

for Moro autonomy and political representation remains so immediate and vital despite decades of brutal repression by putatively democratic Filipino governments.

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State and uncivil society in Thailand at the temple of Preah Vihear

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The temple of Preah Vihear remains a prominent issue in the slow-burning civil war that has gripped Thailand since 2006. The eleventh-century ruins are located on what became the border between French Indochina and the Kingdom of Siam in the early twentieth century. After a Thai attempt to appropriate the temple in the 1950s, the International Court of Justice confirmed Cambodian ownership in 1962. Both countries accepted this decision until Cambodia's 2008 application to designate Preah Vihear as a World Heritage site reignited a crisis in Thai–Cambodian relations. Thai nationalists argued that the listing represented a 'loss of territory', and the growing controversy led to resignations within the Thai cabinet. By 2009, the Abhisit government attempted to block its World Heritage listing using the threat of both a trade embargo and military intervention against Cambodia. Fifty years after the original border dispute, tensions over Preah Vihear had undone decades of bilateral cooperation. How did this happen?

State and uncivil society in Thailand offers a brief, but thorough, analysis of this latest quarrel over Preah Vihear by placing it within the context of Thailand's domestic politics and long-term foreign policy. It places blame for the political crisis squarely on the shoulders of the People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD), a coalition of groups whose only shared trait was hostility towards former Thai prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra and his allies. By carefully examining the PAD narrative on relations with Cambodia, Puangthong reveals its many inaccuracies. For example, the book points out that there has never been any substantial evidence to support PAD's accusation that by signing off on the World Heritage

proposal, the Thai government had traded territorial sovereignty in return for Thaksin's right to lucrative gas concessions in Cambodia (p. 4) The allegation of corruption overlooks the fact that the heritage project had been endorsed by several Thai governments as part of a larger programme to strengthen socioeconomic ties with Cambodia. Academics who dared raise these objections were met with PAD accusations that they had been paid by Thaksin.

The PAD campaign to discredit government policy on Preah Vihear succeeded, in large part, because it exploited popular ignorance of past border disputes, thereby transforming the temple into a litmus test on Thai patriotism. University academics and the Thai media helped create an atmosphere of nationalist hysteria by misleading the public regarding the temple site's history of contested sovereignty. In 2010, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs attempted to combat this misinformation by asking Charnvit Kasetsiri to assemble a team of historians (which included the book's author) to produce a series of video presentations that would educate ordinary people regarding Thailand's past territorial disputes (p. 79). This was an important and an unpopular task, since Thai rulers had long created irredentist maps to promote narratives on National Humiliation, bolstering support for the state by manufacturing grievances against former imperialist powers and newly independent neighbours alike. As Puangthong points out, however, this is the first time that such a discourse has been wielded by a non-state actor, who then used it to attack the Thai and Cambodian governments simultaneously (p. 102).

Puangthong's analysis of PAD strategy reveals a lingering nostalgia for an imagined golden age when Thailand was a dominant regional power capable of punishing upstart neighbours. Believing that it could force Cambodia to make concessions by disrupting its economy, PAD members pressured the Thai government to cancel trade agreements and withhold financial aid. While Phnom Penh found alternate sources of investment and trade in Japan and Taiwan, the embargo threatened Thai businesses that relied on the Cambodian market. At the same time, the Thai media attacked Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen as an arrogant and corrupt leader who sold his country to powerful foreign interests. Fifty years earlier, Bangkok newspapers made similar accusations against Prince Sihanouk during the 1958–1962 dispute over Preah Vihear, and the new press war produced exactly the same result: Hun Sen became more popular than ever. These types of posturing produced short-term political gains for PAD, at the cost of serious damage to trade and foreign relations (p. 32).

State and uncivil society in Thailand raises important questions on the role of civil society in the democratisation of ASEAN countries. For several

years, the Thai and Cambodian governments had worked together on the World Heritage project in a shining example of bilateral cooperation. The temple proposal represented an effort to bury past grievances while strengthening social and economic ties between the two countries. This spirit of regional solidarity collapsed with the involvement of PAD, for whom the temple was a means to destabilise the government. Throughout this process, we have witnessed the unusual spectre of state leaders working for harmonious relations with Cambodia, while civil society groups inflame resentments and push the country towards conflict. Puangthong's portrayal of PAD demonstrates that destructive nationalism is no longer the sole prerogative of the state, and civil society groups do not always promote democratic principles.

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Timor Lorosae

The politics of Timor-Leste: Democratic consolidation after intervention

Edited by MICHAEL LEACH and DAMIEN KINGSBURY

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This book adds value to the existing literature on Timor-Leste (Timor Lorosae). By dealing with the politics of Timor-Leste, the book clarifies issues correlated with the democratic consolidation of the country. Although many publications are readily available on the history, human rights, language, peace building and self-determination of Timor-Leste, not much has been published on its current politics. Michael Leach and Damien Kingsbury fill this gap in this edited volume, *The politics of Timor-Leste*.

Leach and Kingsbury have extensively published on Timor-Leste, and both have a deep knowledge of the challenges experienced by one of the youngest nations in the world. They are veteran observers of the state-building process in Timor-Leste, particularly as they have first-hand experience in the country; both were on the ground during the East Timorese presidential elections. In particular, this edited book has one important characteristic that the reader perceives from the very first pages, something that provokes an actual sense of being present in the country: the attentive language allows the reader almost to 'smell the place'. Therefore, the book