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**EAST TIMOR'S
INDEPENDENCE,
INDONESIA
AND ASEAN**

Jean A. Berlie



East Timor's Independence, Indonesia and ASEAN

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Editor

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Jean A. Berlie
The Education University
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To Francisco Fernandes

PREFACE

This book explains how history, tradition, and human factors have shaped modern Timorese politics. Portuguese colonization, 24 years of Indonesian neo-colonialism, just over 2 years under United Nations stewardship, and 15 years of “electoral democracy” have forged the political uniqueness of the new country. Formally independent on May 20, 2002, the “Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste” is sometimes forgotten, but the world wants to know what happened between 2006 and 2015. East Timor is the most robust democracy in Southeast Asia, so every 5 years its elections capture the attention of the global media.

Without the United Nations, Kofi Annan, Max Stahl’s film shot in Dili in November 1991 and many actors, East Timor would probably not exist as an independent Democratic Republic. The country needs more development and reflection on policies. Off-shore oil and gas are the unique important sources of wealth that will last some 20 years. Mari Alkatiri, Secretary General of the Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor (Fretilin), East Timor’s party for independence established at the beginning in 1974, won the Constituent Assembly elections which took place on August 2001 conducted under United Nation’s auspices. Alkatiri became the first Prime Minister of the independent country on May 20, 2002. The political events in 2006–2008 and 2015 are compared.

Chapter 1 details the local politics, culture, and great variety of languages in East Timor, Portuguese colonization and Timorese traditions.

The essential role of Australia and the United Nations, in particular the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) is written with an attempt not to repeat what is already known about the pre-independence period of the newest country of the twentieth century. Fretilin's continuous positive promotion of independence, the emergence of political parties, the remarkable redaction of the Constitution under the leadership of Lu-Olo, the President of the Constituent Assembly, and the implementation of democracy are detailed. Chapter 2 tries to point out solutions to avoid crises. The present Sixth Government of East Timor is a new scenario, established after the resignation of Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão in 2015. The bi-party political system under the leadership of the Prime Minister of the opposition seems to work. The Fretilin member, Rui Maria de Araújo, ex-Minister of Health, became Prime Minister in February 2015.

Chapter 3 is a sympathetic political view of Timor from Australia; it shows a good knowledge of the character of Timorese politicians as seen from inside their party. Peter Murphy presents a modern political view of the Australian-East Timor relationship. Through the 24 years of resistance to Indonesian occupation in East Timor between 1975 and 1999, Australians of very diverse political views maintained sympathy for the Timorese as opposed to the official Australian government complicity, especially in seeking to divide-up Timor's petroleum resources with the Jakarta government. They ranged from Communist Party activists, trade unionists, World War II commando veterans, Catholics, members of the Australian Labor and Liberal parties, Aboriginal leaders, and media workers contributed to develop the present excellent relationship between Timor-Leste and Australia.

Given the security role that Australia took on in 1999 alongside the first arriving United Nations peacekeepers, Australia's leaders are duty bound to respect the Timorese people, their nationalist and democratic character forged by 500 years of colonialism, two decades of neo-colonialism, resistance, and aspirations to establish their own flowering culture. A fair resolution of the maritime border conflict between East Timor and Australia is expected in 2017.

In the author's view, promoting the candidacy of East Timor to join the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) constitutes Indonesia's moral obligation. Indonesia is the best supporter for

East Timor candidacy to join ASEAN. In collaboration with my long-term friend, Hans Hägerdal, Chap. 4 presents an original chronological view on the sincere will of the East Timor Government to join ASEAN. Singapore remains to be convinced. ASEAN is now a venerable international association that China and the United States are seeking to seduce. East Timor may join ASEAN in 2018 if its Government succeeds in convincing each member state of ASEAN one by one. An earlier bid seems questionable but, as stated by President José Ramos-Horta in an interview with the author in Dili on April 20, 2017 it is expected in 2018. As this book argues, joining ASEAN as a member state constitutes the best option for Timor-Leste's future. Agriculture, education, and tourism are key sectors to develop in showing that the country is progressing and ready to be the eleventh ASEAN member state.

The last chapter is a unique study which compares the two main parties. The present Sixth Constitutional Government is a mixed government of the two main parties, Fretilin and the National Congress for the Reconstruction of Timor (CNRT), which kept the power until the parliamentary elections on July 22, 2017. The President of the Democratic Party (PD), Fernando Lasama, former Vice Prime Minister, the unique political leader who was able to contest the existence of the bi-party system, died in 2015. Fretilin is an offshoot of the Timorese Social Democratic Association (ASDT), Fretilin's predecessor, which was founded in May 1974. Fretilin currently has the character of a social democratic party rather than a Marxist one. The author's field notes would be valuable for scholars interested in Timorese elections.

The epilogue presents a story of the past and tries to look at the evolution of Timorese politics, including a comment on colonialism and postcolonialism before independence in 2002. The present appears to be still quite challenging. On May 20, 2017 Lu-Olo became President of Timor-Leste. The parliamentary elections were successfully organized on July 22, 2017. Fretilin and the CNRT will, sooner or later, try to play their own cards, following the tough years between 2006 and 2015, the extraordinary post-2015 Timorese political truce needs to be again on the agenda of East Timor's new Government. The happy conclusion examines broader issues impacting Timor-Leste, including the politics of modernization, the question of development, social and political change, and their importance for the stability of the country. It ends

with the wish to build a stronger relationship with ASEAN, in particular Indonesia, to become the 11th member of the association after successfully organizing the ASEAN Regional Forum in Dili in April 2017.

Tai Po
Hong Kong

Jean A. Berlie

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EDITOR AND CONTRIBUTORS

About the Editor

Jean A. Berlie is a researcher at the Education University of Hong Kong. His books include: *East Timor Politics and Elections*, Guangzhou: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Jinan University (2007); *East Timor: A Bibliography*, Paris: Indes Savantes (2001); and *Macao 2000* (ed.), Hong Kong/New York: Oxford University Press (1999).

Contributors

Hans Hägerdal is Associate Professor in History at Linnaeus University, Sweden. He is the author of *Lords of the Land, Lords of the Sea: Conflict and Adaptation in Early Colonial Timor, 1600–1800* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2012).

Peter Murphy is a former militant for East Timor and has published articles on Timorese politics.

ACRONYMS

ASDT	<i>Associação Social Democrata Timorese</i> (Timorese Social Democratic Association)
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CAC	Anti Corruption Commission
CMATS	(Treaty on) Certain Maritime Arrangements in the Timor Sea
CNRT	National Congress for Timorese Reconstruction (party)
CPLP	Community of Portuguese Language Countries
Falintil	<i>Forças Armadas de Libertação Nacional de Timor Leste</i> (Armed Forces for the National Liberation of East Timor)
F-FDTL	Falintil and later National Defence Force of Timor-Leste
Fretilin	<i>Frente Revolucionária de Timor Leste Independente</i> (Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor)
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
MAP	Ministry of Agriculture and Fishery
PD	<i>Partido Democrático</i> (Democratic Party)
PI	Public investment
Pide (PIDE)	<i>Polícia Internacional e da Defesa do Estado</i> (International Police for the Defence of the State)
PLP	People's Liberation Party
PNTL	<i>Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste</i> (National Police of Timor-Leste)
UDT	<i>União Democrática Timorese</i> (Timorese Democratic Union)
UN	United Nations
UNAMET	United Nations Assistance Mission to East Timor (June–November 1999)

Undertim	<i>União Nacional Democrática de Resistência Timorese</i> , the United Timorese National Democratic Resistance Party
UNMISSET	United Nations Mission in East Timor (May 2002–2005)
UNMIT	United Nations Integrated Mission in East Timor (8.25.2006–12.31.2012)
UNOTIL	United Nations Office in East Timor (May 2005–2006)
UNTAET	United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (1999–2002)

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A Socio-Historical Essay: Traditions, Indonesia, Independence, and Elections

Jean A. Berlie

Abstract This chapter gives details on the Timorese culture and the great variety of languages. It describes East Timor's traditions and its colonial history, the short civil war for independence in 1974–1975, and the occupation by Indonesia. Without the Timorese themselves, the United Nations, in particular, Kofi Annan, Max Stahl's film shot in November 1991, in Dili, East Timor would not exist as an independent democratic republic. The United Nations Transitional Administration (UNTAET) was sovereign in East Timor between 2000 and 2002. This chapter gives more information about the development of the Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor (Fretilin) and a reflection on its policies.

Keywords Charismatic leaders · colonization · *funu* · history · independence · *liurai* · political parties · traditions · UNTAET

This chapter details the local politics, culture, and great variety of languages in East Timor. It is based on fieldwork using a participant anthropological methodology, conducted over many years on Timor Island.

J.A. Berlie (✉)

The Education University of Hong Kong, Tai Po, Hong Kong

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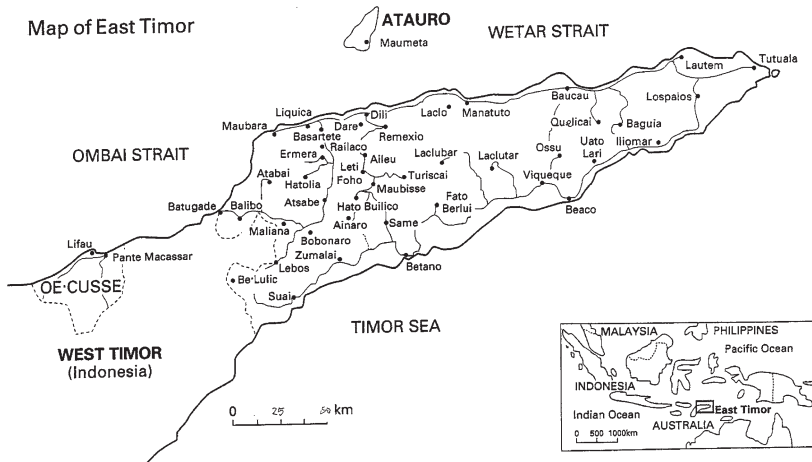
I thank the Australian scholar Clinton Fernandes who advised me not to say too much about what I observed on the fascinating island, but to write an original essay in my own way, “and some people will understand.”¹

This work describes East Timor’s traditions and its colonial history, Indonesian period, between 1975 and 1999, the ballot on self-determination and the unique UN sovereignty between 2000 and 2002. Questions regarding the East Timorese political system and the construction of a particular electoral democracy are also addressed.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Geography and Languages

The beauty of Timor Island lies in its blue seashore and discontinuous green central cordillera. This crocodile-shaped island is located at the far eastern end of the Malay World, south-east of the deep Ombai Strait, and includes East Timor and the Indonesian West Timor. For a view of East Timor in the 1970s see Chrystello.² East Timor, or Timor-Leste, encompasses 19,000 square kilometres and a population of 1.3 million in 2016. Lying north of Darwin, Australia, East Timor is a part of Southeast Asia and the South Pacific. It has an enclave called Oecussi, Oecusse or



Map 1.1 Map of East Timor

Ambeno (“*oe*” means “water” in Meto, the language of the local Atoni people, see Map 1.1 above). Its main city is Pante Makassar (Macassar).

According to James Fox, East Timor is remarkably diverse “in its linguistic and ethnic make-up.”³ East Timor, a country in Southeast Asia, is also related to the Pacific Ocean and Austronesian cultures. However, Portuguese colonization had a great impact on East Timor’s linguistic history. Around 40% of the Tetum-Praça words used in Dili, the capital, are Portuguese, but the grammar of the national language is Central Malayo-Polynesian. Local newspapers are printed in Tetum and Portuguese. Both are official languages, but Portuguese remains the major language of the Republic. The Constitution was first drafted in Portuguese. The colonial period, which promoted the usage of Tetum, in particular in Dili, also pushed the more literary Portuguese language. The issue of language remains problematic in 2017. The cultural and political Timorese elites are educated in Portuguese, and there is a great cultural gap between them and the youth who have been educated in the Indonesian language (*Bahasa Indonesia*) for 24 years.⁴ Tetum has the advantage of being the liturgical medium of the East Timorese Catholic Church. Unfortunately, the Bible has not yet been properly translated into Tetum, although more than 90 percent of the East Timorese are Catholic. Nevertheless, Pieter Middelkoop (1895–1973) had translated the Bible into Meto, which is still used among the Atoni of East Timor, Kupang, and Kefamenanu, West Timor, and Indonesia.⁵ Although Portuguese is the main language of the Timorese laws, the English language deserves a better consideration in the Constitution of East Timor. Australia is a close neighbor and its education system could be very useful for East Timor, but there are few competent English teachers in East Timor. The official languages are Tetum and Portuguese. The country’s Constitution states that Indonesian and English remain working languages.

Timor has 14 different Austronesian languages and many of them are mutually unintelligible.⁶ They were all part of the local culture of former chiefdoms. To understand the complex customary system of the island, it is necessary to briefly classify the languages of Timor.⁷ These 14 languages are spoken in different Timorese districts as follows: Tetum is spoken in Dili, Batugade, Suai, and Viqueque; Adabe in Atauro Island; Mambai is used in Samé, Aileu, and Ainaro; Fataluco is spoken by the Dagada people in Lautem and Los Palos; Meto or Vaikenu dominates in Oecussi; Tokodede is spoken in Liquiçá and Maubara; Makasai in Baucau and Baguia⁸; Galole in Manatuto; Bunak in Bobonaro; Kemak or Emak in Kailaku; Idate in

Laclubar; Lakalei in Samé; Kairui and Midiki in Lacluta and Viqueque; Nauete and Naumik in Uato Lari. In 2000, instead of using Indonesian interpreters, the UNTAET used Tetum interpreters, meaning they were sometimes unable to communicate with Timorese people in some districts. For example, they were unable to communicate with Fataluco speakers in the eastern district of Los Palos. Between 2000 and 2002, it was not politically correct to use *Bahasa Indonesia*, despite it being commonly spoken after 24 years of Indonesia rule. However, in Oecussi the local people, Atoni, speak Meto or Vaikenu; Tetum was often not favored, except for the elite who'd been educated in Dili or later for those who had a job in the capital. The family of the traditional chief, *liurai* João Hermenegildo da Costa in Oecussi, avoided using the Indonesian language. This particular *liurai*—fluent in Meto and educated in Portuguese—always preferred to use an Indonesian interpreter knowing also Portuguese or Meto. Compared to the first decade of the 2000s, the enclave is recently more “Indonesian-influenced”, partly because of its geographical proximity to Indonesia. In 2017, Meto, Tetum, and Indonesian are the most spoken languages; without Indonesian workers and machines, it was not possible to finish the roundabouts and roads in Pante Makassar for the ceremony of the 500th anniversary of the arrival of the Portuguese.

The Portuguese language too cannot be forgotten. It is useful to note the publications of the administrator Correia and his knowledge of the Makasai culture in Baucau.⁹ Portuguese colonialism has been criticized for the years 1974–1975. 500 years of Portuguese presence in the country have to be seriously considered, as these have had a profound impact on modern East Timor. In Oecussi, in November 2015, the 500 year anniversary of the arrival of the Portuguese was a reminder of the importance of Timor's Portuguese heritage.

Portuguese Colonization

First Indian, then Arab and Chinese traders bought sandalwood originating from Timor around the year 1000 A.D. The era of Portuguese colonialism begins in 1515. Initially, Portuguese trading was centred in Lifau, on the coast of Oecussi, and over several centuries Portuguese Timor became economically linked to Goa and Portugal. Sandalwood, and later coffee, were the main Timorese colonial exports, but these natural resources were never as valuable as the silk trade of Macao. As trade grew, and the harbor on the Pearl River Delta expanded, Timor was, for

a short period of time, brought under the jurisdiction of the Portuguese governor of Macao. The key administrative turning point was in 1769, when the Portuguese established a real capital and a local colonial governor in Dili. Exactly a century later, Alfred R. Wallace in *The Malay Archipelago*, gave a relatively dismal image of the capital.

As a colony, Timor was located at the extreme end of the Portuguese Empire. The Governor of Macao and Timor (1879–1883), Joaquim José da Graça, rightly wrote in 1882 that “the number of military cadres” (*oficiais do quadro*) was insufficient to govern the colony.¹⁰ Governor Eduardo Augusto Marques, after his arrival in Timor in 1908, issued a significant note, numbered 177 in the *Boletim Oficial*, and many reports of Portuguese officers followed, using the concept of “indigenous customary law.” This often meant “local justice”, but to cool down reports, the note “no crime” often appeared. Indigenous problems were nevertheless often solved according to traditional rules. During this period of slow transformation for the colony, Governor Marques explained that the Timorese needed a more direct system of colonization, noting with bias reflecting his favorable views of colonialism that the Timorese could not benefit from an overly expansive definition of rights. Nonetheless the Timorese, like all peoples, need laws, including their own local customary laws.¹¹

The Portuguese, in their Indo-Melanesian colony, constituted a very small number of administrators and military men. Some of them held Timorese culture in low esteem, but others such as Armando Pinto Correia, Administrator of Baucau for many years, deeply understood its significance. For security reasons and the good management of the indirect colonial system, some took on the praxis of customary laws *adat* without studying it in detail.¹² Given the circumstances, it is actually remarkable that the Portuguese succeeded in remaining in Timor for so long, given such a consistently small Portuguese military contingent, and particularly considering the maritime and trading power of the Dutch based in Kupang. Colonial Portuguese Timor was composed of local Timorese, Portuguese, *Mestiços*, Topas interpreters also called Topasses or “Black Portuguese”,¹³ *Macanese, Indians from Goa, a few Europeans, Muslims, the dominant group being Hadhramaut, and Africans. Timor today continues to be a melting pot of different ethnicities and languages. The Timorese Chinese, mainly Hakkas (Kejia), originally from Eastern Guangdong, are totally assimilated and often polyglots.*¹⁴ In 1970, Timorese Chinese were 6,000 but at present are less numerous, and Mainland Chinese are in greater number

in Dili. Contrary to the local Chinese Timorese, among the numerous Mainlanders in the country, few of them are fluent in Tetum and I met very few Portuguese speakers among them outside the Chinese Embassy. In 1908, the country was divided into *sucos*. There were, for example, 18 *sucos* in the Oecussi enclave, ten in Baucau and six on Atauro Island. To limit the power of a chief, the colonizers sometimes tried to redefine the area of his *suco*. For example, in Baucau on October 21, 1909, the Portuguese administrator increased the territory of a loyal chief of Keli-Kai (Quelicai), a major of the second line, Carlos Ximenes da Costa. The result was that the *suco* of Bercoli lost two villages: Uai-Tame and Tati-Are. During the Timorese civil war, the last governor Mário Lemos Pires (1930–2009) left Dili to Atauro Island to protect himself. He overestimated the military capability of the Timorese resistance (ASDT-Fretilin). The captain of the boat responsible for this maritime journey was Federico Almeida Santos da Costa, former President of Association Pro-Democratic Timorese-Indonesian (Apodeti), later called “Pro-Independence.” Colonel Pires refused to go to Baucau, Villa Salazar, the second city, where he had an airstrip which could be protected, as did UNTAET between 1999 and 2002. In an interview by the author early April 2017, this question of the importance of Baucau Airport was not criticized by the Ambassador of Portugal, Manuel Gonçalves de Jesus, who mentioned that he rejected the idea of commemorating the memory and presence of Lemos Pires in Atauro in 1975. This part of Portuguese history is rarely commented on. Between the years 2000 and 2015, I had many interviews with Federico Almeida da Costa in Dili, and elsewhere with two officers who spent years in Africa and Lisbon under the command of Pires, during the difficult periods of decolonization and armed conflict.

Indonesian Occupation and Laws

On December 7, 1975, the Indonesian Army (TNI) invaded Portuguese Timor. East Timor was renamed the 27th Indonesian province in 1976. In 1999, following the successful referendum for independence, after 24 years of Indonesian occupation and administration, strong Indonesian cultural and linguistic influences remained. The UNTAET also influenced the constitutional nature of the new independent state, the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste. Independence was finally declared in 2002.

For an independent democratic republic, laws are necessary. As we know, the laws of East Timor are written in Portuguese. The Constitution of East Timor was written first in Portuguese and translated afterward into English and Tetum. The Latin spirit of these laws derives mainly from the Portuguese legal culture. The laws were also shaped by the administrative period of the United Nations. Defined laws are essential, but without speaking of either Portuguese or past Indonesian laws, the East Timorese also have their own customary “laws.” On August 7, 2000, in Dili, Mari Alkatiri, at that time a member of the central committee of the National Congress for Timorese Reconstruction (CNRT), and the first Prime Minister of Timor-Leste after independence asked the question: “How to adjust international laws to East Timor?” This question remains pertinent in a country where customary laws still play a significant role.

TIMORESE CULTURE AND TRADITIONS

Culture and traditions are very important in the Island of Timor. This section concerns the customary laws as well as the charisma of Timorese leaders. It deals with an important concept *lulik* meaning “sacred” and all the related symbols still present outside the capital and even in Dili.

Timorese Customary Culture

It is not so easy to find ethnological information on Timorese culture in East Timor. The Dili archives were destroyed at least four times—in 1779, 1890, 1975, and 1999.¹⁵ So, I did research in Lisbon in the National Archives, the Historical Overseas Archives, and the Navy Archives. Pioneering work by Portuguese scholars, Luiz Gonçalves, and Jacinto José do Nascimento Moura, paved the way to define the different forms of Timorese laws.¹⁶

The traditional *Tobé* of the Atoni dominant ethnic group—Meto speakers—of the Oecussi enclave, formerly had a lot of economic power allowing them to solve land disputes, as they sometimes still do. The *Tobé* was the only village leader who knew all the land and natural resources. Traditionally, it was also believed that those who illegally cut sandalwood trees will not have a peaceful life. In the nineteenth century, sandalwood was still important, and as coffee became an important export large plantations became significantly developed at the end of that

century. In Oecussi district, the *Tobé* was formerly the leader able to give the authorization to cut down sandalwood trees (*Santalum album* L.).

When necessary, the Timorese continue to use divination. On August 7, 2001, an Atoni divination ceremony was carried out to determine whether the Timorese Democratic Union (UDT) candidate Arnaldo Sombico of Oecussi would be an elected deputy. On that day, in Pante Makassar at Padi Ai, at around ten in the morning, I attended this divination ceremony. A cock was sacrificed; its price was US\$5. The question was what would be the result of the elections for the UDT party in Oecussi. Two masters (in Meto, *abinet* means “one who knows”) officiated. The ceremony of this animistic rite was divided as follows:

At 10.10 am, a *promessa* (promise) was made to the ancestors, and in particular to the ancestor João Hermenegildo da Costa, the late father of Inacio da Costa. São António, the holy patron of Oecussi, is often invoked, but here the main Christian-animist “ancestor” invoked was the late *liurai*. Later at 10.20 am, the cock (*mano* in Meto and Tetum) was killed. Before the sacrifice, the cock was raised toward the sky. A mantra was recited by the *abinet* to the ancestors. The throat of the cock was then cut over a plate covered by a thin layer of water. The blood remained in the vessel.

The inspection of the cock’s bowels constitutes a central part of the divination ritual. If there is a discovery of a white appendix in the bowels, called *paku inpanan muti* (“appendix-erected white”) it is encouraging. On that day, it was not the case. The consumption of the sacrificed fowl is supposed to eliminate evil spirits. The flesh of the sacrificed cock was grilled. At 10.50 am the assistants consumed a lunch comprising various grilled parts of the cock, but not the feet or the liver. Rice was cooked in palm leaves, called *tuas* in Meto or *katupa* in Tetum. Coffee was served at the end.

Makasai divination, in and around Baucau, is sometimes different from the Atoni style of divination in Oecussi. Makasai prefer to inspect the hearts of chickens, pigs, goats, bulls, and buffaloes to divine the future. It seems that in general, in East Timor, the liver (*aten* in Meto and Tetum) is the key organ for divination. However, for the Atoni, the gallbladder (*enuf* in Meto) is essential. When this organ is full and long, the results of the divination are considered favorable. If the gallbladder is half full, the outcome will be unfavorable. If the gallbladder (*mamiik* in Tetum) does not exist or is very small, the final outcome will also be negative. That day in Oecussi, the gallbladder was very small. The chance

to win was negligible, and Sombico was not elected. The UDT party was not represented in Oecussi. The culture of East Timor was initially not political, but today issues of political power, leadership, and *liurai* remain salient.

Leaders and Charisma

The chiefs are called *liurai*. They are part of the indigenous political system which includes “beliefs and practices.”¹⁷ Cultural markers such as swords symbolize the supernatural power of the Timorese chiefs. Mythology and culture are still important. In Timor, flags (in particular Portuguese ones transmitted from one generation of *liurai* to another) are remarkable symbols of chieftainship. The first *liurai* who ruled a part of Timor was Belo, a Tetum speaker. The second was Sonbai,¹⁸ an Atoni; he was a “younger brother” of the Belos. According to Pieter Middelkoop and Schulte Nordholt, the third was from Suai.¹⁹ The structure of the society was pyramidal. The *liurai* were on top, and the *suco* chiefs under them controlled territories and ritual feuds. During the colonial period, the power of the *liurai* and *suco* chiefs was not obtained by elections but from their ancestors. Some *liurai* are “legendary”: prominent examples include Dom Boaventura da Costa Sotto Maior and his father D. Duarte, D. Luis dos Reis Noronha, D. Aleixo Corte Real of Ainaro, D. José Nunes, and Jeremias do Amaral.²⁰ These chiefs, their ancestors and their descendants—such as the family Corte Real of Ainaro—are still considered key elements of Timorese society. Nowadays, the real *liurai* are legitimate, democratically elected, charismatic political leaders, such as Mari Alkatiri, Ramos-Horta, and the former Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão.²¹ *Liurais* are still part of the Timorese structure of the society. In an interview, PM Alkatiri confirmed that the real national leadership in this country totals no more than five people: “The president, Xanana Gusmão, the current prime minister, José Ramos-Horta, the president of the parliament, the commander of the army... and myself of course” (Mari Alkatiri’s interview with John Loizou, *Southeast Asian Times* online, 11-9-2006). Modern high-ranked leaders or “political” *liurais* are part of a tradition which reproduces the ancient Timorese definition of power, the power of the “chiefs.”

Fretilin prefers democracy as a driving force instead of traditions to control the local system. In 2005, and in 2017, the process of modernization required adoption of property laws based on official land

registration. However, these cannot ignore local customs—a challenge for the law makers of the National Assembly who also have to integrate Portuguese, Indonesian, United Nations, and post-2002 East Timorese laws. An ambitious program was eventually established as part of the Policy and Strategy Development Program, and the Agriculture Rehabilitation Project (2000–2007). Between 2012 and 2017, this type of development and the construction of greenhouses continue, led by the company Kmanek, although it is not an official Timorese project. The issue of overlapping land property and customary laws associated with former Portuguese laws, United Nations adopted laws, and the laws of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste remains an important problem. The *liurai* have less power and are not fully able to help as before to solve land disputes; however, they are still recognized as important for the community. The Timorese people are always touched by the charisma of their political leaders who follow the *liurai* tradition. The Timorese use nationalist images, animist icons, and sacred symbols (*lulik* in Tetum) to link themselves with their ancestors. Francisco Fernandes, my late friend, has carefully described the importance of a sacred “Superior Lulik”, parallel to Mother Earth, which continues “to influence Timorese life.”²² This *lulik* concept and the role of ancestors are essential in Timorese traditional religion and beliefs. To understand modern Timorese politics, it is useful to explain these traditional customs. “In contemporary East Timor animist or *lulik* ceremonies are still conducted in which animals are sacrificed.”²³

Many of these local symbols influenced and still continue to influence charismatic Timorese leaders. Leaders use these symbols directly or indirectly. The sacrificial post in East Timor has three bifurcations, representing the three main ancestors linked to the three original kingdoms. Timorese use a bamboo pole in their sacred (*lulik*) shrine, the ritual equivalent of the vital digging stick (*ai suak*).²⁴ The sacrificial post with three bifurcations appears to be the most ancient type in East Timor. Before 2012, a post of this type was displayed with a cross in front of the entrance of the head office of the KOTA Party, in Dili. KOTA (*Klibur Oan Timur Aswain*), means “The Association of the Timorese Warriors.” A three-bifurcated sacrificial post stands in front of the Parish Building of the Church of Maubisse in Central Timor. Manuel Tilman, born in Maubisse, was the president of the KOTA Party, and a former deputy in Portugal and in East Timor (2001–2012).

Kingsbury, an Australian expert on Indonesia and Timorese politics, concentrated his attention on the Portuguese flag, often hidden and still considered sacred.²⁵ These *lulik* flags resisted Indonesian enquiries and attempts to suppress animism in places such as Ermera. In 2001, I visited these villages with Xavier do Amaral (1937–2012). Cristalis largely used the *lulik* concept to demonstrate its importance in developing Timorese nationalism and patriotic feeling, not mentioned, but well-rooted in the mind of the resistant military commander Cornelio Gama (L7) and his brother Paulino.²⁶ For L7, traditional religion, symbols, and Sagrada Familia are essential points. Molnar noted the importance of *luli* (Emak variant of *lulik*).²⁷ The essential ethnic local character of this term is remarkable. However, at present, it is not clear whether the majority of the youth of East Timor, a numerically significant part of the population, still seriously believe in these traditional values. The knowledge of a culture linked with chiefdoms, myths and ancestors—sometimes forgotten in the modern world—is essential in understanding how Timorese society and politics work. Elections occur at the national level to elect deputies to the National Parliament, the *suco* or district level, and the village level (*aldeias*). The designation of *chefes (xefes) de sucos* and *chefes de aldeias* has created a new grassroots political structure in the country. The people do not automatically follow the new structure as defined between 2001 and 2005, but in principle, Fretilin remains the only political and financial power able to organize a structured political campaign in the whole country from Dili down to the village level. Except with CNRT after the elections in 2007, in certain districts, Fretilin might have difficulties competing with some other parties, but when we consider the national level, no other party has the strength to fight against it. As pointed out by Elizabeth Traube, status is a key element for the Timorese; it is not easy to get a clear idea of what Timorese culture is because there are so many ethnic groups and languages in Timor.²⁸ This historical ethno-culture, as well as more modern Portuguese laws, both influence the laws and the society,²⁹ analyzed in further detail below.

Up to the nineteenth century, traditional Timorese society was divided into rulers called *liurai*, *suco* chiefs, headmen, local priests sometimes called *dato lulik* (the old form is *lulic*), commoners and slaves. The *liurai* (called *radja*, *raja* “king” by the Dutch) were independent in their own chiefdoms and received great respect from their subjects until the present; they were considered of divine origin. A *liurai* does not die (*mate*) but ascends (*hasae-an*). Old *suco* chiefs in

modern times, even if they are not elected, can play an advisory role. It is problematic for present-day *liurai*; their ancestors are not well-defined because colonization and politics have both played a role in their nomination. Ancestors define *liurai*'s genealogy. In earlier times it was not an election which defines the representative chief, and the people had a role in nominating the chiefs (*liurai*, *suco* chiefs, and village headmen) and could refuse them. In a past *funu* time, life was too risky to keep an incompetent leader. This could bring about intense disputes. In the countryside, the knowledge of the *suco* chiefs and local priests was very important because the conservation of public acts of ownership was never a priority in East Timor. Below the *suco* chiefs were the village headmen. Boundary disputes were frequent, so it is difficult to draw a clear line between small *sucos* and big villages in the plains. For the geographer Ormeling Timor, precolonial society was a "feudal system" divided into chiefs (*raja*, *liurai*, and *suco* chiefs), commoners, and slaves (*atan*).³⁰

Under the Portuguese, the division of the country was simplified. There were two main kingdoms and 62 smaller kingdoms: 46 in Belo³¹ and 16 in Servião.³² A substantial migration in the early fourteenth century brought the three initial kingdoms into one principality called the Balibo kingdom.³³ After an exemplary study of the local chiefs, the customary priests, their oral sayings, and the Timorese vision of political power, Francisco Fernandes and the French anthropologist Louis Berthe insisted on the importance of the ancestors in Timorese culture.³⁴ An example is given by the leaders of the historical party KOTA who understood the importance of local traditions: "union" (*klibur*), "filialness" (*oan*), and "bravery" (*aswain*). Despite the fact that educated Timorese are critical of the *raja*'s authority, the majority still accepts these traditions and their symbol of power. The community was restrained from violating local usages: *lisan* (Tetum) or *adat* (*Bahasa Indonesia*) by fear of sickness, drought that could damage crops and famine.³⁵ Timorese tradition is based on the oral genealogies of *liurai*. These chiefs generally—but not always—follow primogeniture to designate a successor at the death of a traditional leader. In the old colonial system, the Portuguese governor, the main administrator, was a part of the Timorese political system. The key point here is that a local hierarchy organized around *liurai* and *suco* chiefs—who before 1975 were accredited by the Portuguese authorities—swore their allegiance to Portugal. During the colonial period, chiefs who did not want to follow the rules of the

colonial system were called “rebels.” Independent East Timor had two main rebels: Reinado (2006–2008) and Paulino Gama (2015).

To understand Timorese society, even in the capital Dili, the concept of “chiefdom” continues to be central.³⁶ In rural society—and sometimes in the cities as well—it is not possible to communicate efficiently with the people without *suco* chiefs; *liurai* still have the customary right to control the villagers. This is fundamental in a rural society heavily dependent on agriculture for its subsistence. Current politics, under the influence of the United Nations, and with the introduction of parties and “democracy”, slightly changes this longstanding Timorese pattern. However, the aristocracy in East Timor is rooted in local history and religious beliefs.³⁷ The understanding of modern democracy is not the same everywhere in Asia. Whereas the *Herald Tribune* finds new signs of democracy in China’s Zhejiang province, the independent Timorese’s view sometimes reacts violently against the government. Chinese and East Timorese conceptions of the Western concept of democracy are different; the Timorese are politically very mature but do not follow a European pattern; they have their own way. In East Timor, even in 1975, Fretilin was indirectly linked with the Catholic Church. This was an important argument in 2005 and the next chapter will explain the confrontation between Fretilin and the Church. Sometimes, the complexity of Timorese politics does not fit a strict chronology. The 85 or so Portuguese governors of East Timor and the four governors during the Indonesian period tried to change the Timorese traditional system but did not succeed. In 2017, as in 2005, the Timorese continue to rely on their own traditional laws. The local economy still relies on agriculture. Far away from Dili, the villagers, who are often poor, cannot contemplate another system that rules their society and helps their country become richer. This is why the traditions continue to play a socio-political role; they are an embedded part of the local cultural system.

Traditional Laws Lisan (in Tetum) or Adat, Other Laws and the Legal Order

Timorese traditions and customs are complex. James Fox said that in Timor, traditions go deep; “Although Timorese traditions might be thousands of years old, these are not static. Engagement with the world involves continual adaptation and reinterpretation. This process has allowed the Timorese to both resist and assimilate.”³⁸ *Adat* is the

Indonesian and Malay concept that means tradition (or “culture”), manners, and customs; the equivalent term in Tetum is *lisan*. In East Timor, all the basic elements ensuring the reproduction of an indigenous society are still firmly in place, from kinship systems, ideologies legitimizing traditional rules, a self-sustaining subsistence economy, to a culture based on reciprocity and exchange. Barter exchange may exist and itinerant traders do not disappear in modern East Timor.

To maintain law and order, laws have to be simple, easy to understand, accessible, and in harmony with the expectations and traditions of the people. The local Timorese traditional system was well-protected during 500 years of colonization, likewise as in British India and Dutch Indonesia. The Portuguese preferred to be tolerant, but that does not mean the inexistence of a repressive system. The Portuguese generally chose to let the Timorese repress themselves when it was necessary to maintain a certain colonial harmony. We will see later that the Governor Filomeno da Câmara Melo Cabral (1873–1934) in the early twentieth century asked for troops from many other African Portuguese colonies and in particular Goa. The result was the creation of an appropriate legal system taking into account the customs and style of the Timorese people, to codify the indigenous customary law, organize a customary judiciary instruction and indigenous laws in a modern fashion, and then to study the application of a Timorese civil and penal system in a new code.³⁹ The history of law is often considered a secondary topic by law faculties, but it can be helpful when attempting to understand politics and electoral motivation. In regard to Timor, it is necessary to study Timorese history and culture, and particularly the power structure of chiefs (*liurai*). One of the key problems is to define the terms “legal” and “justice” in relation to East Timor. “Legal” refers not only to “written laws”, but also to traditional Timorese oral laws. Any writing on politics in East Timor requires diplomacy and objectivity. The people of East Timor want to build a legal structure for their independent country, after comparing other laws and incorporating them harmoniously within the culture handed down to them by their ancestors.⁴⁰ Ancestry is the basis of local beliefs in Timor and the Sunda Islands, as mentioned by the Russian anthropologist Kerimova,⁴¹ but it is also the basis of local power and justice. For the Timorese Bunak, the parents of the “ancestors” are a pair of twins whose mythical sons are the five ancestors. Political power and

status are not based on land ownership but on the patrimony of noble families. This partly explains why the legal issue of title to land is so complex. Formerly in rural Timor, the answer to the question: “Who owns the land?” could be “the *liurai*” (*rai* meaning earth) or “the King” (*raja*). Formerly in Timor, as in Samoa, land belonged to the king.

The present society of East Timor, then, continues to be segmented and has its own internal logic. Language, religion, family, marriage, and family networks are significant elements in maintaining traditional Timorese order at present, and will likely remain so in the future. For the Dutch anthropologist Schulte Nordholt, *adat* is a “system of life” and he spent many years studying the Atoni in West Timor and Oecussi. He argued that the traditional Atoni social system, *lais meto*, referred to the rules of conduct and customary laws, which had their roots in the cosmic order. This order has to be preserved at all costs, and it was dangerous to commit an offence against it—even to the extent that it was dangerous to use a wrong word in a ritual (*lasi*). *Lais meto* was not only the divine order, but also the course of events to which people were accustomed and in accordance with which they should act. The Atoni distinguishes the categories of good and evil by the nature of their human condition.⁴² The current local chiefs are part of the educated elite, which includes priests, teachers, and high-ranked government officials. Many of the old marks of these literati are nearly gone now; however, the deep bow and hand kissing of Catholic priests (*Padres*) and of nuns (by women), teachers and high-ranking government officials are still widely practiced. A general attitude of respect, verging at times on subservience, on the part of the uneducated toward the educated remains prevalent. Far from irrelevant to economic development, an understanding of Timorese traditions is essential to any efforts to modernize the country. This starts with “a change in attitude and calls for what the Timorese would call *respeitu*—a genuine respect for what is valuable in local traditions.”⁴³

EAST TIMOR’S SPIRIT OF INDEPENDENCE

Earlier in the 1900s and in 1975, East Timorese proved that the word “independence” has a strong meaning. Nationalism emerged in 1991. Later, in accordance with the people’s will, between 1999 and 2002, the United Nations prepared a remarkable achievement, East Timor’s independence.

Failed Decolonization, 1974–1975

In 1966 the United Nations passed a resolution (No. 1542) on the Timorese right of self-determination. A few years later, between April 25, 1974, and December 1975, East Timor had a failed attempt at decolonization and the official Portuguese report on decolonization was only published in 1981. The year 1999 expressed the viewpoint of the East Timorese who wanted “a country independent of Indonesia and Portugal.” The first structured anti-colonial resistance ended in 1913 with the death of the last famous Timorese anti-colonial leader, Boaventura da Costa Souto—probably in the fortress of Maubara, not far from Liquiçá. World War II saw sporadic, sometimes pro-Japanese movements. The *Columnas Negras* (Black Columns) between 1942 and 1945 were not part of the nationalist history of Timor. 14 years later, the nationalist Timorese uprising of 1959 against the colonial power failed. Seventy nationalists were deported to Bie, Angola, for over 10 years. In Dili, only two out of these 70 nationalists survived, the author visited and interviewed them in the last 15 years.

By the time former Portuguese Prime Minister Antonio de Oliveira Salazar died in 1970, followed by the *Revolução dos Cravos* (Carnation Revolution) in 1974, there was increasing support domestically in Portugal for decolonization, partly due to the high fiscal expenses associated with administering a far-flung empire. Mário Lemos Pires, who had great experience in Angola and Guinea-Bissau, was the last governor of East Timor and was tasked with overseeing decolonization. Silverio Henrique da Costa Jonatas (b. 1942) and Francisco Fernandes Mota (b. 1939), two competent majors, assisted the governor. Despite interviewing one of them, it remains unclear whether they considered decolonization in East Timor a success. The two officers were dismissed without being given acceptable reasons. The UDT party (*União Democrática Timorense*) was founded on May 11, 1974, by Mário Viegas Carrascalão (b. 1937), his late brothers João (1945–2012) and Manuel (1933–2009). Later their political campaigns were followed by the author and the district meetings were followed with Manuel. Manuel Carrascalão became a rich coffee planter and was a former president of the town council of Dili. Therefore later, in 2000 and 2001, under the UNTAET, he was often invited to attend the meetings of the Dili District Administrator.⁴⁴ Major Jonatas and Major Mota were more pro-Fretilin. However, a large majority of the Portuguese preferred UDT.

Portuguese officers such as Rui Alberto Maggiolo Gouveia and UDT members were arrested by Fretilin. Gouveia was killed in December 1975 along with Vitor Santana, an administrator, and Osório Soares of the “Pro Democratic Timorese-Indonesian” Association (APODETI) or the Timorese Popular Democratic Association. Reportedly, Caboi Lino also took part in these events. APODETI was initially formed to promote integration with Indonesia, but in 2000/2001 shifted its stance to pro-independence under President Federico Almeida Santos da Costa. Still alive in 2015, Federico was one of the last surviving participants of the nationalist uprising of 1959, and the deportation to Bie, Angola.

After a political summit with APODETI in Macao on June 26, 1975, which unfortunately Fretilin refused to attend despite strong Portuguese pressure, UDT became overconfident. In the beginning, local *liurai* and *suco* chiefs were favorable to UDT; for example, in Ainaro many of these chiefs were appointed by the Portuguese administration. Lopes da Cruz, a UDT founder, was a member of the only political party allowed in Portugal. The UDT staged a coup d’état on August 11, 1975, in Dili. On November 28, 1975, Fretilin, which controlled the country after a counter-coup, declared independence. For a short period after the brief August 1975 civil war, Fretilin established de facto independence from Portugal and ruled the country, having unified most of the Timorese people behind its regime. November 28 symbolically marked the 500th anniversary of the Portuguese presence in Lifau, Oecussi, in 2015. In order to understand the events which took place in Santa Cruz, 1991, it is essential to understand the spirit of Timorese independence.

Santa Cruz Cemetery Event, 1991

Both Portugal and Indonesia supported UDT, for different reasons, but the majority of Timorese people had already supported Fretilin. A bloody civil war broke out in 1975, ending only when Indonesia invaded the country in December 1975. The Indonesian invasion was met with silence from the international community; until the events in Santa Cruz cemetery in Dili, 1991, it seemed the world had forgotten about East Timor. Without the Santa Cruz incident, East Timor might still be under Indonesian rule today. On November 12, 1991, Max Stahl, also named Christopher Wenner, a British cameraman shot a film at the Santa Cruz cemetery. His film was taken from Santa Cruz the next day by a man who had met Stahl at the Hotel Turismo. The film was later sent

safely to Japan and then to London, and duly transmitted to the British BBC.⁴⁵ The footage showed Indonesian armed forces firing at a funeral procession in honor of a slain youth named Sebastião Gomes. The film received global attention.⁴⁶ For many observers, this event marked “the beginning of the end” of any successful integration with Indonesia.⁴⁷ Without this film, the UN had no proof of what had happened that day. The film prompted the emergence of a global solidarity movement including massive public demonstrations in Australia, North America, and Western Europe against the atrocities committed by Indonesian forces in East Timor, finally pushing the United Nations and Australia to intervene.⁴⁸

A year later, in June 1992, the Falintil Commander Kayrala Xanana Gusmão, head of the National Council of Maubere Resistance (CNRM), asked the UN Decolonization Committee to reconsider “the inalienable right of East Timor to self-determination.” A few months later, Gusmão was arrested in Dili and sent to Cipinang Prison in Jakarta. Fernando Lasama de Araújo,⁴⁹ a student resistance leader and founder of the Renetil, and later the founding President of the PD (Democratic Party), was sent to the same jail where he remained imprisoned for 6 years. The key turning point was the referendum held on August 30, 1999, thanks to international public opinion, and diplomatic pressure on Indonesia and President Habibie from President Clinton. The Timorese citizens voted that they wanted “a country independent of Indonesia and Portugal.” The year 1999 was a difficult one for the Timorese people, with violence breaking out in September 1999 after the referendum.

AUSTRALIA AND UNTAET

The Role of Australia in 1999 and After

The first oil concession was sought by Australia in 1905.⁵⁰ By June 11, 1999, UNAMET had been established and the East Timorese voters were trained to vote in a ballot on self-determination. On August 30 of the same year, more than 98% of eligible voters cast their ballots. A very large majority (78.5%) of the votes favored independence, but dramatic events followed in September 1999. In 1999, more than 200,000 East Timorese refugees from Dili and elsewhere fled or were pushed to Kupang, the capital of West Timor; many were sent to the Island of Wetar. Long after these events, in August 2002, Abilio Soares, the last

governor under Indonesia in Dili, was sentenced to 3 years in jail by an Indonesian court.

In Resolution 1296/1999, the United Nations Security Council on September 15, 1999, authorized the establishment of a multinational force to restore peace and security in the country. Australia led the United Nations-backed International Force for East Timor under Major General Peter Cosgrove who landed in East Timor on September 20, 1999.⁵¹ Consequently, “Australia–Indonesia relations were placed on a new footing.”⁵² The International Force for East Timor managed the transition to the Peace Keeping Force (PKF) of the UNTAET; “the INTERFET forces were made by France, Italy, Canada, Jordan, Kenya and the United Kingdom, as well as by New Zealand.”⁵³ In October 1999, the Indonesian National Army, *Tentara Nasional Indonesia* (TNI), which numbered around 15,000 military, left East Timor. Many houses were burned in Dili, Liquiçá, Manatuto and elsewhere in the territory by militiamen.

UNTAET, Timorese Participation, and the Implementation of Democracy

The UNTAET mandate was approved by the United Nations Security Council under UN Resolution 1272/1999. On October 25, 1999, the UN concentrated all powers in the hands of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor, thereby giving it “executive, legal and administrative responsibility.” Paragraph 8 of Resolution 1272 stresses “the need for UNTAET to consult and cooperate closely with the East Timorese people in order to carry out its mandate effectively with a view to the development of local democratic institutions.” The regulation of UNTAET, No 1999/2 (December 2, 1999), ensured East Timorese participation in the decision-making process through the establishment of a National Consultative Council (NCC). This council comprised 15 members: seven were from the National Council of the Timorese Resistance (CNRT), four from the UNTAET, including the Administrator Sérgio Vieira de Mello, three from political groups outside the CNRT, and one from the East Timorese Catholic Church. Catholicism remains popular in East Timor, and the Catholic Church continues to play an important role in Timorese politics and society. Portuguese were tolerant and did not force conversion, so only 30% of the people were Catholic before 1976, but by 1999 over 90% had become Catholic. Indonesia with its five

religions—Islam, Catholicism, Protestantism, Buddhism, and Hinduism—follows the social, philosophical, and political ethics of the *Pancasila* system, which legally forced the Timorese to choose a religion. In 1976, most of the Timorese opted for Catholicism because they believed it was the religion most likely to protect them.

Starting during the United Nations administrative period, the media proudly and openly promoted democracy. Evidently, in the twentieth century, there is widespread acceptance of democracy as the most desirable form of government. Nonetheless, this concept is considered by some in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East to be a distinctly Western system. A key question often asked is to what extent is it desirable or even possible for the developing world, and in particular, East Timor, to fully adopt Western-style democracy? In 2001, when UNTAET staff tried to educate the Timorese people to this somewhat novel concept of democracy, many misunderstandings occurred and, initially, many Timorese refused to register for the election of the Constituent Assembly. Elections are viewed as an integral part of the democratic process for choosing political leaders, deputies, a president, and various local representatives such as *chefes de suco* (regions initially based on traditional Timorese chieftainships). At that time, many Timorese asked if the purpose of the elections in 2001 was simply to elect Xanana Gusmão as president. The Constituent Assembly election, with too many parties was complicated for ordinary Timorese.

There were problems even after the signing of the 14-party pact on July 8, 2001. Two parties did not sign it: PNT (*Partido Nacionalista Timorense*) and Parentil (*Partai Republik Nasional Timor-Leste*). Both were formerly pro-Indonesia parties, but PNT became an East Timorese party during the UNTAET period. Parentil prefers *Bahasa Indonesia*, but PNT has a Portuguese name. Aliança da Conceição Araújo was elected a PNT deputy in 2001.⁵⁴ For the international community, 2002 marked the end of United Nations transitional period (under UNTAET) and the beginning of the formal sovereignty of the Timorese over their new country, the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste. During the transition, many Timorese people questioned the need for a new constitution; it seems likely many Timorese voters did not understand the system of constitutional democracy that they were being asked to support. Nonetheless, there was high voter turnout despite the remoteness of many districts, and the commitment of the citizens of Timor-Leste to their civic duty remained remarkable.

CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY ELECTION, 2001

Fretilin's dominance became evident in August 2001 (see photo 1). The second Democratic Party of Lasama (1963–2015) and many other smaller parties, for the first and last time, really defined a multi-party system in the new country. Fretilin's continuous positive promotion of independence was mitigated in December 2002 by slight *funu* events reminding UNTAET social movements.

Independence and Emergence of Political Parties

The independence of East Timor is rooted in the strong nationalism and resistance of the Timorese people, initiated in particular in Manufahi (Samé) under the guidance of the *liurai* Dom Duarte and his son Dom Boaventura at the beginning of the twentieth century. After 24 years of Indonesian occupation, East Timor finally had the chance to choose its own destiny. In March 2001, when registration started, it was difficult to gauge the Timorese spirit of independence. The lack of communication between UNTAET and the Timorese people was also problematic. Nonetheless, the high electoral turnout for the referendum vote was a significant victory for the UNTAET. A Constituent Assembly was elected by the 400,000 eligible Timorese voters (aged 18 and above) on August 30, 2001. The Timorese were highly motivated and very conscious of their political rights, with over 90% electoral participation. The multi-party election took place: 88 deputies were elected to the Constituent Assembly of East Timor; among them, 13 were elected indirectly to represent the districts. The multi-party system increased the number of political parties. Initially, there were seven in total: Fretilin (*Frente Revolucionaria de Timor Leste Independente*, the pro-independence party); UDT, APODETI (pro-Indonesia but now pro-referendum); PST (the Socialist Party of Timor);⁵⁵ PDC (*Partido Democrata Cristão*, the Christian Democrats); KOTA (*Klibur Oan Timor Aswain*, the Association of Timorese Warriors); and Trabalhista (the Labor Party). However, under UNTAET, the number of parties increased. In 2001, 16 parties were registered, including the PSD (the Social Democratic Party), founded at the end of 2000 under the presidency of Mário Viegas Carrascalão. The former Vice-President of PSD, a member of the late CNRT, Leandro Isaac (also a former Fretilin member) was chairman of the debates during the final CNRT conference, held from August 21 to 30, 2000.

The RDTL (Democratic Republic of East Timor), which claimed to be a part of Fretilin, was an opposition group fighting underground, with most of its support coming from the youth.

João Viegas Carrascalão supervised the August 11, 1975, coup which eventually started the civil war. Under UNTAET he was Minister of Infrastructure. Later, he was elected deputy at the Constituent Assembly. At one stage it seemed UDT was in a position to win four to six seats in 2001, but ended up with only two. It seemed that UDT was losing control in the countryside, except in Liquiçá and Baucau. KOTA and ASDT (*Associação Social Democrática Timorese*), the earlier name of Fretilin, were among the few parties who wanted to protect the traditional system. The KOTA president in 2001, Clementino dos Reis Amaral, did not fully support the program of the Vice-President of KOTA, Manuel Tilman who quickly became president of the party. He was the son of a *liurai*, and consequently more of a traditionalist. He is an experienced lawyer who graduated from Lisbon University. He also had a Chinese experience, having long resided in Macao.⁵⁶ Finally, Tilman, the then President of KOTA, was re-elected deputy between 2007 and 2012. Concerning the 2001 elections themselves, the chances for Fretilin to win were considered high, but a blow occurred in May 2001 when one of Fretilin's founders, Francisco Xavier do Amaral, formed a new party ASDT. ASDT represented resurgence of the older *Associação Social Democrática Timorese* party. In July and August 2001, two ministers—Mrs. Ana Pessoa Pereira da Silva Pinto, Minister of Administration (Fretilin) and Mari Alkatiri, Secretary General of the Fretilin, the Minister of Economic Affairs, later Chief Minister—were preparing for the elections. It was clear that Fretilin was attempting to concentrate its forces to win. It is useful to note that both the pre-electoral period and the election itself were peaceful. In early August 2001, UNTAET anticipated a Fretilin victory; many of the various party leaders expected this outcome, even if reluctantly. To demonstrate the importance of the complex ethno-linguistic divisions, for instance, the different parties needed to have Makasai speakers to win more votes in the second city, Baucau. An endorsement from the Bishop, Dom *Basíliodo* Nascimento Martins, certainly played a role during the electoral campaign and eventually motivated voters.⁵⁷

Under the governors during the Indonesian occupation, before the sovereign administration of Sérgio Vieira Mello, East Timorese were not free citizens and had very limited involvement in local and national politics. For many years, democracy seemed to be merely a motto coined

by the United Nations. UNTAET did not want a landslide victory by Fretilin. Rule by a single party was seen as likely to undermine rather than stabilize democracy in the newly independent Timorese nation. Encountering leaders who promoted independence during the important event of the independence in Dili, I briefly met US President Bill Clinton near the Bishop residence at a meeting to honor Ramos-Horta, but did not try to meet Major General Mário Lemos Pires (1930–2009), who was also present. The author had a long interview with the President of Mozambique, Joaquim Alberto Chissano, who was a close ally of the Timorese resistance between 1976 and 1999.

Notes on Funu

In Timorese culture, *funu* is a *leitmotiv* marker of violence used to promote nationalism. This anthropological marker exists in the north of Pante Makassar (Oecussi) where a cave named *Bolkenat* (meaning “war cave” in Meto) stands as a reminder of the enduring importance of the concept *funu*. Cockfighting may also be considered close to *funu* and related to the ideal of courage in Timorese culture. This nationalist violence often occurred during the many rebellions against Portuguese colonization. After spending 4 months in Dili and Balibo in 1861, the naturalist Alfred Wallace reported there had been several insurrections.⁵⁸

To understand this violence, which does not correspond exactly to the term *funu* (“war” in Tetum), some explanations are necessary. *Funu* became explicitly more anti-colonial around 1900, when the framework of colonial law was transformed. Written laws became more restrictive for the Timorese, even though they did not understand the “strange” European laws. For example, in Manatuto in April 1909, “no legal trial was reported in resolving conflicts according to Timorese traditions.”⁵⁹ José Ramos-Horta wrote a famous book called *Funu*. In 2000, the first Timorese leader to whom I asked the question of the meaning of *funu*, the Nobel Prize winner, Bishop Carlos Belo, immediately ended our first meeting, although he later accepted an interview on education.

In Timor, violence is a recurring problem with a long history. As we will see in the next chapter, the political events between 2005 and 2015 show that “rebellion” remains an issue in post-independence East Timor. It is difficult to define customary and political types of behavior linked to power and the will of domination. According to Michel Maffesoli, a

sociologist, in a collective or ritual context, social violence acts to symbolize power, providing cohesion, and cooperation. Violence is also part of the colonial history of Timor, albeit largely perpetrated by European colonialists against the local peoples.⁶⁰ Local culture is nevertheless very useful in solving legal problems, but this must be consistent with ethics and priorities of good public order. This means that for simple cases, the customary law is used as a priority.⁶¹ The need to maintain order and discipline have always been crucial issues in East Timor.

Founded in 1999, the Committee for Popular Defence of the Democratic Republic of East Timor (CPD-RDTL) was allied to the *Sagrada Familia* (Sacred Family), a religious sect. Both had earlier pro-Indonesia links which have remained ill-defined. It reached its most violent stage in 2001. It was also active during the main crisis, between 2006 and 2008. UNTAET was forced to call upon the police force (“Civilpol”) after a grenade was thrown at Xanana and Ramos-Horta in the stadium in Dili, on March 7, 2001. Fortunately, no major damage was caused. A hand grenade was discovered on a young CPD-RDTL activist that evening at the gymnasium. He was arrested and handcuffed. Brazilian military bodyguards reacted promptly and moved toward the main table where Roque (Rocky) Rodrigues was giving a talk in Portuguese on the new Defence Force of Timor-Leste (F-FDTL). This speech was translated into Tetum by President Xanana Gusmão himself. The Commissioner of Police, Costa e Sousa, gave the order to evacuate the officials present in the gymnasium, including President Gusmão, General Matan Ruak, the representatives of Fretilin including its President Francisco Guterres, Lu-Olo, and the vice rector of Dili University. In the afternoon, possibly impressed by the efficiency of Civilpol’s display of force, a few CPD-RDTL demonstrators stood in front of the UNTAET main building with their flags. In the evening these followers began moving toward the old market of Dili, but without any great success. An incident then occurred in Vemassi, where 400 CPD-RDTL men tried to intimidate the population. Violence also occurred on March 7 and March 12, 2001, houses were torched in Viqueque and in Baucau (the mosque also was burned). More violence broke out in Quelicai on May 25 and in Baucau where a primary school was charred on May 30. On June 15, 2001, the main building at the old market was burned in protest against the transfer of the Dili market to Comoro. During this difficult time, Australia played an essential role helping to maintain law and order. In August 2001, eight

houses were burned near Passabe in Oecussi, probably the result of fights between refugees returning from West Timor and the local Atoni population. *The Australian General Michael G. Smith* was commanded the UNTAET *peacekeeping force* from January 2000 through mid-2001. Michael Smith analyzed the successes and failures of UNTAET, which are also sometimes perceived as having exacerbated these harmful events.⁶² After independence, CPD-RDTL looters continued their rampage. On December 4, 2002, violence broke out in Dili's streets; proceeding from the torched Lorosa'e Dili Hotel (former Hotel Resende) and the Australian Supermarket Hello Mister, the mob went to Colmera, damaged UN cars, and burned the An-Nur Mosque in Kampong Alor and PM Mari Alkatiri's residence.⁶³ These events during the fall of 2002 called into question the legitimacy and durability of the transition to independence as managed by UN. UNTAET's legitimacy was also questioned by many Timorese, who after their successful referendum wanted immediate and full independence.

Fretilin, a Champion of Independence

Fretilin was the only party that continuously promoted independence from 1974 to 2002. Before independence, the majority of local chiefs were pro-Fretilin and still form a significant part of the judicial, administrative, and electoral system. For this reason, to control and build a strong political structure in 2001, Fretilin wisely organized structured local elections, among other political actions, and designated governors in Oecussi, in Central Timor, and the Eastern part of the island. Wanting to be modern and democratic, Fretilin prefers to use the electoral system to find new and faithful local leaders.

The Falintil networks always switched toward the leading party, Fretilin, because the original National Council of the Timorese Resistance (CNRT) was dissolved before the electoral campaign, in August 2001. Except in areas around Baucau, Laga, Bagia, Quelicai, Gariwai, Viqueque, and possibly Samé and Suai, Fretilin commanded support from the majority of the peasants in the countryside. Those who fought for 24 years to achieve independence continued to favor real independence and disliked UN "control by foreigners" (*kbiit malae* in Tetum). In 2000, I attended the last Congress of the original CNRT. Gusmão and Ramos-Horta wisely resigned and the CNRT became an empty shell, not a party. Certainly, Xanana could have had earlier the idea to make a new party, but he was

already approached by the Administrator Sérgio de Mello to become the president of East Timor. So, the new party, a sort of rebirth of the original CNRT, did not appear immediately. Timorese resistance and Fretilin acted in different ways to the former colonial powers Portugal and Indonesia (1975–1999), and to the United Nations administration (2000–2002). In 2001, no other party was able to compete with Fretilin; in 2007 came a second main party, CNRT. What explains the importance of Fretilin in Timorese politics? First, Fretilin placed greater emphasis than other parties on using democratic institutions to control the local system. Second, in 2001, the Timorese exercised their cultural habit of voting for the party representing their will for independence and so, in that year the Timorese voted decisively for the party which most strongly favoured independence. In 2007, as we will see in the second chapter, the rules changed.

On August 30, 2001, the Fretilin Party won 55 of the 88 seats of the Constituent Assembly under the presidency of Lu-Olo. *Lasama and the Democratic Party won seven seats, five parties won two seats each and three parties one seat only.* The ASDT under President Xavier do Amaral won six seats, and the Social Democratic Party with Mário Carrascalão, Zacarias Albano da Costa, and Leandro Isaac also winning six seats each. Mari Alkatiri won the elections. The remarkable redaction of the Constitution under the careful attention of UNTAET and the leadership of the President of the Constituent Assembly, Lu-Olo, must also be addressed. Mari Alkatiri became the first Prime Minister of the independent country on May 20, 2002. Both President Xanana Gusmão and Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri looked wished to achieve sincere reconciliation with the country's major neighbors, Indonesia and Australia. Indonesia can supply industrial and food products to East Timor at reasonable prices.

CONCLUSION

In 1515, the Portuguese landed in Oecussi, which was then established as the center of the colony. It was only in 1769 that Dili became the main city. In the 24 years following the Indonesian invasion of Timor on December 7, 1975, many dramatic events happened. Nevertheless, a university was established in 1981. For many Timorese youths who participated in the courageous independence movement, despite their preference for freedom over subservience to foreign rule, “the contact with Indonesia’s education and modernity project, inspite of its colonial attributes, is valued.”⁶⁴ This compliment for Indonesian edu-

cation paved the way for strong Indonesian support for East Timor's candidacy to become a member of ASEAN.

For UNTAET, the rule of law and strengthening of the international legal system were implemented in East Timor, but not without difficulty. Sérgio Vieira de Mello had 30-years of experience in the United Nations when he arrived in Dili in 2000, and he wanted to cooperate with the Timorese to implement democracy. Following difficult years under Indonesian rule, at the end of many months under UNTAET, in exercise of their democratic rights the Timorese of Dili marched en masse toward the government palace, demanding to be allowed to *choose* their own leaders, as well as personal economic development. Social movements in 2001 and 2002 explain the difficult years experienced by East Timor's government between 2006 and 2008. Sérgio de Mello, Mari Alkatiri, and Xanana Gusmão were the three key players in the period 2000–2002. On April 14, 2002, Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão was elected President. A leader with charisma can win many votes, and this was certainly the case when Commander Gusmão was elected to the presidency with more than 80% of the votes. Xanana's origin is Laleia, Manatuto District, on the road to Baucau, where according to a Makasai proverb the Makasai chiefs of "Laga and Laivai have descendants everywhere and they control the whole region". Liurai traditions, alliances, and family networks are still powerful and continue to play an important role in society and politics. The formal declaration of independence of Timor-Leste was the realization of hopes, nostalgia, and above all the strong nationalism and courage of the Timorese people. From the transition period under UNTAET to the present, summoning political will is necessary to reduce poverty. Achieving real and effective independence is not so easy. Budgetary discipline and public investment (PI) are essential for economic development; Timor-Leste needs massive amounts of PI in important sectors like education, health, infrastructure, and agriculture. PI in productive sectors such as agriculture and infrastructure can help to reduce Timor-Leste's dependence on imported food such as rice. These are key unresolved issues for the future prosperity of Timor-Leste and Timorese people's well-being. Transportation also needs to be addressed in order to develop East Timor's agriculture.⁶⁵ PI is also a means by which the state can expand its role and enhance its legitimacy in Timorese society. Thus, the political future of East Timor, including the question of whether it can achieve "real independence" depends to a large extent on the effectiveness of public investment projects.⁶⁶

From the beginning, Fretilin promoted independence and received a large majority in 2001. Mari Alkatiri became the first Prime Minister of the independent country. The biparty system begun in 2007 under the leadership of Mari Alkatiri and Xanana Gusmão, and does not follow the multi-party constituent assembly planned by Sérgio de Mello and the United Nations. *Fretilin and CNRT will probably maintain their dominance*, and currently the parliament composition accurately reflects Timorese political attitudes. Timorese politics follows the *liurai* tradition of leaders, bifurcated into a contest between CNRT and Fretilin. From its colonial past and geographical remoteness, Timor-Leste was suddenly thrust forward into the twenty-first century, but the period 2006–2015 was marked by a series of political events.

NOTES

1. Clinton Fernandes 2011, 2.
2. Chrystello c.1974.
3. Fox 2001, 155.
4. Aditjondro 2000.
5. Padre Richard Daschbach, an educator, is currently one the most famous teachers and translators of Meto language. He praised Middelkoop's Bible in Meto; the author stayed in Kutet two days in 2001 and 2015.
6. Fox 1977, 5, Berthe (1972).
7. <https://www.ethnologue.com/country/tl/languages> (accessed 8-23-2016).
8. Taur Matan Ruak, president of East Timor, was born in Osso Huna, Baguia Subdistrict in 1956.
9. Armando Pinto Correia's masterpiece c. 1934: *Gentio de Timor* (People of Timor), Lisboa: Lucas.
10. Graça, 1882. Report 1. See Berlie. 2001. *East Timor. A bibliography*, 74–75.
11. According to José Ramos-Horta, the Portuguese gave the Bible to the Timorese, but in exchange took their land.
12. From 1515 to 1975 the Portuguese were a ruling minority with few military forces and administrators. On August 26, 1975, only 275 military men (107 of them belonging to the Army, 7 to the Air Force and 27 to the Navy) and 25 military prisoners were present in Timor.
13. Alfred R. Wallace (1823–1913). Charles Ralph Boxer 1948, 175, and Schulte Nordholt 1971 mentioned *topi* (“hat”). This is the root for *Topasses*, in Hindi and Nepali. From Larantuka, main city of Flores Island, the Topasses, *Larantuqueiros* went to Lifau in 1640, in Oecussi, and paid tribute to Portugal when trading sandalwood. The family da Costa was always faithful to Portugal.

14. Jean A. Berlie 2015 “Chinese in East Timor. Identity, society and economy” in *HumaNetten* Nr. 35 Hösten, 37–49. Open Journal Systems... <https://journals.lnu.se/index.php/hn/article/download/355/315>.
15. Documents are mainly available in Portugal, Indonesia, Holland and secondarily in the Timor collection of the Northern Territory University, in Darwin. The author would like to thank the Librarians and all the staff for their help in Portugal and Australia.
16. Gonçalves, and Moura 1937, 475.
17. Gunn 1999, 48.
18. In 1665, the king of Sonbai was a mighty ruler, capable of rallying a force of 10,000 armed soldiers. Schulte Nordholt 1971, 170.
19. *Ibid.*, 159.
20. Timorese declaration to the governor on June 10, 1964. PIDE/DGS NT 8973, 1008–1009. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_rulers_of_Timor (accessed 11-4-2016).
21. Kingsbury 2009, 10.
22. Padre Francisco M. Fernandes 2011, 87.
23. Jolliffe 2001, 40.
24. Hicks 1976, 34.
25. Kingsbury 2009, 37.
26. Cristalis 2009, 180–185.
27. Molnar 2010, 10–24.
28. Traube 1986.
29. *Ibid.*
30. Ormeling 1956, 76–79. For Voklage 1953 *suco* means literally “bamboo internode”.
31. Schulte 1971.
32. Schulte 1971, 163.
33. Taylor 1999, 2.
34. Berthe 1972.
35. Ormeling 1956, 76, 78–79.
36. Bodley 1994, 149–152.
37. *Ibid.*, 143–144. Irving Goldman, *Ancient Polynesian Societies*, 1970. During his mandate as governor, between 1926 and 1928, Duarte tried to introduce a *Caixa de Moradores* (Residents Deposit) to develop a system of credit among farmers. Duarte 1930, 292–298. Md Yunus, Nobel Peace Prize met the PM Alkatiri in Dili and did succeed to import his microcredit Grameen to East Timor in the 2000s. Grameen Bank is currently active in microcredit with “Moris Rasik” (Independent Life).
38. James J. Fox 2011 “The articulation of tradition in Timor-Leste” *Land and life in Timor-Leste: ethnographic essays*. Online Canberra: ANU, 241–257.
39. BOT 9/41, 10.10.1908, 176–177. Governor Eduardo A. Marques (1908–1909).

40. *Pomal* or *pomali* is the place where the relics of the ancestors, totems and sacred objects (*lulik*) are deposited. Wallace 2000, 150.
41. Kerimova 1990, 1. Vroklage vol. 1, 1952, 22. Berthe 1972, 44.
42. Schulte Nordholt 1971, 424–425.
43. Fox 2008, 255.
44. These UNTAET meetings were also attended by the author between 2000 and 2002.
45. Felgueiras 2006, 169.
46. <http://journeyman.tv/60170/documentar> (accessed 3-21-2016).
47. Australia 2002, 8.
48. Clinton Fernandes 2011, 91–102.
49. Deputy Prime Minister from 2012 to his death in 2015.
50. Cotton 1999, 1.
51. Cotton 2004, 96.
52. *Ibid.*, 97–98.
53. *Ibid.*, 127.
54. Aliança Araújo, Deputy between 2001 and 2007, resigned as Vice-President of the PNT Party in August 2011.
55. Japan sometimes preferred the socialists (PST).
56. In 2005, Manuel Tilman, who is a former Timorese member of the Portuguese Parliament, was elected a deputy in 2001 and 2007.
57. Molnar 2010, 160.
58. Wallace 1987.
59. BOT 10/21 22, 4.1909, 75.
60. Michel Maffesoli (1979, rep. 1994) *La violence totalitaire. Essai d'anthropologie politique* (“Totalitarian violence...”), 23. Taylor 1999, 1.
61. Gonçalves, and Moura *ibid.*, 443. Gullick 1991, 238–257.
62. Smith 2003.
63. <http://www.easttimorlawandjusticebulletin.com/2008/12/unmiset-report-on-4-december-2002-civil.html> (accessed 1-9-2017).
64. Marisa Gonçalves 2015, 240.
65. <http://timor-leste.gov.tl/?p=4113&lang=en&n=1> (accessed 02.17.2017).
66. Making public investment more efficient (*ibid.*) IMF. www.imf.org/external/np/pp/eng/2015/061115.pdf (accessed 02-17-2017).

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Independence: Political Events in 2006, 2008, and 2015

Jean A. Berlie

Abstract This chapter describes the main political events between 2005 and 2015. Mari Alkatiri, General Secretary of the Fretilin party, won the Constituent Assembly elections and became the first Prime Minister of the independent country on May 20, 2002. Two crises in 2006–2008 and 2015 are compared. This chapter tries to point out some solutions to avoid further crises. The Sixth Government of East Timor is atypical and was established after the resignation of PM Xanana Gusmão in 2015. A bi-party political system under the leadership of a Prime Minister of the opposition seems to work. This chapter presents a short introduction of the fact that ASEAN is a unique solution for the future of the new country.

Keywords Australia · Democracy · IDPS · Independence · Maritime borders · Oil · Petitioner · Political events · Rebel

The success of the Fretilin Party allowed it to secure a large majority of seats in the Constituent Assembly August 30, 2001. It was the body that

J.A. Berlie (✉)

The Education University of Hong Kong, Tai Po, Hong Kong

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drew up the nation's Constitution. It appointed its members to form the first parliament without a further election. This chapter will study the key political events following the independence on May 20, 2002.

The successive UN missions from 1999 until 2012 and their difficulty adapting to conditions in East Timor help in understanding the complexity of current politics in the country. The United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) shaped the Timorese own new and modern way to define democracy and the electoral system. Following UNTAET, after independence came the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISSET) 2002–2005, the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL) 2005–2006, and finally the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) 2006–2012. In June 2006 the deterioration of the situation in East Timor prompted the UN Security Council to vote for the establishment of UNMIT, including an international police force to replace and supplement the international military troops. The return of international troops brought an uneasy calm, but sporadic violence continued. The impact of the Timorese crises may have been less important if the UN had been able to intervene more directly. Unfortunately, in 2006, the main crisis started during a weekend, and the UN in New York was not able to act immediately.

YEAR 2005

A Peaceful Demonstration in April–May 2005 and Factors Contributing to the Long Period of Crisis Between 2006 and 2008

In contrast to the long missions of the UN in the new country, the confrontation between the Catholic Church and the Government in April 2005 seemed secondary. However, for the Fretilin Party, it was the most important sociopolitical problem. These events were triggered by a perceived attempt to prevent the powerful Catholic Church from continuing to teach religion, civics, and ethics in state schools. Nevertheless, in the Constitution, the Catholic Church has the second position on the “Valorisation of Resistance” and the state acknowledges and values the participation of the Catholic Church in the process of national liberation of East Timor.

Smythe's book on East Timorese politics and religion (2004) carries concrete lessons concerning the challenges of the Catholic Church. The opposition between Fretilin and the Catholic Church was an important event. The publication of a pastoral note on February 25, 2005, marked

the beginning of the confrontation.¹ The Constitution separates between church and state, but “the State shall recognize and respect the different religious denominations, which are free in their organization and in the exercise of their own activities... that contribute to the well-being of the people of East Timor.”² The pattern of social movement in East Timor can be interpreted first as a struggle against social inequalities. In Dili, the May 2005 demonstration organized by the Church was partly instigated by a proposal document passed on November 19, 2004, by the Ministry of Education and approved by the Council of Ministers. It was a new curriculum under which religion was downgraded to an optional subject in a country where 96% of the population was Catholic. This program was implemented in January 2005 in 32 experimental public schools in 13 districts, and reflected a secularist orientation to religion within the state which had been prescribed in the Constitution and actively promoted by the Government since independence. The two leading bishops, Alberto *Ricardo* da Silva (1943–2015) and Dom Basílio do Nascimento Martins declared:³

(1) The State received the power from the people. Religion constitutes an important human heritage; (2) A dropping out of the religious dimension was not acceptable; (3) State “budget arithmetic” and the life of the nation should be balanced properly; (4) Why is the Portuguese language an important part of the curriculum, but not religion?

For the Church, religion must be considered on the same level as other courses. During a Symposium on religious education in April 2005, the Minister of Education, Dr. Armindo Maia, maintained his proposition “to make religion an optional subject in schools.” On April 11 that same year, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, José Ramos-Horta, deemed the position of the Catholic Church on religious instruction as an “unwanted interference in state plans.” On April 27, 2005, Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri, stated that “the world is made up of changes, a static world does not develop...The decision to end compulsory religious classes in state schools was made by the Cabinet.” Any such change would have to be made by the Cabinet. Between April 19 and May 9, 2005, the center of Dili was paralyzed by a peaceful demonstration controlled by the Timorese police. Only one incident occurred when two Portuguese were attacked by a mob.

This long demonstration showed the strength of the Catholic Church in East Timor. An ambiguous compromise was eventually agreed upon, in which parents could sign a form authorizing their children not to

attend religious courses. The events in 2006 are partly a continuation of the 2005 social unrest, but violence, killing, and torching houses later became common. In 2005, for the Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri, this demonstration was a “war of religion to transform a legitimate decision” made up by the Legislative Assembly to introduce a modification of the educational curriculum.⁴

At that time, for Bishops Ricardo and Basilio,⁵ the modifications planned by the Government jeopardized the teaching of religion and morality. The legendary President of East Timor, Xanana Gusmão, tried to deliver a speech to the demonstrators on May 9, 2005, but they refused to listen. The Bishops finally managed to cool down the protestors. Since the events of December 4, 2002, this was the first example when the public popularity of the most admired Timorese leader appeared slightly weakened. An international event, the Donors’ Conference was held, on April 28, 2005, so the Church demonstration was *ipso facto* publicized. This politico-religious confrontation also highlighted the progress of the Timorese Police in handling demonstrations peacefully. Unfortunately, as we will see later, between 2006 and 2008, peace did not last. A new rash of thefts of computers, cameras, mobile phones, and valuables from private houses in Dili pointed to new types of criminal activity in the capital. Outside the capital, the National Police in Bobonaro sub-district had stopped patrolling due to a lack of equipment and vehicles. More importantly, on April 18, 2005, police officer Tomas da Costa was killed in Lautem and a member of the martial arts group Kera Sakti was stabbed to death in Comoro, Dili. In July 2005, in response to this violence, President Xanana Gusmão and PD called upon martial arts groups Kera Sakti, Korka, and Setia Hati to cease their activity disturbing the security of the country.

Bishop Ricardo combined theology in Portuguese, the official language, with a genuine concern for the poor. He confirmed his commitment to the people of East Timor and explained his view on poverty during my many interviews with him in 2007, but made no substantial comment about this Church/Government confrontation. Smythe claims that “Theoretically the Catholic Church is committed to prioritize the needs of the poorest [...] but the evidence put forward here reveals that there were significant shortcomings in its reaction to the plight of the East Timorese.”⁶ The international community and the BBC, on Sunday, June 26, 2005, were particularly concerned by the Church/Fretilin confrontation. In the 1980s the percentage of Timorese identifying as

Catholic or Protestant doubled from around 30 to over 60 percent, and the Church retains the ability to mobilize large segments of the populace. Some foreign ambassadors in Dili blame the Church for the long mass mobilization of April–May 2005. More than 100 truckloads of demonstrators came to the capital over the course of three turbulent weeks. Five trucks full of protesters came twice from Ainaro to Dili. In Los Palos and Baucau, police had the strength to block the movement of protestors who wanted to go to Dili. Bishop Ricardo considered the police intervention to block “this convoy of 50 trucks” as an “anti-human-rights action.”

According to a keen observer of the Timorese society who analyzed these events, it looked like an ancient *jacquerie* coming by waves from the countryside to the center of power. Large numbers of trucks brought demonstrators from far away districts. Later, with the withdrawal of the last Australian contingent of the UN Peacekeeping Force (PKF) in 2005, the National Defence Force of Timor-Leste (F-FDTL) was for the first time the only force safeguarding East Timor from external threats and internal social disturbances. F-FDTL had been established in February 2001, in Aileu, and comprised two small infantry battalions, a small naval unit, and several supporting elements. It was partly protected by the noninterference policy among members of ASEAN. F-FDTL is very small and has no particular anti-subversive mobilization capacity. It was never trained to be a special force police by Portugal or the People’s Armed Force of China, even if China sent high cadres to serve in the UN police in East Timor, so Timorese Defence and Police constitutes a limited deterrent. Furthermore, the Timorese Defence Force had never been used as an anti-subversive unit before. In 2006, the F-FDTL created problems when it was operating jointly with the PNTL (National Police of Timor-Leste). It was one of the reasons for the rapid propagation of events in 2006.

One month after its confrontation with the Church, the Government tried to ease the internal political tensions. It was restructured to include 52 ministers, vice ministers, state secretaries, and governors. PM Mari Alkatiri named his new Cabinet on July 28, 2005. A Vice-Minister of Education, Rosária Corte-Real, was designated to assist the Minister of Education, Armindo Maia. During April–May 2005, Bishop Belo, who was away from Timor-Leste, did not approve the mass mobilization, his political note, printed in a local newspaper, called for a quick end to the social movement of April and May. A copy of the newspaper with this

article was torn up by a demonstrator in front of his astonished companions. The shops in the center of Dili were closed in April and May 2005 for the first time since late 1999. The economic activity of a vital part of the city was paralyzed during that period, and East Timor's economy was weakened by the prolonged closure of shops, which in turn had a negative impact on society. However, achieving harmony between the government and the Church is an essential factor in stabilizing Timorese society particularly before elections. We note that these events between the church and the state did not appear again. Around 10 years later, on March 19, 2016, Dili saw the Episcopal ordination of the Salesian of *Don Bosco* Fr. Virgilio do Carmo da Silva. The President Taur Matan Ruak and the Board of the Fretilin Party sent their congratulations to the New Bishop of Dili. This marked a new era of socioreligious stability in the country. The conflict between Church and Government in 2005, weakened both, but the events of 2006 eclipsed it.

CONFLICTS BETWEEN 2006 AND 2008

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

In 1999, one of the first problems was the return of East Timorese migrants to their home. The UN called them refugees. An ex-militiaman, Filomeno Orai, explained in his thesis the migration of East Timorese to West Timor in September 1999.⁷ These migrants returned to their newly independent country. Following the violent intervention of militiamen and burned-out houses in September and October 1999, the fears of these people is understandable.

Before January 2002, nearly 200,000 people, who had been driven out from their country in 1999, returned home. These returning ex-migrants had been compelled by the surrounding violence to go to West Timor in 1999 and stayed a long time out of their property. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimated that around 50,000 left West Timor and reentered their newly independent country in December 2002.⁸ Many of these people were frightened in 2006, as in 1999, by the increasing violence in the country. In 2006 repeated bouts of violence followed, paralyzing the capital Dili. In 2006, these IDPs lived in camps for many months in the capital Dili near the harbor, the cathedral, and the airport. The problem of the IDPs lasted 2 years from 2006 to 2008. Some of them were paid to return to their

villages and returned later to Dili to be paid again. The numerous camps in Dili, in particular, the camp at the airport, were a great concern for the Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri who resigned, Ramos-Horta who replaced him, and also for President Xanana Gusmão. Dili had become “a very uncomfortable place.”⁹ In June 2006, the UN Security Council voted to establish UNMIT. The UN peacekeepers and additional police arrived late, but the UN presence was nevertheless useful. In 2008, the Norwegian Refugee Council estimated that 70% of families returned to their homes and 17% to relatives.¹⁰

Petitioners

Excluded from the armed forces, the so-called Petitioners constituted a serious sociopolitical problem and contributed to the instability in the country. In terms of legal identity, “the *locus standi* of a petitioner could be allowed or refused.”¹¹ In East Timor, on February 17, 2006, numerous soldiers of F-FDTL went “on strike” to have equal status with their “camarades.” One month later, on March 16, Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri, Defence Minister Roque Rodrigues, and General Taur Matan Ruak decided to sack these petitioners for desertion. In 2006, nearly 600 of them were sacked! This is around 40 percent of F-FDTL, a huge number. On May 25, that year, Australian peacekeeping troops arrived in East Timor.

Historical background about the veterans will help in understanding the full story. In Guinea Bissau, like East Timor a former Portuguese colony, there was initially a similar situation concerning the veterans. In Bissau, the leaders rarely were able to finish their mandate. Bissau did not enjoy a long period of peace after its independence except during the period of the successful UN Mission led by Ramos-Horta in 2013 and 2014. For the veteran petitioners the question was better resolved in Dili than in Bissau. But, the following story of the Timorese petitioners was really dramatic, and many veterans did not receive pensions. This is the case for the veteran petitioners who survived Fernando Reinado’s rebel resistance between 2006 and 2008. For example, the former Lieutenant Gastão Salsinha had no pension, although he fought in the resistance.¹²

The pattern of social movement in East Timor can be interpreted not only as a struggle against social inequalities, but also as a consequence of strong Timorese nationalism. This particular nationalism was noticeable during the 500 years of Portuguese colonization particularly in the early twentieth century, during the 24 years of Indonesian occupation,

and again between 1999 and 2002 under UNTAET's post-colonization. In the modern Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, it is not possible to explain social movements using the concept of nationalism alone. This "nationalism" in peace time could be violent, such as during the UNTAET period, and later in 2006–2008. The violence was triggered not only by the complaints of a particular group called the "Petitioners," but also by the instability created by fans of martial arts and gangs of youths.

Following the petitioners' crisis, Alfredo Reinado became indirectly the main leader of this movement. The Easterners, who were more active, were loosely known as *Firaku* and said to be militarily more disciplined than the Westerners who were less appreciated in the resistance. Easterners were supposedly more diligent when they received orders in the resistance. This useless distinction between the Westerners and the Easterners has divided the country and created turmoil. However, there were more commanders from the Eastern part of the country (*Firaku* or *Lorosa'e* from the East or Sunrise) in the armed resistance, *Falintil*, and later in the Armed Forces *F-FDTL*. This was simply a geographic coincidence between 1975 and 1999. The *Matebian Mountain*, and other hills, where it was much easier to survive than in more open plains or lower western hills. James Fox mentioned that the name of the country, *Lorosae* or *Timor-Leste*, gives a preeminence to the Easterners, but in the past *Western Belo*, also called the *Wehali Kingdom*, was very important.¹³ From 2006 until the present, in consideration of the multicultural variety of East Timor, the East/West division has no reason to be preeminent and national unity is more important.

In 2006, the complex political situation brought turmoil in the capital *Dili*; consequently, nonessential UN staff were evacuated. Prime Minister *Alkatiri* resigned on June 26, 2006, and his resignation was announced by the official TV channel of Timor-Leste that same evening. The following day, six opposition deputies met at *Hotel Timor*, and signed a petition against *Fretilin*: *Mariano Sabino* of PD (at present president of the party); *Maria da Paixão da Costa* of PSD; *Pedro da Costa* of the Socialist Party; *Jacob Xavier* (1936–2012), founder president of PPT; *Le Quiteria da Costa*, of UDT; and *Clementino dos Reis Amaral* of KOTA.¹⁴ The "failed petition" was planned to suspend unilaterally the activities of the National Parliament. The three presidents who did not attend this historical meeting at the *Hotel Timor* were: PD President *Fernando Lasama*; and two brothers, *Mário Carrascalão*, of PSD, and *João Carrascalão* of

UDT. President Xanana Gusmão wisely asked the National Assembly to vote on the annual budget the next day, June 28, 2006. An emergency parliamentary session was needed to secure the budget for the elections in 2007, meaning this petition failed. The political situation led to the rapid appointment of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, José Ramos-Horta, to the position of interim Prime Minister in July 2006.

The 2006 Events and Their Consequences

Other tragic events happened in May 2006, for the first time since the UDT–Fretilin confrontation in 1975, the country reached the level of virtual civil war. Auweraert explained that “the historical precedent of the 1975 civil war was never far from people’s minds in the tense months after the 2006 crisis.”¹⁵ From March to June 2006 up to 40 people were killed and 1,650 homes were destroyed.¹⁶ The arrival of international troops from Australia, Portugal, Malaysia, and New Zealand helped, but the progress was slow. The Defence Minister Roque Rodrigues was pushed to resign at the end of May. On October 2, 2006, the United Nations Independent Special Commission of Inquiry found that the dismissed Interior Minister Rogério Lobato¹⁷ and Defence Minister Rodrigues acted illegally in transferring weapons to civilians during these events. In 2006, both the Police and the Army ceased to function normally. Poor, uneducated, disenfranchised gangs of young men filled the vacuum with chaotic violence, looting, and burning. Ramos-Horta, as Prime Minister before the elections in 2007, avoided the worst during this violent post-independence period. He tried to limit the violence, but politically it was a very difficult time.

To be clear, the 2006 East Timorese crisis began as a conflict between elements of the country’s military over discrimination including some 40 percent of the Defence Force. The issues of returning refugees and displaced persons were concomitant factors and became long lasting and difficult questions for three successive Governments. At the peak, 150,000 IDPs were located in camps in the capital Dili and much less in various districts, such as Ermera.

Not related, but also in the same period, José Luís Guterres was East Timor’s Ambassador to the US and the UN and returned to Dili. He created a split in the Fretilin Party when he returned to Dili from his posting in New York at the end of his 4 years as ambassador. Guterres in 2006 has created a new Fretilin *Mudança* Party (Frente-Mudansa) and later made an

alliance with the CNRT Party. In 2007 José Ramos-Horta became president and Xanana Gusmão became Prime Minister. Between 2006 and 2008 sociopolitical events occurred in Dili. Later violence became omnipresent throughout the country. Alfredo Reinado, a former major in the Army deserted and became the main rebel throughout the crisis.

Alfredo Alves Reinado, an Ambiguous Personality

In 1976, aged 8, Reinado was captured by the Indonesian military (TNI), and made a TBO (*tenaga bantuan operasional* or assistant to military operations) carrying supplies for TNI.¹⁸ In 1995, he eventually escaped, went to Australia and later became a leading officer in the F-FDTL. On May 3, 2006, Reinado deserted with his men and did not shoot at petitioners. He was briefly imprisoned in Dili, but in August, he escaped along with some 50 other prisoners.

East Timor has dismissed a substantial proportion of the F-FDTL. Between 2006 and 2008 Reinado, who refused to shoot at his companions of F-FDTL, was on the run with a group of petitioning soldiers claiming discrimination in the national forces. Moreover, the country was in trouble and many people were driven from their homes, seeking shelter as IDPs in camps mostly mainly in Dili. In 2006, Boughton said that Reinado was taking part in a coordinated movement. He “became a central player in that movement, but he only survived because of his powerful political backers.”¹⁹ UNOTIL was scheduled to end its mandate in May 2006, but its term was ultimately extended to August 20, 2006, and replaced by UNMIT to the end of 2012. The East Timorese government received police and military assistance from Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia, and Portugal during a long period.

On February 11, 2008, Reinado’s second in command, Lieutenant Salsinha and his men did not ambush and attack the Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão.²⁰ In numerous interviews Salsinha confirmed it. After running for so many months, the best option for Reinado and Salsinha was to try to find a compromise. It is likely PM Gusmão did not favor a compromise, so convincing President Ramos-Horta, was probably the main mission on that day. From the beginning, President Ramos-Horta who met them 1 month before, wanted to find a fair middle way approach. Earlier, Reinado crossed the border to see his family in Flores once, but according to Lieutenant Salsinha, had no Indonesian ID. After reviewing the autopsy evidence, Paul Toohey wrote on August 13, 2008:

“*What* is certain is that the events that morning [on February 11, 2008] are not as clear as previously presented.” During this period of crises “political divisions within the former independence movement” and inter-generational tensions were present.²¹ That day, Alfredo Reinado was killed by a soldier at Ramos-Horta’s residence.²² Reinado’s image appeared on youth T-shirts.²³ In 2008, the former Major Alfredo Reinado became a sort of iconic model of courage for many Timorese youths, who have their own ideas about what East Timorese nationalism means. Reinado was 39 years old when he was killed, and the Timorese youth continue to admire him. I personally heard many Timorese youths say in 2015 that “he was really a hero.” Reinado was sometimes described as a “defender of the people.” The views of these young admirers of the “rebel” not only show their disillusionment with the national government, which has its strengths and weaknesses, but also reflect the weaknesses of ancient, colonial or postcolonial, and postmodern popular nationalism.

On the same day, in February, at his own residence, President Ramos-Horta received two gunshot injuries. Thanks to immediate action on the part of one of his staff, he was saved by an Australian medical team that came quickly to the scene of the shooting. This quick intervention of emergency physicians saved his life. Ramos-Horta had two successive, massive blood transfusions in Dili, before being evacuated to Darwin by plane. He was able to return courageously to his Dili office in April 2008.

EVENTS IN 2015 AND CONSEQUENCES

The Roots of the Events: Looking Back, Looking Forward

It is necessary to mention Ely Forai Bot Cornelio Gama, alias L7, the elder brother of Paulino Gama. Paulino was responsible for the political crisis in 2015.²⁴ In 2000, L7 and 700 other veteran military men of the former Falintil were not included in the F-FDTL commanded by General Taur Matan Ruak. President Xanana Gusmão selected Virgilio Smith to chair the association of veterans, which was an intelligent political move. L7 from Laga was the founder of the *União da Resistência* association, and of Undertim, his party which came to symbolize the Timorese resistance.²⁵ The *Sagrada Família* is a politico-religious sect. It remained underground during the Indonesian occupation of 1975–1999. The *Sagrada Família* was not close to the mainstream of the Catholic Church. Falintil fighters around L7 and youth joined

Undertim. Following clever political advice, Cornelio Gama was elected deputy in 2007, without evident financial support. In 2007, this party won two seats and, like many other parties, joined the CNRT alliance against Fretilin. From 2007 to 2012 as a deputy, L7 depended more on the CNRT Party than Fretilin, which had been his first political affiliation. Xanana Gusmão became the second Prime Minister, thanks to his alliance with other parties. Fretilin, although it had more elected deputies, was not able to choose the Prime Minister. Ramos-Horta seemed skeptical at that time. The Portuguese Ambassador, Manuel Gonçalves de Jesus, considered that the “Spirit of the Laws” was respected in East Timor concerning the interpretation of the Constitution which designated Xanana Gusmão Prime Minister in 2007. In 2012 he won the election with more votes than the Fretilin, and became Prime Minister for the second time. In February 2015 he resigned, but apparently became the most powerful minister in the new government. During that tense period, Xanana hugged L7 in a public meeting in a quite dominating and effusive way; this was a highly symbolic act. Later during that year, L7 indirectly supported his brother, Paulino Gama (1955–2015) who was killed in August.²⁶

What motivated Paulino Gama to become a rebel in 2015? Was it the will to be somebody, a real chief, a *liurai*? In 1975, he was already inclined to be well-armed, as could be seen when he escorted the Australian Channel Seven crew to Balibo. The political consequence of this rebellion was the resignation of Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão. As one commentator put it, “Mr. Gusmao’s CNRT Coalition Government and Fretilin were engaged in a bitter political battle, much of it involving claims about corruption and gross financial mismanagement.”²⁷ East Timor has suffered unrest in the past, and, in particular, in the period between 2006 and 2008 when Australia and other nations sent troops and police to fight the violence. The UN peacekeepers finally left the country in 2012.²⁸ To understand the current political system of East Timor, and in attempting to limit the recurrence of dramatic political events, it is useful to explain the period between 2006 and 2008, and also the events of 2015.

Paulino Gama’s Saga

After surrendering to the Indonesian Army in the 1980s, it seems that Paulino Gama (1955–2015), alias Mauk Moruk Ran Nakali Teki Timur Lemorai, or Mauk Morok, wanted a confrontation with the Timorese leadership of the resistance. It was not pure treason. In 2012, Paulino

Gama arrived in East Timor from Holland. Before the presidential election, the author had lunch with Paulino near Dili beach. He knew me from Holland, but was rather silent and 3 years later, in 2015, he triggered political turmoil. The political reconciliation between Fretilin and CNRT after these events are an extraordinary political development; a new Prime Minister was appointed. Gordon Peake said that “this is very unusual. It’s like Tony Abbott [former Prime Minister of Australia] stepping down to become a minister in a government led by Bill Shorten [leader of the opposition in the Australian parliament].” It is an example of the unpredictability of Timor’s politics. This 2015 period is also the story of the adventures of Paulino Gama who wanted to follow the *liurai* tradition, and to be a historical and courageous fighter.²⁹ After Gama’s last arrival in Dili, many events related to his return occurred. It is useful to mention some notable facts.

Angela Freitas is the President of the Labour Party, *Partido Trabalhista de Timor* (PTT), a small party founded in 1974 in Dili by her father Paulo Freitas. In 2012 and 2017, Angela was one of the first female Presidential candidate.³⁰ Freitas was secretly opposed to the Indonesian occupation, working alongside Bishop Belo, and Caritas director, Father Francisco Barreto. Angela Freitas was arrested and detained for a short period in 2015 because she was allegedly supporting Mauk Moruk. Paulino Gama’s initial nationalist spirit was transformed into a rebellious dream linked to his past resistance. Kingsbury and Leach (2008) refer to that as “difficult memories.” In April he ignored media advice to surrender.³¹ Compared to Reinado, Paulino was lightly armed, had no well-trained bodyguards, and no elite unit to protect him. In 2015, he seemed to have spent most of his few months on the run in the bush, not far from the hilly region where he resisted the Indonesian military (TNI). The last confrontation was a joint police and military operation, during which Paulino Gama was killed, on August 8, 2015, in Watu Saha Loi, near Venilale.³² About that event, the government spokesman said: “Every effort was made during the operation to avoid this outcome. Regrettably, the operation was unable to avoid a confrontation resulting in an exchange of gunfire.”

The two Gama brothers’ stories are different, but there is emotion connected to the past involved in both cases. L7 is more successful and careful; he is a real fighter. Paulino was something of a ‘dreamer’. Paulino’s nostalgia could be linked to his exile from East Timor to Holland, near Leiden, after being a commander in the hills between 1976

and 1981.³³ In 2012, he went to East Timor for the elections. 3 years later, he returned from Holland to meet his death. His wife attended Gama's funeral in their native country, which neither of them had forgotten. Why did Paulino's memories push him once again into the hills? Paulino Gama criticized the government and, like Reinado, afterward disappeared into East Timor's countryside. Bishop Carlos Felipe Ximenes Belo commented: "In the history of insurgencies in East Timor, local people [...] if they feel strong, they fight alone."³⁴ The Timorese are not afraid to fight for their ideas, and the "insurgencies" in 2006–2008 and 2015 explain that. The *liurai* families continue to play a role in Timorese society. Both, Reinado and Paulino Gama, tried to prove that they are true *liurai*, attempting to demonstrate leadership capacity and proverbial courage, the kind displayed by Dom Boaventura. The *liurai* tradition promotes the hereditary transfer of power such as in Boaventura family.³⁵

In politics, *liurai* traditions are sometimes rejected by the Fretilin Party, but probably less by the CNRT. The Timorese *liurai* played an important role, but following the UN (UNTAET) mandate in 2001 and 2002, they have lost their political role, except for some notable exceptions. The political end of the PPT Party of Jacob Xavier of Ainaro and Manuel Tilman's KOTA (Klibur Oan Timor Aswa'in, Sons of the Mountain Warriors), signifies a certain decline. However, in 2009, Kammen's "utopia" seems too strong a term to define the behavior of the deputies Xavier and Tilman. This judgment does not reflect the reality of the *liurai* spirit, but it is right that Jacob Xavier was sometimes called "Maluko." This Tetum adjective sometimes means "bizarre." The alliance of Xavier and Tilman demonstrated their political intelligence. They both were re-elected deputies in 2007. So, the traditional spirit has not disappeared. Reinado and Paulino Gama are good examples of the persistence of such among the Timorese. The *liurai* tradition continues to be rooted in the Timorese system of belief and identity.

These traditional questions have to be asked of the youth. The resistance might be over for the youth of Timor, but their current political power is very limited and their votes do not point to a strong preference for any particular political leader, except the late Lasama. We have to see if, in July 2017, the youth will vote for PD and the Minister of Education Kalohan. The new National Youth Policy, examined at the meeting of the Council of Ministers on December 22, 2015, details the challenges, objectives, and projects of the state for the youth who are the majority of the current population of Timor-Leste: "The promotion of

civic education, employment for the youth and national unity guide the strategies and programs for youth development.”³⁶ More has to be done. Addressing unemployment is a good starting point. The development of Tetum, the national language, is certainly another question. For most of the youth in Timor-Leste it is still essential and less expensive to have a valid tertiary education certificate from Indonesia, but the upgrading of Tetum as a secondary school language will not happen any time soon.

On February 12, 2015, the main result of Paulino Gama’s “rebellion” was that a leading member of the opposition Fretilin party, Rui Maria de Araújo (b. 1964) became Prime Minister of the Sixth Government of East Timor. Araújo is a physician. He was Health Minister in 2006 and became Deputy Prime Minister from 2006 to 2007. One day before his nomination, in an ABC News interview, Kingsbury said that Araújo was very popular and regarded “as one of the new generation.” He also described Araújo as a “strong and unifying figure who can work competently across the aisle to avoid political crises.”³⁷ Many politicians and Ambassadors also congratulated Lu-Olo. On the afternoon March 22, 2017, after learning of the electoral success of Lu-Olo, President-elect, the Prime Minister Rui Maria de Araújo went to Fretilin HQ in Dili. Xanana Gusmão after his resignation as Prime Minister continued to play a very important role in the government affairs, and as State Minister in charge of Planning and Strategic Investment.

The death of Paulino Gama raised a question of state legitimacy. Apart from the question of political power, there is a question of state’s authority, law and order. For Max Weber, violence is justified when it is “legitimate.”³⁸ Since February 2015, the government of East Timor has a sort of biparty political system, CNRT and Fretilin. The power is not shared between CNRT and Fretilin, even if the Prime Minister is a Fretilin member. Lasama’s Democratic Party was the only other party in a position to claim power, even if it remains allied to CNRT. The leadership of Lasama cannot be replaced by the 32.5% who voted for the Minister of Education, António da Conceição. The parliamentary election in July 2017 will be different.

The Death of Fernando Lasama

President of the National Assembly between 2007 and 2012, and later Vice-Prime Minister, Fernando Lasama de Araújo was born in Manutasi into a rural family. The name “La Sama” means “cannot be influenced” in Tetum. Lasama was the founder of the Renetil, a student association of resistance

against Indonesia. Lasama inspired a thousand students to abandon their studies in Indonesia and work full time for the pro-independence vote in 1999. A feminine resistance association Grupo Feto Foinsa'e Timor Lorosa'e (GFFTL) also existed, and an active member of this student women's organization was Atanasia Pires, who later became a CNRT deputy.

As a student at the Udayana University of Bali, Lasama was arrested for "subversion."³⁹ Before being released from Cipinang in Jakarta, both Lasama and Xanana were identified with Fretilin. After being released, neither joined Fretilin again. In 2001, Lasama established the Democratic Party. The role and importance of Lasama's PD are often forgotten by political scientists, but they mention sometimes his Partido Democrático (PD).⁴⁰ In 2001, just before the Constituent Assembly election, in an interview with me, Jill Jolliffe said that Lasama would win this election with his Democratic Party; I made a political forecast for Fretilin at that time. In fact, the PD Party received 8% of the votes and was not invited by Fretilin to participate in the government. In the 2007 parliamentary election Lasama won more than 11% of the votes. This slight increase was a remarkable achievement. In 2012, Lasama led PD to the third place with 10% of the votes, and eight PD deputies. Fourth-placed Fretilin-Mudança, won only two seats. Lasama's political intelligence was recognized and he became Vice-Prime Minister responsible for Social Issues. He resigned from this post in 2015 and soon passed away. Lasama was especially praised among youth educated in *Bahasa Indonesia*. In East Timor in 2017, an Indonesian education is still regarded as a positive asset. Despite his long detention, Lasama did not criticize Indonesia after his country gained independence. Lasama was praised for his anti-colonialism, political clarity, and determination as a party founder. Between 2007 and 2015, Lasama managed to push his Partido Democrático to become the third party in the country. He became Vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Education, at the end of his long career of resistance and political activism. The model of political leadership personalized by Fernando Lasama has been decidedly nationalist from the beginning. Lasama's political model was also followed, with some differences, by Xanana Gusmão, Mari Alkatiri, and José Ramos-Horta. The charisma of each of these leaders exists, albeit with personal variations. Xanana is more populist and profoundly charismatic, Alkatiri is a brilliant politico-economist, and Ramos-Horta is a pragmatic master in politics. When there is a political turmoil, these three key leaders meet together, this has happened many times between 2002 and 2008. In 2015, Mari Alkatiri

was named the head of the Special Economic Zone of Oecussi, it demonstrated a Xanana-Alkatiri collaboration to avoid crises. The events in 2006 were “the result of a conspiracy... It started in 2001, 2002...”

In February 2015, the new government was a good solution, and a serious crisis was avoided. However, poverty had not yet been addressed very seriously in 2017.

TIMORESE FUTURE: NO MORE POVERTY?

Poverty Reduction

To reduce poverty and promote economic growth in rural areas, Timor needs to develop a thriving agricultural sector.⁴¹ Between 2002 and 2006, the Fretilin Party was economically quite successful, but the population in the great majority of the rural areas remains poor. However in 2002 UNTAET, the World Bank, Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri and President Xanana Gusmão strove to improve the livelihoods of the poor after drafting the *National Development Plan (2002)* to reduce poverty. This plan had a clear objective, but the subsequent progress of the government in tackling poverty was slow despite the official endorsement. Solutions for agriculture and irrigation and the participation of the community were included in the 2002 plan. In January 2005, during a drought the Bishop Ricardo of Dili managed to supply food to far-away south-eastern districts. In July 2005, the Government decided to take action, 139 villages suffered food shortages.⁴² Atauro Island was mentioned, and agencies such as Oxfam would try to solve this urgent problem. The World Bank, the UN, donors, and East Timor’s Government have all ranked poverty a high priority on their agenda for change, and the Timorese want concrete action, not simply media-oriented humanitarian discourses.

Poor people in East Timor are engaged primarily in agriculture, and improving agricultural productivity is a high priority for the Government and bureaucracy. Proposed initiatives include rehabilitation and reconstruction of irrigation systems, introduction of water harvesting techniques, wider distribution of improved seeds of cereal crops, fruits and vegetables, livestock health, aquaculture projects, and sustainable management of forests and other natural resources. These initiatives will be undertaken with the participation of the communities that depend on them.⁴³

Between 1926 and 1928 the Governor Teófilo Duarte was the first to introduce microcredit in East Timor. At present, with the help of Grameen Bank of Bangladesh, Moris Rasik, a microcredit company, began operating in 2007. Since 2000 “Moris Rasik” primarily focuses on poor, rural women and started earlier after a visit of Md Yunus, the Nobel Prize winner. In 2007, “Moris Rasik” (Independent Life in Tetum), had more than 11,000 loan clients and 16 branches in 11 districts, with a portfolio worth US\$2.25 million, which has a repayment rate of 98% and operational self-sufficiency.⁴⁴ Some 11,000 households have benefited from microcredit. It is dedicated to helping families escape poverty by providing them with access to capital which can be used to start their own small businesses. One of the main complaints heard by the author is the obligation to reimburse the interest of the loan a month after receiving it.

The so-called *Timor-Leste Strategic Development Plan 2011–2030*, which follows the guidance of the World Health Organization (WHO), mentioned the question of “extreme poverty” without giving a plan on how to reduce poverty.⁴⁵ Around half of the East Timorese population lives on one US dollar a day. By world standards, Timor-Leste is a poor country.”⁴⁶ The earlier *Development Plan* in 2002 tried to give more solutions.⁴⁷ In the last 12 years, following the UNTAET work on the paddy field question, there was no serious program to develop irrigation. This is recognized by Serge Verniau, former head of UNTAET’s Agriculture Unit. He was the creator of “Seeds of Life,” a project approved by Sérgio Vieira de Mello to upgrade agriculture.⁴⁸ Australian programs follow Verniau’s ideas to help secure East Timor’s future. Later, between 2012 and 2017, development and the construction of greenhouses in Aileu and Ermera continue with the company Kmanek which is not an official Timorese project. In 2017, despite there being will to reduce poverty, no clear constructive policy has been developed.

Happy End of the Year 2015, Followed by 2016, a Year of Challenges

The Constitution of East Timor states that “the independence of East Timor, proclaimed on November 28, 1975, by Frente Revolucionária do Timor Leste Independente (Fretilin), is recognized internationally.” The 500th Anniversary of the arrival of the Portuguese and Catholicism in Timor was celebrated in Oecussi on November 28, 2015. The local

Atoni chiefs, clad in their folkloric clothes, were represented at the celebrations. Under what conditions and circumstances do some Timorese continue to obey these socio-political authorities? Is it because during the long colonial past they commanded them? The customary *liurai* leaders of Oecussi met with the Cardinal who represented the Pope for the 500th anniversary of the arrival of Catholicism in East Timor. President Taur Matan Ruak was the highest official present at these ceremonies, while Mari Alkatiri, Head of the Special Economic Zone of Oecussi, was in charge of the official ceremony. The Minister of Tourism, Art and Culture, Francisco Kalbuadi Lay was also present to show that the development of tourism is important in Oecussi. In 2016, the Sixth Government of East Timor faced many challenges. Since independence the economy struggled, despite a reserve of US\$16 billion at the end of that year. This was expressed by a former Minister of Economy in an interview, SDV, the French company Delmas in charge of Tibar Harbor, and Ted Lay, the son of late San Tai Ho who was the most famous trader in Portuguese Timor before 1976. East Timor remains one of the world's poorest nations, and its government has struggled to improve the livelihoods of its 1.3 million citizens, with diversifying the economy a particularly problematic issue.⁴⁹ East Timor ranked 133 out of 175 in 2014 on Transparency International's corruption index.⁵⁰ The former competent Commissioner of the CAC Anti-Corruption Commission, Aderito de Jesus Soares is now a key leader of the PLP (People's Liberation Party), a new party. After May 20, 2017, when Francisco Guterres Luo Olo was sworn in as President of Timor-Leste, the former President Taur Matan Ruak could participate in the parliamentary elections directly or indirectly. Certainly the most important person for the management of the economy is the new Prime Minister.

The central politico-economic issue is oil. The issue is thorny. In 1980 a book was banned in Australia for stating that the oil issue "could be more readily negotiated" with Indonesia than with an independent East Timor.⁵¹ Australia abides by the preexisting and legally binding 2002 Timor Sea Treaty and the 2006 Treaty on Certain Maritime Arrangements in the Timor Sea (CMATS) which was signed by the Foreign Ministers José Ramos-Horta and Alexander Downer. In 2016, the Australian Government was not yet ready to negotiate with Timor-Leste on maritime boundaries.⁵² According to Timorese sources, exploitation of the country's oil reserves is viewed

as a means to the full restoration of East Timor's economic independence and development. In 1997, a treaty was negotiated between Australia and Indonesia concerning East Timor, the 27th Province of Indonesia. It initially concerned Australia and the Republic of Indonesia, which were responsible for defining the Council's negotiating strategy for the definitive delimitation of maritime boundaries. In 2002, Australia withdrew its recognition of the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice over the maritime boundary issue. From the Australian viewpoint, on January 12, 2006, the Treaty between Australia and East Timor on CMATS, signed by the Foreign Ministers Ramos-Horta and Downer, tried to unilaterally provide the two countries with a fair distribution of revenue derived from the disputed Greater Sunrise oil fields. Revenues from the Joint Petroleum Development Area were split 90% to Timor-Leste and 10% to Australia. In December 2013, the Australian Security Intelligence Organization and the Australian Federal Police seized files and computers from the Canberra office of Bernard Collaery—one of the lawyers advising East Timor in the dispute with Australia.⁵³ While the validity period of the CMATS was until 2057, on February 3, 2016, the government appointed Xanana Gusmão, State Minister of Planning and Strategic Investment, as chief negotiator of the Negotiating Team for Treaties.

Major nationalist demonstrations were organized in Dili and Australia in March and April 2016 (see photo 2) calling for more rights on the Timor Sea.⁵⁴ The protesters were against Australia's refusal to negotiate a permanent boundary in the Timor Sea. Despite the Australian beneficial treaty arrangements, on April 11, 2016, Timor-Leste requested a Conciliation Commission under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) to conciliate differences between Australia and Timor-Leste on maritime boundaries in the Timor Sea. On 26 September, 2016, the Conciliation Commission announced that it had jurisdiction to proceed with the conciliation. Australia accepts the Commission's decision and will continue to engage in good faith during the next phase of the conciliation process. The boundary issue raises many questions, but unexpectedly in January 2017, new Maritime Arrangements in the Timor Sea seemed possible. The agenda of the negotiations has yet to be finalised, but the limit of the validity period, 2057, was cancelled in 2017. The CMATS treaty arrangements, which were consistent with international law, will

be discussed. Essential preliminary renegotiations between the two countries took place in Holland in April 2017, State Minister Xanana Gusmão was the head of the Timorese delegation. An agreement on maritime boundaries is expected in September 2017. The Timor Sea Justice Campaign cannot, unfortunately, guarantee that inside the new maritime borders oil and natural gas will be found.

The year 2017, following a bad economic year in 2016, is marked by the victory of Lu-Olo to the office of President with 57% of the votes, but with a record low voter turnout of 71% of voters. In particular, the youth turnout was low. We have to await the parliamentary elections in July 2017 to confirm the state of social stability, but student violence occurred at the National University UNTL during the first round of the presidential election. Is it possible to anticipate significant changes after the parliamentary elections? We have to await July or September 2017 to know the answer. August is usually a rather calm month. Divisions and rivalries exist within the Timorese political elite, but in 2015, 2016, and 2017 before the parliamentary elections, the main leaders in the present biparty system attempted to find an “*entente cordiale*.”

To mark this year, on March 27, 2017, the 17th Anniversary of the National Police of Timor-Leste (PNTL) was celebrated by the Prime Minister Rui Maria de Araújo and the Minister of the Interior, Longuinhos Monteiro, joined by the President of the Republic Taur Matan Ruak, General Lere Anan Timor and other dignitaries, to offer their congratulations to the head of the PNTL, Commander-General Júlio da Costa Hornay. The author was present.

CONCLUSION

Most Timorese citizens are very nationalistic. The year 2017 is different, but in recent times the older generations have been more inclined than the youth to refer to the past for guidance. I argue that the youth have their own views on nationalism. Some divergence of opinion has appeared between generations. This was evident during the elections of 2012. In 2016, and in 2017 too, the youth of Timor at times reacted differently. They did not vote as usual for the presidential election, for the first time in March 2017, and the low number of voters can be partly attributed to the low interest of the youth in politics. This will probably not be the case in July 2017, and some of them can be expected to vote for PD.

Can we say that East Timor is a successful democratic country? The character of the country's future depends upon accessing "global capital."⁵⁵ Local institutions are still fragile. Stability and development, both pillars of a solid political system, also continue to depend on "both local and international factors."⁵⁶ The government seems to ignore useful recommendations which are not promoted by financing sources from the UN (UNDP) or the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR). There is a lack of support for agricultural development. In 2014, only 2% (US\$34 million), of the national budget has been allocated to agriculture.⁵⁷ The national budget was US\$1.5 billion in 2014.⁵⁸ The deputies in charge of these questions were interviewed by the author at the parliament in December 2015 and they had no interest in finding solutions to develop the production of maize, despite the fact that maize has more vitamins than white rice. The UN promoted rice growing at the expense of corn cultivation and since 2002 corn has been less cultivated. One of these deputies agreed that reforestation continues to be a priority. In 2017, food security and nutrition in East Timor are important issues for FAO. Timor will need a healthy grain crop economy when the reserves of oil and natural gas have been exhausted. In April 2017, the Vice-Minister of Agriculture (MAP), Marcos da Cruz, rightly noted that the youth are not interested, and the country needs more farmers. It is urgent for the future of East Timor to secure a sufficient rural population and increase agricultural production.⁵⁹

Only the Greater Sunrise field can keep pumping oil until around 2025. Timor's economy has already been badly hit by a reduction in prices of oil and gas. As Kingsbury sees it, regardless of its oil wells, East Timor's future will continue to be difficult.⁶⁰ Oil has too often produced vast personal fortunes, but very little real social change benefiting the majority.⁶¹ The CMATS renegotiations are making progress in 2017. On March 26 and 31, 2017, the UN Permanent Court of Arbitration organized a meeting with the two countries involved in the Timor Sea dispute, East Timor and Australia, the Ambassador Peter Taksoe-Jensen was the president.⁶² No definitive result was announced by the Court of Arbitration, in The Hague, Holland.

The question of national unity also has to be addressed. The current biparty system favors national unity, but it is difficult to recreate the national unity of 1999 without a common enemy. The death of Fernando Lasama has created a political void, and fewer will vote for the Democratic Party. When Xavier do Amaral passed away in 2012, his followers were

not able to restructure the ASDT Party. After the parliamentary elections in 2017, the new Prime Minister and President Lu-Olo will determine the level of Timorese democracy within the dominant Fretilin/CNRT political system. The future will tell if the new maritime borders will finally be successfully negotiated with Australia in 2017 and accepted by the Timorese people. ASEAN membership remains a key issue, and this is probably the most promising opportunity for Timor-Leste, but Australia remains an essential neighboring country for East Timor.

NOTES

1. Late Bishop of Dili Alberto Ricardo da Silva in 2005.
2. East Timor Constitution Part I-12.1.
3. Ricardo 2005.
4. *J N Diario*, May 2005.
5. In December 1996, Dom Basilio do Nascimento Martins became the second Bishop (Baucau) named by the Vatican.
6. Smythe 2004.
7. Filomeno Orai 2001, Master thesis Lund University online <http://lup.lub.lu.se/luur/download?func=downloadFile&recordId=1355394&fileId=1355395> (accessed 6-21-2016).
8. <http://www.unhcr.org/3e1a9fc00.pdf> (accessed 10-30-2016).
9. Cristalis 2009, 308.
10. <http://www.internal-displacement.cceorg/search?Countries=Timor-Leste&Regions=South+and+South-East+Asia> (accessed 03-29-2017).
11. *Locus standi* means: “entitled of judicial review” Joseph Vining (1978), *Legal identity...* London Yale University Press, 56.
12. Chopra 2000; Wilson 2010; Svoboda 2013.
13. Fox 2008, 121–122, 255.
14. Clementino Amaral was the Head of the Indonesian Human Rights Commission (Kommas-HAM). Clementino Amaral was a Timorese deputy between 2001 and 2007.
15. Auweraert 2012, 17.
16. Auweraert 2012, 16.
17. Rogério Lobato is a former member of the Central Committee of Fretilin and brother of the national hero Nicolau Lobato.
18. TBOs had “to carry heavy goods each time the camp moved”. <http://docstore.ohchr.org/SelfServices/FilesHandler.ashx?enc=6QkG1dpercent2FPPRiCAqhKb7yhsq3bGBgj7nnUgqOopercent2FynBtOpercent2B UFr6hfhZJdxbyS1jD6nijBZpercent2BwntuWuulb6y7Pgiv2ITm90Dg-jo92VNC28GPJja3oNgEfhQK0gTrD8nmjRJM6> (accessed 4-6-2016). “Former clandestine youth were underground”.

19. Boughton 2008.
20. Cristalis 2009, 310, and Kingsbury 2009, 2 for other interpretation of these events.
21. Leach 2008, 146.
22. They knew each other and immediately Reinado said to his killer “La bele tiro!” (don’t shoot!).
23. Cristalis 2009, 309.
24. http://www.casacomum.org/aebdocs/05/05732/05732.020/d2/05732.020_p0001_id001451607_D2.pdf (accessed 3-27-2015). “Names and pseudonyms of the Timorese Resistance”.
25. Cristalis 2009, 279, 308.
26. Paulino Gama, c. 1985, clad in a priest uniform, managed to fly unknown to Indonesian immigration police to Thailand and to Europe.
27. Xanana 2006.
28. Kingsbury 2009, 3.
29. *Ibid.* “Names and pseudonyms of the Timorese Resistance”.
30. <http://www.diakkalae.com/2012/01/angela-freitas-first-female-candidate.html> (accessed 4-3-2016).
31. “Diak Liu Mauk Moruk rende” (the best for him is to surrender). *Jornal Nacional Diário*, 4-14-2015.
32. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/countries/asia-and-the-pacific/timor-leste/report-timor-leste/> (accessed 4-10-2016).
33. Carey 1995.
34. Belo 1994.
35. <http://www.yourarticlelibrary.com/sociology/paretos-circulation-of-elites-characteristics-and-criticisms/43779/> (accessed 4-3-2016).
36. East Timor Government Information.
37. <http://www.ndtv.com/world-news/east-timor-swears-in-new-prime-minister-and-government-740052> (accessed 4-8-2016).
38. Weber 1922, 6. Online Weber-Politics-as-a-Vocation (accessed 6-3-2016).
39. <http://www.rappler.com/views/imho/99074-fernando-la-sama-de-araujo-in-memoriam> (accessed 8 April 2016).
40. Cristalis 2009, 279.
41. Timor-Leste-Strategic-Plan-2011-2030 (accessed 4-17-2016).
42. Estanislau da Silva was interim Prime Minister in 2007.
43. *East Timor National Development Plan*. Dili: Planning Commission, May 21, 2002, [http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPRSI/Resources/Timor-Leste_PRSP\(may2002\).pdf](http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPRSI/Resources/Timor-Leste_PRSP(may2002).pdf) (accessed 4-17-2016).
44. Microcredit 2007, 13.
45. <http://timor-leste.gov.tl/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/Timor-Leste-Strategic-Plan-2011> (accessed 11-18-2016).

46. East Timor: Basic Income, Job Guarantees or Minimum Wages (c. 2008) (accessed 11-2-2017). <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-14919009> (*idem*): the “UN telecom body lists East Timor as being among the world’s 10 least-connected nations”.
47. *Ibid.* https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/1506_Timor-Leste-Strategic-Plan-2011-20301.pdf (accessed 04-17-2016).
48. The “Seeds of Life” project was developed by Australia to find varieties resistant to downy mildew disease.
49. Smythe 2004: Concerning poverty, there are “significant shortcomings in its reaction to the plight of the East Timorese”.
50. “Individuals were arbitrarily arrested [...] by security forces as part of joint security operations in Baucau district between March and August [2015]”. <https://www.transparency.org/cpi2014/results> (accessed 4-8-2015).
51. J.R. Walsh and G.J. Munster 1980 *Documents on Australian Defence and Foreign Policy, 1968-1975*, Sydney: Hale & Iremonger, quoted by Tanter 2001, 257, 270.
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56. Molnar 2010, 153.
57. Andrew McWilliam <http://press-files.anu.edu.au/downloads/press/p323251/pdf/ch15.pdf> (accessed 1-9-2017).
58. <https://www.mof.gov.tl/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Budget-Book-1-ENGL.pdf> (03-30-2017).
59. *Diariu Timoroman* 04-10-2017, p. 7.
60. Kingsbury 2009, 218.
61. Tanter 2001, 260.
62. *Timor Post* 07-04-2017, p. 1, 23.

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East Timor and Its Giant Southern Neighbor

Peter Murphy

Abstract In this chapter, Peter Murphy presents an Australian modern political view of the Australia and East Timor relationship. Through the 24 years of resistance in East Timor between 1975 and 1999, Australians of very diverse political views maintained their sympathy with the Timorese and their opposition to Australian complicity. They ranged from Communist Party activists, trade unionists, the Commando veterans, Catholics, Labor as well as Liberal people, Aboriginal leaders, and media workers. Given the security role that Australia has taken on, Australia's leaders are challenged to respect the Timorese people. Their nationalist and democratic character has been forged by their own history, 500 years of colonialism, three decades of neo-colonialism, resistance, and aspirations to establish their own flowering culture.

Keywords Australia · Conflict · Elections · Political tradition · Regional order · Resistance

P. Murphy (✉)

Independent Scholar, Michigan State University, MI, USA

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Despite the close proximity of the Australian continent to the island of Timor, and the strong people-to-people bonds that have developed since World War II, there is a gulf of incomprehension between the two nations which is sometimes catastrophic in its results. Australia's political traditions embedded in the Westminster parliamentary system and the modalities of Empire and colonialism. It is a democracy within an undemocratic monarchical framework.

East Timor's political traditions are embedded in traditional culture and its experience of subordination to and rebellion against Empire and colonialism. It is a democracy within an emerging culture freeing itself from domination, a democracy inclined to popular mobilization and confrontation. Posed this way, it is more apparent that at that formal political level, there will be deep frustration felt on both the Timorese and the Australian sides. East Timor is navigating its future in the Asian region and with its Pacific neighbors, needing to develop positive and supportive relationships with both Indonesia and Australia, but finding itself the focus of attention from the larger powers operating in the region, being the USA and China, while finding reliable support from the Lusophone community. Australia also is trying to find a future in the Asia-Pacific, but its political and diplomatic elite has been confounded by changes in Indonesia and perhaps beguiled by the current counter-terrorism policy into a highly ambiguous approach to regional order. These larger dynamics came to bear on Australia's approach to the 2017 national legislative elections in East Timor.

AUSTRALIA'S POLITICAL TRADITION

Former Prime Minister Malcom Fraser defined this outlook as "strategic dependence", and traced its application in Australian history in his recent critique of Australia's US Alliance. Despite the shocking cost to Australia of this dependence in World War I, the policy continued through to today, with only minor tremors during the dark days of 1942, the Whitlam Labor government's assertiveness in the 1972-1975 years, and Labor's opposition to the Iraq invasion in 2002-2003. Faced with the failure of Great Britain to hold off the Japanese Navy in 1942, Australia's Labor government turned to the USA, and this shift endured and deepened with the mainly conservative governments in the 1950s and 1990s. While the democratic spirit still moves among the people, Australia's leaders—Liberal, National, and Labor Party—have become completely

absorbed in the post-Iraq USA policy, in Afghanistan, presently in Iraq and Syria, and in massively expanded surveillance and intelligence sharing.

Whereas the Australian people rallied behind the independence movement in East Timor in 1974–1975, as the Timorese faced dire threats from the Indonesian military, Australia's establishment saw the situation in Cold War terms of communism and anti-communism. Despite some notable opposition from Ministers and senior bureaucrats, the anti-communist perspective prevailed and Australia was complicit in the Indonesian invasion and annexation of East Timor.¹ Through the 23 years of resistance in East Timor, Australians of very diverse political views maintained their sympathy with the Timorese and their opposition to Australian complicity. They ranged from Communist Party activists, trade unionists, the Commando veterans, to concerned Catholics, Labor as well as Liberal people, Aboriginal leaders, and media workers of all views who maintained their rage at the October 1975 Balibo murders.² So when the post-Suharto Indonesian government agreed in early 1999 to a UN-managed referendum on autonomy or independence for East Timor, Australians volunteered for the UNAMET mission in large numbers, and the Australian government led by John Howard was the biggest financial backer of the mission. Australian media played a vital role in the exposure of the Indonesian military-sponsored militia and their murderous efforts to crush the independence movement. And true to its policy of paramount concern for the Australia–Indonesia relationship, the Howard government deferred to Indonesian demands to maintain security for UNAMET with its own police, while the Indonesian Army was free to organize the militia. The conflict in Australia between the people and the government that had marked the previous 23 years in relation to East Timor continued through 1999.

This longstanding Australian political dynamic was short-circuited by the consistent view of all the Timorese resistance that the referendum should go ahead, whatever the risk of violence from the militia or massive Indonesian military retribution when the people cast their vote for independence. Developments in the Timorese resistance since the late 1980s meant that their Australian supporters were divided and subject to powerful stories disparaging various key groups and individual leaders. The departing Indonesian military had stolen, destroyed or damaged just about every fixture in the country during the period September 1–20, 1999. They had forced almost one-third of the population to move to West Timor. Not only were the Timorese people deeply traumatized, but

also their country had been laid waste. And Australian civilian volunteers were a major presence in the emergency relief and reconstruction phases that followed. The arrival of the INTERFET peacekeeping force led by the Australian military was essential. While the National Council of Timorese Resistance continued to operate, political groups began to be organized separately in 2000, with Fretilin being the most able to undertake organized tours of the entire territory. The Australians who came to East Timor, largely from aid agencies including religious ones, were affected by the divisions among the resistance groups and surprised that few Timorese spoke English. Among the expatriate circles in Dili there was a strong and open prejudice against Fretilin, against its external leaders who returned from Mozambique in particular, and against the preference for the Portuguese language.

While East Timor was largely closed off to Australians until 1998, many Australians with an interest in the region had spent time in Indonesia, and were conversant in Bahasa. Those who went to East Timor gravitated to Bahasa speakers, including Timorese graduates from Indonesian universities. However, Timorese politics was opaque, and insights came through English speakers who had their own strong views. The basic Australian political expectations of open debate in a reliable media about jobs and services, within a free market framework and military alliance with the USA, were not reflected in the new social reality in East Timor. Among the Australian people this fed into enthusiasm for people-to-people assistance and suspicion and cynicism about Timorese politics and government, although Xanana Gusmão and José Ramos-Horta were preeminent figures more or less above these critical feelings. Australia's political, diplomatic, and military elites had started talking to resistance figures only in 1998, and prior to that these leaders had been intelligence targets. Dialogue was established with Xanana Gusmão at an earlier point while he was held at Cipinang Prison in Jakarta. Despite this huge disadvantage, Australian agencies had to engage with resistance leaders and develop relationships that could deliver positive outcomes in the long term. However, longstanding prejudice against Fretilin as a kind of "communist" threat dominated thinking. This was also echoed in the coffee shops of Dili. So the success of Fretilin in the elections of October 2001, and in creating the Constitution with its unfamiliar "semi-presidential" system was greeted with chagrin at both the popular and official levels of Australian society. The Howard government clashed sharply

with Fretilin in the negotiations over marine oil and natural gas reserves, and by 2005 the official Australian hostility to the Fretilin government was mobilized into a far larger power play which aimed to topple the government and install President Gusmão in the principal executive role of Prime Minister.

EAST TIMOR POLITICAL TRADITION

From the mid-sixteenth century, Timorese society was ruled by a small group of Portuguese officials, with traditional kings and chiefs retaining a high degree of power and respect in their local areas, as long as they did not challenge the colonial rulers. There is a history of partial rebellions, and in the late nineteenth century and into the twentieth century Portugal faced two more significant challenges: in 1895–1912 from Dom Boaventura of Samé; and in 1959 from the population at Viqueque. However, these rebellions were put down by Portuguese authorities with the support of other Timorese leaders and their troops. A Chinese merchant community came to dominate commerce in Portuguese Timor, with the blessing of the colonial administration. Sometimes, this community did not mix with the Portuguese.

The Timorese people seized another opportunity in the twentieth century when Dutch and Australian troops landed in Dili on December 17, 1941, to deny the territory to the Japanese forces. Two Australian commando companies fought about 20,000 Japanese troops for over a year, until they were forced to withdraw from the southern coast in January 1943. The Timorese, as well as most of the Portuguese, supported the Australian troops. After the Australians had withdrawn, there were savage reprisals by the Japanese against villages as well as the families of individuals who had directly assisted the Australians. The official figure for Timorese deaths is 40,000, but it was probably as high as 60,000. The territory and its economy were devastated.³ The experience of the Japanese occupation heightened anger against foreigner interventions, but at the same time, made the return of the Portuguese administration a welcome event. According to James Dunn, Australia's Consul-General in Dili from 1962 to 1964, by the time the post-Salazar Caetano Dictatorship was overthrown in Portugal on April 25, 1974, most of the chiefs or *liurais* were pillars of the regime and had become authoritarians themselves.⁴ There was also a small number of anti-Salazar

deportees from both Portugal and its African colonies. They were well-integrated with the Timorese, and interested in democratic change. They were democratic in orientation, but well-integrated with Portugal, and thought of a long period of association with Portugal leading eventually to independence.

There were three main responses from the society to the democratic change in Portugal: a desire to stay with Portugal; a desire for independence; and a desire to integrate with Indonesia. On May 11, 1974, the UDT was formed to support the Portuguese option; on May 20, the Social Democratic Association of East Timor (ASDT) was formed to promote independence; and on May 27, the Timorese Popular Democratic Association (APODETI) was formed to promote integration with Indonesia. The thin layer of educated Timorese—graduates of technical schools or the Jesuit Seminary at Dare—were young, and it was they who organized the ASDT. Later, in September 1974, the ASDT's name was changed to Fretilin (Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor) to demonstrate their commitment to grassroots mobilization to achieve independence. Prominent leaders were Nicolau Lobato, Mari Alkatiri, José Ramos-Horta and Francisco Xavier do Amaral.

APODETI was always tiny compared to Fretilin and UDT, and it expressed fear that any move to independence would provoke a disastrous Indonesian intervention. Hence, it promoted integration with Indonesia. However, this was distinctly unpopular. Its main leaders were Arnaldo dos Reis Araújo, who was a collaborator of the Japanese, Guilherme Gonçalves, the *liurai* of Atsabe, Hermanegildo Martins, a coffee planter, and José Osorio Soares, a former school teacher and civil servant.⁵ There were also some much smaller parties formed, notably KOTA, formed by a group of seven *liurais*; Trabalhista (Labor Party); and Aditla, which promoted integration with Australia. KOTA eventually came under the leadership of José Martins, originally with APODETI, and Martins became an agent of Indonesian intelligence.⁶ While all these parties were basically Timorese, and each had *liurai* among their leaders, and all espoused democratic ideals, they can be distinguished according to the interests they represented. UDT represented the small non-Chinese business sector with a strong reliance on Portugal; Fretilin represented the farmers; and APODETI represented traditional conservative leadership.

When Australia's Prime Minister Gough Whitlam met with Indonesian President Suharto in Townsville in September 1974, Whitlam supported the integration of Portuguese Timor into Indonesia, with the

proviso that there had to be a genuine expression of self-determination by the Timorese people. This development convinced both UDT and Fretilin that independence was not going to be an easy goal to achieve. In response to this threat, in January 1975 UDT and Fretilin formed a coalition, and then on March 13, 1975 took part in local government elections supervised by the Portuguese administration. By then the Portuguese government was more determined to complete a decolonization process, and was now led by a more conservative military bloc. The outcome was a huge majority for the pro-independence coalition, with Fretilin winning 55% of the vote, and demonstrating its preeminence. ASDT/Fretilin had undertaken energetic organizing across the territory, promoting agricultural cooperatives, and conveying its ideas through a Tetum-based literacy campaign based on the writings of the Brazilian Paulo Freire.⁷ Fretilin had embraced the derogatory word which was sometimes used by the Portuguese—*Maubere*. This name later became a synonym of resistance. Following the March elections, the dynamics in distant places such as Saigon and Lisbon, as well as Jakarta, weighed heavily on Portuguese Timor. Saigon was liberated on April 30, 1975, with US forces fleeing in some disorder, the Indonesian military capitalized on the anti-communist hysteria these events generated, and in Lisbon there was a shift to the right.

The UDT–Fretilin coalition broke down in May 1975 when Fretilin refused to attend a decolonization conference in Macao. Indonesia’s military, well-organized to seize Portuguese Timor through Operasi Komodo, moved decisively to split the UDT–Fretilin coalition, in parallel with the pro-Spinola forces in Dili, in particular the Portuguese police commander and Bishop Ribeiro. The UDT leaders travelled to Jakarta in early August, and were convinced that if they did not take action against the “communists” in Fretilin and in the Portuguese administration, then the Indonesian military would intervene themselves. The outcome was the UDT coup, launched on the weekend of August 9–10, 1975, with the support of the police. Fretilin leaders were forewarned and had withdrawn to Ailieu and Maubisse. UDT leaders in several areas, including Dili, began to round up opponents and execute them. The Portuguese administration did not confront the coup, and sent back to Portugal two of the officers who were alleged to be communists. On August 15, the Fretilin leadership decided to take armed countermeasures, and on August 17, Fretilin seized control of Ailieu and Maubisse. On about August 20, the Timorese conscripts in the Portuguese army seized the arsenal at the Taibesse barracks, and launched

attacks on the UDT forces. Fretilin forces also executed captives in this period.⁸ By August 29, the UDT forces were driven to Liquiçá, and by September 24 to the border village of Batugadé.⁹ The high level of violence reported in this period between villages or *sucos* on different sides demonstrated continuity of traditional political culture in East Timor. But the UDT coup also showed a new form of political conflict, driven by two factors: a need to preempt even more violent foreign intervention; and a need to impose a form of class superiority and religious conservatism on a disturbing social movement.

Facing an imminent invasion, the Fretilin Central Committee held a ceremony to declare the independence of the Democratic Republic of East Timor, on November 28. The Indonesian intrusion faced strong military resistance from Fretilin and Jakarta resolved on a full-blown assault on Dili from sea and air, which took place on December 7, 1975. Faced with mounting international criticism for its military brutality in East Timor, the Indonesian military obtained attack aircraft from the USA and the UK and in September 1977 intensified their attacks on the rather successful resistance and food production system in the mountains. This triggered the first of two moments of political conflict in the Resistance. Fretilin created a formal military structure, Falintil, to manage the resistance war, and this was very effective through late 1977 and to the end of 1978. The Indonesian military had little effective control outside Dili, Baucau, and other coastal towns. Falintil had a distinct advantage over the Indonesian military because it had a NATO-standard arsenal, the support of the population and knowledge of the terrain. In September 1977, the Fretilin President, Xavier do Amaral, decided that the intensity of the war on the people was too great, and that Falintil should negotiate with the Indonesians. He was denounced and replaced by his Vice-President, Nicolau Lobato. Amaral surrendered and became the servant of an Indonesian general, but never supported integration. He returned to East Timor in May 2000.¹⁰

Again in 1978, the Indonesian military boosted their airpower and land forces to launch devastating bombing and encirclement operations against the Falintil forces. The Fretilin Minister for Information and Internal Security, Alarico Fernandes, was the voice on the Timor end of the radio link to Darwin, which passed messages on to the Fretilin External Delegation in Mozambique. Fernandes began to send messages seeking the support of José Ramos-Horta for a move against Nicolau Lobato to enable negotiations to open up with the Indonesian military. The plan was named Operation Skylight and

involved the use of anti-communism to justify the betrayal. The External Delegation uncovered the plan and in early December used the radio link to denounce Fernandes and to alert any Falintil members listening. Fernandes was reported to have surrendered and, whether he was captured or surrendered, the radio link was lost for several years. On December 31, 1978, Nicolau Lobato's unit was ambushed by Indonesian Special Forces and was killed in combat.¹¹

By 1981, the Falintil remnants had regrouped, under the leadership of Xanana Gusmão, based in the Los Palos area in the east. Over the next few years Fretilin was able to hold Congresses and reorganize itself. By March 1983, Falintil was strong enough to force a ceasefire agreement with the Indonesian command. However, the local Indonesian military commander was overruled by Jakarta and removed. The ceasefire and possibility of negotiating an Indonesian withdrawal under UN oversight was lost.¹² The people themselves—in the towns, the farming areas and the mountains—displayed an unshakeable determination to defeat the invaders. Interviews with women veterans of the resistance demonstrate this. For them, secrecy became an art. Their slogan was: Dead or Alive for Independence! As well, a clear message is that their contribution is not sufficiently recognized.¹³

Faced with international isolation and ongoing attack by the Indonesian military, it seems that Xanana Gusmão wanted to focus on more popular mobilization. Then in 1988, a major political change took place. Fretilin transferred control of Falintil to the new National Council of Maubere Resistance (CNRM), of which Fretilin was the largest component, along with all other patriotic Timorese organizations, such as APODETI and KOTA, who were completely repelled by Indonesian policy soon after the invasion. Gusmão resigned as President of Fretilin to become President of CNRM (see “The origins of CNRT” in Chap. 5). José Ramos-Horta resigned from the Fretilin External Delegation and became Special Representative of CNRM in 1990. These major changes reflected the formation of the Clandestine Resistance in the occupied areas of East Timor, alongside the smaller armed resistance in the mountains. There was also an ideological tension in these developments, whereby Gusmão and Ramos-Horta began to criticize Fretilin as “Maoist”, or even like Pol Pot the Cambodian despot, and to argue that national liberation was “above politics”. In Australia from the early 1990s this led to an open division between Fretilin supporters and supporters of Xanana Gusmão, even as CNRM relied heavily on Fretilin both inside and outside East Timor.

The actions of the clandestine resistance in the protest at the visit of Pope John Paul II on October 12, 1989 opened up the shocking repression in occupied Timor to international scrutiny. The Santa Cruz Cemetery massacre, in November 1991, was filmed, creating international world attention. US military assistance to Indonesia was stopped, and UN and Portuguese initiatives to negotiate with Indonesia for an end to the occupation were boosted. Xanana Gusmão was captured in Dili on November 20, 1992. Following a blatantly unfair trial in Dili, he was sentenced on May 21, 1993 to life imprisonment (commuted to 20 years) and held in Jakarta. From there he continued to lead the struggle, including the efforts to expand the CNRM by including the remnants of UDT. CNRT was formed just weeks before President Suharto was forced to resign amid economic calamity and *Reformasi* protests on May 21, 1998. At last, after almost 23 years of cruel Indonesian occupation, the Timorese people saw the stars aligning for them. The external resistance was conducted mainly in Portugal and Australia, and eventually led to the formation of the National Council of Timorese Resistance (CNRT) at a conference at Peniche, near Lisbon, in April 1998. The key symbolic issue was the use of the word “Maubere”. Fretilin had to compromise on this in the end, to enable a completely unified Timorese movement to push on for independence in the international community. For Fretilin, “Maubere”¹⁴ expressed its commitment that independence would uplift the lives of the poorest Timorese.¹⁵

There was rapid progress from June 1998 to January 1999 in Indonesia’s thinking about how to proceed. The Indonesian military were demoralized and released many Fretilin leaders, who were free to organize. A strong expectation developed in East Timor that there would be an end to the occupation. The incoming President B.J. Habibie took less than three weeks to initiate a rapid change in the status of East Timor. On June 9 he declared that he was considering a special autonomy status for this annexed province. He was motivated by the financial cost of maintaining the occupation, the ongoing reputational cost of the occupation to Indonesia, and a desire to demonstrate his democratic credentials after he had been the dictator’s deputy.¹⁶ As part of the process, Fretilin held an Extraordinary Congress in Sydney on August 17–20, which was attended by its External Delegation, José Ramos-Horta and a recently released leader from Dili, Mau Hudo. It was linked by teleconference to leaders gathered near Dili and adopted a *Manual and Political Programs* document as preparation for the rapid

changes unfolding. A few months later, Australia's federal election on October 3, 1998 was won by the Liberal Party led by the Prime Minister John Howard. Australia's Foreign Minister Alexander Downer reexamined Australia's policy on *de jure* recognition of Indonesian sovereignty in East Timor and decided for the first time to talk to Timorese community leaders. In December 1998, Prime Minister Howard wrote to President Habibie to propose a solution. President Habibie seized on it to take his next step, and in a media statement on January 27, 1999, the Foreign Minister Ali Alatas made a reference to the possibility of complete independence for East Timor.

On February 10, 1999, Xanana Gusmão was released from prison, and Downer went to Jakarta to meet him, and he met President Habibie before flying to Lisbon. In the meantime, the Indonesian military, shaken by the collapse of Suharto's New Order regime, had begun to reassert their power by fomenting communal violence across the archipelago. In Timor this took the form of militias who launched deadly attacks on pro-independence individuals and communities. In the meantime, the governments of Portugal, Australia, and the USA, and the United Nations reacted to this development with conflicting strategies to curtail the militias. CNRT was very confident that the people would overwhelmingly reject autonomy with Indonesia. Falintil forces were withdrawn to agreed cantonments, and instructed not to attack or be provoked by the Indonesian army or its militias. This directive was imposed absolutely and at a high cost to Falintil and the people. Meanwhile, CNRT leaders in the territory had to launch the campaign for a "NO" vote in the face of periodic massacres and individual killings by the militias. The people were urged to vote, and then to immediately depart for the mountain cantonments for protection. The unity and solidarity called for was heroic, and it was given at all levels of the society.

Following the massive vote for independence on August 30, the Indonesian military organized the entire territory, about 250,000 people were sent to West Timor. An Australian-led military force (INTERFET) landed on September 20, 1999. One month later, the United Nations took control of the territory from Indonesia on October 25, and created UNTAET to act as the government. Xanana Gusmão had landed in Dili on October 22 and Fretilin External Delegation leaders also returned. Fretilin was able to undertake a territory-wide organizing tour early in 2000, and in May held its first membership conference in Dili. For a while Fretilin was the only operational political party.

However, this changed as the election of an 88-member Constituent Assembly approached on August 30, 2001. Parties from 1975—UDT and KOTA—contested. Mário Carrascalão, with the encouragement of Xanana Gusmão, created the Social Democratic Party. The Democratic Party was formed by Fernando “Lasama” de Araújo, who had led the clandestine youth at the end of the 1980s and had been in jail with Xanana Gusmão in Jakarta for 6 years. APODETI did not return. Xavier do Amaral had asked to be reinstated as President of Fretilin, and when this was rejected by the party, he re-created the Social Democratic Association of East Timor (ASDT), which was the forerunner of Fretilin. The Nationalist Party (PNT) was supported by Abilio Araújo, a former Fretilin External Delegation member, who joined the Suharto camp in the late 1980s, taking significant Fretilin funds with him.

Fretilin won 57% of the vote, but gained over 80% in Dili and Baucau, the two largest towns. This result gave Fretilin 55 seats in the Constituent Assembly, and it had the support of the Independent from the District of Oecussi, and of the PD, PST, CDU, and ASDT representatives, providing a bloc of 71 votes, which was sufficient to adopt a Constitution. 40 percent of the Fretilin elected representatives were women. Fretilin had prepared a draft Constitution with the key concept of a “semi-presidential” system. It emphasized parliament, prime minister and cabinet and allowed a president limited powers, as in Portugal. Because of the people’s experience of the Indonesian dictatorship, there was massive grassroots support for democratic government. The Constituent Assembly became the parliament at the hand-over of sovereignty from the United Nations, and Mari Alkatiri became the Prime Minister of the first Government of the Democratic Republic of East Timor.

This first government was dominated by Fretilin and included Ministers from other parties and independents. It faced the state-building challenge with a very tiny budget provided from donations made to the World Bank on its behalf. In particular, there was no effective judiciary and court system, and only the beginnings of a civil service. Yet it faced great expectations of immediate improvement in living standards from the people, and from some political leaders, while it was constrained by World Bank and International Monetary Fund policies on the role of government vis-à-vis the market. In late November 2002, President Gusmão had called for the resignation of the Interior Minister, Rogério Lobato. There was serious political violence in December 2002, and many signs

of frustration with the government's tight control over spending and its insistence on constitutional processes and policy-driven administration, to avoid corruption. There was also ongoing destabilization from the Indonesian military. On December 4, 2002, two people were shot dead by police, and many were wounded when a protest over the arrest of a student on a murder charge went out of control in Dili. In the next two hours, the parliament building was sacked, and the homes of the Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri and his brother were burned. The Resende Hotel was sacked. About 30 motorcycles and five police cars were burned. Baucau's mosque was burned, the mosque of Dili was sacked and 24 dwellings in its compound were destroyed. The riot was provoked by rough police behavior in arresting a student at his school on a murder charge. The next day a large number of students went to the parliament to complain about this arrest. When they could not meet Ministers, violence and shooting broke out and escalated as about 500 students marched on the police station. When President Gusmão went to speak to the rioters, they ignored his words and stoned him too. It took the UN-controlled security force over one hour to deploy its personnel and bring the violence to a halt. In 2004 the residence of the Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri was burned. Again, the Resende Hotel and Hello Mister supermarket were looted and burned.

Events in 2005 and 2006–2008

Later, in 2005, the first signs of deeper political conflict emerged, with an attempt by the Catholic Church to depose the government, allegedly over the status of religious education in government schools. In mid-April, the Bishops mobilized a 3000 strong siege of the parliament building while the International Donors Conference was taking place nearby. The protesters came mainly from the Ermera District. In the second week of the campaign, the Church went further and proclaimed a new government—with the President to be Mário Carrascalão (Social Democratic Party), the President of the Parliament to be Fernando Lasama (Democratic Party), and the Prime Minister to be Manuel Tillman (KOTA). The Catholic radio became a mouthpiece for the Bishops' campaign, and indulged an anti-Muslim rhetoric, aimed directly at Mari Alkatiri. However, the President and the Prime Minister were united in rebuffing the demands of the Bishops, and also in exercising restraint on the police side, demonstrating a commitment to peaceful

protest and the rule of law. The sustained protest in Dili ended after 19 days, and 10 days later, on the anniversary of the 2002 independence handover and the 1974 founding of Fretilin, over 100,000 people, coming from all over the country, rallied in Dili for Fretilin.

In 2006, just before the first major flow of oil and gas revenues into the budget, these tensions burst out in a series of developments sparked by a protest movement in the army, fanned with an “east” versus “west” prejudice. Early in 2006 two nationals and two foreigners—so far identified only as Australians or Americans—made two separate approaches to Taur Matan Ruak, and one of his senior deputies, Lieutenant-Colonel Falur Rate Laek, to stage a coup against the Fretilin government. Each time they refused.¹⁷ Having failed to win over General Matan Ruak, the next move was an attempt to divide the armed forces.

In early January 2006 Lieutenant Gastaõ Salshinha, who had been denied promotion, launched a movement in the army’s First Battalion, claiming that “westerners” were suffering from discrimination in promotion. There is no ethnic basis to the alleged “east–west” tension. East Timor has 16 ethnic groups located in different areas of the country. The political opposition is mainly based in the west of the country, but Fretilin also has very strong organization in the west. Salsinha led antigovernment demonstrations, in February, March, and April 2006. These failed to bring the government down, and these soldiers were subsequently sacked by Brigadier-General Taur Matan Ruak, since they had been absent-without-leave for over a month. Then, on April 28 there was a wild rampage by about 120 antigovernment thugs in Dili, associated with the sacked soldiers. This did shake things up—it led to four deaths, 70 civilian injuries and the burning of around 100 homes. But still the state was united, and the army and police managed to restore order.

However, another figure now joined in the destabilization, Major Alfredo Reinado, the commander of a small Military Police unit—a man who had received Military Staff College training in Australia in late 2005, and whose wife was manager of the 57-strong US Peace Corps, and employed at the US Embassy. On May 3, Major Reinado led his small force of 17 heavily armed military police out of Dili to the mountains at Maubisse, from where he protested against an alleged order by Prime Minister Alkatiri for the army to open fire on civilians during the 28 April disturbances. Reinado declared his continuing loyalty to President Gusmão. Later in May it was Major Reinado’s forces that were to lead the assault that became the immediate trigger for outside intervention.

The attack came on May 23, just three days after the second Fretilin National Congress, which reelected Alkatiri as Secretary General. His victory was unopposed, as his main competitor, the Ambassador to the UN and the USA José Luis Guterres, failed to gain enough support to be nominated, but said that the election by “show of hands” was bullying.

Major Reinado and his troops returned to the hills above Dili and opened fire on an army observation post. Somehow Reinado had managed to arrange an interview with Australia’s SBS TV *Dateline* program, in which he called for international intervention, immediately *prior* to the shootout he initiated. The encounter was recorded and the whole thing broadcast, with *Dateline* reporter David O’Shea saying to camera, “Surely this will bring in the international intervention”. Early the following morning, on May 24 a second group—this time armed police led by a Commander Rai’los—attacked the army headquarters and a third group—again police led by a former police commander Abilio Mesquita—attacked Brigadier-General Matan Ruak’s house in the west of Dili.

On May 25, 2006, two or three government soldiers had attacked 37 unarmed police outside the UN compound in Dili, and this led to a split in the state structures. Twelve police were killed and 25 wounded while being escorted by UN police from the police headquarters to the UN compound. In the face of this crisis, Prime Minister Alkatiri, President Gusmão and Francisco (Lu-Olo) Guterres, the President of Parliament, then invited in Australian, Malaysian, New Zealander and Portuguese military and police to restore order. The Australians were the first to arrive, on the evening of May 26 as troops loyal to the government drove the armed rebels out of Dili. Government troops then returned to barracks and handed their arms to the Australians, as ordered. President Gusmão and Foreign Minister Horta, however, reacted to the May 25 massacre by beginning to separate from Prime Minister Alkatiri and his government, with the President now claiming sole power over all the security forces. There is no evidence that Prime Minister Alkatiri was in any way connected to this attack.

By early June Major Reinado had dropped his allegations about Alkatiri having ordered troops to fire on civilians during the events of April 28, instead arguing that Fretilin and Alkatiri were “communist” and had to be destroyed. On July 16, claiming that he was acting under orders from the President, Reinado theatrically surrendered just 12 weapons to Australian forces. According to Reinado, however, he had been enjoying Australian beer with the Australian troops guarding him

at Maubisse from the time of their arrival. He and 20 other soldiers were finally arrested by Portuguese police and Australian soldiers on July 25 on charges of possession of arms and ammunition, and just across the road, not far from the Australian Army HQ in Dili.

Organized gangs, backed up and coordinated by armed rebel soldiers and police, burned hundreds of houses, looted, and burned many businesses and government offices in Dili, maintaining a reign of terror despite the presence of Australian and other forces. Across most of the media—and in a way which echoed many CIA media campaigns in Latin America and elsewhere—there was a wildly inaccurate portrayal of Alkatiri as an unpopular, authoritarian, fundamentalist Marxist who ran a corrupt, nepotistic government. PM Alkatiri had actually demonstrated a deep commitment to constitutional rule and institutional development. The violence in Dili was detached from its actual perpetrators and reported as if it was a general phenomenon for which the government was in some way responsible. On June 19 an investigative current affairs program on Australia's ABC TV called *Four Corners* launched an entirely new Alkatiri scandal, alleging that there was a secret Fretilin hit squad. A veteran resistance fighter, Commander Rai'los, alleged that he and 30 men had been given automatic weapons by Interior Minister Rogério Lobato as recently as May 8, and had been ordered to kill the numerous striking soldiers (Petitioners), as well as opponents inside Fretilin. A list of rifle serial numbers was provided to *Four Corners*. Rai'los also took the opportunity to complain that his group had suffered four casualties when taking part in the May 24 attack on the army headquarters at the beginning of the coup d'état. This indication that Rai'los was part of the antigovernment forces from the beginning did not, however, get in the way of *Four Corners'* allegations.

Interior Minister Lobato was hauled in for questioning after the program and placed under house arrest. The media was then told by unnamed "court officials" that he had admitted guilt and implicated Alkatiri. Calls for Alkatiri's resignation redoubled, but he again flatly rejected the allegations. On July 17, the Human Rights Monitoring Mission in East Timor apologized for wrongly reporting that Lobato had twice admitted guilt and implicated Alkatiri.¹⁸ In early August, the Judicial System Monitoring Mission asked why Rai'los had not been investigated, while such attention had been focused on Lobato and Alkatiri. On June 21, President Gusmão publicly demanded the Prime Minister's resignation at a Council of State meeting. That night, the Australian and US

Embassy staff and local opposition figures threw a party in the Hotel Timor bar. Next day, antigovernment protests swelled from 150 to 2000, as young men were trucked in from Maliana in the west, to roam around Dili in large packs shouting “kill the communists”, “kill Alkatiri” and other similar slogans. On June 22, President Gusmão gave a 90-minute speech to the nation, denouncing Fretilin and saying its leaders had not been legally elected. On August 11, however, the Court of Appeal in Dili ruled that the elections at the Fretilin Congress were legal.

Alkatiri resigned on June 26, 2006. On 28 June he addressed Fretilin supporters in a public rally to the east of Dili, calling on them to defend the Constitution and to focus on winning the 2007 elections. Despite long delays by the Australian military, 20,000 people were finally allowed to assemble and parade in Dili on June 29–30, where they called on President Gusmão to uphold the Constitution and to work with the elected leaders to resolve the political impasse legally and peacefully. In short, they called for reconciliation, and the President responded positively. José Ramos-Horta was sworn in as Prime Minister on July 10, 2006 to stabilize the political situation. On July 14, Agriculture Minister Estanislau da Silva, a strong supporter of Alkatiri, and a senior leader of Fretilin, was sworn in as First Deputy Prime Minister; he was also the Chair of the Council of Ministers. Later da Silva replaced Ramos-Horta as interim PM between May and August 2007. The Health Minister Rui Maria de Araújo, an independent and later a Fretilin member, became the Second Deputy Prime Minister. José Luis Guterres became Foreign Minister in 2007 replacing Ramos-Horta, later he was Deputy Prime Minister in 2012 and Foreign Minister. In the presidential elections in April–May 2007, José Ramos-Horta defeated Fretilin’s candidate, Francisco (Lu-Olo) Guterres, taking 69% of the vote in the second round. In the parliamentary elections of June 30, 2007, Fretilin won the highest vote, at 29%, but it was much lower than 57.3% in 2001. Xanana Gusmão led a new party, named the National Congress for Timorese Reconstruction (CNRT), which won 24% of the vote. Fourteen parties stood in the parliamentary elections, and seven of them attained the threshold 3% to win seats. Eighteen women (27%) were elected to the new parliament, including five for Fretilin, six for CNRT, four for the ASDT–PSD coalition, two for PD and one for PUN.

Despite a constitutional provision that the party with the largest number of votes in the election should nominate the Prime Minister, President Ramos-Horta, at the urging of Australia’s Prime Minister

Howard, appointed Mr. Gusmão. This sparked a further wave of violence across the country, particularly in areas which strongly voted for Fretilin. Fretilin's vote was reduced partly because of the split led by José Luis Guterres, and withdrawal of support by one of the survivors of the first Fretilin Central Committee, Mahuno and because of the impact of the massive violence of mid-2006, with more IDPs living in Dili in Internally Displaced People's camps during the election. Many who voted for Fretilin in 2001 decided to vote for peace in 2007, even if that meant voting for other parties. As well, a deeper reality was the people's perception of Fretilin and Xanana as the bearers of the banner of independence. The deadly conflict between these two symbols was impossible to resolve. For the next 5 years, Fretilin worked as a sharp parliamentary opposition party, campaigning against corruption and waste of revenues from the Petroleum Fund. The first 8 months of the new government were marked by the ongoing IDP problem, with the outlaw Alfredo Reinado still operating in the mountains, despite one attempt by Australian Special Forces to capture or kill him.

Since early December 2007, the new government had failed to resolve the politico-social crisis, with over 100,000 displaced people remaining in their camps. In the meantime, the government and the parliament adopted the budget, but failed to disarm the armed group of rebel soldier Alfredo Reinado, or deal with the numerous officers and soldiers sacked in March 2006. Minor and major corruption allegations began to plague the government's credibility. In January, President Ramos-Horta continued to insist that Reinado would not be arrested, while he gave himself until May to peacefully bring in Reinado's group. Reinado, in his turn, distributed all over the island a well-produced and hard-hitting DVD stating that Gusmão was the author of the soldiers' petition and all the upheaval in 2006. His men paraded in brand new US Marine camouflage fatigues.

However, according to *The Age* reporter Lindsay Murdoch, President Ramos-Horta had reached a secret agreement with Reinado in Maubisse, in January. A closely related problem was the "petitioners"—the sacked soldiers. Another element of the political negotiations between Fretilin, CNRT and President Ramos-Horta to resolve the events was the calling of elections 3 years early, in 2009. It appears that this last element was unacceptable to Prime Minister Gusmão. These deteriorating relations between Reinado and Gusmão were the context for the shootings early on Monday February 11, 2008. It appears that Reinado and

at least five others arrived at the President's compound soon after 6 am. Reinado was shot at point blank from the front, while his deputy, Leopoldino Mendonça Esposito, was shot in the back of the neck at point blank range. Just before 7 am, President Ramos-Horta returned to his compound from his regular morning exercise walk, aware of the gunfire, but he and one of his guards were shot down near the entrance of the compound by a man wearing a balaclava. Reinado probably went to President Ramos-Horta's personal residence to finally find a solution. The President was the most competent leader to find a compromise between the rebel and the government.

Early on the morning of February 11, 2008, shortly after 8 am, Prime Minister Gusmão was aware of the shootings at the President's compound, drove in convoy from his hillside residence towards his Dili office, and reached his office about an hour later. PSD President Mário Carrascalão told Paul Toohey, a reporter of *The Australian*, that President Ramos-Horta was not shot by Reinado's men. Carrascalão also alleged foreign involvement in the shooting. On that day of February 2008, the people of East Timor were deeply shocked by the shooting of President José Ramos-Horta. The death of rebel soldier Alfredo Reinado at the President's compound caused consternation. The surviving attackers at the President's compound abandoned their cars and escaped on foot. Those who went to the Prime Minister's residence also escaped. However, six of the attackers were arrested at Taibesse on February 26, and one firearm seized; three others of the attackers surrendered peacefully. No weapons which matched the bullets which struck Reinado and the President were found at the President's compound. No one has been convicted for the shooting of these three people at the President's compound on February 11, 2008. Following the funeral of Reinado, the IDP camps soon emptied, and a sense of calm returned to Dili and the whole territory. Fretilin maintained its critical oppositional role, and prepared for the 2012 presidential and parliamentary elections. Again Francisco (Lu-Olo) Guterres stood for the Presidency, and this time the commander of the armed forces (F-FDTL), General Taur Matan Ruak, stood as an independent candidate, after resigning his post. Prime Minister Gusmão threw his weight behind Ruak, a decision resented by both Ramos-Horta and Lasama.

The presidential elections were conducted over two rounds on March 17 and April 16, 2012, and resulted in Taur Matan Ruak winning by a margin of 61 to 39% over Fretilin candidate Francisco (Lu-Olo)

Guterres. To many this was a surprising result, since most expected a close vote. In the first round, incumbent President José Ramos-Horta was eliminated with 17.5% of the vote, with Lu-Olo leading the results at 28.8%, and Ruak coming in second at 25.7%. Lasama, who came in just behind Ramos-Horta also demonstrated strong support. These four candidates accounted for 89.3% of the total vote. In the counting for Round 1, there was some controversy in Baucau and Manatuto, leading to a strong protest by Fretilin and a call for a recount in Baucau. This was strongly resisted by the electoral agency, the Technical Secretariat for Electoral Administration (STAE), but supported by the oversight body, the National Electoral Commission (CNE). In the end the Supreme Court of Appeal ordered the recount, which STAE conducted under protest. The recount led to an increase in the Fretilin vote by 3000, a 10% shift. With the losing candidates shifting behind Lu-Olo, there was a broad expectation for a close vote. But instead there was a decisive win for Ruak, who won 11 of the 13 Districts, including Dili, which has 124,000 voters. Lu-Olo won the second largest town, Baucau, and Viqueque, and compared to 2007, the Fretilin vote recovered in western districts. Clearly most of the Ramos-Horta and Lasama votes from Round 1 went to Ruak, despite the apparent stance of their leaders. Perhaps just 6% of this bloc went to Lu-Olo, along with the votes from Lobato, Tilman, Freitas and Pires. “Peace and stability” were uppermost for voters, and after the result several people suggested that the voters had chosen the outcome with the lesser chance of violence—a calculation that it was safer to vote for Taur Matan Ruak.

The July 7, 2012 parliamentary elections gave Prime Minister Gusmão’s CNRT a decisive win, for the first time the CNRT gaining more votes than Fretilin, and thus having a clear constitutional right to form the next government, which excluded Fretilin. There was a voter turnout of 74.8%. ASDT’s vote collapsed to 1.8%, following the death of its leader, Xavier do Amaral, partially explaining CNRT’s increase from 24.1% in 2007, to 36.66% this time. At the subsequent CNRT Congress, some leaders made nationally televised insults directed at Fretilin that incited some youths to stone cars. But contrary to media reports, no cars or homes were burned. The worst violence was next morning, on July 16, when a police officer shot and killed a Fretilin youth while a group of police arrested him at his house at Hera to the east of Dili. The police officer was later convicted of murder. At the time, Fretilin members felt there was cheating in the election count, and comments by Prime

Minister Gusmão at the time of his February 2015 resignation indicate that this is true. However, the parliamentary election outcome should still be seen in the broader framework of the people voting for peace, and searching for a way to resolve the conflict between Xanana and Fretilin.

In 2012, soon after the new government was sworn in, Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão declared that he would only stay in office for 1 year, to “clean the house”—a reference to corrupt and incompetent practices. In September 2013, the Prime Minister asked the people for another year because he still had to “wash the house”. Then, when presenting the National Budget to the parliament on January 15, 2014, the Prime Minister said it would be really the last. Speaking at the Dili Convention Center on November 11, 2013, Gusmão said, according to a report in the local *Tempo Semenal* newspaper (2015): “I Xanana will step down as Prime Minister this decision is irreversible. I have already sworn to the spirits of the dead”. In Tetum language it means: “once you spit you can’t lick it back” [sic]. The current government has a cabinet of 56 altogether, reflecting the political problems for Gusmão’s CNRT party. Many Ministers and Secretaries of State are not up to their tasks, former Justice Minister Lucia Lobato, served a prison sentence for corruption. Gusmão emphasized a need for generational change to allow the country to go forward, saying the “Generation of 1975” needs to step back into some kind of guiding role.

Year 2015 and a View on Future Timorese Politics

On February 9, 2015, Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão tendered his resignation to President Ruak. Next day, as leader of CNRT, the party with the most votes in the 2012 parliamentary elections, Xanana proposed to the President that Rui Araújo, a Fretilin member and former Health Minister, be the next Prime Minister. The next day, the Prime Minister designate put forward his cabinet, which was sworn in on February 16. It was still a CNRT government, but included three other Fretilin personalities, participating as individuals because Fretilin is not formally in coalition with CNRT. These were: Estanislau da Silva, Minister of State, Coordinator of Economic Affairs and Minister of Agriculture; Hernani Coelho, Minister of Foreign Affairs; and Inácio Moreira, Vice-Minister of Public Works, Transport, and Communications. In the new Cabinet, Xanana Gusmão was State Minister of Planning and Strategic Investment.

Fernando Lasama de Araújo, the President of the Democratic Party (PD), was Minister of State, Coordinator of Social Affairs and Minister of Education and died of a stroke, aged 52, on June 2, 2015. The new Araújo government had barely 2 years to make a difference, before the 2017 elections would take place. At the age of 69 in 2015, Xanana Gusmão hypothetically wanted to give more political power to younger generations. His abrupt shift towards Fretilin after his resignation and a certain lack of confidence upset his own party, CNRT, but it does not mean that he has lost his charisma for the coming 2017 elections.

On July 30, 2015, Fretilin's Secretary General and former Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri was appointed President of the Special Administrative Region of Oecussi and its Special Zone of Social Market Economy.¹⁹ Alkatiri's objective was to create a new economic development paradigm. Meanwhile, inside Fretilin, a new, more cooperative policy towards Xanana Gusmão was devised at the end of 2013. This was based on an assessment that 5 years of sharp opposition to Xanana's efforts to marginalize them had proven that Fretilin could not be marginalized, but the country itself had not been able to go forward. When Fretilin publicly criticized Xanana Gusmão, they suffered in the eyes of the public. Fretilin members themselves argued that the party had to "save Xanana from the mud". And meanwhile, corruption became rampant, precious funds were wasted and the people's living standards did not improve. Xanana was embarrassed by his own government.

These are the roots of the surprising developments of February 2015. The Timorese people are well aware of Xanana Gusmão's reputation for having multiple plans in play. Cooperating in this way with Xanana is, therefore, a high risk strategy for Fretilin, one which could create confusion among its grass roots militants going into the 2017 election about the differences between Fretilin's program and that of CNRT and Xanana Gusmão. But the new government was a sign of growing confidence that the violence of 2006 and subsequent tension was being put away, and a more united and competent approach to politics and governance was emerging. Even before the death of Lasama, there was speculation that PD might not be present in the next parliament. There was speculation too about a post-election unity government between CNRT and Fretilin, or even that CNRT may disintegrate and Xanana Gusmão move even closer to Fretilin. So, by 2012, UDT had disappeared as a political force, and its role in representing conservative commercial interests had transferred to CNRT. Xanana Gusmão crystalized his shift from Fretilin in the 2007 elections, but in 2015 signalled yet another shift in

identity, yet to be revealed. Fretilin managed to hold its base through the 10 years of upheaval and to maintain its identity as a farmers' party, administratively competent, aiming to uplift the quality of life of the poor. In mid-November 2015, the President, Taur Matan Ruak, began his own political move to contest the 2017 parliamentary elections with the newly-launched People's Liberation Party.²⁰

AUSTRALIA'S MOTIVATIONS IN EAST TIMOR

The new Commonwealth of Australia had a passing role in the Portuguese military repression of the rebel Dom Boaventura in Portuguese Timor in 1912, but had no independent foreign policy until 1942, when the Curtin Labor government implemented the 1931 Statute of Westminster. The commitment of Australian troops to Portuguese Timor in December 1941 took place as a result of British policy, not Australian policy. However, with the fall of Singapore to the Japanese Imperial Army in 1942, the Curtin Labor government vigorously asserted its right to control Australian military forces and to have a larger say in the conduct of the war. External Affairs Minister Bert Evatt created Australia's diplomatic service in the context of a policy of asserting Australia's national interest within the framework of its alliances with the British Empire and the United States of America. Evatt and the Australian delegation played a major role in the drafting of the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, upholding the rights of small nations and the role of international law to curb the actions of the big powers.

Within the Asia-Pacific region, Prime Minister Chifley and External Affairs Minister Evatt strongly supported the independence of Indonesia from the Dutch Empire, in the teeth of British policy.²¹ Although they strongly asserted Australia's right to rule the territories of Papua and New Guinea, where they had defeated the Japanese invasion, this was within a perspective of de-colonization to be supervised by the United Nations. While Chifley and Evatt maintained this posture during the early years of the Cold War, the policy did not survive the defeat of Labor in the December 1949 elections, and the subsequent 23 years of continuous conservative government in Australia under Prime Ministers Menzies, Holt, Gorton and McMahon. Under Menzies, Australia shifted gradually out of the British military orbit and fully integrated into the US global strategy. Under Prime Minister Menzies, Australia provided forces to suppress the communist insurgency in Malaya, and clandestine

military support for the attempted overthrow of Indonesia's President Sukarno in 1958—the Outer Islands Rebellion.²² This was the start of Australia's anti-communist campaign in the region, which was aimed at fighting an imagined threat of invasion by communist China.

When Sukarno laid claim to Dutch New Guinea in 1961, Australia's Foreign Minister Garfield Barwick objected, calling for a genuine act of self-determination. However, the US opted against Dutch colonialism, and for Indonesia, and Barwick decided to retreat.²³ The fate of the Indonesian province of Papua has remained a continuous point of stress between Australia and Indonesia since then. World War II had taught Australia's leaders that any military threat will come through Indonesia and Papua New Guinea. This strategic lesson was overlaid with the Cold War communist threat from China, where the Indonesian Communist Party was perceived as a proxy for China. The Menzies government welcomed the mass slaughter of Indonesian communists in 1965–1966 and the end of Sukarno's presidency in 1966. Australia provided significant support for the stabilization of incoming military dictator President Suharto and his New Order regime. Anti-communism was the default position in Australia's foreign affairs establishment, and so the labeling of Fretilin as “communist”, despite all the evidence provided by experienced people on the ground, such as former Consul-General James Dunn, is not surprising. What is remarkable is that there were strong voices in the Department of Defence who discounted this attitude, and could foresee only trouble in an Indonesian takeover of the territory.

One result of that support was an agreement between Indonesia and Australia on a seabed boundary, signed in 1972. That boundary had a gap—south of the coast of Portuguese Timor. Portugal would not agree to Australia's proposal for a boundary going to within 50 kilometres of the Timor coastline.²⁴ The Fraser government was able to commence negotiations with Indonesia over the “Timor Gap” boundary once it extended *de jure* recognition of Indonesia's 1976 annexation of Portuguese Timor. This was done in 1979, and talks began. However, agreement was only finally reached under the next Australian government, the Hawke Labor government, in October 1989, coming into force in February 1991.²⁵ The delay was caused by the unfairness of the Australian position, but in the end Indonesia could not seek international arbitration because its annexation of Portuguese Timor would be challenged. Portugal did challenge Australia over the 1989 treaty in the International Court of Justice in 1991, with a partial victory in 1995.²⁶

In 1998 Australia's Howard government was as conservative and anti-communist as any before it. Yet it was faced with the shock of the Asian Financial Crisis of 1997–1998, which inflicted great damage in Thailand and Indonesia in particular, and then with the Indonesian political crisis of the fall of Suharto. His corrupt dictatorship, so recently Australia's solid friend, was totally discredited. By then the Australian Labor Party had shifted its stance, in opposition, through the work of Laurie Brereton, to support self-determination for the Timorese people, and to distance itself from the very close relationship between former Australian Labor Prime Minister Paul Keating and President Suharto of Indonesia. The Howard government responded to the Asian Financial Crisis with significant financial aid, especially to Indonesia. This was in line with the longstanding policy of "regional engagement", which included engagement with ASEAN and its principles of non-interference and consensus, formation of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation and participation in the ASEAN Regional Forum on strategic concerns. Even mildly suggesting that Timor may become independent in 10–15 years, as Howard said to Habibie in December 1998, was a big departure in this policy. However, as events unfolded leading up to the August 30, 1999, referendum, and its violent aftermath, the Howard government came to commit most of the funds and the biggest number of police to the UNAMET mission, then most of the troops to the INTERFET mission. Australia was intervening with military in the region. This new policy led to a conflict between Australia and the US on intelligence sharing, because the Australian government knowingly denied that the militia violence was organized by the Indonesian military, while the US asked for but were denied photographic and other intelligence on this issue.²⁷ Australia and the US disagreed about how to provide security for the UNAMET mission, with Australia siding with Indonesia at the meeting in Bali in April 1999 that Indonesia alone would provide security.

After the burning of the territory began, Prime Minister Howard needed US assistance urgently to obtain practical military support for an intervention. Australia wanted political legitimacy for this at the United Nations Security Council. U.S. President Bill Clinton made him wait until they met at the APEC Leaders Meeting in Auckland, New Zealand on September 13, 1999. And then Clinton gave political support, but no troops. Clinton convinced the IMF to suspend aid to Indonesia. He also had the US command ship *Blue Ridge* stationed off Dili for three days in February 2000. Once UNTAET took control of the territory on October

25, 1999, Australia had to cope with the Brazilian Sérgio Vieira de Mello, the UN Transitional Administrator and the disappointing dynamics of the UN, while shouldering a significant burden. It soon became apparent that UNTAET could not build a new state and nation, and should exit, to allow the Timorese to pursue this task.²⁸ The Howard government maintained a hostile attitude to Fretilin throughout, with Foreign Minister Downer displaying this in the negotiations over the seabed boundary with both UNTAET and the first independent East Timorese government.²⁹ Neither Xanana Gusmão nor Fretilin provided a compliant government such as Australia was used to in Papua New Guinea, Fiji, the Solomon Islands or Vanuatu. José Ramos-Horta was accommodating, but did not have sufficient political support to deliver.

Just prior to the September 2001 terrorist attacks in New York and Washington DC, Australia was charting unknown waters, having abandoned “regional engagement” within the framework of the US Alliance, for independent intervention in the region, with the United Nations Security Council providing legitimacy. In particular, its relationships with Indonesia’s elite were fragile, with huge concern in Jakarta about Australia’s aims in its Papua Province. Even though Australia had indulged the Indonesian military over its militia violence in East Timor, at some cost to the Australian military and intelligence, and with its US ally, the Indonesians were highly offended by what had happened in East Timor. They abrogated the 1995 Australia–Indonesia Agreement on Maintaining Security, a centerpiece of Prime Minister Keating’s foreign policy. With the Timor crisis, Australia had found that ASEAN and the ASEAN Regional Forum failed to manage a major regional crisis. Australia found that its long-cultivated “relationship” with the Suharto regime was no help in a genuine crisis. Australia was being challenged to really look at its own values, and its own interests, and to use these to navigate in the region.

AUSTRALIA, EAST TIMOR AND THE REGIONAL ORDER

The regional order of East Timor is mainly centred on Australia and Indonesia. “[Australia’s military intervention in 1999] is a highly political intervention in its impact, atmospherics and consequences”, wrote journalist Paul Kelly in *The Australian* on May 30. “In this sense Australia is operating as a regional power or a potential hegemony that shapes security and political outcomes...We have taken complete charge

of law and order in East Timor and its domestic power struggle is conducted against the backdrop of our unstated pressure”.

Both President Gusmão and Prime Minister Alkatiri had offended Foreign Minister Downer and senior Foreign Affairs officers during the protracted negotiations about their seabed boundary and share of Timor Sea gas and oil revenues, which only concluded in January 2006. Alkatiri was widely credited for getting a better than expected outcome.

In New York on May 5, 2006, East Timor’s Foreign Minister, José Ramos-Horta, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan and almost the entire UN Security Council were ready to vote to extend and strengthen the UN Office in East Timor (UNOTIL) with a new mandate to May 20, 2007. The first parliamentary and presidential elections since independence were due in April 2007, and the scare of April 28 had underlined the nation’s fragility, but Australia’s Ambassador, the former Defence Minister Robert Hill, and the US Representative, William Brencick, disagreed. The mandate was extended to June 20, 2006.³⁰ Then on May 11, 2006, the Howard government decided to mobilize a naval taskforce and 1100 soldiers to be ready to intervene “if requested by the East Timor government or by the United Nations”. The Timorese heard about it on the news.³¹ The die was cast, such a taskforce would be mobilized if necessary at that time. Australia signed a new security agreement with Indonesia on November 13, 2006—the Agreement on the Framework for Security Cooperation—and again in August 2014 signed the “Lombok Treaty” with Indonesia.³² One of the main points is the United Nations ending its peacekeeping mission and assistance in East Timor on December 31, 2012.

In 2017, a good relationship between Timor-Leste and Australia is essential and oil is a priority for the survival of the Timorese people. The surprise outbreak of peace between the East Timor and Australian governments over the lack of an agreed seabed border in January 2017 may best be explained by the attitude of Woodside Petroleum, the Australian company with the largest stake in the Greater Sunrise gas field. Its Chief Executive Peter Coleman commented to Australia’s ABC News that the company wanted a pathway to development of the field. However, the company said development will not proceed until it has certainty over the revenue sharing arrangements between the two governments. “Reality is we got to an impasse on the project just a few years ago. Who actually do we pay the rents to?”³³ This is a very welcome development for East Timor because it helps to heal a significant wound in

the people's sense that their sovereignty is respected, and could reduce the destabilizing effect of petroleum-related intrigue in the national politics. It is also a welcome development in Australia's elite attitude to the Timorese people, and will assist in the development of a stronger and more positive relationship between the two countries and Australia's engagement with the wider region.

According to James Cotton, "Regional order is understood to refer to the pattern or arrangements manifest in the regional security milieu and aimed at the maintenance of peaceful relations between the states in question".³⁴ That pattern for ASEAN was described by Hadley Bull as a regional system, or sub-system, of states, as opposed to a geographically delimited "society of states". In Bull's view, ASEAN offered collective maneuver and protection to the political elites of its member states, with Indonesia being considered the first among equals. ASEAN aimed to prevent violence between states and/or avoid great power intervention.³⁵ In 2016, Timor-Leste was ready to be an ASEAN member state. The question is to convince ten nations.

NOTES

1. The Australian Department of Defence supported independence for East Timor in 1974–1975, as did Foreign Minister Senator Don Willesee. Cotton 2004, Chap. 2.
2. Jill Jolliffe 2001, *Cover-up, the inside story of the Balibo five*, Melbourne: Scribe.
3. Dunn 2003, 22.
4. Dunn reports that these *liurais* undermined democratic elements in traditional life. Dunn 2003, 4.
5. Dunn 2003, 48–62; Freney 1991, 339–340, 343–348.
6. Dunn 2003, 61–62.
7. <http://www.freire.org/paulo-freire/>.
8. Testimony about the unlawful killings on both sides are set out in the CAVR Report, Chap. 5, 8–29. <http://www.cavr-timorleste.org/chegaFiles/finalReportEng/07.2-Unlawful-Killings-and-Enforced-Disappearances.pdf>.
9. Dunn 2003, 139–152; Freney 1991, 351.
10. Freney 1991, 369–370; Dunn 2003, 272.
11. Freney 1991, 371–372; Dunn 2003, 273–274.
12. Dunn 2003, 294–295; Freney 1991, 395.
13. Sequeira and Abrantes 2012.
14. In its *Manual and Political Programs* adopted in August 1998, Fretilin defined "Maubere: Thus, today 'Maubere' symbolises a whole People".

15. Walsh, P., <http://members.pcug.org.au/~wildwood/CNRTPat.htm>.
16. Cotton 2004, Ch. 5.
17. Martinkus 2006, June 28.
18. *Sydney Morning Herald*, July 27, 2006.
19. <http://www.laohamutuk.org/econ/Oecussi/ZEESMIndex.htm>.
20. <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/world/timor-leste-president-taur-matan-ruak-urged-to-resign/news-story/3923c41e1e2b89a5ff1451e618a7b0c1>.
21. Fraser and Roberts 2014, 107–108.
22. Interview with Denis Warner, ABC talk, August 14, 1977. Prouty for overall operation.
23. Fraser and Roberts 2014, 112–113.
24. Cleary 2007, 6–9.
25. *Ibid.*, 34–41.
26. *Ibid.*, 42–43.
27. Lt Colonel Mervyn Jenkins, Australia's intelligence liaison officer in Washington, took his life on 13 June 1999. <http://www.abc.net.au/4corners/stories/s276564.htm>; <http://nautilus.org/publications/books/australian-forces-abroad/security-general/the-death-of-mervyn-jenkins/>.
28. Cotton 2004, 157.
29. Cleary 2007, 79–89.
30. <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2006/sc8712.doc.htm>.
31. Paul Kelly, *The Australian*, May 30, 2006.
32. <http://www.australia.edu.au/au/other/dfat/treaties/ATS/2008/3.html>.
33. Cited in <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-01-11/woodside-petroleum-interview/8174854>.
34. Cotton 2004, 84.
35. *Ibid.*, 85. Bull, H. 1977, *The Anarchical Society, a study of Order in World Politics*, London: Macmillan Bull 1977.

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Timor-Leste and ASEAN

Hans Hägerdal and Jean A. Berlie

Abstract This chapter five presents an original chronological view on the sincere will of Timor's Government to join the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). East Timor's Government needs to convince each member state of ASEAN one by one. An earlier bid seems questionable, but the Indonesian ambassador to ASEAN, Rahmat Pramono, expects it in 2018. Joining ASEAN as a member state constitutes the best option for Timor-Leste's future. Agriculture, education, and tourism are key sectors to develop in showing that the country is progressing and ready to be the 11th ASEAN member state. One single member state, among ten, could prevent Timor-Leste to become the 11th ASEAN nation.

Keywords ASEAN · Candidacy · Indonesia · Singapore

H. Hägerdal (✉)
Linnaeus University, Växjö, Sweden

J.A. Berlie
The Education University of Hong Kong, Tai Po, Hong Kong

THE ASEAN WAY

The issue of Timor-Leste's relations with its Southeast Asian neighbors is inevitably tied up with the question of what Southeast Asia is or should be. It is a recent concept which encompasses a large number of cultural and political forms. Whether there are common historical traits which set it apart from other parts of Asia is a moot point which has received rather different answers by recent scholars.¹ In spite of the term having Western origins, however, the region has increasingly been seen as coherent, not least by its own political and intellectual elites. A key role is played by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Of the 11 nations conventionally counted in Southeast Asia, ten are currently members of this organization.² The present chapter focuses on the 11th one, Timor-Leste, and its shifting relations with ASEAN, seen against the transformation of the agendas and cohesion of this organization. A chronological survey, will remedy the lack of documentation on the issue. So far there is no complete study of the essential relationship between Timor-Leste and ASEAN. We need a clear political definition of the official viewpoint of ASEAN concerning East Timor's candidacy for membership. The focus is on the diplomatic game as well as the economic interests involved from the various countries involved and in particular Timor-Leste. ASEAN is presently not associated with conflict or contentious internal issues. As has been frequently commented upon, "the ASEAN way" is on the contrary characterized by consensual forms of cooperation where conflicts within the member nations are largely left for them to solve with limited criticism or interference from the others. This political syndrome has obviously been fostered by the increasingly stable conditions in the region since the end of the last century, when the ASEAN expanded to include a wide range of regimes, from fairly pluralistic to totalitarian. Mutual criticism has been regarded as improper and threatening to the stability of the organization. When the organization was born on August 8, 1967, the situation was entirely different. In fact, the ASEAN was created as a reaction to the perceived threat of Communism. While the Vietnam War was in a build-up stage, the Indonesian regime had recently eliminated the Communist Party and its sympathizers. In Malaysia (Malaya) the Communist insurgents had been eliminated by 1960, and there was ongoing Communist guerrilla warfare in Thailand and the Philippines. The foundation of the ASEAN was influenced by the so-called Domino Theory advocated by the US

intelligence: if non-Communist states, such as South Vietnam and Laos, fell to Communist forces, neighboring non-Communist nations were at the risk of being toppled as well. American analysts viewed the insurgencies in Southeast Asia as part of a worldwide Communist campaign which must necessarily be contained, motivating strong US support for the ASEAN.

Against this background, it comes as no surprise that the attitude of the ASEAN partners of Indonesia took a passive or tacitly supportive stance during the East Timor events in 1975. After the *Revolução dos Cravos* (Carnation Revolution) in Portugal on April 25, 1974, the prospects of decolonization quickly led to the decision of the Indonesian regime to incorporate East Timor, preferably without military action. The Australian Prime Minister Gough Whitlam, who was personally strongly in favor of East Timorese integration with Indonesia, discussed the issue of East Timor's future with the prime ministers of the neighboring ASEAN nations, Singapore and Malaysia, in 1974, in both cases receiving the reply that they would have nothing to do with the question.³ By the middle of 1975, with an increasingly tense and complicated situation in East Timor, observers noted that the stance of ASEAN would not present any problem at all to the planned takeover, especially since the USA did not seem overly interested in the issue. In fact, the fate of East Timor was "almost a taboo subject" among diplomats from ASEAN countries. The ghosts of the recently concluded Vietnam War obviously loomed large when the Timorese UDT party colluded with the Indonesian authorities and argued that their main opponent, Fretilin, was tinged with Communism. As the journalist, Roger East, stated just before he and four colleagues were murdered by Indonesian troops in Balibo:

"Jakarta has elected to win support from its nervous neighbors by attaching the 'red' label to Fretilin. Visions of Chinese sampans, Hanoi dhows and Russian cruisers riding at anchor in Dili harbour are sufficient for ASEAN states, countering Communist insurgencies, to see the threat real and applaud its removal".⁴ Whether the Communist scare was actually the decisive factor in the formation of the hard line taken by the Soeharto regime is debatable, however. Rather, it converged with the fear that an independent East Timor might evoke separatist tendencies in the neglected and largely non-Muslim Eastern Indonesia. The plans may have represented a will to round out the territorial possessions as successfully done in West Papua.⁵ The details of the invasion and the

subsequent occupation need not concern us here. To make it short, the Cold War concerns effectively halted any attempt to involve the United Nations in settling the crisis. Neither the major non-Communist powers nor Indonesia's ASEAN partners voiced any efficacious protests about the occupation, although there were concerns over human rights violations among non-state groups and observers. The issue was not vented on any ASEAN meeting after the invasion.⁶ The ASEAN partners probably did not know much about East Timor, and saw the occupation as inevitable and even desirable.⁷ Even to the Indonesian public East Timor was largely a non-issue until the Santa Cruz massacre in 1991 highlighted the failed integration. Meanwhile, two related developments changed the preconditions of the ASEAN. First, the organization was expanded to include virtually all of Southeast Asia, with the Communist or formerly Communist nations Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, joining in 1995–1999. Second was the evaporation of a Communist “threat”. All this probably made international opinion less prepared to accept authoritarianism and brutal occupation perpetrated by the old allies of the West. The new winds were felt when Bishop Belo and Ramos-Horta were accorded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1996. Characteristically, however, Indonesia's ASEAN partners continued taking a cautionary stance on the East Timor issue. Thus the Asia-Pacific Conference on East Timor in Malaysia in the same year was violently interrupted by a mob, and a large number of participants were arrested by the authorities.⁸

Thus, the new concerns over the fate of East Timor did not apply to ASEAN itself. In fact, the organization failed to play much of a role in the East Timorese developments that followed the fall of Soeharto in 1998. The organization persisted in its silence as the new president, B.J. Habibie took over. While Habibie began contemplating a solution for East Timor, he still saw the issue as an internal affair. When the possibility of East Timorese independence was offered in case the autonomy proposal was voted down, Habibie turned to the United Nations rather than ASEAN. As violence soared in the wake of the referendum in August 1999, the organization failed to react to the recurring reports of violence.⁹ The tradition of non-intervention in other members' affairs still counted for something. Moreover the end of the Cold War lessened the need to speak with one voice, and the lack of a common stance reflected a growing diversity in interests.¹⁰

ASEAN ASSOCIATION 1999–2015

The Indonesian government was initially reluctant to enlist the assistance of its ASEAN partners to solve the acute crisis, but soon had reason to change its mind. When the scale of the violence became known, the public outcry at last forced some member states to react diplomatically and even express their willingness to participate in a peacekeeping force.¹¹ The UN Transitional Administration in East Timor was in place in the fall of 1999, and began the task of reconstructing the war-torn nation. The accompanying peacekeeping task force, INTERFET, as we already know, consisted of troops from some 20 nations, including the ASEAN members, Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, and the Philippines. In particular, Thailand contributed with a substantial force. The Thai foreign minister, Surin Pitsuwan, advocated a more active ASEAN engagement in issues of concern for the well-being of the region, played a role in gathering ASEAN support, and conferred with Soeharto's successor, Habibie, concerning the raising of the INTERFET. Responding to this, Habibie even wished for an ASEAN commanding officer for the task force, although this proved impractical. However, a Thai general was made deputy commander. It was notable that, even at this stage, ASEAN would not act as a collective, its members participating on an individual basis.¹²

Jürgen Haacke has proposed five main reasons why several ASEAN countries joined the INTERFET. First, it was a matter of demonstrating solidarity with Indonesia in a situation when the country had lost face and been subjected to the “betrayal” of Australia—formerly a tacit supporter of the Indonesian appropriation of East Timor. Second, it was a way to cover up at least some of the shame associated with the policy of the Indonesian regime and maintain good working relations with the dialogue partners of ASEAN. Third, Australian leadership in the INTERFET seemed to demonstrate the inability of ASEAN to act on regional problems, encouraging some member states to take action and join with substantial forces. Fourth, the East Timor events could potentially have a destabilizing impact on Indonesia itself, in particular, when one considered the brewing troubles in Aceh and Irian Jaya. ASEAN participation in the INTERFET could halt the slide toward further instability by at least taking a firm grip of the East Timorese situation. And finally, there might have been national status issues at hand, where countries like Thailand could enhance their international credibility by intervening.¹³

With the immediate prospect of official independence, the question inevitably arose as to what relationship the newborn nation would have to ASEAN which encompassed the other ten Southeast Asian nation states. In 2001, the analysts, Hal Hill and João Saldanha, strongly argued for an association on economic grounds. As they wrote, there was simply not much choice but to maintain an open trade regime. In general, one could draw three conclusions from modern economic development. First, outward-oriented economies performed better than inward-looking ones. Second, the costs for trade intervention are heavy for small economies like East Timor, and the consequences will be felt soon enough. And third, the geographical position of maritime Southeast Asia strongly favored free trade. It was inevitable that the main trading partners of East Timor would be Australia and Indonesia. This fell so naturally that no particular policy initiatives would be necessary to develop the relationships with these two giants. Furthermore, the benefits of joining the ASEAN were obvious. Membership would open the gate to an important regional organization and develop the ties to Southeast Asia, beyond Indonesia, to several strong economic powerhouses. There was an educational aspect to this, since East Timor could learn much about development policy and practice.¹⁴

As the Republic of Timor-Leste became formally independent in May 2002, membership became a standing issue. A few events heralded the closer ties to the other Southeast Asian nations. Thus, Timor-Leste (as we may now call it) was admitted as an observer in ASEAN in the same year. In the next year, for the first time, East Timor participated in the Southeast Asian Games in Vietnam.¹⁵ Furthermore Timor-Leste joined the ASEAN Regional Forum, a formal multilateral meeting point encompassing Australia, North America, and much of Asia, in 2005. The neighboring states in Southeast Asia and Australia had an interest in seeing a stable Timor-Leste, which would gain from keeping channels open, although the stage of development of the country was generally deemed insufficient for actual membership.¹⁶ One problem was the deficient process of “Timorization” during the UNTAET mission, with “an absence of meaningful capacity-building activities at multiple levels (from public administration to civic education) and a failure to involve an appropriate range of East Timorese actors in an appropriate range of sufficiently resources transitional activities and transitional governance forums”.¹⁷ Thus, the administrative structure of the nation was poorly prepared to meet the basic requirements for membership. Almost 15 years after independence, it still has by far the smallest GDP in Southeast Asia.

The postindependence period nevertheless seemed to provide good opportunities for the newly independent nation to demonstrate its goodwill to its previously indifferent Southeast Asian neighbors, by applying for full membership. As expressed by Maria Ortuoste, “Timor-Leste is trying to demonstrate its bona fides by ‘becoming’ an ASEAN state with the requisite institutional capabilities ... to generate a positive consensus on its membership”.¹⁸ While most East Timorese may not be interested in the theoretical aspects, they will understand the crucial importance of ASEAN for the survival of their nation. Ramos-Horta established a task force in September 2007 with the aim of preparing the accession to ASEAN: in December in the same year, he mentioned that joining ASEAN was a top priority for the country.¹⁹

This is the place to mention a second possible Asian ally, namely China. In fact, the former President and Prime Minister, José Ramos-Horta, have seriously considered China as the “closest possible ally”, with the two countries being “good friends but not best friends”. “China’s sophisticated diplomacy had allowed Beijing to emerge in the eyes of the Timorese as a committed and much needed friend”.²⁰ In spite of some recent diplomatic strains with ASEAN, China is still able to play a major role among the members of the organization to support Timor-Leste as the 11th member state. Analyst, Ian Storey, has stated that China has worked hard to cultivate a close relationship with Asia’s newest nation, and that China’s interests in Timor-Leste are three-fold: to expand its influence in the Southeast Asian region, to restrict Taiwan’s international space, and to gain access to the country’s natural resources.²¹ Another example of the involvement of China in ASEAN was signing a nonbinding declaration on the conduct of parties to prevent critics against Myanmar. Practically, China seems ready to help East Timor during its laborious candidacy quest to join ASEAN.

The Stance of Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Singapore

In spite of the traumatic past, and the anger of many Indonesians over the cessation of East Timor, post-2002 relations with Indonesia have generally been friendly. In fact, Indonesia has actively been promoting development and economic diversification of the nascent manufacturing industry in Timor-Leste. Indonesia is a strong supporter of East Timorese candidacy. This was seen in March 2011, when Indonesian President, Susilo Bambang Yudhyono, voiced support for Timor-Leste’s bid to join the organization.²²

Timor-Leste has a few obvious traits in common with the Philippines, with an Iberian colonial background and a predominantly Catholic population. In 2008, President Ramos-Horta went to the Philippines and addressed the question of East Timor's candidacy. In 2011 and 2013, the Philippine Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) expressed their support for an East Timorese bid for ASEAN membership. Between the 5th and 9th June 2013, Prime Minister, Xanana-Gusmão, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, José Luís Guterres, met with the Filipino, Gus Miclat, who is the Executive Director of the Initiatives for International Dialogue (IID) and the main convenor of the Asia-Pacific Coalition for East Timor (APCET), a human rights group founded in 1994. On this occasion, Gus Miclat said that "Prime Minister *Gusmão's* visit to the Philippines is very meaningful, our country being in the forefront of championing democracy in the region, and with civil society leading the solidarity movement for Timor-Leste's struggle. [...] Thus, Philippine CSOs will support East Timor's membership to the ASEAN, which will hopefully further strengthen their young democracy".²³ Other VIPs of the Timorese delegation were the Ministers of Finance, Emilia Pires (minister between 2007 and 2015), Education, Bendito Freitas, Commerce Industry and Environment, António da Conceição, Public Works, Gastão de Sousa, Agriculture, Mariano Sabino, and Tourism, Francisco Kalbuadi Lay. Prime Minister Gusmão delivered a lecture at the University of the Philippines, "Peace and Reconciliation: Timor-Leste experience".²⁴

While such statements were issued by non-state actors, Thailand took a positive official stance. In January 2009, the Prime Minister of Thailand, Abhisit Vejjajiva, was one of the first leaders to expressly mention that his country would support East Timor's membership. Timor-Leste had just started to formally apply for its ASEAN membership under its fourth East Timor Government. We should recall here that the nation had recently suffered considerable turbulence in 2006 and 2008, years which were seen as an impediment for membership.²⁵ The following fifth East Timor Government took office on August 8, 2012, and the country's candidacy was considered by the ASEAN Council. In the following year, 2013, the significant Singaporean publication, *Southeast Asian Affairs*, issued at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, published a complete article on Timor-Leste and ASEAN.²⁶ The article stated that East Timor still continues "its enthusiastic embrace of multilateral forums, in particular, its active pursuit

of joining ASEAN, with the support of Indonesia. [...] Timor-Leste [leads] the g7 + Pregroup of least developed countries”.²⁷ East Timor which is leading this group of small states should certainly continue to play a proactive, more innovative and effective role;²⁸ g7 + includes 20 countries. The former President, Xanana Gusmão, in April 2017 met the President of Portugal, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, in Lisbon to discuss g7 + issues.²⁹

Despite the possible impact of this article, it seemed that no direct Singaporean support appeared that was comparable to Indonesia’s frank support. However, the official “Media Release” of the 5th East Timor Government declared: “The expressions of support for Timor-Leste’s ASEAN bid must be considered a very successful visit for the nation”. On March 15, 2014, Prime Minister, Xanana Gusmão and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, José Luis Guterres, went to Brunei for the first official visit to prepare for the exchange of Ambassadors in both countries.³⁰ The government of Timor-Leste had already allocated funds to open embassies in Cambodia, Laos, and Myanmar, in addition to the seven others already established in other ASEAN countries. In that way, it signaled that it met some of the preconditions for membership.³¹

2015, A TURNING POINT FOR EAST TIMORESE CANDIDACY

The process gained speed in 2015, and in hindsight, 2015 might well be seen as a turning point. After the internal violence of 2008, Timor-Leste experienced a degree of stability despite the cumbersome issues lying ahead—overpopulation, soon-to-be exhausted oil and natural gas resources, poverty, and so on. The immediate needs have been assessed by Rosalia Sciortino, a cultural anthropologist and a development sociologist by training and former Regional Director for Southeast Asia of the Rockefeller Foundation (2000–2007). Technological solutions to develop irrigation and introduce hand tractors are necessary, in particular, East Timorese agriculture needs mechanics and spare parts to repair the tractors. This has not been implemented since the year 2000, when East Timor received tractors from China. Mechanics to repair tractors are needed. Timorese farmers must be protected, and such need for protection is expected to rise after 2025. Starting early will help to avoid food shortages later on.

Institutionalization of Diplomatic Relations

An important step to get ahead was to secure proper diplomatic representation in both directions. Brunei was a case of these tightening diplomatic ties. Like Timor-Leste, Brunei is a minor state in the region and depends on important oil incomes, although the affluence of Brunei contrasts starkly with Timor-Leste. Not least considering the importance of oil prices, Brunei has a certain interest to become an ally of Timor-Leste. In 2015, Brunei registered its third year of economic recession, which is a serious matter. In and after this year, declining oil prices on the world market hit the economy of both nations. Interestingly, this coincided with the appointment on March 10, 2015 of Dato Paduka Haji Abdul Salam Abdul Momin as the Ambassador of Brunei to Dili by His Majesty, Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah.³² On the other hand, the head of the Timor-Leste Embassy in Bandar Seri Begawan in 2015 is Eminio da Silva Pinto.

Such advances marked that, by 2015, the East Timorese government, more pronounced than in the past, declared its readiness to join the association at any time. Apart from Brunei, no less than three East Timorese ambassadors or heads of mission were appointed to Cambodia, Laos and Burma (Myanmar). Now Timor-Leste declared that it had fulfilled a major requirement for ASEAN membership, namely “to have opened embassies in all ASEAN member-states”. In that way, Timor-Leste was supposedly ready to join ASEAN grouping.³³ The question was whether this was enough from the point of view of its neighbors. On April 10, 2015, East Timor Ambassador in Malaysia, José Antonio Amorim Dias, said that Timor-Leste’s application was basically accepted by ASEAN member countries, but with some reservations from Singapore. Malaysia wanted Timor-Leste to make proper preparations for the full acceptance of its candidacy.³⁴ However, the second Minister for Foreign Affairs in Singapore, Grace Fu Hai Yien, stated: “Whether Timor-Leste is ready [...] we like to have a working group to evaluate”. Singapore’s reservations need to be carefully scrutinized. The implication is that a clear estimation of Timor-Leste’s economic diversification and agriculture development is necessary. The expected costs for ASEAN will be considerable since the organization must likely support the cumbersome socioeconomic development of Timor-Leste up to at least the 2020s decade. Any comparison of Timor-Leste’s current GDP with that of other member states is useless, and will not positively promote the candidacy

of the new country. These efforts to meet the criteria ushered in an initiative in August 2015. At that time the Indonesian delegates raised the issue of membership of Timor-Leste in ASEAN during the 48th ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. In line with their post-1999 stance, the Indonesians turned out to be helpful. M. I. Derry Aman, director at the Indonesian Foreign Ministry, said that the Indonesian government would persistently attempt to include Timor-Leste in the ASEAN.³⁵

The Position of the USA and China

Encouraging support has been voiced from outside the ASEAN. Under the US President Obama, relations between Washington and Southeast Asia in general have received a strong boost. Here we should remember that President Bill Clinton largely contributed to push Indonesian President Habibie to allow the referendum in 1999. It remains to be seen what will be the implications of Donald Trump's victory in the US presidential election, and whether the USA will contribute with political pressure to help Timor-Leste to join the ASEAN. His rival Hillary Clinton, in fact, visited Dili in September 2012 and met with President Matan Ruak and Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão. During her last tour in Southeast Asia, Hillary Clinton made clear her intention to return to Asia, and particularly to the ASEAN countries. If so, Timor-Leste will likely not be forgotten, but her defeat in the election would, of course, lessen the impact of such a trip.

ASEAN plus Three is a multilevel platform for political, economic, security and cultural dialogue, communication and cooperation between ASEAN and the three East Asian nations of China, Japan, and South Korea.³⁶ Being one of the world's largest economies, it goes without saying that China has a crucial role in any issue of economic cooperation. A striking symbol of this is the presidential palace and the building of the Timorese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which were both built through Chinese support. The first lift ever in the new country was installed inside this building. It is important to point out here that China has a particular solid link to Dili. China played an active role at the last ASEAN Regional Forum in April 2017, in Dili. The political bilateral cooperation between Timor-Leste and China is particularly strong and this may have strategic ramifications. As for its relationship with ASEAN, China is looking to have a more positive participation by negotiations

and concessions. The increasingly tense situation in the South China Sea has created turbulence between China and the ASEAN members of Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei, and the Philippines. China obviously needs friends prepared to accept Chinese sovereignty over the Spratly and Paracel Islands. Together with Portugal, China was the main country contributing to the construction and human resources investment of the small Timorese naval force, which is part of the Falintil Defence Force of Timor-Leste (F-FDTL). All these points help us to understand that the question of candidacy to join ASEAN is complex and multilateral, although in the end it remains centered on Southeast Asia.

DEVELOPMENTS IN 2016

In 2016, the reasons for delays in accepting Timor-Leste's membership are different from those in 2002. As we have seen, progress has been made in this long-lasting quest, as encouraging voices have been heard from some of ASEAN members. Among the main reasons for the delay is presumably the country's uneven economic progress, and reminiscences of the outburst of mass violence in 2006 and its aftermath. However, there is more to it. In fact, Timor-Leste compares favorably to several ASEAN countries. Its income per capita is higher than that of Cambodia, Laos, Burma, and Vietnam. Moreover, in terms of human development index, which gives a broader idea of welfare than economic growth, the nation ranks higher than Cambodia, Laos, and Burma.³⁷ Paradoxically, a reason for lacking enthusiasm might be the democratic credentials of the small peninsular country. Timor-Leste has three fair democratic elections behind, and a civil society which has actively pursued issues of human rights. In fact, it ranks higher than any other Southeast Asian state in the *2015 Democracy Index*, being number 44 among 167 nations. While still in the category of "Flawed Democracies", it stands out dramatically in comparison with countries such as Burma (no. 114), Vietnam (no. 128), and Laos (no. 155). While this may seem commendable and, speaking to nominal ASEAN commitments to human rights and democracy, it has, in fact, been argued that this might leave Timor-Leste an outsider. The authoritarian structures or downright authoritarianism among the ASEAN states are strengthened by the old ASEAN way of mutual non-interference, and democratic activism by a newcomer can possibly be regarded as disturbing and uncomfortable by some members.³⁸

For example, the East Timorese can offer foreign business a favorable environment for investments, with a generous tax code and relatively simple procedures to establish companies on its soil.³⁹ This favorable environment may sometimes create fear among some Timorese leaders who prefer protectionism which, in fact, will never favor the foreign direct investment so much needed in Dili after more than a year of weak economic development. If indeed Timor-Leste manages to join ASEAN, it will be a great political, economic, and security achievement in securing the future of the nation. For that, we will compare the views of the member states to better understand when Timor-Leste will be able to join the association.

East Timor and Singapore

In spite of its small size, Singapore is “the most important country for the acceptance of the ASEAN candidacy of East Timor”.⁴⁰ This is, of course, due to its position as a financial hub and quest for regional stability. If the East Timorese government tackles the increasing inequality and the rocketing costs of living, Singaporean leaders could be convinced that there is sufficient progress in the management of the new country. Such questions of inequality and the cost of living were the key issues that stoked voter outrage in 2011 and 2012 during the elections in both countries.⁴¹ In the past, Singapore has been wary of the economic burden that developing nations may bring to the ASEAN. These questions seemed to be ignored when the Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão, and the Minister of Defence and Security of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste made an official visit to Singapore on June 3–5, 2013, at the invitation of Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong. During their meeting, both Prime Ministers reaffirmed the excellent bilateral relations between Timor-Leste and Singapore. Agio Pereira, Minister of the Council of Ministers of Timor-Leste, concluded that the Gusmão visit, which was accompanied by the most important delegation of ministers ever, was met by expressions of support for Timor-Leste’s ASEAN membership, and therefore had been quite a success.

Regional media was sometimes even more optimistic than the cautious Minister of Foreign Affairs, Guterres. In August, 2016 *Asia Pacific Star* published an article entitled “S’pore won’t block Timor-Leste’s bid to join ASEAN”.⁴² In 1997, the economic liberalization prescribed by ASEAN was a nightmare for Cambodia and Myanmar. It was sure that joining ASEAN would be much easier for Timor-Leste than for these

two newcomers. Between 2002 and 2016, the successive post-independence East Timorese governments have developed economic liberalization. By 2017, East Timor already has 15 years of experience of democratization and economic liberalization. It has managed two major thorny political issues, namely the petitioner question and the crisis of the internally displaced persons (IDPSs) who stayed in camps in the capital Dili and other districts.

Indonesia

The main motivations of Indonesia to be closer to Timor-Leste are political and economic. It is only to be expected that the most interested member state is the closest neighbor. A certain liberalization of Indonesia's economy, trade, and finance, will clearly favor Timor-Leste. The Indonesian rupiah is presently the only foreign currency easily exchangeable in the capital Dili. James Cotton rightly mentioned that "Indonesia is the dominant power in ASEAN",⁴³ and the 25th annual summit of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) was held in Bali, on October 5–7, 2013. This was accompanied by renewed Indonesian enthusiasm in the issue. In January 2014, Rahmat Pramono presented his letter of credentials as the new Permanent Representative of Indonesia to ASEAN, in Jakarta. Pramono later made an announcement where he pointed out that a feasibility study on Timor-Leste had been undertaken. In this, three pillars were highlighted, namely politics, security, and economy. Pramono said that "[t]he politics, security and economy studies have been assessed, while the socio-cultural assessment is expected to be completed by the end of this year".⁴⁴ In a realistic way, the diplomat mentioned that human resources were a priority to bolster the economy. "However, Timor-Leste does not need to wait to complete development of its human resources to become a member of ASEAN. This can be done after Timor-Leste has joined the big family of the ASEAN".⁴⁵

Ambassador Pramono announced in May 2016, that Timor-Leste's feasibility studies to join ASEAN were to be finished soon. On top of that, the Philippines, also a close ally of Timor-Leste, will be the ASEAN Summit host for 2017.⁴⁶ Moreover, East Timor membership "would provide key access to funds for national development through programs like the Initiative for ASEAN Integration aimed at narrowing the development gap between ASEAN member-states. Lastly, it will enable Timor-Leste to have a greater and stronger presence on the international stage by virtue of joining a 10 member-state strong association".⁴⁷

The Long-Lasting Agreements of Portugal and the European Union with East Timor

Timor-Leste became an integral part of the EU–ACP (Economic Partnership Agreements) family of nations in 2006. The Cotonou Partnership Agreement provides the legal framework for the EU/Timor-Leste cooperation. It is a step that has the potential to provide socio-economic development and integration into the world economy.⁴⁸ The agreement was concluded for 20 years (2000–2020), with a clause allowing its revision every 5 years, and also a financial protocol for a 5 year period. Between the ACP countries and the EU, an emphasis exists on conflict resolution, and it focuses on the root cause of conflicts. This clause is useful for Timor-Leste, since it is a guarantee for its future internal security. It may be helpful to present a new agenda for ASEAN and all its nation members. East Timor, with its Portuguese background, its laws being written in Portuguese, has a long relationship with Europe and the European Union (EU) that few ASEAN nations have. The EU, the USA, China, Japan, and South Korea are all key partners of East Timor. It is useful to consider these positive factors for the East Timor candidacy to join ASEAN.

Promoting the East Timorese *savoir faire* in the Lusophone world, in 2013–2014, the former President José Ramos-Horta was the Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS). Fair and democratic elections happened, and the transfer of UN mission to another diplomat, Miguel Trovoada of São Tomé and Príncipe, went very smoothly for a while. Timor-Leste was able to designate the president of the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP) in 2014, having acceded to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in 2007. In 2016, the rotating Presidency of CPLP had been officially transferred from Timor-Leste to Brazil. “Timor-Leste’s inclusion would enhance the diversity of views in ASEAN by bringing in a stable, democratic country to the regional grouping. [This demonstrate the existence of] different political culture in Timor-Leste”.⁴⁹ 40 percent of Timor-Leste’s national parliament is made up of women, which is indeed the highest percentage in Asia. Indonesia and the Philippines, respectively have 17 and 27% of women elected in the parliament. In addition, there is a talented pool of Timorese diplomats that could potentially serve ASEAN interests.

Candidacy on Track

The Indonesian researcher, Ganewati Wuryandari of the Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI), has commented on the prospects and challenges of the East Timorese candidacy, as follows:

1. “East Timor remains one of the world’s poorest nations. It was ranked 120 out of 169 on the 2010 UNHD Human Development report”. However, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam “were classified as the poorest nations [...] accepted as ASEAN members”.
2. “East Timor’s fragile domestic situation, economic development and human resources [need a consolidation of bureaucracy [...] finance and technical infrastructure”.
3. “ASEAN’s measured approval to East Timor’s integration makes good sense”.⁵⁰

While the candidacy to join ASEAN is on track, other challenges still need to be clarified, in particular, to convince Singapore. Former Vice Premier and Minister of Foreign Affairs, José Luis Guterres, was careful not to show too much optimism during an interview with one of the authors in early December 2015, at the Hotel Timor in Dili. At that time, the Singaporean authorities expressed themselves in a way implying some reservation about Timor-Leste’s bid. According to some voices, careful consideration must be taken so that plans for region-wide economic integration are not derailed.⁵¹ Meanwhile, most of the ten member states have voiced support for the fledgling nation to join the bloc by 2016. “Failure to admit Timor-Leste therefore risks ASEAN’s centrality and relevance in the regional architecture of the Asia-Pacific in the 21st century. In the face of China and India’s rise as well as the United States greater interest in the region, this is something ASEAN simply cannot afford to lose”.⁵² With an eye to its future prospects, Timor-Leste organized the ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ASEAN Peoples’ Forum (ACSC/APF) in Dili between the July 30, 2016 and August 1, 2016. The ACSC/APF was an important event attended by the State Minister Xanana Gusmão. On August 1, 2016, participants the APF reported their commitment and support for a fair settlement for the Timorese peoples’ unfinished struggle to achieve their full sovereignty as the ASEAN’s newest country.⁵³ However, in 2016, the main step forward for East Timor was the visit of Prime Minister Hun Sen.

Cambodia's Important Role

On June 1–2, 2016, at the 25th ASEAN Economic Forum in Kuala Lumpur, the Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen, had a meeting with Prime Minister Rui Maria de Araújo, “to increase cooperation and security in Southeast Asia”. For the first time, Araújo seemed to really lead the deal to join ASEAN. At the time, Singapore and Laos again argued that development remains an important issue for East Timor.⁵⁴ More recently, Hun Sen visited Dili for 2 days on August 20–21, 2016. On this occasion, he reaffirmed Cambodian support for Timor-Leste to join the World Trade Organization (WTO), and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.⁵⁵ According to a statement released by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Cambodia during his visit, Hun Sen also told Araújo that Cambodia would offer ten scholarships each year to East Timorese students. In addition, both prime ministers witnessed the signing of three important documents related to trade and tourism, oil, visa exemptions for holders of diplomatic and service passports, and cooperation in the field of labor. PM Araújo is expected to attend the World Economic Forum hosted by Cambodia in 2017.⁵⁶ Timor-Leste’s Minister of Tourism, Francisco Kalbuadi Lay, signed the document related to the essential question of development for the new country, tourism, and trade cooperation.

Indonesia's Positive Recommendations

In March 2016, the Habibie Center presented a positive view for accepting the candidacy of East Timor to join ASEAN: “The discourse surrounding Timor-Leste’s application for ASEAN membership should be shifted to a more positive and encouraging mindset. Too often, comments from ASEAN officials have been marked by a negative mindset [...] ASEAN should rethink the process for Timor-Leste’s application for ASEAN membership to make it more transparent, more inclusive and more encouraging.”⁵⁷

The three constructive recommendations of the Habibie Center in 2016 were as follows:

1. *ASEAN should make information regarding Timor-Leste’s application status publicly available*

2. *ASEAN should broaden the ASEAN Coordinating Council Working Group (ACCWG) of independent studies to be an even more fair mix that takes into account the wide and differing views from ASEAN member states*
3. *ASEAN should adopt a more positive mindset with regards to Timor-Leste's application.*

Joining ASEAN will benefit its member countries as well as the People of Timor-Leste by an involvement and participation that promotes “the acceleration of economic growth and improvement of quality of life of the people in the region”.⁵⁸ Wang Gongwu has argued that most of the ten ASEAN nations have been building their new nations for nearly a century.⁵⁹ To become the 11th member state in the near future, Timor-Leste should try to formulate rhetorics and ideals, finding a diplomatic “clear sense of direction” for its new nation to persuade Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. In autumn 2016, the visit to Jakarta of the Prime Minister Rui Maria de Araújo, centered on East Timor’s ASEAN candidacy, is a significant step forward.

CONCLUSION

Optimistically maybe, one of the “most successful” regional organizations of our time, ASEAN, has been slow to admit Timor-Leste as its 11th member state. Joining ASEAN is essential for Timor’s future development and prosperity. The reasons for ASEAN’s reluctance to admit Timor-Leste are somewhat murky, and it has even been suggested that Timor-Leste’s good democratic and human rights credentials constitute an obstacle in a region still tampering with authoritarian features. Comparing the GDP (Gross Domestic Product) of East Timor with those of Cambodia, Laos, and Myanmar is not valid, considering the progress made by the fledgling nation. It is possible that diplomacy, friendship, and networking will, after all, land Timor-Leste in ASEAN. It does not lack allies. Despite obvious disparity in wealth, the economies of Brunei and Timor-Leste have some striking similarities and it is interesting to note the strong support of Brunei for East Timorese candidacy. Formally, the issue seems simple enough. The only formal criterion to be a member of ASEAN is to be geographically situated in Southeast Asia. However, the process of admittance requires unanimity. One single nation among the ten ASEAN members is enough to block the candidacy of Timor-Leste.

By August 2016, three ASEAN member states were favorably inclined to accept Timor-Leste as the 11th member. Five countries were neutral or favorable: Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam. Two countries do not currently accept the candidacy of a new member state: the wealthy and somewhat democratic Singapore, and the poorer authoritarian Laos are not favorable to East Timor's candidacy in 2017, but the coming years will favor the newest country of Asia which does not lack friends. In April 19 and 20, 2017, Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, and Thailand, which attended the ARF (ASEAN Regional Forum) in Dili, seem favorable to admit Timor-Leste as an ASEAN member state. This was the first time that such an important forum on preventive diplomacy to resolve conflicts with the active presence of China took place in Dili at the Novo Turismo, with ASEAN as the main regional association. President José Ramos-Horta and the State Minister Dioniso Babo, were key speakers. President Ramos-Horta was interviewed by the author on April 20, 2017.

Despite obstacles mentioned, Timor-Leste still stands a fairly good chance to join ASEAN in the near future, since it might be an attractive object of foreign business investment.⁶⁰ If the East Timorese government succeeds in convincing each member state of ASEAN, and in particular Singapore, it is possible that it can join in 2019. An earlier bid seems doubtful, although Ramos-Horta and the ASEAN diplomat Rahmat Pramono are optimistic. Xanana Gusmão is highly favorable to Timor-Leste's candidacy to join ASEAN. The author met Gusmão on April 18, 2017 at the Parliament after his diplomatic travel in America, Holland, and Lisbon, although it was not possible to ask him his real thinking on East Timor's candidacy. Joining ASEAN is the best option for Timor-Leste's future from any point of view. Agriculture, education, and tourism are key sectors to show that the country is progressing and ready to be the eleventh ASEAN member state.

NOTES

1. Reid 1988, 93; Noor 2016.
2. Nations in the vicinity such as Papua New Guinea and Palau are normally counted as parts of Oceania.
3. Greenlees 2002, 7.
4. Aubrey 2000, 141.
5. Greenlees 2002, 6–9; Nixon 2013, 59.
6. Gunn 1999, 287.

7. Dunn 2003, 305.
8. Inbaraj 1997, 173–179.
9. Haacke 2003, 197–198.
10. Greenlees 2002, 340–341.
11. Haacke 2003, 198.
12. Greenlees 2002, 257, 263; Haacke 2003, 199.
13. Haacke *Ibid.*, 199–201.
14. Hill and Saldanha 2001, 20–21.
15. http://southeast-asian-games.wikia.com/wiki/2003_Southeast_Asian_Games (accessed 18-11-2016).
16. Molnar 2010, 143.
17. Nixon 2013, 120, 128.
18. Ortuoste 2011.
19. Church 2009.
20. Horta 2009; Jolliffe 2002.
21. Storey 2006.
22. *The Brunei Times*, March 4, 2011. <http://www.bt.com.bn/news-asia/2011/03/04/indonesia-supports-t-lestes-asean-bid-0#sthash.BD9dNEFq.pdf> (accessed 7-26-2016).
23. “Philippine Civil Society to support Timor-Leste Bid for ASEAN Membership”, 7 June. <http://www.iidnet.org/philippine-civil-society-to-support-timor-leste-bid-for-asean-membership/> (accessed 1-8-2016).
24. *Ibid.*
25. Church 2009; Horta 2009.
26. Kingsbury 2013.
27. *Ibid.*, 317–318.
28. Md A.Razzaque 2015, 131, 134–135.
29. *Diariu Timoroman* 04-10-2017, p. 14.
30. Slater 2012, 7–8.
31. Molnar 2010, 143.
32. *The Brunei Times*, March 21, 2015. <http://www.bt.com.bn/news-national/2015/03/21/brunei-establishes-permanent-mission-timor-leste#sthash.FR5FchRT.pdf> (accessed 25-7-2016).
33. *Daily Express*, April 11, 2015.
34. *The Sun Daily*, April 10, 2015, <http://www.thesundaily.my/news/1381066> (accessed 23-7-2016).
35. “Indonesia and East Timor candidacy”, *Xin Hua*, July 30, 2015 (accessed 6-8-2016).
36. Zhu Feng 2012, 10.
37. Talesco 2016.
38. *Ibid.*
39. Lotova 2016.
40. Hunt 2016.

41. Slater 2012, 7–8.
42. <http://www.asiapacificstar.com/index.php/sid/217222890> (accessed 1-8-2016).
43. Cotton 2004, 22.
44. <http://thedi diplomat.com/2016/05/east-timor-hopes-for-asean-membership-by-2017/> (accessed 1-8-2016).
45. <http://en.tempo.co/read/news/2016/05/25/309773887/Timor-Leste-to-Join-ASEAN-in-2017> (accessed 5-11-2016).
46. <http://thedi diplomat.com/2016/05/east-timor-hopes-for-asean-membership-by-2017/> (accessed 1-10-2016). Roshni Kapur 2016, *The Diplomat*, October 1.
47. A. Ibrahim Almuttaqi 2016. *The Jakarta Post*, September 21. <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2015/10/11/the-case-timor-leste-s-membership-asean.html> (accessed 21-9-2016).
48. http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/timor_leste/eu_timor_leste/political_relations/index_en.htm (accessed 7-8-2016).
49. Habibie Center 2016, 7.
50. Wuryandari 2016, 15–9.
51. *Brunei Times*, 2016 July 25.
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57. *Ibid.*, 8.
58. João M. Saldanha <http://jsaldanha11.blogspot.hk/2011/05/timor-leste-and-asean-2030.html> (accessed 24-9-2016).
59. Wang 2005, 2.
60. Lotova 2016, Dunn 2003, 379.

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Fretilin and CNRT: A Short Comparative Study of the Two Main Political Parties of East Timor

Jean A. Berlie

Abstract This unique chapter looks at the two most important political parties of the country, Fretilin and CNRT, rarely compared. The present Sixth Constitutional Government is a CNRT government, with its Prime Minister, Rui Maria de Araújo is a Fretilin member. The Government will be dissolved after the parliamentary elections on July 22, 2017. This chapter studies the political challenges in 2016 and the youth who constitute a very important part of the population without political power and often unemployed.

Keywords CNRT · Elections · Economy · Fretilin · Youth

This chapter aims to understand Timor's two main political parties, Fretilin and the National Congress for Timorese Reconstruction (CNRT), has been published, so, the following attempt may be useful

J.A. Berlie (✉)

The Education University of Hong Kong, Tai Po, Hong Kong

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for future comparative articles.¹ This chapter aims to understand the two main political parties that are presently ruling East Timor, but which will be in competition to win the elections in 2017. In 1974, Fretilin was the only party symbolizing the strong Timorese will of independence. In 2007, CNRT, a new party but an old acronym, formed an alliance with other parties and Xanana Gusmão became Prime Minister. Two main parties then appeared. Prior to that, Fretilin supremely ruled the Constituent Assembly and after independence the Parliament. In 2015, CNRT and Fretilin shared some of the power, but the main party was CNRT. The notion of a bi-party system is complex, and this is why studying Fretilin and CNRT is essential.

Fretilin was founded in 1974. It was initially called the Association of the Social Democratic Timorese (ASDT). Fretilin and the Timorese Democratic Union, *União Democrática Timorense* (UDT), were the first parties calling for independence in that year. The Portuguese colonial authorities largely favored and supported the UDT which initially supported independence and later started a civil war against Fretilin.

When the CNRT appeared in 1998, it was not the party we now know, but it represented Timorese nationalism which was historically rooted in the Fretilin tradition. So in 2007, when the CNRT emerged, could we interpret it as the year of a new type of political nationalism. Later, in 2015, and faced with a difficult situation, the alliance of the two parties ruled more or less jointly, resolving the problem of governance and saving the Timorese nationalist ideal. The complex dominance of these two parties between 2015 and 2017 followed the designation of the new Prime Minister in February 2015.

The United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) favored a multiparty democratic system. However, the Timorese are somewhat traditional and will continue to vote along nationalist lines for Fretilin and CNRT. A new, modern multiparty system will not happen in 2017. Instead, East Timorese politics may follow the 2015 political system which was marked, for the first time, by a new complex biparty dominance. Nonetheless, the July 2017 parliamentary elections will be a tough time for both parties unless CNRT and Fretilin join forces. The new Fretilin/CNRT era of the past 2 years was heralded by the declining power of the Democratic Party after the death of the Vice-Prime Minister Fernando Lasama, the president of a party that many young people liked. East Timorese youth are still concerned

about Timorese nationalist traditions, but prefer modernity and dream of political change. In the future, however, it's unlikely that they will vote decidedly for Lasama's party as it currently has no strong leader. This is why, in the run-up to the 2017 elections, a comparative study of Fretilin and CNRT is essential.

Preparing a government and an administration for the independent country in 2002, facilitating the return of displaced persons and holding elections were essential missions for UNTAET. From 2002 to 2006, both President Xanana Gusmão and Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri ruled the new country. UNOTIL and finally UNMIT, the following UN missions also helped to organize the new State. In 2006 and 2007, the new Prime Minister, José Ramos-Horta, led the country through difficult times. Later, from 2007 to 2012, he was President. In 2007, the former President Gusmão with his party, the CNRT, managed to build an alliance with other parties and became Prime Minister for the first time. The success of this political alliance was based on Xanana's luck and charisma. Long before this, on 15 July 1997, another remarkable lucky event occurred when he was in jail in Jakarta. President Suharto invited two revolutionaries, Nelson Mandela and Xanana Gusmão to dinner. Possible problems in the new country and between Fretilin and CNRT had been predicted in 2003 by James Fox and Dionisio Babo who noted differences in cultural values and national ideology, coupled with "social and political challenges."² Let us start with the Fretilin Party.

FRETILIN

Fretilin may not have been a true Marxist party, but in 1975, the USA believed it, and as a result supported Indonesia's invasion of East Timor and helped in building Indonesia's military machine. On the eve of Indonesia's full-scale invasion of East Timor, then President Gerald Ford and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger stopped in Jakarta en route from China. During a previous meeting between Ford and Suharto at Camp David on 5 July 1975, Suharto brought up the question of Portuguese decolonization in East Timor, proclaiming his support for "self-determination" but also dismissing independence as unviable. "So the only way is to integrate [East Timor] into Indonesia", he said. Without mentioning Fretilin by name, Suharto misleadingly characterized the party as being almost Communist.³

Consequently, Australia adopted an ambivalent attitude. There are many interpretations of Fretilin's Marxist ideology. One relatively unknown precursor of Fretilin's political re-orientation was Martinho da Costa Lopes (1918–1991), a former acting Bishop in Dili and an elected deputy in Lisbon. He was a strong Fretilin supporter and a benefactor of the Timorese people, but did not adhere to the Marxist doctrine from the beginning. J. Mariano Saldhana described Fretilin as having "started out as a revolutionary movement that later became a political party calling for radical changes in Timor-Leste society, although, [...] its stance has been tempered by the realities of independence."⁴ The point is that now the relationship with Indonesia is excellent, so it may be preferable to forget a part of the past history; the establishment of a university in Dili in 1981 has to be mentioned. For João Mariano Saldanha, Senior Adviser of Policy Analysis and Research in the Ministry of Finance of Timor-Leste, developing the education of East Timor is essential. To return to the early years of ASDT and Fretilin history, Nicolau Lobato, José Ramos-Horta, Mari Alkatiri, and Xavier do Amaral were against colonial regimes and favored immediate independence. These leaders were also journalists for the Catholic pro-independence newspaper *Seara*, an early vehicle for the nationalist movement. In February 1973, the Polícia Internacional e da Defesa do Estado (PIDE), the symbolic shield of the Portuguese dictatorship, closed *Seara*.⁵ However, PIDE's power was eroded under Marcello Caetano, a law professor, who succeeded Antonio Salazar. On 25 April 1974, the Carnation Revolution came about. Caetano left Portugal and settled in Brazil. Faraway Portuguese Timor did not react immediately, but the civil war between Fretilin and UDT was a consequence of this political change in Portugal. In September 1974, Fretilin was the leading political party, with Falintil becoming the armed wing in 1976. The well-known author on East Timor, Jill Jolliffe, used the term "Fretilin soldier", an interesting symbolic name.⁶ The Indonesian Army, Tentara Nasional Indonesia (TNI), realized the difficulty of winning with its 25,000 troops against some 9,000 Fretilin/Falintil regulars, plus part-time militia and around 10,000 reservists. Nicolau Lobato's brother, Rogério, was a Portuguese officer at that time.⁷ He became Fretilin's Minister of Defence, but Vietnam, China, and the Soviet Union did not send arms to the exhausted and sometimes poorly equipped Falintil fighters, who had to rely on weapons abandoned by the Portuguese or seized from the enemy. Indonesian intimidation of the Timorese

population and camps resulted as early as 1978. A foreign delegation in Remexio described the starvation in East Timor as being “worse than Biafra.”⁸

In January 1975, Fretilin, the oldest traditional party in East Timor, and the Timorese Democratic Union (UDT) formed a coalition. However, in August 1975, a coup by UDT was followed in September by a counter-coup by Fretilin, which escalated to open civil war as we know. Although a tragic event in East Timor’s history, this prepared the future nationalist union and instigated the country’s will for independence.⁹ Xavier do Amaral became the first President. Most Timorese were pro-Fretilin; however, a minority wanted to delay independence and supported the UDT. Fretilin emerged victorious and Timorese nationalism was now on track toward independence. This evolution contrasted with the departure of the Portuguese governor Lemos Pires who, on August 11, 1975, left Dili by night by boat and remained in the isolated Island of Atauro. On December 7, 1975 Indonesia invaded Portuguese Timor. Nicolau Lobato, President Amaral, and Mari Alkatiri were founding members of the ASDT–Fretilin Party. Alkatiri had studied politics in the field in Portuguese Timor between 1974 and 1975, and he taught economics in Mozambique. Both Alkatiri and Ramos-Horta did their best to develop Fretilin’s international links, particularly with the Lusophone world, and also with Australia. Ramos-Horta was Secretary of the Foreign Affairs section at the time. In 1984, while in Australia, he explained that Fretilin had groups of leaders outside the country: in Mozambique, Portugal, Australia, and New York. These groups were in frequent contact with Falintil and Fretilin leaders inside the 27th Province of Indonesia.¹⁰ Finally, following international consensus, and with the intervention of US President Bill Clinton and the acceptance by President B. J. Habibie of a UN-administered referendum was planned in August 1999.

A Political Turning Point Toward Independence and Electoral Campaigns in East Timor

At the time of the referendum, held on August 30, 1999, Tim Fisher was, as Deputy Prime Minister, the highest ranking official representative of Australia in East Timor. Fisher, along with other observers, was there to ensure the fair organization of the referendum.¹¹ The Timorese went en masse to the polling stations, with 98% of registered

electors casting their vote. The result was announced in Dili: 78.5% rejected autonomy under Indonesia. The Timorese had opted for independence. Electoral campaigns make for interesting sociological reflections. From 2001 to 2012, I often traveled in local Timorese buses to follow the country's politics. During that period, I also campaigned with many different parties, in particular with the independent presidential candidate Ramos-Horta in Oecussi, Ermera, and Dili, and also with Lu-Olo in Ainaro and Dili. In 2012 and 2017, I was an international observer. In 2007, I followed the parliamentary campaign of Vicente Guterres in Baucau and at Matebian, the sacred mountain of East Timor. It was a familiar sort of campaign. Lasama, the President of the Democratic Party, became President of the National Assembly. Later, in 2012, Vicente Guterres, a faithful supporter of Xanana Gusmão became President of the Parliament. 4 years later, in 2016, he resigned and simply became a CNRT deputy. The United Nations and international observers praised the fair and democratic elections in East Timor. I will not detail any corruption in other fields. However, the Indonesian term *Korupsi, Kolusi, Nepotisme* (KKN) is currently used in Tetum, the national language of East Timor and does not need any translation.¹²

In 2001, no party could compete successfully against Fretilin. For the Timorese everything is symbolic, and in that year, the idea was independence. This is why, from 2002 to 2006, Fretilin ruled. I was in Oecussi for the electoral campaign in 2001. The following is an extract from my diary at the time:

On August 9, 2001, I travelled far away to the interior of the Oecussi enclave. I went to Oenuunu to attend the Fretilin campaign, around 30 km east of Pante Makassar, on the east road across the Thono River which was at its lower level of the year. At 11.15, we left Fretilin headquarters in Pante Makassar, Oecussi's main city. The caravan was composed of four motorcycles, one small truck for the music, and two large trucks. We arrived in Oenuunu around 1 pm. Around ten local motorcycles and five bicycles joined the caravan. The youth from other villages wanted to climb on our truck but it was impossible. It was too crowded. It was sad to see them running in vain to try to catch the caravan. In the meantime we reached a shadowy place, under tamarind trees (*sukaer* in Tetum). Many people and two Civilpol Toyotas were already waiting.

The coordinator of Fretilin party in Pante Makassar was riding a motorcycle with his assistant José Maulaco who left the association Fitun and joined Fretilin. The head of Fretilin, José António Soares Martins, was riding another motorcycle. Santana Coutinho of the central committee was present to prepare for the arrival of the leaders. Secretary General Mari Alkatiri and President Lu-Olo, Francisco Guterres, finally arrived.

On August 11, 2001, Mari Alkatiri, Lu-Olo and Francisco Kalbuadi Lay (Li Fafang, now a minister) arrived at Ambeno's airport.¹³ Liurai Tassi, chief of Fretilin security (Oecussi) was also present. The political campaign continued, the Fretilin flag was raised. All the VIPs went to the house of the general coordinator of the party, Sebastião de Almeida. A few years later he was independent and did not participate in the political life of the district.

During this visit, the following national candidates from Oecussi for the parliamentary elections also went to Oenunu: Jorge da Conceição Teme (No. 12, later elected) of Naimeco, Luisa da Costa (No. 23, later elected), and Francisco Lelan (No. 53, later elected). António da Costa Lelan, a Deputy at the Constituent Assembly, was a former teacher who joined politics in 1984; he was an independent candidate and became the Oecussi *District* Representative. *District* representatives must be residents in the *district* they represent: Aileu, Ainaro, Baucau, Bobonaro, Cova Lima, Dili, Ermera, Lautem, Liquiçá, Manatuto, Manufahi, *Oecussi*, or *Viqueque*. *UNTAET insisted on representation of each particular district, to have a harmonious political system.* Among the important candidates from Oecussi who campaigned in August 2001, we noticed: José Oté, António da Conceição (PD), Jacob de Araújo (PL), and Inacio da Costa (UDT), the son of the famous past Liurai, João Hermenegildo da Costa. Inacio was not elected, and so missed the opportunity to succeed his uncle, the liurai José da Costa, though he had formally received the symbolic sword from José, the last liurai. This line of successive liurai is said to be almost continuous from 1515 to the present. The liurai are the traditional chiefs on the island of Timor. However, Fretilin leaders seem to prefer having elections at the level of suco, just below the district, rather than adhering to the traditional liurai system. However, liurai families continue to be preferred in the country. This was the case in 2015 in Oecussi, when the liurais were invited to attend the important ceremony held for the 500th anniversary of the Portuguese presence in Timor-Leste.

In August 2001 I also wrote in my diary:

On August 12, 2001, in the morning, another Fretilin campaign continued. At 4 pm everyone climbed into cars, mini-buses and trucks heading to the main stadium of Oecussi where the political campaign for the Parliament started. Speeches of Mari Alkatiri and Lu-Olo convinced the numerous local Atoni who attended this meeting to vote for Fretilin.

On Monday August 13, 2001, from Pante Makassar, went to Suai and Dili. At 7.45 am at Oecussi airport I waited for the Dash 7, which flew us to Suai and Dili. Mari Alkatiri was present in the plane, Fretilin sympathizers of Oecussi congratulated the Secretary General.

It is interesting to note the importance of the mentioned political meetings in Oecussi, because around 3 weeks later, Alkatiri, Lu-Olo, and Lay were all three elected deputies. The deputy who represented Oecussi at the Constituent Assembly in the period 2001–2007, António da Costa Lelan, was elected as an independent. The people of Oecussi, called Atoni, have their own way of looking at politics, which could explain why Lelan decided to vote for the Fretilin party at the Constituent Assembly. Also present in Oecussi, Hakka Timorese Chinese are not much involved in politics. However, Francisco Lay was elected a Fretilin deputy in 2001 and became Minister of Tourism in 2015. Pedro Lay was the first Chinese Cabinet Minister, from 2007 to 2015. The Timorese Chinese constitute a generally Catholic socioeconomic group. East Timor needs the Chinese, and the local Hakka have been very well integrated into Timorese society since the end of the eighteenth century.¹⁴

Under the leadership of President Francisco Guterres Lu-Olo, the Constitution of the Democratic Republic of East Timor was signed on March 22, 2002 by 88 deputies. On May 20, 2002, Mari Alkatiri became the first Prime Minister of Timor-Leste. On June 26, 2006, IDPs, Reinado's rebellion and other political events pushed Alkatiri to resign. He was replaced by Ramos-Horta, the former Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation. Ramos-Horta was one of the few politicians able to satisfy both the main parties and the Timorese people, but the country's socioeconomic conditions were seriously affected. The years between 2006 and 2008 were chaotic. One of the best specialists of East Timor's politics, Kingsbury mentioned "a breakdown of state

institutions,”¹⁵ but presidential and parliamentary elections were successfully organized. On May 20, 2007, José Ramos-Horta became the second President of East Timor since independence. That same year, the Fretilin Party was pushed to accept the rule of the CNRT alliance, and Xanana Gusmão became Prime Minister. The UN, Australia, and Portugal in particular contributed to the progressive recovery of East Timor’s sociopolitical situation. In 2012, Taur Matan Ruak was elected President, but declined to seek re-election 5 years later. Lu-Olo, the President of Fretilin at time of writing, was elected President of Timor-Leste on March 2017 (see photos 4 and 5). Xavier do Amaral is a historical figure who became President of the country in 1975.

The dynamism of Lu-Olo’s successful presidential election is an advantage for Fretilin in the lead-up to the parliamentary elections, in principle, in July 2017. The elected President Lu-Olo represented the easterners, but he is the president of all the Timorese. This is of note because Lu-Olo is from Viqueque. He got 57% of the votes and the second man, António da Conceição, Kalohan, from the western district of Ermera, won 32.5% of the votes. The PD Party and PLP will both try to use this “West against East” dynamic to win more votes in the parliamentary election in July 2017. From 2015 to 2017, then, the union of Fretilin and CNRT has been a remarkable but complex step forward. After the parliamentary elections in 2017, this union needs to continue for the stability of the country.

Mari Alkatiri and Xanana Gusmão are the main charismatic political leaders of Fretilin and CNRT. Between 1975 and 1991, Gusmão fought with Falintil and, in 1991, in the guerilla warfare he was captured by Indonesian intelligence agents. Gusmão was elected president in 2002 and Prime Minister twice, in 2007 and 2012. He is the founder of the CNRT Party.

CNRT

To compare Fretilin and CNRT, we have to return to 1975.¹⁶ That year, President Suharto ignored a dozen UN resolutions asking Indonesia to leave East Timor. Following Suharto’s fall in 1998, the CNRT existed but was not a party in the same way as Fretilin and UDT. (See the diagram on the origins of CNRT below.)¹⁷ Xanana

cleverly used this name CNRT. Resistance indicated obstinacy but difficulties to survive for the armed branch, Falintil. Fretilin, the National Council of Revolutionary Resistance (CRRN) and the Maubere people, during the long period of resistance, between 1976 and 1999 constituted the Timorese resistance, constantly helped by the Timorese people. In 1998, the CNRT replaced the National Council of the Maubere Resistance (CNRM, *Conselho Nacional da Resistência Maubere*). A year later, the CNRT was the official counterpoint to Indonesian hegemony in the ballot for self-determination and CNRT overwhelmingly won. In terms of Timorese political psychology, it is fair to say that Fretilin and CNRT are inseparable when it comes to promoting the idea of independence. Still nowadays, the Timorese people associate their dreams and symbolic sense of nationalism with politics and cast their votes for one of these two parties.

In 2012, Timor-Leste changed from a multiparty to a bi-party system which was reinforced in some ways between 2015 and 2017. The multiparty electoral system was initiated and favored by UNTAET which wanted to promote democracy. *Between 2007 and 2012, an exception existed for Fernando Lasama and his Democratic Party which was really the third largest party in the country.* Before his death in 2015, Lasama was the only Timorese political leader able to contest the absolute power of the biparty system. Aderito de Jesus Soares and the People's Liberation Party (PLP), in Tetum *Partidu Libertasaun Popular*, managed to get the earlier support of Manuel Tilman and Taur Matan Ruak's approval. It is difficult to forecast success without a strong political alliance with another party such as PD and the construction of a structured political network outside Dili. Time is running out. In light of the upcoming elections of 2017, it is interesting to understand CNRT's origins. We sincerely thank Sara Niner, from Latrobe University, who in her thesis on Xanana Gusmão, compiled a structured diagram of CNRT and authorized its reproduction (see below).¹⁸ Fretilin was founded in 1974 and the CNRT grew out of this movement in 1998. The diagram "The Origins of CNRT" clearly shows the long history of the Fretilin Party and the emergence of the CNRT, a council of resistance. It was followed in 2007 by the creation of the new CNRT Party.

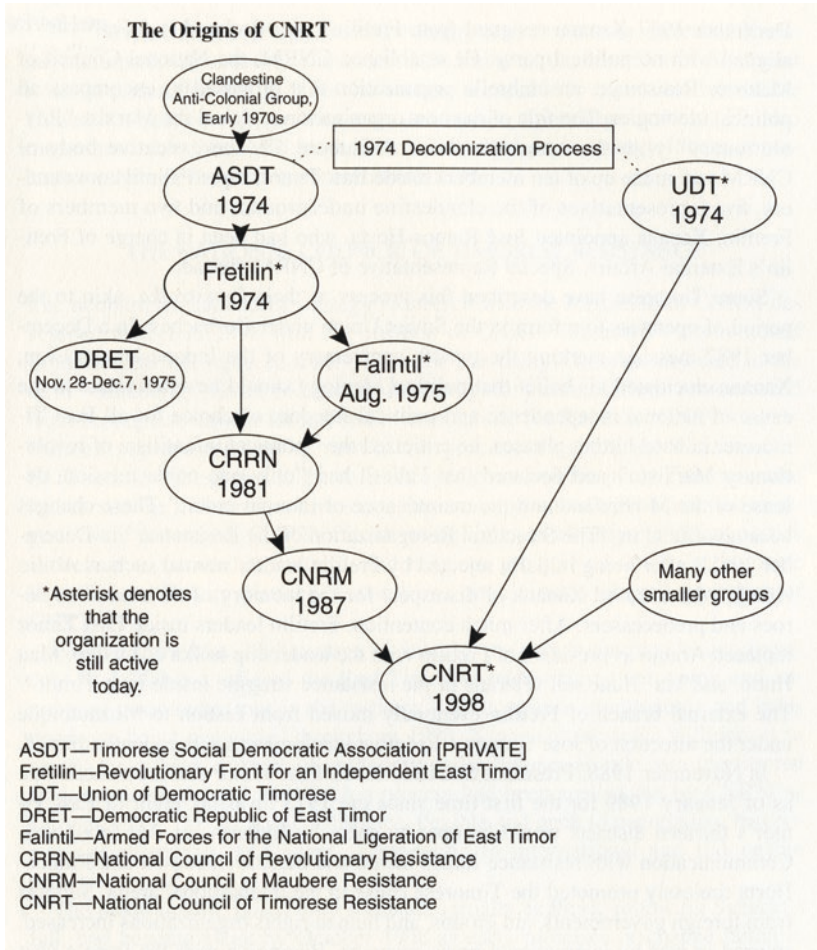


Diagram 5.1 The origins of CNRT

Before becoming a party, CNRT was a National Council. It changed the name but was the symbol of the Timorese resistance. “With a touch of irony,” James Dunn has mentioned the diplomacy of the UN, Australia, Indonesia, and two central personages, Xanana and General Kiki Syahnakri, who arrested the Timorese resistance leader in Dili in

1991. They met again in 1999 when both attended the ceremony marking the formal departure of Indonesian troops from East Timor.¹⁹ The importance of CNRT and Maubere participation in the referendum should be noted. After the arrival of the UN in 1999 under the name UNAMET, and despite an important conference in August 2000, the non-existence of CNRT as a party during these years sharply contrasted with the omnipresence of the Fretilin Party. The acronym CNRT signified independence for many Timorese, but after the National Congress of 2000, it lost some of its power.

Between August 21 and 30, 2000, I attended the CNRT's National *Congress* in Dili. It was a historic event, emotionally charged, and essential in reuniting many East Timorese after the referendum. On the first day, Max Stahl received a standing ovation for his film which largely contributed to the independence of the country. Among the important political leaders present were Xanana Gusmão, Mari Alkatiri, and João and Mário Carrascalão. Xanana Gusmão was asked by de Mello to be Chief Minister, but he declined assuming this responsibility. Mari Alkatiri finally accepted the position and became Chief Minister. This symbolic transfer of power on the part of UNTAET helped to limit violence at the end of de Mello's mandate. Against Xavier do Amaral, the only other candidate, Gusmão, was easily elected President of the future independent country of East Timor. In 2007, CNRT was revived by Gusmão to run in the parliamentary elections. Gyda Sindre, of the University of Bergen, noticed the "challenges when it comes to building a new party organization" from a resistance movement such as the CNRT and the Council of Maubere Resistance (CNRM).²⁰ These movements, and later the veterans too, formed the backbone of the CNRT which had not become a party in 2000, which would have been too early. The process of building a party takes time. However, in 2007, Gusmão's new party, CNRT, managed to win 18 seats in the Parliament against 21 for Fretilin. Although with some difficulty at first, former President Gusmao intelligently managed to construct an alliance of parties. This new interpretation of the Constitution was strongly criticized by the Secretary General of Fretilin, Alkatiri. Regardless, Gusmao became Prime Minister with an alliance of parties: ASDT/PSD (11 deputies), PD (8 deputies), PUN (3 deputies), Democratic Alliance, KOTA, and PPT (2), and Undertim (2 deputies). The majority of these deputies were initially allied to CNRT and voted CNRT in the Parliament. Xavier do Amaral had some difficulties with his ASDT deputies when

some of them became members of the Prime Minister's alliance and quickly ignored their President. A close reading of Article 106-1 of the East Timorese Constitution, regarding the appointment of the Prime Minister, shows that what happened in 2007 was an interpretation of the Constitution. However, the spirit of the Constitution was respected for the Ambassador of Portugal in Dili, Manuel Gonçalves de Jesus who was interviewed by the author (3 April 3, 2017). In East Timor, the laws are written in Portuguese, the official language. The existence of CNRT as the leading party in a ruling coalition was finally accepted by the Parliament and President Ramos-Horta. It would seem that, for the stability of the country, Ramos-Horta opted for the CNRT's solution of an alliance, and he finally designated Xanana Gusmão as Prime Minister. In June 2006, following the resignation of then Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri, the political power was rather unbalanced. Despite its superior number of deputies, Fretilin was compelled to concede more power to President Xanana, who ruled the Army and Police, and Ramos-Horta became the interim Prime Minister. The day-by-day political situation in 2006 and the following years were often chaotic, with malnutrition common in the countryside. Later, between 2007 and 2008, at the end of the Army/Police confrontation to resolve the question of the "rebel" Reinado, former Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri was certainly consulted. Separate interviews with the three leaders—Xanana Gusmão, José Ramos-Horta (severely wounded in 2008), and Mari Alkatiri—would make for a better understanding of the period 2006–2008. Alliance became the rule when designating the Prime Minister, although in 2012, CNRT Party won enough seats to rule alone. Gusmão was re-elected Prime Minister between 2012 and 2015, and then February 2015 saw a very particular political situation when he resigned but became a ruling State Minister. For the government to remain democratically correct, a complex biparty system was established. Prime Minister Rui Maria de Araújo is not a CNRT member, but a moderate member of the opposition party, Fretilin. Gusmão, contrary to Mari Alkatiri after his resignation in 2006, managed to keep a significant part of his power and we witnessed a significant shift in Timorese political history.

For the 2017 elections, there is no clear shift yet, but Vicente Guterres' sudden resignation in 2016 after four solid years as President of the National Assembly does confirm the complexity of Timorese politics. Since February 2015, power has not been balanced between CNRT and Fretilin, although in 2016 and 2017, we observed a rather successful

management of the government. However, the economy did not work normally during that period. From February to August 2015, Gusmao, Prime Minister Araújo, José Ramos-Horta, and Mari Alkatiri finally decided together to stabilize the country. The relationship between Fretilin and CNRT initially was tense, but Rui de Araújo was appointed Prime Minister of the sixth government in February 2015. Later that year, the President of the Democratic Party, Fernando Lasama passed away. In 2017, his party will probably elect fewer deputies. We do not know exactly how Gusmao's political career will continue²¹ but his support for Lu-Olo, the new elected president in March 2017, was a brilliant political move.

The Present Political Economic Situation

It is difficult to forecast the political evolution of East Timor's complex biparty coalition. The 2017 elections alone cannot ensure political stability; something else is needed. The CNRT has seemed to favor decree laws such as Decree Law 36/2014, used it to expropriate land for the Suai Supply Base, which was undertaken to try to develop the country and to create jobs. The question for 2017 is a CNRT and Fretilin coalition. At time of writing, nothing is sure. Extensive oil and gas fields in the Timor Sea lie to the north of Darwin and of course East Timor wants to control its own resources.²² New, more favorable borders, as supported by Australian activists, may have significant economic implications for the internal political dynamics and viability of the country.²³ Unfortunately, East Timor is in a difficult position to beat the mighty giant of Australia. On January 12, 2006, Australia and Timor-Leste signed the Treaty on Certain Maritime Arrangements in the Timor Sea (CMATS). Australia had the right to wait more than 40 years to discuss the treaty, but this clause was canceled in 2017. Clinton Fernandes believes that "dealing fairly with East Timor is not charity but justice."²⁴ In January 2017, CMATS "will cease to be in force as of 3 months from the date of notification." Australia did not give an exact date for notification, but both governments seem committed to negotiating new permanent maritime boundaries in September 2017.²⁵

The gigantic Suai project is costly for East Timor, in April 2017, this fact was recognized by the Ambassador of Portugal, Manuel Gonçalves de Jesus. To transport gas from the Timorese offshore fields, a deep undersea pipeline would be necessary. Naturally, both Australia and East

Timor want the gas plant to be built on their soil; but with no significant naval units, East Timor is in a difficult maritime and international position. Both CNRT and Fretilin want to fight for the gas plant and expect the best outcomes from the maritime border negotiations. As Meabh Cryan puts it: “The US\$1.3 billion Tasi Mane, the South Coast Petroleum Development project is the cornerstone of *Timor-Leste Strategic Development Plan 2011–2030*.” The project includes: a supply base, industrial estate, airport, and new town at Suai; a refinery and petrochemical plant at Betano; a liquefied natural gas plant, airport, and new town at Beasu; and a 155-kilometre highway linking all three sites. Arguments in favor of the project are centered on the need for national economic development.²⁶ For the Timorese NGO La’o Hamutuk, the project is not economically viable. As yet, nothing clearly points to the possible success of this project for Timor-Leste. The impact on local communities has not been well studied. Factors directly affecting the country’s economic and social development include the question of oil reserves, which are not infinite, the current low price of crude oil and the weak global economy.

*Trying to Avoid Political Crises*²⁷

The years 2001, 2006, and 2015 are landmarks which required new creative politics for CNRT as well as for Fretilin. One of the worst periods was 2006. It is very difficult to forecast how the present biparty coalition might be able to find solutions for the country after the 2017 elections. However, the Policy Development Framework to avoid future crises has been constructed by Rod Nixon, as follows²⁸:

“Policy development at all levels should include broad local participation and be informed by [...] social research... mission objectives [to avoid crisis] policies would specify when [and how] local justice should be used, and when formal justice should be used”.

Nevertheless, crises are often unexpected. In early December 2002, without warning, the Hotel Resende, near the Parliament, and the nearby “Hello Mister” supermarket were torched. A few hours later, the Prime Minister’s residence and his brother’s house were targeted. A further question is the country’s economic situation, for which the government has responsibility. To avoid political turmoil, a better knowledge

and consideration of East Timorese youth is important. Between December 1975 and 1999, earlier generations of youth gave their lives for the independence of their country, but today the youth are not well represented in Timorese politics. When it comes to matters of national identity and nationalism people of all generations fought to be independent. As Traube said, “The hostility towards nationalism that characterizes recent thinking reflects a persistent neglect of the specificity of particular nations, nationalisms and national movements.”²⁹ To resist the Indonesian occupation, to be independent, all the Timorese were united, albeit surprisingly and contradictorily, as some of them were pro-Indonesia. This was well explained by Gordon Peake (2014) who noted that the worst militia men today are treated normally by the majority of the Timorese. The past seems forgotten. Most friendships and family relations have become normal. Some East Timorese militias were double agents, but liked their own country, East Timor, more than they liked Indonesia. From 1976 to 1999, a sense of national identity and nationalism were unifying, despite the diversity of the ethnolinguistic groups. East Timorese of all generations wanted independence. However, in 2017, it can be argued that the nationalism of today’s youth is different. National unity is not all-encompassing as it was in the past. At present, the youth are apart; their dire unemployment plays a role and their identity is somewhat different.

The Catholic Church plays an important role in reducing violence among Timorese youth. Pope Francis met Prime Minister Rui Maria de Araújo on March 3, 2016. On March 19, 2016, President Taur Matan Ruak sent his congratulations to the new Bishop of Dili, Virgilio do Carmo da Silva. This new era of stability is positive, but we must wait until the parliamentary election of July 2017 to confirm this. The gap between the youth and other generations remains an important factor. Older generations who suffered more before 1999, are more inclined to look to the past, whereas the youth believe in the future.

THE YOUTH, A POLITICALLY UNIDENTIFIED GENERATION

Writing in 2011, Marisa Gonçalves and Clinton Fernandes defined *juventude* or *gerasaun foun* as East Timorese born “in 1960s and 1970s [...] and educated in the Indonesian school system.”³⁰ A total of 48% of the country’s population is below the age of 17. People aged 15–29 accounts for around a quarter of all Timorese. In one of the worst periods in East

Timor's eventful history, between 2006 and 2008, Timorese youth were constantly accused of being involved in frequent outbursts of violence, torching of buildings, and civil unrest.³¹ In 1999, Dili was the theater of some drastic events, but the sacrifices of youth between 1975 and 1999 cannot be forgotten.³² Their fight for independence was obsolete by 2006 and many youth were jobless. They questioned what constituted independence in twenty-first century Timor-Leste.

Street art seems to constitute one positive solution toward improving youth welfare. It is doubtful that such art was in fashion between 1976 and 1999. From 2000 to independence in 2002, nascent street art was concerned with the evolution of Timorese society and anticolonialism. Urban life was changing, and the impatient Timorese wanted immediate independence. Unemployment was one of their main concerns. The Timorese knew the salaries earned by the UN staff in East Timor, and how hard they worked. This information was probably also known by the jobless youth. Most of the time, UNTAET "European" staff were considered as foreigners (*malae* in Tetum, a colonizer designation), whereas UN staff from Africa were not called *malae*. Many *foun*, youth who spoke Tetum and were educated in *Bahasa Indonesia*, were jobless between 2000 and 2017. However, in East Timor, nowadays *Bahasa Indonesia* continues to be used in tertiary education and modern media, such as television. From 1976 to 1999, in Dili, Indonesian was a compulsory subject in schools, with a well-planned e-curriculum. As a result, the Indonesian language rapidly became a *lingua franca*. Between 2000 and 2002, in Dili, street art sometimes became a complement to the mob mobilization at the end of each month in front of the main administrative building, which in 2002 became the main government building. The aim of these mobilizations was sociopolitical protest, yet without any specific focus apart from the demand for compensation. Those who spoke English less fluently were not immediately recruited by UNTAET. In the difficult period of 2006–2008, many suffering and frustrated youth came to Dili from distant rural districts, and the International Labour Organization (ILO)'s *leitmotiv* "recurrent unemployment of the youth" in Timor-Leste needs to be better understood.³³ The modernity of the capital attracted those young people who did not want to live in the countryside too traditional for them. They were looking forward.

Many Timorese youth go to Indonesian universities because tertiary education in Indonesia is inexpensive compared to that in other countries such as Australia. However, for most parents, sending their child to

study in Indonesia remains a distant dream. On the other hand, many medical doctors graduated in Cuba were proud to join a Timorese political party. Their knowledge of such a country as Cuba and the professional respect they enjoy is sufficient to make them happy and many want to be actively engaged in politics.³⁴ The ordinary Timorese youth, however, are jobless and feel frustrated. This had led them to violence, such as in the period 2006–2008. It is hoped that Fretilin and CNRT leaders understand the frustrations that were at times expressed in these outbursts. I was in Viqueque in 2001 when houses were burned and destroyed, it happened also in Fatuhada, Dili, in June 2006. Sometimes, the owners have no money to repair their property when it was damaged.³⁵

The youth of East Timor, an essential element of the social fabric, still often go unrecognized in politics. Their street art is certainly more constructive than violence, and martial arts associations are now tightly controlled by the government. Consequently, “the search for human dignity,” or the proud hope to be independent, has played a role in “postcolonial Timorese street art [which invokes] the ghosts of the past or [the wrongs] of the present.”³⁶

Youth unemployment remains chronic, however, and education is the most useful thing to reduce violence in East Timor. The following actions may help in this:

1. Being more attentive to the youth needing jobs who represent around 25% of the population.
2. Promoting education and the teaching quality.
3. Closing many martial arts associations already seems to have reduced violence, although it is not enough.
4. Looking at other solutions such as access to traditional quick justice.³⁷

During the different mandates of the United Nations, it was demonstrated that violence on the side of the Timorese was not really controlled by the police. However, between 2006 and 2012, some 140 GNR were rightly deployed in Timor-Leste as a part of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT). GNR was de facto, a part of the Australian command of the international force. The Portuguese of the National Republican Guard, *Guarda Nacional Republicana* (GNR), were justly praised by Prime Minister José

Ramos-Horta who told Lusa News Agency that the policemen of the GNR “have to start acting with autonomy and strongly” in the entire city of Dili in order to reestablish law and order (see photo 3 in 2010, PM Ramos-Horta, General Matan Ruak, and Minister Monteiro).

Unreported poverty is another reason for the increased violence in East Timor. In 2001, I noted the dire living conditions of some local Atoni during a sojourn of 2 days in a hospitable house in the remote village of Oenunu. On the first day, we ate rice and vegetables, but on the second day, we had only white rice and nothing else. In 2017, poverty continues to play a negative role. The development of agriculture, irrigation, and reforestation, and also consultation, determination, perseverance, and innovation, are necessary for the government and legislators in tackling this. There are already projects underway in Oecussi, where a new bridge was inaugurated in April 2017 by Mari Alkatiri; he will be Secretary General and President of Fretilin for the first time after the nomination of the country’s President Lu-Olo on May 20, 2017 (see photos 4 and 5 of Lu-Olo’s political campaigns).³⁸

Poverty has to be reduced before education can be effectively promoted. It is particularly alarming that, at present, over 8,000 youth reach adulthood each year without being able to read or write. The high youth unemployment rate, called “recurrent unemployment” by ILO,³⁹ is linked to low secondary school attendance. The Fretilin and CNRT parties would be rewarded if they decided to really fight poverty and promote upgraded education for today’s youth. They are the future of the nation, but many are unemployed. Serge Verniau has rightly raised the question of improving agriculture and irrigation in East Timor, which would help reduce poverty levels.⁴⁰ The frustration experienced by Timorese youth was on my agenda in 2006 that not prevented a part of them to support Fretilin and CNRT (see photos 6 and 7) and during the electoral campaign of 2012. The youth want recognition, in particular from political leaders. The Timorese *jobless youth* deserve to be listened to. And in spite of the alarming conditions for development, it is still possible to mobilize. In 2017, for the parliamentary elections, and before 2025 when offshore oil and gas fields could be running dry, several actions are necessary. East Timor needs to develop agriculture to become “really independent.” Positively mobilizing the youth and the farmers, and finding acceptable solutions after listening to their complaints will reduce the perception of inequality and could be decisive for the results of the 2017 elections for both Fretilin and CNRT. Even with

the current support of the youth, José Luis Guterres' party may have difficulties in reaching the minimum barrier of 4% of the votes. In 2012, President Xavier do Amaral was not able to elect as many deputies as in 2001. In 2007, ASDT members joined the CNRT party of Gusmão. In 2012, fewer were re-elected and ASDT finally disappeared, even if it is still considered to be a political party in 2017.

CONCLUSION

Fretilin and CNRT should continue to consolidate their relationship. This will strengthen modern democracy and create a new political system that would appeal to the youth of East Timor, although clearly the country's current political nationalism does not appeal to everybody. Street art is a positive orientation for the youth (see photo 8). Something positive for the youth was a concern of the governments of Timor-Leste. When I attended a district political meeting in Dili in early December 2015, few youths were present. To avoid complaints from the youth during the political campaign in 2017, as in 2012, the party that attracts the youth and offers support to them may gain more votes. Today's youth look more to the future than backward to Timor's colonial and postcolonial past, and they constitute an exceptionally large percentage of the population. Empowering the youth politically is a useful strategy for the upcoming parliamentary elections, the mobilization of some 10,000 to 40,000 youths against Australia's current maritime border on March 22 and 23, 2016 being a case in point.⁴¹ Divisions have arisen between the two largest Australian political parties, with one refusing to re-open negotiations and another stating its willingness to do so.⁴² The mobilization of Timorese youth helped this, and Australia will discuss the Maritime Arrangements in the Timor Sea in 2017.

Western models of nation building have never really attracted the interest of those Timorese politicians who are still traditionalist and nationalist. Rather than reminiscing on the courageous struggle for independence of the past, the youth have their own type of nationalism that is much more forward looking. Today's youth will emerge in Timorese politics in the 2020s. Meanwhile, the question of forgiveness and good relations with Indonesia continues to be essential if East Timor is to join ASEAN. East Timor also wants to secure its huge reserves of oil, which is only just. Fighting Australia over new maritime borders will not automatically increase the production of Timorese oil, however.⁴³ Is it just a strategy to win the elections? In April 2014, the World Bank

recommended the country “to create job opportunities for youth, sustain inclusive growth, and prepare for a future of potentially declining natural resources. Timor-Leste needs to diversify its economy and sources of revenue.”⁴⁴ Any economic diversification, other than tourism, was not specifically mentioned. Tourism was, however, on the agenda of Minister Kalbuadi Lay during the 500th anniversary in Oecussi in November 2015, but much more has to be done to improve hospitality. Is it possible under the present government to imagine the creation of vocational schools of tourism and a new university of tourism?

For both parties, Fretilin and CNRT, peace and justice require public policies that empower those organizations promoting opportunities to reduce poverty and develop education and tolerance. In converting economic growth into well-being “Timor-Leste ranked 7th of 160 states for making progress.” The exceptional mandate of the 6th Government of Timor-Leste makes for almost a joint system of political administration by two parties. This will be a difficult act to follow.

Article 65-1 of the Constitution requires that “elected organs of sovereignty and of local government shall be chosen by free direct, secret, personal and regular universal suffrage.” In 2012, the CNRT won 30 seats against 25 to Fretilin. On March 20, 2017, the dynamism of the successful presidential election of Lu-Olo is an advantage for Fretilin. After this election, a political alliance between Fretilin and CNRT is unlikely suggested for the parliamentary election in July the same year. CNRT traditionally had an alliance with PD. My forecast for the July 2017 election results is the following: 28 seats for CNRT, 28 seats for Fretilin, 6 for the Democratic Party, and 3 for PLP (this estimation, close to the reality, was given in April 2017). These estimates have a margin of error of plus or minus 2. The new Prime Minister after the parliamentary elections in 2017 will likely be either from CNRT or Fretilin. An alliance is possible for other smaller parties. In recent times, East Timor has appeared to have put the events of 2006 and 2008 behind it, and no major outbreaks of violence have recurred since 2015. However, violence still exists, largely a consequence of the huge youth unemployment. Cultural differences may resurface during the election period in July 2017 to create a less peaceful atmosphere in the country. Bringing together the rich ethno-linguistic diversity of the Timorese traditional system and “Western” culture—be it Portuguese, UN or “constitutional”—will continue to be difficult. For both Fretilin and CNRT, cultural differences in this multicultural and multilingual country will continue to be significant factors impeding national unity and hindering social harmony.

In geopolitics more than in classical politics, regional integration is essential for the two main parties and the country.⁴⁵ Solid relationships capturing “the attention of international bureaucrats and politicians” of both ASEAN and Australia will help Timor-Leste.⁴⁶

NOTES

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37. Nixon 2013. Online: <http://www.gsdr.org/docs/open/ds33.pdf> (accessed 5-16-2016).
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Epilogue: East Timor's Political Development, Indonesia and ASEAN

Jean A. Berlie

Abstract With parliamentary elections approaching on July 22, 2017, both parties, Fretilin and CNRT will sooner or later try to play their own cards, and possibly even be compelled by self-interest to do so. The extraordinary post-2015 Timorese political truce may not last. Broader issues impacting East Timor, including the politics of modernization, development, and socio-political change will be examined.

Keywords Fretilin · CNRT · Modernization · Development · Indonesia · ASEAN

This epilogue summarizes the past and present of Timorese politics. The past is clearly a comment on colonialism and postcolonialism before independence in 2002. The present appears to be quite challenging. With parliamentary elections approaching on July 22, 2017, both party, Fretilin and CNRT will try to designate the Prime Minister. The extraordinary post-2015 Timorese political truce may not last. Broader issues

J.A. Berlie (✉)

The Education University of Hong Kong, Tai Po, Hong Kong

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impacting East Timor, including the politics of modernization, development, and sociopolitical change will be examined. Indonesia established Dili's first university in 1981, and it became the National University in 1999. Thousands of East Timorese youths have studied at Indonesian universities, and continue to do so, building a people-to-people relationship which transcends the experience of invasion and occupation. East Timorese youth, and other generations too, like modern Indonesian television channels which contribute to the smooth continuation of Indonesian culture.

The United Nations missions that followed UNTAET were: the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISSET), 2002–2005; the United Nations Office in Timor Leste (UNOTIL), 2005–2006; and finally the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor Leste (UNMIT), 2006–2012. These missions certainly gave an administrative structure to the country, following 500 years of colonization and the Indonesian experience, and may indirectly help Timor-Leste to join ASEAN to survive diminishing oil and gas reserves.

OIL AND NATURAL GAS, MODERNIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT

In January 2006 Australia signed the treaty on Certain Maritime Arrangements in the Timor Sea Treaty (CMATS) with East Timor. In March and April 2016 thousands of Timorese people rallied in front of the Australian embassy in Dili to protest (see photo 2). Australia and East Timor will finally discuss the treaty in 2017, and a new CMATS will most likely be established. This is significant, as “Timor-Leste remains highly oil dependent, with present oil revenues providing approximately 95% of the state budget”.¹ Obtaining new sources of revenue is essential for the country's survival—but where will they come from? As already mentioned, oil has slightly improved the living conditions of ordinary Timorese people, but the forecast exhaustion of oil reserves means there must be economic diversification and modernization. Is this really possible? Casino licences are under discussion, but investment has yet to materialize.

East Timor has now had 15 years of independence, during which there has been great social and economic change in Dili, but the development of the countryside remains slow. Development of agriculture over the next 20 years is a priority, but while Timor is a magnificent island, its climate is fairly dry. After hydrocarbons, coffee, and paddy

are the country's main products, but this type of agriculture cannot yet replace oil, so, the development of agriculture is a key priority. With the Seeds of Life program, the number of farmers self-sufficient in food was said to "expand rapidly".² In fact, the potential impact on food security, with promising sweet potato production and new potential yields, seems to be delayed. The Policy and Strategy Development Program, and the Agriculture Rehabilitation Project (2000–2007) were useful and implemented by World Bank in 2016, but it is difficult to evaluate their value for the well-being of the farmers and ordinary Timorese. In terms of politics, the recent CNRT–Fretilin alliance has been a success story, although the elections of 2017 will decide if such a golden period will continue. No doubt, creative political policies will be welcomed after the elections in 2017.

POLITICS AND ELECTIONS

In 2001, the Timorese were unfamiliar with the concept of democracy. Nevertheless, beginning with their knowledge of self-determination in 1999, the Constituent Assembly election in 2001, and the high percentage of voter turnouts for the country's elections between 2001 and 2012, the civism of the East Timorese people is remarkable. The lower electoral participation on March 20, 2017 is a unique case. There are 31 political parties, but only eight candidates registered for the 2017 presidential election. The sitting President, Taur Matan Ruak, has declined to seek re-election. In the meantime, Lu-Olo was elected President of Timor-Leste on March 20 with 57% of the vote, so, a second round was not required. A multi-party system was created by the United Nations on the eve of Timor-Leste's independence in 2001, but since February 2015, in some ways the bi-party system has ruled Timorese politics. In 2017 the parliamentary elections will be mainly a bi-party election between Fretilin and CNRT. The dominance of these two parties will probably not allow more than ten deputies from the Democratic Party and another party such as PLP. CNRT and Fretilin will unlikely form an alliance during the July election, but will stabilize the country if it is done after the election.

The country needs to consider the challenges to be faced in 2017 and after. Mari Alkatiri and Xanana Gusmão will perpetuate their alliance. Xanana and Taur Matan Ruak made a recent new alliance hopefully leading to the constitution of a new government supported by José

Ramos-Horta. The current unemployment rate among youth and their will to be politically active will finally need to be seriously considered. With the last government, there were no signs of clear economic recovery in 2017. “A country is not born in one day. It is born every day, bit by bit. Every dawn, however bitter, holds the hope of better day”.³ Yet the future, with less oil and gas will continue to be difficult.

INDONESIA, ASEAN AND EAST TIMOR

ASEAN membership is one of the most important partnerships for the new country, although as yet it is not sure when Timor-Leste will become the 11th member state. Acceptance of East Timor’s candidacy requires unanimity but at present it appears that at least three country members—namely Singapore, Myanmar, and Laos—are likely to vote negatively. Is it too optimistic to hope that Brunei, Cambodia, and Indonesia will be powerful enough to convince other member states? One main question remains: the throbbing headache of Singapore when it comes to East Timor’s ASEAN candidacy. Although Indonesia is a dominant power, can it possibly promote the candidacy of East Timor in 2019? Rahmat Pramono, Ambassador at the ASEAN office in Jakarta, remains confident. Indonesia is one of the most motivated nations for East Timor’s candidacy of ASEAN, but how should East Timor secure this candidacy and the future? The country still needs massive public investment in important sectors like education, health, and infrastructure. Public investment in productive sectors such as agriculture can help to reduce dependence on imports such as rice. To develop the hospitality sector, it would be advisable to use as a model the Balinese *savoir faire*. International cooperation in creating a new university oriented toward the development of tourism and the hospitality industry will certainly be positive. Access to a deeper harbor is advised to increase the number of tourists from abroad, and in particular from Australia which has a fleet of cruise ships. 1

Because known oil and gas reserves are running dry, two main international questions hamper East Timor:

1. Solving the current difficult relationship on new Maritime Arrangements in the Timor Sea with Australia in 2017
2. ASEAN membership is the most important partnership for East Timor.⁴

In 2016, the government spokesperson Minister of State Agio Pereira noted that “ASEAN membership has been a national foreign policy priority” since our independence.⁵ Timorese ministers and deputies favorable to this candidacy do exist. The government of Portugal, speaking through Ambassador Manuel Gonçalves de Jesus, has recognized the importance of this valuable membership for Timor-Leste.⁶ President José Ramos-Horta confirmed his strong support to the country’s candidacy at the ASEAN Regional Forum in April 2017, in Dili, and during an interview with the author.

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