenced that of another." For example, in the first half of the ninth century, Jayavarman II—who was raised in the Javanese court—"founded the Khmer empire," with the assistance of "Javanese artists . . . priests and court officials." Despite the presence of themes borrowed from other sources, Javanese influence is clearly seen in the temples built by Jayavarman (Brandon 1967, 25–26).

From the fourteenth century, versions of the *Panji* epic became popular in Burmese, Cambodian, Lao, Siamese, and Malay royal courts. This epic therefore represents "one of the most famous local history legends in Southeast Asia." In Java, Raden Panji was considered a "descendent of the Pandavas, heroes of the Mahabharata," while on the mainland Inao became regarded as a "future Buddha" or Jataka (Brandon 1967, 106).[9] Baker and Pasuk, in their *A History of Ayutthaya: Siam in the Early Modern World* (2017a), develop this line of analysis by pointing out that in cosmopolitan Siam *Inao* was one of a number of foreign epics that became part of the literary landscape. In addition to the well-known *Ramayana*, these epics included "the *Anirut* tales from India, . . . the Arabian *Thousand-and-one nights*, the *Duodecagon* from Persia, and a vampire tale from Sanskrit (*Vetala pancha-vinshati*)." Furthermore, vernacular translations were recast to suit their new audience. For example, the *Anirut* that arrived from Cambodia in the early Ayutthaya period was adapted into an "immense epic with greater focus on the love story and the

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8) Readers interested in reading about the relationship between Patani and Ayutthaya should consult Watson Andaya and Andaya (1982), Suwannathat-Pian (2012), Andaya (2017), and Baker and Pasuk (2017b).

9) Baker and Pasuk mention that dramatic traditions that developed outside the court (*lakhon nok*) included those based on plots in the *Fifty Jatakas*, and that Thai *Jataka* contain elements absent in the Pali versions on which they are based. Many originated as "folktales, which were adapted into stories of the Buddha's past lives" (Baker and Pasuk 2017a, 235). For more on Jataka in Thailand, see Jory (2016).

addition of Thai spirit beliefs." And the *Ramayana* (*Ramakien*) emphasized the role of Hanuman (a clever courtier), not the royal Rama (Baker and Pasuk 2017a).

It has already been mentioned that the *Panji* epic had been adapted to dance and drama performances in the court of Borommakot. *Inao* tended to select episodes that glorified princely success or romantic escapades. Later versions of it revealed what might befall princes who behaved badly. Baker and Pasuk point out that while court and popular literary traditions might have initially been kept separate, they "increasingly borrowed from each other" at three-day festivals held at temples (*wat*). These are described as "open to all social levels, and which was often the staging place for dramas and recitations," but they were also sponsored by the palace. One festival patronized by Borommakot at three new monasteries in Saraburi included performances of "*khon* mask-plays, *lakhon* dramas, shadow puppet shows, *mongkhrum* drum performances, *rabeng* dances, Mon dances, tightrope walking, jumping through flaming hoops, sword dances, wrestling, and 'daring acrobatics'" (Baker and Pasuk 2017a, 234). An important detail—mentioned by Davisakd (2008, 47) and developed in more detail by Baker and Pasuk—is that literary works were adapted to a *klon*. A *klon* is a Thai metrical form based on rhythms accompanying the popular Thai tradition of counterpoint singing. Its "simplicity and flexibility" lend themselves to composition and storytelling, especially in comparison to "older, more formalized meters which excelled at expressing emotions." As such, "before long, *klon* was used for poems, dramas, (and) histories" (Baker and Pasuk 2017a, 235). To summarize, *Inao* was one of a number of literary works adopted and adapted in Siamese literary networks. Most—although not all—were Indic works, and no consensus exists about the route through which the Javanese *Panji* arrived in cosmopolitan Siam. Having presented various proposals of *Panji*'s arrival from Angkor in the east, we now consider arguments for its arrival from the Malay World.

Robson's analysis of *Inao* (1996) includes a discussion of whether the Thai versions mentioned by Prince Dhani Nivat (1947) were translated from Javanese. There are multiple Thai versions of *Inao* that resemble the Javanese original. There is no consensus on whether these are based on Malay or Javanese manuscripts, and it is likely that, according to Prince Damrong, both daughters of King Borommakot had "Malay maids, descendants of Pattani prisoners of war."[10] There is no information about where Prince Dhani's versions originated, but Robson insists that they were transmitted orally. A

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10) It is worth noting that in 1685, Chevalier de Chaumont observed the presence in Ayutthaya of both Makassarese and "many people of the Island of Java," and Malays who were mostly slaves but "quite numerous" (Smithies 1995, 43, cited in Davisakd 2008, 89). This was approximately a century before the arrival of massive numbers of Malay war slaves (Thai *chalei*) in Bangkok following campaigns against Kedah and Patani between the late 1780s and the 1830s (see Bradley 2012).

second story claims that *Inao* was introduced to the Siamese court by a Muslim woman named Yai Yavo—which roughly translates as "Grandma Jawa"—and that this was translated from Javanese into Siamese by Prince Chao Kasat-tri, "for presentation on the stage." Prince Dhani adds that the "colophon attached to King Rama II's Inao" explicitly stated that it was composed by a *Chao Satri* (noblewoman) during the Ayutthaya period (cited in Rattiya 1988, 44). Can references to *kham chawaa* (Javanese words) in *Inao* be cited as evidence of the text having come directly from a Javanese source? While we address the notoriously imprecise nature of "Jawa/Jawah" and "Malay/Melayu" below, we concur with Robson's assessment that Siamese literary networks at the time would not have been either "aware of" or "concerned with" distinctions between "Malay" and "Javanese." *Inao* was "quite unambiguously" set in Java. It therefore seemed logical that "it was taken from Javanese." Malay *Panji* stories also "abound with words borrowed from Javanese." As these were produced by Thai literary networks, Robson feels justified in "regarding them as Malay," although their "distinctive Javanese character" supplied "the appropriate 'local color' for a Panji story" (Robson 1996, 44–45).

Krommamun Phittayalap Phrittiyakon (following Winstedt [1958]) might have argued that the *Panji* epic came to Ayutthaya during the height of the Malacca sultanate in the fifteenth century, but Rattiya Saleh (1988) addresses the issue of whether that was through oral traditions or written manuscripts.[11] Rattiya argues that it was Malays from Patani who functioned as the epic's principal importers and disseminators (cited in Robson 1996, 48). As described below, if what Peter Floris (see Moreland 1934, 42–43) witnessed during his visit to Patani in 1613 was a performance of *mak yong*, other Javanese materials such as *Panji* might also have been part of the local repertoire.[12] Rattiya's most compelling contribution to issues of agency is her analysis of the Malay versions of *Panji* that most closely resemble the *Inao* texts attributed to King Rama II.[13] She concludes that this is not a "translation from any particular text" but a text "adapted from one not among our selected texts, possibly from an older source which was possibly also the basis of some of our selected texts" (cited in Robson 1996, 49). On this point,

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11) On the spelling of Melaka/Malacca, Peter Borschberg (2014, 264) points out that in European cartography during the early modern period, the city of Melaka is spelled differently from Malacca, which often referred to the wider Malay Peninsula.

12) Robson adds that during the 1930s in Kelantan, *wayang* was referred to as *wayang Jawa*, and that local repertoires included versions of the *Panji* epic. This was distinct from *wayang Siam*, which drew more on versions of the Rama epic (Robson 1996, 48). For more on *wayang Jawa* and *wayang Siam*, see Scott-Kemball (1959), Sweeney (1972), Wright (1981), and Osnes (2010).

13) These are: *Hikayat Misa Taman Jayeng Kusuma*, *Hikayat Endang Malat Rasmi*, *Hikayat Dewa Asmara Jaya*, *Hikayat Cekel Waneng Pati*, *Kuda Semirang Seri Panji Pandairupa*, *Syair Angreni*, *Syair Ken Tambuhan*, and *Hikayat Panji Semirang*.

Robson concurs. The lack of evidence of direct contacts between Java and Siam means that direct translations between Javanese and Thai need to be discounted.

Without taking a recalcitrant position on whether or not there was contact between Ayutthaya and Java, Davisakd disagrees. He questions why, after risking the "trip across the Java Sea to Melaka or Patani," Javanese would not have continued on to "prosperous Ayutthaya." He is equally reluctant to discount Siamese having visited Java: "What would have prevented Siamese from plying the naval routes between Ayutthaya and Java, whereby they could keep an eye on troublesome southern vassals? Why would they not have stayed for a season in Java?" (Davisakd 2008, 95).[14] Returning to Robson, we conclude that in light of differences between (Thai) *Inao* and (Javanese) *Panji*, the former is best regarded as a "new, independent creation, albeit using a theme from a non-Thai source, but at the same time naturalized on Thai soil and hence incorporating much of Thai culture, distinct from Malay or Javanese culture." In other words, it was the "end-product of a series of 'receptions' of the Panji theme" (Robson 1996, 51).

The preceding sections have provided the most important pieces of the puzzle through which a picture emerges of the personalities and historical processes of how *Panji* arrived in Ayutthaya, where it was adopted and adapted in its literary networks. We have identified Khmer, Javanese, and Malay personalities who arrived in Ayutthaya through conquest, and perhaps commerce. Our primary concern below is to describe the cosmopolitan sites of contact and exchange mentioned above. In order to overcome the understandable incredulity about how Javanese or Malay versions of the *Panji* epic could have come to the attention of Thai literary networks in Ayutthaya—especially among those oblivious to the contacts and cultural exchanges among port polities at the time— it is necessary to have a more nuanced picture of Ayutthaya's cosmopolitan credentials as well as the "Malay" and "Javanese" elements in its linguistic and ethnic landscape.

Malay and Javanese Elements in Cosmopolitan Ayutthaya and Patani

What references to Javanese during the Ayutthaya period exist in the secondary literature? Baker begins by citing claims by Fernao Mendes Pinto (1989) that a squad of Turks attempting to scale the walls of Ayutthaya in the mid-1500s were cut to pieces by three thousand Javanese warriors (Baker and Pasuk 2017a, 94). This is one of the earliest examples of Javanese loyalty to Siamese kings—also shared by the Cham. Muslims were

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14) Indeed, Dhirawat na Pombejra has documented material exchanges between Ayutthaya and Java in
the late 1680s, specifically Javanese horses and Siamese elephants (2001).

among the foreign fighters who defended Ayutthaya in its final days. The Cham and the Javanese were often contrasted to Makassarese and Bugis visitors, who were mistrusted as potential pirates or mercenaries (Smithies 2002). Indeed, Makassarese were presented as barbaric giants (Thai *yak makkasan*) in Thai literature (Davisakd 2008, 92). Baker's fascinating reconstruction of economic activity in Ayutthaya before 1767, contained in a source discovered in 1925, includes accounts of the annual monsoon season that "blew junks up the river and into the city," which would "drop anchor at the end of the canal." Amidst the long list of vessels are references to "*Khaek* from Java and Malayu" (Baker 2011, 58). When Christoph Carl Fernberger visited Ayutthaya in 1624, he counted "six Javanese sailboats" (Lukas 2016, 129).

Although the vast majority of surviving literary works from the late fifteenth century (such as the Luang Prasoet's chronicle and law codes) were written in Thai, Pasuk and Baker (2016) point out that this was "not the only language" present during the Ayutthaya period. For instance, many religious texts were written "in Pali using a Khmer script," translations of which were "extemporized during sermons by monks reading a Pali excerpt and then expounding in Thai." This was facilitated by Pali-Thai notebooks compiled by monks. In Thai temples, "monks used an argot of verbs and nouns derived from Pali, Sanskrit, and Khmer for everyday actions and things," and "diplomatic correspondence between Siam and Lanka" was written in Pali (Baker and Pasuk 2017a, 205).

We have already mentioned Baker's (2003; Baker and Pasuk 2017c) important reconceptualization of Ayutthaya as an urbanized port city involved in Southeast Asia's maritime trade. It also shared the linguistic, cultural, and religious cosmopolitanism of ports such as Melaka, Surabaya, and Batavia. An important detail that has only recently received the attention it deserves is that the most important *lingua franca* in Ayutthaya was Malay. Particularly after the fall of Melaka to the Portuguese in 1511, Portuguese diplomacy with Ayutthaya was conducted in Malay.[15] Later, in 1595, there was "a Malay letter sent from the Portuguese governor of Melaka to Naresuan" (Baker and Pasuk 2017a, 205). Davisakd (2008, 84) adds that the letter from Dutch Stadholder Prince Frederick Henry to King Songtham (which arrived in 1628) was "translated from Dutch into Portuguese, from Portuguese into Malay, and from Malay into Siamese," which at the time was "the usual procedure." Baker and Pasuk also speculate about whether the local career of the (in)famous Greek adventurer Constantine Phaulkon (1647–88) got off to a good start due to his facility in English and Malay—to which he "quickly added Portuguese and Thai." The entourage that accompanied King Borommakot on his mission to Sri Lanka to revive Buddhism in 1753 included Malay translators (Baker and

15) For more on this Iberian mission in the early 1500s, see Van Roy (2017, 42–43).

Pasuk 2017a, 205). We finally note that the online publication of the archive of the Dutch East India Company, or Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie (VOC), includes no fewer than eight diplomatic letters exchanged between Batavia and Ayutthaya between 1674 and 1769—all of which were in Malay.[16]

In addition to Malay, and other languages primarily associated with Buddhism, there were other elements in Ayutthaya's cosmopolitan linguistic landscape. Despite difficulties in determining the exact number, Baker and Pasuk recount Dutch accounts confirming the presence of interpreters for "dealing with the court," and that the VOC employed "informal intermediaries" skilled in "several languages." Furthermore, a "Portuguese mestizo, a Mon, a Javanese, and a Chinese" helped mediate the crisis between the VOC and the court in 1636–37. The Portuguese was "one of the Berckelang's people" in the service of the Phrakhlang minister.[17] The Javanese was a wealthy merchant in the service of the Kalahom (Department of Defense). The Chinese was probably an interpreter in Phrakhlang. The Mon was Soet, "a low-born woman who acted as an all-purpose liaison between the Dutch and the court" (Baker and Pasuk 2017a, 205). According to Davisakd, the linguistic aspects of Siamese cosmopolitanism described above explain why Javanese and Malay terms remained untranslated in the versions of *Panji* produced by Siamese literary networks. Translating them would have been deemed unnecessary as Malay functioned as one of Ayutthaya's primary *lingua francas*. These terms represent linguistic artifacts present at the "moment of exchange in which economic commodities and cultural elements were bargained, bartered, and traded through the medium of Melayu" (Davisakd 2008, 86, 88).[18]

There are more mentions of Javanese presence and influences in Patani during the Ayutthaya period.[19] For instance, in 1556 King Chairacha (r. 1534–47) summoned Raja Muda of Patani to assist in his campaign against the Burmese. A flotilla of two hundred

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16) "Diplomatic Letters 1625–1812." For diplomatic letters between the VOC and Ayutthaya, see Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia and The Corts Foundation (2016).

17) Phrakhlang was the Ministry of External Relations and Maritime Trading Affairs (Breazeale 1999, 5; see Ruangsilp 2016). "Berckelang" was the Portuguese term for Phrakhlang.

18) On the topic of not all foreign words being translated in multilingual Southeast Asia, it is worth noting that the copy of *Panji* tales from Kelantan translated by R.O. Winstedt was estimated to have been composed in the 1780s. While written in "excellent Malay," it contains "many Javanese but few Arabic and no Portuguese loanwords" (Winstedt 1949, 54).

19) Before addressing the issue of the presence of Javanese in Patani during the Ayutthaya period, Robson points out that while Sai, Kelantan, and Trengganu are all listed in *Desawarnana* (composed for the Majapahit royal court in 1365), Patani is not. In its place is the toponym Langkasuka, which suggests that at the time Patani had not yet been established (Robson 1996, 44–45). For more early Javanese references to parts of present-day Thailand and the Siamese Malay States before the Anglo-Siamese Treaty of 1909, see Robson (1997).

boats sailed to Ayutthaya as instructed. Upon arriving, the intruders discovered that the Burmese had retreated. This led the raja to mount an (unsuccessful) attack on the weakened Siamese forces. Upon receiving news of this engagement, an unnamed "Ratu of Java" attacked Patani. Nevertheless, his troops arrived after the return of the raja, meaning that the Javanese were wiped out. Another force led by the ruler's "most successful general" was sent to Patani, but that was also repelled (Fraser 1960, 25).[20] The *Hikayat Patani* describes another attack from Palembang that occurred in either 1549 or 1563 (see Teeuw and Wyatt 1970, 88–90).[21] Intriguingly, this involved a conflict between two Palembang-based Javanese noblemen. Despite being military commanders, these men were referred to as Kyai Badar and Kyai Kelasang. Equally striking was their "use of Javanese words," such as *paseban* (audience hall), *manira* (I), *pakanira* (you), *lawang seketeng* (outer gate), and *rabi* (wife).[22] A. Teeuw and D.K. Wyatt conjecture that Malay readers of the *Hikayat Patani* might have been familiar with these terms through local performances of *wayang* (shadow puppetry) or "literary texts containing Javanese *wayang* stories." Both were hugely popular along the east coast of the peninsula in the sixteenth century.[23] Furthermore, the quarrel between the *kyai* is reminiscent of scenes common in *wayang*. There are other references to the attackers being Javanese from Palembang (*ra'yat Jawa Palemban*). Whether this refers to language, origin, or affiliation, the *Hikayat Patani*'s description appears to stress their Javanese characteristics (Teeuw and Wyatt 1970, 239). An unflattering journal entry by Floris in August 1613 mentions attending a performance by Malay women of a Javanese comedy (perhaps a *mak yong*) (Moreland 1934, 97). Slightly later, during the reign of Raja Biru (r. 1616–24), the *bendahara* (a powerful position in the Malay palace, analogous to the vizier in a European court) was a "Javanese of the family of the sultan of Mataram" (*anak Jawa bangsa sultan Mataram*) (Teeuw and Wyatt 1970, 79). Finally, by the beginning of the seventeenth century, the number of Javanese slaves in Patani, who might have been descendants of captured soldiers, was significant enough for them to attempt a (failed) rebellion (Moreland 1934, 94–95).

What is the relevance of these insights provided by historians of littoral and mainland Southeast Asia to reconstructing the personalities and processes through which Siamese literary networks adopted and adapted the *Panji* epic? This epic is likely to have arrived

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20) Fraser cites Wood (1933, 19).

21) The most important treatments of the *Hikayat Patani* include Wyatt (1967), Siti Hawa Haji Salleh (1992), Bradley (2006a; 2006b; 2009), and Porath (2011).

22) This is also mentioned by Robson (1996, 47).

23) The decorated boats that the east coast of the Thai/Malay Peninsula was famous for included characters from not only the local *wayang* repertoire but also the *Panji* epic (Coatalen 1982, 86–99).

from more than one direction. Although it could have been introduced by the Khmer as early as the turn of the second millennium, most commentators cite members of the Siamese court receiving oral traditions passed on to them by "Malay" or "Javanese" servants. Although these female storytellers would have arrived in Central Thailand more than a century before the dramatic rise in the number of Malays from 1786, little has been written about Javanese and Malays in the Ayutthaya period. More anecdotal evidence about military and artistic interactions between Java and Patani between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries can be gleaned from primary and secondary sources. The important—but often overlooked—issue of how "Jawa/Jawah" functioned as toponym and ethnonym, and what the ethnonym "Malay/Melayu" denoted, is the subject of the following section, which explains the confusion or lack of interest in the ethnic identity of the aforementioned storytellers in the Siamese court.

Malay and Javanese in the (Confounding) Southeast Asian Cosmopolitan Soup

Given that Adrian Vickers (2004) does not consider any case studies from Thailand, what is the relevance of his revisionist scholarship on the ethnonyms "Malay" and "Javanese" to our investigation of Thai adaptations of the "Javanese" *Panji*? First and foremost, his proposal about what "Malay" and "Javanese" did—and did not—denote are based on his analysis of texts produced in a range of Malay and Javanese literary networks (Vickers 2004). Vickers demonstrates ways in which the study of literary texts confirms the complex and ambiguous characteristics of ethnonyms such as "Melayu/Malay" and "Javanese" and the toponym "Jawa/Jawah." Neither of these can be adequately defined without reference to "literature, geography and language" and interactions provided by European visitors to the region. Like others offering a range of circumstantialist alternatives to primordial perceptions of Malayness, Vickers criticizes attempts to separate "Malay" from "Javanese."[24] Not only does this run against the grain of "indigenous discursive fields," but the "colonial reconstitution" of these ethnonyms is inseparable from the "reconstitution of the term 'Java.'" Both Malaysia and Indonesia might represent "invented traditions," but none of these were "invented from nothing" (Vickers 2004, 26). We add that Malay was a category that was frequently combined with—or used alternately with—Javanese. "Malay" and "Javanese" were ethnonyms commonly employed in descriptions of littoral Southeast Asia, yet both denoted *hybrid* identities

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24) Adrian Vickers is one of a number of scholars who have argued that until the late nineteenth century, the ethnonym "Malay" was a "fluid category" (see also Barnard 2004; Milner 2008; Joll 2011, 66–75; Maznah Mohamad and Syed Mhd. Khairudin Aljunied 2011).

formed through "combinations of antipathies and interchanges predating the one-way street view of late nineteenth century colonialism" (Vickers 2004, 32).[25]

Another important detail complicating an already confounding cultural conundrum is ambiguities about how "Jawa/Jawah" functioned as both toponym and ethnonym. No one denies the presence of Javanese in Ayutthaya during the early Ayutthaya period. Nonetheless, not only are references scant and evidence often anecdotal, but Java and Javanese could also be referred to in a number of ways. Anthony Milner comments that the related ethnonym "Jawi" is encountered in regions where Muslim populations are found. These include present-day Cambodia, where Muslims are referred to as Chvea—a local derivation of Jawah. This community claims long-standing and close connections with Patani and Kelantan, where people are also frequently referred to as Jawah or Jawi (as well as Melayu).[26] Milner adds that in Cambodia, Chvea may also refer to the entire Malay community regardless of place of origin. Although encompassing people from the island of Java, Chvea also includes populations from "various islands of the Malay Archipelago or the different states on the Peninsula" (Milner 2008, 90).

British observers in the late 1700s were familiar with the land and people "beneath the winds" (*de-bawah angin*)—a toponym as imprecise as "Jawah" (Milner 2008, 96–97). As a toponym, "Jawah" encompassed Sumatra and possibly Borneo, but English observers in the late seventeenth century occasionally also referred to the entire archipelago as "the Javas." Similarly, Chinese captains referred to Malacca and Patani as part of Jawa. However, when employed specifically as an ethnonym, "Jawah" could denote Acehnese, Bugis, Malays, and other groups in mainland and littoral Southeast Asia—as well as Javanese. This did not escape the attention of Snouck Hurgronje (2007), who famously commented that in Arabia, "Jawah" denoted all people of the Malay "race." In addition to this, the term's geographical breadth spread to Siam, Malacca, and even New Guinea. Intriguingly, it sometimes referred to Southeast Asians who were not Muslims, a detail dealt with by reference to "Jawah Meriki," which specifically referred to "genuine Javanese" (Hurgronje 2007, 248).

Vickers claims that maintaining dichotomies between literature and history represents one of the "most potent of the positivist legacies, dominating the majority of works in the field" (Vickers 2004, 35). He considers the case study of Malay communities in Ceylon who not only "produced their own literature" but also "copied and maintained some of the standard 'classics' of Malay literature."[27] Studying the works produced by

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25) For a discussion of colonial discourse in Southeast Asia during the nineteenth century, see Noor (2016).

26) On Jawi in South Thailand, see Joll (2013) and Le Roux (1998).

27) For more on the intriguing case of Sri Lanka's Malay diaspora, see Ricci (2012; 2013a; 2013b).

this literary network calls into question assertions about the presence of some sort of "pure 'Malayness' outside the area usually designated as the Malay world." For instance, the subject of *Hikayat Raden Bagus Gusti* was one of the famous Wali Sanga of Java. At the time the British took control of Ceylon, this diaspora community was referred to as Malay; the previous Dutch overlords had referred to them as Javanese. Nonetheless, from "photographs, the costumes, kris and music" of the period, it appears that this community embodied a "mixture of Malay and Javanese styles" (Vickers 2004, 40, 41).

While Vickers (2004, 44) makes no references to either Malay or Javanese specifically in Siam, he demonstrates ways in which the analysis of texts produced by Southeast Asian literary networks supplies unexpected insights into "links and parallels between the cultures of the archipelago." These include the similarities between Malay and Javanese *Panji* narratives provided above. Between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries, what "Malay" and "Javanese" referred to as ethnonyms and what "Jawa" denoted as a toponym remained fluid. In the 1800s European "high imperialism" froze these into "strict and exclusive categories." Nonetheless, despite attempts at freezing and standardizing these terms, they did not operate as either exclusive or separable (Vickers 2004, 54). This explains—although not entirely excuses—the widespread confusion in the secondary literature about the roles of "Javanese" and "Malay" in introducing the *Panji* epic to the palace in the late Ayutthaya period.

Conclusion

What do the curated empirical and conceptual materials discussed above reveal about the characteristics of the Siamese cosmopolitanism that existed when the "Javanese" *Panji* was translated into Thai? What is the utility of expanding the units of analysis to include the products of Siamese literary networks, and interrogating "Javanese" and "Malay" agency in both Ayutthaya and Patani? Far from representing some sort of cultural anomaly or outlier, we argue that literary productions of this nature suggest that Siam took a number of pages out of Melaka's (highly successful) playbook following the latter's demise in 1511. The most important standard operating procedure was that Melaka fostered the cultural and linguistic cosmopolitanism that had been so good for business. Michael Feener (2010) summarizes the scholarly consensus, describing Melaka as a "cosmopolitan port city located at a key point on the straits between Sumatra and the Malay peninsula." As such, it became a "thriving hub of commerce, in which Muslims from all around the Indian Ocean rim and beyond came together with non-Muslims from all across Asia and Africa in exchanges of ideas and social practices, as well as commercial

goods." Tomé Pires's description of this port's "polyglot merchant population" in the early sixteenth century is well known:

> Moors from Cairo, Mecca, Aden, Abyssinians, men of Kilwa, Malinidi, Ormuz, Parsees, *Rumes*, Turks, Turkomans, Christian Armenians, Gujeratees . . . Merchants from Orissa, Ceylon, Bengal, Arakan, Pegu, Siamese, men of Kedah, Malays, men of Pahang, Patani, Cambodia, Champa, Cochin China, Chinese . . . Moluccas, Banda, Bima, Timor, Madura, Java, Sunda, Palembang, Jambi . . . Pase, Pedir, [and the] Maldives. (Pires 2005, 268, cited in Feener 2010, 485)

The port produced many polyglots as male merchants married local women in port, and many "streams of Islamicate civilisation" fused with local influences—as well as those from China (Feener 2010, 486).

The spread and diffusion of Melaka's Malay "Islamicate" culture accelerated after its fall to the Portuguese. While Baker has argued that—along with Aceh and Patani—Ayutthaya was a maritime port city, we add that it profited and prospered from Melaka's demise. In ways that resemble Pires's account, one of the most widely cited descriptions of Siamese cosmopolitanism that developed from the early sixteenth century is that of Chevalier de Chaumont, written during his visit to Ayutthaya in 1686. This includes the assertion that "There is no city in the East where is seen more different nations than in the capital city of Siam, and where so many different tongues are spoken" (Chaumont 1997).[28] Baker and Pasuk note that such an assessment was shared by many of Chaumont's contemporaries, and that this cultural fluidity was a result of the "gradual accretion of peoples in a port-city over three centuries" (Baker and Pasuk 2017a, 203).

Engseng Ho, who has studied Southeast Asia's "expanding and interconnected diasporas" that impacted port polities throughout the archipelago, identifies "expansive social formations" previously perceived in "fragmentary, partial and disconnected ways." Furthermore, the "entire archipelago" resembled a crossroad where merchants enjoyed the freedom to change (linguistic repertoire and religious affiliation) where they congregated (Ho 2013, 146–147, 151), for example, a certain Pieter Erberveld, whom Feener describes as a "baptised German Siamese Eurasian." Some years after his conversion to Islam in Ayutthaya in 1721, Erberveld and his associates were executed in Batavia, with their heads displayed on pikes. Their crime was distributing "Islamic religious amulets containing Arabic script formulae (*jimat*) and plotting to put an end to VOC control by slaughtering the Christian population of Batavia" (Feener 2010, 495). Feener notes that this convert was one of hundreds of "polyglot, highly mobile and eclectic individuals" who proliferated across Southeast Asia during this period. This case study is noteworthy for a number of reasons. It reminds us that religiously motivated violence

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28) Cited in Baker and Pasuk (2017a, 203–204).

by European converts to Islam is far from a new phenomenon, and also—more important for our purposes—that a wide range of transcultural individuals moved between Ayutthaya and Batavia.

However appreciative we might be of what historians, archaeologists, and linguists have contributed to the picture of Siamese cosmopolitanism, we argue for the need to both expand the units of analysis and pursue comparative approaches to Southeast Asian historiography. We have also demonstrated the utility of Malay studies to Thai studies specialists seeking to make sense of Javanese and Malay agency in Ayutthaya. There have been empirical and conceptual elements to arguments about what the adoption and adaptation of *Panji* reveal about Ayutthaya's linguistic and cultural milieu, as conceptual innovations lacking empirical ballast will not float very long. There are many ways that scholars can respond to forms of ethnolinguistic and ethnoreligious nationalism in both littoral and mainland Southeast Asia. Trawling the archives and conducting fieldwork between Thailand and the Malay World provides plenty of evidence that fostering cosmopolitanism is not only a sign of strength but also good for business.

Acknowledgments

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De-commercialization of the Labor Migration Industry in Malaysia

Choo Chin Low*

This paper focuses on irregularities as a result of the privatization of migrant worker recruitment and the unregulated activities of outsourcing companies, created by the institutionalization of the outsourcing system. Using Malaysia as its case study, this paper examines the strategies utilized by the government to de-commercialize the migration industry by phasing out intermediaries and turning to a government-to-government (G2G) approach. Eliminating the business aspect of the industry signifies a fundamental change in the government's conceptualization, that is, labor migration should be framed as a long-term economic development issue rather than a national security threat. Enforced since 1995 and updated in 2010, the official policy to phase out agents has not eliminated employers' and workers' dependence on intermediaries, a historically rooted practice. The findings show that attempts to de-commercialize recruitment in Malaysia have led to monopolization of the industry and an increase in employers' hiring costs and migrant workers' application processing fees.

Keywords: de-commercialization, G2G, irregularities, labor policy, Malaysia, migration industry

Introduction

This paper defines "de-commercialization" as a systematic attempt by governments to remove the business incentive of the labor migration industry. As shown in the Malaysian case, the government has attempted to discipline the market actors by freezing the outsourcing system, turning to the government-to-government (G2G) approach, digitalizing the recruitment process, replacing agents with government-appointed vendors, strengthening law enforcement on agents, and shifting the liability to employers. Although there is a lot of information on how commercialization has led to irregularities in Malaysia, there is considerably less knowledge about efforts to de-commercialize the industry. The Malaysian case study prompts a few questions: Why have the government's

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de-commercialization initiatives been unsuccessful? What are these initiatives' implications for the market actors? How does the shift to de-commercialization impact the state's gatekeeping strategy? How has irregular migration been beneficial or harmful to the host country?

Malaysia's long-standing battle against irregular migration calls for a thorough analysis of the myriad factors contributing to the persistence of this phenomenon. The Immigration Department has reiterated its pledge to free Malaysia from irregular migrants by intensifying its enforcement operation called Ops Mega 3.0, targeting both errant employers and irregular migrants, beginning July 1, 2018 (*Star Online*, July 21, 2018). The government's continuous operations against employers and irregular migrant workers have prompted extensive criticism for overlooking the role of commercial brokers and intermediaries. In response to Ops Mega 3.0 nationwide raids, over a hundred civil society organizations and migrant groups issued a joint statement "calling for an immediate moratorium" on the operations. According to the joint statement, the affected migrants' status of irregularity was due to the systemic existence of trafficking networks in Malaysia, deception by agents, exploitation by employers, and the complex commercial chains of private outsourcing companies. Becoming undocumented was primarily an outcome of the illegal activities of trafficking syndicates and employment agents (Civil Society Organisations 2018).

After the change in political leadership in May 2018, industry players and trade associations wanted the new Pakatan Harapan government to formulate a clearer foreign worker policy. They maintained that all stakeholders should be involved in devising an all-encompassing policy on foreign worker recruitment. While they agreed that law enforcement was necessary, they reminded the authorities not to neglect the various sectors' needs for foreign workers (Kong 2018). There were at least two irregular workers for every legal worker employed by companies. It was estimated that four million undocumented migrants worked in various industries.

According to employer associations, the high number of irregular foreign workers may be traced to third-party agents who have brought in an excessive supply of such workers. Tracking down irregular migrant workers would cripple the country's economy. Instead of targeting employers and irregular workers, the government is urged to address the root cause of irregularities—the involvement of third-party agents. One hundred members of the Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers signed a petition to the Ministry of Home Affairs (MOHA), urging the government to investigate the operations of government-appointed outsourcing companies, which have failed in their responsibility to ensure "the sound management of imported labour" (Teh and Shah 2018).

Shifting the attention to brokers and outsourcing companies as key players that

produce and sustain irregular migration is significant in three ways. First, it addresses a long-standing problem in the privatization of recruitment and the institutionalization of the outsourcing system. The recruitment model in Malaysia is based on the business-to-business (B2B) approach by third-party agents (recruiters, outsourcers, and labor intermediaries). Due to its business nature, the B2B approach entails high costs as it involves several agents and subagents in countries of origin and destination, generating "gains that mostly favor third-party intermediaries" (World Bank 2015, 56). Various reports document that exorbitant costs charged by third parties incentivize existing documented workers to overstay after the expiration of their work permits in order to pay off their debts and potential workers to join underground employment (SOMO 2013, 6; Verité 2014; ILO 2016, 13). The main question is whether the government is committed to controlling, reducing, and eventually discontinuing the practice of outsourced contract labor that affects workers' rights.

Second, the shift has serious policy implications for migration control strategy. To remove the business incentive, the state has moved toward de-commercialization of the industry by phasing out private agencies and turning to the G2G state-operated mechanism. Eliminating the role of outsourcing companies and intermediaries is outlined in the 11th Malaysia Plan (2016–20) for national economic development as part of the reform to improve the management of foreign workers (Malaysia, Economic Planning Unit 2015, ch. 5). Eliminating the intermediaries' role complements centralizing the regulatory infrastructure and digitalizing recruitment through an online platform. Ideally, this move has allowed the government to regain control over the recruitment process and profits gained while cutting intermediaries and corruption among officers.

Third, with the diminishing role of intermediaries, the state reinforces internal gatekeeping by making employers fully responsible for the recruitment and welfare of their foreign workers under the newly introduced strict liability program. Internal gatekeeping in the labor market and in underground employment is important because irregular migration is driven by both pull and push dynamics involving various migration industry actors (Triandafyllidou and Ambrosini 2011, 272). Irregularities are explained by using different frameworks: the role of intermediaries in the migration industry, restrictive immigration policies, and structural causes related to uneven development between the Global North and the Global South (Castles 2004; Koser 2010).

This paper builds on the literature about the migration industry. John Salt and Jeremy Stein conceptualize "migration as a business." They argue, "The migration business is conceived as a system of institutionalized networks with complex profit and loss accounts, including a set of institutions, agents and individuals each of which stands to make a commercial gain" (Salt and Stein 1997, 467). This conceptualization has signifi-

cant policy implications because it shifts the attention of policy makers to "the institutions and vested interests involved rather than on the migrants themselves" (Salt and Stein 1997, 468). Governments' migration management is part of the business, and their control policies are aimed "at making an investment in managing the business for a worthwhile return" (Salt and Stein 1997, 468). The literature on the migration industry focuses on irregularities created by the commercialization of the business and how various actors profit from the industry. With the increasing commercialization of migration, the industry actors' role is gaining significant traction. Actors include transnational companies providing migration management services, recruitment agencies facilitating access to legal migration, networks set up by migrants themselves, human smuggling networks, non-governmental organizations, and migrant associations (Sørensen and Gammeltoft-Hansen 2013, 9–10). Conceptualization of the migration industry is important in understanding "how migration is fostered, constrained, shaped and assisted" (Cranston *et al.* 2018, 545).

Various forms of transnational migration, including labor migration, involve intermediaries (Fernandez 2013; Groutsis *et al.* 2015; Ambrosini 2017; Harvey *et al.* 2018). In the Asian migration industry, the intermediaries' role has historical roots. Migrants almost never approach the appropriate government agency directly, preferring an informal labor recruiter (field agent) (Lindquist 2010, 125). Examining the Indonesian migration industry, Johan Lindquist (2010) argues that historically specific environments have created the space for informal brokers, who mediate between formal recruitment agencies, bureaucracies, and villages. An informal brokerage system (existing in parallel with formal channels) is necessary in the midst of capitalism, state power, and local economies of trust (Lindquist 2010, 132). In investigating migration regimes across Asia, it is important to include the role of migrant brokers. According to Johan Lindquist, Xiang Biao, and Brenda S. A. Yeoh (2012), examining the brokers' role is an approach used to understand the "black box" of migration. These authors remind readers of the importance of focusing on the migration infrastructure, including institutions, profit-oriented networks, and people, that determines the mobility of migrants: "By focusing on those who move migrants rather than the migrants themselves it is possible to more effectively conceptualise the broader infrastructure that makes mobility possible" (Lindquist *et al.* 2012, 9). Brokers and the infrastructure occupy the "middle space of migration" that makes mobility possible (Lindquist *et al.* 2012, 11).

In their research on low-skilled labor migration from China and Indonesia, Xiang Biao and Johan Lindquist (2014) call for the clear conceptualization of migration beyond state policies, the labor market, or migrant social networks. As labor migration is intensively mediated, focusing on the concept of a commercial infrastructure (institutions,

intermediaries, market actors, and technologies) would unpack the process of mediation (Xiang and Lindquist 2014, 122). Rather than migration being conceptualized as a journey between two places, it is viewed as a "multi-faceted space of mediation occupied by commercial recruitment intermediaries" (Xiang and Lindquist 2014, 142). Migration brokerage is a huge business. Brokers have played a significant role in the middle space of migration, facilitating recruitment, connecting people, establishing networks, and making migration safer. In contrast to the stereotype of unscrupulous brokers, Alice Kern and Ulrike Müller-Böker find that brokerage and recruitment agencies have contributed to securing new means of livelihood for people and fostering the development of countries (Kern and Müller-Böker 2015, 158).

Moving beyond contemporary debates in migration studies, this paper surveys the development of the government's attempt to de-commercialize the migration industry, using Malaysia as the case study. First, it investigates how the institutionalization of the outsourcing system has led to irregularities, as well as highlights the role of the migration industry. Second, the paper examines the government's initiatives to phase out intermediaries and to regain control of the process under a state-operated mechanism, considering the challenges encountered. Finally, it analyzes the implications of the state's migration policies for the nation.

The de-commercialization approach of the labor migration industry is not unique to Malaysia. In the Asian context, the market-driven recruitment system has been gradually replaced by a government-regulated system. Other labor-receiving countries have attempted to eliminate private agents from the recruitment process, such as South Korea implementing the Employment Permit System (Vandenberg 2015, 2; Migrant Forum in Asia 2017, 2–3). Applying the working framework in the Malaysian case, this article seeks to contribute to a better understanding of Malaysia's migration industry. Despite efforts to de-commercialize the industry, the initiatives have resulted in business monopolization by some authorized companies and an increase in employers' hiring costs and migrant workers' application processing fees. The analysis draws on Hansard documents (between 2005 and 2017), legislation, official reports by migrant groups, press releases, English-language newspaper articles, and secondary literature.

Literature Review

Much of the literature on Malaysia's migration industry is highly critical of the development of the state-sponsored outsourcing system. Migration scholars suggest that irregularities in Malaysia are created by the privatization of recruitment. The business aspect

is reinforced at the institutional level through the institutionalization of the outsourcing system. In examining the migration industry in the Indonesia-Malaysia corridor, Ernst Spaan and Ton van Naerssen find that industry actors—whether formal or informal—are thriving due to the changing context of government policies (Spaan and van Naerssen 2018, 680). The government has delegated some of its immigration functions to non-state actors, creating much space for licensed recruitment agencies in labor migration management. The migration industry system consists of formal, licensed recruitment companies and informal networks, both of which are intertwined. The thriving of informal migration industry networks is attributed to the weak regulatory framework (Spaan and van Naerssen 2018, 690–691). Migration industry actors are incorporated by the Malaysian state in its immigration management as it has outsourced some immigration functions to private actors. In their work on Burmese labor migration to Malaysia, Anja Franck, Emanuelle Brandström Arellano, and Joseph Trawicki Anderson show that private actors are also important to the migrants themselves as "means to increase their room to maneuver during the migration process" (Franck *et al.* 2018, 55).

Sidney Jones convincingly shows how various actors in the Indonesian-Malaysian migration industry have profited from the recruitment process, ranging from the lucrative people-smuggling businesses, the profitable black market document industry, and corruption in both countries to employers hiring undocumented workers (Jones 2000, 35, 89). Informal recruitment (*taikong*) with the help of local agents is largely responsible for clandestine entries and the smuggling of undocumented workers (Kassim 1997, 57). The persistence of underground employment is due to the business aspect of the industry: "Economically, illegal entry and recruitment of foreign labour generate a lot of business for traffickers, landlords, exploitative employers, and suppliers of false documents" (Kassim 1997, 67). Azizah Kassim attributes this phenomenon to the ineffective enforcement of laws against Malaysian citizens' harboring and employment of undocumented migrants (Kassim 1997, 76). Market actors, including agents and outsourcing companies, are part of an integrated migration system. Alice Nah blames the irregularity on "the lack of attention to the institutions, processes and actions that stimulate irregular migration" (Nah 2012, 490).

The severe labor shortage in certain industries, the economic disparities between Malaysia and the countries of origin, the tradition of travel in the Malay Archipelago, and geographic proximity have all explained the emergence of formal and informal recruitment agencies. According to Blanca Garcés-Mascareñas, "their presence must be understood not only as a way of channeling migration flows, but also as a mechanism that promotes them" (Garcés-Mascareñas 2012, 49–50). The privatization of recruitment has a twofold effect: (1) increasing the cost of legal migration, thus making the legal channel

an unattractive option; and (2) contributing to the incidence of irregularities. Upon entry into Malaysia, many legal migrants join the ranks of illegality due to various malpractices of recruitment agencies, such as recruiting without definite employment and bringing in workers under forged permits (Garcés-Mascareñas 2012, 72–73).

The existence of labor brokerage in Malaysia may be traced to the British colonial era. The relationship between the colonial state (as the regulatory agency), labor brokers, and employers in the migration infrastructure was well established in the historical context. The British colonial power created migration corridors across Malaya, India, and China, encouraging labor mobility in Southeast Asia (Kaur 2012, 225–226). Private labor brokers played an important role in recruiting Indian plantation workers under the colonial recruitment methods, comprising the indenture system and the Kangani system. Under the indenture method, employers used labor recruitment firms in India (Kaur 2012, 232). Meanwhile, the Kangani system utilized existing plantation workers as brokers to recruit laborers from their villages in India. Both methods were phased out in 1910 and 1938, respectively, as the state became the broker for Indian labor recruitment as well as a regulatory agency (Kaur 2012, 233–235). Similarly, private labor brokers played a major role in Chinese labor migration through a "kinship-based" migration network in China and the contract-based credit-ticket network in British Malaya. Reports of laborer abuse attributed to the credit-ticket system for Chinese labor recruitment led to its abolition in 1914 (Kaur 2012, 239–241).

Despite the British ban on the contract-based labor system, the intermediaries' role continued to flourish after Malaysia was granted national independence, corresponding to the growth of the country's migration industry. Malaysia's Private Employment Agencies Act of 1981 formalized the private labor brokers' function of recruiting foreign labor (Kaur 2012, 244–247). Under the guest worker program and offshore recruitment procedures, foreign labor recruitment was inadequately monitored, providing fertile ground for commercial broker networks to bring in an excessive labor supply. The practice of outsourced labor led to the commercialization of the industry, with legal migrants and locals entering the migration industry market and becoming recruitment agents themselves. Contemporary legal migrants' involvement in the underground migration industry is somewhat reminiscent of the practice of the colonial Kangani system and the credit-ticket system, whereby migrants themselves recruited workers for plantations and mines through their personal networks. The situation illustrates the entrenchment of migrant networks in the recruitment system.

Legal foreign workers are joining the underground migration industry by setting up illegal businesses, thus abusing their work permits. Illegal businesses operated by immigrants are swelling in the major central business district areas in Kuala Lumpur. Malay-

sian citizens sublet their licenses by charging a monthly fee, ranging from MYR1,000 to MYR2,000, whereas a license usually costs MYR100 to MYR150. Some foreigners, especially Bangladeshis and Indians, have obtained business licenses by marrying local women. Illegal businesses have negative consequences on Malaysia's economy because foreigners do not pay taxes, creating unfair competition for Malaysians, and Malaysia suffers from monetary outflow through increased foreign remittances annually (Bavani 2017).

Legally hired immigrants are not allowed to conduct business on behalf of companies, become business owners, or have their own business premises or business entities that are against Malaysian laws. The reality is that business owners are undocumented immigrants who have stayed and worked illegally in the country for a long period. These undocumented foreign workers (Pendatang Asing Tanpa Izin) have gradually become illegal employers (Majikan Asing Tanpa Izin).

This case highlights three implications. The first involves Malaysian citizens who have hired and harbored irregular migrants. The increased number of these underground businesses is attributed to Malaysian citizens who are the license holders of the business premises. Second, the monopolization of the businesses has affected local traders. Third, illegal businesses are often related to other illegal activities, such as license abuse, illegal utility connections, premises misused for vice-related activities, and tax avoidance (Shah 2018). The extent to which these business operations occur indicates the practice of contracting marriages for business purposes. The Immigration Department has identified four hundred Pakistani men who have married local women in the state of Kelantan in order to stay longer and operate businesses in Malaysia. Most of the Pakistan nationals operate small retail stores by securing business licenses through their local spouses who are double their age (Free Malaysia Today 2019).

The influx of migrant workers is attributed to the high reliance on them to take low- and medium-skilled jobs, and the employers' interest is a force to be reckoned with. There were 1,758,238 registered foreign workers in the country as of February 28, 2018, with the majority coming from Indonesia (705,154 or 40.11 percent), followed by Nepal (382,651 or 21.76 percent), Bangladesh (268,050 or 15.25 percent), India (113,891 or 6.48 percent), and Myanmar (107,555 or 6.12 percent) (Table 1). Six sectors, comprising one informal (employing foreign maids) and five formal sectors (construction, manufacturing, services, plantations, and agriculture), are allowed to employ foreign workers. The 15 source countries that are permitted to supply workers to Malaysia are Indonesia, Bangladesh, Nepal, Myanmar, India, Vietnam, the Philippines, Pakistan, Thailand, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Laos, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan. The employment period is five years + five years for the five formal sectors. For the informal sector, foreign

Table 1 Statistics of Foreign Workers by Nationality and Sector as of February 28, 2018

No.	Nationality	Manufacturing		Construction		Plantations		Services		Agriculture		Maids		Total		Grand Total	Percent (%)
		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F		
1	Indonesia	33,380	97,660	157,453	13,527	173,146	32,862	21,158	14,809	57,005	16,479	498	87,177	442,640	262,514	705,154	40.11
2	Nepal	269,690	11,130	9,085	8	2,983	5	78,574	195	10,626	297	28	30	370,986	11,665	382,651	21.76
3	Bangladesh	118,079	309	82,751	43	22,606	7	31,420	85	12,598	28	35	89	267,489	561	268,050	15.25
4	India	2,492	21	10,062	38	21,265	216	48,736	190	29,132	821	40	878	111,727	2,164	113,891	6.48
5	Myanmar	62,965	15,746	11,578	478	896	181	10,587	1,628	2,802	613	8	73	88,836	18,719	107,555	6.12
6	Pakistan	3,470	3	23,797	20	5,702	9	6,076	55	17,486	61	3	37	56,534	185	56,719	3.23
7	Philippines	3,751	531	3,475	102	3,037	1,036	3,428	1,685	2,923	1,093	91	33,250	16,705	37,697	54,402	3.09
8	Vietnam	6,513	11,294	3,773	186	16	17	664	674	168	199	5	393	11,139	12,763	23,902	1.36
9	China	1,239	84	12,330	463	8	6	2,743	4,235	71	9	1	76	16,392	4,873	21,265	1.21
10	Thailand	161	63	1,068	7	491	230	5,912	5,340	1,270	681	5	287	8,907	6,608	15,515	0.88
11	Sri Lanka	2,166	981	157	9	197	16	788	28	128	27	11	621	3,447	1,682	5,129	0.29
12	Cambodia	537	850	84	26	60	34	77	567	157	43	2	1,535	917	3,055	3,972	0.23
13	Laos	4	3	1	0	0	1	3	4	1	0	1	15	10	23	33	0
	Total	504,447	138,675	315,614	14,907	230,407	34,620	210,166	29,495	134,367	20,351	728	124,461	1,395,729	362,509	1,758,238	100
	Grand Total	643,122		330,521		265,027		239,661		154,718		125,189		1,758,238			
	Percent (%)	36.58		18.8		15.07		13.63		8.8		7.12		100			

Source: Malaysia, Ministry of Home Affairs (2018a).

maids have no fixed employment period. The permitted age range of foreign workers is between 18 and 45 years (Malaysia, Ministry of Home Affairs 2019). As of February 28, 2018, foreign workers constituted a large share of the total employment in manufacturing (36.58 percent), followed by construction (18.8 percent), plantations (15.07 percent), services (13.63 percent), agriculture (8.8 percent), and domestic help (7.12 percent) (Table 2). Foreign workers were highly concentrated in Selangor (30 percent), followed by Johor (17.53 percent), Kuala Lumpur Federal Territory (14.57 percent), Penang (7.4 percent), Sabah (7.2 percent), and Sarawak (7.19 percent) (Table 2). In 2017, foreign workers represented around 15.5 percent of all employed persons in Malaysia (Khazanah Research Institute 2018, 120). The high dependence on foreign labor indicates the need for a fundamental reconceptualization of migrant labor in the policy debate by viewing labor migration as a long-term development issue rather than a security concern. Migrant labor management has sidelined the issues of third parties' involvement and foreign workers' exploitation, which have perpetuated the migration industry (Lee 2017, 558).

Scholars suggest that illegality is the consequence of weak gatekeeping on the labor market front. In the Malaysian context, the gatekeeping function is rather weak in its preventive efforts, especially in labor market checks. Private agents have been able to bring in an excessive number of foreign workers, mainly due to the lack of a comprehensive assessment of labor market demand. There are no guidelines for determining the exact quotas of foreign workers needed for each industry. The quota figures are merely "guesstimates" (Abella and Martin 2016, 99). The inadequacy on the labor market front may be explained by the state's conceptualization of migration as a "security problem that has needed a security response from the state apparatus" rather than an economic issue (Arifianto 2009, 623). According to Malaysian political discourse, migration is conceptualized as securitization. Migration is viewed as an issue of national security rather than as an industry, resulting in the consolidation of the state's penalty regime against undocumented migrants (Liow 2003, 50). This contradiction is reflected in the regulatory mechanism itself: the MOHA rather than the Ministry of Human Resources (MOHR) is tasked with policy making on labor migration, although both institutions are involved in labor migration. Foreign workers are perceived as potential national security threats; thus, the management of foreign labor has been placed under the jurisdiction of the MOHA (ILO 2016, 11). This situation has raised questions over who the gatekeeper is and where the gatekeeping occurs.

Illegality is also the outcome of unregulated gatekeeping by employers and the legal system. Many foreigners enter the country as documented workers but later become undocumented due to the lack of redress. There is no channel for complaints for these foreign workers when they face pressure from their employers who do not comply with

Table 2 Statistics of Foreign Workers by State and Sector as of February 28, 2018

No.	State	Manufacturing		Construction		Plantations		Services		Agriculture		Maids		Total		Grand Total	Percent (%)
		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F		
1	Selangor	174,586	33,060	109,301	6,371	29,394	568	82,946	8,340	29,374	2,588	268	50,652	425,869	101,579	527,448	30
2	Johor	139,356	31,479	45,102	1,158	20,406	1,025	23,622	2,690	30,298	2,369	26	10,659	258,810	49,380	308,190	17.53
3	Kuala Lumpur Federal Territory	21,752	2,969	89,424	4,144	36,304	568	49,667	5,058	16,904	1,036	253	28,047	214,304	41,822	256,126	14.57
4	Penang	48,989	38,073	16,160	634	445	25	13,714	1,566	2,897	103	9	7,461	82,214	47,862	130,076	7.4
5	Sabah	7,518	3,497	5,854	119	50,671	14,191	4,165	2,074	19,042	11,171	11	8,220	87,261	39,272	126,533	7.2
6	Sarawak	21,707	6,014	19,466	979	41,731	16,675	5,285	4,675	5,851	810	18	3,178	94,058	32,331	126,389	7.19
7	Perak	31,401	8,844	5,978	375	16,090	282	6,335	806	6,695	329	12	4,301	66,511	14,937	81,448	4.63
8	Negeri Sembilan	18,409	3,747	5,517	316	5,511	232	7,620	716	4,447	300	21	2,463	41,525	7,774	49,299	2.8
9	Malacca	16,479	6,817	8,527	423	2,153	69	5,422	906	5,005	231	8	2,744	37,594	11,190	48,784	2.77
10	Pahang	4,873	400	3,637	169	13,855	486	3,680	636	10,560	567	59	1,977	36,664	4,235	40,899	2.33
11	Kedah	16,219	3,214	4,345	143	1,653	111	4,005	773	1,694	586	13	1,873	27,929	6,700	34,629	1.97
12	Terengganu	949	17	895	18	3,951	14	1,267	483	162	25	5	649	7,229	1,206	8,435	0.48
13	Putrajaya Federal Territory	8	5	544	19	5,082	142	966	54	529	9	5	511	7,134	740	7,874	0.45
14	Kelantan	1,740	152	272	11	2,909	117	470	141	180	24	17	836	5,588	1,281	6,869	0.39
15	Perlis	445	379	128	10	252	115	566	394	375	130	2	160	1,768	1,188	2,956	0.17
16	Labuan Federal Territory	16	8	464	18	0	0	436	183	354	73	1	730	1,271	1,012	2,283	0.13
	Total	504,447	138,675	315,614	14,907	230,407	34,620	210,166	29,495	134,367	20,351	728	124,461	1,395,729	362,509	1,758,238	100
	Grand Total	643,122		330,521		265,027		239,661		154,718		125,189		1,758,238			
	Percent (%)	36.58		18.8		15.07		13.63		8.8		7.12		100			

Source: Malaysia, Ministry of Home Affairs (2018b).

all the conditions stipulated in their contracts and do not pay them salaries. Employers can dismiss workers, terminate their contracts, take "check-out memos" from the Immigration Office, and book tickets for them to return to their home countries. Without any opportunity to claim their rights, terminated foreign workers either resort to the black market (refusing to return without settling their debts) or return to their home countries with debt burdens (Malaysia 2015c, 26–27). Although laws are provided for the Labor Court and Industrial Court, foreign workers have no right to redress. Employers can issue check-out memos and get away with it. The MOHA has been urged to empower avenues for foreign workers to defend themselves and their right to redress in cases of disputes with their employers (Malaysia 2015c, 28). The Immigration Act, Section 55B, states that an employer hiring five unauthorized foreign workers may be imprisoned for a term between six months and five years and whipped a maximum of six strokes (Malaysia 2006). Employers have the perception that they can get away with hiring undocumented workers. According to the Malaysian Employers Federation, imposing heavy penalties will not deter small businesses from hiring foreigners. There is always a ready supply of undocumented workers, and employers are willing to take chances in hiring them to remain competitive (Shurentheran 2017).

The overflow of undocumented workers is caused by the privatization of recruitment. According to MP Michael Jeyakumar Devaraj, "It's the business aspect of it that lets a lot of unscrupulous agents who make promises to bring people in and then let them loose in the sense that they can't go back because of their debts" (Abu Bakar 2017). Employers are often depicted as being "forced" to hire from the readily available pool of undocumented immigrants in order to remain competitive. If employers hire local workers and pay them minimum wages in accordance with the law, they cannot compete with their peers who hire undocumented workers. Partly due to weakness in the law enforcement on employers and partly due to over-recruitment by employment agencies, the cycle continues (Abu Bakar 2017). Permits granted to outsourcing companies without adequate control lead to a "race to the bottom," in which firms compete against one another by cutting costs as much as possible and paying the lowest wages to remain competitive. The government has thus been urged to revert to a state-operated mechanism (Malaysia 2014, 79–80).

The flow of irregular migrants have deeply impacted the wages and job opportunities of local workers. The labor market structure favors hiring undocumented workers in the very first place, discriminating against Malaysian workers. Employing local workers is more expensive because employers have to pay them the minimum wage of MYR1,000 per month (as of July 2016) and 13 percent of the Employees' Provident Fund contribution. For foreign workers, the levy is deducted from their salaries, as stipulated in their

contracts. Foreign workers are silent if they are not paid the 1.5 overtime rate. The ready supply of foreign workers and the labor market structure explain employers' reluctance to hire local workers. To eliminate the wage inequality, the costs of employing foreign and local workers must be equal (Malaysia 2015d, 61–62). As pointed out by MP Devaraj, an analysis of the problem of irregularities should consider the issue of who benefits and who suffers from the arrival of foreign workers. Those who gain from the presence of foreign workers are employers, agents, labor contractors, and perhaps corrupt immigration officers who receive high commissions. The top 10 percent (T10) have profited from this situation, while foreign workers and the lower income group or the bottom 40 percent (B40) of Malaysian households have suffered the consequences. Approximately 75 percent of the B40 consists of the Malay community (Malaysia 2015c, 27–28).

Although much has been written regarding how commercialization of the migration industry has led to irregularities in Malaysia, there is considerably less information about efforts to de-commercialize the industry. Building on the above literature, this paper discusses shifts in government policy since the first decade of the twenty-first century to remove the industry's business incentive. Next, this paper explains a few government initiatives for de-commercialization, including freezing the outsourcing system, turning to the G2G approach, digitalizing the recruitment process, changing the gatekeeper orientation, replacing agents with government-appointed vendors, strengthening law enforcement on agents, and renegotiating memorandums of understanding (MoUs) with labor-supplying countries in ASEAN.

De-commercialization of the Migration Industry in Malaysia

Freezing the Outsourcing System and the Setback
The government has attempted to abolish the use of outsourcing agents throughout the history of Malaysia's migration regime. In 1995 the government made the radical move to ban agencies from bringing in foreign workers (except domestic workers) and to reduce the number of licensed Malaysian recruiting agencies (169 at the time). This policy paralleled the Indonesian Ministry of Manpower's policy of reducing its licensed recruiting agencies (Jones 2000, 29). The state became the sole institution authorized to recruit. In 1995 a Special Task Force on Foreign Labour was set up in the MOHA as the sole agency responsible for foreign labor recruitment. This was tantamount to establishing the state's direct management of foreign worker recruitment, taking over the regulatory functions from licensed employment agencies. During this period, the Immigration

Department's function was expanded to deal with policy making on foreign labor recruitment (Kaur 2012, 248–249). The G2G model was implemented when recruitment was centralized in the country. A G2G agreement was made with Indonesia. A subsidiary company (Peti Bijak) was created in Indonesia. However, all the G2G efforts eventually failed. The Malaysian government was forced to accept that the recruitment industry involving private employment agencies (PEAs) was a multimillion-ringgit business. It was difficult to control the industry (Malaysia 2005, 20).

As a result, the Private Employment Agencies Act of 1981 was amended in 2005, re-legalizing recruitment agencies and institutionalizing an outsourcing system. The previous policy of de-recognizing private agencies did not solve the problems with foreign workers as employers continued to use their services. It was even more difficult to control the activities of private agencies due to their lack of recognition. Under this system, outsourcing companies were the legal employers of migrant workers (Garcés-Mascareñas 2012, 71). However, both employers and outsourcing companies tended to avoid fulfilling their responsibilities to foreign workers. This situation compelled the state to revert to the G2G system, so that employers would be accountable. In 2010 the government decided to phase out outsourcing firms in line with its initiatives to replace intermediaries with G2G agreements. No new licenses were granted to outsourcing companies; the number of outsourcing agents was thus controlled (World Bank 2015, 68). The government decided that assessing the performance of the 276 outsourcing companies would be necessary. It could no longer allow profit-oriented outsourcing companies' disregard for their social responsibility, causing a negative impact on national security and public order. Controlling outsourcing agency activities would be essential to ensure that these companies would not worsen the situation with an excessive supply of foreign workers (Malaysia 2010, 33).

Though the outsourcing system was terminated, the practice of outsourcing workers continued in another form. The government institutionalized its outsourcing system when it amended the Employment Act of 1955 in 2012. This landmark amendment blurred the legal employment relationship between employers and workers by introducing the concept of a "contractor for labor." A drawback of the concept was the distancing of employers from any liability for migrant workers (Devadason and Chan 2014, 27; World Bank 2015, 56). Contractors for labor included outsourcing agents, brokers, PEAs, and other third parties that supplied outsourced workers to employers (principals of workplaces). Outsourced workers were legally not employees of the principal of a workplace. The amendment did not "advocate a permanent direct employment relationship between employers and workers" (Syed Mohamud 2012). Moreover, workers had no right to be members of a trade union and hence were unable to benefit from collective agreements.

For the Malaysian Trade Union Congress, PEAs could still supply workers, but these workers had to be hired as employees of the workplace with similar benefits (Syed Mohamud 2012). Principal employers left the responsibility to determine contract workers' terms and conditions of employment to the contractors as long as their demand for labor was met. Based on a survey conducted on employers, contractors, and contract workers in 1993–94, Lee Kiong Hock and Alagandram Sivananthiran concluded that less than 10 percent of the contractors provided welfare benefits to contract workers (Lee and Sivananthiran 1996, 80–82). There were no written contracts, and contract workers were denied most of the benefits stipulated under labor laws (Lee and Sivananthiran 1996, 89).

During the second and third readings of the Employment (Amendment) Bill it was widely criticized, mainly due to its serious implications for workers' rights, particularly workers employed by contractors for labor. There were 277 outsourcing companies, and outsourced workers were not limited to foreign workers but included local ones. First, there was no security of tenure, a key principle of the International Labour Organization (ILO). This amendment elicited insecurity because of the uncertainty in the contract workers' future employment prospects. Security of tenure ensured the existence of protection. Second, there was a proprietary right to jobs; workers could not be dismissed for no valid reason. However, the amendment triggered uncertainty because factory owners were not the employers (Malaysia 2011b, 97). Most important, the introduction of contractors for labor brought back the Kangani system used during the British colonial era. The bill legalized the old system that had been banned by the British colonial power under the 1955 Employment Act. The original 1955 Employment Act issued by the British consisted of two important principles—security of tenure and proprietary right to the job. However, the amended act legalized the practice in which workers could be employed by a contractor for labor and be brought to a factory whose owner was not the employer. Their condition was uncertain. Their fate was uncertain (Malaysia 2011b, 98). In terms of protecting foreign workers' rights, the legislation would be a black mark in Malaysia's labor history. The parliament brought back the long-abolished system by issuing the amended act (Malaysia 2011b, 99).

There were perceptions that the responsible ministry had transferred its responsibility to outsourced companies, disregarding migrants' protection and welfare. The principal company had no responsibilities to the workers, was not liable to them, and in fact was not their employer. A parliamentarian asked, "I would like to ask the Minister how the contract of service can be established as between the contractor of labor and workers when the contractor of labor is not the owner operator" (Malaysia 2011b, 112). The Employment (Amendment) Act of 2012 framed foreign worker recruitment as a busi-

ness. Migration has become a lucrative industry; people can make profits from recruiting
workers. The contractor system has undermined the protection of workers and is regarded
as anti-labor legislation (Malaysia 2011b, 110). The issue of the outsourcing system
having been created to generate profit for certain parties has been brought to the forefront
of parliamentary debates:

> It in fact showed we are allowing foreign workers to work, not with the intention to help the
> economy but as a business. Many of the outsourcing companies that were allowed to bring foreign
> workers are the cronies of politicians. It's all licensing to profit. (Malaysia 2016b, 92)

The cases of Bangladesh and Nepal, as discussed in the next section, show the limitations
of the privatization of recruitment. Under the private management of Bangladeshi work-
ers in 2007–8, unscrupulous agents' recruitment malpractices—including corruption,
joblessness, low wages, non-payment, and poor living conditions—resulted in an exces-
sive number of Bangladeshi workers being sent to Malaysia. Many ended up jobless or
in unpaid short-term jobs and eventually returned home. In 2009 Malaysia canceled
55,000 visas and imposed a four-year ban on recruitment from Bangladesh. Concern over
maltreatment by Malaysian employers prompted the Bangladeshi government to initiate
the G2G mechanism (Palma 2015; Tusher 2016).

The Malaysian government failed to equip itself with the necessary capability to
control foreign workers from Indonesia through G2G. Leaving the problem unsolved,
the Malaysian government adopted the G2G approach with Bangladesh and Nepal.

Turning to G2G Bilateralism

The G2G recruitment arrangement with countries of origin eliminated the involvement
of private agencies. The MoU signed by Malaysia and Bangladesh in 2012 was significant
in two aspects—it removed the involvement of private agencies and included the Online
Application for Employment of Foreign Workers (Malaysian acronym SPPA), thereby
eliminating the workers' incentive to overstay in order to settle their debts (ILO 2016,
15–16). The SPPA was introduced in February 2017. The MoU stipulated that the entry
of Bangladeshi workers was allowed only through G2G mechanisms. The admission
process was approved by the respective government agencies in both countries and did
not involve third parties. Job seekers underwent health screening for 18 types of dis-
eases, a security screening process, and induction training to ensure that only candidates
who were qualified and met the set criteria were shortlisted to be sent to Malaysia.
Similarly, the Malaysian government implemented strict screening of employers applying
to hire workers. The government rejected some plantation companies for not complying
with the minimum wage requirement and the provision of standard homes, as well as

those with records of law violations (Malaysia 2013, 1–2).

However, the G2G effort was rendered ineffective by the lobbying of private sector agents in Malaysia because it deprived them of millions of taka and ringgit that they were earning through the B2B system. Only ten thousand Bangladeshi workers were hired, although Malaysia had a target of recruiting thirty thousand. The G2G model was unpopular among agents and employers, who preferred hiring through the private sector. This state of affairs pointed out "the inefficiency of the government in handling the business" (Palma 2015). The failure of the G2G approach led both governments to set up the G2G Plus deal to recruit 1.5 million workers over the next three years, replacing the G2G agreement signed for 2012–14. Private firms were allowed to send workers to Malaysia through the government arrangement under the G2G Plus deal signed in 2016. Employers were held responsible for workers' security deposits, levies, visa fees, and health and compensation insurance, in addition to the MYR1,985 expatriation cost for each worker (Carvalho 2016).

The issue of bringing 1.5 million Bangladeshis into the country was debatable. The (mis)perception was that the government was not serious about eliminating irregular immigration because it was about the money trail. Besides the money chain, some parties benefited from the involvement of syndicates in the transnational border crossing. According to the government, these syndicates tried to outsmart law enforcement, and it was unfair to allege officers' involvement. As a result of the widespread misconception, the government introduced the online application system to remove the roles of agents and syndicates (Malaysia 2015d, 56). A parliamentarian pointed out, "The entry of foreign workers is a profitable business. Bringing in foreign workers, 1.5 million from Bangladesh workers with MYR3,000 per head, how much profit is there? It is deemed as 'human trafficking,' but it is a legal trading" (Malaysia 2015d, 59). For the MOHA, the purpose behind hiring 1.5 million workers was to enable the deportation of the existing undocumented workers. The request for Bangladeshi workers came from the employers' associations themselves. Bangladeshi workers were preferred because they were deemed more trustworthy than other foreign workers (Malaysia 2015d, 59).

Another related matter was the MOHA's questionable adeptness in handling the issue of foreign worker recruitment. According to then Human Resources Minister Richard Riot, only 2,948 workers were hired through the G2G in 2015. In 2016 the number dropped to seven persons under the G2G Plus mechanism, reflecting the ineptitude of the system. The MOHR has been urging the government to centralize the recruitment and employment of foreign workers (currently under the jurisdiction of the MOHA) under the MOHR. The MOHR believes that, as the ministry responsible for the workforce, it should take the lead in employment affairs. The task should not be divided

between these two ministries, in order to facilitate enforcement and fulfillment of access to labor market needs (Malaysia 2017a, 55–56).

Most important, private recruitment agencies perceived the G2G Plus deal as a form of business monopolization by a Malaysian private company. The agencies represented by the Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies (Baira) protested to Bangladesh's prime minister because the deal effectively eliminated all Baira members from the recruitment business, while allowing the Malaysian syndicate to generate profits with its affiliated companies. The monopolization in the Malaysian case was unique as there was no foreign company monopolization in the other 139 countries in which Baira was involved (*Star Online*, February 18, 2016). The concerns over Malaysia's possible business monopolization were justified. Under the G2G Plus deal, hiring was done online through the SPPA, which referred employers to 10 companies that had been designated as sole authorized agents, closing the door to about 1,500 recruitment agents in Bangladesh. Bestinet Sdn Bhd, a private company that operated the SPPA, functioned as the service provider for the distribution of workers to their employers via the 10 companies. A local news media company, *Star Online*, reported the involvement of a human trafficking syndicate that earned MYR2 billion through the recruitment of Bangladeshi workers. The industry involved a multitude of intermediaries. Of the MYR20,000 paid by each worker, MYR2,500 was pocketed by a subagent who was connected to another subagent from the worker's village, who also took MYR2,500; one of the 10 companies then charged MYR10,000, and MYR3,000 was given to a local Malaysian agent. The whole employment process cost only MYR2,000 (Perumal 2018a).

In June 2018 the new Malaysian government suspended the G2G Plus deal along with the 10 authorized companies for recruiting Bangladeshi workers. The new human resources minister, M. Kulasegaran, announced the suspension pending a full investigation. The entire recruitment process under the G2G Plus deal was perceived as a "business aimed at benefiting certain individuals," and the process was "a total mess" (*Star Online*, June 22, 2018). The SPPA was also suspended effective September 1, 2018. The decision broke the monopoly of the 10 authorized companies, offering relief for 1,500 recruitment agencies in Bangladesh, and Malaysian employers were no longer required to pay MYR305 as the SPPA registration fee (Perumal 2018d).

Similar to the Bangladeshi case, the recruitment of Nepalese workers was beleaguered by the problem of monopolization, in addition to red tape and bureaucracy. The recruitment mechanism was overly complex, involving various government-appointed private agencies charging high fees as part of the visa requirements. In May 2018, Nepal barred its workers from going to Malaysia due to the exorbitant visa fees. The temporary moratorium resulted in fifteen thousand to twenty thousand workers being left in limbo.

The new Nepalese government demanded the revocation of private companies, streamlining the existing complex mechanism, and reducing visa costs (*New Straits Times*, August 2, 2018). Due to a private company's (Bestinet Sdn Bhd) virtual monopolization of the processing of Nepalese applicants' work visas, other companies were not allowed in the business. Malaysia has been highly dependent on Gurkhas (native soldiers) from Nepal to work in the security line. In 2018, of the approximately half a million Nepalese workers in Malaysia, 150,000 were hired as security guards (Perumal 2018b). As a result of the controversy surrounding Bestinet's monopolization, the company was suspended by the Malaysian government in August 2018, pending a new MoU with Nepal. Malaysia would sign a new G2G agreement with Nepal, based on the model used with Bangladesh (*New Straits Times*, August 14, 2018). The new Pakatan Harapan government would scrap the G2G Plus deal, formulated by the previous Barisan Nasional government, and revert to direct recruitment based on the G2G agreement without any intermediaries (*Star Online*, July 29, 2018).

Centralization of recruitment under a sole private agency, as in the cases of Bangladesh and Nepal, showed that it was problematic to the source countries. It created "a monopolistic situation," prevented open competition, and weakened labor relations with the source countries (Rahim 2018a). Outsourcing companies had not been allowed to manage foreign workers since 2010, and many such companies closed their businesses. The Malaysian Association of Suppliers and Employees Management of Foreign Workers, comprising 149 licensed outsourcing companies whose market opportunity had been closed by the previous government, hoped that the Pakatan Harapan government would allow open competition and engage the expertise, capability, and experience of outsourcing companies (Perumal 2018c).

In October 2018 the new Pakatan Harapan government announced the abolition of the outsourcing of foreign worker recruitment effective March 31, 2019. In the government efforts to curb human trafficking and workers' exploitation, intermediaries and agents would no longer be allowed to hire workers. The joint committee from the Home Ministry and the MOHR decided that the task of foreign worker recruitment, previously handled by about a hundred outsourcing agencies, would be taken over by the MOHR (Zainal 2019).

Digitalizing the Recruitment and Permit Renewal Process
Another initiative taken to phase out agents was replacing the manual process conducted at the immigration counters with an online platform. The shift to digitalization was perceived as an anti-corruption, agent-free, and cost-effective policy. Digitalizing some immigration functions was an important milestone toward the de-commercialization of

the industry by gradually diminishing the agents' role. The bureaucracy involved in the manual application allowed agents to act as intermediaries, enabling them to earn huge profits. Throughout Malaysia, the process could be conducted only at the immigration headquarters, Putrajaya. Employers who abided by the law were forced to line up as early as 3 a.m. to apply for foreign workers' permits at Putrajaya. After the daily quota was filled, those still in line had to return the next day. The government was thus urged to change the application process to an online system (Malaysia 2016d, 51). More employers were hiring workers without permits because of the rigidity of the manual system. When the employers did not renew expired permits, their workers became overstaying aliens. As penalties, the law stipulated a fine of up to MYR10,000, six months in jail, and whipping—but not all were applicable. It had become a state of affairs "that [indicated a] total collapse of the law" (Malaysia 2016c, 34–35).

The Foreign Workers Centralised Management System (FWCMS) was introduced on June 15, 2015 to process applications for foreign worker visas and health status clearances. The Malaysian Immigration Department's move toward a fully electronic system aimed to improve efficiency in visa applications while eliminating intermediaries and hidden charges. The use of the eVDR (visa with a reference) became compulsory for foreign worker visa applications, including the purchase of insurance policies. Foreign workers were required to undergo health screenings in registered clinics equipped with the BioMedical system to eliminate incidents of fraud. After the implementation of the new system, the Immigration Department no longer accepted manual applications (Zolkepli 2015).

The online renewal of work permits represents another reform toward eliminating intermediaries. Since 2015 the renewal of the foreign worker permit, called the Temporary Employment Visit Pass (Malaysian acronym PLKS), has been done online through a government-appointed private company, MyEG Services Bhd (My Electronic Government). The reform aims to address the issues of misappropriation and negative perceptions about the Malaysian Immigration Department, thus improving the quality of service delivery and effectively reducing congestion in the immigration office by 50 percent. Under the manual process, there were many allegations about officials and private agents exploiting the system. Employers paid agents between MYR300 and MYR500 for each worker, and these costs would subsequently be passed on to the workers. Thus, the new system prevents agents (both authorized and unauthorized) from extorting illegal commissions from employers and has diminished the allegations about immigration officers' collusion with these agents (Malaysia 2015a, 4–5).

Moving forward, the government also introduced three online application systems for foreign workers on April 1, 2017 to ensure that both employers and foreign workers

would no longer be cheated by third-party agents. The three online recruitment systems are the Integrated Foreign Workers Management System (ePPAx), SPPA, and MYXpats for expatriates. Each company needs to digitalize its information in the system, replacing the paperwork. The advantages include reduced costs, more convenience, and greater confidentiality. The whole recruitment process is now digitalized, from application to permit renewal and repatriation (Moh 2017). The SPPA system is for Bangladeshi workers only, while ePPAx is used for foreign workers from all other source countries. The ruling is mandatory for foreign workers in formal sectors (manufacturing, construction, services, plantations, and agriculture) but not in the informal sector (employing foreign maids). Digitalization eliminates the involvement of third parties, to prevent agents from taking advantage of poor migrant workers and overcharging employers. It curtails corrupt practices among officers and curbs the risks of migrant trafficking and abuse (Shahar 2017).

Direct hiring without agents was soon expanded to the recruitment of foreign maids. The government introduced an optional online system beginning January 1, 2018, which allowed employers to directly apply for foreign maid permits from the nine source countries: Indonesia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, India, Laos, Nepal, Vietnam, and Cambodia. Direct recruitment of domestic workers tackled the issue of human trafficking and reduced costs more than 50 percent, from MYR12,000 to MYR3,600. Alternatively, employers could still utilize agents, because the ruling was not compulsory (*Sun Daily*, November 1, 2017). Effective January 1, 2018, the new Maid Online System (SMO) was launched. It received a positive response. Within one week of its launch, 3,141 employers registered and 36 employers received their maids (Surach 2018).

The move toward digitalization and centralization would eventually result in the termination of recruitment agencies' services. This was a disturbing development for the hiring agencies and the employers of foreign workers, who reacted negatively to the implementation of the FWCMS and the MyEG system. There were concerns about added costs, national security, and the monopoly of the FWCMS, developed by the private firm Bestinet Sdn Bhd, which had been contracted by the government. The use of the FWCMS was mandatory as all health check-up centers in the source countries were compelled to use the Bestinet system. Employment agencies in the source countries criticized both the BioMedical system and the eVDR for the increase in fees, from MYR15 to MYR250. Foreign governments, such as those of Nepal and Indonesia, threatened to stop sending their workers to Malaysia. The monopolization of the eVDR and the biometric system by Bestinet would expose foreign workers to human trafficking risks if the cost could not be monitored. As a result, the FWCMS, which came into effect on January 15, 2015, was suspended by the Immigration Department after two weeks of its operation, before

resuming in June 2015 (Zachariah 2015).

The mandatory use of both the FWCMS and the MyEG online system was criticized not only by lawmakers but also by local Chinese businesses. The Associated Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Malaysia (ACCCIM), representing over 28,000 Malaysian Chinese businesses, called on the government not to make it mandatory to use the FWCMS and the MyEG online system to renew the PLKS, claiming that both private firms were exploiting the services for profit. Additionally, both systems were still under the "proof of concept" and at the test-run stage. According to the ACCCIM, "The government can outsource the system to external specialised entities, but they should not outsource the power of approval to the respective third parties" (*Borneo Post*, January 29, 2015).

In the state of Sabah, the Association of Foreign Worker Hiring Agencies (PAPPAS) has supported the state government by managing the local recruitment industry for more than 20 years. Any termination of service would negatively affect the businesses of PAPPAS member agencies. PAPPAS urged the government to consider the difficulties that would be faced by its recruitment agencies (Gordon 2016). The implementation of the online system in Sabah would put 53 local agencies out of business, and their employers would also risk losing their livelihood. PAPPAS has 53 members that are legal recruitment agencies under the Private Employment Agencies Act 1981. For the past two decades, its member agencies have delivered effective services to all industry stakeholders: employers, employees, foreign companies that supply workers, the state government, and the source countries under the established system. The association objected to any monopolization of the business and urged the government to ensure that "they do not lose their bread and butter in favour of other companies that provide an online service" (*Daily Express*, September 15, 2016).

The government's move to outsource the online permit renewal service to MyEG was perceived as an attempt to exercise some sort of monopoly, depriving other agents of their livelihood while allowing only one company to profit. Prior to 2015, some agencies helped employers manage all permits. The government's sudden decision to outsource the online service resulted in a loss of business for all these agencies. The government was asked why it had delegated a revenue-generating service worth MYR73.6 million a year to a private company instead of having the Immigration Department deliver it: "Why do we outsource immigration service to one company and make it a monopoly? Why was this monopoly given to MyEG?" (Malaysia 2015b, 35–36). MyEG secured a five-year concession agreement (May 23, 2015–May 22, 2020) worth MYR553.85 million to provide online renewal of the PLKS for foreign workers (Ooi 2017). The government reiterated that outsourcing the MYR73.6-million-per-year service delivery to a company, rather

than delegating it to immigration officials, would address the issues of misappropriation and negative perception about the Immigration Department (Malaysia 2015b, 36).

Changing the Gatekeeper Orientation

The gatekeeper orientation has been improved in two ways—involving the employers and the labor market. Employers are delegated more responsibilities under the newly introduced strict liability principle as a means to improve gatekeeping. Direct employment by employers through the online system can provide a better picture of the labor market demand in comparison to the manual process conducted by agents, which is inadequate for responding to labor market demand. It is noteworthy that employers are empowered under the state's legalization program. Under the Rehiring Program, foreign workers must be present with their employers at the immigration office. Between February 15, 2016 and May 28, 2018, 83,919 employers participated in legalizing 744,942 undocumented immigrants through the three government-appointed vendors, 307,557 of 744,942 applicants qualified for legalization, 329,151 applications were in process pending biometric information, and 108,234 were rejected. The unqualified workers were processed for the repatriation program by employers and vendors (*Star Online*, June 2, 2018).

The strict liability principle is applied when foreign workers are brought in under the online recruitment process. Based on this principle, employers themselves apply for their required workers. Digitalization may contribute to foreign workers' welfare; employers are fully responsible for each worker's permit application and renewal online, making them accountable for irregularities in the recruitment process (Malaysia 2016a, 67). This system may be interpreted as a means to improve gatekeeping, where the liability is held by employers. Discussions are ongoing to implement the strict liability principle to ensure that employers will be more responsible for the welfare of their foreign workers, from the latter's arrival until the end of their contracts. The employers' responsibilities include providing accommodations, minimum wages, health insurance, and medical benefits and complying with international labor standards (*Sun Daily*, June 26, 2016).

The government decided to change the gatekeeper from the MOHA to the MOHR, signaling a reorientation of where the "gate" lies. In October 2018, Home Minister Muhyiddin Yassin announced that foreign worker recruitment would be transferred to the MOHR's Private Employment Agency in 2019. The decision was made during the meeting of the newly established Foreign Worker Management Special Committee under the Pakatan Harapan government. According to the committee's deliberation, the outsourcing system would be discontinued gradually, and the services of one hundred

outsourcing companies would be terminated (Tee 2018). According to the 11th Malaysia Plan, policy making for foreign worker management would be placed under a single administration, the MOHR. To ensure that employers would be fully responsible for the recruitment and welfare of their employees, the strict liability concept was embedded in the 11th Malaysia Plan (Malaysia, Economic Planning Unit 2015, ch. 5).

Replacing Agents with Government-Appointed Authorized Vendors
The renewal of foreign worker permits was undertaken by MyEG, which could not hire third-party agents. Despite the efforts to eliminate intermediaries, some cases of fraudulent agents were still reported. Some individuals claiming to be appointed agents cheated employers and immigrants, asking for deposits to legalize undocumented foreign workers when the deadline for the amnesty program approached (Civil Society Organisations 2018). Some syndicates were involved in PLKS forgery, charging employers MYR1,500 and acting as intermediaries submitting applications to the Immigration Department. For example, a Bangladeshi-led syndicate forged some of the PLKS documents, sending a few applications to the Immigration Department for approval. Employers were thus advised to submit their online PLKS applications directly, with lower charges (*Sun Daily*, October 17, 2017).

Similarly, the involvement of agents was also excluded from the state's legalization program, called the Rehiring Program, to discourage profiteering. Instead of agents, the government appointed three third-party vendors to manage the program from February 15, 2016 to June 30, 2018. Iman Resources Sdn Bhd dealt with the legalization of Indonesian nationals, Bukti Megah Sdn Bhd handled Myanmar nationals, and MyEG was in charge of other nationalities. After the program ended, the Immigration Department took over all services related to foreign workers' employment, and the services of the three vendors were terminated (Ragananthini 2018). Despite the widely known fact that no agents were involved in the Rehiring Program, the news media reported numerous cases of fake agents and syndicates operating the program. The syndicates promised valid work permits and employment to undocumented migrants for a fee of MYR8,000, even after the program deadline. For example, a syndicate operated by locals earned MYR2.2 million by cheating more than 270 foreign workers (*Star Online*, August 15, 2018).

A more worrying trend was some undocumented immigrants' involvement in operating these counterfeit syndicates, deceiving their compatriots with promises of securing employment and work permit extensions. The existence of both local- and foreign-operated syndicates managing the legalization program without permits threatened national security. A Bangladeshi-owned company was reported to have been operating the Rehiring Program illegally for more than a year, disguised as a mini-market that

was converted into an office (*Sun Daily*, July 6, 2018). According to the law, only authorized vendors and several of the company's subsidiaries were allowed to manage the Rehiring Program. Raids conducted by the Immigration Department's Intelligence, Special Operations, and Analysis Division found that the Rehiring Program syndicates' activities were expanding. Some authorized company subsidiaries infringed immigration laws and abused the approval granted. False document agreements were made with factories, foreign workers' applications were processed with dubious documents, and migrant workers became partners in some of the companies. In a raid on a rehiring syndicate in Selangor, 98 Bangladeshi and Indonesian passports and MYR250,000 in cash were seized (Teoh 2018).

Fake rehiring agents were responsible for otherwise eligible migrant workers' missed opportunity to extend their employment in Malaysia. There was a news report about 270 Bangladeshi workers being swindled in the amount of MYR1.8 million by a fake rehiring agent. The Bangladeshi victims submitted their passports and paid MYR8,000 each to the agent to secure valid work permits before the Rehiring Program deadline. However, the agent failed to get back to them before the deadline passed, believing that these undocumented migrants would not report the case. Since they failed to be legalized under the program, these migrants were forced to return to their country (Zolkepli 2018). Labor agents and brokers thrived in the underground labor market, while employers got away with unpaid salaries. According to MP Charles Santiago, "We are yet to demonstrate a commitment to go after labour agents and brokers, who profit at the expense of these poor migrant workers" (News Hub 2018). Employer associations blamed third-party agents and government-appointed outsourcing companies. The Malaysian Trade Union Congress argued that irregularities caused by bringing in an excessive supply of foreign workers could be traced to these agencies. "They serve[d] as one-off suppliers" without ensuring the validity of these workers' permits. For the Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers, law enforcement left unscrupulous agents free to escape punishment (Teh and Shah 2018).

Law Enforcement and Regulating the Activities of Agents
The Immigration Department announced the launch of Ops Mega 3.0 to flush out irregular immigrants nationwide beginning on July 1, 2018, after the deadline of the Rehiring Program. The crackdown aimed to enforce the law on immigrants and their employers. Stubborn employers who protected, hired, and allowed irregular migrant workers to stay in their premises would be punished with a maximum fine of MYR50,000, imprisonment not exceeding a five-year term, and caning up to six strokes (*Star Online*, June 2, 2018). The Immigration Department's director general justified the action against employers,

reiterating that there would be no crackdown on foreign workers if employers hired them legally. There were legal channels for hiring workers, and employers must follow the requirements of the MOHA (Kumar 2018). Human Resources Minister M. Kulasegaran echoed the Immigration Department's commitment to strictly enforce the law against errant employers, in line with the MOHR priorities of zero corruption and "meticulous enforcement." In cooperation with the MOHA, the MOHR sought out stubborn employers (*Sun Daily*, June 4, 2018).

The failure to deal with the influx of illegal foreign workers discredited the performance of the previous government. The Barisan Nasional government promised to rid the country of illegal migrants through its declared "zero illegal immigrant" policy. However, the country was inundated by immigrants. Their overwhelming presence in the city of Kuala Lumpur has created the impression that local residents have become minorities in their own country. The Pakatan Harapan government is determined to "clean up" the country of illegal immigrants. In conjunction with Malaysia's National Day on August 31, the Immigration Department pledged to "free" the country of undocumented immigrants. Enforcement operations were intensified after all the opportunities for registration and legalization of foreign workers ended on August 30, 2018 (Muhamading and Teh 2018).

The new nationwide enforcement operations (Ops Mega 3.0) were criticized by parliamentarians for targeting helpless victims and employers but not the perpetrators. The Pakatan Harapan coalition government was urged to target traffickers instead of cracking down on four million undocumented workers. The group of traffickers was identified as the root cause of the oversupply of foreign workers, who were victims of human trafficking syndicates and fraudulent agents. According to a Democratic Action Party lawmaker, three prioritized areas would bring greater benefits at lower costs: enforcing the law on human smugglers, protecting the victims, and preventing illegal entry (Malaysiakini 2018). Similarly, civil society organizations and migrant groups protested about Ops Mega 3.0, calling for comprehensive and holistic rights-based solutions. According to these groups, the operations were criminalizing foreign workers for offenses that were not their fault. Upon landing in Malaysia, many victims found their contracts, employment sites, and terms and conditions different from what they had been promised, resulting in violations of immigration laws, which were circumstances beyond their control. Among other measures, the migrant groups recommended the following: (1) suspending raids and operations, (2) making available Ops Mega 3.0's standard operating procedure for conducting raids and detaining undocumented migrant workers, (3) decriminalizing the "undocumented" status of workers, (4) facilitating G2G hiring mechanisms, (5) stopping the blacklisting of migrant workers who used the 3＋1 amnesty

program, and (6) ensuring that all migrants would have access to justice and the right to redress (Civil Society Organisations 2018).

The penalty regime against errant employers was stepped up, following the end of the Rehiring Program on June 30, 2018. Employers who failed to settle their fines after this date were blacklisted, banned from leaving the country, and barred from any dealings with the Immigration Department until they had settled their fines, a ruling that outraged them. From the point of view of the Immigration Department, the fines should have been paid when these employers legalized the workers. Employers were given an additional time frame until August 30, 2018 to settle outstanding penalties. The move provoked negative responses from the Malaysian Employers Federation, which lamented that these employers had already registered their undocumented workers and that the Immigration Department should not focus on penalizing employers. The Asean Traders Association stated that it was "excessive to impose compounds on business," which was already having difficulty surviving. Both organizations opposed the monetary fines imposed for hiring undocumented workers (Kumar and Chung 2018). The construction and service sectors were facing shortages of site workers, who went into hiding as the crackdown continued, affecting Malaysia's economy. The continuous and consistent crackdown frustrated employers, especially those operating small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). According to the SME Association of Malaysia, SMEs paid the agents under the Rehiring Program but did not have their undocumented workers legalized. They blamed these agents, saying, "Agents just want to make the money" (Goh, Melissa 2017).

Criminalizing workers and later employers did not resolve irregularities created by the industry system itself. Migrant workers were turned into "profitable commodities" by recruitment agencies and failed by their exploitative employers. Enforcement did not solve the underlying problem; rather, it further alienated the migrants. An overhaul of the migrant labor management system would be much needed compared with the repeated cycles of legalization, amnesty, and crackdown (*Sun Daily*, June 6, 2018). Despite protests from migrant groups, it was doubtful that the Immigration Department would scale down its raids. In 2017 the department set a new target of 1,300 enforcement operations as its monthly key performance indicator (KPI) compared with its initial KPI of 850 operations (Goh, Pei Pei 2017).

Private Employment Agencies (Amendment) Act of 2017
In a move to ensure strict enforcement against illegal recruitment agencies, the Private Employment Agencies Act was revised again in 2017 after the 2005 amendment. It empowers the government to regulate recruitment activities conducted by PEAs and to protect local workers in Malaysia (Yong 2018). The Private Employment Agencies Act

of 1981 governed the activities of PEAs and safeguarded the rights of job seekers. As of 2017, 1,003 PEAs were registered in peninsular Malaysia, 55 in Sarawak, and 117 in Sabah. The Private Employment Agencies (Amendment) Act of 2017 requires each PEA to have a valid license and prevents recruitment activities without a valid license. It involves amendments and replacements of 29 existing provisions, the creation of 24 new ones, and the abolition of 11 provisions. It aims to modernize PEA-related legislation to comply with current requirements, clarify the application of recruitment-related legislation covering foreign workers, and empower enforcement activities (Malaysia 2017b, 84–85).

Among the issues discussed during the second and third readings of the bill, a better protection mechanism against illegal recruitment agencies was brought up. Any party engaged in recruitment activities without a license was to be penalized with a fine not exceeding MYR200,000 or imprisonment not exceeding three years or both (Section 7). The imposition of this severe punishment prevents recruitment without a valid license, which can have a huge impact on victims, who are often associated with trafficking and forced labor (Malaysia 2017b, 87). A new 13D clause of this bill requires a licensed PEA company to provide an identification document to its employees responsible for recruitment activities; failure to do so will subject the party involved to a fine not exceeding MYR10,000. This provision was included because the enforcement revealed that some parties conducted recruitment activities illegally (Malaysia 2017b, 89).

Several new interpretations are stated in Section 3 of the bill. First, a "private employment agency means a body corporate incorporated under the Companies Act 2016 (Act 777) and is granted a licence under this Act to carry out recruiting activities" (Section 3a). This amendment of the interpretation requires any party applying for a PEA license to be a company registered under the Companies Act 2016. Second, an "employer means any person who engages a private employment agency to recruit an employee for himself" (Section 3g). This interpretation prevents outsourced labor in which the employer supplies the person recruited via the PEA to another employer. Third, "recruiting means activities which have been carried on by any person, including advertising activities, as intermediaries between an employer and a job seeker" (Section 3i). To facilitate monitoring and enforcement, the phrase "any person" includes private persons or organizations undertaking recruitment activities without PEA licenses (Malaysia 2017b, 86). To prevent PEAs from imposing high fees on job seekers and non-citizen employees, the bill stipulates that such agencies are only allowed to impose a registration fee and a placement fee as specified in the First Schedule (Sections 14a and 14b). Such agencies are required to deposit a money guarantee as specified, which will be utilized if the agency fails to fulfill its responsibilities to job seekers, non-citizen employees, and employers (Sections 14c and 14d).

Renegotiation with Labor-Supplying Countries in ASEAN

The de-commercialization approach has broader implications for anti-trafficking efforts and migrants' protection. Ensuring a sound recruitment process is closely related to migrants' protection and regional efforts to tackle human trafficking. The Malaysian migrant rights group Tenaganita criticized the use of private agencies because the latter were driven by profit. Profit-oriented outsourcing systems not only led to high recruitment fees but also posed the risk of corruption. The business-to-business recruitment model fostered human trafficking. According to Tenaganita's Executive Director Glorene Das, "the logical solution would be an overhaul of the system to remove the focus on direct profiteering and increase regulation" (Soo 2018). The gradual termination of the outsourcing system and the shift to the G2G system are significant steps in combating human trafficking and foreign workers' exploitation. Malaysia's restructuring of its foreign labor recruitment addresses a critical problem in the migration industry by eliminating intermediaries, thus putting an end to debt bondage. Debt bondage is a form of modern-day slavery in which workers have to work excessive hours to pay back the high recruitment fees (Beh 2018).

Following the controversial G2G Plus involving Bangladesh and Nepal, Malaysia's labor recruitment policies were renegotiated with the labor-supplying countries in ASEAN. On October 29, 2018, Nepal and Malaysia signed an improved MoU on worker recruitment, employment, and repatriation to address human trafficking and the exploitation of migrant workers. The new MoU adhered to the ILO's guidelines, under which employers would bear the recruitment charges, two-way airfare, visa fees, health checkups, accommodations, security screening, and levy charges. All the basic facilities would be provided to Nepali migrant workers with regard to their health insurance, accident insurance, and social security insurance. Workers would have the right to change jobs in case of their employers' bankruptcy or labor exploitation. The workers' salaries would be paid through a banking channel. Direct recruitment based on the G2G system was incorporated in the new MoU signed with Nepal, to be used as a model for other source countries (Poudal 2018). Most important, intermediaries would be eliminated. The Nepalese workers would be recruited directly through a G2G initiative, removing the moratorium placed by Nepal and resuming the flow of its workers, including domestic maids, to Malaysia (Rahim 2018b).

The Pakatan Harapan government after May 2018 has been renegotiating an improved and standardized MoU with other countries of origin. It is important to improve the MoUs as part of the efforts to curb human trafficking and the exploitation of workers. As of 2018, Malaysia's status was downgraded to Tier 2 in the US State Department's Trafficking in Persons Report. If the status drops further to Tier 3, the country will face

international sanctions and foreign countries will not be allowed to invest in Malaysia. The sanctions will have much more dire consequences compared with the increase in manufacturing costs and the prices of goods and services as a result of the new MoUs. Next, Malaysia negotiated with Bangladesh, Indonesia, and Vietnam, whose MoUs were expiring soon, to incorporate the ILO's standard elements in their new MoUs (*New Straits Times*, November 28, 2018).

Shifting the recruitment costs from workers to employers is a step in the right direction, in line with the international standards outlined in the ILO Private Employment Agencies Convention, 1997 (No. 181), the ILO General Principles & Operational Guidelines for Fair Recruitment, and the International Organization for Migration International Recruitment Integrity System. A joint report by the International Organization for Migration and the ILO in 2017 suggested that "worker-borne recruitment costs should be eliminated in both countries of origin and destination" (Harkins *et al.* 2017, 90). On one hand, employers as the beneficiaries of the workers' services should pay for the services. On the other hand, migrant workers are less likely to return home unless they have earned enough money to pay their incurred debts (Harkins *et al.* 2017, 90). The "employer pays" model of international labor recruitment would eliminate the exploitation of workers and further prevent the race to the bottom of working conditions (Nishimoto 2017).

Malaysian bilateral labor recruitment is moving toward regional efforts for the protection of migrant workers' rights, as envisaged by ASEAN. In November 2017, the ASEAN Consensus on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers was signed as a result of deliberations during the ASEAN Labor Ministers' Meeting. It outlined the fundamental rights of migrant workers and their family members, the specific rights of migrant workers, the obligations of the sending and receiving states, and the commitments of ASEAN members. It is a non-legally binding framework (ASEAN Secretariat News 2017). Chapter 4 of the document outlines the migrant workers' specific rights, including access to information; an employment contract; fair treatment in the workplace; reasonable accommodations; fair remuneration; as well as the rights to transfer their earnings, file a complaint, and join trade unions (ASEAN 2017).

Conclusion: Discussion and Implications

This research offers a few implications of the recent shift to de-commercialization of the labor migration industry in Malaysia. De-commercialization signifies a fundamental shift in the government's conceptualization of migrant workers, that is, labor migration is a long-term development issue rather than a security concern. This change in direction

is demonstrated by overhauling the channel of legal migration and improving policy coordination in the migrant labor management regime. As argued by Lee Hwok-Aun, "the influx of foreign workers was motivated by the lucrative trade in migrant labour rather than demand for labour" (Lee 2017, 566). The profitable business generated by labor outsourcing, the contract labor system, and overtime work have perpetuated the market demand for migrant labor. The labor market structure itself has encouraged indirect employment and workers' exploitation. Lee suggests that promoting mechanization and technological upgrading to replace foreign labor with automation, as outlined in the 11th Malaysia Plan, may overlook the fundamental factors driving the persistent dependence on foreign labor (Lee 2017, 566).

Malaysia's policy context should be understood from the perspective of balancing between competing concerns: (1) fulfilling the nation's economic needs versus avoiding employment discrimination against citizens, and (2) prioritizing security concerns versus meeting labor market demands. The move to de-commercialize the industry—with the G2G model, online hiring, digitalization of work permits, and eliminating the use of agents through improved MoUs—has shown that the government is indeed treating irregular migration as a labor market issue to be regulated by a state-level mechanism. Third-party involvement is detrimental to the balance of market power and causes an excessive labor supply. De-commercialization as a migration control strategy could be realized by de-privatizing the migration industry.

Unsuccessful attempts to de-privatize the recruitment industry in Malaysia since 1995 should be understood in relation to five factors: the historical role of outsourcing agents, the institutionalization of the outsourcing system, employers' reliance on agents, poor gatekeeping in the labor market, and the government's ineptitude in handling recruitment. The official policy declaring the phasing out of agents has not eliminated employers' and workers' dependence on agents. Instead, false syndicates have emerged. This culture of dependence on agents has become a deep-seated problem since the government's phasing out of their services, and attempts to revamp the recruitment system into the G2G model have encountered challenges since 1995. The popular use of agents also explains the difficulty in efforts to de-privatize the migration industry. The tradition has been deeply rooted for several decades since the government formalized the outsourcing system through the Private Employment Agencies Act of 1981, amended the Act in 2005 and 2017, and further institutionalized the practice of outsourcing workers through the Employment Act (Amendment) of 2012.

The recent policy U-turn to a state-governed system (G2G) under the new government signaled a renewed interest in controlling the migrant labor sector, following the controversies over the G2G Plus deal. Facilitating the state-operated mechanism as the

primary means of recruitment is important to discourage profiteering. The attempts to reduce the number of agents through the G2G Plus deal, as shown in the cases of Bangladesh and Nepal, failed to curb irregularities and resulted in bilateral tensions. The G2G Plus deal did not remove the business incentive, as the sole authorized agents monopolized the recruitment industry and were in a better position to impose higher costs with no competition from rivals. When the government sought to reduce the number of agents to a few authorized vendors, monopolization of the industry became a real problem. The Malaysian case shows that the group of authorized agents has indeed become a "big monopoly," evidenced by delegating the recruitment of Nepalese and Bangladeshi workers to Bestinet and outsourcing permit renewal to MyEG. The replacement of agents with government-appointed vendors has been criticized by small agents and parliamentarians because certain parties have earned huge profits by bringing in and then sending back undocumented workers (Malaysia 2011a, 89). Outsourcing immigration functions to a few private agencies is viewed as a form of monopolization, closing opportunities for other agencies. This issue has raised the question of whether privatization of immigration functions is still appropriate in the Malaysian context when it is bound to lead to some sort of business monopolization and license abuses.

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The Arts of Everyday Peacebuilding:
Cohabitation, Conversion, and Intermarriage of Muslims and Christians in the Southern Philippines

Yoshizawa Asuna* and Kusaka Wataru**

While armed conflict has occurred since around 1970 in the Southern Philippines, ordinary people of different faiths have cohabited as neighbors, lovers, and families. Why are ordinary Muslims and Christians able to create and maintain everyday peace although they have suffered from the conflicts and the state's initiatives for peace have not yet been realized? After noting limitations of peacebuilding efforts by the state and nongovernment organizations, we analyze the arts of everyday peacebuilding practiced by ordinary people based on ethnographic research in Iligan City. First, Muslims and Christians have engaged in mutual assistance for everyday survival in the city where they live as diaspora or transients, who are relatively autonomous from their clan networks. Second, Muslim converts and many Christians regard those who practice other religions as companions who share the same "paths to happiness." Third, when a multireligious family is pressed to choose one religion for its children's faith or its ceremonial style, it avoids the rupture of family relationships by "implementing non-decision" to make the two religions obscurely coexist. Finally, even when Christian women married to Muslim men face polygamy without consent, they do not attribute the unfaithful behavior of their husbands to Islam but instead often blame the patriarchal culture of their ethnic group. Such a practice of "crossing divides" prevents religion from becoming an absolute point of conflict. Everyday peacebuilding of the ordinary can be a foundation of the state's official peacebuilding, although there exists a tension between them.

Keywords: religion, interfaith dialogue, intermarriage, Balik-Islam, everyday peace, Southern Philippines, peacebuilding, multiculturalism

Introduction

This study aims to clarify the arts of cohabitation and everyday peacebuilding practiced by ordinary Muslims and Christians in the Southern Philippines. In the predominantly

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Christian Philippines, the armed struggle of Muslims for secession and autonomy has been ongoing since the 1970s. The state has tried to realize peace by granting autonomy to Muslims, while civil society organizations have promoted interfaith dialogue, but violence has not been eradicated. However, despite the prolonged conflict, ordinary Muslims and Christians have cohabited not only as neighbors and friends but also as lovers and family members. This reality propels us to ask the question: Why are ordinary Muslims and Christians able to create and maintain everyday peace although they have suffered from the conflicts and the state's initiatives for peace have not yet been realized?[1]

Roger Mac Ginty (2014) highlights the concept of everyday peace to counteract the technocratic and top-down peacebuilding efforts employed by professionals, states, and international organizations that emphasize "control and order." He argues that ordinary locals have also contributed to peace, especially in informal areas where the technocratic approach is ineffective. Official peacebuilding is parasitic to everyday harmony despite the latter's subversive nature against the former. Mac Ginty maintains that fluidity, heterogeneity, and intra-group interactions among ordinary people are the foundations of everyday peace.[2] However, his argument is limited to how people deal with others with opposing identities and does not explore cases in which people's identity itself becomes ambiguous. Thus, this paper aims to develop Mac Ginty's argument in a way that expands the focus on flexibility and ambiguity to people's identity.

In Southeast Asia, most scholars have identified local culture and identity shared by different religious groups, rather than flexibility and ambiguity, as an enabling factor of interreligious coexistence. Alexander Horstmann (2011) maintains that multi-religious ritual traditions in Southern Thailand facilitate the coexistence of Muslims and Buddhists. Albertus Bagus Laksana (2014) describes how an inclusive Javanese religio-cultural sensibility supports a religious pluralism among Javano-Catholics and Muslims. Hannah Neumann (2010) and Coline Cardeño (2019) assert that in the Southern Philippines, the construction of a shared local identity coupled with weakening of narrow clan and ethno-religious identities is the foundation of everyday peace. However, such shared local culture and identity are not always necessary for everyday peacebuilding. For instance, Kawada Makito (2010), in studying the religious communities worshipping the Virgin of

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1) This inquiry into everyday peace is partly inspired by Thomas McKenna (1998), who provided an alternative account of the armed separatism of the Southern Philippines through an ethnography of the everyday politics of rank-and-file Muslim rebels.

2) Mac Ginty identifies three premises of everyday peace: (1) fluidity of individuals, collectives, ideas, and practices; (2) heterogeneity of groups often seen as homogenous; and (3) environmental factors that shape inter- and intra-communal experience. More specifically, he highlights everyday peace activities such as avoidance of risky topics, people, and places; promotion of ambiguity to conceal signifiers of identity; avoiding "seeing" others, and so on.

Guadalupe in Cebu City, argues that conflicting practices and discourses over history coexist, which can be interpreted as a case of coexistence of plurals in diversified life under urbanity and globalization. We also claim that flexibility and ambiguity in everyday life can be a foundation of inter-faith cohabitation even without a shared local identity, and even with antagonism over religious differences, based on an ethnographic study in Iligan City, Province of Lanao del Norte.

Yoshizawa Asuna, one of the authors, conducted intensive fieldwork in the city while living with a Muslim family from February 2013 to June 2014. All the stories and narratives quoted in this paper are taken from her field notes. Iligan is known to be a place where Muslims and Christians have coexisted relatively peacefully. Yet, the "peace" experienced in Iligan is not inherent but is an outcome of the everyday efforts undertaken by ordinary people, even in instances when the city was surrounded and partially encroached by elements of violence. For instance, in 2000, when the Estrada administration waged an all-out war against the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) that resulted in over 900,000 refugees, the first clash occurred in a town close to Iligan. Many residents of Iligan witnessed the violence that accompanied it. The military used Christian militia in its operations against the MILF, which led to violence perpetrated by vigilante groups from both sides. In 2017 Marawi City, located just two hours from Iligan by car, was devastated by a five-month-long battle between the ISIS-inspired Maute group and the military.

According to the 2010 census, Iligan's household population was 321,156, of which 89.7 percent was Christian (with 79.3 percent being Catholic), 9.5 percent Muslim, and 0.8 percent maintaining the animism of the indigenous tribes. Since Muslims make up 5.6 percent of the national population, statistically speaking, the proportion of Muslims in Iligan is only 4 percent higher than the national average. However, actually living in the city, one gets the sense that 30–40 percent of its inhabitants are Muslims. Perhaps this is because many Muslims from neighboring areas temporarily live in Iligan due to its opportunities for higher education and employment. Among the more than 10 Muslim ethnic groups in the Philippines, Maranaos are the majority in Iligan.[3] There are also non-Muslim indigenous peoples who are generally known as Lumad, and while their representation and social inclusion are important issues, this paper's coverage is limited to the relationship between Muslims and Christians.

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3) The Maranaos are the largest Muslim ethnic group in the country, with a population of more than one million. While most of them inhabit the provinces of Lanao del Sur and Lanao del Norte, a significant number have been forced by poverty and conflict to migrate to Manila and other cities, where many of them engage in retailing businesses.

I Living with Religious Minorities

Recently there has been a growing apprehension that liberal democracy, due to its principle of secularism, may be unable to represent religious minorities, thus worsening the social exclusion and fragmentation rather than promoting integration. In this sense, possible limitations of liberal democracy should be examined, not just the failures of the Philippine state as a cause of prolonged armed conflict in the Southern Philippines.

Separation of religion from politics was a prerequisite to the establishment of liberal democracies in the West. Modernization has been expected to entail privatization of religion and secularization of deliberation in the public sphere. However, there are a growing number of cases in which religions assert their values and norms in the public sphere. In the Middle East, Islamism has progressed against violent and corrupt secular regimes supported by Western countries since the end of the World War II, as seen in the Islamic Revolution in Iran at the end of the 1970s. Because Islamism calls for political reform based on the teachings of Islam, it is incompatible with the concept of separation of church and state. Christianity also played a major role in the struggles against dictatorships in the Philippines, South Korea, Eastern Europe, and Latin America in the 1980s and 1990s. In the United States, Christian fundamentalism that colludes with the new conservatism has exercised its political influence since the 2000s (e.g., in justifying the War on Terror).

José Casanova (1994) emphasizes that religion plays a public role in supporting liberal democracy and modern values in the era of post-secularism. While some examples mentioned above support his argument, others show that religion also threatens the values of liberal democracy. This ambiguity has activated debates over how liberal democracies should address religion in the public sphere. Secularists, on the one hand, insist that religious discourses should be excluded from the public sphere because they obstruct rational deliberation and consensus based on public reason. On the other hand, some scholars forward the view that religious discourses may be included in the public sphere under certain conditions. For instance, Jürgen Habermas argues that religious discourses entering the public sphere must be "translated" into "generally acceptable secular discourses" (Habermas 2011, 26).

However, it is unjust to impose the obligation of secular translation on religious citizens while not demanding a fundamental change on the part of liberal democracy and secular citizens. Charles Taylor (2011) contends that secularism is by no means neutral, as it excludes religious discourses from the public sphere while making itself absolute. Thus, he advocates neutrality between secular and religious discourses. Talal Asad (2003) further argues that the secular-religious dichotomy is fictional. According to him,

secularism is a religious product rooted in Western Christianity because it was created and upheld in the process through which liberal democracy defeated the theory of the divine right of kings in Western modernity. Saba Mahmood (2009), addressing the controversy over cartoons depicting Muhammad that caused disputes and violence in Europe in the mid-2000s, contends that the legal framework of liberal democracy rejected representing the subjective injuries of Muslims. According to these arguments, liberal democracy fails to represent religious minority Muslims because secularism imposes its systems and norms on them while denying its Christian background and biases, not because religion makes rational deliberation impossible.

Despite the limitations, some would argue that multiculturalism has enabled progress toward realizing the rights of religious minorities in Western liberal democracies since the 1970s. However, it is the state, not the minorities, that has broad discretion over which aspects and to what extent claims for religious minorities' rights can be accepted. This state-sponsored, official multiculturalism presupposes management by the majority, and its group-based approach carries the risk of entrenching social cleavages. Moreover, as neoliberalism has become hegemonic since the 1980s, official multiculturalism has reduced its welfare function, thereby favoring highly skilled migrant workers while excluding unskilled laborers. In these circumstances, scholars see possibilities in "everyday multiculturalism" wherein diverse people experience and negotiate cultural variety in ordinary settings such as neighborhoods, schools, and workplaces, and in the process shape and reshape their social relations and identities.[4]

Some proponents of deliberative democracy, as Monique Deveaux (2017) notes, also highlight the potential of informal public spheres for opening up additional pathways for democratic participation by the minorities, thereby contributing to everyday multiculturalism. Deliberative democracy places hope on the possibility that deliberation with others leads to transformation of people's preferences. However, there is a growing belief among critical scholars that the formal Habermasian public sphere, which upholds normative procedure, rationality based on public reason, and moral consensus, practically excludes marginalized groups' discourses and interests. Thus, they advocate incorporating a broader variety of discourses into deliberative democracy, such as rhetoric, narrative, testimony, storytelling, myth, and oral histories, as well as wider forms of communication such as bargaining, negotiation, and compromise among different self-interests. They argue that the outcome of deliberation contributing to cultural pluralism is more important than the idealized procedures and moral requirements of deliberation (Deveaux 2017). Yet, granted that informal deliberation is more friendly to religious

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4) For instance, see Harris (2013).

discourses and would facilitate interfaith coexistence, various forms of hierarchy and emotional conflicts in everyday settings may obstruct the possibility. Also, pressing necessities of everyday events may not allow enough time for deliberation.

Judith Butler (2011) advocates the ideal of "cohabitation" with others with whom deliberation is difficult or even impossible, as a more radical vision of a plural society. According to her, cohabitation is a Jewish value based on the tradition of diaspora. Thus, violent return to the land by the Israeli state is an attack not only on Palestinians but also on the same Jewish value. She reminds us that "those with whom we cohabit the earth are given to us, prior to choice, and so prior to any social or political contracts we might enter through deliberate volition" (Butler 2011, 83). This is an ontological condition in which we are bound with strangers, and "to destroy the other is to destroy my life" (Butler 2011, 88). Thus, Butler claims that cohabitation with neighboring others is a universal right and obligation. She further suggests that cohabitation might be achieved when opposing groups' unique memories of dispossessions—experiences of being exiled from places or groups that they originally belonged to—flash up during moments of emergency. This means that remembering one's exile may prompt concern regarding the dispossession of another, since while the suffering of each dispossession is unique, it is also a universality that ties together opposing groups (Butler 2011).

II Conflict and Cohabitation in the Southern Philippines

Reexamining Social History

The idea of cohabitation helps us to reinterpret the social history of the Southern Philippines as an encounter, cohabitation, and everyday peacebuilding by ordinary people who embrace not only the different faiths but also their unique experiences of dispossession. This historical landscape is affirmed by Patricio Abinales (2016), who criticizes an "orthodoxy" of the history and cause of conflict in the region which is commonly shared by state officials, Muslim separatists, nongovernment organizations (NGOs), and development experts.

First, the orthodoxy identifies religion as a primary source of conflict in the South and attributes its origin to the Spanish era, which began in the sixteenth century. Certainly, Spaniards attacked Muslim communities with Christianized local soldiers. They called the Muslims Moro, naming them after, and projecting their hostility toward, the Muslim Moors in North Africa who conquered the Iberian Peninsula in the eighth century. For the Spanish, the Moro represented a common Christian enemy with whom dialogue was impossible. Christianized Filipinos also antagonized the Moro, who in retaliation to

the Spanish invasion attacked Christian villages and kidnapped villagers to procure labor. However, the simplistic view that reduces roots of conflict to religion cannot explain the times when relative peace was maintained, such as the 1930s to 1960s, and why so many Muslims and Christians have cohabited.

Second, the orthodoxy offers the socioeconomic deprivation of Muslims as a root cause of the conflict, emphasizing how Muslims' lands were legally and illegally seized by Christian settlers who migrated from the highly populated north-central regions. In the early twentieth century, a resettlement program was undertaken by the American colonial state to resolve the food crisis. This was continued by the post-independence state to prevent expansion of Communism and unrest in the north-central regions. These events led to Muslims becoming a minority in Mindanao by the 1970s. Moreover, international corporate capital investments in plantation and mining businesses impoverished Muslims through land grabbing and environmental devastation. Nowadays, in the Muslim-majority provinces the poverty incidence is the highest in the country, while the human development index, average life expectancy, and family income are the lowest.[5] The sense of dispossession experienced by Muslims, despite their residing in a habitat rich in resources, has led to their desire to reclaim their land and rights and has bolstered separatist movements engaging in armed conflict.

However, this explanation of the factors behind the socioeconomic marginalization of Muslims needs to be qualified. Abinales claims that land grabbing was not systematically promoted by an efficient state. Both colonial and autonomous states were too underbudgeted, corrupt, and inefficient to implement the resettlement program. The law to supervise and regulate land acquisition was not appropriately implemented, thus making the claim of "legal" land grabbing invalid. Due to the state's failure, Christian settlers also suffered from hunger and famine, which was worsened by widespread and recurrent rodent infestation.[6] Certainly, despite the absence of the state's support and the hardships suffered by the people in the frontier, spontaneous migration continued even after independence had been achieved. Approximately 1.2 million people migrated to Mindanao after independence until the shortage of frontier land became a serious issue in the mid-1960s. However, this vast migration did not immediately lead to clashes with Muslims. Christian migrants avoided Muslim-majority areas, and they, as well as Muslim elites, occupied new lands by clearing forests. Abinales notes the following:

> Muslim, Lumad, and settlers shared the same resentment toward an apathetic national state, and at the ground level de facto plural societies thrived, with "tri-people" contacts limited to small

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5) See Philippine Statistics Authority (2019).
6) See Abinales (2012) for detailed accounts.

marketplaces in towns or in between these communities where goods and harvests were traded and sold. "Peace" was, in turn, ensured by the Muslim elites themselves who saw the settlement zones as new constituents in their patronage games with national elites . . . . (Abinales 2016, 52)

This account illustrates the dispossession of Christian settlers who escaped from impoverishment under feudal landownership in the north-central regions to the frontiers in the South, where they were met with strained circumstances. It also indicates that Muslims and Christians spontaneously began cohabiting based on their unique but shared experience of dispossessions.

Abinales further explains that the conflict between Muslims and Christians became serious in the beginning of the 1970s, when land became scarce for new settlers and Christian elites emerged and started challenging the authority of the existing Muslim elites. This competition promoted the militarization of local elites and the organization of private armies. The timing coincided with the declaration of martial law in 1972 by President Ferdinand Marcos, who mobilized massive international capital to develop the region and deployed military power to suppress dissent. Marcos also intervened in regional politics, giving preferential treatment to allied local elites to consolidate their support, which intensified the rivalry among local elites. In summary, heightened competition among local elites over lands and access to state resources through patronage with national elites came to erode cohabitation at the ground level (Abinales 2016, 49–52).

The frustration of impoverished Muslims invited the emergence of young Muslim leaders who, through scholarships, either obtained higher education in Manila or received religious instruction in Egypt and Saudi Arabia. These young leaders reconceptualized the derogatory term Moro into the shared identity of the proud Bangsa Moro (Moro state, nation, or people) and established the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) in 1972 with the aim to reclaim their ancestral domain and resources.[7] Threatened by the rise of local Christian elites, local Muslim elites also supported the struggle. To appease the MNLF, President Marcos enacted the Code of Muslim Personal Law in 1977 to promote recognition of their faith and culture, but economic marginalization persisted. Meanwhile, the MILF, a splinter group of the MNLF, became the country's largest anti-government Islamic force providing policing, welfare, and religious programs in places where the state failed to function.

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7) The trigger was the Jabidah massacre of 1968, in which young Muslims recruited for covert military operations were murdered by soldiers during training to silence them regarding military secrets.

Peacebuilding by the State

The Philippine state utilized two institutions of liberal democracy to integrate Muslims into the nation and build peace. However, paradoxically, both invited a division of Muslims into those who worked within secular institutions and those who did not or could not, as well as conflicts between Muslims and Christians.

First, the installment of electoral democracy in the South in 1958 did not alleviate impoverishment of ordinary Muslims while it helped local Muslim elites to entrench their power by holding elected office through clientelist politics with economically disadvantaged constituents.[8] Muslim elites also developed patronage with Christian presidents and senates to gain privileged access to state resources and rent seeking. This system integrated local Muslim elites into national politics, which explains the absence of large-scale resistance directed by them until the end of the 1960s. By the early 1960s, Muslim congressmen succeeded in having legislations passed for Muslims' rights such as increasing educational opportunities and facilitating development by the Mindanao Development Authority. However, the issue of land redistribution remained untouched because it could affect their power base. Amid persistent poverty, ordinary Muslims disillusioned with electoral democracy found hope for a better life in the armed struggles of the MNLF in the 1970s. After the interval of dictatorship from 1972 to 1986, the electoral system was reinstalled, but it again failed to channel the leadership of armed rebels into representative democracy. It also intensified conflicts among local elites for electoral posts, as vividly shown by the 2009 Maguindanao massacre, in which 58 people were killed.

Electoral democracy also triggered conflicts between Muslims and Christians in the 1970s. This was because Muslim local elites and emerging Christian local elites started competing with each other for electoral positions, and ordinary people whose welfare was dependent on their leaders' electoral outcome also passionately joined the contest. Elites on both sides organized private armies or allied with paramilitary groups that frequently committed violence against people of a different faith. For instance, Ilaga ("rat" in the Cebuano language), a fanatic Christian paramilitary group, massacred more than five hundred Muslims in the early 1970s, while the Barracudas, an alleged private army of Muslim Congressman Sultan Mohamad Ali Dimaporo, had an encounter with the Ilaga in Lanao del Norte in 1971, which led to hundreds of deaths on both sides. These incidents seriously worsened interreligious relationships in the region.

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8) Americans imposed direct military rule on the South, considering self-government impossible for Muslims, or the "un-civilized race," in contrast to the Christian-majority north-central areas where they gradually expanded local election.

Second, successive administrations engaged in peace talks with antigovernment forces to establish an autonomous region.[9] However, these negotiations led to conflict between those who supported the conditions of an autonomous region and those who opposed it, not only among Muslim forces but also among ordinary people. Muslim rebel leaders competed for which group would become a participant in peace talks with the government and enjoy access to rights and resources granted to an autonomous region. Every time the state tried to advance peace talks with an antigovernment force, disgruntled factions resorted to violence to demand representation.

The 1976 Tripoli Agreement between the Marcos administration and the MNLF led to the splitting away of Salamat Hashim's faction, which established the MILF in 1984.[10] After the Fidel Ramos administration and the MNLF signed the 1996 peace agreement, MNLF leader Nur Misuari became the governor of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.[11] However, when he lost the post in 2001 due to internal conflict, his faction attacked the military headquarters in Jolo, Sulu, to disrupt the gubernatorial election. The 2012 Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro between the Benigno Aquino III administration and MILF provoked the Sulu-based Islamic forces. In 2013 a self-proclaimed descendant of Sulu Sultan Jamalul Kiram III sent one hundred armed men to Sabah, Malaysia, insisting on territorial claim to the land, which led to an encounter with Malaysian armed forces. Kiram reportedly protested the exclusion of the issue of territorial dispute over Sabah in the peace talks between the MILF and the government.[12] Seven months after the event, Misuari's MNLF faction, which had also been excluded from the peace talks, laid siege to Zamboanga City, reportedly to appeal its inclusion, triggering a battle with the government forces.

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9)   International mediators such as the Organization of the Islamic Conference, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Japan played an important role in promoting the peace talks.

10)   Rivalry among Muslim ethnic groups also contributed to the split. While the MNLF is composed largely of Tausug and Sama from Sulu, most MILF members are Maguindanao and Maranao. The MNLF also resumed the armed struggle when Marcos watered down the original agreement that granted autonomy to 13 provinces.

11)   In 1990 the Corazon Aquino administration established the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, but both the MNLF and MILF refused to participate.

12)   The Sultanate of Sulu thrived through the intermediate trade among the Middle East, Europe, and Asia in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In 1878 the declining sultanate signed an agreement with the British North Borneo Company, which allowed the latter to occupy Sabah upon regular payment to the sultanate. However, the interpretation of the term *pajakan* in the agreement has been contested. While the British colonial government succeeded the company, and then the Malaysian government claimed that Sabah was "ceded" in return for payment of 5,000 Malayan dollars per year, the Sultanate of Sulu argued that the land was only "leased." The Philippine government, representing the sultanate, negotiated with Malaysia over the territorial dispute until 1977 but has dropped the issue from its diplomatic agenda.

Such division among Muslim forces was driven not only by interests but also by ideological differences. While mainstream Muslim organizations have accepted the secular framework of an autonomous region under the Philippine state, more radical Islamists have tried to disrupt it in favor of an independent *ummah* (Islamic community). The MILF appealed to establish an Islamic system when it split from the MNLF, criticizing the latter's secular and communistic struggle. Yet after the 2003 death of Hashim, who had been a student of Islamic studies in the Middle East, the MILF has increasingly emphasized secular demands, appealing to the right of national self-determination while calling for jihad (religious struggle) to establish an autonomous region where sharia law would be implemented.[13] In contrast to the "secularization" of the two forces, spin-off hard-liners have emerged.[14] In the 1990s, the Abu Sayyaf Group was formed by defecting members of the MNLF. In 2011, a commander who had split from the MILF formed the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters. In 2017 the Maute group, which pledged allegiance to the Islamic State, entrenched itself in Marawi and fought for five months.

The rise of Islamist armed groups was facilitated by the worldwide Islamic revival and international networking among Muslim activists. However, it would not have gained ground without locals believing that armed struggle for an independent Islamic community was more attractive than the MILF's technical and practical negotiation with the government for an autonomous government. Since the prolonged conflicts and massive resettlements destroyed the vernacular social system that sustained ordinary Muslims' lives, an increasing number of Muslims found a vision of an alternative system that would emancipate them in radical Islamism. In particular, youths who could not relate to aging organizations became targets of recruitment by extremists resorting to terrorism.

The initiatives for establishing an autonomous region also paradoxically destabilized the everyday cohabitation of ordinary Muslims and Christians. This was because the initiatives evoked suspicion and fear among Christians that they may become the minority and be treated unjustly in a new territory. The MNLF and MILF claimed that the territory should include the vast extent of the South where many Christian-majority and mixed communities existed. In order to justify the claim, they tried to (re)define the concept

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13)　The Bangsamoro Organic Law of 2018 stipulates that "Shari'ah shall apply exclusively to cases involving Muslims. When a case involves a non-Muslim, Shari'ah law may apply only if the non-Muslim voluntarily submits to the jurisdiction of the Shari'ah court" in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region (Section 1, Article X).

14)　Loosely organized by diverse clan leaders and commanders, the MNLF and MILF are both prone to defections.

of Bangsa Moro or Bangsamoro people as not limited to Muslims but including non-Muslims as well.[15]   However, this inclusivity was not readily accepted by the people because the Islamic symbols and discourses had been associated with the concept since the 1970s. Both Christians and non-Muslim indigenous people believe that the Bangsamoro movement has been just for Muslims. This discrepancy between the idealized collective identity and people's everyday perception contributed to confusion and misunderstanding about contents of peace talks among non-Muslims, which eventually led to a big protest movement against the peace process in 2008.

In confidentiality, the Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo administration and MILF negotiated the Memorandum of Agreement on Ancestral Domain (MOA-AD) and were scheduled to sign it in Malaysia in August 2008. Stipulated in the MOA-AD were the establishment of the Bangsamoro Juridical Entity in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao and the six municipalities adjacent to the region, and the conduct of a plebiscite on the participation in the Bangsamoro Juridical Entity of the additional 735 *barangays* (smallest local government unit) within 12 months, and 1,459 *barangays* not earlier than 25 years. When these stipulations were made public, Christian local elites with vested interests in the existing system launched a fierce opposition campaign that rapidly expanded. This was because the secret negotiation adopted to prevent Christian politicians and other Muslim groups from hindering the peace process unintentionally escalated Christians' fear. The erroneous assertion also spread that Christian lands would be grabbed by Muslims. One Christian staff member of an NGO recalled in a personal conversation with Yoshizawa, "I participated in the opposition movement out of anxiety and fear without deep understanding of the MOA-AD. Such shared feeling of anxiety surely increased the tension between Muslims and Christians even in Iligan." Several local politicians, including the mayor of Iligan City, claimed that the MOA-AD was unconstitutional, which the Supreme Court affirmed. In response to the setback with the MOA-AD, the MILF collided with government forces.

As discussed, electoral democracy and initiatives for autonomous government worsened intra-Muslim as well as interreligious divisions. The division of the former could have been due to the secular bias of liberal democracy against Muslims, considering not

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15) The MNLF officially declared in its newsletter in 1974 that "even those of other faith[s] who have long established residence in the *Bangsa Moro* homeland and whose good-will and sympathy are with the *Bangsa Moro* Revolution shall, for purposes of national identification, be considered Moros" (Noble 1976, 418). The initial formulation of Bangsa Moro as a different nation from the Filipinos was also diluted into Bangsamoro as an ethnicity within the Filipinos in the course of peace talks for establishing an autonomous region between the MILF and the government. This was because it was more acceptable not only to the state and the majority of Christians, but also to non-secessionist Muslims in the South (see Kawashima 2014).

a few Muslim forces rejected the secular institutions.[16]   As for the interreligious relationship, however, the secular institutions do not always keep on worsening it.   First, the interreligious conflicts escalated by electoral democracy have been under control in Lanao del Norte since the mid-1970s, when rival powerful elite families from both sides made an alliance.   Abdullah, a son of Mohamad Ali Dimaporo, and Imelda Quibranza, a daughter of a Christian elite, even married in the 1980s and formed a strong and interreligious political foundation in the area.   This could be viewed not merely as a strategic marriage but also as a case in which interfaith cohabitation at the grassroots encouraged the elites to overcome their political rivalry along with religious groups.   Second, the initiatives for an autonomous region made significant progress in the 2010s.   One factor that disrupted the peace talks was the discrepancy between the state's institutions governing the population based on ideally compartmentalized "we/they" relationships, and everyday cohabitation built on complexly interwoven social relations among the people.   In the 2010s, however, the government and MILF tried to mediate the gap by adjusting the former to the latter, which contributed to the establishment of the autonomous region.   This argument will be elaborated in the conclusion section.

Interfaith Dialogue in Civil Society

Associations in civil society have also worked toward peacebuilding, not only through advocacy and social development but through interfaith dialogue.[17]   For instance, the Bishop-Ulama Conference, sponsored by the state, organizes public debates among religious leaders, and their outcomes are disseminated through the media.   It also invites policy makers, antigovernment forces, and NGOs to improve state policies.   Reina Neufeldt (2011) praises the dialogue as a successful case, but Steven Rood (2005) claims that it failed to make an impact on ordinary Muslims, as the *ulamas* involved in the initiative did not represent the diverse Muslim communities.   Meanwhile, Jayeel Cornelio and Andrew Salera (2012), who examined the impact of interfaith dialogue among the youth in Manila, assert it is personal communication, friendship, and collective participation in communities rather than theological discussion which can break down stereotypes and

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16)   Although the constitution stipulates the separation of church and state, prohibition of official religion, and freedom and equality of religions, the Philippine state is characterized by "loose secularism," in which religious ceremonies are integrated into state events such as presidential inaugurations (Kawashima 2012: 25–28).

17)   NGOs have tried to represent the interests of marginalized sectors in peace talks through advocacy, but Steven Rood (2005) claims they have had little effect due to inaccessibility to back-channel negotiations among anti-government forces, the government, and local elites.   A rare but noteworthy success for NGOs is that they were able to have representation of indigenous people in the peace talks (Rood 2005, 26–27).

humanize religious others. However, such communication may not be feasible in situations where religious antagonism is prevalent.

In Iligan's civil society, interfaith dialogue, among other activities, is conducted by the Institute for Peace and Development in Mindanao (IPDM), an academic institution affiliated with Mindanao State University-Iligan Institute of Technology.[18] Deep-rooted prejudice of Christians against Muslims as being generally "uneducated," "undeveloped," "violent," and "dangerous" has made such initiatives pressing tasks. The prejudice also delegitimizes the struggle of Muslims, because the more they object against historical injustice and marginalization, the more the negative stereotypes are strengthened. In a private conversation, a Maranao university lecturer noted that media coverage also reinforces this prejudice when news about Muslims emphasizes their religious affiliation, which is not the case when Christians are involved. It is not rare to hear such malicious jokes as "The only good Muslims are dead Muslims" and "Islam teaches that the only way to reach Heaven is to kill Christians."

To debunk such stereotypes, IPDM organizes workshops among Muslim and Christian students. The methodology includes participants expressing their sentiments through drawing pictures and creating videos on peacebuilding in Mindanao. Many of these videos challenge traditional social norms (e.g., telling stories of romance that transcend religious barriers), but they do not necessarily have a happy ending, which reflects actual social constraints. IPDM notes that educating students on Mindanao history provides them with a foundation for interfaith activities. Part of their mandate, therefore, is to train young educators in order to develop their ability to facilitate discussion about sensitive topics. Otherwise, according to a staff member of IPDM, classrooms can become a space for conflicting and hostile ideas instead of promoting peace.

In an IPDM workshop, Yoshizawa observed how Muslim and Christian students developed trust through listening to each other's voices. Such activities are surely an important process in assuaging mistrust between the two groups. However, although the workshop envisioned an ideal society where "good Christians" and "good Muslims" harmoniously coexisted, it seemed to be divorced from everyday life on the ground where tensions over differences and actions that deviated from norms were common. This vision of coexistence seems to have a similarity with the state's peacebuilding in drawing clear boundaries on the complexly intertwined diverse people. Staff members of IPDM are not unaware of such limitations of idealistic interfaith dialogue in realizing peace. Nevertheless, IPDM keeps on encouraging students to engage in the activity perhaps out of the expectation that they would become future local leaders of peacebuilding who

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18) For detailed information about their activities, see Institute for Peace and Development in Mindanao (n.d.).

have the ability to articulate experiences and practices of interfaith coexistence in a universal language.

Another organization in Iligan which promotes interfaith dialogue is Kapamagogopa, Incorporated. The NGO is known for having won the Intercultural Innovation Award from the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations and the BMW Group in 2013. Organized by Maranaos, Kapamagogopa provides young Muslim university graduates with opportunities to work as social workers in other NGOs. This is to reduce employment discrimination against them. When searching for jobs in large enterprises and government organizations, many Muslim youths are unreasonably denied interviews or given lower priority than Christian applicants. The more capable a Muslim graduate is, the greater the frustration they face when being deprived of opportunities to exercise their skill and knowledge and build careers in positions with high social status. A female co-founder of Kapamagogopa said that when she underwent the National Steel Corporation's final selection process for three new hires, she, the only Muslim among the finalists who all graduated from Mindanao State University-Marawi School, was turned down although her score was the third highest. She believed the rejection was due to religious discrimination.

Kapamagogopa dispatches young Muslims who have completed their training programs to other NGOs as trainees. They receive payment for their living expenses, and if they get good evaluations they can become regular staff. Jobs at NGOs financed by international donors are attractive for them because they can promote peace and development in the region while receiving respect and a good salary. Thus, there are around a hundred applicants for the annual recruitment of 10 trainees. Approximately 80 percent of applicants are women, and the recruitment ratio is comparable. The reason for the large number of female applicants is that many Muslim families hope that their university-educated daughters will get stable jobs, such as schoolteachers, NGO staff members, and professional workers abroad. Also, for Maranao women, employment at NGOs enables them to distance themselves from their clan groups and conservative social norms. This allows them to enjoy freedom of movement and friendship. Even though there are relatives who oppose the idea of women living away from their parents, they can be persuaded if the women work at NGOs.

Kapamagogopa's training programs include learning about the general conduct expected of workers as well as tolerance of different faiths and cultures to broaden their perspectives. Trainees also learn skills necessary for social workers such as community development, project planning and management, and advocacy. Through acquiring such values and skills, trainees are expected to work in Christian-dominant societies as "good Muslims" and contribute to eliminating the prejudice against them. In fact, many trainees have acquired the reputation of being good Muslims, overcoming daily prejudice,

learning Cebuano, the language of Christians in the South, and adapting to unfamiliar environments.

Within the context of these activities, it seems that being a "good Muslim" means acquiring secular knowledge and skills, becoming tolerant of other cultures, engaging in secular deliberation, and working with Christians, while maintaining their faith, all in order to eliminate the prejudices against them. It seems Kapamagogopa believes that young Muslim university graduates have more potential and flexibility to undergo such subjective transformation than uneducated or older Muslims. From the perspective of Habermasian theory, young Muslims are trained to translate religious discourses into a "universally accessible language." It seems, however, that the emphasis on creating "good Muslims" risks marginalizing those who fail to fit into this mold as "bad Muslims." Also, it is unfair to demand that Muslims alone shoulder the burden of subjective transformation for the sake of interfaith dialogue with Christians. This asymmetric relationship reflects the extent to which Muslims are marginalized, not the biases of the NGO.

III   The Arts of Everyday Peacebuilding

Mutuality to Cope with Dispossession
In contrast to the state and civil society's tendency to call for ideal subjects compartmentalized according to clear boundaries for peacebuilding, ordinary people in Iligan have built everyday cohabitation by blurring the boundaries of differences while simultaneously harboring prejudice and antagonism. The most common practice of interfaith cohabitation is mutual cooperation among the poor for everyday survival.

Nafie, a Maranao Muslim woman, and her family moved to a depressed community where they found a new house for rent. In the neighborhood, they regularly bought vegetables and condiments at a *sarisari* (sundry) store run by an elderly Christian woman named Gusina. Initially, Gusina was alarmed by the Muslim family and did not even talk to Nafie when she came to shop. Gusina was very surprised to learn that Yoshizawa was living with the family, and her daughter asked in a hushed tone, "Do they treat you well? Don't trust the Maranaos." However, when Nafie's family had to leave their rented house due to their landlord's circumstances, Gusina's attitude changed. Since the landlord needed to have his leg amputated due to diabetes, he hoped to pawn the house to Nafie or someone else to get the money to cover the expense of the operation. Nafie struggled to raise money while searching for other houses to rent. Perhaps out of sympathy, Gusina began showing her concern and listened to Nafie's complaints about the situation. When Nafie's small child became sleepy and started to fret as they stood chatting, Gusina laid

him on a couch in the shop, saying, "Take a nap here, boy." Nafie's problem made her closer and more intimate with Gusina.

Nafie also helped Rachel, the Christian woman who lived next door. Rachel had been separated from her husband for several years and was living with her two little girls and her partner, with whom Rachel constantly quarreled over financial troubles. Nafie said, "We Maranaos help our relatives when they are in need. Christians are heartless; they don't help their relatives even when they have problems." Though she made this kind of dismissive remark, she was concerned about Rachel's plight. Rachel's daughter was to enter elementary school, and she needed money for her school uniform and supplies. Nafie and her neighbors offered to lend Rachel money, using as collateral Rachel's household goods such as an electric fan. In such an arrangement with friends, one can redeem the item after an extended period of time, unlike when one pawns it at a pawnshop. This practice is possible even when the parties involved have only transient relationships and do not completely trust each other.

As shown by the above examples, when Muslims and Christians encounter each other, their sense of mistrust mixes with the feeling that not all people of different faiths are bad. While they remain cautious and may gossip about each other, their everyday needs can trigger a small exchange that soon develops into friendship and mutual assistance. In Iligan, it is common to find such mutual cooperation among the poor despite differences in faith. Even ordinary Christians living in communities without Muslim neighbors would not be surprised to hear these stories, since they believe that they can also mutually engage with Muslims when necessary. Since the state and the market do not guarantee subsistence and opportunities, mutuality is the most important resource for ordinary people in a small city like Iligan. This suggests that rich people need not develop such mutuality. In fact, a well-to-do Maranao family living in a two-story concrete house in the same depressed community did not interact even with their Maranao neighbors. They just went out and back in their private car.

However, one cannot generalize that impoverished neighbors of different faiths always help one another. There have been many cases when cohabitation of people of different faiths turned into violence.[19] Why is it possible for people in Iligan to develop relationships of mutual assistance despite their religious differences and the conflicts around them?

First, the city has the characteristic of a community of diaspora and transients with experiences of dispossession. Many Maranaos in Iligan have escaped from problems in

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19) For instance, cohabitation of Rohingya Muslims and Myanmar's Buddhists collapsed when the latter began persecuting the former.

their hometowns such as poverty, conflict, lack of agricultural land, and restrictive family relationships. They usually find vacant houses in various communities in Iligan without forming segregated Muslim communities, which creates opportunities for everyday inter-action with Christians. The Christians, on the other hand, are descendants of settlers who migrated to Mindanao in search of land and a better life. Many Christians born in neighboring areas also come to Iligan for education and work. Considerable number of both Muslims and Christians do not consider Iligan as their final home and continue to move around in search of better opportunities. Particularly in deprived communities, it is common for people to briefly stay at their relatives' rented houses, be evicted from their houses when the rent money runs out, and be forced to evacuate by natural disasters. In such contexts, Muslims and Christians find it relatively easier to have interfaith inter-actions than in their rural hometowns where relations are often strained over agricultural land and political power.

Second, from the Maranaos' perspective, there is a sense that in Iligan Christians can be trusted as neighbors more than unknown Muslims. Within Maranaos' close clan network, one can trust others because proper behavior is strictly expected and those who break this norm are sanctioned. However, most Maranaos whom they meet in Iligan are outside of their network, thereby inviting distrust. Moreover, together with media dis-courses highlighting violent events related to Muslims, it seems self-representations of Maranao men, which typically portray them as fearless "tough guys," also increase their sense of distrust of unknown Maranaos. They often boast about the way they engaged in fights, got involved in *rido* (violent feuds between clans) and other crimes, or partici-pated in armed groups. Rich men, usually successful businessmen or high-ranking military or police officers, ride around ostentatiously in rugged vehicles such as American Hummers. Perhaps they represent themselves as such because of their upbringing, surrounded by violence and conflicts as well as foreboding that something unjust that cannot be dealt with by the law can happen any time.[20]

Religious Differences as "Paths to Happiness"
How do ordinary people address differences and antagonism based on faith, which is much more difficult than developing relationships of everyday mutual assistance? We identify everyday practices that intertwine religious differences to create and maintain multi-faith cohabitation.

We firstly focus on the religious practice of conversion, which erodes the bound-

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20) Maranao gender norms seem to reflect a value system in which there are two ways of navigating an unstable situation: the official (female) and the unofficial (male).

aries between Christians and Muslims and neutralizes the sense of otherness. In the Southern Philippines, since the 1970s there have been an increasing number of Christians who develop doubts about their own Catholicism and convert to Islam.[21] They call themselves Balik-Islam, which means "returning to Islam." There are four Balik-Islam organizations in Iligan City. Importantly, converts (and many Christians) recognize the differences between the two religions not as an exclusive dichotomy, but as connected "paths to happiness" down which they walk in pursuit of a better life and death. Missionary activities by various religious groups have helped people in search of "more correct" religious practices to recognize the hidden connectedness of the two faiths.

Missionary seminars conducted by Balik-Islam groups emphasize the shared worldviews of Christianity and Islam (i.e., one God, Heaven, and Hell) while conveying the superiority of Islam with referencing Christ and the Bible. For example, a Balik-Islam group explained that it was inconsistent for monotheistic Christianity to advocate the theory of the Trinity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and therefore Islam, in which one prayed only to Allah, was more correct. When one of the attendees questioned the explanation and said that a Catholic priest had told them the teaching of the Trinity was correct, a Muslim convert who had been a Christian pastor answered that the Bible did not contain the teachings of the Trinity. The Balik-Islam also explained that the practices of Muslims were closer than those of Christians to the practices of Christ and the Virgin Mary. Examples of such practices were Christ's 40-day fast and Mary's wearing of a veil. Christians who have more knowledge of the Bible's teachings are more likely to be interested in Islam and therefore likely to convert.

The missionary activities of other religious groups also emphasize connectedness among different faiths to attract new followers by lowering the psychological barriers to conversion. In a seminar of a Catholic youth group, a lecturer explained that indigenous people's animism was not different from that of Catholics: "They pray to God through worshipping natural beings such as mountains and stones which have the spirit of God." Various Protestant groups insist that they are more faithful to the Bible than Catholics who share a common worldview as Christians. Although each group maintains the supremacy of its own faith, such discourses connecting religions have been so aggressively produced by missionary activities as to erode the religious boundaries. Therefore, it is not surprising that Christians who previously considered Muslims as "absolute others" came to realize that Islam was a possible option for conversion.

More specifically, competition among the various Protestant groups unintentionally

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21) Luis Lacar (2001) explains that the intensification of civil war and deterioration of public order in the 1970s gave an incentive to Christians in Muslim-majority areas to convert to Islam for the sake of their livelihoods and security. However, he does not explore spiritual reasons for conversion.

led Catholics who doubted their church's teachings to convert to Islam.[22] A man named Rasel was originally a faithful Catholic but converted to Jehovah's Witnesses, whose teachings he thought were more faithful to the Bible. However, when he became seriously ill due to a heavy drinking habit, he received prayers from a Born Again Christian group and recovered. Then, he joined the group and contributed to the congregation's worship services, using his singing talent. Subsequently, while deeply studying the Bible, he moved toward Judaism and then eventually discovered Islam. Rasel is not an unusual case in Iligan. Yoshizawa has met more than a few former Catholics who finally settled for Islam after successively converting to other religions. The more they study the Bible, the more they feel unconvinced worshipping statues of Christ and Mary. They also complain about the authoritative Catholic Church and its priests. Their deep wish is to interpret the teachings of the Bible in an equal position with religious leaders and to conduct correct religious practices accordingly. Those who have such sentiments are attracted to Muslim groups' assertion of being the true adherents of the Bible and the most effective in achieving equality before God.

In addition to those who question Catholic teachings, there are also people who convert to Islam without much concern for religious doctrine and practice. One day, some elderly people gathered at the Balik-Islam missionary seminar. While they were being taught the obligations of Muslims, such as fasting and *zakat* (giving to charity), one of them impatiently grumbled, "That's all well and good, but we are too old now; all we can do is pray. I know that if I become a Muslim I can go to Heaven, so I want to hurry up and convert." Another elderly woman wanted to convert after listening to her eldest son, who had converted to Islam while working in the Middle East. After *shahada* (the confession of faith), she said with a radiant face, "I cannot fast because of my age, but now I am finally free, right?" She seemed to be convinced that she had finally reached the path to happiness both in life and in the afterlife.

Reaching the path to happiness is a common wish regardless of people's religions and concerns about doctrines. Nevertheless, nobody knows whether they are on the right path that leads to happiness or not. This persistent uncertainty makes people keep on being curious about different teachings, which weakens the otherness of different faiths. Even Balik-Islam who seem to have made a final choice retain an interest in Christianity and ardently ask persons with a deep knowledge of Christianity about "true teachings." If convinced, they even stop practicing Islam and go back to Christianity. They are called "Balik-Christian."

It is natural for people in Iligan to develop the idea that different faiths are linked

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22) According to Lacar (2001), among the 322 Balik-Islam informants, 67 percent of them converted from Catholicism to various Christian groups before deciding on Islam.

paths for happiness because religious differences do not fall into the false secular–religious dichotomy. As Asad and Mahmood assert, in Christian-dominated societies that advocate "secularism" secretly anchored in the Christian culture, Muslims' voices are not heard. In Iligan, however, most Christians do not support secularism, and the pursuit of happiness through religion is a common concern among the people. This guarantees a space for open discussion where people ask about others' faiths without hesitation and talk about various religious issues in their workplaces and on street corners. Although there are often prejudices and misunderstandings in these everyday conversations, and some people just deny others with a belief that their own faith is absolutely right, the fact remains that any normative discourses on religion are not hegemonic. Such contested spaces create enough room for ordinary people to deliberate freely over what would be the "true religion" for happiness. Because religion is a common interest, the Muslim minority can have channels for dialogues with Christians without being silenced by the pressure of secularism.

In small cities like Iligan, where the state and market do not guarantee happiness—failing to provide people with stable life or career opportunities—religions can become bonds that create social ties. Amid this precariousness, people endeavor to seek "good lives and afterlives" through cultivating mutuality and sharing their wish for happiness even with people of different faiths.

However, people do not necessarily respect different groups equally. For instance, even Balik-Islam who have transcended religious boundaries construct a hierarchy among groups. They consider Muslims to be "brothers and sisters who know the religion of truth" while pitying Christians as "those who do not yet know the truth." Their attitudes toward Maranaos, usually born Muslims, are complex. While Balik-Islam admire devout Maranaos with their in-depth knowledge of Islam and the Arabic language as "good Muslims," they criticize "Muslims only by name" who lack a sincere study and practice of the Islamic teachings. Armed conflicts have also exacerbated Balik-Islam's othering of Maranaos. In a meeting held after the armed encounter between the MNLF and the army in Zamboanga in September 2013, a woman said that her new landlord had not allowed her to move in due to his mistrust of Muslims. This propelled other participants to share their stories of discrimination by Christians. Interestingly, they blamed Maranaos more than Christians, exchanging such opinions as "We are affected by Maranaos who ruin the reputation of our religion by perpetuating violence and crimes" and "I can't stand being mistaken for a Maranao just because I wear the hijab." They further criticized some Maranao customs as un-Islamic, saying, "Maranaos are totally different from us because they have a tradition like *rido* which is against Islam, a religion of peace."

In this way, Balik-Islam construct a hierarchy based on proximity to "true religion,"

piety, and ethnicity. Yet this hierarchy by no means represents a fixed "friend/enemy" antagonism over religious differences. It is easily challenged by persistent uncertainty and curiosity regarding "true religion."

"Implementing Non-decision" in Multi-religious Families

We next examine a practice that allows different religions to coexist in a family. Multi-religious families are created either by conversion or by interfaith marriage. Both practices are acts of transcending religious boundaries, but they in turn create new boundaries within the family. Not only conversion to Islam, but also love and marriage between people of different faiths are not unusual in Iligan City. However, most interfaith marriages are between Christian women and Muslim men. Muslim men can marry Christian and Jewish women who are considered "people of the Book." Among the 19 interfaith married couples that were interviewed, 9 women converted to Islam while the other 10 remained Christians.[23] Meanwhile, based on Islamic law, Muslim women can marry only Muslim men. In theory, Christian men can marry Muslim women if they convert to Islam, but in Iligan, family relationships and the norms of the Maranaos rarely permit it.

While many multi-religious families maintain multiple faiths, special occasions such as funerals and decisions on the children's religion bring forth the tough question of which religious practice to follow. Although consensus is almost impossible, couples must somehow conduct family events. In an act of desperation, family members on both sides often discreetly try to influence the way events are carried out, or attempt to avoid making a definitive decision as far as possible. We like to conceptualize such a practice as "implementing non-decision," which helps families manage their dilemma and retain coexistence of the two faiths. The following cases illustrate this concept.

Mariam is a Balik-Islam woman whose mother also converted with her encouragement. Mariam's Christian brothers were angry that she had "stolen" their mother from them. When Mariam's mother died, Mariam came into conflict with her brothers over which religion should be followed at the funeral. In Islam, burial must be done no later than a day after death; but in Christianity, burial can be held even a week after the funeral service. Without providing an opportunity for deliberation, Mariam's brothers held a Christian funeral. At the wake, while the white Christian coffin was decorated with flowers and photographs, there were several ornaments with passages from the Qur'an on the walls of the room. While her brothers invited a priest to perform Mass on Sunday, Mariam asked her Balik-Islam group to hold an Islamic missionary seminar on another day. The death of a loved one heightens people's wish to know the "true religion." In

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23) Depending on the country and region, women may be required to convert.

such a spiritual atmosphere, these two religions were competing and coexisting.

On the way to the Christian cemetery, Mariam rode a different jeepney, murmuring, "Because my brothers are somewhat different . . ." After a while, she said she was hurting and held her hands tightly to her chest. When she arrived at the cemetery, Mariam stayed at the end of the line, and later she persuaded her brothers to allow a leader of the Balik-Islam group, who was a former pastor, to deliver a sermon. He preached, "Although there are conflicts between religions, Muslims and Christians are brothers under the same God, so we can live together." After the burial, Mariam repeatedly reminded the workers who were plastering the grave with concrete not to attach a symbol of the cross.

As in Mariam's case, in situations where compromise or consensus through deliberation is difficult to achieve due to differences in religious doctrines, multi-religious families somehow negotiate sensitively and make nuanced adjustments acceptable to both parties because they must continue living as a family.

Choosing a religion for the children is also a difficult and sensitive issue for inter-religious couples. There is no problem with husbands and wives retaining their original faiths and engaging in different religions while respecting each other. This is more easily understood and accepted by the people around them. Conflict arises, however, when grandparents and other relatives intervene in the decision of whether their children should be Muslim or Christian. The fact that both religions stipulate that it is the parents' responsibility to foster devout faith in their children strengthens the pressure from people around them.

Ali was a Catholic Christian when he got married, but he converted to Islam after his children were born while his wife remained a Christian. Their three children who were in elementary school were baptized as Christians, according to their grandparents' wishes. They attend Islamic prayers on Fridays and Mass on Sundays. Since Ali himself was raised a Christian and converted after becoming an adult and studying Islam, he wants to instill in his children the doctrines of both religions and allow them to choose based on their free will. He firmly believes that "when the children grow up and are able to understand, they will naturally come to Islam." This is the practice of delaying the decision on the children's faith and maintaining the ambiguity of their religious affiliation. It is stressful for Ali to deal with criticism from other Muslims, who often tell him things like "Your children should be Muslims. It is unbelievable that you let your wife and children go to church." Nevertheless, Ali states with conviction, "Faith is a relationship between you and God; it is not the place of other people to speak on this."

It is natural for children of multi-religious couples to be confused or indecisive about their own faith. Sahara is one of these children. When asked whether she was a Muslim or a Christian, Sahara responded that she did not know. Her Muslim father migrated to

Manila for work and met her Christian mother there. However, since her father left her mother and went back to Iligan with Sahara and her siblings, she has lived apart from her mother for almost 15 years. This has led Sahara to being ambivalent toward both faiths. Her father does not show much religiosity. Relatives on her father's side, whom Sahara often spends time with, always admonish her to wear the hijab and perform *salah* (daily prayer), but no one really taught her the ways of living as a Muslim, nor did they listen to her troubles. When she is with her mother's family in Manila, she feels that she is different from her Christian relatives. For example, she is the only one who does not eat pork. She speaks about her faith in this way:

> I think there is no difference between Muslims and Christians apart from their ways of praying. Why did God divide the people into two? Of Heaven and Hell, there is one of each. There is one God. I pray when I want to pray every day. I reflect on my actions with gratitude to God and ask for better things to come. I wonder if this isn't enough.

Sahara's interpretation of faith comes from the painful experience of her family being torn apart by religious differences. In addition to the tension between her father and mother, her elder sister also has discord with her father. She had a Christian boyfriend who promised to marry her, but her Muslim father furiously forced her to end the relationship. Perhaps because of this painful experience, Sahara's sister left Iligan for Manila to live with their mother. Since then, her sister and father have stopped communicating with each other. Their religious differences have broken up the family, but Sahara still wishes for good family relationships. Perhaps because of this wish, she wants to make her religious affiliation as ambiguous as possible.

"Half" children in between different religions constantly face pressure from relatives on both sides and others to be more decisive about their religion. Sahara is often admonished by relatives on her father's side for wearing a T-shirt and shorts, but she maintains, "I do not want to change my clothes just because I am told to do so by others. I will wear the hijab when I am fully convinced to do so."

However, such efforts of "half" children to retain two faiths can meet with outright denial of even their identity. One day, a woman working at a fast food shop was asked about her religion by a Balik-Islam customer and she answered, "I am a half-Muslim blessed by both Christianity and Islam." She introduced herself as a "half-Muslim," not as a "half-Christian," perhaps to show an affinity to the customer. However, he rebuked her, saying, "It is impossible to be half a religion." For members of multi-religious families, keeping on "implementing non-decision" in the face of external pressures is a practice that they go through with agony in order to maintain good family relationships and the coexistence of multiple faiths.

Polygamy and "Crossing Divides"

Polygamy, however, which is one of the most sensitive issues for multi-religious families, does not allow space for "implementing non-decision" and may sometimes break down family relationships. Polygamy is one of the main negative preconceptions that Christians have of Muslims, almost equivalent to terrorism and armed conflict. For Christian families, this is also the main reason why it is unacceptable for their daughters to marry Muslim men.

According to the 1977 Code of Muslim Personal Laws of the Philippines, Muslim men can have four wives. In cases of inter-religious marriage, the Civil Code of the Philippines allows Muslim men to have only one wife. However, based on the Code of Muslim Personal Laws, they can still have other wives by registering these marriages in the sharia court. Moreover, registration is not necessary as long as the wedding ceremony is conducted in keeping with Islamic doctrines. Yet from the Islamic perspective, obtaining the first wife's consent is imperative, and all wives and children must be treated equally in terms of support such as meals, clothes, education, time, and affection.

In Maranao society, the practical side of polygamy is often cited to rationalize the practice. If one has many wives, one can expand clan networks and strengthen mutual aid. Also, for Muslims in general, polygamy fulfills the role of economically supporting widows and orphans. Furthermore, if a man falls in love with another woman after marriage, it is possible for him to formally marry her without committing adultery. Polygamy also has religious value. If a man marries and cares for a widow as a second wife, and his first wife tolerates this, they can be rewarded and be blessed religiously.

Nevertheless, not all Maranaos support polygamy. For a poor man it is impractical to have more than one wife and more children to support. Some wealthy Maranaos flaunt many wives, but others frown at such a macho attitude, saying it is written in the Qur'an that it is preferable for a man to have a single wife. Most Maranao women, especially those who have direct experience with polygamy, also oppose the practice. Fatima has not forgiven her husband for taking a second wife and even tried to separate them. Her husband goes to the second wife's house every Monday but returns home by 3 p.m. because of his fear of Fatima. Ishmael, a Maranao man, married another woman but has not yet notified the sharia court of his second marriage, even though he is a lawyer, for fear of being discovered by his first wife.

Polygamy usually causes conflict over differences in values regarding how a couple and family should be. Even for Christian women who have transcended the religious barrier by marrying a Muslim man and worked out other differences in everyday religious practices such as eating habits and worship, polygamy can easily lead to othering of spouses as someone with whom cohabitation is impossible. Linda married a Maranao

man who was her classmate in university, but she retained her Christian faith. Although she sometimes found it difficult to get along with her husband's relatives, her marriage was good. However, after her husband took a second wife without her consent, he became overtly cold to her and their children. Linda, who started divorce proceedings, stated, "It is terrible for him to marry another woman without even consulting me. His relatives say I should accept it, but it is unbearable." Despite her anger, Linda believed it was neither Islam nor her husband's personal character but the male-dominated Maranao culture which caused the marriage breakdown. The reason she did not blame Islam was perhaps due to dignity and respect for herself, since she had taken the decision to marry a Muslim.

Jinjin was devastated when she learned that her husband had married a woman about 20 years his junior. Her husband had talked about second marriage to his parents and relatives but not consulted Jinjin at all. However, because her brother tried to convince Jinjin to remain in her marriage, she started to learn the teachings of Islam in an attempt to somehow understand her husband's behavior. After a few months she converted to Islam, and now she wears the hijab. She said her husband's polygamy was a painful experience, but it brought positive changes. Both of them became devout Muslims, she explained. She now regularly attends an Islamic study group and focuses on religious activities together with her husband, while her husband has stopped drinking alcohol and staying out late at night. Rather than rejecting Islam, Jinjin embraced it, perhaps because she could not process her suffering in the context of Christian values, where polygamy simply represents the moral sin of a husband having another woman. In contrast, polygamy in Islam is seen as institutionally and morally correct. Thus, by converting to Islam and internalizing its values, Jinjin was able to see her pain with a new meaning: If she endured it as a "good Muslim wife," she would be given rewards and would gain respect and sympathy among Muslims.

As shown by these cases, polygamy forces a Christian wife to either reject her husband or internalize the values of Islam in order to accept him despite his seemingly unreasonable actions. Either way, polygamy can foreground religious differences and disrupt the coexistence of different faiths within a family. However, as Linda attributed the cause of her divorce not to Islam but to the male-dominated Maranao culture, even discourses constructing unacceptable "others" over polygamy are based not only on religion but also on gender and ethnicity.

Balik-Islam women, as devout believers, try to understand polygamy, but deep down they find it hard to accept. One day, to celebrate the construction of a new mosque, Mariam and other Balik-Islam women visited the house of a Maranao man who sponsored it. The man said he had three wives. His first wife was his age, and his second wife, who

looked a little younger, was serving food to the visitors. When the man left the Balik-Islam women to attend to other guests, they all voiced their opinions. One told Mariam, "This would be impossible for me; I'd be jealous. I would never allow it. How about you?" Mariam answered, "A true Muslim wife must help her husband. And if he marries a widow or a poor woman, his action has the value of charity, right?" Despite the words, she herself was unconvinced. She nervously added: "My husband is young, so he may take another woman and abandon me. If that happens, I will let the Islamic experts judge his actions." The Balik-Islam women's hope was the knowledge that Islam does not always allow polygamy.

These stories illustrate how people in Iligan have varying ideas and attitudes toward polygamy, depending on their class, religion, gender, ethnicity, and the degree to which it affects them. In other words, when people criticize or reject men engaging in polygamy, they focus on multiple social divisions as a reason of othering. This is a practice we call "crossing divides" through which people relativize the religious dichotomy and prevent it from becoming a single focal point that could lead to a critical rupture of cohabitation. It could also be argued that Iligan's everyday cohabitation is created and maintained because people complexly cross multiple divides by frequently exchanging discourses over diverse others, including prejudiced and even hostile views.

Conclusion

Ordinary Muslims and Christians in Iligan have built cohabitation into their everyday life despite antagonism rooted in religious differences and conflicts surrounding them. They have accepted people of different faiths as neighbors who help each other and as companions who seek to walk the "paths to happiness." Even when there are conflicts caused by multiple faiths, people somehow manage to avoid relationship breakdowns by "implementing non-decision" and "crossing divides."

Those who build interfaith everyday peace are by no means strong individuals who can endure differences indefinitely. Rather, they are people with vulnerabilities and weaknesses both in life and in faith. They generally embrace the sense that poverty and strife have deprived them of the wealth that is rightfully theirs. Also, in their religious life, Muslims are often forced to compromise their faith due to necessity; they have to contend with the system of education, employment, and politics of the dominant Christian society, which hampers them from attaining an ideal Islamic life. For Christians, the hierarchical structure of the Catholic Church prevents ordinary followers' desire to actively participate in the spiritual pursuit of truth.

Thus, each of them carries a unique suffering of dispossession, a feeling that external and unreasonable forces as well as internal weaknesses have disrupted an attainment of their desirable self and a good life.[24] Importantly, this general sense of imperfection and aspiration for happiness leads to an openness and interaction with others, even those of different faiths. Hence, diverse people not only cultivate mutuality but also actively express, exchange, and contest different values in the hope of obtaining information on the "religion of truth" or avoiding ruptures of intimate relationships. It is upon these ordinary interactions among people with such vulnerabilities that everyday peace is built.

As discussed in the introduction, many studies note unifying local culture has enabled religious coexistence in Southeast Asia. However, the condition seems to have been eroded in many societies by urbanization, globalization, and neoliberalism that have increased diversity, fluidity, and division. Despite the general trend, Mac Ginty maintains fluidity, heterogeneity, and ambiguity can be foundations of everyday peace, but his focus is limited interactions among social groups with clear boundaries and not extended to individuals. In contrast to them, we claim that ordinary people have the agency to build cohabitation with religious others, even without shared local culture and even with prejudice and antagonism, based on their dispossession, vulnerability, and fluidity in life and faith. Given that our finding is applicable to other parts of the world, it is more important to analyze the disabling factors, rather than enabling factors, of everyday peacebuilding. Presumably cohabitation is likely to be disrupted when people's experiences of dispossession come to be recognized as an outcome of "exploitation by different neighbors." Thus, it is necessary to explore what conditions would foment such antagonism.

Another future task is further clarifying the interrelationship between peacebuilding by the state and everyday people. We argue that official peacebuilding by the state can destabilize everyday cohabitation due to its tendency to impose an institutionally and ideally compartmentalized "we/they" relationship on the complexities of social relations at the grassroots. When formal institutions demand that the intertwined population determine clear boundaries among themselves, everyday peace can be disrupted. Nonetheless, this danger is by no means inevitable. Rather, we hypothesize that peacebuilding by states can be more promising when state institutions are adapted to the reality of everyday cohabitation built by diverse people in mixed communities.

In fact, the setback by the anti-MOA-AD movement in 2008 provided an opportunity to mediate the discrepancies between the two. Since then, the government and MILF

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24) We like to expand the idea of dispossession (Butler 2011) as exile not only from original places and groups but also from original desirable states of self.

have addressed issues of mixed communities such as Christians' apprehension that they will become the marginalized minority in the autonomous region. They adopted a participatory governance system that facilitates representation not only of the "Bangsamoro people" but also of "settler communities" and of "non-Moro indigenous peoples" in the autonomous region.[25] They also narrowed areas of plebiscite for the autonomous region and disseminated information that non-Muslims' rights were guaranteed by the autonomous government. These initiatives contributed to the progress of the peace process as seen in the case of Cotabato City, one of the biggest mixed communities, where people's attitude changed from rejecting the autonomous region to approving it in the 2019 plebiscite.

This development indicates that consideration for non-Muslims has not only weakened their opposition against the autonomous region but has also promoted further expansion of Muslims' rights in terms of economic benefits and cultural recognition. In other words, initiatives to protect non-Muslim minorities' rights within the autonomous region promoted the peace process. Like a nesting, this fact affirms Will Kymlicka's argument that liberal democracy can become compatible with collective rights of minorities (in this case, Muslims) when it guarantees minorities of "external protections" from the state and majority while encouraging minority groups to reduce "internal restrictions" (in this case, on non-Muslims) within their groups and territories (Kymlicka 2002, 340–341).

Nevertheless, there are still several challenges for the peace process. First, there is the dilemma that the more inclusive the peace process becomes, the more difficult it will be to reach a consensus. The second challenge is how to integrate Islamic groups that reject the autonomous region and resort to armed struggle. Third, even in the current framework of the autonomous region, there remains the coexistence model based on an institutionally and ideally categorized population, which is in conflict with everyday cohabitation. It will therefore be critical for the autonomous government to manage this conflict. Having flexibility in the implementation of institutions and policies will be important. NGOs will have an important role in mediating the discrepancy. Eventual stabilization and peace in the region depends on whether the formal peacebuilding pro-

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25) The Bangsamoro Organic Law of 2018 defines Bangsamoro people as follows:

> (t)hose who, at the advent of the Spanish colonization, were considered natives or original inhabitants of Mindanao and the Sulu archipelago and its adjacent islands, whether of mixed or of full blood, shall have the right to identify themselves, their spouses and descendants, as Bangsamoro people.

Although the definition does not refer to religion, "Bangsamoro people" practically signifies indigenous Muslims such as Maranaos because non-Muslim indigenous people have not agreed to be included in the collective identity. For historical development of the concept, see note 15. In the same manner, "settler communities" largely refer to Christian inhabitants.

cess can address these challenges and realize social reforms that equitably benefit these intricately intertwined people.

Acknowledgments

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Theatrical Governmentality and Memories in Champasak, Southern Laos

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In this article, I discuss cultural governmentality, its growth—as highlighted by multiple views in the past—and accretionary beliefs and religiosity that have emerged from the domestication of traditions in Southern Laos. In Champasak, visible ancient remains have long been indicators of the existence of guardian spirits, as well as religious beliefs, legends, and practices. The rites of worshipping the spirits have been demonstrated through staged ceremonial and ritual grandeur. This form of political art has been used to convey spiritual messages to the citizenry; however, such theatrical governmentality has not escaped the influence of scientific modernity. Thus, two phases of heritagization have occurred: French colonialization and the present periods of imposed scientific knowledge and politics that have created heritage sites and objects in the region. When modern knowledge dislocates spiritual worship and ambiguous memories of the past, the natives remember and craft legends and beliefs, or "unofficial" memories, in their pursuit of identity. By closely scrutinizing and recontextualizing these two encounters, this article elucidates how religious beliefs, legends, and memories redevelop as complex religious and political expressions of native selves.

Keywords: Laos (Lao PDR), Champasak, Wat Phu (Vat Phou), governmentality, religion, memory, archaeology, heritage

I Introduction

I-1 *Wat Phu in the Past*

Photos in the booklet by Henri Marchal (1959) show Champasak in the old days, with its emblematic site Wat Phu (Wat Phū; "Vat Phou" in French)[1] (Fig. 1). Wat Phu is a well-

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1) In Lao, Wat Phu means "mountain temple," and the site is located at the bottom of the mountain Phū Kao. Phū Kao means "mountain in the shape of a woman's chignon." Ancient inscriptions, however, seem to refer to the mountain as Lingaparvata ("mountain in the shape of a lingam," or phallus, a symbol of Shiva).
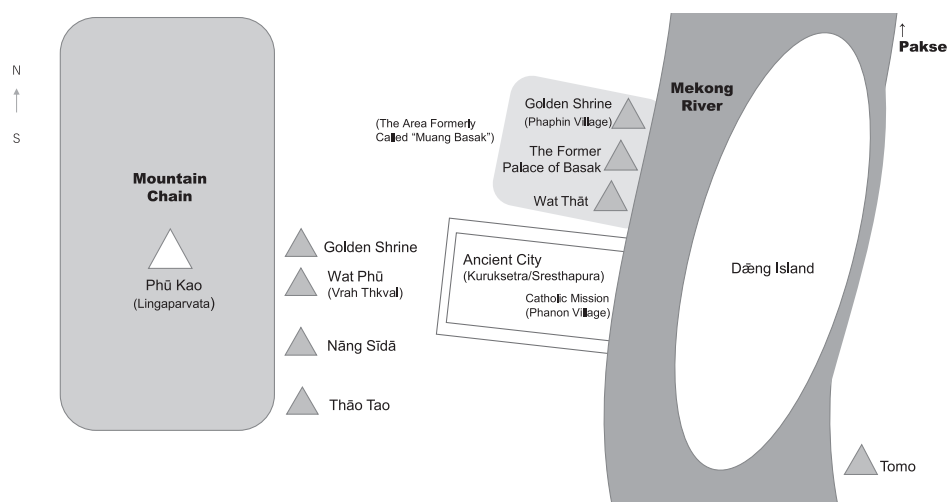
Fig. 1   Sketch Map of Champasak District (map created by author)

known monument site in southern Laos. Presently, it is a tourist site; the large area surrounding it was inscribed on the World Heritage list in 2001.[2] However, Wat Phu has drawn a great deal of attention for a very long time. Since the beginning of French colonization in the late nineteenth century, Wat Phu has attracted not only local residents but also explorers, scholars, politicians, and tourists.

Three photos in the aforementioned booklet, which was originally published in French by Henri Marchal in 1957, were added when the text was translated into Lao by a dignitary and a member of the former Southern Lao royal court. They depict scenes of the Wat Phu Festival, one of the South's most magnificent ceremonial festivities. Two of the three photos show that Savang Vatthana, Prince of Laos from the town of Luang Prabang, officially visited Wat Phu with his ministers in 1959, and that the ministers greeted Boun Oum (Bun Ūm), the late prince and last heir of the Southern Lao monarchy. The photos infuse the celebration taking place at Wat Phu with diplomatic tactics. Their insertion into the booklet reflects the translators' intention to show that the Lao chiefs, particularly Boun Oum, were the governors of the Southern region. A semi-autobiography of Boun Oum (Archaimbault 1971) conveys the late prince's feelings of grief, resignation, and powerlessness over the decline of the South in Northern-centered Laos. The translators, who were close to him, would have shared those feelings and

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2) The buffer zone of the Champasak World Heritage site includes not only Wat Phu, but also the mountains and archaeological sites located nearby, particularly the Ancient City (called Kuruksetra or Sresthapura).

added the three special photos as evidence of the closeness of the Southern monarchy to Champasak.

Modestly portrayed in both the French and Lao versions were the native Lao inhabitants who lived near Wat Phu and their feelings of friendship, respect, and awe toward the site. This closeness with Wat Phu still exists today, albeit in a less focused way.

I-2 *Cultural Governmentality and Memories*

In this article, my first aim is to elucidate the invention of certain political arts in Champasak, which employed fine arts on the political stage. I explore what Michel Foucault (1979) called "governmentality"—techniques, tactics, and discourses that embody forms of governing and polities under certain environmental and temporal conditions in the West—as a cultural product that emerged and was nurtured in Southern Laos, home to groups of ancient artifacts. I analyze the cultural uniqueness of Southern Lao governmentality based on documents written by French explorers, archaeologists, and ethnohistorians in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, particularly the ethnological documentation of Charles Archaimbault, who conducted extensive fieldwork in Champasak with a special focus on ceremonial and ritual features during the royal regime. I also use data collected and photos taken during my own on-site research in the early 2000s[3] to examine how people lived with the archaeological sites and objects in Champasak, which had just become a World Heritage site. During this field research, I met elderly villagers who lived near archaeological objects or were involved in rituals conducted around the sites. I was not allowed to be alone in the village, however, due to the regulations of the current socialist government. When using these data, primarily in the later sections of the article, I take account of such particular present-day contexts.

These data sources illustrate what I call "theatrical governmentality." The politico-societies of Tai groups have fitted themselves within different environments and realized culturally variable governmentality. Their religiosity takes a hybrid form, reflecting the ongoing lives and beliefs of living peoples, animating their own religious lives and sustaining the cultural governmentality of each group (Comaroff 1994; Hayashi 2003; Hayami 2004; Pattana 2005; Holt 2009; Endres and Lauser 2012; McDaniel 2014). This has given a unique shape to governmentality in Southern Laos.

These features are mirrored in the paramount tenet of political art in Champasak, or theatrical governmentality. In Champasak, as in other places in Southeast Asia where people live with ancient buildings and artifacts constantly in view, hybrid religiosity is

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3) In addition to the data collected in the early 2000s, I use two photos taken during short visits in 2015 and 2018.

sustained. Unique to Champasak, however, is that both native political actors and commoners reference beliefs that demonstrate "accretion" (McDaniel 2014) or "participation" (Lévi-Bruhl 1984 [1926]); these are conveyed by the ancient but still living artifacts, the messages of spiritual entities delivered through mediums, and various ritual spectacles and festivities invented or reinvented in the cultural public sphere.

To elucidate cultural governmentality and the religious specificity on which it is based, the materials present an image of French governmentality based in late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century French modernity. The colonizers' technological, scientific, mechanical, numerical, chronological, and typological knowledge, devices, and discourses on objects, time, and human and nonhuman entities were embodied in archaeological and political exploration and exploitation. Modern development of rationales relied on deduction, evolution, or diffusion rather than accretion or participation. The contrast between these tenets led their early contact to take the shape of an encounter. Thus, my second aim in this article is to closely scrutinize the development of otherness when the two sides—colonizing and colonized, one using modern science and the other using locally developed knowledge—encountered one another. This extends to an investigation of what Mary Pratt (1992) calls the "contact zone": the temporal and spatial phase in which the others meet without the preexisting equilibrium of power. This can also be called a phase of "heritagization" (Smith and Akagawa 2009; De Cesari 2017) or a politicized phase of heritage, as, for example in Champasak, ancient objects become materials by which different groups contest their own views of the truth.

However, my analysis is not limited to the phase that developed during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; it also encompasses the present phase, which developed through the union of the sciences with local theatrical arts in response to the rise of the scientific World Heritage program. In both phases, scientific and ritual governmentality clashed over their perspectives of the past, objects, and religions. Ultimately, ritual governmentality and the aspect of the place as a home for villagers and their spirits were hidden behind scientific governmentality.

Elsewhere in Southeast Asia and the Pacific, public crises and fears emerging from social struggles and dilemmas were often subsumed into religious phenomena, including millennialism. Such phenomena were either locally invented tactics to manage crises and insecurity or expressions (intentional or unintentional) of protest against the colonial or capitalistic other, and they were used against the modernity subsumed by that other (Worsley 1981 [1957][4]; Ong 1987; Tanabe and Keyes 2002; Hayami 2004; Pattana 2005; Endres and Lauser 2012). Likewise, in Champasak, natives' worship of spiritual entities

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4) I read the text in Japanese translation.

expressed their feelings of insecurity regarding oncoming crises. Whereas orthodox religious teachings are reference points to embody governmentality and religious practices (Kanya 2017), the religious phenomena they re-realize do not equate to the old traditions; their beliefs and practices can be understood only as modern phenomena (Comaroff 1994; Hayami *et al.* 2003; Hayashi 2003; Hayami 2004; Holt 2009; Endres and Lauser 2012). This is particularly evident in the second phase of heritagization. In post-1975 Laos, where theatrical governmentality is unofficial despite its potency, a sharp demarcation is drawn between the past and the present, or between tradition and modernity, respectively (Rehbein 2007). As the industrious and realistic orientation and scientific education affect religious institutions and monks, the legitimacy of canonical Buddhism is apt to be overemphasized, and hybrid popular beliefs and practices may be denied (Ladwig 2012). In this strict atmosphere, understanding of heritage or religious monuments is standardized, and their spiritual potentiality is underestimated. Because of this trend, local beliefs in spiritual heroes in Champasak, which are closely tied to the existence of ancient monuments, have begun to reawaken and participate in living society as the local residents' pursuit of identity.

Such local beliefs tend to be treated as historical anecdotes or memories shared within native circles only. However, if a memory is a continually reproduced representation of a living social group, as Maurice Halbwachs (1992) suggests, then so-called history can be regarded as a representation of scientific engagement. The "facts" are, therefore, multilayered, and we should take a multifaceted view when examining them.

When considering a multiplicity of facts, we must note how vulnerably, emotionally, and discursively the past and "truth" are produced in highly politicized and traumatic situations in the present. Halbwachs's discussion of memory does not mention this (Rappaport 1998; Cole 2008; Shaw 2008). Multiple facts have been produced in phases of dispute in Champasak as an expression of various people's struggles to define the past. Thus, by relocating the scientific position (and myself) as reflexively as possible, and by resituating histories/memories already unearthed in the excavation of the past, I aim to examine how different views have been produced and performed.

II Situating Champasak: Marginalization under French Rule

To begin the study, I first examine how Southern Lao experienced otherness and marginalization by the other. The marginalized position of the South was reinforced in two historical phases: first, the formation of French Laos by the unification of Lao princi-

palities, the muang (mū'ang, ເມືອງ)[5] of the three kingdoms (ānāchak, ອານາຈັກ) of Luang Prabang, Vientiane, and Champasak at the end of the nineteenth century; and second, the installment of the king of Luang Prabang as the monarch of the Kingdom of Laos (ānāchak lāo, ອານາຈັກລາວ) after decolonization. This occurred alongside the Siamese colonization of the three Lao kingdoms in the eighteenth century. However, these phases, especially French colonization, were dramatic for the Southern Lao population as they introduced a coercive encounter with the powers of modernity, technology, and science that remained until the end of the royal court. French colonization began to affect Southern Lao even before the territorial treaty was forged in October 1893[6] by way of explorers dispatched to investigate the geography and resources of the South, including ancient monuments. The treaty, signed by the Siamese and French administrations, effected a change in the Southern kingdom: Muang Basak[7] (Fig. 1), the capital principality of the Champasak Kingdom located on the western bank of the Mekong, was excluded from eastern bank-centered French Laos. Although the western bank was included in French Laos in the second treaty, concluded in 1904, the French administration then established its headquarters on the eastern bank. The new central city of the South, Pakse (Fig. 1), was occupied by Vietnamese and Chinese settlers. Unlike the new settlers, who engaged in commercial, administrative, and other promoted activities, the residents of Basak were wet-rice cultivators, marginalized both economically and geographically.

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5) In this article the word "muang" is used in two ways: "principality" and "capital." Scholars consider a muang to be a small polity and component of the traditional Tai world. This Tai world and cosmology was called the "mandala" (Stuart-Fox 1997, 7) or "galactic polity" (Tambiah 1976, 109). In the mandala or galactic world, a muang was a principality because it was organized by the political discretion of local chiefs, and often maintained relative autonomy. However, if, like Basak, a principality was the heartland of a kingdom composed of many other subordinate principalities, it could also be considered a capital. I wish to emphasize that a muang is not only a politically organized polity but also a religiously organized one, or a polity embodied by religious imagination and performance.

6) The 1893 Franco-Siamese Treaty consisted of 10 articles concerning the delimitation of the territorial border. The territory of French Laos was delimited at the Mekong and excluded the western bank of the present provinces of Luang Prabang and Champasak. The western bank of Champasak, on which the palace of the Southern Lao kingdom was located, was cut off from French Laos in the 1893 treaty (Picanon 1901, 222–223) despite its close connection to the eastern bank. In 1904 the French government succeeded in annexing the Western banks of both the Northern and Southern regions (Le Boulanger 1931, 347–349). In the 1940s, however, the two western banks again became sites of territorial dispute between France and Siam (Thailand). This historical path may have furthered the marginalization of Champasak.

7) Muang Basak, the capital of the Southern Lao monarchy, no longer exists. Present residents call the former Basak area Muang or Muang Champasak, which translates to "town." "Muang Champasak," however, also signifies "Champasak district" (an area larger than the former Basak or "town") of Champasak Province. Since the French colonial period, the political system has considered Muang to mean "district," an administrative unit lower than a province.

Under such circumstances, how could, and how did, the Lao population view, interpret, and remember the present and past?

II-1 *Constructing a Memory: How the Prince Remembered the Past*
It is evident in Archaimbault's account *The New Year Ceremony at Basăk* (1971) that for Champasak, the past was a production of remembering and forgetting the specific historical and political moments in which it was situated. Archaimbault wrote his account through a lengthy communication with Boun Oum in the 1950s and 1960s.[8] He included statements written by Boun Oum himself, who experienced the loss of his position as a prince within the Kingdom of Laos by ceding the throne to the Luang Prabang court in 1946.

The account vividly notes how Boun Oum remembered the past in this situation. Archaimbault, serving as a storyteller, begins with the prince's discussion of his grandfather Kham Souk. Kham Souk established the royal court of Basak (Fig. 1) and encountered French expeditions in the late nineteenth century. Boun Oum told Archaimbault that his grandfather's encounter with French explorers was the start of a nightmarish experience: Auguste Pavie, the main player in the French colonization of Laos, treated Kham Souk as nothing more than "a phantom king" (Archaimbault 1971, 18), being skeptical of his close ties to the Siamese. The account notes that Kham Souk died in anger and distress, degraded to chief of one district. The nightmare was then passed on to his son, Rāsadānai—Boun Oum's father—who had to swear "allegiance to the French" (Archaimbault 1971, 18). After 1941, Basak once again became a point of territorial battle between France and Siam (Thailand). It became part of Siam and remained so until it was returned to Laos in 1946. The account records Champasak's past through the filter of Boun Oum, who sketched out the deterioration of both the fame and pride of the Southern Lao monarchy. This distress did not belong specifically to Kham Souk or Rāsadānai, but to Boun Oum himself. Boun Oum felt toward Archaimbault what his father and grandfather had felt toward French colonization. Sensing this, Archaimbault states that Boun Oum's narratives appeared like *bǫk bān chai* (ບອກ ບານ ໃຈ)—the rite of expulsion of sins, literally meaning "to tell (*bǫk*) is to open or to bloom (*bān*) a heart (*chai*)," in which sins are confessed as self-punishment. Archaimbault decided that the former

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8) Although a number of explorers visited Laos, including Champasak, and wrote travelogues in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, they rarely mentioned the names of the Lao kings. Archaimbault, who visited Laos after decolonization, focused on members of the Lao monarchies because his research, unlike that of early adventurers, pertained to Lao monarchical traditions. Thus, he became close to members of the royal family (Goudineau 2001; Lemoine 2001). That said, he does not seem to have been ignorant of the fact that he came from the colonizers' side.

prince lamented the decline of his grandfather, father, and country due to his incapacity. Boun Oum, however, stated that the Southern country's decline was its fate: in Buddhist thought, karma was attached to the South, and caused by an "original sin" by an ancestor of the royal court in the remote past (Archaimbault 1971, 45–49). This ancestor was a sinful queen named Nāng Pao. Another of Archaimbault's accounts, "L'histoire de Čămpasăk" (1961), regarded Nāng Pao as the key cause of the country's misfortune. In "L'histoire," however, the queen was a mythical figure with few concrete details: she was the only daughter and heir of a multiethnic kingdom consisting of Khmer, Indians, Cham, Lao, and Suei, called Năk'ônkalăčămpanak'ăbŭrisi. The kingdom was believed to have been situated around the villages of Katup, Muang Kang, Sang O, and Phanon before 1638 and to have had a good relationship with the Khmer monarchy (Archaimbault 1961, 523). The queen, whose ethnicity was unknown, passed her reign to the two Lao founders of the monarchy, the Buddhist monk Prakru Ponmesak and the prince Soi Sisamut, who came from Vientiane and established the order of the Southern region following Buddhism (Archaimbault 1961, 534–557).

Both Boun Oum and Archaimbault state in *The New Year Ceremony at Basăk* (1971, 14) and "L'histoire" (1961, 531) that the Southern kingdom fell into chaos during the reign of Nāng Pao because of the birth of her illegitimate daughter, Nāng Peng. Nāng Pao's illegitimate pregnancy was considered to be the cause of all the bad luck that befell future generations. Boun Oum's account raises a crucial theme in the governance of the Southern monarchy: gender and sexuality. He notes the importance of this theme in his own afterword in *The New Year Ceremony at Basăk*, in which he recalls how carefully his ancestors addressed gender and sexuality (Archaimbault 1971, 48).

Boun Oum's narratives cannot prove the existence of Nāng Pao and other ancestral heroes. Historians can closely scrutinize his statements, but firsthand materials are rare, and if written materials or objects could be found, it would be difficult to determine their accuracy. It would be impossible to pursue such a positivist approach in its entirety because, although Archaimbault stated his written history was based on several sources— those authorized by Kham Souk, his dignitaries, a Lao monk, and Siamese dignitaries working for their royal court[9]—the agency of the writers in shaping the facts remains uncertain. In the case of Boun Oum's narratives, which are full of grief and sorrow, what is more certain is his view and way of interpreting the past and reconstructing a memory.

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9) Archaimbault's "L'histoire" (1961, 579) referenced several source materials: first, two Lao versions, the annals of Kham Souk and his dignitary, written at the request of the Siamese, and the writing of Vientiane monk P'ră K'ru Kêu Lăk K'ăm; and second, three Siamese versions written by the dignitaries P'răyamahaămmatăyathibodi, Hmôn Amorawong Wičit, and Čău P'romt'ewanŭk'rô. All these sources were based on Lao and Siamese ancient texts and oral traditions.

We must consider what agency shaped Boun Oum's own memory. As a man who experienced modernity and its marginalization of his country, Boun Oum was a postcolonial subject in a hybrid position between the colonizing and colonized cultures (Said 1993), and he could only feel powerless.[10]

II-2 *Muang and the People*

During the period of the Southern country's marginalization, the rite of purifying sins was important. Feelings of grief were not exclusively felt by the prince but shared by the people who participated in the rite. Furthermore, the prince's reconstruction of the past was not solely an individual memory. Thus, ritualistic acts of purification served as important ceremonies. With respect to the New Year ceremony, Archaimbault notes that the sharing of symbolic acts established the harmonious relations of people with Muang Basak (Archaimbault 1971, 3–5).

Symbolic acts united the people, the royal house, and the authorities as an organic and lively community. Citizens who participated in the ceremony played the roles of both performer and observer. They were performers when they cleansed their bodies and purified the outer environment by accompanying the sacred procession with the prince as it circled the ritually central monasteries, and also when they sprinkled water on the prince and images of Buddha—the most powerful bodies symbolizing their principality and representing how and by whom the polity was managed and protected (Archaimbault 1971, 3–5). Subsequently, they completed the ceremony as observers. They observed that the rite was conducted promptly and smoothly, promising them safety and prosperity in the coming year (Archaimbault 1971, 3–5). This was the only way to officially end the ceremony, and the prince's exhibition of the entire procedure to residents was thus a crucial task.

The significance of the people's presence cannot be underestimated. The ceremony provided both the prince and the people with the opportunity to reconfirm their social and cosmological norms, as well as the political organization and protection, through enjoyment. Thus, the ceremonial settings of Southern Lao muang could be analogous to Clifford Geertz's definition of the classical Balinese polity, the negara, as a "metaphysical theater state" (Geertz 1980), which was "designed to express a view of the ultimate

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10) When reading Archaimbault's studies of Champasak, we must also carefully examine his agency and theoretical standpoint. Although Archaimbault demonstrated the inconsistency of the religious structure in Laos, as discussed in this article, he can also be said to have been influenced by structuralism; his inclination toward psychoanalytic structuralism (Lemoine 2001, 179–180) overemphasizes Boun Oum as an absolutely melancholic man despite his in-between position in postcolonial Laos, similar to his interpretation of gender and sexuality as firm dichotomies.

nature of reality and, at the same time, to shape the existing conditions of life to be consonant with that reality" (Geertz 1980, 104). Southern Lao muang conducted the New Year ceremony at the turning point of the calendar, bringing governors and commoners together onto the stage of a grand "drama" in which they reconfirmed the ontological significance of their cosmos. As in the negara, in which governance operated via symbolic actions, in muang, politics was not a simple conduit of power but rather an art to help realize its grand function, inciting commoners to cooperate with the governing body and its associates.

III   Theatrical Governmentality: How to Govern Muang

Although the features of Lao muang are analogous to the Balinese negara, muang were not exactly the same as negara. Each developed its own distinctiveness through unique cultural processes and the capacity to adapt to natural and social environments. We must thus more closely scrutinize each muang's development of "theatricality," or uniqueness in the art of conducting ceremonies for the political sake of each polity.

III-1 *The Uniqueness of Lao Theater: The Cultural Public Sphere*
The uniqueness of the Southern Lao art of governing muang can be seen most prominently in the popular way they relate themselves to the ceremonies and politics. We must first keep in mind that ceremonies are called *bun* (ບຸນ), a term with a double meaning: virtue or merit making, and participatory ceremonial occasions. Both meanings imply that individuals accumulate virtue or merit to achieve nirvana or eternal happiness (Nginn 1967), following the teachings of Theravada Buddhism. Thus, achievement of a state of happiness depends primarily upon individual practices, but individuals also engage in merit making and ceremonial occasions to gift their virtues to those around them. Thus, their virtues and happiness are to be shared by the collective. Lao ceremonial occasions, or theatricality, imply both individual and common good.

   To scrutinize Archaimbault's portrayal of the New Year ceremony, Bun Pī Mai (ບຸນປີໃໝ່), in terms of this theatricality, we can consider the ceremony to be an occasion for both individual and collective pursuit of happiness. The occasion was meaningless if not conducted in a space that was both open and accessible to individuals living together in the muang. Some rites were conducted within the palace, but the ultimate aim of such rites was to lead the muang and its people to happiness. Thus, the New Year ceremony and other ceremonial occasions were culturally designed to occur in the public sphere. The people were enthusiastic to join in this sphere because, being mostly agrarian

farmers, they earnestly wished to secure a good rice harvest. This is illustrated by Archaimbault: "The prince goes downstairs and takes his seat under the veranda, where everyone . . . now sprinkles him in order to assure an abundant rainfall" (Archaimbault 1971, 13). This aspect—people participating in ceremonial occasions in hopes of gaining life security and religious happiness—may also be a distinctive feature of Southern Lao's theatricality, running in contrast to the negara. Geertz portrayed the negara as composed of subjects who faithfully performed given hierarchical roles. Each actor was invariably obedient to the social and political scenario. Anthropologists skeptical of the image of individuals as anonymous members of culture or society may insist that Geertz, in accordance with his early theories, customarily interpreted people as socially embedded objects, and thus he depicted the negara as a hierarchical, well-organized theater. Such critiques alert us that facts are filtered through writers' eyes.

All we can draw with certainty from Archaimbault's portrait of the New Year ceremony is that diagnostically, the muang's residents were highly sensitive to socially expected roles and codes, which were conveyed through ceremonies. However, they were not merely recipients of these codes but creative performers who interwove their own will into the drama. Archaimbault's portrayal suggests that if the theatrical public space did not allow individuals to live on their initiative, the theater would have been empty. In this respect, the Southern Lao public sphere was unlike the Balinese theatrical sphere.

In Southern Lao muang, ceremonies were important arts that connected the people to their lords. Indigenous politics were successful if they could stimulate people's enthusiasm for living. An interview with villagers who participated in ceremonies during the old regime revealed that the festivities conveyed religious excitement and feelings of pleasure for their lives. The most impressive ceremonial event was *bun sūang hū'a* (ບຸນຊ່ວງເຮືອ), the boat racing ceremony. It was exciting because it had multiple meanings: human, ethnic, economic, and political. Such scenes can be observed again in Archaimbault's research (1972). Racers came from all the lower regions of both banks of the Mekong, the farthest coming from the border area of present-day Cambodia, to the main stage in Muang Basak. In the area of the palace was a miniature Mount Meru (according to local belief, a physical representation of the peak of the world), located in the center of the Southern kingdom. The spatial range of the capital city Basak was marked and protected by two important shrines: the Golden Shrine (*hǭ kham*, ຫໍຄຳ) in Phaphin Village, which enshrined the great guardian spirit of the capital of the kingdom (phī mū'ang, ຜີເມືອງ), Chao Thǣn Kham (ເຈົ້າແຖນຄຳ); and Wat Thāt (ວັດທາດ), the monastery that enshrined the royal Lao founder and guardian of the capital, Soi Sisamut (Fig. 1).

The people who performed the boat racing ceremony expressed appreciation and homage toward the divine dragon, Nāga, which controlled rainfall and was thus the

farmers' subsequent lifeline. At the same time, the ceremony provided a multitude of entertainment, offering people the opportunity to dance and sing with others from different villages and districts. Finally, the ceremony afforded the opportunity to purchase rare products brought by traders from all over the lower Mekong region (Archaimbault 1972, 62).[11]

By hosting the ceremonies and integrating the rituals with trading and entertainment, the former Lao monarchy could control the public. By gathering racers and dignitaries from villages and small muang in the lower Mekong region, they also could recognize those in their mandala (Stuart-Fox 1997, 7) or galactic world (Tambiah 1976, 109). The ceremonies demarcated the border of the universe, not by drawing a borderline of the kingdom but by inspiring the imagination and performance of the ceremony's participants.

III-2 *What Is Shown in Lao Theater? Controlling Sexuality and Regulating Society*
If ceremonies were indigenous arts for governing muang, we should carefully examine what participants were shown. As noted previously, in Champasak Boun Oum considered it important to regulate female sexuality. The theme of the sinful queen was staged repeatedly in important ceremonies and rites, including the sacrifice of buffaloes.[12] This sacrifice was carried out at the Golden Shrine, which was built in the precinct of Wat Phu (Fig. 1). Based on his participant observation in the 1950s, Archaimbault (1959) described the procedures of the rite, unlike early explorers, who concerned themselves only with the architectural and archaeological features of Wat Phu. His research suggests how Nāng Pao's original sin was related to regulating female sexuality by highlighting the villagers' belief that Nāng Pao had cursed them:

> If any young girl follows my example and lets some young lad make love to her to the extent of becoming a mother, then let her offer up a buffalo to the guardian spirits. . . . If not, then may the rice in the rays perish when the ears are forming, may the rice in the rice-fields dry up and die! (Archaimbault 1959, 160)

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11) Jos Platenkamp (2008, 8–9) states that in Luang Prabang, what he calls the "appointed markets" were held at the New Year and boat racing ceremonies. These markets were officially controlled occasions in which citizens could meet traders and peruse merchandise from all upper Mekong regions and various ethnicities.

12) Buffalo sacrifice was not conducted exclusively in Champasak. As Paul Lévy (1959) noted, the same rite was historically conducted in Northern Lao principalities as well, although it has not survived to the present in the North. In 1975 the sacrifice of buffaloes in Champasak was replaced with the sacrifice of chickens; however, following permission from the authorities, the villagers of Champasak restored the rite in 2013, as is discussed in a later section. This occurred along with a resurgence of popularity and belief in the legends of Kammathā and Nāng Sīdā.

According to Archaimbault, following this curse, villagers searched for unmarried mothers in the greater area around Wat Phu and asked those women to offer buffaloes to the guardian spirits worshipped during the rite. He suggests that the main reason Lao communities sacrificed buffaloes was their adherence to local Lao oral tradition, which said that the founder of Wat Phu, Kammathā (ກຳມະທາ), offered human sacrifices to the guardian spirits (Archaimbault 1959, 156). At some point in the past, the rite transformed into a sacrifice of buffaloes because "the blood of a buffalo is of equal value with the blood of a man" (Archaimbault 1959, 156). Archaimbault does not indicate why Nāng Pao was drawn into the scenario; however, he obviously believed that the Lao attached their legend of Nāng Pao to a pre-existing rite of sacrifice. He followed the hypothesis of his fellow scholar George Cœdès, who translated the late-fifth-century Sanskrit inscription K365 discovered in Champasak (the details of this inscription will be discussed later). Cœdès suggested that in the remote past, a rite of human sacrifice was practiced by a king with a name other than Kammathā. Archaimbault, accordingly, believed the original rite to have begun in the remote past with someone other than Kammathā (Archaimbault 1961, 519–523). In Archaimbault's perspective, the Lao attached their legend of Kammathā to the scenario of the sacrifice. Likewise, Archaimbault thought that the Lao legend of Nāng Pao was incorporated into the previously existing rite of sacrifice.

Archaimbault's proposition suggests that, by reinterpreting and incorporating pre-existing religious practices into their own traditions, Southern Lao people reproduced their theatrical governmentality. This domestication of various beliefs and practices for their own use, with special attention to female sexuality, is also suggested by the Southern Lao recreation of other myths. First is the genesis myth of the Southern world, which stated that their world began with an accident caused by a female divinity who had an illegitimate child with her servant (Archaimbault 1964, 61–63); second is the oral tradition of a Lao woman named Nāng Malong, telling of her illegitimate love with a young non-Lao prince and ending in her suicide (Archaimbault 1961, 525–526). The main themes of such myths were female sexuality and misfortune, including interethnic marriage, caused by women's misconduct. As Archaimbault mentioned (1961, 525–531), however, those stories share a resemblance to myths of Northern Lao principalities. Although female sexuality was a common theme in the region, the myths were not simply disseminated to the South; the Southern Lao found it necessary to transform them into theatrical governmentality.

Why was female sexuality an important theme? There is no critical answer. However, considering that important messages were transmitted during ceremonial performances, and that voluntary participation in ceremonial/political occasions was respected, it is possible that female sexuality was a difficult problem for the "liberal" government to solve.

It is unclear why interethnic marriage was narrated and performed as misconduct in myths and ceremonial occasions. Most likely, it was to maintain a hierarchical relationship between Lao and minorities,[13] as in the case of royal ceremonies held in Luang Prabang (Lukas 2012). In Champasak non-Lao minorities played a significant role in ceremonies, but the Lao imposed a hierarchical relationship between the minorities and themselves. This relationship is well illustrated in the procedure of the boat racing ceremony (Archaimbault 1972). Some minorities, who were considered "original inhabitants" and thus legitimate conductors of rituals to call upon ancestral spirits, came to this ceremony to initiate the sacrifice of the buffalo to the guardian spirits. Others struck gongs, danced, and sang to call up the tutelary spirits of the land. One such song included both Lao and non-Lao lyrics, preaching the miserable end of interethnic marriage. By including non-Lao people in ceremonies, the Lao monarchy could ostensibly exhibit the Lao people's superiority. Thus, minorities took part in the Lao theatrical governmentality not as the principal actors, but in supporting roles.

IV   The Making of History: Gazing upon Antiquity

In Lao theatrical governmentality, festive occasions, myths, and legends were vehicles to convey symbolic messages to the people, particularly those concerning moral codes connected to female sexuality. In this governmentality, myths and legends were not fantasy but socially authorized historiography, or "correct history." This "history" was, however, vastly different from the "history" created by French explorers and scholars in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. French history was produced by scientific specialism, objectivity, and the measurability and traceability of materials. In contrast, Lao traditional governments' history was crafted by providing people with opportunities for performance and celebration as social welfare.

IV-1 *The French Version of History and Its Methodology*
French scholars created a chronological history and gave the names of non-Lao founders and monarchs to the old artifacts and buildings scattered around Champasak. They

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13) During the Lan Xang period, people were enslaved as a result of debt or captivity after armed conflicts. In the southern region of Laos, minorities were often enslaved by the dominant groups, such as the Lao, the Siamese, and the Vietnamese. In the late nineteenth century, Europeans began an anti-slavery campaign, and the French colonial government officially abolished slavery in Laos in 1898. However, slavery continued as an institution in remote areas until the 1920s (Stuart-Fox 2001 [1992], 290–291).

developed this history in the form of texts to understand the past, writing about the causes and effects of events, piecing together fragments of evidence. This practice was initiated by nineteenth-century explorers. In the early twentieth century, the "amateur" work of French scholars was integrated into the work of a scholarly organization known as the French Archaeological Mission, which ultimately became L'École Française d'Extrême-Orient (French School of the Far East).

Considering that the early explorers "discovered" and documented a dense distribution of ancient objects around Basak (Aymonier 1901; Lunet de Lajonquière 1907; Garnier 1996; Harmand 2010), the dwelling area of the Southern Lao monarchy became of interest to the organization. These ancient remains, particularly Wat Phu and other standing stone buildings, suited the French administration's hopes of finding evidence of past and present affluence, as well as testing their knowledge. Particular political attention was paid to Wat Phu because it resembled Angkorian architecture, exhibited as a symbol of French Indochina in museums and expositions.

Epigraphists and conservators of the French School, such as Auguste Barth (1902), Louis Finot (1902), and Henri Parmentier (1914), published studies of the archaeological features and translations of the Sanskrit and Khmer inscriptions based on rubbings. Champasak was, however, too remote for extensive investigations on-site. The scholars' offices were located in major cities within Indochina, and the greatest concern of the French School, following administrative policy, was the restoration of gigantic buildings. Given these restrictions, surveys in Champasak were limited, and the regional culture—particularly Lao culture in Southern Laos—was of far less interest until Archaimbault began his fieldwork in the 1950s.

Investigation and collection of ancient objects was allocated to French administrators or treasury researchers stationed in the French office. Those engaged in the Mission Conservatrice (Conservation Mission) were most interested in the statues with old Sanskrit and Khmer engravings.[14] The inscriptions were prized as evidence the researchers could use for absolute dating. If the inscribed statues and other artifacts were small enough to carry, they were sent to museums established by the French administration in Indochina, or to museums in France.[15]

The most active agents of the Conservation Mission, however, were members of

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14) At least 12 inscriptions were discovered around Wat Phu and catalogued in French travelogues and inventories (Aymonier 1901; Barth 1902; Lunet de Lajonquière 1907; Cœdès 1953; 1956; 1964; Harmand 2010): K365, K366, K367, K475, K476, K478, K720, K721, K722, K876, K938, and K963.

15) Inventories of the inscriptions, particularly Volumes 5 and 7 (Cœdès 1953; 1964), allow us to trace where the inscriptions of Champasak were taken and stored. Most were sent to Vietnam and Cambodia, and very rarely were they sent to Paris. K365 was not removed from Champasak.

the French Catholic Mission (hereafter "French mission")[16] who settled in Champasak in the late nineteenth century. With the aim to "[e]vangelize the people of Laos" (Tournier 1900, 130), the mission established a settlement and built a cathedral in the area around Phanon Village, located within several kilometers of both Wat Phu and Basak (Fig. 1).

When the mission arrived in Phanon, the area appears to have been sparsely populated. The early explorer Étienne Lunet de Lajonquière said, on his visit to Champasak in 1905, that locals preferred not to dwell in the Phanon area, which was scattered with bricks from collapsed structures, because they believed it was once a city created by the Cham and that the area was haunted by their spiritual entities (phī) (Lunet de Lajonquière 1907, 76). It is difficult to confirm the truth of the existence of the Cham spirits in the oral tradition. Considering that the area was the arrival point of the heroic Lao ancestors Prakru Ponmesak and Soi Sisamut, it is unclear whether the Lao would have abandoned it. Considering that the present villagers frequently moved settlements due to maladies caused by the spirits, it is unsurprising that the Lao refrained from living around a spiritual area. Despite this ambiguity, according to Lunet de Lajonquière's information, the French mission chose to settle in the area because the Lao did not reside in it for fear of the spirits.

This decision led the French mission to form close connections with the ancient remains. Phanon Village was located in the area of Champasak most thickly scattered with archaeological remains, meaning that members of the mission could begin to conserve ancient artifacts immediately. One such object was a two-meter statue discovered along the bank of Hūai Sa Hūa (Sa Hua River), a branch of the Mekong. After the statue was discovered, the mission placed it in Phanon. It is uncertain why they did not transfer the statue to a French museum. Considering the difficulty of carrying a huge stone object all the way to a central city, it could be that preserving it on-site was merely a method of conservation, or that the mission may have been afraid of damaging the statue. In any case, the mission kept the statue for decades after its discovery (Lunet de Lajonquière 1907, 88–89; Cœdès 1953, 9; 1956, 210).

The stone statue was shaped like a lingam, a symbol of Shiva, and had Sanskrit inscriptions on its four surfaces. It became the focus of French investigation. Around

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16) The Catholic Mission belonged to the Bishop of Bangkok and was accompanied by Christian Annamites, who had been liberated from slavery (Tournier 1900, 130). The mission was called the Mission at Phanon, named after the village where the cathedral was built. In a sketch map of the location (Lunet de Lajonquière 1907; Cœdès 1956, 211), however, the mission seems to have been located at the site of Vat Luang Kao village, which had a pier. Phanon and Vat Luang Kao were both sanctuary sites for Lao royal ancestors and Buddhist monks. Early French articles often confused the locations of Phanon and Vat Luang Kao due to uncertainties in the village profiles.

the early 1930s, a French administrator took a rubbing of the inscriptions at Vat Luang Kao village, which neighbored Phanon. The rubbing was of poor quality, however (Cœdès 1953, 9), and the geographic remoteness prevented epigraphists from reading the inscriptions. It was not until the early 1950s that Cœdès (1953; 1956) studied and fully translated the statue's inscriptions.[17]

The inscription was numbered K365 in the French inventory. Some began to call it the inscription of Devānīka (Mahārājādhirāja Çrīmāñ Chrī Devānīka), after the king named in the inscription. K365 became renowned as significant evidence of "pre-Angkorian" history; Cœdès incorporated Angkorian inscriptions, Khmer oral tradition, Chinese texts, and K365 in his examination and created a grand history of the region. To French scholars who were concerned about how and why the Khmer formed the Angkorian Empire, and who were interested in the history of the lower Mekong region, his hypothesis was very insightful.[18]

Cœdès portrayed Champasak, where the Lao were already the dominant residents at the time of his study, as the historical stage, related to Cham, Chenla, and Khmer. Studies of K365 and other inscriptions from Champasak also showed that Wat Phu was called Vrah Thkval (Aymonier 1901, 163–164; Lunet de Lajonquière 1907, 75) and the venerated god was Bhadresvara (Cœdès 1956, 213; 1968, 66). None of these names, however, appear in Archaimbault's studies of Southern Lao traditions. Paradoxically, Cœdès left some keywords appearing in K365 unexamined, including the rite of sacrifice, Kuruksetra (the name of the place, according to Cœdès [1956]), and tīrtha (a domain of sacredness, according to Diana Eck [1981; 2012]), although those are important for understanding the ancient governmentality of Champasak.

K365 stated that Devānīka, a great conqueror, came to and invented "tīrtha," named

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17) The statue, before being numbered K365 in the French inventory, was called by different names by explorers and administrators: the statue of the Catholic Mission, the statue of Phanon Village, or the statue of Vat Luang Kao. Cœdès was able to translate the inscription because Archaimbault, who was doing fieldwork on the site and checked whether there were as many statues as there were names, gave him a photographed copy of all its surfaces (Cœdès 1956, 220).

18) With K365, Cœdès presented his hypothesis of the "pre-Angkorian" history of the region. He came to the following conclusions: 1) Because a sentence in K365 stated that Devānīka devoted himself to the lingam, or the god Shiva, on the mountain Lingaparvata ("mountain of the lingam," present-day Phū Kao), like the ancient Cham site My Son, and because other inscriptions named the venerated god Bhadresvara, identical to the name of the god worshipped at My Son, Champasak clearly had a relationship with Cham; 2) King Devānīka was the same person as the king of Chenla (真臘), Fan Chen (=神), Tch'eng (=成, 晟), or Fan Tien-Kai, whose name was mentioned in the Chinese texts of the Sui Dynasty, because the meaning of the two names matched, along with the Chinese description of Chenla and the features of Champasak; 3) The Sanskrit letters of K365 could be dated to around the late fifth century, when Funan, a rival to the early Khmer, was in decline and the Khmer defeated the Cham (Cœdès 1956; 1968).

"Kuruksetra," and conducted the "rite of sacrifice" toward "fire." Given that Devānīka led the sacrifice as a rite of purification, he acquired merit, conferred it on Kuruksetra (as created by Devānīka), and prayed that both the dead and the living would share it (Cœdès 1956, 217–219). Cœdès (1968, 75) concluded that Devānīka sacrificed humans to powerful spirits, following the texts of the Sui Dynasty as they relate to Chenla.[19] To be precise, no critical statements in K365 state that the sacrifice was of humans; however, this hypothesis was accepted as an absolute truth. As noted in the previous section, by accepting Cœdès's interpretation as an absolute fact, Archaimbault regarded human sacrifice as the origin of the buffalo sacrifice, despite the lack of any supporting evidence aside from the Chinese document.

Cœdès's interpretation had an influence on many scholarly discussions; however, it had its limitations. For instance, epigraphic studies (Cœdès 1956, 212; Jacques 1962, 250) did include the important keywords "Kuruksetra" and "tīrtha," but they were scrutinized only modestly. These studies noted that K365 reflected the lyrics and cosmology of the Ramayana and Mahabharata, and thus suggested that ancient Champasak was a theatrical country, like the existing Indian city of Kurukshetra.[20] Thus, they treated the cosmological lyrics and the name of Kurukshetra inscribed in K365 as evidence of "Indianization." However, because they failed to closely scrutinize the meaning of tīrtha, they interpreted Indianization superficially. According to Eck (1981; 2012), a tīrtha classically indicated a sacred spot or place, such as a crossing, river, temple, or mountain. A tīrtha was not sacred in its own right; the sacredness of tīrtha, like Kurukshetra, was dependent on sacred acts, including purification, performed by visiting pilgrims. The sacredness of tīrtha and Kurukshetra were never guaranteed without the practices of living people.

Epigraphists were not indifferent to the two keywords of "Kurukshetra" and "tīrtha." Nevertheless, because they could not witness the fragile and ambiguous actions of pilgrims, which were rarely reflected in written testimonies, they concluded only that the ancient governmentality described in the inscriptions was evidence of the static phenomenon of Indianization. Indianization could be a complicated and ambiguous process, however, just as a tīrtha could be a dynamic realm.

French investigations sought to acquire evidence using new technology, but there were limits to its interpretation. With the advent of aerial photography in the mid-

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19) The Sui texts said that the place "was always guarded by a thousand soldiers and consecrated to the spirit named P'o-to-li, to whom human sacrifices are made" (Cœdès 1968, 65). According to Cœdès (1968, 66), P'o-to-li was identical to Bhadresvara, and the temple was Wat Phu or Vrah Thkval.
20) The existing Indian city is spelled "Kurukshetra," not Kuruksetra, in contemporary English maps.

twentieth century, Archaimbault and the French Service of Information provided Cœdès with a bird's-eye view of the area. The epigraphist then found double-folded walls situated over a large area around Phanon Village (Fig. 1), including a number of archaeological remains (Cœdès 1956, 220). He concluded that they were the walls of Kuruksetra (Cœdès 1956, 220). After the appearance of the aerial photo, however, the ancient city began to be called Sresthapura, a legendary Khmer city, instead of Kuruksetra, although no archaeological materials supporting the existence of Sresthapura in Champasak were discovered. This was in large part due to scientific concerns tied up with Angkor-centered history. In accordance with Khmer legends that the earliest Angkorian Empire was born with the early Khmer King Sresthavarman, around an area geographically similar to Champasak, the walled city became known as the Sresthavarman's city of Sresthapura (Archaimbault 1961, 519).[21]

IV-2 *The Local Lao Version of History and Its Methodology*

Lao history contrasts with the French history of Champasak with respect to appreciation of ancient objects. Considering the documents written in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Lao inhabitants can be assumed to have viewed all the great remains as sacred devices that contained the special powers of the spirits, which controlled the fate of the principality and the people. Caring for such objects was the duty of the Lao royal court, the holder of the ancient objects. Ancient artifacts were not displayed in museums but exhibited as active objects on the stages of ceremonies, or as symbols of welfare and protection for the living people. The site of Wat Phu was considered the oldest Mount Meru, the center of the universe, or the oldest palace (phāsāt, ຟາສາດ), which was guarded by spiritual powers. According to Lao inhabitants Archaimbault (1959; 1961) met in the 1950s and 1960s, one of the spirits with the greatest power was not Cham, Chenla, or Khmer, but rather King Kammathā, known in their oral tradition as the founder of Wat Phu. The villagers honored the spirit of King Kammathā by sacrificing buffaloes. However, as noted previously, in the oral tradition of Lao villagers, Kammathā conducted human sacrifices at Wat Phu in the remote past. The Lao villagers thus took over the rite from Kammathā. By holding the rite, regardless of their use of buffaloes, the Lao people declared to the spirit that they governed their country.

Kammathā rarely appears in the mainstream French version of Champasak's history because no inscriptions or other written materials support his existence. Unlike other explorers, Etienne Aymonier (1901, 164–165), who traveled to Champasak in the late

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21) Recently, scholars involved in excavations in Champasak have begun to discuss calling the city Kuruksetra, due to the lack of material evidence to support the existence of Sresthapura. The discussion reflects the recent trend for scholars to pay greater attention to locally specific history.

nineteenth century, noted that in the local Lao oral tradition, Kammathā was the founder of Wat Phu. However, Aymonier wrote that Kammathā was a legendary figure, stating that the oral traditions differed from written materials that could be used as evidence in scientific studies.[22]

Archaimbault (1961), too, treated Kammathā as a legendary king. The sole instance in which Kammathā is mentioned is the chronicle written by Kham Souk and his dignitaries at the request of the Siamese in the late nineteenth century (Archaimbault 1961, 579). This chronicle was not intended to be printed and disseminated to the public. Rather, its contents were meant to be transmitted to the public in the cultural and ceremonial public sphere as real history, or in a way that attracted little scientific attention.

Despite positivists' skepticism over King Kammathā's existence, Lao communities shared the story about him in the form of ritual performance and narrative. In culturally authorized time and space, local residents believed it was not Devānīka, the Cham, the Chenla, or the Khmer kings, but Kammathā himself who was the heroic founder and initiator of the area's history. In the oral tradition, Kammathā had a daughter named Nāng Sīdā, the main figure in the oral tradition titled "Mr. Katthanam." This oral tradition concerns a heroic and mysterious prince who was married to Nāng Sīdā (Aymonier 1901, 164–165). In the story, Nāng Sīdā is represented as a model woman embodying intelligence and beauty (Archaimbault 1961, 521–523).[23] Although she was also treated as a mythical figure by explorers and scholars, she too was a real princess to native Lao communities. As the stories of Queen Nāng Pao and other sinful women carried codes of sexuality and marriage in the monarchical regime, the stories of Kammathā and Nāng Sīdā also served to convey to the people their true history.

Lord Kammathā, Princess Sīdā, and all other "legendary" ancestors were considered not dead but "living" when their legends were remembered and narrated by Lao communities. As will be discussed later, these ancestors remain living in the present as they are worshipped in ordinary or ceremonial times and spaces. They are not only commemorated but also incarnated through the bodies or voices of ritual masters or

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22) Aymonier wrote that local Lao oral traditions identified Kammathā not as a Lao but as a Cham man who married a daughter of the Lao king of Vientiane (Aymonier 1901, 164–165). The fact that he was a Cham man did not appear in the oral traditions of the twentieth-century villagers that Archaimbault (1961) studied. The mutation in the story, however, does not necessarily exclude oral traditions from usefulness as material for scientific studies. As demonstrated in this article, studies should examine how such changes occurred and what they indicate.

23) Archaimbault (1961) notes that the oral traditions of Nāng Sīdā had some similarities with Northern Lao legends, as did other southern legends such as that of Nāng Malong. If so, we may assume that the myths and legends were adapted to their environments in the course of Lao resettlement into the South.

mediums. Thus, Lao society illustrates what Lucien Lévi-Bruhl called "participation": the "opposition between the one and the many, the same and another does not impose this mentality, the necessity of affirming one of the terms if the other be denied, or vice versa" (Lévi-Bruhl 1984 [1926], 77). In Lao society, old artifacts and legendary people were in a sense both dead and living, coexisting with the living villagers in their society.

During my fieldwork in the early 2000s, this feature was evident in my communication with and observation of the living inhabitants and the master of rituals. Those who lived in the village situated closest to Wat Phu and the other ancient places said that the spirits of the "legends" remained in the region. In Lao governmentality, the existence of the ancestors and spirits was anchored to performativity, subjectivity, and the remembering and forgetting of members of society, as was the past. History was interwoven in the course of inclusion, exclusion, and domestication of traditions. This historicization, however, was marginalized when it encountered science. Due to the exclusion of the ritual authorization of history, a phase of dispute developed between the two versions of history.

V The Encounter of the Spirits with Modern Science

The moment at which scientific and modern governmentality encountered theatrical governmentality was documented in the travelogue of the French explorer Lunet de Lajonquière (1907). As mentioned previously, Lunet de Lajonquière noted that although the Lao inhabitants were frightened by the spirits and preferred not to live around the Phanon area, the Catholic Mission chose to use the area as a base (Lunet de Lajonquière 1907, 76).[24]

This was the first meeting between science and the spirits, old artifacts, and Lao governmentality. If the Lao felt fearful toward spirits, as the travelogue noted, we may presume that, out of awe and respect, the locals could hardly touch the ancient remains and would have therefore "conserved" the objects in situ. If a person were to carelessly touch one, the spirits might impose adverse repercussions. During my fieldwork I often heard Lao inhabitants express such fear of the spirits. Some said that villagers used to move their settlements when maladies were imposed on them by the spirits. In many cases, the villagers said the same thing regarding spiritual spots scattered with ruins.

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24) Phanon Village still exists along the Mekong today. However, the village is divided into North Phanon and South Phanon, populated by Buddhists and Christians respectively. Thus, the legacy of the Catholic Mission has been passed down to later generations in a way that coexists with the local religion, despite its religious differences.

More stories from inhabitants supported the hypothesis that not only the various French missions but also natives and the royal house engaged in the conservation of ancient artifacts. One story concerned the inscription of K365. The French catalog noted that the Catholic Mission handled K365 either in their village, Phanon, or in the neighboring village of Vat Luang Kao. However, at some point during the twentieth century, the statue was transferred to the palace at Basak. The royal house kept the statue for decades until it was transported to the exhibition room of the museum, which was built in 2002 after the large area obtained World Heritage site designation.

The royal house placed K365 at the entrance, as if it were a symbol of the house. From the perspective of theatrical governmentality, this "exhibition" would represent the art of governing the Lao polity: showing a symbolic object signaled that the palace was the center of the principality. Although it was not possible to ask the house why K365 was "conserved" outside, many native narratives suggested that the house employed the traditional art of managing the polity by governing ancient objects. Those narratives said that in the old days, when people found artifacts near their living environments, they delivered them to the palace, which was considered the most appropriate place to manage extraordinary objects. The Lao palace therefore served as a "storehouse" or "museum," as Grant Evans (1998, 122) noted.

Ironically, these stored artifacts did not have corresponding information about the dates and states of discovery, so when museological and curatorial knowledge arrived with the World Heritage designation, the traditional methods of conservation were criticized as "incorrect." Under Laos's socialist regime, which pursued modernization, theatrical governmentality was considered to be so old and contradictory that it obfuscated the facts.

V-1 *The Second Phase: The Old Man Who Lived in the Ancient City*

Around the 2001 inscription of Champasak on the list of World Heritage sites, historical investigation, interpretation, conservation, and restoration began to revisit Champasak. Based on my fieldwork, I discuss how and why facts multiplied, reexamining the participation of the dead in the living society, and the involvement of the physical in that belief.

A conversation with an elderly villager living within the walls of the ancient city of Kuruksetra/Sresthapura illustrates how the pursuit of truth may make our realities converge. I visited the resident's village in 2002, when I was still unknown to the villagers. I was accompanied by two local officers, an older man and a woman interpreter, who were dispatched by the local authorities to oversee the research. My meeting with the elderly villager was an opportunity to learn how vulnerable the past was. To determine general

information about the village, I asked several questions, including some about his personal life and the history of the village. In response to my questions about the history of the village, the old man began talking about the "Conservation Mission" of the native population. He said that the royal court and the villagers had come together to create the village, which was located in the heart of Kuruksetra/Sresthapura. According to the man, his village had been created when the palace ordered the citizens to establish a village in an area densely covered by fragments of ancient bricks, with the intention of having the residents manage the remains. The man, who stated his age at about 70 years, reported that this order was given about "100 years ago," equivalent to "two or three generations before." The interpreter asked him for a precise year, but he did not provide one. He spoke with her quickly and in unidentifiable words but did not offer me any more details. The old man and my associates seemed to talk amongst themselves and did not continue the investigation.

I discovered many years later that the old man's information was somewhat confusing when referring to a description of the same situation by a French explorer. A French travelogue I read in 2010 (Lunet de Lajonquière 1907, 76) mentioned that Lao inhabitants refrained from establishing settlements around the ancient city because they were afraid of the curse of the spirits and the ancient remains. Nonetheless, a sketch map (Lunet de Lajonquière 1907, 78–79) showed the village that I visited, with exactly the same name and location. If the village truly existed in 1905, then who issued the order to create it, and when? The monarchical history reveals that Kham Souk died in 1900, and Rāsadānai took over in 1903.[25]

By 2010 I had had a few opportunities to meet with another old man from the village who took care of the spirits. He said that the spirits dwelled around the ancient remains. He also spoke about foreign researchers he had met at the ancient remains in the 1990s. He thought that the researchers had come to his village to dig for gold, because when he was sleeping the spirits conveyed to him that gold was present. Although he did not criticize the researchers, he had been unwilling to see them.

When I found the French map in 2010, I recalled both stories and considered that the visits by outsiders would have been shocking to the villagers. In particular, during the period of French colonization in which ancient materials were of great interest, it made sense that the Lao royal court—Kham Souk, Rāsadānai, or others—would have created a mission to protect the objects and spirits from colonization, regardless of citi-

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25) A three-year interregnum followed the death of Kham Souk. This was likely related to the French administration, which could not establish its provincial office until 1908. However, no materials support this claim.

zens' fears of spiritual curses. To lose the ancient remains would have meant losing a way to communicate with their spiritual guardians; the Lao royal court's resistance would have been reasonable.

The stories raised questions that my positivistic investigation could not definitively answer. As a researcher from a foreign country, I found it difficult to obtain supporting data that provided details with a signature from the author(s). I was unsure how to acquire data that supported the narratives. Even if I had another opportunity to meet these old men, it would be difficult to move from the fragile past to a fieldwork context, when stories of the old regime would still trigger political confusion. Eventually, I realized that there might be unspoken stories. The silenced, untouched element in the old men's speech was obviously the archaeological history of Champasak. The officers who accompanied me engaged in the present art of governing foreign affairs and instructed me to be on their side. They appeared to imply that they controlled the research. Thus, the two old men appeared to claim ownership of the ancient sites, over both the officers and me.

If I had been more in tune with the context in which the old men were situated, I could have asked more insightful questions and had better conversations with them. The same thought occurred to me in 2015, when I had the opportunity to meet with Lao authorities. They had visited the old men's village in the 1990s to acquire new archaeological materials to add Champasak to the World Heritage list. When I spoke with these authorities, they implied that they felt the villagers were unwelcoming. They said that not many villagers had seen an archaeological excavation, and most did not know what was going on. I recalled the old men's stories upon hearing this, and realized that their mission to protect the ancient remains might have been reactivated when the authorities visited the village. When I visited, the villagers would also have watched me carefully. When outsiders began to visit Champasak to see the ancient objects, the old men and other villagers may have resumed their mission to protect both the antiquities and the village.

It is difficult to find the absolute truth about these situations. Different people are concerned about Champasak's past and present. Not all would necessarily respond to a positivist inquiry of the past. Thus, all I could ascertain was that the facts were delicately constructed.

V-2 *The Second Phase: The Masters of Ritual Who Lived in the Precinct of Wat Phu*
In 2008 I had the opportunity to talk with the masters of the ritual who lived at the neighboring site of Wat Phu. At that time, the sacrifice of buffaloes had been modified to a sacrifice of chickens in accordance with the "saving-first" policy of the socialist govern-

ment. The ceremonial governmentality tended to be overlooked by society as a whole.

The village of the masters, located next to Wat Phu, was known as a home to people who had been in touch with the guardian spirits. Male mediums, such as Mǭ Thīam (ໝໍທຼງມ), who could be possessed by spirits, and Mǭ Cham (ໝໍຈ້ຳ), who could talk with spirits, were the main conductors of the rituals; female mediums, Mǣ Lam (ແມ່ລຳ), who communicated with spirits by dancing and were concerned with curing diseases, lived with other villagers. These masters played the main role in communicating with the ancient founder of Wat Phu and other spirits authorized as guardian spirits of the principality in oral traditions and myths, along with other masters of the Golden Shrine in Muang Champasak (formerly Muang Basak) (Fig. 1).

Mǭ Thīam, who was over 70 years old, said that the spiritual entities had continued to monitor Champasak, with each establishing its own base. Thǣn Kham (ແຖນຄຳ), Nǭi (ນ້ອຍ), and Thamphalangsī (ທຳພະລັງສີ) were at the Golden Shrine next to Wat Phu, where the masters conducted the sacrifice. Each mountain lying beside Wat Phu was a base for the great spirits of Surinyaphāvong (ສຸຣິຍະພາວົງ), Lāsaphangkhī (ລາຊະພັງຄີ), Phāsathū'an (ພາສະເທືອນ), Ongkhot (ອົງຄົດ), Champāvongkot (ຈຳປາວົງກົດ), Thǭnglǭ (ທອງຫລໍ່), and Mǭkasat (ໝໍ່ <ໝໍ່> ກະສັດ). The ancient buildings were occupied by the spirits of Nāng Ekhai,[26] located in the stone-built monument, called Tomo, on the eastern bank, and Kammathā, located in Wat Phu (Fig. 1).[27]

Mǭ Thīam did not mention the spirit of Nāng Sīdā dwelling at the ancient stone building complex named for her, which was located within a kilometer of Wat Phu (Fig. 1). Even so, just as her story was a favorite of present Lao communities, many inhabitants continued to commemorate her, although in a different place. As Aymonier noted, the location bearing her name was originally one of two galleries standing in the lower terrace of Wat Phu, not the smaller-scale stone building in the complex a kilometer distant (Aymonier 1901, 164–165). Her name was most likely removed from the gallery of Wat Phu because the scientific investigation at Wat Phu began in earnest during the French colonial period, during which the gallery became known by a different name. After Nāng Sīdā's "expulsion" from Wat Phu, however, the monument complex nearby became known as the "building of Nāng Sīdā" (hōng Nāng Sīdā, ໂຮງນາງສີດາ) in native circles.

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26) I was unable to record the name of Nāng Ekhai in Lao in my notebook during fieldwork. This is a female spirit, as "Nāng" is a general title for women.

27) Within several kilometers of Wat Phu and Nāng Sīdā is a ruined stone monument called Thāo Tao (see Fig. 1 for location). The name means "Mr. Turtle" in Lao. The masters of the sacrifice did not mention any spirits around this building. The booklet published by the local authorities (Champasak Province 1996, 38–39) states that local myth and oral tradition concerning turtles might be the source of the building's name. Recent villagers rarely remembered any myths or oral traditions regarding "Mr. Turtle."

People do not remember when the removal occurred, or if there even was one; however, both the site and the building named for the ancient princess remain, reflecting local remembrance of her.

The vulnerability of the past to the present situation continued to fill me with confusion. To combat this, I did not talk about my research before my conversation with Mǫ Thīam. After describing the guardian spirits, the master of the ritual described the procedure for sacrificing the buffaloes. He told me that the sacrifice was conducted in a way very similar to the procedure noted by Archaimbault. Historically, unmarried mothers had to sacrifice a big black buffalo to the great spirits at Wat Phu as compensation for their guilt. Mǫ Thīam said nothing about the curse of Nāng Pao and its relation to the buffalo sacrifice. When I asked, he said he had not heard the name of the ancient Queen Nāng Pao or about her curse.

The master of the ritual told me what he had seen and experienced during the sacrifice of buffaloes in the past. Then, there were a number of unmarried mothers around the region, so the masters conducted the sacrifice with buffaloes every year. During the sacrifice, the masters and participants listened very carefully to the words of the spirits, who gave both the masters and the people warnings and protection. Some spirits, who did not station themselves at any sites in Champasak, responded when the masters called upon them at the sacrifice. Those spirits came from far across the region and participated in the rite and a feast with the masters and the participants. The names of the spirits given by Mǫ Thīam were slightly different from those in Archaimbault's (1959) study on the rite. It is possible to suppose, in accordance with the master's explanation, that if the sacrifice were conducted appropriately, the spirits appeared to communicate and to protect the region. The fate of the country was fully subject to how the rites were conducted.

In the master's discussions, remembering and forgetting fused. The past was ongoing and interwoven, and society accepted that spirits and humans lived together. In such a society, where the dead (or the past) participated with the living (or the present), history could be grasped by commemorating and appreciating the dead (past), and by worshipping spirits and narrating tales about them. Thus, although it was unknown whether the spirit of Nāng Sīdā dwelled in the stone building complex neighboring Wat Phu, it was possible to conclude that if the worship of the ancient princess continued, she continued to live in the present.

The participation of the ancient princess in present society was evidenced in the current era when Champasak became a World Heritage site. A museum was established, and many ancient artifacts, including K365, were moved there from the former palace. Many objects were added to the museum, including the statue of a woman that the local museum staff began to call Nāng Sīdā. Wishing to have a place to remember her, they

Fig. 2 The Statue of Nāng Sīdā and Offerings (photo by author, December 2018)

Fig. 3 People Give Offerings to the Statue, Recognizing It as Kammathā (photo by author, December 2015)

placed the statue in the room next to the entrance (Fig. 2). The ancient princess, together with Kammathā, who was worshipped and commemorated at Wat Phu (Fig. 3), continued to live alongside local worshippers and pilgrims. Kammathā, whose statue took the shape of Vishnu and differed from that seen by French explorers a century ago (Aymonier 1901, 165),[28] was remembered as the founder of the world. This remembrance animated his existence as living and true. In 2013, when the rite of buffalo sacrifice was reestablished by the living villagers after the authorities revoked its official suspension, Kammathā was again worshipped in the rite of sacrifice with even firmer belief in his status as a hero. Whether in this ceremonial and ritual time and space, or in the process of performance and commemoration, local true history continues to be produced and reproduced.

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28) Aymonier (1901, 165) noted that the statue of Kammathā was located at Wat Phu, but the neck was broken and there was no head. This must have been the statue left in the grassy area that I saw during my fieldwork. The Vishnu-like statue of Kammathā (Fig. 3) was already being worshipped when I visited Champasak in 2002. This indicates that the statue of the local hero had been changed, most likely to show a more energetic image of the hero.

VI   Conclusion

In this article, I discussed the cultural governmentality in Champasak, Southern Laos, where hybrid beliefs and facts have been produced since local beliefs first encountered modern scientific discourse. Throughout this examination, I argued that in the Southern Lao world the past and the present, the dead and the living, the material and the immaterial are participated in. In such a world, cultural governmentality is valued, and the past and its traditions are reproduced or accrue on its performing and artistic stages. In this sense, history is a living being that encourages inhabitants to live as active subjects. This ceremonial and performative art of governing is a unique, "authentic" art of the region that has transcended the borders of time and ethnicity.

If scientific discourse is indifferent to this uniqueness, or seeks to dominate the delicacy and dynamics of such a world, a competitive phase arises and ritual governmentality becomes a representation of protest against scientific governmentality. Although such ritual governmentality is a contemporary phenomenon or a product of modernity, rather than ancient surviving traditions, those who associate with it can claim the legitimacy of their governmentality as a long-lasting heritage. Accordingly, I present a multilayered history in this article by relocating different memories in the same area. This method is important for exploring a place like Champasak, where different types of agency encounter one another. Ultimately, it is crucial to unravel the entire historical and social process, allowing a multiplicity of views and the subtlety of different selves to emerge.

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The State and Religious Violence in Indonesia: Minority Faiths and Vigilantism
A'an Suryana
London and New York: Routledge, 2019.

Violence against the minority Ahmadiyah and Shi'a Indonesia increased during the government of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (2004–14). Perhaps the most horrific act of religious violence during this era was the massacre of three Ahmadiyah by a mob of hundreds in February 2011 in Cikeusik, West Java, which is discussed in depth in this book. The incident received a lot of international attention, and human rights observers urged the Indonesian government to respect religious freedom and protect its people. Meanwhile, at around 9 a.m. on December 28, 2011, a crowd of about one thousand Muslims (Sunni) surrounded the Shi'a *pesantren* (boarding school) in Sampang District, East Java, and in a short time destroyed and burned to the ground the entire complex, also contained the home of Tajul Muluk (a local Shi'a leader), a *mushala* (prayer room), a *santri* room, classrooms, and a grocery store.

The Indonesian government's reaction to increasing religious intolerance is rather weak, which has led to the conclusion that is better to remain silent about matters. After the Ahmadiyah massacre, the government was slow to condemn the perpetrators and subjected it to much criticism. More criticism followed when the killers were given short prison sentences by Indonesian courts, even though the footage showed them in the act.

This book, which was originally A'an Suryana's PhD dissertation at the College of Asia & the Pacific, Australian National University, discusses the gaps in attitude of central and local state actors in responding to acts of violence. His study is based on fieldwork conducted over seven months in 2013, during which he lived in Ahmadiyah and Shi'a settlements in Kuningan District, West Java and Sampang District, East Java.

The study found that state actors at the local level seemed unconcerned with the barrage of violence, while state actors at the central level showed an ambivalent attitude: at one time they appeared enthusiastic about protecting the right of minorities to embrace their respective beliefs, but at other times they showed an attitude of compromise toward perpetrators of violence in the name of religion. A'an Suryana argues that inequality occurs due to differences in sociopolitical

challenges that must be faced by state actors at these two different levels. State actors at the local level seem unconcerned about the fate of minorities because they often have ties of friendship or kinship with the perpetrators. The latter are also Sunni, the majority Islamic faith in the area where minority Ahmadiyah and Shi'a live. Conversely, state actors at the central level face more diverse constituencies in terms of religion and beliefs, and also in terms of social and political thought. This has resulted in central state actors inevitably having to face social and political pressure from various parties in connection with the handling of minority issues, especially from domestic and international human rights activists. As a result, state actors at the central level seemed ambivalent in responding to the rise of violence against minorities, especially Ahmadiyah and Shi'a, the Yudhoyono era (pp. 2–24).

During the Yudhoyono years, people saw an increase in intolerance and even violence against minority congregations, Ahmadiyah and Shi'a, in the form of attacks on places of worship, attacks on minority-owned homes, forced evictions targeting minorities, and prohibition of religious activities. A'an Suryana looks at the factors contributing to President Yudhoyono's response to increasing violence against minority congregations during his two terms in office (2004–14).

Intellectuals and academics criticized the president for his actions that seemed too slow and weak to resolve the violence. Some scholars argue that it was President Yudhoyono's narrow political interests that contributed to his ignorance of violence. Other scholars point to more structural factors as having caused President Yudhoyono to become indecisive, indifferent, or slow in taking action against increasing intolerance, such as his childhood experience and family background and the rise of corporatist metaphors (McCoy 2013) in the post-New Order era, which hampered the president from taking bold steps to fight for the rights of minorities. Through a case study of President Yudhoyono's response to violence, A'an Suryana contributes to Indonesia's perspective on the classic debate about whether structures form bodies, or bodies form structures.

A'an Suryana thinks of the binary opposition between agency and structure. Scholars, especially essentialists, have the habit of holding either agents or structures responsible for the occurrence of events, but according to A'an Suryana, ignoring either of these factors neglects some aspects that potentially enrich our understanding of what motivates agents to carry out social action.

In that regard, A'an Suryana has analyzed the response of the Indonesian state to violence against Ahmadiyah and Shi'a minority communities by highlighting the close relationship between state officials and vigilante groups, which influenced the way in which the post-Suharto democratic Indonesian government dealt with the problem of violence against religious minorities. The targets of such attacks were the Shi'a community, the Ahmadiyah community, and Christians, and their places of worship and churches. Usually the attacks involved demolishing holy places, sometimes beating up people, but rarely killing people. The perpetrators behind the attacks were usually members of radical Muslim groups such as the Islamic Defenders Front and the Alliance of Islamic Mass Organizations.

These attacks, including heresy campaigns against Ahmadiyah and Shi'a (non-mainstream faiths), have increased over the years, followed by attacks on properties belonging to members of these minority communities, as reported by the human rights group Setara Institute for Democracy and Peace: 135 cases of intolerance and violence against minorities in 2007, 265 in 2008, 200 in 2009, 216 in 2010, 244 in 2011, and 264 in 2012 (Setara 2014). Another group, Wahid Institute, reported 234 cases of human rights violations in 2008 and 35 in 2009, but the figure steadily rose to 64 in 2010 and 93 in 2011. (Wahid Institute started its annual survey in 2008. Samples of its reports can be found at Wahid Institute 2011.)

In this seven-chapter book, A'an Suryana focuses more on institutional factors that hindered the Yudhoyono government's response to violence. Sometimes the president encouraged initiatives to promote minority rights. However, these programs faced obstacles from other state institutions due to bureaucracy and the tendency of the judiciary to preserve the majority social order and hegemonic interpretation. These challenges were further exacerbated by the decline in presidential power in the post-New Order era.

In the reformation era, religious intolerance in Indonesia—sometimes culminating in violence—is increasing. The Setara Institute recorded 236 incidents of violence in 2015, up from 177 the previous year (Setara 2015). The institute noted that the majority of violent incidents were carried out by local governments, thereby implying that the government was actually the main actor perpetuating religious intolerance and urging the central government to punish local governments that failed to protect religious freedom.

Using a case study of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's response to violence against minority congregations, Ahmadiyah and Shi'a, A'an Suryana shows that the interaction between agency and structure is stronger than either of those factors alone in explaining social phenomena. This framework reconciles conflicting arguments between structural actor theory and rational actor theory. Research that focuses on studying both structure and agency tends to lose the holistic picture of what factors motivated or encouraged Yudhoyono to act or react to the increasing religious intolerance that led to the growth in religious violence during the two terms of his presidency. A'an Suryana is able to show through case studies in East and West Java that the reason for the violence against minorities during Yudhoyono's presidency was that he was a human agent whose actions were limited by structure. However, on the other hand, he was also a rational actor who took measured actions to pursue his own interests.

By reasoning that the violence originated in part from the close relations of state officials with vigilante groups, and the general tendency for authorities to establish mutual and material interests with such groups, the author points out that vigilante groups themselves are capable of committing violence against minority congregations with a significant level of impunity. While the Indonesian state has become much more democratic, accountable, and decentralized since 1998, religious violence against the Ahmadiyah and Shi'a communities shows that countries are still reluctant to

help or allow minority groups to practice their religion (pp. 59–80).

This book is based on A'an Suryana's extensive ethnographic fieldwork in the communities of West and East Java. Research materials include in-depth interviews with community and religious leaders, state officials, security forces, and prominent politicians. Data collection was carried out using ethnographic methods and in-depth interviews with sources related to this research.

A'an Suryana succeeds in presenting a new approach to the problem of Islam, violence, and the state in Indonesia, and this book will be interesting for researchers of Southeast Asian politics, Islam and politics, conflict resolution, state and violence, terrorism and political violence.

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The Vortex of Power:
Intellectuals and Politics in Indonesia's Post-Authoritarian Era
Airlangga Pribadi Kusman
Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019.

There has been substantive growth in the scholarship of post-authoritarian Indonesian politics in the past two decades. We know more about the achievements and limitations of Indonesian democratic politics as a vibrant democratic performer that continues to struggle against illiberal and oligarchic influences. Making an important addition or contribution to this rich body of literature can be challenging, especially on research pertaining to the relationship between local politics, oligarchic power, and competing social forces. This is the task that Airlangga Pribadi Kusman tackles quite successfully in his book.

Anchored in the Marxist theoretical tradition of the Murdoch School of Asian political studies (Hameiri and Jones 2014), Kusman looks at the role intellectuals such as academics, social activists, and journalists play in local politics in East Java, Indonesia's second most populous province, and the extent to which they challenge or enable oligarchic hegemony. Contrary to conventional wisdom, Kusman argues that Indonesian intellectuals do not always serve as the vanguard of pro-democratic ideas and politics. In a detailed manner, he shows that the increasingly political class of intellectuals sometimes influences policies in the service of predatory political and economic interests. He establishes his argument in several steps. In the first two chapters, he introduces his thesis and rules out three competing explanations: the neo-institutionalist account with its rosy picture of intellectuals as the torchbearers of pro-market and liberal democratic ideas, the neo-Foucauldian analysis of the entanglement of intellectuals within the discursive power play and relations, and the neo-Gramscian critique of intellectuals as agents of transnational capitalist class. True to the spirit of the Murdoch School, Kusman instead offers an analysis of the role of intellectuals in supporting the political project of the dominant politico-business interests that is more attentive to domestic political economy and local political contingencies. Intellectuals, he argues, have always been involved or entangled in power struggles, whether in the United States, Britain, Latin America, or Southeast Asia.

The rest of the book (Chapters 3–7) gives robust empirical grounding to Kusman's argument by detailing the ambivalent position of intellectuals vis-à-vis state and capitalist power. In the post-authoritarian context, East Javanese intellectuals play a range of roles in local politics, not only as advocates of social transformation but also as political consultants, spin doctors, and informal advisers for predatory elites. In other words, intellectuals also have their share of "sin" in the perpetuation of oligarchic power at the expense of ordinary and marginalized citizens.

Though this book is local in scope, Kusman also attempts to show the connection between national and provincial oligarchic power by analyzing the infamous Lapindo mudflow case in East Java in Chapter 7. This accident was a result of a botched drilling operation by PT Lapindo Brantas, a corporation owned partly by the oligarchic Bakrie family. The case, which received national attention, is an example of how local and national political dynamics intersect in post-authoritarian Indonesia. Kusman once again tells us that intellectuals too can be found on both sides of the conflict: as the defenders of the mudflow victims as well as the agents of elite coalition supporting the corporation and the Bakries.

Kusman concludes by reiterating that "intellectuals are not innocent from dealing and contributing to the power struggles that shape the landscape of contemporary Indonesian politics" (p. 237). I agree. All in all, Kusman presents a convincing analysis of how intellectuals serve oligarchic and predatory interests in post-authoritarian Indonesia. By doing so, he specifies one major mechanism through which oligarchy operates, namely, the cooptation of intellectuals by established politico-business interests.

However, there are several aspects of Kusman's work that could have been improved. In terms of his case selection strategy, Kusman could make a better case for East Java as his chosen focus by explicitly laying out the importance of this province compared to other localities in Indonesian politics. Substance-wise, I would like to see more explanation on the thinking and ideas behind the intellectuals that he studies. Kusman rightly points out that material factors, especially the local political economy constellation, matter. However, he misses another factor in the equation, namely, the ideational dimension of intellectuals' political engagement. These added nuances would make the book even more interesting to read and strengthen Kusman's overall argument.

Some other points are also worth mentioning. Kusman pessimistically yet prematurely claims in the conclusion that the absence of "vibrant liberal reformists or social democratic forces" significantly "limits the options available to intellectuals" (p. 238), a prognosis that is emblematic of some analyses in the Murdoch School approach. Although this assessment is mostly accurate, it does not capture the whole picture of Indonesian politics. Sure, oligarchic rule remains triumphant, but as a student of Indonesian politics and social movements, I can list a number of advances made by lower-class groups and their activist allies, ranging from local policy changes to solidarity economy initiatives (Anugrah 2019a; 2019b). One does not have to adopt a naïve liberal pluralist view of politics as a mutually beneficial arena of interest exchange and competition to argue that under certain conditions popular agency for progressive agendas can make a breakthrough. Perhaps another question that the book and the broader literature should ask is why there has been a lack of an effective progressive social coalition for change and the role of intellectuals (or the lack thereof) in the said political project.

My last criticism is stylistic: at times, this book reads like a dissertation. This is understandable, given that the book is indeed a remake of the author's PhD dissertation (Kusman 2015). However, the book's structure and language could be made crisper and more engaging. In particular, I personally think that the brief discussion on intellectuals and political struggles in Southeast Asia and other regions should be turned into a separate chapter on its own or integrated into the concluding chapter to show the applicability of Kusman's investigation to other world regions, thereby strengthening his analytical framework.

These criticisms aside, Kusman's book manages to enrich our understanding of how oligarchy operates in post-authoritarian Indonesia. Adding novelty to the Indonesian oligarchy scholarship is a challenging task, and Kusman deserves applause for doing that excellently.

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The Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere: When Total Empire Met Total War
Jeremy A. Yellen
Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2019.

This book is probably the first English book exploring the rise and fall of the Japanese Empire during the late 1930s and early 1940s with a particular focus on Japan's ambiguous relationship with two Western colonized countries in Southeast Asia, Burma and the Philippines. As the author, Jeremy Yellen, clearly points out in his introduction: "there are no book-length monographs in English that explore the Japanese Co-Prosperity Sphere from the perspective of Japanese high policy" and former "English-language literature on the Sphere often focuses on the initial stage of the Pacific War" (p. 11). In other words, the "brutal" aspects of the Japanese occupation, such as the attacks on Pearl Harbor as well as the Naval Battle of Malaya, and US withdrawal from the Philippines and the ensuing "Bataan Death March," have attracted English-language scholarly circles. With his excellent command of Japanese and use of rich Japanese sources, however, Yellen reveals the ambivalence evident in Japan's policy making and implementation of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. On one hand, the empire attempted to bring liberation to the people in the sphere; but on the other hand, it turned out to be yet another imperial/colonial order in the region. This perspective is most clearly explained in the book's conclusion, which states that Japanese tensions "between idealism and self-interest, between utopian dreams of and the realist pursuit of national power, were shared among modern empires" (p. 206). The reviewer believes this insightful statement dismantles the "Orientalist" image of the Japanese Empire, reinforced in academic scholarship, and will generate further English-language research on the topic through comparisons with other empires of the twentieth century.

The book consists of two parts: a discussion of the rise and fall of the Japanese Empire, followed by an examination of the counterreactions as well as commitments from "liberated" Burma

and the Philippines under the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. The first three chapters focus on the challenges confronted by Japanese policy makers, represented by the figure of Matsuoka Yōsuke, and pay close attention to Japanese diplomatic tensions with the great powers: Germany, Italy, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Chapter 1 discusses the signing of the Tripartite Pact between Germany, Italy, and Japan in 1940 and explains the ambition of Japanese politicians and diplomats who, encouraged by the victory of Hitler's Nazis ruling Netherland and France, envisioned Southeast Asia as a potential imperial territory. Chapter 2 focuses on the thought and diplomatic action of Matsuoka, who persisted in peaceful negotiations within Asia in order to build Japanese leadership in the region. By signing the Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact in 1941, Matsuoka designed a new world order divided into four blocs: Western Europe, Russia, America, and East Asia. Although Matsuoka was relieved of the position of foreign minister on the eve of Japan's participation in the war, his Monroe ideology of "self-existence and self-defense" in Asia was assertively advocated in wartime Japan. Chapter 3 examines Japan's unclear war aims by paying attention to the ideology of *hakkō ichiu*, which was translated by the government as "universal brotherhood" (p. 95). This Asian brotherhood was advocated in order to hide the true aim of Japan, whose empire was now in greater need of acquiring resources than building the co-prosperity sphere.

The next three chapters, in the second part of the book, look at the reactions of Burma and the Philippines, which were "granted" independence in 1943 by the Japanese Empire. Chapter 4 examines the Burmese and Filipino political elites' motivation for collaborating with Japan, which was rooted in their nationalistic desire to decolonize their countries. Chapter 5 examines the impact of the two countries' independence in the sphere, with a particular focus on the Greater East Asia Conference held in Tokyo in 1943. The seven leaders from the sphere attended this conference: Ba Maw (Burma), Zhang Jinghui (Manchuko), Wang Jingwei (Chinese Nanjing regime), Tōjō Hideki (Japan), Wan Waithayakon (Thailand), Jose P. Laurel (Republic of the Philippines), and Subhas Chandra Bose (Provisional Government of Free India). Utilizing the Japanese rhetoric of "independence and autonomy," Yellen shows that leaders such as Wang and Laurel expressed their frustration toward the idea of Greater East Asia, which did not give equal rights to the countries in the sphere. The final chapter describes the patriotic acts of political leaders, particularly Ba Maw and Aung San from Burma, and Laurel from the Philippines. In demonstrating the three leaders' creation of new governmental institutions, Yellen claims that the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere was not a wholly one-sided affair, as has long been argued.

This reviewer basically agrees with Yellen's perspective. The book, however, has some shortcomings. As the author himself admits in the preface, one of the anonymous reviewers pointed out that he needed to reframe his argument in a more persuasive manner. The reviewer was also not able to find a clear reason for comparing Burma and the Philippines under the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, despite their commonality of independence in 1943. This alludes

to the fact that the author was not able to put Burma and the Philippines in the book title, and instead mixed the countries together as part of the "total empire." As Yellen insists, it is true that political leaders such as Aung San and Laurel were patriots and that was their motivation for collaborating with Japan. But this juxtaposition simply conceals the postwar differential treatments of Aung San and Laurel. During the last months of the war, Aung San led the anti-Fascist—thus anti-Japanese—underground society (Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League), and such resistance continued when the British forces came back to Burma after the war. During the struggle for independence against Britain, Aung San was assassinated; and he has since been a respected national hero. On the contrary, Laurel did not have a choice when it came to leading anti-Japanese forces. He was asked by Commonwealth President Manuel Quezon, upon his retreat from Manila to Corregidor together with Douglas MacArthur after the landing of Japanese forces, to remain in the top echelons of government to deal with invading Japan. As is well known, MacArthur fulfilled his promise and returned to "liberate" the Philippines from Japan from 1944 to 1945. Such heroic icon of MacArthur strengthened the "traitor" image of Laurel as collaborator among Filipino people. On July 4, 1946 the Philippines gained its independence, supported by the United States, and this US-Filipino friendship further strengthened Laurel's pro-Japan image for a long time.

In the case of Burma, the issue of "collaboration" did not generate so much controversy at either the political or scholarly level. In the case of the Philippines, compared with other countries in Southeast Asia, this issue remained one of the most heated topics in political and scholarly circles, due to the US-Filipino friendship. In fact, Filipino "nationalist" historians, such as Armando Malay, Alfredo Saulo, and Teodoro Agoncillo, sought to complicate the portrayal of collaborators by factoring in their patriotism. These historians' writings were widely read by Filipino scholars and students but were not considered worthy by Carl Lande, David Steinberg, and Alfred McCoy, American historians based in the United States. In fact, the American historians more or less demonstrated the oligarchical nature of the Filipino act of collaboration. In his conclusion in *Philippine Collaboration in World War II,* for example, Steinberg equates collaboration with "treason" and points out, "(T)he difference between the oligarchic collaboration with the Spanish and American authorities and the later collaboration with Japan is that the first two occurred before a Philippine nation had emerged, while the last took place when national self-consciousness existed" (Steinberg 1967, 176). By comparing the Philippines' collaboration with the Spaniards and Americans, Steinberg points to the immature nationalism of Filipino oligarchical elites who betrayed the friend (the United States) and stood by the alien (Japan). If Yellen persists with the thesis of patriotic leaders, he needs to address this discrepancy in perspective between Filipino and American historians on the collaboration.

Lastly, as a Japanese, the reviewer found something not right with the use of the term "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere" without mentioning its "banned" postwar history. The term "Pacific War" was invented during the General Headquarters/Supreme Commander for the Allied

Powers operation of Japan (1945–52). It did not mention Asia, and it banned the Japanese imperial —but local—term "Daitōa Sensō" (Greater East Asian War) together with "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere" in order not to resurrect Japan's "foolish" empire and democratize the state. The Japanese literary critic Etō Jun wrote that this change erased the presence and meaning of Daitōa Sensō and filled the void with the selective account that the war was fought only between Japan and its Pacific neighbor, the United States. Through this change, the United States was able to redesign the co-prosperity sphere in the region with the ushering in of entrepreneur capitalism during the Cold War era. In this new US-created sphere, Japan was able to recover its economy and even develop it rapidly by re-allying with the capitalist countries in Southeast Asia. If Yellen aims at dismantling the "Orientalist" image of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, he might need to reconsider the United States' postwar treatment of the sphere and the ways in which narratives of the war were regulated in the shadow of American intervention in the region.

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Man or Monster? The Trial of a Khmer Rouge Torturer
Alexander Laban Hinton
Durham: Duke University Press, 2016.

The Khmer Rouge regime (1975–79) oversaw a tragic period in Cambodian history in which people were forced to work extremely hard, provided with little food, and offered no proper medical treatment. There were extralegal executions of civilians, soldiers, cadres, and party members who were accused of being enemies of the regime. Security centers across the country played a significant role in eliminating those who were accused of being enemies, and the S-21 Security Center was at the top of the regime's security system. S-21 was under the direct leadership of Duch, a former mathematics teacher who joined the Communist movement in 1965, later to become known as the Khmer Rouge. He was arrested by government police and put in jail for two years. Upon his release in 1970, he became the chief of the M-13 Security Center, a Khmer Rouge detention center during the civil war (1970–75). After the Khmer Rouge victory in 1975, he became chief of the S-21 Security Center from 1976 to 1979 after which he lived in the Khmer Rouge stronghold of Samlaut District, Battambang Province, until his arrest in 1999. In 2012, he was sentenced to

life in prison by Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia known as Khmer Rouge Tribunal to try top leaders and the most responsible persons during the Khmer Rouge regime.

There have been many publications about Duch and the security center under his leadership. David Chandler (2000), a well-known historian, published a book titled *Voices from S-21: Terror and History in Pol Pot's Secret Prison* explaining the role of S-21 in serving the paranoid policy of the Khmer Rouge leaders, who systematically purged their own cadres and soldiers. François Bizot (2004), on the other hand, has described his mixed interaction with the prison chief when the latter headed M-13 Security Center, which operated before the Khmer Rouge took power in the entire country. Bizot was a prisoner but was later rescued by the prison chief, Duch, which made him view Duch as both a torturer and a lifesaver.

This 350-page book with its defaced cover picture of Duch, and graffiti of "A Cruel Man" along with the catchy title *Man or Monster*, is written by the well-known anthropologist Alexander Hinton, author of the award-winning *Why Did They Kill?* The novel-like book narrates Duch's background and the Khmer Rouge Tribunal procedure of case 001 in a lively manner. Duch, whose official name was Kaing Guek Eav, was the chief of the S-21 Security Center, where nearly twenty thousand people were arrested, detained, tortured, and executed during the Democratic Kampuchea (DK) regime from 1975 to 1979. The complexity of Duch's personality and background, with his responsibility during the DK regime, became a source of interest to Hinton. The author discusses the problem of viewing Duch as a complete monster when he describes the book's cover photo that was taken at Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum. The graffiti on the photo reads "A killer, the hell will not pardon you" and is written next to a defaced picture of Duch, seeming to represent Duch as completely evil. Hinton argues that Duch was a complex human being and could not be described as a completely articulation of man or monster. Hinton collected information about Duch through extensive interviews and investigated the whole court procedure of the Khmer Rouge Tribunal in case 001 in order to find a possible answer to the question of "man or monster?"

The book is organized in thematic chapters to characterize Duch, using his entire background and the court procedure of case 001 as the main sources. Part 1 consists of six chapters focusing mainly on the argument of Duch as a "man," presenting different arguments claimed by Duch himself as well as his defense lawyer. Duch is presented as a normal human caught up in ideological circumstances, a cog in the machine just following orders from the upper echelons, embroiled in a political culture of patronage, and recognizing his own mistakes. For example, the book highlights Duch's love of teaching before, during, and after the DK period. During the DK period he was the chief of the S-21 Security Center but still associated himself with teaching. He used the former school as a detention center where he taught his subordinates in political training sessions and about interrogation techniques. His connection with education and teaching demonstrates that his claimed goal of being a teacher was reasonable, and this can be considered characteristic of a normal human. In the courtroom, Duch delivered his testimony like a history lecturer, command-

ing everyone's attention.

The way that Duch was chosen to hold position as prison chief also portrays the commonality of how Cambodian "network or string" (*khsae*) works in Cambodia. The "network or string" worked in two ways during the Khmer Rouge. The first was when it came to appointing trusted people within the network in key positions, and the second was when it came to purging cadres. Additionally, the author notes that a political culture of patronage existed during the Khmer Rouge. In chapter 2, the book narrates Duch's life story during the revolutionary period, for instance when he worked as the prison chief at M-13 Security Center. Presenting Duch as a man includes a discussion of his generous acts toward Bizot as a well-known prisoner of the Khmer Rouge whom he released. In Bizot's eyes, Duch was a lifesaver. However, Bizot also argued that Duch was the prison chief in charge of torture and executions at S-21. Hinton raises the very important complexity of Duch's image in Bizot's eyes; he believes that the binary articulation of Duch as man or monster is not appropriate as Duch's personality and acts showed a certain complexity.

However, Duch is also presented as a monster. Many witnesses and much evidence show him as a monster during the period he was the chief of S-21. Hinton portrays Duch as a loyal cadre who strictly followed the Khmer Rouge policy that led to the atrocities at S-21. Duch initiated tactics and executed policy very effectively. From the victims' testimonies and evidence of Duch's atrocities, Hinton draws the attention of readers to Duch as a "monster." Duch's cruelty and torture appear in the documents and testimonies of survivors cited in the book. In the face of plenty of evidence at S-21, the final decision of the Supreme Court Chamber, sentencing Duch to life imprisonment, was welcomed by victims and the public. The sentencing lends weight to the monster image of Duch in public opinion.

Although Hinton walks us through some historical events from Duch's early life to the time he was sentenced to life imprisonment, what this anthropologist misses is a discussion of historical events. In his book, Hinton does not interpret historical events. Rather, he presents perspectives and characteristics of people involved with Duch, and also Duch himself. Additionally, the book fails to compare Duch's perspective on past mistakes with those of other Khmer Rouge leaders. Readers might be confused over whether or not Duch can be considered representative of other top leaders. To some extent, he was different from leaders such as Pol Pot, Nuon Chea, Ta Mok, and Kieu Samphan, who mostly believed that their acts were in the national interest and did not accept any mistakes. Duch differs from the others in that after the fall of DK he lived a normal life and distanced himself from the top leaders. He might have had a feeling of guilt, as he claimed in court, leading to his conversion to Christianity in order to clear his sins, which psychologically helped him deal with his guilt.

Hinton takes advantage of the Khmer Rouge Tribunal in order to gather extensive information from different people during the court procedure of case 001, which helps him to present a detailed narrative of what happened in the court, as witnessed through his own eyes, and interpret it in a

lively manner. By doing this, he provides more detailed information about Duch than Chandler or Bizot. In addition, the book brings readers to an understanding of a few other points. First, it presents the Cambodian political culture of patronage and the strings that were used during the Khmer Rouge and continue to dominate the Cambodian political landscape until today. Second, Duch shared a psychological belief with other Khmer Rouge cadres of exclusively following one idea and giving no credence to any other view. He strictly followed the Khmer Rouge's ideology and policy, which resulted in the tragedy of cadres following orders without critical consideration of its impact. Hinton, as well as Chandler, agrees that it was "unquestioning obedience to authority." Third, the articulation of Duch as either man or monster is not valid because the complexity of Duch's character proves that he was a combination of both. Hinton carefully discusses evidence and perspectives on both sides.

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Siamese Melting Pot: Ethnic Minorities in the Making of Bangkok
Edward Van Roy
Singapore: ISEAS - Yusof Ishak Institute, 2017.

Throughout the nineteenth century, observers estimated that non-Thai residents made up more than two-thirds of Bangkok's total population. Yet, by 1919, excepting a substantial Chinese minority, the census depicted an overwhelmingly "Thai" city. Almost everyone of Khmer, Lao, and Mon ancestry was considered Thai, and the city's other non-Thai residents were undercounted dramatically (see Grabowsky 1996, 50). On paper, it would appear that a diverse and cosmopolitan city had rapidly homogenized. This was not just statistical sleight of hand. Over the first half of the twentieth century, a growing proportion of Bangkok's local-born residents were speaking Thai, acting Thai, and identifying themselves as Thai. How did Bangkok's ethnic landscape shift so quickly? What logics underpinned Bangkok's nineteenth-century cosmopolitanism, and what new logics replaced them in the decades before and after the turn of the twentieth century?

Based on decades of ramblings on foot combined with a thorough survey of published materials on the city's communities, *Siamese Melting Pot* offers a persuasive account of the demise of

ethnic pluralism at the hands of ethnic nationalism. After an introduction (Chapter 1) that sets the scene of "Old Bangkok" (1782–1910) and previews the conceptual interventions discussed in more depth in the conclusion ("Retrospect," Chapter 8), each chapter focuses on an ethnic category or set of categories: Portuguese (Chapter 2), Mon (Chapter 3), Lao (Chapter 4), Muslim (subdivided into Cham, Persian, Arab, Indian, Malay, and Indonesian; Chapter 5), Chinese (Chapter 6), and others (Khmer, Vietnamese, Thai Yuan, and Farang; Chapter 7). Each chapter offers a social history of the movements, settlements, occupations, leading members, and court affiliations of one or more ethnic categories and concludes with some reflections on the diminishing salience of those categories over the course of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Edward Van Roy makes two powerful contributions to the history of ethnicity in Siam. First, he makes the case that a certain spatial logic underpinned the physical arrangement of ethnic settlements in Early Bangkok. He identifies two principles to this logic and connects them (rather loosely) to the mandala model of political power in premodern Southeast Asia. One spatial principle is intuitive: the higher one's status, the closer one's residence to the city center. The royal palaces were clustered around the city pillar, surrounded by princely houses and nobles' residences. These were interspersed with small neighborhoods of palace attendants, palace artisans, and military specialists. Beyond were settlements of merchants, petty artisans, laborers, and agriculturalists (pp. 4–11). These zones were not strictly delimited—they changed according to the needs of the rulers, and they overlapped significantly as the city grew—but this concentric spatial order signaled to nineteenth-century observers the social status of an ethnic settlement. The farther you lived from the center, the lower your status was likely to be. As a result, people of the same ethnic category often lived in settlements of varying distance to the center, depending on their rank and occupation. For example, Lao war captives of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were divided into at least three categories for resettlement. Royalty were hosted (as captives of honor) at or near the king's Grand Palace and the viceroy's Front Palace in the center of the city; communities of skilled artisans (including gold- and silversmiths, woodworkers, and court performers) were positioned nearby; and peasant farmers were assigned to the city's fringes and beyond (pp. 106–107).

The other principle of Old Bangkok's spatial order is less intuitive. Van Roy shows that the city was roughly divided into southerly and northerly divisions, which were associated, respectively, with the king and the viceroy. Sojourners, settlers, and captives of all ranks sought or were assigned to a royal patron. Those affiliated with the king were usually settled in the city's southern zone, while those associated with the viceroy were settled to the north (pp. 4–12). In the late eighteenth century, for example, consecutive waves of Mon migrants affiliated alternately with the king and the viceroy. As a consequence, they were settled in the city's southern and northern zones, respectively (pp. 87–90). Sometimes war captives were given to officials at the royal court or the viceregal court; these communities were likewise situated near or beyond their patrons'

residences in the city's southern and northern zones (e.g., pp. 157–158).

Van Roy shows that these spatial principles began to unravel in the late nineteenth century. Patronage relations were gradually replaced with a free market for wage labor, and restrictions on residence and mobility were steadily loosened. Although some neighborhoods preserved an ethnic character, and many later migrants settled together, the hierarchical logic of Bangkok's spatial arrangement is no longer obvious. Van Roy offers a needed correction to the historical scholarship that largely overlooks the links between ethnic identity, geographic location, and political affiliation in Old Bangkok. His evidence for these findings, scattered across the book, doubles as a comprehensive local history of Bangkok. Nearly 75 ethnically identified neighborhoods are given dedicated attention (ranging from less than a page to more than five pages each). Helpfully, over two dozen maps allow the reader to visualize both the principle and the practice of these spatial arrangements. (Unfortunately, though, some are a bit blurry in my copy of the book.)

Van Roy's second major contribution is to explain the mysterious disappearance (or dramatic attenuation) of the ethnic communities that were so prominent in the nineteenth century. The contours of this disappearance vary from people to people, and the author addresses the circumstances specific to each in its respective chapter, but two overall explanations are most compelling.

First, a "commercial," "free market" system gradually replaced a "patrimonial," "feudal" one. For ethnic communities of peasants, artisans, and nobles, this meant the dissolution of patron-client ties (or, as Van Roy prefers, "master-minion" ties) that had previously specified their place of residence and primary occupation. Instead, wage labor replaced bound labor (as "slaves" or "serfs"); individuals replaced communities as the primary unit of production; and one's residence and chief occupation were no longer matters of state control. In the nineteenth century, for example, Mon communities were assigned specific responsibility for conducting patrols and staffing the kingdom's navy. But by the end of the century, these institutions were centralized, and the Mon workers were gradually replaced with diverse conscripts and salaried staff (p. 100). Likewise, many Lao and Malay descendants of war slaves, no longer bound to work the land for a specific master, established their own farmsteads on newly reclaimed land of dubious value on the city's peripheries (p. 129). Economic privileges were likewise untethered from specific merchant communities. After the Bowring Treaty of 1855, the Hokkien Chinese community's special access to official posts and lucrative trade ventures dissolved along with state trade monopolies. This benefited European and American firms as well as the other Chinese "speech groups" (p. 186). By the early twentieth century, ethnic identities no longer structured key economic and social relationships as before, and most ethnic settlements gradually dispersed. These factors affected all ethnic communities, but especially those without strong international networks.

The second overall explanation for the gradual assimilation (or "integration"—see p. 198) of Bangkok's ethnic communities—the more significant factor, in the author's estimation—is the advent of a strain of ethnic nationalism that put a new premium on being "Thai" (pp. 39–41). There

were both top-down and bottom-up pressures at work. The royal court attempted to resist extra-territorial claims on its residents with ancestral ties to (what became) European colonies by recasting them as "Thai." At the same time, an increasingly nationalist ruling class began to eliminate ethnic institutions such as Mon temples and Mon-language temple curricula (p. 97). Some ethnic communities, such as the descendants of Lao war slaves, were eager to shed their low-class ethnic associations (p. 129). For others, the ethnic distinctions so prominent in the nineteenth century were gradually replaced in social significance by other divisions. For example, ethnic distinctions among Bangkok's Muslims were eventually superseded by doctrinal divisions (pp. 135–136). Like-wise, crackdowns on secret societies and the formation of pan-Chinese organizations weakened rivalries between Chinese speech groups. By the mid-twentieth century, whether one's sympa-thies ran Communist or Nationalist was a more contentious matter (pp. 196–197).

This brings us to the title of the book. The "melting pot" metaphor is often criticized for "whitewashing" difference in contexts like the United States, where ethnic and (especially) racial categories remain socially significant. It is, perhaps, on these grounds that other readers have panned Van Roy's title. On this point I wish to come to his defense. It is precisely the author's point that most descendants of the ethnic communities so critical to social interaction in the nineteenth century had become unhyphenated "Thai" by the middle of the twentieth. Ethnic distinctions for Theravada Buddhists such as Mon, Lao, and Khmer faded the fastest, but even most Bangkokians of Chinese and Vietnamese ancestry retain little memory of it. For the most part, Bangkok's Christians and Muslims no longer identify themselves as ethnic Christians and Muslims, but as Thai Christians and Muslims. True, some communities have preserved local traditions, and some have retained certain markers of difference—observations that Van Roy makes with interest in the book—but the vast majority of Bangkok's citizens, despite their diverse ances-try, now self-identify only or primarily as Thai. Perhaps the melting process is yet incomplete, and new ingredients are continually added. But phone books, tax records, and legal documents no longer identify each Bangkok resident with an ethnic label as they did, as a rule, in the nineteenth century. Explaining how this came to be is Van Roy's second major contribution and, in my view, his most significant.

Ethnic identification has always been a messy, ad-hoc practice, and *Siamese Melting Pot* does the subject justice by refusing to sweep the mess under the rug. Yet, a few conceptual questions stand out to this reviewer as ripe for further discussion. Van Roy defines ethnic identity as the product of in-group determinations (pp. 67, 236) and characterizes the state's involvement in ethnic communities as "benign neglect" (pp. 29, 234), but at the same time he acknowledges the role of the state in constituting categories (e.g., pp. 86–87). How can we reconcile internal and external factors in the constitution of ethnic categories? The author asserts that Bangkok's royalty and nobility were "Thai" by default (p. 15), but he treats ennobled ethnic leaders and royal consorts from neighboring kingdoms as representatives of their peoples. Could these stranger-elites have

claimed two ethnic identities at once? Or, is it possible that they eschewed ethnic self-identification altogether, preferring to claim membership in a "race of royalty" (*chuea-chat kasat*)? The author gives intermarriage its due in the chapter on the Portuguese, but elsewhere it is largely overlooked. Most Chinese migrants were men, for example, and intimacies with non-Chinese were commonplace. This surely had an impact on the integration of Chinese in Bangkok—but how? Finally, Van Roy makes a strong case on a macro level that ethnic divisions wilted in social importance over the early twentieth century, but the motivations and mechanisms of ethnic boundary-crossing on the micro level are less clear. There is no parallel, for example, to Kasian Tejapira's fascinating study on the mid-nineteenth-century efforts of some Chinese to become Thai, some Thai to become Chinese, and the state's occasional toleration of such moves to facilitate administration (Kasian 1992).

The book is productive, then, because it leaves the reader eager to explore even further the historical interconnections between ethnicity, power, and space. So, for its incomparably rich treatment of Bangkok's diverse array of old neighborhoods, its compelling account of the obsolete logic of Bangkok's ethno-spatial layout, and especially its powerful explanations for the gradual transformation of ethnic subjects into Thai nationals, this book is a success.

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