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Everyday Security Practices in Asia

Special Issue edited by Marc von Boemcken

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In Memoriam Detlef Kantowsky
(1936 – 2018)

After launching the *Internationales Asienforum* in 1970 – together with the publisher Alois Graf von Waldburg-Zeil – Detlev Kantowsky regarded this project as a rather risky venture. He probably could not have dared imagine that this journal would still exist today, albeit in a somewhat different form.

That this is so, is in no small measure thanks to Detlev Kantowsky. With his own unique discipline and precision, loyalty and reliability he devoted himself for almost 40 years to this journal. "You have to dabble around, put out your feelers here and there to keep the Asienforum alive", he once said and he took this as a criterion for his own endeavours. He addressed potential authors directly, publicised the journal at conferences, initiated specific themes and he himself contributed with many of his articles to the success of the *Internationales Asienforum*. With his article "Gandhi und Indiens Entwicklung heute" he was a contributor right from the first issue (1970). There followed regular contributions that reflected Detlev Kantowsky's many and varied intellectual interests; not to forget numerous reviews and conference reports.

Detlev Kantowsky's interest in India dates back to the 1960s. He learned Hindi first of all in Heidelberg, and from autumn 1964 at the Benares Hindu University. Only a year later he moved with his wife Ingrid to "his" village near Benares, the place to which he was to return again and again in the years to come. His detailed research on village development and village democracy in India, exemplified by three villages in eastern Uttar Pradesh, culminated in a work with which he qualified as Dr. habil. at the University of Konstanz and which was published in 1970. He published studies of Indian village life – still the centre of everyday life for the majority of the Indian population – in numerous articles which appeared as a compilation in the Edition Suhrkamp in 1972. He recorded his more personal experiences and encounters with village life and the villagers in his book *Bilder und Briefe aus einem indischen Dorf. Rameshvar 1965–1985* (Frankfurt 1986, English ed. 1995). It is testimony to his great empathy for and understanding of the villagers and their joys and sufferings but it also reveals the critical gaze of the sociologist who, participant observer as he was, never reduced people to mere research objects and always reflected on his own role as stranger and foreigner.

Detlev Kantowsky's studies are relatively short, addressing only essentials. He was a great master of the pithy and apposite expression. Verbosity was quite foreign to him. When he felt the written word was inadequate he often supplemented it with black and white photographs that verged on the artistic.

This combination is particularly impressive in the large volumes on Gandhi (*Gewaltfrei leben*, 1992; *Wahrhaft sein*, 1995) and *Gotama Buddha* (1996, together with E. Saß).

Detlev Kantowsky always took a critical stance towards official development policy. Right from the first issue of the *Asienforum* he adopted his own specific attitude towards the so-called "sociology of developing countries", and this he did with occasionally polemical remarks. As contributor to a comparative evaluation for the Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit (BMZ; Ministry for Economic Cooperation) he first became acquainted with the Sarvodaya movement in Sri Lanka in the mid-1970s, a movement based on Gandhian and Buddhist concepts. He had already become familiar with Gandhi a few years previously, now Buddhist teachings made their impact. These motivated him to write his study on Sarvodaya and to become involved with alternative development programmes that consciously distanced themselves from a simple Western development paradigm. He himself characterized Sarvodaya as an autochthonous form of "inner-wordly asceticism". He gave his monograph the title *Sarvodaya – The Other Development* (New Delhi 1980; Hindi edition 1984). Here are the roots of his increasing interest in Buddhism and Max Weber's socio-religious studies on Hinduism and Buddhism that captivated him from 1980 onwards. Detlev Kantowsky's main object was to draw attention to the misinterpretation of Weber's study in South Asia. It was then that he began to absorb himself ever more with the Buddhist way of life and interpretation of existence and, from 1990 onwards, to edit at the Univeristy of Konstanz the series "Buddhistischer Modernismus" (Buddhist Modernism) in which his *Buddhisten in Indien heute* (2003, English ed. 2003) also appeared. Six years previously he had published *Buddhismus. Lehrer, Lehre, Weg und Weggemeinschaft*. His critical attitude towards the Western development model found programmatic expression in the collection of essays *Von Südasien lernen. Erfahrungen in Indien und Sri Lanka* (Frankfurt 1985; enlarged ed. Konstanz 1992). Here he quite consciously redirected the focus from the hitherto customary West to East (*Von Europa lernen*, Dieter Senghaas) to East to West. These articles can be read as the fulfilment of the motto that Detlev Kantowsky had prefixed to the first issue of *Asienforum* in the year 1970: "[...] the contributions are addressed to a public aware of the fact that Europe and Asia are becoming increasingly interdependent". This perception has lost nothing of its pertinence – it is still valid for the journal.

As Professor, Detlev Kantowsky taught Sociology and Comparative Cultural Studies at the University of Konstanz after 1969. At the beginning of 1999 he opted for early retirement, one of the reasons probably being that he had distanced himself inwardly from everyday academic life. Since then he worked on themes such as migration of Indian workers to Mauritius, the history of Mauritian sugar production and – of great personal significance to him – the

Japanese tea culture and its reception in German speaking countries. It is no coincidence that his last publication in the *Asienforum* was entitled "Der Teekult in Japan. Eine Erinnerung an das grundlegende Werk von Anna Berliner" (2009, No.1–2), followed by a brief commentary on the then planned auction of the few personal belongings of Mahatma Gandhi. These rounded off his contributions which had started with Gandhi in the first issue and ended with Gandhi in the last one under his editorship. A full circle!

He enjoyed sharing the practice of the Japanese tea ceremony with his wife Ingrid in their house in Bodman on Lake Constance. Her sudden unexpected death at Christmas 2013 came as a terrible blow to him. He died four years later on 29 January 2018. The editors and all old and new members of the advisory board and editorial staff feel profoundly indebted to Detlev Kantowsky for his unflagging commitment over four decades. Without him the *Internationales Asienforum / International Quarterly for Asian Studies* would never have become what it is today, an illustrious international journal on Asia, one which addresses and analyses the ever changing questions and problems posed by the world today.

Clemens Jürgenmeyer

IQAS Vol. 49/2018 1–2, pp. 9–16

Everyday Security Practices in Asia

Editorial

Marc von Boemcken

What associations come to mind if we think about security and danger in Asia? Our first thought might go to the conflicts between India and Pakistan or on the Korean peninsula, which foreground the threats of inter-state rivalries, arms races and nuclear weapons. We might also reflect on large-scale violence within states themselves, as for instance in Afghanistan or Myanmar. Studies on issues of in/security in Asia have addressed, among other things, refugee flows, political volatility, military interventions and transnational dangers such as religious terrorism or organised crime. To be sure: all of these topics are highly relevant. They remain of utmost concern in countless recent writings in political science and its sub-disciplines of International Relations (IR) and Security Studies.

Still, this Special Issue wants to approach the subject matter of security in Asia from a different angle. It proceeds from the observation that such macroscopic perspectives only partially capture the complexity and heterogeneity of the issue at hand. Critical writings have pointed out for quite some time that the meaning of "security" is intersubjectively constructed and can, potentially, mean many different things to different people (e.g. Buzan et al. 1998). Asia is certainly no exception here. Who is to say that, for instance, nuclear weapons or terrorism are the most urgent and pressing security concerns for the continent? Whatever we consider worth securing, whatever we posit as dangerous and whatever strategies we devise for engaging and dealing with these perceived threats – all of these things vary from one person to the next, from one social group to another. As Barry Buzan once famously put it, security remains an "essentially contested concept" (1991: 6–7).

If this is the case, then we should be careful not to treat security issues in Asia (or any other place, for that matter) as a given. Rather than approach security as a self-evident condition of existence to be objectively measured and improved upon, we ought to trace the ways in which various takes on security

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emerge through certain social practices. Traditionally, of course, the term security is closely aligned to the notion of statehood. Even writings concerned with "human" as opposed to "national" security tend to regard the state and its associated organs as the principle providers of security-related services. By way of contrast, more recent contributions have emphasised the individual as an agent of security in his or her own right (e.g. Lemanski 2012, Rowley / Weldes 2012, Jarvis / Lister 2013, Crawford / Hutchinson 2016, Gough et al. 2016). We all face insecurities and dangers, some of which are quite existential. Rather than security being solely an elite practice, a concern only for civil servants, experts and professionals, everybody thus "does" security in his or her everyday life.

This Special Issue wants to further explore this important insight across different cases in Asia. It goes beyond some of the well-rehearsed narratives of the mainstream media, policy makers or, indeed, academics and sheds light on the security practices of those who do not usually stand in the centre of security-related research. In doing so, the individual contributions certainly expand and perhaps even challenge more orthodox understandings of what security is all about. This has a not only empirical but also normative value. For such a perspective may reveal non-elite practices that transport vernacular counter-discourses to state-centric securitisation strategies, militarised states of exception and emergency politics.

In terms of their methodological take on things, all the articles collected here follow an ethnographic approach. Many go to what Michel Foucault referred to as the "extremities of power" (2003: 27); that is, to those micro-spaces where power, including the power of security, manifests itself in very concrete, often routine activities. Rather than in national security doctrines or other elite discourses, it is here that meanings of security become habitually enacted and reproduced. This does not necessarily imply a clear-cut break with top-down securitisation dynamics. At the very least, a careful exploration of these extremities can reveal a more nuanced picture of how state- or corporate-sponsored security narratives actually play out in the lives and doings of people.

The article by Rapti Siriwardane-de Zoysa, Johannes Herbeck and Irene Sondang Fitrinitia in this issue is a good case in point here. It ties in nicely with numerous recent studies in Critical Security Studies that emphasise a host of pre-emptive techniques and technologies geared toward constructing resilient and vigilant bodies, often by means of militarising aspects of everyday life (e.g. Amoore 2007, Adey / Anderson 2012, Amin 2013, De Goede et al. 2014). So far, such practices have been examined primarily with a view to various measures implemented in European and North American societies in the context of the so-called war on terror. Yet, as Siriwardane-de Zoysa, Her-

beck and Fitrinitia convincingly demonstrate, they equally inform the securitisation of "flood cultures" in Manila. In both cases, everyday security practice consists in requirements to submit oneself to the highly technical and usually preventative security prescriptions of experts. To cope with flooding, then, would be less a matter of dealing and living with a quite natural phenomenon; neither would it be primarily about responding with exceptional actions to a sudden and spectacular emergency situation. It lends itself, rather, to a life governed (or disciplined) by what Jef Huysmans characterised as "little security nothings" (2011) and what Siriwardane-de Zoysa, Herbeck and Fitrinitia describe as a state of "normed exception".

Crucially, however, the notion of the everyday as a docile object of an elitist security apparatus is only part of the picture. As other publications have pointed out, vernacular practices for engaging and coming to terms with dangers may also challenge and disrupt the security measures of states (e.g. Stevens / Vaughan-Williams 2016). It is worth noting here that many of the contributions to this issue, namely the ones by Nina Bagdasarova, Hafiz Boboyorov and Aksana Ismailbekova, adopt the analytical perspective of "securityscapes". This perspective seeks to trace the ways in which either individual or collectively shared imaginations of danger manifest themselves in various social practices. The concept thus puts the spotlight on individual agents actively navigating spaces of in/security in their daily lives (Von Boemcken et al. 2018). Of course, empirical analyses of individual securityscapes may well reveal numerous congruencies with those "national" security strategies propagated from above. Importantly, however, they may equally resist these or, indeed, suggest an altogether different kind of security practice. The suffix "scapes" is, in this sense, inspired by the anthropologist Arjun Appadurai (1996), who used it to draw attention to what he considered a growing disjuncture between the experiential life-worlds of many people and the, to his mind, weakening grip of the nation-state on social collectives.

Although Appadurai did not use the term "securityscapes" himself, the contributions collected here show that such disjunctures can also be discerned in everyday security practices. Indeed, many of them highlight ways of dealing with dangers that fail to conform to elitist and/or state-centric accounts of security. They do this by tracing the securityscapes of socially marginalised individuals and/or groups, who usually cannot claim easy access to public institutions of security provision and thus have to rely, at least to some extent, on themselves for protection.

Whatever constitutes a marginalised group or person very much differs from case to case here. Some articles concentrate on ethnic and/or religious minority groups. In the wake of rising nationalism alongside efforts of cultural homogenisation in parts of Asia, they have come under increasing pressure, occasionally even meeting with outright violence. This includes the Uzbek

people in the city of Osh in southern Kyrgyzstan. In June 2010 ethnic clashes between Uzbek and Kyrgyz inhabitants claimed several hundred lives over the course of only a couple of days, most of them Uzbek. Ismailbekova's article examines the creative ways in which Uzbek businesspeople in Osh continue to make a living in a difficult situation that remains troubled by severe ethnic tensions.

Bhumitra Chakma focuses on the indigenous people of the Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh. Given their history of social exclusion, displacement and violent oppression by the state, feelings of vulnerability are particularly intense and widespread here, again giving rise to a specific set of practices for preserving their identity as a cultural-linguistic group and ensuring their everyday livelihood.

Besides considering fairly close-knit ethnic and cultural minority groups, the contributions to the Special Issue also take other forms of marginalisation into account. Boboyorov examines the far more diverse and varied "Ruszabon" or "Russified" peoples in Tajikistan's capital Dushanbe, whose loose affiliation with the Russian language and culture is at odds with a post-Soviet, ethnocentric identity politics that seeks to build a "Tajik" nation. In fact, as Boboyorov shows, some bodies may be marginalised all the more severely on the grounds of not being classifiable as belonging to any ethnicity or cultural group at all, as is the case with the so-called Metis, individuals with "mixed" ethnic heritage. Bagdasarova traces the security practices of individuals from the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community in Kyrgyzstan, whose sexual orientation and/or gender identification run counter to the established moral norms of society and who frequently experience homophobic attacks. Finally, Siriwardane-de Zoysa, Herbeck and Fitrinitia touch upon the issue of socio-economic marginalisation when they discuss the insecurities and coping strategies of the urban poor in the coastal areas of Jakarta, Indonesia. Arguably, Chakma's assertion that security perceptions and practices are primarily formed by the experience of marginalisation can, to varying degrees, be applied to all of the cases presented in this issue.

Still, however, the contributions show that security remains a highly heterogeneous social phenomenon. Depending on the individual or group in question and the kinds of security practices analysed, they are concerned with very different threat perceptions. Some take a very broad approach. The securityscapes of the Ruszabon in Boboyorov's article range from practices to protect oneself against crime to measures for remaining healthy to attempts to muster a sense of self-certainty and feeling of belonging in the world. Other pieces opt for a comparatively narrow scope. Siriwardane-de Zoysa, Herbeck and Fitrinitia concentrate on different ways of dealing with floods. Bagdasarova is primarily concerned with security from physical assault (and, although to a lesser extent, psychological harassment). Ismailbekova, by contrast, looks at

efforts to acquire economic security in a volatile, post-conflict context. Chakma, similarly, examines livelihood opportunities, yet expands the focus by taking into account practices for securing such a thing as "cultural identity".

As different as the cases here certainly are in terms of the particular threat discussed, their common concern with socially marginalised groups and individuals does bring at least one overarching theme to the fore. Studies on security practices, including those on everyday and/or human security, often posit the state as the principal provider of security-related services, be it with regard to protection from physical attacks or, more broadly conceived, social welfare, health and feelings of national belonging. Yet, for most, if not all, of the cases presented in this Special Issue, this holds true only to a very limited extent. Some, like the owners of the LGBT nightclub in Bishkek interviewed by Bagdasarova, may indeed call upon the police when they are faced with trouble. For others, however, public security providers appear very much as a source of insecurity. The threat may be comparatively mundane, as for example with the Uzbek businesspeople in Osh who need to deal with corruption on a regular basis (Ismailbekova). It may also be quite severe and even existential. A number of LGBT people in Kyrgyzstan do not turn to the police for help out of fear of being abused or beaten by them. The indigenous people of the Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh consider themselves endangered in their collective identity by the logic of the nation-state and the violent practices it informs (Chakma). Siriwardane-de Zoysa, Herbeck and Fitrinitia, finally, point out that the informal settlers in the coastal parts of Jakarta, Indonesia, are regularly confronted with forceful evictions at the behest of public authorities.

Given the specific predicament of marginalised groups and individuals often having to look out for and fend for themselves, studies of their everyday security practices can therefore reveal certain ways and strategies for dealing with dangers that are commonly overlooked, downplayed or neglected in more state-centric accounts. Literature in Critical Security Studies usually associates security practices with the drawing of boundaries, distinguishing between self and other, inside and outside, friend and enemy. This is as true for the doings of states as it is for non-state and even marginalised groups. Maria Stern's (2006) study on Mayan women in Guatemala, for instance, emphasises practices of othering, of constructing a sense of self-identity against the image of a threatening outsider. Such practices can also be found in some of the accounts in this Special Issue, particularly in the case studies of the Uzbek community in Osh (Ismailbekova) and of the indigenous people in Bangladesh (Chakma). Following the violence of 2010, the city of Osh has become highly segregated along ethnic lines and Uzbeks largely stick to their own neighbourhoods, or *mahallas*. Similarly, the people of the Chittagong Hill Tracts in

Bangladesh see themselves as endangered in their collective sense of belonging and thus attempt to further fortify their cultural identity against those who are deemed to be other. The drawing of self-constitutive boundaries between us and them is by no means a practice exclusive to states alone.

Yet, this Special Issue also collects various ways of coming to terms with everyday insecurities that do not easily fit into this schema. In fact, in many cases security involves, quite the contrary, the active crossing of social and/or physical boundaries. It consists in practices of mimicry and adaptation, concealment and avoidance. The contributions by Bagdasarova and Boboyorov, in particular, provide ample evidence for this. What is more, Siriwardane-de Zoysa, Herbeck and Fitrinitia show that some of the coastal poor in Jakarta traditionally deal with flooding by experientially integrating it into their daily routines and habits. Floods are not so much a problem that needs to be abolished; they are a phenomenon one needs to "live with". Such insights from ethnographic field research can, arguably, go a long way towards questioning established normative epistemologies of security. By taking creative local agency seriously, they alert us to comparatively benign security-making practices that do not rely on the violence and discipline so prevalent in the writings of political scientists on the subject. It is from this vantage point that we might want to begin considering security – not only in Asia – in a different light.

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Securing an LGBT Identity in Kyrgyzstan. Case Studies from Bishkek and Osh

Nina Bagdasarova

Abstract

The high level of homophobia in society and a contradictory state policy towards sexual minorities define the specific mode of existence of the LGBT community in Kyrgyzstan. The need to socialise and spend some time together is a big part of building and maintaining an LGBT identity, which requires collective security practices. The concept of "securityscapes", based on Arjun Appadurai's idea of "scapes", was used as a main instrument for the analysis of ethnographic data. LGBT people in Kyrgyzstan navigate quite complicated landscapes of security and insecurity, defined by encounters with various agents, and engage in different strategies of adaptation. During the field research two types of threats within LGBT securityscapes were identified: "outer" threats (such as the homophobic environment) and "inner" threats (such as some behavioural patterns that might expose community members to this hostile environment). LGBT people navigate within their securityscapes individually, yet community life requires specific measures. The collective securityscapes of the LGBT communities in Bishkek and Osh were examined, and it will be shown that despite the differences according to local conditions, similar strategies were developed in both places when responding to "inner" and "outer" threats.

Keywords: LGBT, Kyrgyzstan, securityscapes, everyday security, insecurity, Bishkek, Osh

Introduction

It is a well-known social phenomenon that belonging to certain types of groups can make one's life dangerous and insecure. The LGBT people living in Kyrgyzstan certainly belong to just such a group. The high level of homophobia in society and a contradictory state policy towards sexual minorities determine the specific mode of existence of the LGBT community. This mode is fluid and depends significantly on the current political situation as well as on the socio-cultural conditions of life in different locations in Kyrgyzstan.

During Soviet times, beginning in 1934, homosexual relationships were illegal and were prosecuted by criminal laws (in the case of male homosexual

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relations) or at least considered as a kind of pathology (more frequently in the case of lesbians and transgender people). Such relationships were decriminalised in Kyrgyzstan after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1998, although LGBT people had already become a part of the public scene since the late 1980s and early 1990s, as in almost all the post-Soviet countries. The liberalisation of the economy, with new commercial enterprises, and an open politics, allowing non-commercial projects of international donors, both contributed to the growing popularity of the LGBT sub-culture. In the late 1990s and early 2000s activities of LGBT-friendly NGOs – mostly on condom promotion and HIV-AIDS risk response – were quite visible and recognisable at many public events, including concerts and performances in all regions of the country. At one point several nightclubs and discos in Bishkek with entertainment programmes quite successfully attracted not only LGBT community representatives but the "general" public as well.

Homosexual and transgender people in Kyrgyzstan started moving towards identifying themselves as a community in the early 2000s, using the term "LGBT" as a unifying sign of common needs and problems (Kirey / Wilkinson 2010). Over the past two decades a specific LGBT identity developed, recognised and internalised by many people. This helped them to establish community-based NGOs and to engage in activism for the purpose of protecting their rights and meeting basic needs. At the same time the communication and networking went far beyond personal connections at the domestic level. Today LGBT-friendly organisations are part of a policymaking process that plays a significant role in all initiatives struggling for equality and non-discrimination. They are also part of the core structure of an "Anti-Discrimination Network" – the largest association of legal bodies and activists working in this field in Kyrgyzstan, including feminists, human rights defenders and people with disabilities. Still, activism in these fields is becoming increasingly difficult.

The diverse environment of the activist and informal life of LGBT people began to shrink quite rapidly after a chain of certain events. The political history of independent Kyrgyzstan began in 1991 under the rule of President Askar Akaev, who was considered a democratic leader who transformed Kyrgyzstan into an "island of democracy" in Central Asia. After 15 years of leadership he was deposed in the 2005 "Tulip revolution". The liberal policies of president Akaev shifted to the much more conservative rule of Kurmanbek Bakiev, which was full of nationalistic and traditionalistic rhetoric. His presidency was characterised by rising authoritarianism and he was overthrown in April 2010. This time dozens of people were injured and died during mass protests, and the political crisis deepened after interethnic clashes between the Kyrgyz majority and Uzbek minority groups in the south of Kyrgyzstan in June 2010. The political crisis that led to the overthrow of Bakiev's presidency

in 2010 and especially the interethnic clashes in the South further strengthened nationalistic discourses along with the idea of "traditional Kyrgyz values". These values include very patriarchal views toward gender and family roles as well as a high level of patriotism based on an ethnocentric understanding of the Kyrgyz nation as first and foremost a nation of people with Kyrgyz ethnicity (Abashin 2012, Jaquesson 2010).

Since 2010 the rhetoric of "true traditional values" of the Kyrgyz nation has developed in different directions to defend a patriarchal family model, the Kyrgyz language and certain folk customs quite aggressively. Feminists, ethnic minorities and LGBT people have become a significant element within "national security" discourses and have been presented as a "threat to the nation" alongside Islamic radicalisation, violent extremism and terrorism (Kyrgyz Indigo 2018, Jogorku Kenesh KR 2016, Malikov 2013). The growing conservatism of Russia's politics has influenced the local situation as well. After the adoption of the "anti-gay propaganda" law in Russia in 2013, Kyrgyz politicians initiated a legislative process for an analogous law in 2014.The first hearing in favour of an "anti-gay propaganda law" in October of 2014 was presented in the popular local media "as a victory in the first battle for the sovereignty of the country" (Delo 2014). Although the law has been suspended for the time being, the attitude towards sexual minorities drastically worsened at that time. The aggressive rhetoric shifted to attacks against activists and LGBT NGOs (Kyrgyz Indigo 2015, 2016, 2017; Human Rights Watch 2014a, 2014b). Since 2014 these attacks have become increasingly serious, sometimes exhibiting features of organised persecution with the involvement of so-called "patriotic movements" led by organisations such as Kyrk Choro or Kalys, groups committed to the defence of traditional values (Labrys 2015, Azattyk 2015)[1].

Kyrgyzstan now calls itself "democratic" and participates in a number of international agreements concerning human rights. There has indeed been great progress from the official side in many ways. For example, in 2017 new rules for changing the documents of transgender people were adopted and it is much easier now to get a new passport without having had surgery or other medical intervention, but simply according to a certificate confirming the transgender status of the person. On the other hand, the discussion of the "anti-gay propaganda law" in Parliament is still not over and the rhetoric on "traditional" values is strongly supported by the authorities.

As one of the well-known activists, Georgy Mamedov, put it: "The state in Kyrgyzstan seems much more progressive than society", meaning that in many

1 In addition to attacking LGBT people they also intimidate young women, for example – such as threatening them if they date foreigners – or humiliate Kyrgyz who speak Russian publicly. "Kyrk Choro" refers to the "Forty Warriors" of the great Kyrgyz epic hero of Manas and his guard of forty most loyal fighters; the name "Kalys" ("The Expert") indicates that the members of this group regard themselves as the most competent in issues of Kyrgyz traditions and values.

cases authorities are following the "path of law" and do not impose unjust charges (interview by author, May 2016, Bishkek). Nonetheless, each case depends substantially on the attitude of specific authorities or even specific individuals among state officials. This concerns all the authorities that LGBT people deal with, including the police. The practices of police forces are also quite diverse and may include many factors that can lead to positive resolutions of LGBT issues as well as to negative ones. In the majority of cases it is difficult to predict whether an LGBT individual will be protected or blackmailed by the specific officers in question.

The attitudes of officials or "ordinary people" may differ even within Bishkek from one city area to another, as demonstrated by the materials collected during my research, in which respondents marked certain places as dangerous and to be avoided. More prominent differences may be found in different regions of the country, taking into account that Bishkek (the capital city, with a higher level of tolerance and a more neutral urban culture) is not in many ways a "typical" locality within Kyrgyzstan. The southern parts of the country, which are considered more traditional, or the Naryn region, with its high level of religiosity, are often more challenging and aggressive environments for LGBT persons (UNFPA 2016).

Thus LGBT people in Kyrgyzstan navigate quite complicated landscapes of security and insecurity that are defined by encounters with various agents, requiring them to employ different strategies of adaptation. In this regard my research question was specified as follows: "How might an LGBT identity be maintained in different social environments and conditions of everyday life?" For further exploration, the two largest cities in Kyrgyzstan – Bishkek in the north and Osh in the south of the country – were chosen. On the one hand, the LGBT communities are very well organised in the major cities and it is possible to look into activities that help people to maintain their identities through collective actions or events. On the other hand, the living conditions and social environments in these two cities are so different that comparison of these research sites might be helpful in discovering the specific characteristics of everyday security of LGBT people in Kyrgyzstan.

Theoretical framework and methodology

Though the security of LGBT people in Kyrgyzstan is one of the concerns included in state policy, it is actually much more a matter of everyday life. The concept of "securityscapes" has been suggested to describe and interpret "security" without direct connections to state security policies and with a focus on the everyday practices and the agency of "ordinary people". This concept

is based on the idea of "scapes" that Arjun Appadurai (Appadurai 1996) introduced in order to explain the contemporary modus of certain phenomena previously strongly connected to territories and specific actors.

"Scapes of security" might be understood as arrangements of concepts of threats that are shared by certain groups of people and lead them to produce and reproduce correspondent types of behaviour in everyday life. At the same time, thinking about security and navigating specific "scapes" is not only about the imagination but also about real spaces containing solid things and bodies. Another important point for understanding the concept of securityscapes is that people are not only trying to secure their physical lives and bodies but other components of life as well, which provide them with a sense of security and safety. These components may include various parameters, such as a feeling of community belonging, social connections with friends, and groups of people with shared values or religious practices. Any shift in these parameters might be perceived as an obvious threat.

From this point of view, a securityscape is a complex of ideas, objects and social practices that help life to continue. It functions to prevent interruptions to different aspects of human life including (1) bare life, as the physical presence of a living and unharmed body, (2) social life, as identity and belonging and (3) spiritual life, as religious experience or historical memory. So the structure of a securityscape might be described through existential threats to any of these aspects of life (objective as well as imagined or constructed).

The opportunity to spend time together in conditions that allow you to "express yourself" plays an important role for many LGBT people in Kyrgyzstan. This paper is aimed at studying those aspects of securityscapes related to social life and community belonging. The relation between individual and collective dimensions of securityscapes is a specific scope of analysis, but it is obvious that in many cases people connect their security (or insecurity) with their identities or the groups that they represent: social, cultural, economic, etc. This is why communal strategies of security-making matter for the understanding of securityscapes.

The spatial dimension of securityscapes of LGBT people is strongly connected to previous research on social aspects of spatiality. The socio-spatial perspective provided a research agenda with four basic categories of place, scale, network and territory (Jessop et al. 2008). All of these categories affect LGBT people at various points, from the networking at different scales with classmates or international NGOs to the territorial boundaries of country laws that define a search for specific places for work and social life. This approach brings together socio-spatial relations and is now used for studying spatial aspects of vulnerability (Watts / Bohle 1993), a new area of studies which looks very productive (Etzold / Sakdapolrak 2016). Our cases show how securityscapes reflect the "polymorphy of socio-spatialities" (ibid.: 241)

i.e. scales, networks and territories to maintain safe spaces for the vulnerable community of LGBT people in Kyrgyzstan. The classification provided by the authors includes an "external side of vulnerability as exposure and sensitivity" and an "internal side of vulnerability as coping and adaptation" that are presented by different features and characteristics within each category (Etzold / Sakdapolrak 2016: 241). Concerning territories, these characteristics include for the external part of vulnerability, for example, the "[exclusion from] citizenship, identity politics (us vs. them), nation-states and borders, private land ownership, gated communities […]" and for the internal part "preparedness, […], political and labour market participation, 'secure territories' or 'humanitarian zones' in a war" (ibid.: 241).

Different scholars usually concentrate on one or two of the components within these classifications, such as "flows of capital, goods, ideas, people between hubs" as an aspect of external vulnerability for networks or the "mobilisation of funds, interest, political support across scalar levels" as an element of internal vulnerability (ibid.: 238–241). The concept of securityscapes covers all these aspects of vulnerability including both the external and internal aspects.

Polymorphic socio-spatialities also make up a significant part of much research in LGBT studies that is in many cases centred on scalar levels of LGBT networks. Although the LGBT community is now considered in many ways as a global phenomenon, locality still matters significantly in the everyday life of community representatives (Lewin / Leap 2009, Shah 2018). These approaches reflect the complexity of relations between the globalised vision of an LGBT community and local practices of maintaining a certain way of life in more patriarchal and traditional societies. Contradictory identities (such as being a Muslim or a good father and simultaneously a gay man) are negotiated in various ways at the individual and community levels, which help people "inhabiting – not resolving – incommensurability" (Boellstorff 2005: 583). This situation might be typical for many non-Western countries. Still, a comparison between different regions within one country might show the role of a certain social and political environment from new angles: the networks and places in the big cities might be completely different from those in the small towns or rural areas, with the same holding true for the environmental pressure to follow religious rules or social norms, as has been shown for Indonesia (Blackwood 2005, Boellstorff 2005).

A case study of Indonesia revealed another important observation: in addition to the regional variations, there was quite a strong social differentiation within the LGBT community in Indonesia – based primarily on class, whether the educated middle class or working class (Blackwood 2005: 234–235). The importance of class, gender and race identities was highlighted as well by Natasha Wilson, who studied Afro-American women in same-sex relationships in

New Orleans in the United States. Wilson noted that for the participants in her research project, "being black" is indeed the starting point of identity formation, and "being poor" the next. Indeed, many of the women who were the focus of this study were poor before "'becoming lesbian' by virtue of their racialised, gendered, reproductive (i.e., their status as mothers), and class positions" (Wilson 2009: 107).

These insights from LGBT anthropology – especially those works studying the role of gatherings and spending time together for identity formation and producing a specific sense of community (Leap 2009, Wilson 2009, Morgensen 2009) – formed an important starting point for my own empirical research, which is based on two case studies in different parts of Kyrgyzstan: the nightclub "London" in Bishkek and the so-called "circles system" in Osh. In Bishkek I conducted participant observation for several months in the LGBT nightclub "London" as well as conducting a series of interviews with the owners of the establishment. The materials collected in Osh by a research assistant provided another main source for the analysis of LGBT securityscapes presented in this text. Additionally I used empirical data collected during former field research in 2016–2017 in Bishkek and Osh, including expert interviews with activists, state officials and police officers. Volunteers from the LGBT community were trained according to the rules and routines of common ethnographic practice as research assistants to collect materials for this study through interviews and participant observation. The research process and data collection were organised around individual cases of homosexual, bisexual and transgender persons; all interviews were conducted in the Russian language.

Securityscapes of LGBT in Kyrgyzstan

In contemporary Kyrgyzstan, any deviation from sexual norms is dangerous. In many cases LGBT people have to hide their identities and mimic heteronormative appearances and behaviours in order to avoid abuse or violence (Von Boemcken et al. 2018). At the same time any gathering of LGBT representatives in Kyrgyzstan today is a risky enterprise by default. Even official meetings and NGO work are organised under strict security rules: there are cameras at the entries of the offices and thorough agreements with hotels' hosts before each conference or seminar. According to interviews with LGBT activists, every meeting requires a lot of preparation in terms of security and these issues are always discussed specially. For example, the date and time of an event might be discussed via group email exchanges but the exact place, agenda and list of participants are always sent separately to each member along with the invitation and a request not to share the information with anyone not

on the list. Moreover, it is not an easy task to find an LGBT-friendly place to conduct an event. A lot of social capital in terms of "connections" and networking with relatives, classmates or friends is usually involved in this process. According to Arstan[2] (an NGO activist), the hosts should be trusted or at least reliable in keeping promises without sudden cancellations.

At the same time, the measures being taken involve not only communication with the "outside world", but internal communication as well. A satisfactory arrangement with external partners is only half the battle; the LGBT community members must also follow certain rules of behaviour to be accepted at the premises. As noted by one organiser:

> We always warn all our participants that there are strict rules of behaviour for living in the hotel and attending sessions in the conference hall. We ask them not to be "too visible", if you understand what I am talking about […] the dress code and all these things […] Also [they should] keep quiet in the rooms in the nights. That kind of thing. Like this is "just a seminar". It is of course, just a seminar, but still […] Well, you know what I mean" (Arstan, 32 years, NGO activist, Bishkek, May 2017).

What Arstan says is a clear reference to the fact that for the majority of people a seminar covering LGBT issues is not "just a seminar" but something different or special. When organising a seminar it is necessary to exercise strict control over the behaviour of the community members. The same activist explained this with reference to one case when seminar participants were spotted in the hotel corridor "cross-dressed" (it was guys in girls' clothes). Later the hotel administrator explained to the organisers that "other customers do not want to have such strange people around in the same hotel". The respondent pointed out that the actual problem was not so much to do with misbehaviour or noise but with the "strangeness" of the people in the next rooms. Arstan was sure that the administrator used this word as a euphemism. The other customers had probably used much stronger expressions.

> They wanted us to move out as we cause trouble to other customers. […] It was so difficult to solve the conflict and stay at this place. And do you know how hard it is to tell people not do certain things when they are gathered together? They do not have a lot of opportunities to spend time together in the way that they want. If you come from Osh to Bishkek, or from Talas, or Karakol or wherever […] It is hard to resist engaging in certain behaviours that are almost impossible at home (Arstan, 32 years, NGO activist, Bishkek, May 2017).

Such examples of organising community events gives us an insight into how the collective securityscapes of LGBT people in Kyrgyzstan are structured: there are two types of threats that must be taken care of, one relating to "out-community", the other to "in-community" contacts. Both types of threats are interwoven: you would not need to control "internal" issues if you were not afraid of the "outside world" that perceives your differences as a

2 All the names of the interviewees have been changed.

provocation. But still, in terms of organisation, the security strategies for coming to terms with each of these threats are different.

In a way this constellation of conditions that need to be considered when organising a meeting of LGBT people reflects the connection between the categories of "place" and "network". It is impossible to find a safe place for events without a certain amount of networking in order to deal with the "external side of vulnerability" and remain secure (Etzold / Sakdapolrak 2016: 241). At the same time the "internal side", linked with coping and adaptation, is also noticeable here because people need to follow certain behavioural patterns in order not to be exposed. Yet the category of "territory" is involved in this case as well. The risk of "misbehaviour" is very high because people attending the event often come from areas where certain practices of spending time together are simply impossible and this difference between different territories within Kyrgyzstan is a key factor in the vulnerability of the LGBT community. All of these categories are significant components of the LGBT collective securityscapes, which include responses to external and internal aspects of vulnerability.

Common "out-" and "in-community" security practices can be further analysed in more detail through an ethnography of the informal gatherings of LGBT people. This distinction was further used for observations and for structuring interviews with respondents who were mostly people in charge of organising community life (primarily at the informal level), such as the proprietors of the gay nightclub in Bishkek.

"London" in Bishkek – a nightclub for LGBT

There is not a long but a rich history of gay nightclubs in Bishkek. After the decriminalisation of homosexual relations at the end of the 1990s, gay, lesbian and transgender people became much more visible. Around the beginning of the millennium there were several places that could be identified as gay clubs or gay discos. However, the number of these places decreased after 2010.

This case study is focused on the club that is now known as "London". It was established in 2015 and quite soon "London" remained the only nightclub catering to the LGBT community. The club has changed its location several times over the last three years. It is currently operating in the fourth venue, which was found only several months ago. The story about losing the third place after an attack of the local young people was reported in the media (Guardian 2017, Azattyk 2017). However, the club moved into new premises quite quickly and the interrupted nightlife of the LGBT community was restored.

The club is run by a lesbian couple in their early thirties who decided to open it for several reasons. Before "London" they had a small café with quite ambitious plans but it went bankrupt. As one of the women was a cook they decided to start a new business, which was supposed to be a bakery. While they were looking for the premises they found a quite isolated venue with thick walls and without apartment buildings nearby. According to the interview, as they looked at the place a new idea began to form. "We decided: Why not? It's quiet and there aren't a lot of people around. Why shouldn't we try to organise a disco?" (Oksana, nightclub co-owner, Bishkek, December 2017). The bakery business was redefined as a nightclub for LGBT people. A coincidence provided them with this specific location, but they were already engaged as LGBT activists, being themselves an openly lesbian couple with the experience of organising LGBT parties in their previous café. They had noticed the lack of space for self-expression (if not for themselves then definitely for others).

> Though we tried to start a business it was never [meant to be] a commercial project [only]. It is still not very commercial. It was like: To gather all! To be together! And this would be great! Something like that. We were daring and impudent in a way, we called the place "Outreach" (Sasha, night club co-owner, Bishkek, December 2017).

Ultimately, they saw the opening of the club as more of a gesture of activism than as the starting of a new enterprise.

Yet the homophobic attitude of other people has created a lot of problems and is one of the main concerns of the club owners. The club has had to move to new locations several times for security reasons. The first time, the club was visited by young people who introduced themselves as "neighbours" interested in "maintaining order in their neighbourhood" and who threatened the staff and customers. The second time "London" was attacked by a mob of 30 young people that destroyed the furniture and injured one of the club's visitors. After moving into the second location the club's name was changed from "Outreach" to "London", choosing a more neutral word for security reasons.

> Usually the landlords [owners of the premises] ask us to vacate the venue. They provide different reasons, like that the residents in the houses nearby are complaining […] but to me it seems more like […] you know […] I believe it is about their own homophobia that they do not want to admit it openly. They hold these fears and just don't want us to be around (Oksana, night club co-owner, Bishkek, December 2017).

The number of difficulties that "London" faces is high; without the strong motivation of the nightclub owners to change the lives of LGBT community members for the better, it might have ceased to exist as a club long before. Most of these difficulties are connected to security issues.

When asked about "out-" and "in-community" threats, interviewees first mentioned the latter during the interviews. A major problem concerns regular fights among the customers. According to the hosts, the opening night of the

club "was just awful. So many fights […] about ten fights probably. One was quite serious – a bottle was smashed on someone's head […] a lot of blood was everywhere" (Sasha, night club co-owner, Bishkek, December 2017). Observation confirmed that this problem is very serious. In the course of regular club visits, at least one fight occurred every night, which is not common for other nightclubs in the city. The host of the club responsible for security issues provided her perspective on this problem as such:

> Actually, if you are humiliated and demean yourself constantly you do not need a lot to explode. Here [in the night club] they feel relaxed […] the alcohol, you know […] Control is loosened […] The whole world humiliates them, but here […] They do not let anybody humiliate them! Like nobody has a right! And here any small thing like somebody looking at you strangely or touching you inadvertently […] it is BAM! It was Varia Petrova[3] who helped me a lot then in "Outreach". She came and asked: "How are you?" I said: "Terrible. I want to disappear." – "What's up?" I said that this is so and so and too hard to bear. She said: "But it is logical. You cannot blame people for that. How can you blame them for being aggressive while they endure so much in the [outside] world." I thought, "Yes, it is true" (Sasha, night club co-owner, Bishkek, December 2017).

Sasha faced a dilemma: On the one hand there was a need to continue the club. But on the other hand putting additional control over their customers seemed to be impossible. The whole idea of the club was to provide a place to relax and reduce tensions. The need to guarantee safety from internal fighting for the customers created additional difficulties for the club owners. However, recently the number of fights has significantly decreased. Applying a new strategy in order to reduce the fighting, the owners created a list of troublemakers and forbade them from visiting the club. In most cases this ban might be valid for one or two weekends (the club is working on the weekends only), but some people are banned from the club permanently as they are considered seriously dangerous, suspected of creating trouble on purpose, or of being "incorrigible fighters".

> I know it is wrong and I should not try to sort out who is guiltier but I cannot help myself. I always try to understand what happened and who started a fight […] All sides are involved more or less and the one who hits first usually goes on the blacklist for a certain time (Sasha, night club co-owner, Bishkek, December 2017).[4]

Often it is not very easy to reconstruct the beginning of a fight and detect the initial troublemaker, though this strategy of banning fighters from the club – either for a limited time or permanently – seems to be working quite well so far and some progress in the behavioural patterns of the guests can be observed.[5] While many arguments and fights can be solved within the communi-

3 One of the activists (the name is changed).

4 She said that usually fights are about nothing and look more like releases of energy, which is why the criteria for suspension are more of a formality.

5 Partly this might also be a result of the high density of social connections between the club's customers. The majority of them know each other quite well, even if they go there from time to time with different

ty itself, the problem of internal security often shifts to the scope of out-community relations, in particular to relations with the police.

The relations between LGBT community representatives and the police are complicated and ambiguous. Encounters with the police are often unpleasant and risky for two reasons. First, the high level of homophobia encourages an extremely negative and biased attitude towards community representatives by some police officers (Human Rights Watch 2014a). And second, the high level of corruption within the police force produces cases of blackmailing LGBT people, since the majority of them try to avoid being outed in different spheres of their lives. Still, in the event of certain crimes, including theft, robbery and (more often) attacks against community representatives, the police protect everyone according to the law. Indeed, according to Sasha, relations with the police are better organised and more reliable than those with the general public around the club. The police are more business-like and do provide assistance in difficult situations, such as aggressive behaviour or racketeering on the part of people living and working nearby. Nevertheless, the most common tactic in dealing with the police is avoidance.

> You know, in general we try to minimise our contacts with the police, as do all our people. There is usually nothing pleasant in it. For many of us it is just dangerous. I myself am in a much better position than others. First I know my rights. I know that they cannot do anything against me if I do not break a law. Second, I am not afraid to defend my rights: I am an open lesbian, I am not afraid of being exposed and they can't force me to do anything. But I am also aware of how difficult it is for many of us to contact the police. The threat of being exposed or even detained, you know […] "until things are clarified".[6] […] Prison is not a good place for our people. That's why LGBT is a permanent source of bribes or pay-offs. But our people are not angels, you know. They break laws sometimes, like anyone else. And here I maintain a very firm position. If our people really are involved in something bad I do cooperate with the police. And I warn people, everybody knows that I will cooperate if something happens. There was a robbery not long ago near the club and [some of] our customers were involved. I called the police and told them: "I will cooperate with you in this case. Yet I am now calling our lawyer to provide the maximum defence for our people. They should be responsible for their deeds but not for their orientation, so our lawyer will come to organise their protection. And you have to cooperate with our lawyer in turn" (Sasha, night club co-owner, Bishkek, December 2017).

To sum up, the securityscapes of the LGBT nightclub "London" might be characterised by a combination of two types of threats: the in-community relationships among LGBT people and out-community relationships with those on the outside. The former are dealt with through restrictions on access. Temporary suspensions from the club seem to discipline people quite well and negative behavioural patterns are currently changing for the better. Internal

companies. The atmosphere in the club is thus more similar to a friends' weekend party than to usual nightclub dancing.

6 According to the Kyrgyz criminal law a person can be detained up to 45 hours pending clarification or the bringing of charges. After 45 hours the decision regarding further detention is made in court.

communication also includes the support of community organisations (such as the help of activists working in LGBT NGOs). Out-community contacts involve not only informal networking and the use of personal connections but also formal and more official relationships with the police and business partners. An important role here is played by the club owners, who consider themselves as activists working for the community and who maintain open lesbian identities. If their identities were hidden a lot of problems could arise and it would be impossible to run the enterprise. Sasha and Oksana, the nightclub owners, are not afraid of blackmail because their families and friends know about and approve of their relationship. Their strong activist position is respected both within the community as well as outside it. The community members follow their decisions, even if they are unpopular (like having to deal with the police from time to time). At the same time, business partners and officials try to accommodate their requests because they are confident in receiving appropriate responses. Still the position of the club owners is rather atypical for members of the LGBT community, who are usually much more vulnerable and exposed to outer and inner threats and thus prefer to stay hidden.

"Circles" in Osh

Osh is the second largest city in Kyrgyzstan, situated in the south of the country. The population in the south is historically considered as more "traditional" and attentive to different hierarchies: social, gender and age-related. People here maintain much closer relations at the level of neighbourhoods or *mahallas*. There are "*mahallas'* councils" (*makhallinskiie komitety*) ruling the everyday life of residents by solving conflicts, providing support and helping with various difficulties. These councils are not just bodies for problem solving; they are responsible for the psycho-social atmosphere in their *mahalla* and their activities have an important impact on the everyday well-being and "moral state" of the people. The everyday life of Osh residents is usually closely observed and controlled through family hierarchies. As Aksana Ismailbekova draws out in this journal issue, for many Uzbek people the *mahalla* itself provides a space of security where people can feel safe and relaxed (see Ismailbekova 2018). One can easily conceive how for the LGBT Uzbeks this social system instead produces additional pressure and control. The same is true for Kyrgyz LGBT in Osh – the structure of neighbourhoods is very similar to that of Uzbek communities, with small differences only.[7]

7 E.g. instead of a *mahalla* commitee as in the Uzbek communities, the Kyrgyz neighbourhood's life is regulated by a street committee or analogous local body.

The collective securityscapes of LGBT people in Osh are closely connected to this social structure. According to statistics, the share in Osh of MSM (men having sex with men) who are married is significantly higher than in the capital (41 per cent in Osh and only 10 per cent in Bishkek). Among my respondents in Osh only the youngest ones (younger than 23 years old) were not married. The majority of interviewees have wives, children and a lot of obligations concerning their parents, parents-in-law and other family members. Many of them confirmed that being a bachelor in Osh after the age of 25 looks extremely suspicious. They highlighted the constant pressure of the need to "play roles":

> I am like a damned actor who performs at various stages. I have to behave differently and even speak in different voices. I have one voice at home talking to my wife and children, but I use another voice towards my employees at work as a state official, and sometimes I need a third one for my colleagues in the NGO [he is also working with a NGO that is not connected to LGBT issues]. I only stop controlling my voice and behaviour when dating [other men] or at private parties with close friends (Erik, 47 years, Osh, December 2017).

The dangers for LGBT people in Osh are very similar to the threats they experience in Bishkek, or in any other place in Kyrgyzstan. Also in Osh, the level of homophobia is high. However, the threat of exposure is much more severe in Osh than it is in Bishkek. Sometimes the level of aggression from the police and homophobic groups is so severe that NGO activities have to be managed secretly. Meetings and workshops are then cancelled and the offices closed until "this wave [of aggression] is over", as one of the experienced activists put it (Erik, 47 years, Osh, December 2017). During these "waves" gay people are attacked and beaten or blackmailed almost every day for several weeks. According to Erik this kind of homophobic outbreak takes place quite regularly every year or two, but for various reasons that are quite unpredictable:

> This might be a quarrel between business partners with exposure of gay owners to the police […] or just street fighting […] or some accidents, you know […] involving somebody belonging to an influential family (Erik, 47 years, Osh, December 2017).

During one of my visits to Osh I witnessed such a period of constant attacks against LGTB people and my impressions from contacting respondents were very gloomy. Yet, Erik demonstrated a rather philosophical approach to this phenomenon and told me that "you just have to survive this time and wait […] sooner or later it will go back to normal again". Of course in Bishkek the level of homophobia and violence against LGBT people fluctuates as well, but it is never as tangible as it is in Osh and this difference reminds us that the category of "territory" is very important for understanding and comparing LGBT securityscapes in both cities.

In Osh too, in addition to the regular threats from outside we find threats "from inside" the LGBT community. This may be when the behaviour of an

individual might betray others and make them visible to the hostile environment. But another serious problem here that was mentioned very often in interviews in Osh is the risk of HIV. An expert working in the field of HIV/AIDS prevention stated that the great attention to this issue is a peculiar characteristic of the Osh LGBT community: "They are thinking and speaking using HIV prevention terminology" (Bakyt, head of an LGBT NGO, 37 years old, December 2017). Although the level of HIV among men having sex with men in the Osh region is reported as almost zero, LGBT people use condoms there much more frequently than in Bishkek: 98 per cent versus 63.3 per cent respectively (Chokmorova et al. 2013). The same expert explained that this behaviour cannot be rooted only in the awareness built by the local NGOs (which is, nevertheless, extremely important), because, after all, NGOs in Bishkek raise the same issue as well. In his opinion the greater fear of infection in Osh is related to the generally more risky way of life for LGBT people there:

> If somebody knew that you had HIV your life would be hell. There are not so many HIV positive people in Osh, mostly among drugs abusers but still [...] (Bakyt, head of an LGBT NGO, 37 years old, December 2017).

It was very remarkable that HIV was mentioned in first place when talking about threats to the LGBT community in general with many of my respondents, even above negative attitudes and aggression from society, blackmailing and police brutality.

In general, identifying LGBT people in Osh was much more difficult than in Bishkek. Although Osh is quite a large city there is no special place for LGBT people to gather informally like the nightclub "London" in Bishkek. Which doesn't mean that the LGBT community doesn't meet in Osh, but rather that their everyday life follows its very own kind of securityscape.[8]

The basis of this securityscape is a collective of gay men organised in so-called "circles". All circles have a more or less stable membership and are organised around "leaders", persons who are older and usually well-secured in terms of income and social connections. From time to time they organise meetings to discuss and solve urgent community problems. Erik believes that a lot of people beyond the community (like the police or health care services) are aware of the circles' existence nowadays (Erik, 47 years, Osh, December 2017). It is difficult to say how and when these circles emerged historically but they seem very well established within the structure of social life in southern

8 Information on informal gatherings of gay people in Osh was collected with the support of a project research assistant, himself a community representative who works in one of the LGBT NGOs in Osh. All collected materials concern male gay or female transgender people in Osh. Lesbian women are not in contact with the NGOs that helped us to collect the data and according to the interviews are practically invisible in the city. The respondents explained that this is because of better opportunities to hide their relationships and the fact that they are almost not exposed to the HIV/AIDS problem and do not need community support for this health issue

Kyrgyzstan. According to several interviews conducted in Osh in 2016 and 2017, the circles' system was already quite well developed at the beginning of the 2000s.

Each "circle" (*krug*) includes around 40 to 50 people and the leader maintains regular contacts with all the members, although he has more regular contacts with some members than with others. Nevertheless, the circles are not organised in terms of a linear hierarchy. They are, instead, structured like a web, with one centre and several interconnected groups around it. It depends on the individual needs and readiness of each person to be in contact with other circle members: some people engage more frequently than others and some of them appear only episodically. And whereas the core of a circle is more or less stable, "peripheral" members may change from time to time. According to Rustam, a circle leader and one of our main respondents, the circles can be described in the following way:

> There are some groups within the whole circle, like "sub-circles". […] These groups are separated by certain interests or age or other reasons. The people in the groups contact [each other] more often and are close to each other. So I know what is going on in each of these groups. If I have not heard from somebody for several days I start looking for that person, trying to get to know what's happened. Maybe something is wrong and some help is needed. […] They all are so different! There are differences in interests, education, income, social status. […] There is an age, you know. […] And some of them may have nothing in common besides alcohol, for example. If you have some money you can go to a café, to a sauna, [or] rent an apartment or house. The poorer people have dates just at home, or if it is impossible then in parks, at the countryside, like picnics. […] Something like that. […] Of course this is possible only from March to October. Winter is difficult for them. There are a lot of encounters, changing partners, no relationships at all. This is not good for the development of the young people. And it could even be dangerous after all [both because of the risk of exposure and sexually transmitted infections, NB] (Rustam, 53 years, Osh, December 2017).

Rustam sees his role as keeping this large and diverse group of gay people together in order to create a certain sense of community among them, which he considers very important. Social networks on the Internet and mobile applications like WhatsApp and Odnoklassniki[9] are used and seem very convenient for communication purposes. Still, there are meetings "in person" when people gather and spend time together. Meetings take place in special venues, usually in rented flats. To rent a flat for a meeting is a task that requires a lot of security measures. Very often gay people become the victims of dishonest hosts or curious neighbours. These try to take them by surprise and then blackmail them to get money, threatening them with exposure before families, employers or the *mahalla* council.

9 A social network that is very popular in many post-Soviet countries. It is supported in Russian and involves a lot of people under the auspices of "common childhood school years", in many cases referring to having been raised together during the Soviet era.

> It is better if the leader rents the flat for a party (*tusovka*) by himself. For example, I have a long-standing contact with one Russian woman who provides us with a suitable venue. She knows about us but she does not mind, she is open. And she is very reliable. I have several such contacts. I am older, you know […] more experienced. […] I just know more people around and I am better at "reading" people, you know. […] I can tell this person is going to cheat us or not (Rustam, Osh, December 2017).

In this case, the leader feels responsible for securing his circle from outside threats. But as noted above there are also "inside" community threats. At the beginning of the interview the "inside threats" and the leader's responses to them seemed very similar to those in Bishkek. Rustam recognised that during parties with alcohol and the ensuring lack of self-control, problems like arguments and fights occur quite often:

> Of course we have problems like that. And if I rent a flat it is me who is responsible for everything. I am responsible to the host for broken things, or for noise if neighbours complain, or anything. […] I [therefore] try to control the amount of alcohol at the party. I also observe people's behaviour and try to prevent anything bad that may happen (Rustam, Osh, December 2017).

Rustam, too, uses a "blacklist" as a strategy to control unwelcome members of the circle:

> There are some people that we all try to avoid for the parties. We put them into "ignore status" in social networks before holidays. I would help them if something happened and support them but it is too risky to have them around with alcohol and these things (Rustam, Osh, December 2017).

Yet, later in the course of the interview the topic of HIV risk appeared again, and became more and more persistent. Speaking about what people did at these parties Rustam said that they were mostly interested in finding new partners for sexual intercourse. In this context the leader expressed a concern about what he referred to as a lack of a "culture of communication":

> It is necessary to instil a culture of communication. These young people, they are unaware that it is much better and safer to have one stable partner, but they are unable to establish real relationships. They do not have real skills for that. So they have this kind of life and these, you know […] sporadic connections. It would be much better to have a stable partner because you are protected from HIV, you have interesting things to do together, maybe establish a business. […] But they are mostly gathering to drink and relax […] and find a new partner for sex (Rustam, Osh, December 2017).

Rustam openly referred to cases from his own sexual life to illustrate the level of this risk, claiming that some young people, especially with a poor education, not only refused to use a condom but were completely unaware that HIV even existed. When he spoke about the circle's gatherings (*tusovki*) he regretted that they were mostly about searching for short-term sexual adventures instead of stable partnerships. At the same time Rustam talked approvingly of and highly appreciated the LGBT-friendly NGO activities aimed at HIV pre-

vention and said that he is trying to encourage the members of his circle to participate in these activities and events.

Since most informants were quite young they talked about the circles as if they had always existed and took them for granted. Interestingly, some activists working in an LGBT NGO considered the circles as a kind of competitor:[10]

> We are struggling to involve people in our activities. We are interested in raising awareness within the community about many things. It is not only HIV and health issues, though many donors are working mostly in this area. […] We watch movies together, conduct discussions, provide psychological support. […] It is important to let young people know that they are normal, that nothing is wrong with them in spite of people's opinions. […] This really helps. And we always have free condoms here, and express tests for HIV. People get used to trusting us. For me it seems that many leaders are just jealous. Some of them prevent people from coming here. They are afraid of losing their audience, it seems (Aibek, 19 years, Osh, October 2016).

It should be noted that the work and strategies of NGOs are more democratic and open than the circles. The "circle life" seems to mimic many characteristics of social life in Osh in general, where community support is very often combined with social control and obedience to certain rules. Rustam's stories about his circle demonstrated some distance between him and other circle members. This might be a result of age difference, since he is noticeably older and behaves like a helpful father of a large family towards other circle members. Although he insisted that he is a part of the circle and there is a kind of collective decision-making process among all members, his position was more about being a provider of things, whereas the "beneficiaries" (his own wording) were considered by him more as the receivers of these goods. According to other interviews with gay people in Osh the circles indeed reproduce a kind of "family" structure, with the old responsible person as the head of it and several members who might be considered as "older sisters or brothers" taking up some responsibilities from time to time as well, such as contacting other members or organising parties on their own.[11]

The circles thus play an important role in the community life of LGBT people in Osh. Their leaders help the members to survive and maintain their identities. They take responsibility for dealing with outside threats in order to provide safe environments for regular gatherings, and also participate in solving problems among the community members (like help with jobs or small businesses). At the same time the leaders are constantly dealing with internal threats. In addition to providing psychological support and advice for circle

10 Though some young respondents indeed saw the circles as a kind of competitor, the general picture showed that the NGOs and the circles seem to coexist very successfully, providing various opportunities to accommodate gay people.

11 In some way the circles are similar to the "houses" presented in Jennie Livingston's famous documentary "Paris is Burning" (1991), devoted to the Afro-American and Latin-American gay communities in New York. Some circle members in Osh (as well as the characters in the movie) refer to the leaders as "Moms" and keep quite close relations within certain groups.

members they are variously involved in NGOs activities on condom promotion and HIV/AIDS prevention. In general the "circle system" seems to have become established as a self-organising and self-reproducing structure supported by all its participants.

Concluding remarks

This paper looked at collective securityscapes for maintaining LGBT identities in two different places in Kyrgyzstan. It should have become obvious that the LGBT securityscapes in the capital Bishkek and the city Osh show many similarities, while differing in accordance to local conditions.

In Bishkek a safe place for an informal LGBT community life is provided by the nightclub "London". The network of LGBT people in Bishkek seems to be fairly loose and independent. People visit the nightclub as customers, whether in shifting groups or alone. Although the nightclub has faced severe problems in the past, the hosts continue to run it as an important part of the social life of LGBT people in Bishkek. Organising a similar club in Osh seems to be almost impossible for now, because of the strict system of social control within the city neighbourhoods. Community gatherings in Osh therefore have to be organised individually and the LGBT social network itself is quite rigidly structured by "circles".

Yet in both places the very possibility of having an informal community life at all depends on certain persons who are willing to be in charge of and provide this opportunity. In Bishkek the two owners of "London" regard running the nightclub as a part of their LGBT activism. In Osh there are the circles' leaders. In both cases the responsible people decide to take personal risks in order to provide a better life for the LGBT community as a whole. These informal key figures of community life – as well as other responsible people such as NGO activists – are constantly identifying threats to the community and organising relevant responses to them in order to help LGBT people to maintain their identities.

The analysis of the community life of LGBT people in Bishkek and Osh shows that collective securityscapes are structurally oriented alongside two general types of threats: "in-community" and "out-community" threats. Both are not isolated, but interwoven with each other. For example, the safety of the venue for a party depends on the good relations of the organiser with owners and neighbours (outer threat) as well as on the proper behaviour of the LGBT people gathering at the party (inner threat). In turn some behavioural problems, for instance fighting (inner threat) derive from the psychological

pressure and aggression that LGBT people endure beyond the community (outer threat).

These findings correspond with the descriptions of the polymorphy of socio-spatialities in vulnerability research (Etzold / Sakdapolrak 2016) based on categories of place, network, territory and scale (Jessop et al. 2008). Our data shows that the securityscape concept keeps the polymorphic character of vulnerability as a whole, including all these categories. It is quite obvious that for our respondents the external aspect of vulnerability for a specific place, connected to its location within city areas and neighbourhoods, does matter: it is indeed important where the nightclub venue or the apartment for a gathering is situated within the city. At the same time the internal aspect of this safe place is connected to the very opportunity to accommodate and keep the sense of belonging to the community.

The category of "territory" in terms of dependence on local customs and cultural norms could also been shown here: the conditions for gatherings or NGO activities in Osh are different from those in Bishkek. Even if all stakeholders involved are working within the same legal framework, the different local environments set up different levels of social pressure and expectations, and thus make the territoriality significant.

The inner side of the vulnerability within different territories might be illustrated by the attitude towards HIV/AIDS issues in Bishkek and Osh that provide completely different pictures of the internal threats in both cities. Similarly the network connections outside and inside the community are apparently important for shaping collective securityscapes. Security issues are solved at the scale of separate events (a Saturday night in the club, a gathering or a seminar) as well as at the level of local community within the city, or involve the security of the nationwide LGBT community as a whole. Though some data were not fully presented here it is apparent from certain interview fragments that the scale of cooperation within the cities and between LGBT people themselves and with NGOs in Bishkek, Osh and other locations plays an essential role in community building. Last but not least the scale of global partnership is extremely important for the entire system of NGOs helping people in legal defence and HIV prevention. For example, the strong position of the owners of "London" is based on their legal literacy and awareness of their rights, which result from the activities of international NGOs working with rights defenders and LGBT-friendly lawyers. At the same time the context that this global partnership is changing the local situation determines (in many ways) the activities and lives of LGBT people at the scale of everyday support or community mobilisation.

Yet if we move the territory dimension along the category of scale to compare the two cities within Kyrgyzstan we can see that the collective securityscapes in Bishkek and Osh are also dependent on similar environmental fac-

tors. Outer threats connected to relations with the police, landlords and ordinary people evoke a strategy of "boundary negotiation". When a strategy of avoidance is impossible to apply, different types of negotiation are used to keep the relationship with outer agents as close to avoidance as possible. This approach describes the relationships of the Bishkek nightclub hosts with the police, for example. They contact the authorities if necessary and otherwise try to keep a distance.

Further comparing the collective securityscapes of LGBT people in Bishkek and Osh we can notice that the perception of inner threats differ somewhat. In both cases there is a problem with the appropriate behaviour of community members when they gather. The "blacklisting" of troublemakers seems to be an effective strategy for dealing with this threat. But in Osh the perceived risk of HIV seems to play a more prominent part as a major internal threat. According to our interviews in the Bishkek LGBT community, the HIV risk is usually contextualised with reference to NGO activities. It is not particularly prominent when people talk about their informal relationships, even when these involve sexual contact. In Osh, by contrast, the HIV/AIDS issue is much more tangible, both in discussions of NGO projects as well as in conversations about the everyday life of our respondents.

The need to socialise and spend time together along with the search for safe places and networks is one of the basic similarities between our results and findings that were obtained in other regions (e.g. Leap 2009, Morgensen 2009). Still some differences should be briefly highlighted: in Indonesia, for example, informal gatherings for gay people are quite strongly ritualised and embedded into religious and local traditions (as in the case of birthday slametans, see Boellstorff 2005: 583). In Kyrgyzstan, even in more traditional regions like Osh, the gatherings are perceived by the participants as something that distinguishes them from the majority of the population and provide them an opportunity to celebrate their difference. They mostly avoid religious ritualisation and national traditions but celebrate the opportunity to be together. This is in a way connected with other findings that concur with studies of LGBT informal life in other parts of the world that show social differentiation and class division within communities (Blackwood 2005: 234–235, Wilson 2009: 107).

In Kyrgyzstan the sense of community that LGBT people gain when spending time together is very much about crossing class boundaries and networking actively in different directions. The audience in "London" or at private gatherings in Osh is very diverse in terms of social status and educational background. Sharing a similar lifestyle and sense of belonging while leaving aside the differences that might be important in other circumstances seems to be much more important here.

To sum up, the ethnography of LGBT securityscapes in two cities of Kyrgyzstan reveals similarities and differences in collective security practices that both communities produce according to "inner" and "outer" threats. Such threats are perceived as very much alike but occur within different territorial conditions, sometimes involving different safe places and types of networking at various scales.

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Secure and Insecure Spaces for Uzbek Businesspeople in Southern Kyrgyzstan

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Abstract

Based on fieldwork in southern Kyrgyzstan in October and November 2017, this article explores at a micro-level the security practices undertaken by Uzbek people in Osh. It closely examines the experiences of Uzbek taxi-drivers, traders and businesspeople and thereby seeks to understand how and why local actors have managed to find creative ways to secure their economic activities. The business sector is the sector in which the Uzbek community is dominant, whereas the Kyrgyz community dominates the state structures. Historically, the two ethnic groups have lived side by side and have been in constant contact with each other through this state/business symbiosis. However, the conflict of 2010 drastically changed and destroyed this symbiosis, and with it threatened the Uzbek business sector. The examination of the security-making practices of the Uzbek businesspeople was guided through the prism of the theor etical framework of "securityscapes".

Keywords: Kyrgyzstan, Uzbek, business, security, strategies

Introduction

The Osh conflict that broke out in southern Kyrgyzstan in summer 2010 was the worst conflict the region had seen in years. The conflict, which involved two ethnic groups, Uzbeks and Kyrgyz, erupted in the city of Osh on 10 June 2010, in the form of intercommunal clashes. It then spread to the region of Jalalabad. As a result of this conflict, more than 470 people were killed and thousands were injured, with some sources claiming that the true figures are much higher. Hundreds of private homes were burned down, and properties were looted. The report of an international inquiry commission stated that Uzbeks made up nearly 75 per cent of the 470 people killed, and that a "disproportionately high number" of Uzbek-owned properties were destroyed. The violence lasted for almost a week (KIC 2011).

In the aftermath of this violence, much attention was given to the causes, to competing narratives (Megoran 2013), different conflict dynamics (Kutmana-

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liev 2015), nationalism (Megoran 2012, Laruelle 2012), peace building, and coping strategies (Ismailbekova 2013, 2015). But recent scholarship on these events in Osh has largely ignored issues concerning local security practices. In the main this is because the focus of attention has been on challenging the broader geo-political security questions and on the "discourse of danger" (Thompson / Heathershaw 2015), as well as because of the methodological difficulties of grasping micro-level security strategies of marginalised and vulnerable groups. Of course, while explanations for the causes of the conflict (Asankanov 2011) and the different dynamics of peacekeeping are important and necessary in Osh and neighbouring towns (Khamidov et al. 2017), we have little knowledge of how people secure their economic activities in everyday life or of the everyday security practices adopted by the Uzbeks living in Osh.

In order to investigate the strategies of Uzbek businesspeople for keeping their businesses running despite constant pressures since 2010, I conducted fieldwork in Osh in October and November 2017. It was important for me to explore the security practices undertaken by Uzbek taxi-drivers, traders and businesspeople in Osh at a micro level, looking to understand how and why they managed to find new ways to secure their economic activities. As the Uzbek community is dominant in the business sector – whereas the Kyrgyz community dominates the state structures – it was an obvious choice to concentrate on this field. Historically, the two ethnic groups have lived side by side, in constant contact with each other through a state/business "symbiosis" (Liu 2012, Megoran 2013). More specifically, the Uzbeks have occupied a niche position in the middle of the economy – typically trading in the bazaar, working as shopkeepers, café owners and drivers – whereas the Kyrgyz traditionally occupy local government structures (Liu 2012, Megoran 2013). However, the conflict of 2010 has drastically changed and destroyed this symbiosis, and with it threatened the Uzbek business sector.

As a Kyrgyz woman myself, conducting research among the Uzbek community was not easy: many informants were suspicious and reluctant to talk about their daily difficulties. Instead many felt the need to mention how good life was in Osh and denied experiencing any problems. Others preferred not to speak openly about their business-related problems or concerns, especially to a Kyrgyz outsider and researcher. However, thanks to one of my key Uzbek informants, I finally succeeded in speaking with several different groups of the Uzbek community. My informant was able to assure other Uzbeks that the project was being conducted for scientific purposes and that their identities would be protected (all interviewees have been given pseudonyms). I was able to conduct a total of 35 interviews with 50 people, organise focus groups and make use of participant observation. In addition, ten Kyrgyz informants from the university, business sector and bazaar were interviewed. Although I tried

to capture the Kyrgyz side as well, the chief focus was on the Uzbek narrative: their subjective experiences, interpretations, perceptions and explanations. This paper thus does not claim to give an overall picture of the whole situation, but clearly centres on the Uzbek perspective.

The examination of the security strategies of the Uzbek businesspeople was guided through the prism of the theoretical framework of "securityscapes", a notion developed by Marc von Boemcken et al. (2018). According to von Boemcken et al. (2016: 5) "securityscapes can be understood as 'imagined worlds' of security and insecurity that goad and structure the lives of people as they go about their daily business". This perspective builds upon the earlier studies of Appadurai's "scapes" (1996) and the "everyday practices of security" (Gough et al. 2016). Thus, securityscapes are based on inter-subjectively enacted social practices and emphasise the individual agency of actors in seeking security – which is especially evident if these actors do not and cannot rely on state authorities.

In the aftermath of 2010

It is clearly evident that nationalism intensified in the country after the deadly clashes in Osh. A common discourse promoting that "Kyrgyzstan is the land of Kyrgyz and the rest, i.e. the ethnic minorities, are guests" remains strong (Abashin 2011) – not only among the youth, but also among the older generation. This belief is so strongly held that it is openly expressed in the street. In the same vein, new statues, mostly of Kyrgyz historical heroes, have emerged in the city as a national signifier that the city of Osh belongs to the Kyrgyz community rather than to the Uzbeks (Wachtel 2013). The importance of knowing the Kyrgyz language and an increase in the number of Kyrgyz language classes at schools highlight the state's attempts to make Kyrgyzstan a "state of the Kyrgyz". The number of Uzbek courses has declined in direct comparison to the increasing number of Kyrgyz classes on offer.[1]

The government has not undertaken any serious reconciliation procedures and inter-communal conflict seems to be a closed subject for the state authorities – as if nothing has happened at all. The discussion of such ethnic issues is considered taboo and remains a sensitive topic. There have been some reconciliation and mediation projects between the two ethnic groups funded by international donors, which took place despite their shortcomings (Megoran et al. 2014), but an invisible wall seems to persist between the two groups. Both my Kyrgyz and Uzbek informants agreed that "there is no friendship between

1 Several interviews by author, October and November 2017, Osh; see also Ismailbekova / Karimova 2017.

Uzbeks and Kyrgyz as before; before it was not divided as it is now. The wound has not healed."[2]

Many Uzbek businesspeople fear that the law does not work properly for them and they are afraid of the state authorities, from law enforcement personnel (police), to the judiciary (judges) and executive bodies (government officials), positions commonly filled by members of the Kyrgyz community:

> The state authorities are supposed to play a crucial role in promoting peace between the two ethnic groups; instead, some authorities are the ones who divide them. Some people use this ongoing situation in the city for their own purposes, not least to gain profit from the vulnerable situation of the Uzbeks.[3]

There is a tendency for state authorities to take the side of the Kyrgyz and not to treat Uzbeks as equals under the law (Megoran et al. 2014, KIC 2011). Many Uzbek informants felt that punishment is deemed to work only against them and in general is not handed out to the Kyrgyz community. As a result, they suspect the state authorities of being "corrupt, subjective and greedy".[4]

In addition to being wary of the state authorities, many interviewed Uzbek businesspeople feared the *köchö baldar* ("street boys") and the *chernye* (organised criminals), both mainly Kyrgyz. These usually muscular young men, who work as bodyguards or who are unemployed, set out to harass Uzbek businesses and extort money on behalf of imprisoned gang leaders. Sometimes these "street boys" are hired by influential people to solve their problems in an easy, "unofficial" way.[5] Uzbek businesses are also the main target of criminal groups, which "collect" money from them for the favour of "allowing them to make a living".[6]

Both the state authorities (mostly through the law enforcement bodies) and organised criminal groups specifically target Uzbek businesses, which threatens them either through loss of profit or the use of force and harassment, or other manipulative strategies to steal either money or their business.[7] The seizure of a business is usually conducted by raiders (*raiderskyi zahvat*): they may demand payment of a large amount of money, known as an *otmetka* (for marking), or they might be influential businesspeople who squeeze the Uzbek business owners out of the competition in a process known as *otzhat biznes*. When a business cannot be "squeezed out" in an illegal way or or else legally for not having followed particular rules and regulations, the state might use an administrative resource, such as repeated financial audits and inspections

2 Islom Rustamov, 24 November 2017, Osh.

3 Interview with informants, and Focus Group Discussion in an Uzbek mahalla, 17 October 2017, and on 19 November 2017, Osh.

4 Durdona Makhmudova, 18 October 2017, Osh.

5 Interviews, 3 October 2017, and 5 November 2017, Uzbek mahalla, Osh.

6 Interviews, 5 October 2017, and 6 November 2017, Uzbek mahalla, Osh.

7 The situation in northern Kyrgyzstan is different; there even Kyrgyz businesspeople can be subject to the constant pressure of state and criminal networks (see Surabaldieva 2014).

of the private business with the threat of serious investigations and controls, in order to coerce the business owner into capitulation. Another social sanction implemented is the collection of compromising material (*kompromat*) and framing (*podstava*), which has been used against Uzbek businesspeople.[8]

Many of my informants did not differentiate between government officials and criminals, but rather saw them as often conjoined, with a blurring of the boundaries between them. They stated that some state authorities use criminal networks for their own purposes. Thus, in the case of Kyrgyzstan, criminal networks, big businesses and patronage networks became symbiotically coexistent (Ismailbekova 2017: 184, Radnitz 2010). It should be noted, however, that this overlap of business, state and criminal networks is found not only in Kyrgyzstan, but also in other post-socialist countries as a result of the transformation processes (Humphrey 2012).

Facing insecurity in the main bazaar

Historically the Uzbeks, considered the sedentary population, and the Kyrgyz, comprising the nomadic population, would meet to trade, rendering them economically interdependent. Trading is embedded in the local culture of Osh, and thus the bazaar plays a crucial role in people's main trading activities. Trading at the bazaar is more than just an exchange of goods and money; all manner of transactions take place, including the exchange of ideas, news and gossip. It is an arena in which the different ethnic groups interact face to face, and come together to exchange stories and experiences. People from different regions of the Osh *oblast* (region) would come to the city's bazaar in order to purchase the goods they needed at a relatively low price and to hear the latest news from the city. During the Osh conflict, the main central Osh bazaar was destroyed, not only by the burning of some of the bazaar buildings, but also by the seizure of the bazaar's trading stalls by the Kyrgyz. Many Uzbek traders were ousted from the bazaar and many left because the Kyrgyz stole their goods.

As a result, many Uzbeks became too frightened to enter the bazaar and for Uzbeks it was soon considered as one of the most dangerous places in Osh. During my visit to the bazaar I observed that many trading stalls remained empty, abandoned or partially destroyed. Furthermore, many of the Uzbek stands at the local bazaar had been taken over by Kyrgyz traders; some trading spots had been sold, but the remaining Uzbek traders were too frightened to come to the bazaar. Many of the traders complained that trade was not as good as it had been before, and many Uzbek shoppers expressed a preference

8 Interviews, 13 October 2017, and 10 November 2017, Uzbek mahalla, Osh.

for buying things in their own *mahallas* (the Uzbek neighbourhoods in Osh) instead of coming to the bazaar.

The former bazaar traders claim that 80 per cent of the bazaar traders are now Kyrgyz; before the conflict Uzbeks mostly dominated trading in the bazaar. The ethnic composition of the bazaar has thus been reversed. For example, sectors within the bazaar for the sale of fruit and vegetables, meat, dry fruits, and Russian lottery tickets previously belonged to the Uzbek traders, but now Kyrgyz traders have replaced them in many of these sectors. For this reason the entire fruit and vegetable sector run by Uzbeks has moved from the bazaar to alternative locations, such as in Uzbek neighbourhoods, and similarly the size of the meat section has shrunk inside the bazaar but has expanded elsewhere.

The bazaar has also become a battle for space: the Kyrgyz community prefers to buy from Kyrgyz traders and the Uzbek community from Uzbek traders. My informant Dilnoza complained of being badly treated by a Kyrgyz woman trader who intentionally inflated the price of a dress when she asked the price, solely because she was an Uzbek woman. When I asked a Kyrgyz trader at the bazaar about my intention to buy some soft leather boots for myself, she instructed me to buy only from Kyrgyz traders and in showing me her section at the bazaar, reminded me that we should buy "only from ourselves and support each other",[9] meaning the Kyrgyz community. This was also the case among Uzbeks, where my key Uzbek informant similarly suggested I buy only from Uzbek traders.

Another symbol of the indirect battle for space between the Uzbeks and Kyrgyz is expressed through animals. Kyrgyz and Uzbeks make fun of each other at the bazaar through the medium of using the specific animals to make a point. For example: according to my informants, on one occasion a donkey was brought into the bazaar and an Uzbek traditional hat (*dopu*) was put on the donkey's head and a dressing gown or coat (*chapan*) on the donkey's back, secured with scotch tape. The message implied was that "Uzbeks are donkeys". In response, someone brought a dog into the bazaar and put a Kyrgyz traditional hat (*kalpak*) on the dog's head with the retaliatory message that "Kyrgyz are dogs". Pepper was then poured on the dog's bottom, which caused the dog to run around the bazaar frantically, to the delight of the perpetrators.[10] These kinds of messages are intentionally organised and designed to further emphasise that the bazaar is no longer an entirely safe place for either ethnic group.

9 Almagul Kydyrova and Sabyra Tashtanbekova, main bazaar, 16 October 2017.

10 Interview with Uzbek informants, 23 November 2017, and Focus Group Discussion, 1 November 2017, Uzbek mahalla.

Searching for security I: within the mahalla

Following the clashes in the city, many Uzbek traders moved and opened their own shops within the mahallas. The mahallas have traditionally been micro zones of the Uzbeks, neighbourhoods in which they are deeply rooted (Liu 2012; see also Boboyorov 2013 for Tajikistan, Rasanayagam 2009 for Uzbekistan). The price of goods inside the new mahalla shops was low, as in the bazaar. Not only did new shops proliferate in the mahallas, but also many new structures are evident, having been built within the last two or three years, and many other buildings are under construction. These buildings have been constructed for the purpose of trading in food, construction materials and household goods. Some traders have turned their private houses into stores. Many of them were traders who previously worked at the bazaar, but are now too fearful to return; others simply cannot return as they have lost their trading spots at the bazaar.

Instead, the mahalla fulfils almost every kind of daily need. It provides shops, hairdressing salons, new teahouses (*chai khana*), auto servicing, private hospitals, and even a children's swimming pool. Other interesting buildings and shopping centres have emerged containing a range of sections selling a wide variety of goods including medicines, music cassettes, food, telephone repair facilities, computer equipment, household appliances, and even spare parts for foreign cars. The array of different shops is located in one building, as is the custom in Western shopping malls. In addition, on the third or fourth floors of these malls are venues for organising a variety of lifestyle events, including theatre pieces and concerts. Other mobile trading possibilities have also emerged in the mahallas, such as the direct trading of coal, fruit and vegetables, whilst butcher's shops, known locally as *kasapchy*, have tripled in number inside the mahallas within the last two or three years.

Local mahalla dwellers told me that "they no longer find it necessary to go to the bazaar to buy basic goods as the mahalla now provides everything that people need at a relatively low price".[11] Apparently, there is no discernable price difference between goods bought at the bazaar and goods bought from the mahalla stores; thus the cost of living has improved because people have no need to travel all the way to the bazaar.

Recognising the importance and need for young people and children to spend their leisure time outside of their homes, an Uzbek businessman opened a huge family recreation centre called Ak-Buura, which is located within the Sheit Tupe mahalla. During the summer of 2016 the newly opened centre was completely packed. The centre has several attractions, including a water activity, a swimming pool, buffet, glass labyrinth, 3D cinema, children's swings,

11 Interview with mahalla dwellers, On Adyr Mahalla, 15 November 2017.

rollerblading platform, autodrome, café, photobooth, rowing boats, simulators, and a children's trampoline. Although this centre belongs to an Uzbek businessman, the profit from it is shared with Kyrgyz law enforcement officials; it would not be possible for the business to function without the profit being equally shared with the state authorities in Osh, otherwise the businessman might face various obstacles from criminal networks or state authorities.[12]

Following the rape of an Uzbek girl in the central park in Osh, Uzbeks have been too fearful to go to the park, which has affected the habits of young people, particularly in the evenings. As a result, young Uzbek people no longer venture into the city centre of Osh, preferring to enjoy the entertainment facilities already provided within the mahalla. Apart from the family recreation centre, there are also football pitches, cafés and body building centres where young people can spend their free time. The young people of the mahalla prefer to stay inside the mahalla for security reasons[13] – the mahalla has become the recognised "safe" place for youth to congregate.

Another interesting observation I made was that the pro-governmental banners of President Zheenbekov appeared on the business centres within the mahallas. The Uzbek community voted for Zheenbekov even though they naturally supported the opposition leader, Babanov.[14] It was explained to me that they voted for the pro-government President under duress. However, another alternate reason offered was that the state authorities within Osh are well connected with the Uzbek businesspeople and as the businesspeople did not believe that Babanov would be able to change or replace all the state authority members in Osh with his own people, they opted to vote for those with whom they were already connected (and who were part of their established networks) in order to protect their own businesses.[15] Zheenbekov's banners advertising his candidacy could thus be seen hanging everywhere – but were especially prominently displayed in the Uzbek-owned large stores and malls, perhaps also with an eye to currying favour with the authorities and emphasising loyalty to the Kyrgyz state.

Many Uzbeks living in mixed neighbourhoods moved to the Uzbek mahallas because it became unsafe for them to continue living together with the Kyrgyz community in their previous neighbourhoods. For example almost 60 families moved from the Kyrgyz-dominated neighbourhood of Amanbai to the Uzbek mahallas of Sheit Tupe, Karajygach and On Adyr. The changing atti-

12 Interview with taxi drivers, Cheremushka Mahalla, 18 November 2017.

13 Interview with young mahalla dwellers, Amur Timur Mahalla, 19 November 2017.

14 Presidential elections took place on 15 October 2017 in Kyrgyzstan. Zheenbekov got more than 54 percent of the vote in the presidential elections, while his main rival, Omurbek Babanov, got only 34 percent of the vote. Zheenbekov, 58 years old, a member of the Social Democratic Party, became the country's prime minister. Zheenbekov's strongest opponent, the 47-year-old Babanov, is a young, wealthy entrepreneur and former fuel trader from Talas in northern Kyrgyzstan.

15 Interview with mahalla dwellers, Shahid Tebe, Cheremushka, and On Adyr Mahalla, 15 November 2017.

tudes of many Kyrgyz neighbours towards their local Uzbek communities has forced the Uzbeks to sell their houses at prices equivalent to around 4,000–5,000 EUR, and land for 2,000–3,000 EUR. These prices were relatively low compared with the market price; however, had they refused to sell at these low levels they would have faced the threat of the properties being taken by force. Both during and after the conflict, property, such as cars, was stolen by young Kyrgyz "street boys" (*köchö baldary*). In one particularly unpleasant incident an Uzbek businessman was taken hostage and a ransom of 10,000 EUR was demanded from relatives.[16] Once he was freed, the family relocated to Russia. However, not all was so bleak. The majority of people living in mixed neighbourhoods simply exchanged houses: Kyrgyz people living in Uzbek mahallas exchanged houses with Uzbeks living in Kyrgyz neighbourhoods. The insecurity of living together forced many to move from mixed neighbourhoods to homogeneous neighbourhoods (cf. Ismailbekova 2015).

Searching for security II: going outside the mahalla

After the recent rape of an Uzbek girl in the central park in Osh,[17] many young people prefer to remain inside their mahalla after 8 pm. If they still go outside, they try to hide their Uzbek identities:

> [...] the young people do not wear their traditional hats (*dopu*) and are careful not to explicitly highlight their Uzbekness in public. If a young Uzbek were to wear a dopu in the centre of the city, he would invite comments from Kyrgyz youths [as my informants say, "our relatives" (*tuugandar*), implying Kyrgyz] who would demand that he remove his dopu if he did not want trouble.[18]

Young men therefore wear their traditional hats only inside of the mahalla because they feel safe therein. In contrast, women openly wear their Uzbek-style scarves when they leave the mahalla. But they do not wear their scarves inside their own backyards, only when they go out, again for security reasons and to avoid harassment, even though they might be identified as Uzbeks. The role of the scarves is important in Central Asia; it helps women to secure their bodies from unwanted attention and gives them the freedom to move in public spaces (Boboyorov 2017).

Many young Uzbeks try to speak and communicate with the local Kyrgyz community in the Kyrgyz language; to do otherwise might invite problems and censure from the local Kyrgyz youth. Following instances of Uzbek youths being beaten and robbed when they left their mahalla, Uzbek youths are ad-

16 Interview with Timur, a construction worker, Shahid Tebe Mahalla, 20 November 2017.

17 Interview with a policeman, 10 October 2017.

18 Interview with Uzbek students, Kyrgyz-Uzbek University, 18 October 2017.

vised by their parents to ensure they are home by 8 pm. One of my informants told me that he was beaten for greeting a group of young Kyrgyz men with the word *Assolomaleikum* in Uzbek instead of using the Kyrgyz equivalent, *Salamaleikum*.[19] The security of young Uzbek men is based on hiding their Uzbek identities and avoiding physical contact with young Kyrgyz men in the evenings, and after 8 pm they are mostly to be found concentrated around the mahalla. Parents whose young adult children work in the city until late evening ensure their children's safety by personally picking them up after work. In a similar vein, Hafiz Boboyorov (in this volume, pp. 61–82) observes how in Tajikistan, the Russian-speaking parents constantly maintain surveillance over their children, control their movements, and do not allow them to go beyond a visible distance.

In sum, in the aftermath of the events in Osh the mahalla became a secure space for Uzbek traders and became the safest place for young people as well. Trading and shopping, which were previously based at the bazaar, have for security reasons moved to the mahallas. As a result, economic activities are now concentrated within the mahallas. Not only has the trade moved, but also a variety of leisure activities are now available within, further encouraging people to move into the mahallas, which they view as a safe place to live. The securityscapes of Uzbeks can be characterised as segregation, or drawing lines in public places, on the one hand, and adaptation and hiding when moving outside, on the other hand.

Mosque, school and hospital – three examples of new businesses

Uzbek businesses comprise very different sizes and sectors, whether small cafés, shops, private schools or hospitals. The Uzbek businesspeople have used different strategies and found creative ways to protect their businesses in Osh from vandalism. In this section, three examples of "unsafe" business sectors will be given and the ways in which they have been transformed into "safe" business sectors will be described.

The first example is a huge new mosque, which has been built in the centre of Nurel Mahalla. It was built on the site of what was previously a large store (constructed during the Soviet times) in which many different kinds of food and goods were sold. After the troubles in Osh the store was looted, and the storeowner (an Uzbek) was pressured by criminals to sell it for a relatively low price. Local Uzbek people asked the Uzbek owner to give this building to the community. He agreed, and the local community then prevented the building

19 Interview with Rustam Asekirov, Shahid Debe Mahalla, 20 October 2017.

from being sold by turning it into a mosque. By doing this, the local people wanted to save their mahalla's business sector. The building has two wings: the mosque is located in the left wing, and the right wing was used to create an indoor football pitch and a gym. Officially the building still belongs to the storeowner; he is therefore able to rent out the gym to young people to play football. The gym is usually booked from 5 pm till 11 pm daily, especially during the winter. The gym is available at a rental fee equivalent to 20 EUR an hour; usually players share the costs among themselves. Just behind the mosque, the owner has a large house, which he built many years ago. Currently the owner has plans to turn his home into a private *madrassa* (Islamic religious school), because both the mosque and football pitch, which are now situated near his house, would be needed by and be available to the *madrassa*. The owner has now applied for state approval for his *madrassa* scheme.

The mosque is considered a "safe" place that members of both the Kyrgyz and Uzbek communities can attend (but it is actually attended only by Uzbeks); therefore no one can touch it, due to its being known locally as a "sacred place" (*yiyk zher*). The location of the football pitch and gym in the right wing of the building allows young Uzbek men to gather safely inside the gym every evening. As they have to enter through the mosque's gate they are protected from potential street skirmishes with young men from the Kyrgyz community. Both the mosque and the gym are frequently visited. In this case, turning the store into a mosque seems an effective strategy to save the property from seizure; other commercial places in Osh had already been forcibly sold at a low price or simply appropriated by criminal networks.[20]

In a second example, a newly built private school in the centre of Nurel Mahalla has replaced what was previously the very profitable Nur Café. This café was successful because of its strategic location between the city of Osh and the airport. People coming to Osh would stop there for lunch, as the kitchen of this café was famous throughout the whole region. After the clashes in Osh the Uzbek owner of the café was under constant pressure, both from the state authorities and from the threat of raids or seizure by criminals and street boys. Following such unremitting pressure, it was impossible for the owner to continue. He then turned the café into a private nursery school for small children. It was impossible for the state authorities and criminals to continue to put pressure on the Uzbek owner once the café was turned into a "safe" business in which small children of both the Kyrgyz and Uzbek communities are taught. As with the mosque above, mostly Uzbeks attend the school, but it is theoretically accessible to Kyrgyz as well. At the present time this school is successfully attracting an increasing number of small children who attend the private school on a fee-paying basis.

20 Interview with Uzbek informants, Shahid Debe Mahalla, 14 October 2017.

The third example of such an enterprise is that of a newly built private hospital, which was established in the centre of Nurel Mahalla a year ago. Previously it was the site of a huge car sales and servicing facility. This was located in a strategic spot between the airport and the city of Osh where new arrivals to the city would stop. In 2010 the car service facility was looted and destroyed. The owner decided to build a private hospital on the site, investing in expensive medical equipment from abroad. Many Uzbek doctors lost their jobs at local hospitals after the conflict and the owner immediately invited them to join him at the private hospital. This hospital, with its up-to-date equipment, is now considered to be one of the best hospitals in southern Kyrgyzstan. If this site had remained an auto service facility, the owner would probably have continued to be harassed. The private hospital in which both Kyrgyz and Uzbek people come for treatment (including members of the state authorities, criminals, and other local people) is no longer a target.[21]

In order to protect their sources of income, some Uzbek businesspeople have found very creative ways, as the three examples show. All succeeded in turning a very profitable but "unsafe" business into a still profitable but "safe" business – a store, a café and an auto-service facility were turned into a mosque, a school, and a hospital. All these new businesses are considered "sacred" i.e. "untouchable" places – the mosque for prayer, the school for children and the hospital for its treatment of everyone, including the elders of both communities, who are venerated. These new types of businesses, created under the umbrella of "sacred" places, provide a niche opportunity for businesspeople to earn money successfully and securely.

Everyday security practices of Uzbek businesspeople

The majority of Uzbek business owners protect their businesses with the help of a video camera. The video camera sign is visible everywhere, from the smallest shop to the large hospitals in the city. In general the majority of businesspeople believe that they can protect themselves from abuses more effectively with a camera because it makes it easy to prove if someone does not pay, and more importantly, people are less likely to violate rules if they see the sign that a video camera is being used in a public place. As a shopowner put it: "when customers see the camera they behave very well and are afraid of the cameras".[22] Shop and café owners, in particular, deal with "payment refusal" problems regularly; using a video camera helps to resolve this issue. Once the video camera is installed, it is possible to record all the activities in the shop

21 Interview with Uzbek informants, Cheremushka Mahalla, 7 November 2017.

22 Interview with Soodat Karimova, Shahid Debe Mahalla, 8 October 2017.

and to monitor customers. The video cameras are installed in visible places in order to show shop visitors that they are being monitored, which also discourages them from engaging in theft.

Many shopowners consciously employ women to sell their products because the local culture forbids a man to beat a woman, or to vandalise private property in the presence of a woman. If young men sold products, it would not be inconceivable for other young men to be discourteous to the male salesclerks or to threaten them, but they leave women alone. Some Uzbek business owners even place Kyrgyz women workers in their business sectors specifically because Kyrgyz state authorities (those controlling tax, water, electricity, the inspectors and the police) would not attempt to cause trouble in the presence of a Kyrgyz woman. In this way, both video cameras and women are used to protect the business and secure property from vandalism. Indeed, the video surveillance in the shops and cafes protects both the women and businesses alike.

Another important aspect that business owners benefit from is being a member of a social network. Most businesspeople try to establish themselves as a member of a good network, preferably with the members of the state authorities (mostly with tax inspectors, law enforcement authorities and the police) and criminal networks (such as criminal organisations and protection rackets) in order to protect the business. Such protection is known as a *krysha* (lit. "roof" in Russian). Usually the profit is unofficially shared with the state authorities in terms of bribes; life for businesspeople who do not enjoy the patronage of the state authorities would be difficult, if not impossible, because they would be constantly investigated for business violations and subject to random inspection as a means of control.[23] The Uzbeks actually receive some security service in return for paying bribes. If members of the strong state authorities patronise an Uzbek business, no one else will dare find reason to "check" the business, or demand to be given products or food for free. In general, business owners share a portion of their profit not only with the state authorities, but also with criminals who extort money.[24] For the low-level business sectors however, there is no exception to the requirement to share a percentage of their profit with the criminals or "street boys"; they would not otherwise be "allowed" to remain in business.

Besides these three commonly seen practices – video cameras, female shop assistants and social networks – many different, individual ways are found to continue an original or new business. One impressive example was the Uzbek owner of a sauna who previously owned several different small enterprises,

23 Interview with Uzbek informants, Shahid Debe, Amur Timur and Cheremushka Mahallas; Focus Group Discussion with businessmen, 9 November 2017.

24 Interview with Uzbek informants, Shahid Debe, Amur Timur and Cheremushka Mahalla; Focus Group Discussion with businessmen, 9 November 2017.

but was forced to close them due to the huge share of profits he had to distribute to state authorities and criminals, which ultimately rendered his businesses unprofitable. When he finally sold his businesses he kept one for himself but convinced the new (Kyrgyz) owner of the others to officially appear as the holder of this last one as well – thus providing him with protection from further claims for money.

Insecure on the roads: Uzbek car and taxi drivers' daily challenges

In conversation with my Uzbek informants, they told me that the most insecure places for Uzbeks are the roads,[25] but I did not understand what they meant. Once I started investigating transportation, I understood better. This problem relates not only to matters concerning automobile accidents or traffic, but to the broader situation regarding transportation in Osh.

Commonly three makes of car, the Daewoo Matiz, Daewoo Tico, and Honda Jazz, are used as taxis and for goods transportation purposes in Osh. This is because the price of such cars is low and they are economical (typically they require 3–4 litres of fuel per 100 km). Most drivers of such vehicles use them to earn their living. The drivers all try to work within their mahalla, as whenever they drive outside of it the traffic police routinely stop them. According to my Uzbek informants, there are mainly two reasons for this: these brands of car generally belong to Uzbeks, and young people commonly use these kinds of cars when learning to drive.[26] The drivers are stopped for supposed "small" violations of traffic regulations, and often they are stopped for no specific reason at all. In all instances a fine is demanded, especially if a driver is Uzbek.[27] I personally observed the traffic police selectively stopping the Uzbek drivers who were driving cars such as the Matiz and Tico and noted that they completely ignored the drivers of bigger cars such as Nissan, Mercedes and Lexus as well as their violations of traffic regulations. While I observed the traffic, a big Mercedes full of young men made an illegal turn in front of the traffic policeman, but the policeman ignored the violation. In another example a Lexus was being driven by a driver who had a child sitting on his knee – although the policeman saw this, no action was taken.

Both Kyrgyz and Uzbek informants confirmed that drivers of cars such as Mercedes, BMW and Lexus – mostly driven by Kyrgyz drivers – are seldom

25 Interview with Uzbek drivers, Amur Timur Mahalla, 15 November 2017.
26 Interview with Uzbek drivers, Shahid Debe Mahalla, 18 November 2017.
27 Interview with Uzbek drivers, Cheremushka Mahalla, 21 November 2017.

stopped by the traffic police, even if they violate the rules.[28] In contrast, the Uzbek drivers of Matiz and Tico cars routinely have to pay a fine equivalent to at least 2 or 3 EUR. Many owners of Matiz and Tico cars thus only drive their cars within the mahalla, but when they go to the city centre they take the local mini-bus (*marshrutka*). The mini-bus is thus another means of transportation that many Uzbeks use for their own security purposes.

The drivers describe themselves as the traffic policemen's "golden goose" because every time they are stopped money is handed over.[29] Most of the time the drivers of such vehicles are very careful not to violate any traffic rules; Uzbek drivers even fasten their seat belts, which is an unusual practice for drivers in Kyrgyzstan. As they explained however, it is better to pay the 2–3 EUR to the traffic police rather than argue and then be forced to pay a fine of 5–12 EUR or more, or risk being arrested and beaten up.[30] Failure to pay might result in threats and further investigations into all manner of driving requirements: such as whether the driver has a first aid kit, emergency signs, a spare tyre, fire extinguisher or a torch. Additionally, they might decide to fine the driver for having tinted car windows.

It is better not to argue with the traffic police, because one is unlikely to win. As my informants say: *tashtasang jashaising, tashtabasang jashabaising* ("in order to live one should bribe, if not, one cannot live"). One informant told me that once he argued with the traffic police, and as a result his driving license was taken away and he was asked to retake his driving test. The policeman had supposedly stopped him for two reasons: the car was old and he was said to be driving too slowly. Apparently, while the policeman stopped his car, another Mercedes drove by very quickly. The Uzbek driver asked him: "Why do you not stop this car?"; the policeman replied that it "was not his business".[31]

The taxi drivers themselves carry sticks in their cars in case something happens to them on a journey. After the events in Osh, it became dangerous for Uzbeks to take unknown passengers because of instances in which the taxi drivers were not paid at the end of the journey or beaten up by young men.[32] The taxi drivers from Uzbek mahallas drive to the city centre in the afternoons, but they are reluctant to go there in the evenings, especially to Kyrgyz-dominated areas such as Zapadnyi, Yugovostok, Frunzenskyi, Oblbolnit-

28 The Uzbek own most businesses and thus have enough money, but they prefer not to show off their wealth otherwise the police might start asking where and how they got the money to buy the car. Of course, not all Kyrgyz work in state positions (with the resultant opportunity to amass wealth) – so there is also a poorer Kyrgyz population who cannot afford the bigger cars. It is important to mention here that the majority of the younger Kyrgyz population work in Russia and send their remittances back to Kyrgyzstan. Interview with Uzbek drivers, 18 November 2017.

29 Interview with Uzbek drivers, 18 November 2017, Karazhygach Mahalla.

30 Interview with Uzbek drivers, Karazhygach Mahalla, 18 November 2017.

31 Interview with Uzbek drivers, Amur Timur Mahalla, 15 November 2017.

32 Interview with Uzbek drivers, Amur Timur Mahalla, 15 November 2017.

sa, Zhapalak and HBK, or to drive to neighbouring towns like Zhalal-Abad, Uzgen and Kara-Suu. They clearly prefer not to go to Kyrgyz neighbourhoods and villages, and try to not to take unknown passengers, especially when these are drunk. Instead they prefer to take passengers from one Uzbek neighbourhood to another and even then only if the passengers are known to them.

Young Uzbek taxi drivers in particular prefer not to go into the city, but the older Uzbek drivers will take Kyrgyz passengers and go to the city centre for two reasons. Firstly, the traffic police are less likely to stop the older taxi drivers because they argue with the police and know their rights much better than the younger generation. Secondly, it is reported that the police do not try to extort money from elders or *aksakal* because they are culturally respected, whereas if a young taxi driver starts to argue with the traffic police, he would be fined immediately. Whenever a "suspicious" passenger, (which may include a drunken Kyrgyz youth) wants to go to a Kyrgyz neighbourhood, the younger Uzbek taxi drivers direct them to an older taxi driver: "We excuse ourselves, saying that we are busy or waiting for someone and suggest an older (*aksakal*) taxi driver by saying that he usually takes clients to the city and know the roads better."[33]

Usually taxi drivers work from early morning till 6 pm and then stop. However, younger taxi drivers still work in the evening, but they work by taking telephone bookings (*zakaz*) from Uzbek people who are known to them. The telephone numbers of Uzbek drivers are widely shared within the mahalla and the passengers are picked up from their homes by pre-arrangement. This method of obtaining taxis is widely practiced among Uzbeks. They feel more secure with Uzbek drivers, especially on a long journey and they show their solidarity with them.

Marshrutka drivers face different kinds of challenges on a daily basis. Uzbek *marshrutka* drivers constantly face discrimination. Some Kyrgyz people abuse them loudly, claim they are not driving properly, and some refuse to pay their fare because the drivers are Uzbek. Routinely 5 to 6 passengers per journey will refuse to pay the fare for the *marshrutka* service into the city. The drivers try to speak Kyrgyz or Russian when asking the passengers for their fare; the Uzbek language is not used as means of communication between drivers and passengers, otherwise it prompts the Kyrgyz passengers to demand that the drivers "speak Kyrgyz because they are living on Kyrgyz land". *Marshrutka* drivers should work until 9 pm, but Uzbek drivers generally work only until 6 pm to avoid having to deal with drunken people (in the main young Kyrgyz men) who get into the *marshrutka* and then refuse to pay or start threatening the drivers. Generally, it is not safe for Uzbeks to work in the

33 Interview with Uzbek drivers, Amur Timur Mahalla, 15 November 2017.

evening. Instead they go home early and prefer to start work in the early morning instead.

The Uzbek drivers are also vulnerable to a number of different complaints made every day by passengers to department authorities, usually on the basis that they did not stop or did not wait for a passenger; this complaint is sent directly to the transport department. On a daily basis, up to 20 Uzbek *marshrutka* drivers will have to pay "unofficial" fines equivalent to 2–3 EUR to the transport department. The drivers told me that "the transport department intentionally makes the life of Uzbek *marshrutka* drivers difficult so they are so resigned to paying fines or bribes. Some drivers suspect that the transport authorities hire someone to monitor the Uzbek *marshrutka* routes".[34] One of the *marshrutka* drivers complained that he cannot drive ahead of any Kyrgyz *marshrutka* driver and compete for passengers, or he will face problems because the Kyrgyz drivers are well connected with the state authorities. Those whose vehicles are at the front pick up more passengers: being at the rear means losing many potential passengers. The driver told me that the Uzbek drivers got together and wrote a letter of complaint, but the transport authorities refused to consider their grievances.

Conclusion

Since the outbreak of violence in 2010 the Uzbek businesspeople have developed their own range of securityscapes. These include providing security through community segregation and boundary making (i.e. concentration of life and businesses in the mahalla), space making and practices of adaptation (turning unsafe businesses into safe businesses), avoidance and concealment of businesses and identity, as well as the usage of video cameras, networking and "invisible" avoidance – avoiding contact with Kyrgyz in a subtle and discreet manner, so as not to give offence. These securityscapes have developed as a reaction to different "imaginations of danger", experienced in reality as physical violence, harassment and the seizure of Uzbek businesses.

Many Uzbeks face a number of challenges on a daily basis. In the main, difficulties affect the economically active, who suffer constant pressure and intimidation from the state authorities and criminals alike. As a result, businesspeople have resorted to finding different kinds of creative strategies to keep their businesses secure. Measures include moving trading from the bazaar to the mahallas, using mobile phones for passenger bookings from the bus station and airport, and avoiding selling to, or serving, potentially "suspicious" clients. The Uzbeks do not openly avoid developing businesses within

34 Interview with a mini-van driver, Osh Mahalla, 23 November 2017.

their economic niche; rather they have tried to turn their existing niche into a safer place by using practices that are not visible to the Kyrgyz community, and in this manner they safeguard their businesses. Some businesses have been turned into "safe" social projects, such as a school, hospital and mosque.

It is important to read the mediating role of the mahalla in securing the elites' social networks: their access to political and economic resources and manipulation of this institution legitimates their positions (Trevisani / Massicard 2003, Boboyorov 2013, Abashin 2015). Business was previously concentrated outside of the mahalla, mostly in the city centre and oriented towards Kyrgyz customers. Now the mahalla has become the security space of the Uzbek community in Osh: the bazaar, transport, hospitals, shops, schools and people have all moved into the mahallas and life is now concentrated therein. This mahalla zone has been further strengthened and developed. The Uzbeks rearrange life there – like a little city within the larger one, but at the same time the city as a whole has become more segregated. The securityscapes of Uzbeks can be characterised as segregation, or drawing lines in public, on the one hand, and adaptation and hiding when moving outside, on the other hand.

As implied by the local Russian term that Uzbeks frequently use, the mahalla has became the *zona komforta* ("comfort zone"). It represents a safe and comfortable place that is outside the influence of the state and of the criminals who threaten the Uzbeks' economic and physical wellbeing. It is a place of safety that outsiders cannot enter. Through creative negotiations with state officials and criminals, it is possible for the mahalla to function as a separate, and safe, economic zone.

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"If It Happens Again" Everyday Responses of the Ruszabon to Existential Dangers in Dushanbe

Hafiz Boboyorov

Abstract

This article discusses how Russian and Russian-speaking (Ruszabon) inhabitants of Dushanbe, the capital city of Tajikistan, shape and maintain their securityscapes through languages, identities, memories, networks and physical structures of the urban space. Securityscapes are physically built and mentally imagined spaces securing individual or collective life from what people perceive as existential dangers. These dangers reflect both objective and imagined conditions threatening individual and collective extinction. Depending on different existential contexts, securityscapes serve either as distinct or as merged and intertwined spatial categories of individuals and collectives. When the Ruszabon face violence in public due to their ethnic and religious origins, they hide their identities or adapt their lifestyle to the hegemonic demands of the Muslim society. Social networks and the physical structures of urban neighbourhoods shape inner securityscapes, as reflected in the physical isolation of individuals and segregation of families, family friends and religious communities from the public. In particular, the memories of the interethnic clashes in the 1990s in Dushanbe, which are substantially influenced by political interpretations, condition and diminish the everyday practices and future expectations of the Ruszabon.

Keywords: Tajikistan, Dushanbe, Ruszabon, securityscapes, existential dangers, everyday practices

Introduction

Through different sections of the novel *Khurramabad* by Andrei Volos, which represents Tajikistan in "the literature map of the world" (Jones 2017), the Russian writer emphasises the February Events in 1990 and the subsequent Civil War (1992–1997) in Tajikistan. His attention reflects the concerns of many Russian and Russian-speaking (Ruszabon) informants in the Tajik capital, Dushanbe, who often interpret these events as an interethnic clash between themselves and the *natsionaly*, as they define the Muslim majority, including Tajiks and Uzbeks. They also link hegemonic practices, such as symbolic nationalism, the destruction of Soviet material and immaterial lega-

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cies, the discrimination against minority groups, and even criminal incidents involving Ruszabon as different forms of the continuation of these February Events. Besides connecting to past events, their memories, which are also evoked by the politicised Russian-speaking mass media, prompt visions of the future as a sudden renewed outburst of past violent events.

Spurred by this retrospective perception of current incidents and imagination of future events, Ruszabon residents of the city of Dushanbe shape their securityscapes by adopting a range of boundary-drawing and boundary-crossing strategies. Marc von Boemcken and colleagues (Boemcken et al. 2016) elaborated the concept of securityscape, inspired by Arjun Appadurai's (1990) notion of "scape". Multiple and fluid scapes thus reflect "'imagined worlds', that is, the multiple worlds which are constituted by the historically situated imaginations of persons and groups spread around the globe" (Appadurai 1990: 296). These imagined worlds are both subjectively internalised and shared across larger groups that also contest and subvert the "imagined communities" of the state, such as "nation" (ibid.: 297). In everyday life they provide people with a "map" to navigate through diverse and ambivalent social fields reflected in materialised spaces, social networks and collective identities (Johansson / Vinthagen 2016).

As "imagined worlds", securityscapes reflect people's everyday practices to secure their physical and social vicinities as well as to fulfil their "metaphysical desire for certitude" (Gough et al. 2016: 350). The existential dangers are not limited to external and structural conditions, referred to, for example, by the concept "existential risks" (Bostrom 2002), which especially characterise threats that people perceive to result in the physical, social and afterlife discontinuities[1] which they necessarily face in their everyday lives (Haubrich 2012, Gough et al. 2016). Along with the threatening objective conditions, the subjective and intersubjective assessments of in/security play a decisive role in resisting what Anthony Giddens defines as "ontological anxiety", i.e. the situation when people lose confidence "in the continuity of their self-identity and in the constancy of the surrounding social and material environments of action" (Giddens 1990: 92). Bearing in mind the crucial role of existential dangers, the search for a "desirable existential state" should build a conceptual basis of "a broader comparative ethnography" (Wilson / Bakker 2016: 292).

The purpose of this article is to understand how the search for this "desirable existential state" is reflected through the everyday security practices of the people. Adam Crawford and Steven Hutchinson (2016: 1190) define these "mundane and quotidian practices", including rituals and routines, as "secu-

1 While physical discontinuity refers to physical injury, punishment and death of an individual caused by natural or societal dangers, social discontinuity is the exclusion of individuals or groups from larger society by categorising them as others and cutting them off from social networks. Afterlife discontinuity describes the threat that an individual will not be saved and resurrected after death if he or she fails to live a "proper" religious life.

rity from below". People employ both habitual practices and conscious strategies to avoid certain spaces, objects and interactions (Haubrich 2012). Sometimes avoidance leads people to isolated or segregated spaces (Crawford / Hutchinson 2016), while often resulting in the practices of drawing and crossing boundaries (Wilson / Bakker 2016).

The perspective of securityscapes is taken as a vantage point to discuss "state performance" (Heathershaw 2014: 39), which is one of the central topics of security studies of the Central Asian region. The everyday security practices of people adapt to the performance of the state and other external actors and intersect their imposed boundaries and structures. Some scholars (cf. Reeves et al. 2014, Humphrey / Skvirskaja 2012, Boboyorov 2018) have discussed how the Central Asian peoples struggle to shape their securityscapes partly by transgressing the increasingly securitised internal posts and international borders of their states. These people seek to secure their everyday translocal life by illegally obtaining passports, resettling in border zones, visiting relatives, shrines or doctors, irrigating domestic plots or allocating remittances. Reeves (2011: 313) depicts how the local populations in these cross-border fields imagine and practice trans-border "places", such as shrines, agricultural fields, pastures, border zones or labour migration. Others (Sahadeo 2011, Isabaeva 2011, Manetta 2011, Beyer 2011) discuss – albeit implicitly – how both local and translocal meanings of "home" relate to the security concerns of ethnic or religious groups, shrine visitors, traders and migrants. For this reason, the boundaries of "home" are fluid and contingent, characterising multiple places.

Only powerful states in the region can transform a few, mainly urban spaces and thus confine the securityscapes of "citizens" within their established boundaries. In the Chinese city of Koshgar, "the bulldozer state" destroys the townspeople's "intimate spaces", including ancestral houses, tombs and mosques (Beller-Hann 2014: 187–188). This is also to some extent relevant to the urban space of Astana in Kazakhstan (Laszszkowski 2014, Bissenova 2014). However, in most other urban settings the people struggle to shape their securityscapes by cutting across state boundaries themselves. In Uzbekistan, the people use "oscillating" strategies (Trevisani 2014) to adapt state structures to their needs. In Tajikistan, Ibañez-Tirado (2015: 550ff.) observes how in the southern city of Kulob people secure their life vis-à-vis "everyday disasters", such as flood and taxation, by "acts of cunning/cheating" the government, religious and international development institutions, and kinship networks.

Of course, the state adapts its local practices to these strategies, which the scholars define as "patronage politics" (McGlinchey 2014: 4). A *mahalla* (semi-self-governance body of rural and urban neighbourhoods) serves to legitimise the political claims of the ruling elites in return for the provision of

security and protection to the residents (Rasanayagam 2009, Noori 2006). Minority groups cannot always embed their security practices among such networks and structures of what my Ruszabon informants called the "patriarchal" society and state. Additionally the hegemonic discourses consider them often a danger to "traditional" family values, moral norms and social ideals (Boemcken et al. 2018: 69). Whereas in such a situation the Pamiris, for example, rely on "multivalent and complex strategies through which they seek to negotiate city life" (Marsden 2012: 218) and thus shape their closed networks across different urban spaces within and beyond Tajikistan (ibid.), the Lyuli and LGBT people in Kyrgyzstan rely on "creative practices of avoidance, boundary-making and withdrawal alongside social adaptation and mimicry" (Boemcken et al. 2018: 69). This paper will examine yet another Central Asian minority group and its strategies – the Ruszabon in Tajikistan.

The Ruszabon in Dushanbe and other urban spaces of Central Asia

In Dushanbe most of the Ruszabon belong to the Russian ethnicity while some of them have kinship ties with other ethnic groups who also speak Russian (including Tajik, Uyghur, Ukrainian, Armenian, Uzbek, Tatar and Georgian). In English literature the term "Rusophone" has been adopted to denote these groups (Peyrouse 2008, Hays 2008). In Tajikistan they inhabit urban spaces and subsist on professional work, petty trade and religious charity. They adhere to Russian language, culture and Orthodox Christianity. The post-Soviet ethno-political transformations left this minority group to struggle for their everyday survival and security. These transformations, such as ethnonational policies and Islamic resurgence, contributed to interethnic tensions and divisions in some Central Asian countries (Abazov 2007), and subsequently led to the emergence of "ethnocracies" (Juska 1999: 524). These first shrank the space for Ruszabon in state institutions, as the post-Soviet institutions and practices reduced power and resources for titular ethnic groups. Moreover, ethnonational practices excluded ethnic minorities from the category of "nation" and thus legitimised political and economic discrimination against them (Akçali 2003, Abashin 2011, Bandey / Rather 2013).

Abashin observes that the political and ideological transformations of the newly established Central Asian states have led to a "massive reconstruction and renaming of spaces, destruction of all symbolic places of memory about the Soviet period" (Abashin 2011: 201–202). The particularities of these post-Soviet developments, he argues, depend on the different sizes of the Russian-speaking population in each country: "Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan

have large Russian-speaking communities, including Russian-speaking Kazakhs and Kyrgyz, therefore, national powers do not want traumatisation of the process of de-sovietisation to be the source of internal social tensions" (ibid.: 203). While these countries are searching for coexistence with the Russian community, in Tajikistan this minority group desperately fights against the dominant group's discriminatory practices of what Abashin defines as "the Muslim alternative" (ibid.: 209).

Under the Soviet Union most of the Ruszabon citizens occupied professional and decision-making positions in political, administrative and economic sectors (Peyrouse 2008: 2–3, Bandey / Rather 2013: 150–151). After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the outbreak of the Civil War (1992–1997) in Tajikistan the majority of them emigrated to the Russian Federation. Radnitz considers rapid economic decline as a primary factor motivating Ruszabon to leave some Central Asian states (Bandey / Rather 2013: 152). In Tajikistan not only economic factors but especially the climate of fear created by ethnic riots were important for the large-scale emigration of Ruszabon. As Bandey and Rather acknowledge, due to the nationalist movements and political Islam "many people envisaged eruption of ethnic clashes and this fear forced many to out migrate to a country of their origin" (Bandey / Rather 2013: 150). In 2010 there were 35,000 Russians registered in the entire country, comprising 0.5 per cent of its total population, as compared to 388,000 or 7.6 per cent in 1989. In Dushanbe there are currently about 20,000 Russians, whereas in 1989 they made up 33 per cent (about 200,000) of its 600,000 inhabitants (Population Census 1989, 2012; see also Peyrouse 2008: 5, Bandey / Rather 2013: 147 for comparisons).

The post-Soviet developments in Tajikistan, especially economic decline, ethnonational policies and religious radicalism, have excluded, marginalised and stigmatised many of those who did not leave the country. This situation "looked as if ethnic cleansing had taken place in public/private sectors, administration or elsewhere and thus Russians were reduced to non-significant minorities" (Bandey / Rather 2013: 150). Only some of the Ruszabon have developed kinship and patronage ties with the Muslim majority, which embeds them into "patriarchal" or patron-client (both state and non-state) structures. Also, media reports claim that some segments of the Ruszabon population represent a high proportion of the homeless and unemployed individuals, isolated families and segregated religious minorities (e.g., Tsherbakova 2013, Ol'khovaya et al. 2004, Rudenko / Sorokin 1993).

Also the hegemonic demands of the Muslim majority reflected in ethnic nationalism and political Islam increasingly expose the Ruszabon to danger in everyday life. My informants categorise the Muslim majority as *natsionaly* (literally "national peoples"), a term with which they refer to all groups who adopt the hegemonic way of life as well as engage in repressing minority

groups. As Abashin also observes, "the nationalistic and religious spirit" of the Central Asian societies has caused "acute concern about the demographic and cultural threat from other-ethnic minorities. […] We see fierce battles in the mass media and on the Internet, where participants choose their opponents based on their ethnic origin and threaten them with revenge" (Abashin 2011: 196–197). These hegemonic discourses and practices "strengthen each other, spread to other spheres, shape memory about certain events and interpret them" (ibid.).

Notably, the Russian mass media also contributes to the hegemonic discourses. Regular reports (cf. Tsherbakova 2013, Tul'skij 2005, Ol'khovaya et al. 2004, Rudenko / Sorokin 1993) and abundant Internet sources, for example, frequently refer to religious hatred, ethnic cleansing and sexual assaults during the February Events of 1990 in the city of Dushanbe. They spread stories by Russian and Russian-speaking witnesses to ethnic, religious and sexual violence. The dominant view among the Ruszabon is that the February Events and their interethnic logic have given rise to all successive clashes, including the Civil War and post-Civil War nationalist and religious developments. This hegemonic discourse, as reflected and highlighted in the Russian media, also accuses interethnic tensions of leading to criminal incidents (such as murder and sexual assault), which happen from time to time. This politicised topic, which also legitimises the political and military presence of Russia in Tajikistan, provokes distrust between the Ruszabon and the Muslim majority. It also interprets the acts of national and religious revival of the latter (such as shifting educational policies, promoting native languages, removing Russian endings in family names, changing the names of streets and the demolishing Soviet buildings) as being directed against Russians and the Soviet-origin middle class (see also Beeman 1999, Pavlenko 2008, Bandey / Rather 2013).

Apart from the general and historical observations of some scholars and the politicised accounts of media reports, this study is the first of its kind to examine the marginalised Ruszabon group in the urban space of Tajikistan. From December 2015 to May 2016, I conducted an ethnographic field study among the Ruszabon group in Dushanbe. The research started with a focus on a neighbourhood of houses and building blocks administered by a single *mahalla* and expanded its scope to the inhabitants' networks of families, friends, professional circles and religious communities. For my research, I interviewed 21 Ruszabon residents, including 6 key informants and their family members, with whom I had frequent interactions. As the cases below manifest, the Ruszabon react and respond differently to existential dangers in everyday life due to their individual and family situations, as well as due to their ethnic and religious affiliations.

Translocal families

More than half of the Ruszabon families that I interviewed in Dushanbe live a translocal life, with some of their family members permanently residing in the Russian Federation, supporting their family members in Tajikistan both financially and morally. These belong to the half million people who left Tajikistan in the post-Soviet period. Although the critical periods of outmigration of the Ruszabon were February 1990 (about 100,000) and the Civil War in 1992 (150,000) (Bandey / Rather 2013: 147), the process continues until today. Thus not only these critical periods of ethnic and religious conflict but also the memories of these notorious events shape certain patterns of security practices of Ruszabon families. The individual and social memory and experience of existential dangers in the past, generated and interpreted through hegemonic discourses and practices, influence the way in which the Ruszabon imagine and respond to current and future threats. Translocality, on the one hand, and spatial proximity, on the other, are important patterns that shape security practices of some Russian-speaking people. Translocal mobility, utilised by many Russian speakers since the collapse of the Soviet Union, allows them to generate remittances and thus improve their socio-economic security, and has been the focus of many publications, especially on labour migration (for literature review see, e.g., Boboyorov 2018).

My informants asserted that their translocal mobility gives them a feeling of physical security, in part, by having a place to flee to in the case of another outbreak of civil unrest. They define this security strategy as an "option in reserve" (*rezervnyj variant*). The family members live in different countries, especially Tajikistan and Russia, obtain Russian or dual citizenship and sometimes residence permits in both countries. Often the informants consider Russia as "a country of escape", a country to which they can flee "in the event of a force majeure". As a 49-year-old man expressed, "I am not sure if [another civil war] can happen again, since the civil war blew up so suddenly. What can I do? I feel that my life and the future of my family are at risk" (interview by author, 16 December 2015).

In addition to translocal mobility, the other important security strategy of translocal families is their settlement in the city centre of Dushanbe. My informants from this group consider this space one of the most important conditions of their everyday security. They seek to move to this part of the city and to find jobs within the international organisations concentrated there. Since the Civil War (1992–1997) part of the city centre, which extends along the main street, Rudaki Avenue, has become more securitised by both civilian and military structures of the state. The political and economic elites as well as the diplomatic representatives reside in this protected area. By the early

2000s many central neighbourhoods were blocked off from other parts of the city by traffic barriers, concrete walls and iron or wire fences. Police patrols, police checkpoints or the guard posts of soldiers and security officers on street corners protected certain areas and buildings of the city centre from paramilitary and criminal groups. The central buildings, which house government offices, embassies and NGOs, were isolated by iron fences or blocked off from other parts of the city by traffic barriers on the connecting roads. Inside these protected areas there were residential buildings. Although some of these material barriers and military personnel have since been removed, government buildings and residential houses retain their iron or concrete walls, checkpoints and sometimes traffic barriers on street corners, hampering free movement into the neighbourhoods.

To become embedded in this highly protected city centre, some Ruszabon have taken employment with foreign embassies, international organisations and their local branches. The elite international institutions serve as a securityscape for their local employees by providing them not only with financial protection but also physical security, which is also observed in other contexts (see e.g. Gough et al. 2016).

One 42-year-old man described how his employment with a UN organisation enabled his family and the family of his mother-in-law to resettle in a more secured neighbourhood of the city centre (personal interview, 16 December 2015). He also maintains a circle of Ruszabon friends, who work in the NGO sector and often have translocal families. They regularly visit each other, share networking in the international sector, talk about the criminal situation in the city and recall the traumas of the Civil War. Memory of these traumas is an important reference to particular events and incidents, and maintains securityscapes created in a certain past. The informant recalls that after a colleague in his musical band was shot dead by a stray bullet during the Civil War, most of the colleagues as well as his family members left the country. He remained because he managed to be recruited by a UN organisation. So far he considers the international organisations as the only effective structure providing financial and physical protection for employees. He has revived the musical group, which performs in an elite café, enabling him and his friends to socialise with the high-ranking staff of foreign (N)GOs and local elites.

"International" families

Six of my Ruszabon informants have developed kinship ties with the Muslim population who thus identify them as "international" (ethnically mixed) families. All of them have relatives in Russia but what is different from other

translocal families is their embeddedness within their extended family and the *mahalla* neighbourhood. Also, their economic situation makes them rely on these "patriarchal" structures of everyday security. Like most urban residents, they cannot afford to move to the city centre and to seal off their private houses. Beyond the city centre, other parts of the central areas and neighbourhoods of the city comprise multifaceted and divided spaces with different levels of in/security. Often the "international" families develop their securityscapes in a neighbourhood by sharing their private spaces with extended families and neighbours and collectively isolating themselves from the outside. Compared to the inviolable mansions of the elites and their international tenants, the neighbourhood that was studied consists of three building blocks and adjacent private houses, set apart by walls, iron gates, fences, traffic barriers and dead ends. These material barriers demarcate the *mahalla*, i.e. the collective administrative body of the neighbourhood. Consequently they transform the Soviet functionalist-constructivist standard and easy-access style of their houses, building blocks, neighbourhoods, streets and public places.

During the time of the Soviet Union, the urban middle class, including the Ruszabon, settled in *mikrorayons* or "micro-regions", i.e. the primary structural elements of residential areas often adjacent to the workplaces of the residents, thus reflecting their social classes and types of employment. From the beginning of the Civil War some Ruszabon families who could not leave the country moved to central neighbourhoods in Dushanbe. For many groups the *mahalla*-style congestion of families in the same neighbourhood is not directly related to ethnic or religious segregation nor to moral commitment of the residents to the *mahalla* but rather due to the shared security practices of families and "family members". Such practices do result in an increasing concentration of ethnic and religious groups in distinct urban spaces, but the primary factor behind this concentration is the objective of family security.

Collective life in the *mahalla* neighbourhood, in particular, subjugates Ruszabon "international" families to the hegemonic demands of the Muslim majority. This supersedes the division between Islam and Christianity or strong attachment to either, in order to preserve individual and family destinies. In the neighbourhood examined, the members of the "international" families do not actively live their religious life and do not openly divulge their faiths. They do not visit the mosque or church for regular prayer but rather celebrate the selected feasts and rites of passage of both religions (including Kurban, Easter, weddings and funerals). This religious mimicry serves as a security strategy, given that they do not believe in these religious practices due to being either Christian or atheist. Notably, this is more of a security concern, as they perceive that the open practice of non-Muslim faiths in particular, or rejection of any religious practice, endangers their lives vis-à-vis the Muslim extremists in their neighbourhood and beyond. As they see it, these

Muslim "extremists" do not represent a specific group but rather consist of all who demonstratively practice Islam and thus impose their dominance over other religious minorities (interviews by author with a 42-year-old and a 69-year-old man, 16 December 2015 and 14 April 2016).

As the informants often warn, "fanatical" young Muslims threaten them, their families and friends. They believe that open dislike and even loathing on the street is due to religious fanaticism (*religioznyj fanatizm*). Obviously the role of memory and political propaganda with reference to the ethnic and religious clashes during the February Events and the Civil War in the 1990s is vital in provoking this imagined danger. In response to this danger, the members of "international" families manifest their adaptation with certain practices of social mimicry, including linguistic and behavioural code switching and body display. Their linguistic adaptation to the majority requires speaking the local languages and dialects as well as jargon.

A 30-year-old electrician from a Russian-Armenian family (interview by author, 18 December 2015), who is married to a Tajik woman and has three children, speaks the local (*Dushanbinskiy*) dialect and the jargon of the so-called "city orphans" (Tajik: *saqirahoi şahrī*). "City orphans" refer to the network of young urban residents who control the everyday movement of "others" in their "zones of influence". Some other informants define them as "aggressive youth" or more formally as "juvenile delinquents". The electrician's linguistic skills help him to maintain and widen the network of clients whose appliances he repairs. Besides this socio-economic aspect, as he mentioned, speaking the local dialect and especially jargon is necessary for moving around more securely during the late evening when he often visits his private clients after his day job in a city electric company. He meets the "city orphans" at every corner and has to find a "common language": "It happens sometimes, especially at a late hour and somewhere hidden from view. They stop and try to entrap you by hinting at your faith." The dialect and jargon he uses show his belonging or respect to this group. Besides using the local dialect and jargon, in this case he introduces himself as a Tatar, an ethnic group of Muslims of Russian appearance.

In the circles of families and in the neighbourhood, Russian-speaking "international" families celebrate the Islamic festivities, wear "national" (Tajik) clothes, and conceal their religious or non-religious views. Thereby they adapt to hegemonic religious demands in order to avoid such religious condemnations as "infidel" or "apostate". Not all informants can give concrete examples of violent outcomes of such condemnations but rather refer to strict surveillance in their neighbourhood and in public. However, some informants, who have already experienced some incidents especially during religious gatherings, point to both the 1990 February Events and to incidents of religious hatred. Indeed, some converted followers and missionaries of minority reli-

gions (such as Zoroastrianism, the Baha'i faith and Evangelism) have been shot dead in public, stabbed in the entryways of their apartment buildings or persecuted and detained by the state authorities on charges of "incitement of religious and ethnic hatred" (cf. USCIRF 2016, The US Embassy 2009). The members of "international" families therefore adapt their appearance and lifestyle to Islamic practices. Although sometimes the adaptation to Islamic practices reflects an actual conversion to Islam, in some cases, it is a matter of outward mimicry to protect oneself from physical assault and social exclusion.

A 69-year-old man from a mixed family (himself Tajik) expressed his concern that "Mullahs have threatened not to perform [for us] *janoza* [the Islamic funeral service]. This fanaticism gives rise to pietism and hypocrisy. I am not free anymore with what I want to do and where I want to go" (interview by author, 14 April 2016). He and some other informants reported that they avoid regularly visiting religious rituals that demand strict religious observance. Nevertheless, they cannot miss funeral and other important liminal services, which ensure social inclusion and religious salvation – which are provided in return for following the hegemonic demands.

A Christian-Armenian informant, who has a Muslim bride and thus close ties with her extended family, reflected upon his experience of "tolerance" as religious adaptation due to the "aggressive" demands of both neighbours and all who know the family. He defined this one-sided condition thusly: "I am unchurched but I have to respect believers who do not respect me" (interview by author, 2–4 December 2015). Obviously he adapts to the hegemonic demands not because he accepts them but rather to avoid social exclusion and physical assault. Another, 69-year-old man said that he must follow his neighbours to observe religious norms in public and sometimes to visit and pray in the mosque. He adapts his behaviour not for religious salvation, nor primarily for his personal security but for his family's security:

> I perform these [religious practices] […] in order to prevent rumours that I do not observe them. During Ramadan I do not fast, and I do smoke but do not show this outside just because I respect my neighbours and do not want them to distrust and despise me. My acquaintances visit the mosque and wear beards because they expect these from each other. Otherwise, the aggressive youth, who these days are hunting infidels, would call not only me "infidel" but also my family. Let them kill me but I do not want the neighbours to despise my children because their infidel father would not be given a funeral. (interview by author, 14 April 2016)

Besides the general fear of the religious "fanaticism", concerns about vulnerable members – especially children, adolescents and women – forces the "international" families to adapt their lifestyle in the neighbourhood and beyond. A 30-year old man told me that, "one must think in advance about the family's wellbeing and security, especially about the children's" (interview by

author, 18 December 2015). The physical boundaries and architectural styles of the *mahalla* neighbourhood help to territorialise the space and thus to secure the inhabitants. The neighbours set codes and locks on the main doors of the building blocks and maintain high walls and iron gates around them. The families who live on the lower floors or close to the streets additionally equip their homes with barbed wire fences, iron gates and doors. Wealthier families might install a surveillance camera at the entrance door or keep a guard dog in the backyard – both also providing protection for other neighbours. Recently, the *mahalla* collected money from neighbours to replace the old barricades on the street inside the neighbourhood, which slows down the speed of the cars.

Such organisation of the neighbourhood by the urban middle class has also been observed in other contexts (Haubrich 2012, Crawford / Hutchinson 2015). The measures taken contribute to securing the everyday life of especially children, adolescents and women from such street dangers such as juvenile delinquency, drug addiction, sexual assault and human trafficking.

Moreover, neighbours, both men and women, mutually keep watch over children, adolescents and women by monitoring them – looking out of the windows, keeping tabs on their behaviour, their circle of friends and places they visit during daytime. By these means they influence the networking practices of the children, adolescents and girls, defining gender roles and setting up strict rules on making new friends from outside the neighbourhood. Within the neighbourhood they block off corners and backstreets, control the movements and daily activities of the children, provide escorts for children and allow them to share inner family spaces. Without permission and, if necessary, without an escort, children are not allowed to violate these intertwined multiple securityscapes. The blocked-off corners and backstreets also prevent them from transgressing the boundaries of these spaces. Having only a single exit to the street for three building blocks in the neighbourhood increases the opportunity to keep an eye on the movement of children and adolescents beyond the neighbourhood. The neighbours do not let them go beyond a visible distance or without adults, especially in the evenings.

Extended families and family friends

The extended families, family friends and neighbours are also concerned about the everyday security of their children in state institutions, including kindergartens, schools and colleges. In schools and on the way back home young girls rely on their senior brothers, other relatives and neighbours who often go to the same school. An interviewee sent her daughter to study in a musical

college, because a family friend teaches there (interview by author, 18 May 2016). Another interviewed woman has a different professional background but now works in the neighbourhood kindergarten in order to take care of her own children as well as of the children of her extended family and neighbours (interview by author, 18 December 2015). The administrations of these state institutions sign an agreement with the parents or other close family members about persons responsible for picking up the children after working hours.

The category of "family friends" characterises the distinctive networking strategy of the Ruszabon, with whom they share their inner family space to mutually protect children and adolescents. This category is not intrinsic to other "patriarchal" groups, who mostly rely on their extended families alone.

When an informant's wife passed away, an older female neighbour overtook the daily care of his small daughter until the girl was old enough to get married. Later the old woman herself was left alone when her son migrated to Russia for permanent settlement. From then on these two families have shared their household spaces in order to provide mutual support and security in their daily lives. A similar situation was described by a 63-year old woman in another building block:

> We [two neighbours in the same building] are friends, we enter [each other's apartments] without warning and our children nomadise [share] the apartments. We live this way […] to support each other by looking after the children when an adult is absent. The neighbour looks after [the children, too]. Our sons go to the same sports club, our daughters take ballroom dancing together. You cannot trust and leave them alone or with people whom you don't know. (interview by author, 22 January 2016).

Some might turn family friends into fictive (neither consanguineal nor affinal but rather adopted) kin: an interviewed Russian woman for example relies on two "adopted" sons – one provides protection for her within her household and the other one, a market trader, protects her when she goes to the bazaar for shopping. She has witnessed many violent incidents, she reported, including many cases of theft and even a physical assault on another old Russian woman in the nearby bazaar.

Ruszabon women frequently encounter sexual harassment, verbal insults and sometimes physical attacks during their daily movement beyond the neighbourhood. They defined several "dangerous" places in the vicinity, such as the bazaar (Bazaar Şohmansur) and two parks, the Opera Ballet Square and Lohuti Square.

Not only the current security conditions of these spaces, which have considerably improved according to the interviewees, but also the memory of the February Events influence their perception that the bazaar and the two parks are hotspots of sexual assault, drug addiction and human trafficking in the city. Indeed, several high-profile child kidnappings in the *mikrorayon*, criminal activities in the bazaar and a street of homeless and addicted people (often

Ruszabon) next to the bazaar keeps this collective memory alive. Some women adapt their behaviour and clothes to the hegemonic demands of the society. In their neighbourhood, in public and when visiting their kin and friends they wear "national" garments to avoid harassment. As a 62-year old woman (interview by author, 14 April 2016) told me, and as can be seen as a quite common belief, during the February Events the "fanatic youth" attacked especially those women in public who wore European clothes.

Thus women who do not wear "national" clothes avoid dangerous places and narrow streets. If they have to come close to these places, especially during evening hours, their brothers or husbands meet them in open areas and accompany them home. This family escort is similar to the Islamic practice of *mahram* adopted in this case by the "international" families. A 30-year old man explained:

> I became a teacher in the school where my mother worked just because she wanted me to be with her, to accompany her when she goes to and returns from the school. After the civil war it was dangerous for women to go outside alone and so far I cannot let my wife and children go alone. I particularly forbid my daughter to go outside in the dark and to wander in strange places also during daytime. There are many rude youths. (interview by author, 18 December 2015).

Only a few women, who have no other choice than to venture into such places alone, rely on their own resilience to protect themselves from physical and sexual assaults. Otherwise, bad reputations spread easily in the neighbourhood, among kin and acquaintances (also see Molla et al. 2008). They try not to respond to harassment (such as calling, smacking, poking, whistling, gesturing and slowing down in cars with tinted windows and inviting the girl inside) and instead pretend they do not notice the signals but rather bend their heads and move away in advance when they see young men approaching:

> I go with earphones on my ears and do not look at those who look at me. You have to not respond to such idiots. Otherwise, they will tease, insult and attack you. Even the policemen who see this do not approach (24-year-old girl, interview by author, 22 May 2016).

Isolated and segregated individuals

Some of my Ruszabon informants living in Dushanbe are unable to resort to translocal mobility nor to find support in the networks of relatives and family friends. People belonging to ethnically mixed families, particularly the elderly, (Peyrose 2008: 5, Bandey / Rather 2013: 153) represent the most isolated and segregated segments of Ruszabon who live in different parts of the city. Not being embedded in family and neighbourhood networks and having lost ties with their relatives in other countries, their social isolation has turned them

into one of the most impoverished groups in the society. Unemployment, homelessness and alcoholism are quite common problems. Often they subsist on petty trade, charities, remains of food and alms that passers-by and traders give to them. My personal survey in a park near the Sadbarg trading centre, a place where many impoverished people gather, showed that most of them were Ruszabon.

For example, an old woman begs for alms half a day on the main street of the trading centre. This retired pharmacist gets only 200 TJ Somoni (about 22 USD) as a monthly pension, which is not enough for her survival. The State Department of Social Provision rejected her appeals for extra social support or employment. Moreover, she could not independently find any appropriate job because of her age. Her only daughter left two children with her, moved to Moscow and disappeared there without a trace. One of the granddaughters works at a nightclub and the other married a man who already had two other wives. The couple sold her private house and now she rents an apartment in the downtown neighbourhood. The granddaughter works as a waitress in a restaurant to pay for the rent. Not only this family "shame" but also her economic deprivation make it important for her to hide her ethnic and religious origin, which is Tatar (Russian-speaking Muslim). As described previously, Ruszabon from "international" families, who seem Tajik in outward appearance, often pretend to be Muslim to fit in with the hegemonic demands. However, the only chance for a Tatar Muslim, who does not speak Tajik and is clearly not a local – and thus will not be accepted as part of the local Muslim community – is to act as a Christian. She uses this strategy to be accepted in the Russian Orthodox Church, where she feels a sense of mutual inclusion and helpfulness with other impoverished visitors. She visits the Church on a regular basis where she regularly receives food and clothes and psychological support. With begging she earns a small income in order to provide daily meals for herself and her great-grandchildren. Due to this aggravating insecurity she has lost her sense of family attachment and affiliation to Islam. She is extremely wary of other people due to the bad experiences of her daughter's disappearance, the polygamous marriage of her granddaughter and her own begging on the street. She does not trust neighbours or the generous individuals on streets and bazaars who give her alms. Rather, during her begging she does not tell the truth about her family but rather changes her facial expression and abruptly cries in order to hide her true identity.

Although most Tajiks and Uzbeks would never lose their ties with their families and neighbours, in the Ruszabon community, this is not the case. A lonely old woman who agreed to be interviewed lives on her pension and rejects any protection from family members, friends and neighbours. In her opinion, family, neighbourhood and religious community present a danger to her "self-dignity". She does not believe in any faith: "I am atheist […] and I

do not understand that the former strict communists have become democrats or that atheists have become converts. How can they be devout?" (interview by author, 2–4 December 2015). She lives alone, isolated from her kinsmen, neighbours and colleagues. As she noted,

> My interaction with the neighbours is limited to mutual greetings, not more. I don't like if someone barges into my personal life and in return I don't intervene in a stranger's life. I perceive good-neighbourliness as mutual non-interference.

To avoid intrusion into her personal life, she reduces her individual securityscape to the physical boundaries of her apartment. She often keeps her apartment locked and limits her contact to a few people by landline phone and avoids any face-to-face encounter if not agreed in advance. She does not accept new information and communication technologies which again she fears might violate her self-dignity. In the neighbourhood only a Russian-Armenian family takes care of her in urgent situations, especially when she is sick.

Two other Ruszabon informants with an ethnically mixed background, known as "Metis", seek to break the social isolation by developing completely different security practices. The notion of "Metis" is a stigmatised reference to the offspring of different ethnic groups, who did not develop "international" families and networks with the Muslim majority. Especially for Muslims this notion implies religious and ethnic inferiority. The Metis thus conceal their religious and ethnic belonging in order to shun this stigma and the social exclusion and physical assaults that result. Nowicki's concept of *l'homme des confins* ("man of borders") suggests how also in another context the "Mestizo" (from which the term "Metis" derives) – the offspring of Spaniards and American Indians – hide or reject their distinct identities, such as race, class, place of birth and religious affiliation (see Grillo 2007: 202–204).

Very similar strategies can be found among the Metis in Dushanbe: A 54-year-old Metis man – "half-Tajik, half-Russian" as he described himself – returned to Tajikistan after having migrated to Russia for a short period, because he could not find a permanent job there (interview by author, 8 February 2016). Now back, he adapts his personal behaviour and family lifestyle to what the Muslim majority expect or demand, in order to keep his job in an art institution. For this reason, he speaks only Tajik language and dialects, observes the religious rituals, celebrates feasts, and participates in neighbourhood exchanges. With these practices he imitates the ethnic and religious identities of the dominant population, i.e. Tajiks and Uzbeks.

In another case, a 58-year-old Metis woman (interviewed by author, 7 May 2016) called this imitation practice as having "no identity" to justify her mimicry and adaptation in public. Notably, this does not mean that the Metis people do not have their own identity as lived out in private and hidden spaces. Within her "no identity" strategy, this informant told exceptionally positive

stories about her encounters with the local people, the "good-neighbourly" relations and *internatsionalizm* ("cosmopolitism") and the "international" families. She admitted though that this strategy is not always helpful and that in everyday life minority groups are more prone to social exclusion and denial. She further reflected on the situation: "[t]he notions of age, social status, ethnicity are tools of the bureaucratic machine. They have some function and make people different". She struggled to reinterpret and readjust the meanings of "Metis" and "native inhabitants" (*korennye zhyteli*). Against the logic of the hegemonic discourse, she claimed that she too is a "native" (*korennoy*), which she justified by reference to her parents who "were born, lived, studied, worked and finally rested in the soil of Tajikistan".

Both informants told me that they face discrimination due to the ethnic identification in their passports and other ID documents. To avoid such discrimination, members of Tajik-Uzbek families in particular choose the dominant (especially Tajik) ethnicity for their children. Others, who cannot choose this ethnicity due to their affiliation to a minority religion, choose a more "convenient" (that is mostly Russian) ethnicity. A family of Armenian-Russian-Tajik origin, who earlier chose the Russian ethnicity for their own children, now decided to register the grandchildren – born of a Tajik mother – as being of Tajik ethnicity. The choice of an ethnicity for official registration is thus subject to security considerations and might be used by members of mixed families to choose the ethnicity among possible alternatives that promises the least discrimination for their offspring. The regulation of Chapter 36 of the Civic Code of Tajikistan – "On Amendments, Changes and Additions to the Book of Civic Registry" – allows them to address the ZAGS (civic registry office) or court in these cases (Civic Code 2008: 236).

Concluding remarks

This article has discussed securityscapes of Russian-speakers in a central neighbourhood in the city of Dushanbe. As defined, securityscapes are both physical manifestations and imagined boundaries that people shape and maintain in order to secure their everyday life. The search and demand for existential security is the central function of everyday security practices. People respond differently to existential threats due to their different individual situations and group affiliations. Also their memories and experiences of existential dangers influence the way in which they reflect on current and future threats. From this perspective, security practices are not only limited to the present time, but are especially future-oriented, as people undertake certain strategies to secure their future, which they view as the continuation of their

past. The role of both individual and social memory, generated and interpreted through hegemonic discourses and practices, is important when reflecting upon the future and thus in shaping current security strategies dedicated to this future.

The discussion above revealed two general types of securityscapes and inherent security practices that Russian-speakers living in Dushanbe maintain. These types can be classified as (1) boundary-drawing securityscapes and (2) boundary-crossing securityscapes.

Boundary-drawing practices maintain spatial mobility and proximity of those Russian-speakers who do not have family relations with Muslims. Instead, they build translocal networks, and try to obtain dual or Russian citizenship, residence permits in two countries and employment with international organisations. The collective memory of the Civil War is important in generating such "options in reserve" in anticipation of a possible sudden outbreak of civil unrest in the future.

Another important boundary-drawing strategy is spatial proximity, maintained especially through shared spaces of family, "family friends", neighbours and residence in a particular part of the city (the city centre). These spaces are also multifaceted and therefore people develop inner spaces not only within their families but also through the traditional *mahalla*-style organisation of neighbourhoods. The collective maintenance of secured spaces of families and neighbourhoods has also resulted in a concentration of ethnic and religious communities in different parts of the city. The physical boundaries of a neighbourhood maintain these inner spaces, which exercise social control and thus secure the movements of in particular the more vulnerable members of the community, especially children, adolescents and women. State institutions adjacent to families and neighbourhoods also facilitate their social control. Moreover, families and neighbours establish social control through escort and social networks to secure the everyday life of vulnerable people traversing beyond the neighbourhood. Not always are these practices sufficient and therefore those who are vulnerable themselves develop individual strategies of behavioural avoidance or proactive measures in response to social exclusion and physical threats.

As some studies note, about half of the Ruszabon of Tajikistan live below the poverty line. As my cases show, some of them neither resort to translocal networking nor receive protection from family and neighbourhood. They live instead very isolated lives in their private homes or rely on the charity of strangers or of minority religions. Another segment of impoverished Ruszabon includes Metis, who either conceal or switch their ethnic identity in order to adapt to the Muslim majority.

The "international" families are the segment of Ruszabon who have developed kinship ties with Muslims. Hence, their personal behaviours and social

networking are characterised by boundary-crossing securityscapes expressed in adaptation to hegemonic demands. Their securityscapes find common ground between different ethnicities, surmount the division between Islam and Christianity or conceal strong attachment to one or the other. The members of these families might employ a hidden or "no identity" strategy and hide their faiths, celebrating selected feasts and liminal rituals of both religions and performing the restrictive norms of Islam in public. Again, collective memory and political propaganda are important in interpreting past events as recurrent dangers of ethnic and religious fanaticism. Important security practices of Russian-speaking "international" families include body display and identity switching in obedience to the hegemonic demands. In particular, female members of these families adapt to the Muslim way of life as manifested in Islamic garments and adhere to the patriarchal norms of family relations such as family escorts and early marriage.

Although the joint efforts of the Russian and Tajik governments have improved the general socio-economic conditions of the Ruszabon in recent years, the increasing nationalism and religious fanaticism still keep the memories of the February Events and the subsequent Civil War alive. Thus, the different strategies for improving the everyday security of their families and friends are still felt necessary by many Ruszabon, to keep them prepared for the future: "If it happens again".

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Security Perceptions and Practices of the Indigenous People of the Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh

Bhumitra Chakma

Abstract

This paper illustrates the insecurity perceptions and security practices of the Paharis, an indigenous people of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) in Bangladesh. It adopts an interpretive ethnographic approach in which it posits, based on fieldwork experiences, that the security perceptions of the CHT indigenous people are primarily formed by the experiences of marginalisation. Marginalisation has resulted mainly from the assimilationist nation-building policies and ill-conceived development projects pursued by first Pakistan and later Bangladesh, which have not only threatened the Paharis' group identity but have also generated threats of violence in their everyday lives. The macro-level threat to identity and the micro-level threat of violence in everyday life operate in parallel and in an intertwined fashion. To cope with these threats, the Paharis have employed an array of different strategies at both macro and micro levels, which are analysed in this paper.

Keywords: Paharis, Chittagong Hill Tracts, Bangladesh, indigenous people, critical security studies

Introduction

Indigenous communities throughout the world confront diverse sets of threats in their collective and individual lives, but traditional International Relations (IR) scholarship has not paid much attention to their insecurities. The security threats to indigenous communities only began to receive attention when critical security studies (CSS) took an "ethnographic turn" (Salter / Mutlu 2013) and Social Sciences a "practice turn" (Schatzki et al. 2001). CSS has now turned its research agenda toward the intertwined structure of "security discourses, security practices and everyday security" (Lemon 2018: 2), which is a significant advance in its research programme, but the scope remains broad and the focus on the security practices of indigenous communities is sketchy. Placed in such a context, this article illustrates the insecurity perceptions and

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security practices of the indigenous people of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) in Bangladesh, who are commonly known as the Paharis or, more recently, as Jummas.[1] It seeks to address two key research questions: (1) What informs the insecurity perceptions of the Paharis? Or, to put it differently, how do the Paharis perceive security threats? and (2) How do they cope with these threats?

Theory and Method

Given that "security" is a contested concept (Buzan 2016) with no "fixed meaning" and is constantly redefined and experienced in varying ways by different actors (Zedner 2009), it is important to clarify the way the concept is used in this paper and the theoretical and methodological approaches applied. The paper is positioned within the framework of the "ethnographic turn" of critical security studies and adopts an interpretive ethnographic method to illustrate the Pahari insecurity perceptions and their coping strategies. Cai Wilkinson defines the ethnographic approach as "qualitative data generation techniques that are naturalistic, meaning that they involve studying people or phenomena in their 'natural' setting or context, and produce accounts of research that are experience-near, meaning that they are based on people's experiences of events, actions and phenomena in the setting or context" (Wilkinson 2013: 129).

The interpretive ethnographic approach is based on fieldwork in which the researcher's participation, experiences and observations generate data and "uncover emic (insider) perspectives on political and social life and/or ground-level processes involved therein" (Bayard de Volo / Schatz 2004: 267). Although ethnography was originally developed in Anthropology, it has been successfully introduced as a viable research tool in CSS. Indeed, the ethnographic approach and CSS are a "complementary and potentially powerful pairing" (Wilkinson 2013: 131).

To illustrate the construction of Pahari security perceptions, the most useful concept is that of "securitisation", developed by Buzan et al., who define it as a "self-referential practice because it is in this practice that the issue becomes a security issue – not necessarily because a real existential threat exists" (Buzan et al. 1998: 24). Security threats are, therefore, embedded in social relations and they are inter-subjectively constituted within discourses (Krause

1 The term "Pahari" means "hill dweller" and the literal meaning of "Jumma" is someone who is engaged in *jum* or "slash and burn" cultivation. The term "Jumma" is a political "invention", to use Van Schendel's term (Van Schendel 1992), which came into use in the context of serving as a symbol of collective resistance against the assimilationist policy of the Bangladesh government.

/ Williams 1996). The paper will thus illuminate how the Paharis imagine and securitise threats, thereby creating their insecurity discourses.

A security practice is a socially meaningful action that an actor or a group of actors undertakes to protect itself from dangers. Indeed, security practices involve a "highly diverse and heterogeneous spectrum of shared imaginations and everyday practices that all people necessarily partake in when responding to the existential contingencies of life" (Von Boemcken et al. 2016). In other words, insecurity discourses and security practices are inextricably linked. Any study of security, Ken Booth maintains, "should begin in the experiences, imagines, analyses and fears of those living with insecurity" (Booth 2007: 152) and form the basis of socially meaningful actions in everyday life.

This paper is based on cumulative fieldwork experiences in the CHT over several decades and continuous contact with people on the ground. Frequent visits to the CHT (the most recent in 2016) and immersion with the people there have facilitated a reflexive interpretation of the Pahari insecurity perceptions and security practices.

The indigenous people of the CHT

The Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT), comprising three hill districts – Rangamati, Khagrachari and Bandarban[2] – in the southeastern corner of the country form a distinct region of Bangladesh in terms of geography, topography, the politico-economic-administrative system and the ethno-national identity, culture and religious beliefs of its people (Ahsan / Chakma 1989). The area has historically been inhabited by 11 indigenous communities, who are, as noted above, collectively known as the Paharis. They are of Sino-Tibetan descent, belonging to the Mongoloid group. They closely resemble the people of northeast India, Myanmar, Cambodia and Thailand rather than the people of the alluvial plains of Bangladesh (Bengalis). Each community speaks its own dialect or language but all share a common and rich cultural heritage. In the religious context too, they present a clear contrast to the Bengalis of the plains. All indigenous communities are non-Muslims and practise either Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity or animism. Their social norms, such as rituals at birth, death and marriage, as well as their dietary habits and method of agriculture, differ markedly from those of the Bengalis.

Historically, the CHT had a distinct administrative system, unlike that in the rest of Bengal, with its own social and political processes (Mey 1981). Before being conquered by external powers, the region was an independent

2 The British colonial administration delimited the boundaries of the CHT as an administrative unit in 1860. In 1947, it became a part of Pakistan as a district, and in 1971 a part of Bangladesh. In the 1980s, the CHT was divided into three separate districts.

Chakma kingdom. A war between the British and the Chakma king – Jan Box Khan – from 1777–1788 paved the way for British control over the area. The British colonial administration delimited the boundary of the CHT as a district in 1860 and in 1881 divided it into three circles: the Chakma, the Mong and the Bohmang. Beginning in 1860 the CHT was administered separately from the areas of Assam and East Bengal by a representative of the Governor General-in-Council of India and except for this representative, the administrative staff, including the police force, were locally recruited from among the Paharis. The collection of revenue and dispensation of traditional justice in social courts were performed by the three circle chiefs.

The British colonial administration allowed the hill people as much self-rule as possible, which was strengthened by the adoption of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Regulation in 1900 (popularly known as the Hill Tracts Manual). The Manual placed stringent measures against the settlement of outsiders in the district. This was prompted by the environmental and economic logic that the CHT possessed limited cultivable lands, being mostly a land of hills and forests (Mohsin 2003: 31). In 1920 the Manual was amended and the Chittagong Hill Tracts (Amendment) Regulation of 1920 declared the CHT an "excluded area", independent of general administration. In the 1935 Government of India Act, the Chittagong Hill Tracts were declared a "totally excluded area".

Marginalisation of the Paharis: Historical background

In 1947, the British left the subcontinent after about two hundred years of colonial rule. Two independent states – India and Pakistan – were created upon the British withdrawal. Although Pakistan was created based on the so-called "two-nation theory" separating Hindus and Muslims, intriguingly the CHT, an overwhelmingly non-Muslim area (97.2%), was awarded to Pakistan against the will of the local population (Chakma 1986). The emergence of the Pakistani "nation-state" at the end of colonial rule set off a process of marginalisation of the Paharis.

Following decolonisation, the Pakistan government introduced sweeping changes in the administration of the CHT in order to bring the distinct region within the framework of the "nation-state". The process created a condition that Michael Hechter has termed "internal colonialism" (Hechter 1975). As part of the "nation-state" building project, the Pakistan government constructed the Kaptai Dam (1957–62) on the Karnafuli river, which left a devastating impact on the livelihood of the Paharis and in later years generated conflict in the CHT. The dam inundated an area of over 1,000 square kilo-

metres, including 54,000 acres of cultivable land (40 per cent of the district's arable land) and uprooted 10,000 farming and 8,000 jhumiya (shifting cultivation) families, totalling about 100,000 people (27 per cent of the district's total population) (Islam 1978). Memories of displacement and economic hardship still haunt the Paharis, as expressed in a Pahari song that vividly describes the pain the people still feel. A few lines from the song are as follows:

Oi degasni Chenge doar, jiyat aghe resav bazar	Do you see the confluence of the Chengi [river], where there is the Reserve bazar [market]?
Ta pugendi gangya parat alo mo adam	East of that on the river bank was my village
Sekke na el pani, na el godagan	The water was not there at that time, neither the dam,
Gangya parat ami tedhong milijhuli	We lived harmoniously on the river bank.

The Pakistan government did not undertake adequate measures to rehabilitate the displaced people nor did it pay adequate compensation to the Paharis to help them rebuild their lives (Ali / Tsuchiya: 2002). The project not only produced internally displaced people, but many Paharis crossed international borders and took refuge in India. Naturally, this led to strong resentment against the state in the CHT.

The process of marginalisation of the Paharis accelerated after East Pakistan seceded from Pakistan and emerged as the independent state of Bangladesh in 1971. The vision of the ruling elites of Bangladesh regarding the nature of the state following independence from Pakistan has been one of a typical "nation-state" (Mohsin 1999). The state was thus organised in such a way that diversities were subsumed to create homogeneity and the state failed to "accord any recognition to the minorities" in the CHT or elsewhere in the country (Mohsin 1997: 1).[3] This set off an accelerated process of marginalisation of the Paharis from the national mainstream.

Against the backdrop of the fear of losing identity, the Paharis organised an armed resistance in the late 1970s, which led to armed conflict between the Bangladesh armed forces and the resistance group Shanti Bahini (SB, "Peace Force"). The Bangladesh government mobilised its armed forces and the CHT soon turned into "a vast military camp" (Barua 2001: 70). By the 1980s, the Bangladesh government had deployed 115,000 military personnel in the CHT –

3 It is noteworthy that the 15th amendment of the Bangladesh constitution in 2011 defined the indigenous communities as *khudro nrigosti* ("small ethnic groups"), notwithstanding their demand to be known by the term "indigenous".

one soldier for every five to six hill people (Levene 1999: 354). In conjunction with massive military deployment, the Bangladesh government also adopted a policy of transmigration of Bengalis from the plains to the CHT. The government had three key objectives in pursuing this policy: (1) to outnumber the local population (a policy known locally as "demographic invasion") and "Bengalise" the CHT; (2) to enable the Bangladesh military to counter the Pahari guerrilla forces by building "strategic hamlets" similar to those of the ill-fated American strategy in Vietnam;[4] (3) to pursue a policy of what came to be known as "We want the land and not the people"[5] which aimed to drive the indigenous people away and grab their land.

This transmigration[6] began in the late 1970s (Anti-Slavery Society 1984: 71–73) and 400,000 Bengalis were settled in the CHT between 1978 and 1985 (The CHT Commission 1994: 26). Consequently, the Bengali population in the CHT increased sharply, from 9% in 1951 to about 50% in 1991 (Adnan 2004: 15). After 1991, the Bangladesh government manipulated the population data of the indigenous people in what one scholar has called "statistical politics" (Barkat 2016).

The consequences of the militarisation and settlement of Bengalis are multi-faceted. They led to the dispossession of the Paharis' land, rendering conflicts over land more frequent and acute (Adnan / Dastidar 2011). The research for this paper revealed multiple cases of land dispossession, as documented in fieldnotes. More seriously, the militarisation and transmigration led to large-scale massacres of the indigenous people. The first massacre took place in Mubachari on 15 October 1979, and involved both the armed forces and the Bengali settlers (Samad 1980, Hussain 1986). In the following years, massacres became more systematic (Amnesty International 1986, The CHT Commission 1989). Mark Levene asserts that the massacres of the 1970s and 1980s crossed the line from a "genocidal process" to "active genocide" (Levene 1999: 359).

4 Ziauddin Choudhury, the Former Deputy Commissioner of Chittagong district, has provided an inside account of the Bengali settlement programme. He opposed the programme because he thought that it would have a disastrous impact on the indigenous communities (Choudhury 2010). The author also had an opportunity to discuss the issue with Choudhury in Washington, DC in 2010.

5 The statement was made by the GOC (General Officer Commanding) of the Chittagong Division of the Bangladesh armed forces, Major-General Abul Manzur on 26 March 1977 at a public meeting (quoted in Mohsin 1999: 111). This policy can be traced back to the initial years of independent Bangladesh. In 1972, Prime Minister Mujibar Rahman threatened a delegation from the CHT with the warning that if they did not abandon their demand for regional autonomy, the government would eliminate them by settling thousands of Bengalis in the CHT (Van Schendel 1992: 117, footnote 80).

6 The term is originally derived from the Dutch word *transmigratie*, which was used by the Dutch colonial rulers and later taken up by the Indonesian government as *transmigrasi*, and means the government-sponsored settlement of people from one place of the country to the other. Thanks to one of the anonymous reviewers for bringing this to my notice.

Insecurity perceptions of the Paharis

As the discussion in the preceding section highlights, there is a causal link between the policies that produced the marginalisation of the Paharis and the rise of their insecurity. Pahari security threats should be understood in two dimensions – the threat to group identity at the macro level and the constant threat of violence in daily life at micro level – but the two levels operate simultaneously in an intertwined fashion. A caveat, however, should be noted here; differentiation should be made on the level and dimensions of threats in everyday life (micro level) on the basis of ethnicity, gender, age, economic status, etc. Nonetheless, the two categories represent the general patterns of Pahari insecurity discourses.

The discourse on the macro-level threat to group identity is formed by the policies of the state toward the Paharis. In particular, they suspect that the key aim of the transmigration policy is "ethnic cleansing" by uprooting them from their lands (Chakma 2006). The policy is a "political migration" (Ahsan / Chakma 1989) and the programme is universally viewed as "demographic invasion".[7] The change in demographic composition has reinforced this fear. In line with the increase in the Bengali population in the CHT noted above, the area had become a Bengali-majority region by the end of the 20th century.

The Bengali settlers have now begun to replace the traditional names of places in the CHT with Bengali-Muslim names (Tripura 2017). Furthermore, the transmigration of Bengalis in the CHT has been accompanied by a process of Islamisation of the region (Mohsin 1999). These trends, Paharis perceive, do not bode well for their future.

The transmigration of Bengalis in the CHT may be explained as "settler colonialism" (Wolfe 2006). The concept was coined in the context of white settlements in America, Australia, New Zealand, etc. in which settlement took place following the extermination of native communities. A similar process can be observed in Palestine, where Israelis are creating settlements on Palestinian land by expelling the local population (Nebulsi 2017).

Land conflicts between the Paharis and the newly arrived Bengalis have massively increased as a consequence of the transmigration programme (Chakma 2010). Arguably, land conflict was inevitable when Bengali settlement began. For one thing, the region is a land of hills and forests with limited cultivable land. It is noteworthy that at the beginning of the 20th century, when the population of the CHT was less than 200,000, various surveys concluded

7 This issue was mentioned by many Paharis in my interviews during fieldwork over the years. Two interviews are particularly noteworthy here. The first was an interview on 26 June 1988 in Rangamati with the late Mr Nandit Roy, a member of the Chakma Raj family, who first introduced me to the idea. The second was an interview on 11 March 2016 in Dhaka with Mr S.S. Chakma, a leading Pahari intellectual, who explained to me the evolution of this policy.

that the population of the district should ideally be kept to that number for the region's environmental sustainability (Mohsin 2003: 31). A key aim of the Regulation of 1900, introduced by the British colonial administration, was to preserve the environmentally sustainable livelihood of the Paharis. Thus, the transmigration policy was undertaken against the established precepts of environmental sustainability in the CHT. The construction of the Kaptai Dam inundated 40 per cent of the area's agricultural land and then the transmigration programme put further stress on land distribution. Under the transmigration programme, the government had planned to settle thousands of Bengalis with the provision that each Bengali settler family would receive 5 acres of hilly land, 4 acres of mixed land and 2.5 acres of paddy land (Anti-Slavery Society 1984: 71–73). But the question was where these lands, particularly the arable land, would come from. The chief of the Chakma circle, Raja Devasish Roy, explained the problem in the following words:

> If we now look at the man to land ratio in the 1970s, i.e. before the settlers were brought in, and then look at the requirements for just the first of several batches of settlers that eventually came to the CHT, we get a very dismal picture. There simply were no paddy lands that were not already under the plough (Roy 1995: 8).

Thus, the inevitable consequence of the transmigration program was the rise of land conflict between the Bengali settlers and the Paharis.

The constant fear of violence also derives from intra-indigenous conflict. Members of the indigenous communities claim that this has resulted from the "divide and rule" policy of the military. The Paharis are divided into four major political groups, some of which the military props up in order to justify its own deployment in the CHT and to further the slow-moving process of ethnic cleansing. During my field interviews in 2016 with several members of the civil society in Khagrachari (who wished to remain anonymous for personal safety), they particularly emphasised the divisions in the United Peoples Democratic Front, allegedly instigated by the military intelligence.

Both the militarisation and the transmigration policy have led to a massive rise of violence against indigenous women in the CHT in recent decades – many cases of rape and sexual harassment were documented during field visits: "Many helpless indigenous women and girls have been raped or sexually assaulted by Bengali settlers and the security forces" (Uddin 2016: 331). The violence against indigenous women appeared systematic. This is corroborated by other researchers who found that rape and other forms of sexual violence were perpetrated as mechanisms of pressurising families and communities to leave a particular locality, in turn enabling settlers to grab their lands (Adnan / Dastidar 2011: 97).

Today, the Paharis live in constant fear of the violence perpetrated by the Bengali settlers, who are backed by the armed forces. Such fear is rooted in historical experiences and in the regular encounters with violence in the CHT.

As an ethnographer has noted, "many incidents of massacre, attack and reprisal, indiscriminate arrest, torture, judicial and extrajudicial torture, killing, rape, sexual violence, forced religious conversion, forced marriage, and abduction took place in the hills, often committed by the security forces and settler Bengalis against the indigenous people" (Uddin 2016: 321–322).

Coping strategies

Against the threat of losing group identity (macro-level) and the fear of daily violence (micro-level), the Paharis have developed an array of strategies. The threats and security-making at both levels should be understood in a composite manner because of their intertwined character.

To protect group identity, the Paharis initially pursued constitutional politics and employed political activism to preserve their status as identity groups. In the 1960s, the Pahari students formed organisations such as the Pahari Chattra Samiti ("Hill Students' Organisation") whose primary objective was to promote awareness among the indigenous students and the Paharis in general of their rights. Later, those student leaders would play a pivotal role in Pahari political activism.

In the first general elections of Pakistan in 1970, Raja Tridiv Roy, then chief of the Chakma circle, was elected to parliament as an independent candidate from the CHT constituency. Following the elections, he was invited to join the Awami League (AL), the party that won the general elections. Raja Roy told the AL leaders that he would join the party if they assured him that the cultural identity of the Paharis would be protected.[8] This signified that the preservation of the cultural identity had become important in Pahari political activism by the end of 1960s – and it would gain even greater significance in the years to come.

Following the independence of Bangladesh in 1971, the Paharis initially followed a constitutional path to protect their cultural identity. When the drafting of the constitution for the newly independent state was underway in 1972, a delegation of Pahari leaders led by Manabendra Narayan Larma (a student leader of the 1960s) met with the Prime Minister Sheikh Mujibar Rahman and demanded regional autonomy and the protection of Pahari cultural identity (Mohsin / Chakma 1992).

The Prime Minister dismissed the demands of the Pahari representatives and advised them "to forget their ethnic identities" and merge with "Bengali nationalism" (Ahsan / Chakma 1989: 967). In reaction, the Pahari leaders

8 Interview by the author with Raja Tridiv Roy in June 2005, Islamabad. It is noteworthy that Raja Roy supported the unity of Pakistan in the 1971 war and that after the war, he did not return to Bangladesh but lived in Pakistan for the rest of his life.

formed a political party – Parbattya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti ("United Peoples Organisation of the Chittagong Hill Tracts" or PCJSS, popularly known as the JSS) to spearhead the movement for regional autonomy. The formation of a Pahari political party was a significant development in the Pahari struggle for identity preservation (vis-à-vis Bengali nationalism), which emerged in the form of "resistance" against the background of the "hegemonising and homogenising" policy of the Bangladesh state (Mohsin 2001).

The regional autonomy movement intensified in the ensuing years. In the first general elections of independent Bangladesh in 1973, M.N. Larma was elected as a member of parliament from the CHT constituency. In the national parliament he made a sustained argument against the assimilationist policy of the government and asserted:

> You cannot impose your national identity on others. I am a Chakma, not a Bengali. I am a citizen of Bangladesh – Bangladeshi. You are also Bangladeshi, but your national identity is Bengali [...] They [the Paharis] can never be Bengali (Bangladesh National Assembly 1974).

Larma's pursuit of regional autonomy evolved into an armed struggle after 1975. When there was a change of power in Dhaka following a series of bloody military coups in 1975, Larma went underground and organised a guerrilla force, the Shanti Bahini. Thus began a military campaign to fight for the realisation of the goal of regional autonomy for the CHT.

Armed conflict in the CHT between the Bangladesh armed forces and the SB continued from 1975 to 1997. Although it was essentially a low-level guerrilla-type conflict, hundreds of Paharis, mostly non-combatants, were killed during the decades-long violence. The high number of deaths was primarily due to the military-complicit massacres of the Paharis by the Bengali settlers (Barua 2001). After years of combat, both sides realised that a military defeat of the adversary could not be achieved. The two sides thus opted for a negotiated settlement and, after years of negotiations, a peace accord was finally signed on 2 December 1997. The accord provided for the creation of a regional council and the two sides agreed to devolve power in several subject areas to the local government bodies (Roy 2003). With the signing of the peace accord, the Paharis returned to constitutional politics and since then the implementation of the peace accord has been the main aim of Pahari political activism.

More than two decades have passed since the peace accord was signed. Although a regional council has been set up, thus fulfilling an important provision of the agreement, the government has yet to fully implement the accord (The Daily Star 2017). Three issues stand out in this context that the Paharis consider important, to maintain their cultural identity, ensure their livelihoods, tackle the fear of violence and build durable peace in the region. First,

the demilitarisation of the CHT. The SB members laid down their arms almost immediately after signing the peace accord, but the temporary camps of Bangladesh armed forces have yet to be withdrawn as was agreed in the peace accord. The Bangladesh armed forces have avoided the closure of temporary camps on the pretext of ensuring security, but the Paharis view the issue differently. They suspect that the Bangladesh military never intended to close down the military camps, primarily because their presence encourages the Bengali settlers, who were brought to the CHT under the transmigration programme, to stay, rather than to abandon the CHT because of the difficulties of living in the hills.[9] Second, a police force was supposed to be raised from the local population as per the provision of the peace accord, but thus far this has not occurred, for reasons that remain unclear.

Third, a land commission was supposed to be expeditiously constituted to resolve land disputes in the CHT. This was a key provision of the peace accord because of the centrality of land in the CHT problem. So far, no land disputes have been settled and the government has failed to take appropriate measures for this. In 2001, the Bangladesh parliament passed the Chittagong Hill Tracts Land Dispute Settlement Commission Act, but it was opposed by the Paharis because the composition of the Commission was favourable to the Bengalis and the chairperson had "excessive" power in the settlement of land disputes. The Pahari leaders suspected that such a composition of the Land Commission would pave the way to dispossessing Paharis of their land. It took another 16 years to introduce an amendment to the Act and eventually the Chittagong Hill Tracts Land Dispute Settlement Commission (Amendment) Act was passed on 9 August 2016. Since then, however, the Bangladesh government has not acted on the issue, nor has it provided any explanation for its inaction.

The land issue has become particularly complicated due to the settlement of Bengalis under the government's transmigration programme. By the 1980s, more than 59,000 Paharis had become refugees in India, but they returned following the signing of the peace accord. In the meantime, Bengali settlers had occupied the land left by the refugees. Moreover, Bengali settlers also grabbed the land of thousands of Paharis who had been internally displaced during the years of conflict. The Bengali settlers are reluctant to return the lands to the Pahari owners. Thus, the issue of land has become very complicated, also fuelling communal violence. It is not necessary, Paharis claim, to enact new laws to settle the land disputes; if the government were sincere, the disputes could be settled now within the framework of existing laws, including the Regulation of 1900, the Parbattya Zilla Parishad Act, the Parbattya Chattagram Anchalik Parishad Act, etc. (Dewan 2018).

9 This observation was made by the author during conversation with the Paharis during a visit to Bangladesh in 2016.

In addition to the formal promises made by the government in the peace accord, the JSS leaders claim that there was an unwritten understanding about the Bengali settlers in which the Bangladesh government representatives promised that the Bengali settlers, who were brought under the transmigration program to the CHT, would be resettled elsewhere following the signing of the peace accord.[10] The European Union offered financial assistance to resettle the Bengalis (Roy 2003), but the Bangladesh government did not accept the offer. Later, the Bangladesh government claimed that there was no such understanding (Chakma 2016a). The issue has created a huge controversy and the JSS leaders have complained that they were duped by the Bangladesh government negotiators into signing the agreement (Chakma 2016a).

The non-implementation of the key provisions of the peace accord has undermined the peace-building process in the CHT in the past two decades and has been a primary driver of Pahari political activism. The Paharis are frustrated over the non-implementation of the key provisions of the peace accord. A common view among the Paharis is that the Bangladesh government never meant to fully implement the peace accord although it signed the document. An observer has noted that the government signed the agreement knowing that it would not fully implement the accord (Mohsin 2003). A careful scrutiny of the government dithering of the past two decades in implementing the peace accord would tend to support the Pahari complaint. The Paharis thus view the Bangladesh military as the "spoiler" of the peace process and accuse them of continuing to maintain a policy of "ethnic cleansing", using the Bengali settlers to uproot them from their lands (observation from fieldnotes). Notwithstanding the persistence of deep frustration, Pahari political activism continues to focus on the full implementation of the peace accord because, in the view of the Paharis, the full implementation of the accord would help them in their struggle to survive as an identity group and reduce the likelihood of the violence that they confront on a daily basis.

Other than domestic political activism, the Paharis, as another coping strategy, have integrated their struggle for the preservation of identity with

10 It is very likely that there was an unwritten agreement on the issue of resettlement of government-sponsored settler Bengalis from the CHT because the JSS leaders would otherwise never have signed the 1997 accord. They were aware of the centrality of the issue in the CHT conflict and knew that if they failed to address the issue in some way their political future would be jeopardised. Yet they agreed to keep it unwritten because GOB representatives explained to them that if it was made a written provision the government would not be able to withstand the political backlash that would result. According to Peace Campaign Group, the government representatives justified keeping the issue unwritten with the following words: "The domestic constituency does not allow the simple majority Awami League Government to openly address the issue in the agreement [...] because once the issue is addressed in the agreement, the opposition parties, particularly the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), will come out in the streets with mass agitation that can even raise the question of survival of the government in power. In that situation, the possibility of an agreement between the two sides will be jeopardized. Of course, the Government understands and supports the concerns of the JSS over the issue and can include some provisions in the agreement for the gradual removal of the settlers from the CHT" (quoted in Roy 2003: 30, footnote 23). My fieldnotes also suggest the existence of such an informal understanding.

international (both inter-governmental and non-governmental organisations) and national indigenous movements. The Paharis have emphasised two issues in their international and national rights activism: the full implementation of the 1997 peace accord and the protection of indigenous rights.

At the international level, Pahari activists have presented their perspectives on the 1997 peace accord and the rights of the indigenous people in Bangladesh (particularly in the CHT) at the proceedings of various international organisations, forums and conferences. In many cases, Pahari activists have played a leading role in the international movement for indigenous rights. For example, Pahari activists have been prominently involved in the activities of the Bangkok-based "Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact" (AIPP), a network of various Asian indigenous rights groups. Pahari representatives have traditionally been active at the United Nations indigenous forums. Particularly noteworthy in this context is that Raja Devasish Roy, the chief of the Chakma circle, was one of the vice-chairpersons of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in 2014–2016. Raja Roy strongly highlighted the issue of the full implementation of the CHT accord and indigenous rights in general during his tenure at the UN. Also, each year Pahari activists present the views from the CHT on indigenous issues at the Geneva-based human rights bodies.

Over the years, Pahari activists have adopted international networking and developed partnerships with other indigenous organisations throughout the world. The Europe-based CHT Commission, with which other Pahari rights groups and activists collaborate, has been at the forefront of the international campaign to defend the rights of the Paharis over several decades. The Commission campaigns in Europe and elsewhere to put pressure on the government of Bangladesh to protect the cultural identity and rights of the indigenous people of the CHT. Other international humanitarian organisations with which CHT rights activists work closely include Amnesty International, Survival International, the International Working Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA) and others. These humanitarian organisations have not only published reports on the CHT, they have employed various strategies to put pressure on the Bangladesh government to protect the rights of the CHT indigenous communities.

Pahari diasporas in various countries lobby their home governments to put pressure on Bangladesh to fully implement the 1997 peace accord. Such Pahari activism can be found in the UK, France, the USA, Japan, Australia, Canada, South Korea, India, etc. The Pahari diaspora groups in those countries work to promote the CHT issue internationally. Furthermore, the diaspora groups have created an international coordinating body – the International Jumma Organisation – through which they actively lobby at various international organisations such as the UN, European Union, Geneva-based human rights agencies, etc.

At the national level, the Paharis have not only formed their own rights groups on various issues to promote the rights of the indigenous communities, but also closely coordinate their activism with other rights groups within Bangladesh. The JSS leader and chairperson of the CHT Regional Council, Jotirindra Bodhipriya Larma, serves as the chairperson of the Bangladesh Adibashi Forum ("Bangladesh Indigenous Peoples Forum"). There are 56 indigenous communities in Bangladesh and the organisation works to promote the rights of all indigenous communities within the country. Similarly, Pahari Chattra Parishad ("Hill Students Association") is working to promote the rights of the indigenous students of the CHT.

The Hill Women Federation is another group that is devoted to promoting indigenous women's rights. Pahari women's groups and activists closely collaborate with national-level women's organisations. They have supported each other on various issues over the years. A prominent example in this context is the case of the abduction of Kalpana Chakma, the organising secretary of the Hill Women Federation. Kalpana was abducted in 1996, allegedly by members of the Bangladesh military (although they deny it). Since her abduction, women's groups both Pahari and national have sought justice for Kalpana Chakma (Chakma 2016b), but until today she has not been found.

Other than the above noted political activism, the Paharis also use the court system to defend the rights of the indigenous communities, occasionally in collaboration with national rights organisations. The case of Kalpana Chakma, noted above, is one in which the Pahari and national-level rights groups have collaborated. Additionally, a group of Pahari activists has lodged a petition in the Bangladesh High Court seeking a verdict on the legal status of the CHT Regulation of 1900. As previously noted, the Regulation of 1900 was introduced by the British colonial administration to protect the Paharis from the influx of Bengalis and to maintain an environmentally sustainable livelihood in the CHT. After decolonisation, the Regulation was not declared null and void by any court, although neither the Pakistan government nor the Bangladesh government applied this legal document in relation to the indigenous people of the CHT. There are many such issues for which the Paharis have sought justice through the courts.

Current trends in cultural activities also signify a strategy of promoting group identity. The observation of the year-end festival, Boi-sa-bi, is now celebrated with great fanfare. The formation of various cultural groups in recent years also highlights a trend of cultural revivalism and a return to tradition. By the same token, an emphasis on religious practices has become noticeable in the CHT. In particular, Buddhism has taken centre-stage in the life of the indigenous Buddhist communities in the region. Early signs of this can be traced back to the formation of the Parbattya Bouddha Sangha ("Hill Bud-

dhist Association") in the 1960s, and from the early 1980s onward there has been an evident emphasis on religious practices within the Buddhist indigenous communities. Particularly noteworthy in this regard was the rise of Bano Bhante, a Buddhist monk who attracted a massive following within the Buddhist communities. The underlying importance of this enthusiasm in the fields of culture and religion is the issue of identity. Parash Khisa, a doctor belonging to the Chakma community, said in an interview on 23 March 2016 that the Buddhist communities would remain very grateful to Bano Bhante for strengthening the religious identity of the Paharis.

While the various kinds of political activism discussed above are understood to protect and promote group identity, the Paharis also view them as a way of protecting themselves from the constant threat of violence. If macro-level security can be enhanced by strengthening group identity, it will have a spillover effect onto micro-level security because of their intertwined character. As noted above, the full implementation of the 1997 peace accord has taken centre stage in Pahari political activism, because its full implementation would not only promote group identity, it would also mean a reduction of violence in their daily lives. For example, if the provision for creating a Pahari police force is implemented, the Paharis will be better protected from communal attack by the Bengali settlers.

The Paharis have organised themselves in various political groups that are not only involved in political activism to promote indigenous rights, but also serve as platforms to protect the Paharis from communal violence. If there is any sign of communal tension anywhere, mobile phones are used to warn group members and the network is used to organise the group to protect itself collectively. For example, when Bengali settlers attacked Pahari villages on 19 February 2010 in Baghaichari, members of Pahari Chattra Parishad immediately alerted group members in Dighinala and Khagrachari to undertake precautionary measures against possible communal tension in their areas (fieldnotes from February 2012).

"Self-surveillance"[11] appears to be the key strategy for dealing with the constant fear of violence. This means remaining self-consciously vigilant to protect oneself from the danger of violence in everyday life. For example, the Paharis generally check with relatives and friends by mobile phone to ascertain whether there is any communal tension before travelling. Also, if Paharis become aware of any communal tension anywhere, they immediately inform others so that they can avoid the trouble. Sometimes they accept material loss but still seek to avoid violence. One Pahari noted on 8 February 2012 in Kamalchari village (Khagrachari) that: "They [the Bengalis] always look for excuses to ignite communal tension; sometimes they take our crops but we can-

11 The term is borrowed from Nasreen (2017).

not do anything because the military protect them; [so] we avoid danger" (interview in February 2012). I also noted an incident in Kamalchari village in which a Pahari said that he cultivated rice on his land and one morning he found that the crop had been harvested by nearby Bengali settlers – about which there was nothing he could do, for fear of reprisal (interview on 8 February 2012). A general view among the Paharis is that they should not do anything that could ignite communal violence, even if it means accepting a material loss.

Another strategy the Paharis employ is to move to urban centres or remote hills to escape violence. They move to urban centres because the likelihood of violence is lesser there compared to rural villages. This is particularly evident when communal attacks take place against the indigenous people. For example, many families moved to Khagrachari and Rangamati following the 2010 Baghaichari attacks on Pahari villages by the Bengali settlers.

Another threat that Pahari women are confronted with is sexual violence perpetrated by Bengali settlers, for which Paharis adopt both macro- and micro-level measures to protect their women. There are no systematic statistics on sexual violence against indigenous women in the CHT, but The Daily Star reported that in the first six and a half months of 2018, 15 indigenous girls and women were raped (including several gang-rapes) by Bengali settlers: "No one has yet been punished in the CHT for rape, gang-rape or murder of Adivasis under the women and children repression prevention act 2000" (Devnath 2018). It is noteworthy that the vast majority of cases of sexual violence against indigenous women are perpetrated by Bengali settlers, and Survival International stated in its report submitted in October 2017 to the 30th session of the UN Human Rights Council Universal Periodic Review: "Physical and sexual violence against indigenous women is used as a tool of fear and coercion to facilitate eviction and land-grabbing" (Devnath 2018). To tackle sexual violence, Paharis pursue political activism at a national and international level in order to put pressure on the Bangladesh government to undertake measures to prevent such violence. At the micro level, indigenous women adopt "self-surveillance" to protect themselves from rape and sexual harassment by the Bengali settlers and the members of the armed forces. An incident in one of the fieldwork locations – Kamalchari village – is perhaps instructive: Protima Chakma, an indigenous woman, was raped and murdered by Bengali settlers on 1 October 2011 when she went to the Chengi River to fetch water. Since then, "we either go to the river when there are people around or go in a group" (interview with a woman in Kamalchari, 8 February 2012).[12] This pattern of self-surveillance can be evidenced in other places as well.

12 The author also visited two villages near Kamalchari, namely Gorgyazyachari and Thakurchara, on 9 and 10 February 2012 and found similar patterns of self-surveillance among women, prompted by reports of the incident in Kamalchari.

Conclusion

This paper has illustrated, by applying an interpretive ethnographic approach, how the perceptions of insecurity and the security practices of the CHT indigenous people are primarily formed by their experiences of marginalisation,[13] first in the state of Pakistan and later, from 1971 onward, in the state of Bangladesh. Marginalisation has occurred mainly due to the assimilationist nation-building policies and ill-conceived development projects pursued by the two states. Specifically, the marginalisation of the Paharis in the Bangladesh nation-state occurred in the vortex of three interactive processes: (1) the nation-building and development policies of the Bangladesh state; (2) the struggle for autonomy by the Paharis in order to prevent the threat of loss of identity; and (3) the "military-focussed" and the politically-motivated transmigration policy of the Bangladesh government to counter the autonomy movement by the Paharis in the CHT. The policies of the two states not only threatened Pahari group identity but also generated constant threat of violence in their daily lives. The macro-level fear of losing identity and the micro-level fear of facing violence in everyday life are intertwined and operate in parallel: an increase in the degree of threat at one level affects the degree of threat at the other. As explained in this paper, the transmigration programme of the Bangladesh government has not only threatened the group identity (macro-level threat), it has concomitantly increased violence against the Paharis in the form of communal attacks, land grabbing, sexual violence against women, etc. (micro-level threats). Arguably, if macro-level security can be enhanced, for example by implementing the 1997 Peace Accord or reversing the transmigration programme, this will reduce the likelihood of violence in the everyday lives of the Paharis.

This paper has presented an array of Pahari coping strategies to deal with the challenges of protecting group identity and the constant possibility of violence. To protect identity, the Paharis initially pursued constitutional politics, which failed to yield the intended result. They then took a non-constitutional approach and began an armed struggle that continued for two decades, until a peace accord was signed in 1997. A peace-building process began after the conclusion of the accord, and Pahari political activism since 1997 has centred around peace building and the full implementation of the peace accord. When the accord was signed, the universal belief in the hills was that it would safeguard Pahari cultural identity and reduce the threat of violence in everyday life.

13 While the concept of marginalisation has different contextual meanings, it is used here to mean the phenomenon of pushing the CHT indigenous communities to the edge by taking away or preventing them from exercising an active voice, identity or place within the mainstream Bangladesh polity.

However, although more than two decades have passed since the accord was signed, the government has yet to fully implement the accord. Several key provisions of the accord have not been implemented which, the Paharis believe, are crucial to building durable peace in the hills. These include: the withdrawal of the temporary military camps, the settlement of land disputes, the rehabilitation of Pahari refugees and the formation of an indigenous police force. Pahari political activism is now geared toward putting pressure on the government to honour the promises that it made in the peace accord.

The Paharis have also adopted networking at the international and national level to protect and promote their rights as indigenous people. Their activities at the United Nations are particularly noteworthy in this regard. They have built strong networks with various indigenous organisations in other countries as well as with other rights groups within Bangladesh. They coordinate their programmes and actions with them on various issues ranging from the environment to women's rights. Additionally, Pahari leaders have played a leading role in national activism on indigenous rights.

To deal with insecurities in everyday life, the Paharis have primarily relied on "self-surveillance" strategies both at group level and individually. Group political activism and vigilance at the personal level are employed to counter the dangers in everyday life.

The analysis of the security perceptions of the Paharis shows that security is local rather than "national" and that in the context of indigenous people it involves group identity and the threat of violence in their everyday lives. From such a standpoint, this is a critique of the realist-positivist security framework, which defines security holistically as "national security" whose central purpose is to defend the State from external threats. While CSS is appropriate for analysing security perceptions of groups such as the Paharis, it arguably needs to move beyond such issues. Security is not only about "securitisation" or the construction of security discourses, it is also about coping strategies or the collective security making by identity groups at the macro level and individually in everyday life at the micro level. Put simply, the CSS needs to build a research programme that combines "security discourses" (perceptions) and "security making" (coping strategies).

This paper has provided further reflection on the "interpretive ethnographic method", contextualising the case of the Paharis in the CHT, thereby validating the approach as a viable research tool. At the current juncture, the Paharis face daunting challenges in their struggle to survive as distinct identity groups. Moreover, they confront enormous challenges to their safety in their everyday lives. As noted above, there is a clear connection between these two levels of threat. The dynamics of the macro- and micro-level threats to Pahari insecurity and how they cope with them will be an interesting area of research for future researchers.

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Watery Incursions: The Securitisation of Everyday "Flood Cultures" in Metro Manila and Coastal Jakarta

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Abstract

This article explores the normalisation of urban flooding through two distinct sets of securitised practices in two Southeast Asian megacities – localised disaster management surveillance regimes and the policing of informal settlements in Metro Manila and northern Jakarta, respectively. As a point of departure, we problematise the question of how the incidence of recurring floods (and flooding) is diversely interpreted as both event and as an experiential reality, insofar as the manifestation of the floods never entirely occupies a state of either normalcy or exception. It is this fluid state of inbetweenness in which these diverse securitisation trajectories are explored. The first entails the recent emergence of Metro Manila's disaster Command Centres, marking a break from conventional ways of responding to flood risks. The second case study engages with Jakarta City's coercive use of its municipal police unit – the Satpol P.P. – in relocating urban informal settlers who have otherwise actively learned to reshape their familiarity to flooding as a non-issue in order to avoid being evicted. While the paper reflects on the formal structures of flood cultures, we illustrate how vernacular interpretations around security entrenched in notions of "living with floods" lead to broader questions of ontological normalisation regarding watery incursions – as both spectacular as well as mundane, routinised events.

Keywords: Urban flooding, Disaster Risk Reduction, surveillance, Metro Manila, Jakarta

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"How do you convince a fisher that he needs to fear water?"
(Disaster Risk Reduction Officer, Metro Manila)

Since the early 1950s, emergency and adaptive measures of state- and donor-driven disaster risk reduction (DRR) policies have conventionally adopted the mantle of humanitarian intervention, often characterised by the intersecting roles played by a host of governmental, INGO, faith-based and other civil society institutions. However, over the past two decades or more, diverse national, regional and international military entities – whether as state, auxiliary, corporate-funded mercenary or under the aegis of transnational blocs (e.g. the African Union, the Collective Security Treaty Organization) – have been gaining greater visibility as first responders particularly with regard to disaster relief action. This shift is evidenced in a multiplicity of contexts such as the USA's Hurricane Katrina or the Gorkha earthquake of Nepal (cf. Platt 1999, Bajc / De Lint 2011). While the contemporary securitisation (and at times, militarisation) of natural disaster aid and the concomitant processes of *political* legitimisation have been widely researched (Platt 1999, Tierney / Beve 2007, Martin et al. 2016), there has been little emphasis placed on the intersections between socio-ecological change, DRR-oriented technoscience, and their modes of material and symbolic meaning-making. In particular, this lacuna appears to be seemingly more evident when considering the broader communal meanings and practices around in/security that are iteratively shaped through a host of less discernible slowly creeping socio-ecological transformations such as relative sea level change, land subsidence and groundwater salinisation, as opposed to the degree of emphasis placed on more "spectacular" hazard-related events, such as storm surges, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, hurricanes, cyclones, tsunamis and more.

By drawing inspiration from the political ecology of natural disasters, we explore how the securitised cultural-institutional production of particular floodscapes[1] – in our case the dynamics witnessed in the two coastal megacities of Jakarta and Manila – serves to create a *normed* state of exception through everyday meanings, metaphors and practices of securitised or militarised "flood cultures" and their consequent lived materialities. In particular, our discussion centres upon how contemporary localised meanings of normal-

1 For conceptual clarity, we borrow Balzacq et al.'s (2016: 495) definition of securitisation (in this context taking anticipatory meanings of flooding) as a process that creates its own "articulated assemblage of practices whereby heuristic artefacts (metaphors, policy tools, image repertoires, analogies, stereotypes, emotions, etc.), are contextually mobilized by a securitizing actor, who works to prompt an audience to build a concrete network of implications (feelings, sensations, thoughts, and intuitions), about the critical vulnerability of a referent object, that concurs with the securitizing actor's reasons for choices and actions […]". At first glance, this definition takes the concept of securitisation beyond mere speech acts by incorporating both vivid and unseen materialities, including multi-sensory dynamics of the embodied, emotive and the affective.

cy and the "normed" are being produced, enacted and contested against the backdrop of urban flooding and state planning structures. By finding inspiration from these two urban contexts we put these island capitals into conversation with each other, particularly through their socio-environmental and post-colonial trajectories of urban development through the lens of their distinct "cultures" of flooding.

As a point of departure, we draw on diverse schools of securitisation and security studies and their relevance to these urban coastal dynamics, all connected through their concomitant blind spots. While critiquing the efficacy of studying states of "exceptionalism" and normed order as analytical dualisms, the second section of the paper discusses how the incidence of flooding has been regarded ambivalently by coastal communities, particularly by informal settlers who eke out a living from the sea or have been living relatively "amphibiously" and see both danger as well as opportunity, both exigency and continuity in the face of these watery incursions. Yet at the same time we argue that the securitised discursive practices and territorialised spaces produced by these distinct yet similar flood-related realities suggest a reading tangential to the seemingly contradictory ways in which diverse urban coastal and hinterland communities have evolved, adapted and continue to live with diverse forms of water. Moreover, we draw attention to the need for further exploratory work to trace discursive tipping points that re-frame flooding and flood-prone spaces as states of exception to "normed exceptions", combined with newly emergent narratives and practices that underpin how watery riskscapes are not only potentially securitised, but also imaginatively interpreted, sustained and lived in.

The third and fourth sections of the paper delve into the two case studies featuring urban flood-related contexts, which differ in terms of their hydrological and geomorphological conditions, the actor constellations and the thematic domains of DRR work, as well as in their discursive framings and practices of flood management and mitigation in the broadest sense. The first empirical context engages with the institutionalisation and popularisation of Manila's estuarine flood-related DRR Command Centres and training facilities among Local Government Units (LGUs), while tracing their discursive development and materialisation as a one-stop social emergency cum environmental surveillance arm, inspired by contemporary American institutions such as the National Guard and the 911 crisis response platform. As a case in point, we draw on Metro Manila's Pasig City LGU and its very well financed DRR Command Centre coordinated by the Mayoral Office at its City Hall.

The second case study draws on the establishment and legitimation of Jakarta's Satpol P.P. – a special municipal police authorised to implement the clearance of informal "squatter" settlements, particularly along the megacity's densely populated flood-prone northern coastline. We trace the state-led polit-

icisation and conflation of informal and semi-formal neighbourhood *kampungs*[2] with urban flooding and look at the intrinsic ambivalences and contradictions undergirding official top-down securitised discourses and practices that guide integrated action against (and in response to) rainwater flooding and coastal saltwater incursions. This is contrasted with the more vernacular interpretations of what it is like to live with diverse kinds of flooding. Thus while the Manila context considers highly formalised and expert-led discursive meanings and practices in response to a particular interpretation of its localised "flood culture" (at the local city/municipal level), our insights from Jakarta draw attention to vernacular articulations, embodied knowledges and their readings of a similar hazard-bound flood-related reality in which state-led and communal responses come to be relatively more differentiated.

Yet it is worth noting that we steer away from drawing clear-cut scalar differences between the LGU/municipal level and Manila and Jakarta's neighbourhood-based *barangay*[3] and *kampung* levels by focusing primarily on the everyday life with and meaning-making processes around floods that go beyond their singularised interpretations as contemporary sources of risk. While the making of floodscapes is particularly salient to both contexts, we place equal emphasis on the generative and productive qualities of flooding (i.e. the lived materialities of diverse kinds of water and their circulations), as well as the social meanings and practices they configure.

Methodologically, the study draws upon qualitative ethnographic research conducted in northern Jakarta and in Metro Manila between February and June 2017, together with a return visit to Jakarta in May 2018 in order to reflect upon policy changes put in place since the election of a new mayor. In Indonesia, the site selected for comparison was Kampung Aquarium in Jakarta Utara, which bore witness to the forced relocation of informal settlements due to the construction of coastal defence infrastructure in order to redress recurrent flooding as a result of stormwater run-off, land subsidence and seaward storm surges. Three in-depth group interviews were conducted with former settlers largely comprising fishers, together with RUJAK – a pro-poor activist network with which many of the formerly displaced residents partnered. In contrast, the insights gleaned from Metro Manila were shaped through three consecutive visits to the Pasig City Council's Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) office, which hosted the megacity's first "Command Centre" in place: a bureaucratic institution inspired by traditional military practices. The visits were further supplemented by four in-depth interviews with Pasig City's Chief DRR Officer within its Command Centre, together with the coordinators of its training unit. The findings were further complemented with 10 semi-struc-

2 A neighbourhood enclosure, smaller than a hamlet; usually associated (although not exclusively) with rural and peri-urban settlements across the Malay-Indonesian archipelago.

3 The smallest administrative unit.

tured interviews at local *barangay* level, primarily with informal settlers who were mainly factory workers or fished for a living.

The qualitative interviews were designed to understand how routinised state-bureaucratic processes of securitising spaces in response to and in anticipation of recurrent flooding came to be legitimised by local authorities, while at the same time being socially normed and/or contested by the very communities they intended to safeguard. Particular attention was paid to how municipal and community-level discourses constructed flooding as both an emergency and aberration in daily life, and also as a political narrative in shaping processes of state surveillance and land clearance, and in justifying the displacement of informal settlers, with little or no tenurial security. Thus we adopt a reading of securitisation that comprises more than simply the melding of the discursive and the material. The ethnographic research aimed to explore the underpinning dynamics of how processes of re/de-politicisation assume an iterative quality in normatively framing what socially accepted modes of responding to and dwelling with the incidence of recurring flooding ought to be, privileging whose perspectives and why.

1. Flood cultures: between normalcy and exceptionalism

When exploring the nexus evidenced in the everyday politics of urban planning, state surveillance and flood protection, two distinct scholarly traditions that have conventionally remained distinct can be traced: securitisation discourses and those related to critical interpretations of socio-environmental risk and vulnerability. The first entails the largely Anglo-European body of literature stemming from a number of disciplinary traditions (e.g. International Relations, Political Science, Political Sociology and Legal Studies) which themselves embody a number of conceptual and empirical tensions. Tellingly, one of these has been the deepening and broadening of the very notion "security" and "securitisation" – as event, process and as a set of discursive practices replete with their own material technologies and discursive speech acts as seen in the Copenhagen School (cf. Baldwin 1997, Buzan et al. 1998, Floyd 2007, Diskaya 2013). In critiquing the survivalist, neo-utilitarian framing of former approaches, the neo-Marxian and Frankfurt Critical Theory-inspired Welsh/Aberystwyth School (Booth 1991, Wyn Jones 1995) paid closer attention to the everyday routinisation (or normalisation) of securitisation structures and practices by tracing their underpinning knowledges, rationalities and distinct ways of forming subjects and objects.

Subsequently the post-structuralist Foucaultian-inspired Paris School complemented these framings by placing equal emphasis on practice-led method-

ologies, questioning how the very materialisations of securitisation infrastructures and enactments (within their broader scope as *dispositifs*) continued to shape historic and contemporary relations of power, while firmly entrenching their work in the everyday dynamics of immigration politics and border crossing (cf. Skinner 2002, Bigo / Guild 2005). Yet the post-positive leanings of these schools of thought (particularly evident in the older Copenhagen School) continue to raise further questions regarding how the politics of the normal (as a state of perceiving and being-in-the-world) could be studied, without succumbing to binary-laden interpretations of normalcy and exceptionalism. Therefore, while these more recent conceptualisations allow for the fact that normality itself could be interpreted as a historically, geographically and socio-politically contingent construct, the ontological dimensions of security analyses – particularly in terms of how iteratively processes of politicisation and depoliticisation of a certain issue unfold – remain an embattled discussion.

The second strand of scholarship emerges from a general focus of the more traditional hazard literature rooted in how societies can be protected against the effects of catastrophic, hazardous events. Flooding has conventionally been discussed as a material event for redress, for which distinct forms of expertise, political steps and infrastructural adjustments are becoming necessary.[4] Disaster events themselves were seen as states of exception, as "departures from 'normal' social functioning" (Wisner et al. 2004: 10), whereas societal recovery was perceived as a return to the "normal". With the introduction of the concept of vulnerability into hazard research in the 1970s and 1980s, the shift to analysing the societal disposition towards hazard events was refined, and the depiction of hazards as merely being shaped by natural factors progressively came to be rejected.

In particular, critical geography introduced ideas from emerging political ecology debates to hazard research, also borrowing from postcolonial and critical Development Studies perspectives (e.g. Wisner et al. 2004, Windmüller 2012, Ranganathan 2015). This wide-ranging corpus engages with the social construction of hazards and the broader social contexts in creating these very risks. For example, the introduction of more interpretive and constructivist approaches included diverse social perceptions of risks (e.g. Slovic 1987, Wildavsky / Dake 1990) and the idea that risks and hazards were not only socially constructed, but were an integral part of everyday practices and the very process of meaning-making with regards to the natural and social processes

4 Starting with the seminal works of Gilbert White (White 1974, White / Haas 1975), hazard research in the second half of the 20th century saw a gradual shift away from viewing disaster events in isolation, increasingly turning towards the manifold interactions between "natural" events and the territorialised social riskscapes determining the impacts of such events on individuals or groups. A utilitarian thrust remained, determining the kind of research that was carried out with regards to flooding and other hazards, very much targeted towards identifying measures that balance societal losses and expenditures to minimise those losses (Pohl 2008).

that amalgamate in hazard situations. These readings also took into account the fact that culturally contingent interpretations and practices play important roles in the construction of risks and influence the extent to which certain risks are seen as significant threats to societies, their expected scale of losses, as well as suitable adaptation strategies.

In both strands of research – spanning critical security and hazard research related to the politics of socio-environmental change – relatively less emphasis is placed on the social production of "normalcy" within and beyond the guise of exceptionalism, particularly in terms of its nested qualities and the spaces in between states of routinisation and exigency, emergency and the routine. While contemporary theorisations on security and vulnerability have certainly progressed beyond these timeworn polarisations – i.e. normalcy versus exceptionality, emergency versus *doxa* – conceptual advances on the study of securitisation as being perpetually and fundamentally incomplete in its amorphousness remain a core concern throughout this paper.

While the in/visibility of urban contexts as "silent security dilemmas" (Hansen 2000) in further exacerbating structures of inequality and marginality have been explored, their particularity has been analysed through more macro-oriented terms such as "emergencities" (Loh 2016), particularly in relevance to their competing politics of urban modernity and socio-environmental change.[5] As Greg Bankoff (2001) argues, expert-led and everyday discourses on how hazard-related vulnerabilities are presented bear historical roots insofar that they often reflect socio-cultural values pertaining to how certain world regions and micro sites are often imaged. As with the sense of tropicality and otherness that was once the aegis of a modernist "conceptual geography of western medicine" that rendered certain parts of the world unsafe, the mantra of natural disasters themselves could be traced as a distinct cultural discourse that legitimised vulnerability as a pathological state of being, requiring intervention (Bankoff 2001: 21).

More recent scholarship on the phenomenology of flooding draws attention to their lived ambivalence, as such events present not only uncertainty and a deviation from normal routines, but also offer opportunities for creative income generation which have often been overlooked in conventional adaptation research in urban contexts (Simarmata 2018: 124). This is not to romanticise the incidence of flooding, but to draw attention to what we term the "enculturation of flooding" – entrenched in the idea of "living with floods" from marine and coastal phenomenological perspectives (cf. Ehlert 2012, McEwen et al. 2014, Siriwardane-de Zoysa / Hornidge 2016). This notion

5 Here the framing of emergencities is used to integrate two related concepts – that of crisis-as-emergency and change (emergence) in which particular historic contexts have determined how and why certain issues have been framed and prioritised over others, and what kind of change was envisioned, and how (Loh 2016: 685).

gives way to broader questions of ontological normalisation. Flood cultures present both spectacle as well as management (as a normed order), continually working to reinforce one another, for without a repeated "event" such response actions could not be as cogently legitimated and routinised into daily practices.

Yet the notion of normalisation requires further empirical elucidation. Normalisation may not merely imply how particular securitised discourses and surveillance regimes begin to meld and ultimately disappear into the mainstream mundanity of urban life. While the lived nature of floods prompts us to step beyond the compass of dramatised news discourses (i.e. the narrativisation and signification of flooding), floodscapes may not only legitimate acts such as surveillance as a given, but take on more generative or productive qualities of their own. Thus it may be recalcitrance and non-compliance that are deemed as states of exception in the face of anticipated normalised flooding. Similarly, diverse technologies from the most basic CCTV cameras to donor-funded early warning systems may not act as panopticons themselves without the refashioning of flooding as what Platt (1999) and others have called "a moral hazard". High-modernist discourses on urban flood control have often privileged certain circuits of blame, while prioritising the disciplining of particular social groups.

As the two case studies differentially reveal, the layered complexities brought about by urban sprawl and agglomeration, compounded by inadequate drainage, sanitation, solid waste disposal and excessive groundwater extraction leading to land subsidence, create an unequal matrix of spatio-temporal risk that has often been intrinsically linked with the presence of informal settlements, unregulated squatting and "slum" housing – as witnessed, for example, along coastal dumpsites, riverine fringes and the edges of railway lines. In this context, urban flooding is not merely *lived* as an event that in turn patterns a raft of urban uncertainties; flooding – as a multi-sensory experiential process – comes to be imbued with distinct cultural identities and modes of action. It may seem intuitive that the incidence of flooding is never experienced homogenously within a given society, yet the underlying meanings of safety and peril, of threat and opportunity, determine how particular flood-prone spaces and communities are diversely securitised – taking into account both expert- and state-led discourses alongside "lay" meanings of watery incursions. It is at this point that the more recent "vernacular turn" within critical and ontological security studies can be cross-fertilised with contemporary socio-environmental research (cf. Croft / Vaughan-Williams 2016, George 2017, Innes 2017), by enlivening the notion of both distinct and interrelated flood cultures. For example, in urban and peri-urban Indonesian

contexts such as Jakarta and Semarang, the term *nerimo*[6] bears a strong religious connotation, embodying sensibilities such as surrender, augmented with meanings of *tahan* (i.e. to keep strong in the face of hardship), while the concept of *aman*[7] captures more collective, holistic understandings of normed order, safety and wellbeing that transcend more universalised place- and event-based notions of security.

Lastly, while there has been a broad appeal in calling for pluralising conceptual readings of "security" as a static, unidimensional and linear concept, "ordinary" people further provoke several epistemological challenges, one of which entails normative readings of social action combined with the negation of power interests and relationships (Jarvis 2018: 16). It is this ambivalence that our study also sets out to understand, for their concomitant processes of securitisation, however top-down or bottom-up, elude being normatively labelled or dualistically read as either being positive or inherently negative. Yet what this study aims to reveal are the socio-material implications, precursors and aftermaths seen in enculturing flooding primarily as a mode of normed securitisation that encompasses one way of responding to watery flows.

2. Umpiring flood cultures: Manila's Disaster Command Centres

Metro Manila has often been referenced as one of the world's "disaster capitals". As Bankoff writes in his seminal text *Cultures of Disaster* (2003), the epistemological lens with which Western social sciences frame risk and vulnerability proves inadequate; for Filipinos, hazards and disasters translate as frequent life events in which the "normalisation of threat" goes beyond shared structures of routinised coping (ibid: 265). This normalisation and the experience of varied socio-environmental phenomena (earthquakes and tremors, monsoonal flooding, storm surges, etc.) can be similarly contested in light of increases in the frequency of cyclonic movements and their heightened intensity – taking for example the case of the super-typhoon Haiyan / Yolanda (2009), swiftly followed by Bopha / Pablo a year later and Rammasun / Glenda in 2014.

Metro Manila is one of Southeast Asia's most complex postcolonial megacities, comprising 17 administrative cities run by local government units (LGUs) through the decentralisation of state power in the 1990s. These "cities" remain connected through the Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA), tasked with the management of solid waste disposal and traffic regu-

6 To be passive or acquiescent to one's fate.

7 To be secure.

lation, while overseeing hinterland and coastal flood control operations (Porio 2012: 8). The politics of metropolitan flood control were a salient governance issue also under Spanish and later American colonial administration, given Manila's location on an alluvial flood plain between the Pasig and Marikina rivers, crosscut by tectonic fault lines.

Due to the city's low-lying lands and recurrent silting during periods of colonial urbanisation, an intricate system of embankments and *esteros* (canals) was put in place to channel storm water flooding. During the Marcos dictatorship, particularly in the 1980s, the response to catastrophic flooding events with populist relief efforts derived political purchase through large-scale infrastructural projects such as dykes and the networked installation of pumps, water gates, storm signal systems and more (Loh / Pante 2015). Today, the discourses of anticipatory, pre-emptive action still serve to legitimate the popularity of mayors and LGU administrative executives. As our interviews reveal, the discursive shift from flood-led response to anticipatory action has prominently featured the establishment of disaster-related "Command Centres", with the first being instigated in 2010 in the relatively more affluent corporate-driven Pasig City following the wake of the super-typhoon Haiyan.

Indeed, the operation of Disaster Risk Reduction units or taskforces across the different cities is an older feature, in which a DRR officer and team would be tasked with the role of coordinating preventive, response and recovery efforts in the event of any hazard-related occurrence. The setting up of the first Command Centre in the Pasig LGU, financed by the City Hall and embedded within the Pasig City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (PC-DRRMO), was established under the direct supervision of the Mayor Bobby C. Eusebio. In its formative stages it served as an early crisis response warning facility modelled along the lines of the United States's 911 helpline service. Subsequently it came as little surprise that the American National Guard – mobilised in the wake of Hurricane Katrina almost half a decade earlier – was called upon for the first round of training of LGU emergency response personnel. While the trajectory of its establishment goes beyond the purview of this paper, it is worth noting that the first Command Centre, along which others were subsequently modelled and which its chief once referred to as "the first and last line of defence", changed the face of governing Metro Manila's flood culture(s) (interview with DDR departmental head, May 2017, Manila).

While conventional hydrological devices and instruments have historically supported Manila's flood control regimes, the PC-DRRMO operates through the deployment of over 200 CCTV cameras interspersed across 80 per cent of the city, as confirmed by the DRR chief during our fieldwork. The aerial images that line its walls are monitored by staff on a roster basis at all times

night and day – including public holidays. The Command Centre also acts as first port of call for the deployment of medical and rescue personnel, serving, in the words of one systems operator, as a "one-stop shop for immediate information on what is happening, and where". Furthermore the activities of the PC-DRRMO's Command Centre are complemented by the Rescue Emergency and Disaster Training Centre (RED), which – as stated in its training brochure – provides "civilian and professional responders the opportunity to learn, practice, and integrate medical, theoretical, technical, and leadership skills". The motto "*accipio, instruo et servo*" ("Learn, Prepare and Serve") festoons its entrance. What is interesting about its current suite of programmes is that it integrates very little flood-related response and management – while focusing almost entirely on search and rescue skills, fire-related and other emergencies characteristic of high-rise urban living. It is this feature that the training facilities often market, in attracting state-sponsored military and civil defence trainees primarily from South Asia (Bangladesh, India and Sri Lanka), together with private security personnel from the United States, the United Kingdom and the Asian Development Bank Headquarters in Manila.

At first glance the establishment of Manila's disaster Command Centres – now being replicated in less affluent cities such as coastal Navotas (characterised by more informal settlements, fisheries and harbour infrastructure) – may appear unremarkable against the backdrop of its flood control measures. Yet arguably the shift in importance now rendered to the use of civilian surveillance as a monitoring device, as opposed to the conventional hydrological infrastructural means that were adopted previously, imbues cities like Pasig with a distinct flood culture – one characterised not just by immediacy but also by the performative nature of anticipatory action. Pasig's use of social media (i.e. Twitter, Facebook) acts as more than a platform to disseminate knowledge. As R. Aseron, a Pasig resident recently remarked on the Facebook page of the PC-DRRMO (accessed 1 February 2018): "Whenever I hear [a] mobile with sirens passing along our vicinity, instantaneously, I will check this page for any update, on which it will always show real time updates". It is a sense of immediacy that does not stop at a given temporal order, but arguably percolates down to the very smallest administrative unit of an LGU *barangay*-neighbourhood, in which *barangay* captains were formerly tasked with the role of providing evacuation orders as the first line of community action.

Moreover the swift mobilisation, deployment and movement of resources across the LGU was often described with the vocabulary of military efficiency, in which the "civilian guards" appointed were no longer simply agents of neighbourhood watch teams. They were also trained in basic self-defence as in the case of simple search and rescue tasks, which in the words of one DRR officer was necessary to circumvent and to contain threats presented by both

natural hazards as well as potential criminal activity during the advent of disaster. What the example of Manila's highly popular self-replicating Command Centres points towards is the securitisation of a bureaucratic arm that was formerly entrenched within its conventional order of administrative governance. Arguably then, the models of action inspired by militarised routines seem to present a simulacrum of a normatively securitised flood culture – in which communicative lines of command and action barely veer away from a scripted order for response. As a Pasig City DRR officer remarked during an interview:

> […] most people do not adequately prepare themselves for a full day, after being evacuated for whatever reason – typhoon, flood, earthquake […] Disasters bring out the worst in people, and it is our task to ensure that proper conduct is maintained. This is why our skills and training integrate many aspects beyond natural hazards including road accidents, bomb diffusion, the handling of hazardous material […] (interview with a Pasig City DDR officer, Pasig City, May 2017).

It must also be borne in mind that the Pasig Command Centre has not, until this date, been put to the test with a challenging disaster situation warranting the swift deployment of hundreds of professional and civilian volunteer personnel. Thus the powerful image of "waiting for the siren(s)" conveys the anticipatory immediacy of a particular urban flood culture that is increasingly being simulated – both materially through training, and imaginatively through collective discourses.

Yet the "normalisation of threat" remains encoded in an arguably more passive set of social practices in the case of top-down disaster risk planning. Under-researched vernacular communal geographies across diverse informal settler *barangays* along the northern reaches of Manila Bay are seen at times to encompass divergent narratives that go beyond exigencies to survive – embodied in the Tagalog notion of *diskarté*, evolving from its Spanish root (meaning "ways and means of how to be", also entailing resourcefulness). Living with watery incursions therefore requires the creative adaptation and transformation of living patterns, often evidenced in the ways in which low-impact informal settler households securely fasten their homes to one another in order to prevent abodes from being washed away – a form of high-density living often perceived a primary source of fire-related hazards by state authorities.

Thus anticipatory perceptions of flooding – particularly from tidal surges in coastal spaces – can, at first glance, be seen to sit in juxtaposition with official state narratives. Meanings and practices of preparedness, response and adaptation may differ vastly, given the livelihood-based attachment to place that the coastal poor often articulate. Yet arguably, sensibilities of normalisation to flood realities bear close parallels in ways that their social practices do not entirely rupture modes of everyday life. At both levels – communal and

state-led – processes of "norming" have led to ways in which formal DRR and semi/informal "solutions" have encompassed broader agendas that go beyond concerns for mere survival. Therefore the enculturing of flooding, particularly via its discourses, plays an integral role in not only shaping a totalising surveillance regime at the city/municipal level, but also serves to justify (or to challenge) a sense of legitimate presence, against official perceptions towards informal land use and "squatting". The next case context, in Jakarta, further illustrates vernacular meanings of "owning" and enculturing floods, given the pertinent differences from Manila, particularly given the overt militarisation of DRR mitigation action within the informal *kampung* settlements of Northern Jakarta.

3. Enculturing floods amid displacement: Jakarta's Satpol P.P.

As in the case of Manila, northern Jakarta's urban coastalscapes offer not only dynamic vibrant life and livelihood options, but also carry the double, if not triple burden of socio-environmental pressures connected to in-migration, extreme weather events and climate variability. As Simone (2014) argues, the socio-economic promises of Jakartan urban life can quickly become a mirage in the everyday struggles to survive, especially for low- and middle-income dwellers who particularly face precarious livelihood situations and challenging environmental conditions. Faced with what Padawangi and Douglass (2015) have called an "era of chronic flooding", low-income households in Jakarta's coastal areas have, over the past decades, developed diverse strategies to adapt and at the same time to self-mitigate. Due to the geomorphological and hydrological conditions of urban coastal Jakarta, considerable areas face regular tidal flooding, locally referred to as *banjir rob*.

In recent years, "sources of flooding have become ever more complex through combinations of global climate change and human transformations of the urban landscape" (Padawangi / Douglass 2015: 517), and it is projected that heavy rain events will become more frequent with the impact of climate change (Abidin et al. 2008). Apart from stormwater flooding and surface runoff, northern Jakarta, which is flanked on one side by the Java Sea, also experiences diverse circulations of water due to freshwater salinisation, backflow and land subsidence as low-lying infrastructures sink deeper due to heavy groundwater extraction, while low-income neighbourhoods find themselves being constantly inundated with pools of stagnant algal water.

Unlike polarised neighbourhoods in Metro Manila that distinguish the affluent from the informal, low-income enclaves in coastal Jakarta lie interspersed with newly built recreational sites and higher-end housing estates.

More traditional settlements are often referred to as *kampungs*, characterised by their specific forms of communal housing and open spaces (Zhu / Simarmata 2014). But they are increasingly becoming associated with poverty and marginality, often combined with dense living conditions and the lack of basic services such as sanitation and running water, electricity and solid waste management (Winayanti / Lang 2004: 42). Typically, as in the case of Manila, *kampungs* have also been clustered along flood-prone riverbanks, the fringes of reservoirs, along state-owned shorelines and interspersed between industrial blocs. Yet it must be borne in mind that *kampungs* have always remained a characteristic feature, embryonic of most Indonesian cities alongside rapid processes of urbanisation. Thus as Simarmata (2018) posits, the city and the *kampung* can never be conceptually nor empirically separated given their mutual embeddedness and interdependence, as spaces of informality have often serviced everyday urban life. Within these *kampungs*, the heterogeneity of resident groups can be distinguished between differing states of illegality or semi-legality with respect to their tenurial security.

While low-income dwellers continue to look for housing opportunities on unused state and private land irrespective of existing titles, their sites of "squatting" and encroachment are often perceived outside the vernacular frame of public order (*ketertiban umum*). This is a narrative often used as a legitimating discourse in regulating where citizens can stay or move, particularly with regard to the occupancy of state urban and provincial land. To facilitate the policing of settlement boundaries, Jakarta's government founded the Satuan Polisi Pamong Praja (abbreviated as the Satpol P.P.) or the "Public Order Enforcers", an auxiliary security unit tasked with performing municipal duties. The unit itself is relatively old, having been formed in the 1950s during Dutch colonisation, and also operated outside Java in spaces like Madura. The later modernisation of Satpol P.P. was governed by a regulatory act (the Pemerintah PP Number 6) in 2010, which reorganised its enforcement authority and mandated role within the aegis of regulating domestic settlement patterns, including the supervision of legal business activities. In contemporary life, these units also encompass a visible ethnic Muslim Batawi identity, given their links with the Forum Batawi at *kampung* level, drawing their support base largely from local uniformed youth and using the *parang*[8] symbol as their logo.

Among its duties, Satpol P.P. is seen as a unit that has been instrumental in assisting the local government of Jakarta in operationalising flood mitigation measures through the clearance (or "sweeping") of significant watershed spaces. Moreover it can be argued that in the past years, the mandate of Satpol P.P. has been continuously reworked: starting as a product of national legislation,

8 A type of machete or cleaver used in the Malay-Indonesian archipelago.

the unit today is very much adjusted to the regulative needs of the city and its sub-district level, acting as a boundary object between state authorities and citizenry when it concerns public eviction orders. Over the course of a decade, the Satpol P.P. has been mobilised a number of times in civil society – from the guarding of vital anti-flood infrastructure such as *kampung* "pump houses" during times of tidal floods in Muara Bahru, to demolition activities along embankments in Kampung Aquarium and Luar Batang, resulting at times in violent clashes with citizens as they hurled stones, Molotov cocktails and chanted shalawat.

One of the most publicised cases that connects the securitisation of flood mitigation with Satpol P.P. involved the largest reservoir in Jakarta, Waduk Pluit, to the west of which lies a highly regulated luxury housing market that faces rows of stilted squatter settlements on the reservoir's eastern bank. In efforts to increase the reservoir's retention capacity after stormwater flooding in the early 2010s, the municipal government implemented measures to clean and dredge the reservoir of floating debris – a process that took over a year. What naturally followed was forced eviction (Thamrin 2009), as in Kampung Aquarium.

How may a *kampung* resident's particular enculturation of flooding experiences differ from the securitised perceptions of state authorities which view flooding as what Simarmata (2018: 47) calls a "preventable disaster"? When tracing the narratives of displaced fisherfolk from Kampung Aquarium, insights to these questions take us back to the lived experiences of flooding and the recurrent sensing of flooding in association with being a member of the urban poor. Put differently, living with floods – more than merely coping with them – was often seen as a form of enskillment with respect to urban coastal dwelling. Flooding did not make people inherently insecure; it was the securitisation of flooding trajectories – from their circuits of blame to the assignation of victimhood – which further legitimised eviction orders and forcible displacement that rendered the coastal urban poor insecure.

The securitising logic culminating in evictions all along the coast in North Jakarta has to some extent changed since the gubernatorial elections in Jakarta and the assumption of office by Anies Baswedan in October 2017. Besides a clear anti-reclamation position, Baswedan's campaign argued for considering the fisherfolk's perspectives when planning developments along the coast and for stopping forced evictions along the waterways and shorelines (cf. Budiari 2017). After his election, works at the reclamation areas along the coast were temporarily suspended and no further eviction campaigns have taken place in North Jakarta. "We do see a shift of policies after the governor has changed", as a member of the RUJAK Centre for Urban Studies in Jakarta explained, adding that *kampung* improvement and social housing initiatives have increased, new regulatory bodies have been formed and money has been allocat-

ed for community action planning (interview with a RUJAK representative, Jakarta, May 2018). In Kampung Aquarium, signs of a cautious optimism seem to confirm this assessment: after a forceful cleaning of the settlement and the relocation of households by Satpol P.P. in 2016, the few inhabitants that still live in the *kampung* have recently elaborated a community action plan facilitated by RUJAK and the NGO Urban Poor Coalition (UPC). In this plan, the location of the *kampung* on the coast has been made the central asset of a "maritime *kampung*" to be constructed on the site of the former settlement (interview with UPC/RUJAK activists). "Whether or not families will be willing to come back remains to be seen" was the dominant narrative on the future prospects of *kampung* re-development. What seem to have changed are the perceptions of an increasing livelihood and the security and safety of living conditions. Recently, Satpol P.P. has been employed to seal off constructions on reclaimed islands that have been erected without building permits rather than in further eviction campaigns along the coast (cf. Jakarta Post 2018).

Furthermore vernacularised meanings of security often play out in very material senses – of modes of being and dwelling amidst coastal change. One such example can be found in the perceived precarity of contemporary stilted *rumah panggung* homes. While their amphibious design enables them to withstand the wear and tear of recurrent tidal floods, a group of forcibly evicted Bugis, Sundanese and Batawi fishermen and boatmen wholeheartedly dismissed the value of maintaining *panggung* homes. Many of these former residents had continually evolving social ties across spaces like Sulawesi and Sumatra – some traveling frequently between Jakarta and the spaces their parents and grandparents left behind. They saw the disadvantages of a home on stilts to be many: at first they felt that these lacked the aesthetic appeal of cemented homes, which they asserted were neater and more "orderly". Upon further discussion, a more cogent trope of modernity and modernisation arguably emerges. As one emphatically stated: "when you are in Jakarta, you must change" (interview with an evicted *kampung* dweller, Jakarta, February 2017). Yet there was another undercurrent that became visible – the fact that cemented homes were more "fixed" and "sturdier".

Upon a closer look at these narratives, the fixities articulated were not simply architectural. They symbolised a form of emplacement, of belonging to a space that they steadfastly called home because they either grew up in Aquarium or raised families there who were invariably Jakartians. Yet to take it further, more than just a symbol of belonging and fixity to the land (i.e. land in which they held no formal certificates of residence to) – the conversion to cemented homes which happened en masse during the early and mid-1990s almost seemed to cement their own meanings of security through the material enculturing of lived flooding, which often ran counter to narratives of flood-prone precariousness and risk.

4. Conclusion

The high degree of subjectivity (of context) greatly matters here, for securitisation is multi-threaded, never linear nor sequential, leaving room for acknowledging more than merely the processual ways of the formation of practice. Rather than to disengage ourselves from the notion of "securitisation" we have argued for vernacular theorisations and ways of meaning-making through perceptions and trajectories of normalisation (of dis/order, social action, presence, legitimation, etc.) whether in the context of the seemingly unexceptional/mundane (e.g. a routine electricity outage), or as spectacle – such as an earthquake, hurricane or other natural disaster or a political event. Thus within this integrative notion of securitisation (and its limits), flooding could be superficially seen as a spectacular event, yet is also possesses an inherently routine characteristic as opposed to a relatively more spontaneous occurrence. Arguably it is this state of inbetweenness – of exigency and the slow "creep" of rising or incursive waters – that we have sought to problematise in terms of both narrative repertoires as well as lived materialities. Furthermore, the very normative identities that are imbued to flooding make its enculturation relevant, once it is experientially lived – rather than witnessed or avoided entirely. It is this sensibility that is captured in the opening quote of the paper by the DRR officer in the City of Navotas (Manila), reflecting on the very ontological dimensions of securitising flooding as a watery incursion, that is both ordinary as well as exceptional.

Yet it must be asked how salient the notion of "normalisation" is (as both event and also social process) in the contemporary study of securitised floodscapes. Moreover, what analytical framings of securitisation promise nuanced readings into contexts such as Metro Manila and Jakarta, in which state-defined everyday security concerns and DRR measures appear to be intertwined?

While the politics of flood control and management in these two cities adopt a distinctly expert-led and technocratic cast, it must be borne in mind that emergency-making discourses and localised action also encapsulate a broader politics of urban change and dwelling. Prescriptive policy solutions may often cohere with elite agendas of nation building, legitimating particular forms of democracy, citizenship and decision making, countering fears (such as the advent of communism) which in turn produce "crisis situations of their own making [...] both spontaneous and organized" (Loh 2006: 684). As Loh and Pante (2015) argue, the lived materialities, discourses and imaginaries of flooding may be readily taken as a microcosm in which the control of ecological nature and human nature (through the taming of both watery movements and human behaviour) presents a particular normed order in its own right. Flooding therefore can be seen not merely as an emergency or crisis

event. The very chains of culpability in which flooding has been officially interpreted (and narrated) bring to the fore meanings and visions of particular kinds of urban modernity and forms of dwelling/being-in-the-world in which securitising both the normal as well as the aberrant was a necessary feature. Both Jakarta and Metro Manila present similar ways in which old and new geographies of flooding have been traversed and negotiated; they also present distinct discursive meanings and nature-cultures of/around flooding – implying the invasive "social" just as much as ecologically-framed watery incursions.

Finally, how do diverse conceptual frames in the study of everyday flood cultures compare in terms of their analytical purchase? Firstly, the two case studies may present different interpretations with regard to what the normed securitisation of flooding realities actually means. In the case of the institutionalisation of disaster by the Command Centres in Metro Manila, states of normalcy and exigency arguably exist not as juxtapositions but as a seamless trajectory of action made possible through the visual surveillance technologies and communal warning mechanisms in which flood cultures are pre-empted and actualised in terms of their planned responses. Thus the "high securitisation" of Command Centres enables staff (and the volunteers deployed) to live with the prophylactic imagination of flooding in which simulation training and images produced on the wall by its many CCTV cameras offer possibilities of flattening multi-sensory perceptions of flooding into a gaze. In this light, critical security studies may offer the tools with which to trace visible assemblages of the securitisation process (actors, technologies, discourses, routinised practices, etc.), but may seem less valuable in offering insights into how normed realities are co-produced through meanings of anticipatory being and of creative emergence – whether in justifying coercive, adaptive or transformative practices.

In the case of northern Jakarta, the virulence with which forced evictions have taken place with the assistance of the Satpol P.P. points to the fact that flooding is not by any means "normalised" as a political discourse, with almost a zero-tolerance level. Flooding is thus seen as an anomaly to be remedied primarily through clearance activity – whether the cleaning of drainage systems, the removal of solid waste or the relocation of informal settlements. Vernacular meanings of public order with which the state justifies its actions stand as the very antithesis of perceiving flooding as a routine occurrence. Yet the narratives of local coastal communities that eke out a living from the shoreline or the sea perceive flooding as a normalised experience insofar as it constitutes part and parcel of life in informal settlements. It is this very experience of flooding as a discourse of non-affectedness that creates its ambivalence – as the presence of water facilitates both the propensity to occupy

marginal lands, while at the same time legitimating the (often violent) processes of relocation to dryer spaces.

Thus the vernacularisation of "security" as a lived concept bears importance in revealing ambivalent and contradictory meanings that occupy a sense of neither normalcy nor exceptionalism, safety nor peril. But to trace these meanings (and their historic evolutionary trajectories) requires an integration of broader theoretical currents calling for more interdisciplinary and fine-grained analyses into phenomenologies of risk and hazard-related "opportunities", a nascent field of socio-ecological research. Therefore, arguably, the notion of "security" itself may not fully encompass the hybrid meanings of living with floodscapes, but may offer a vantage point from which to analyse their everyday realities.

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IQAS Vol. 49/2018 1–2, pp. 127–146

Book Reviews

Thomas H. Johnson, *Taliban Narratives. The Use and Power of Stories in the Afghanistan Conflict*. London: Hurst, 2018. 336 pages, £30.00. ISBN 978-1 8490-4843-9

Since the mid-1980s Thomas H. Johnson (National Security Affairs Department at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California) has made numerous trips to Afghanistan and in 2001 he was involved in the information operations campaign in preparation for the US invasion of the country. Research for this book – which belongs to the great number of conflict studies on Afghanistan, here with a special focus on information operations – was mainly conducted over the years 2004–2011, including field research in Southern and Eastern Afghanistan with special attention to Taliban messaging. Johnson was a Senior Political and Counterinsurgency Advisor to the Commander of Canadian Forces in Afghanistan in 2009 and held other political and military positions as well during these years. His research for the book was thus directly embedded in the military actions of the US army and its allies. This makes clear that the author does not even attempt to take a neutral position as one might expect in a study carried out in the fields of narratology and cultural studies. For this reason narratives of the Taliban may be called "enemy narratives" (p. 3) in this book, and it comes as no surprise that military operations of the US army and its allies are straightforwardly referred to as "our operations in Afghanistan" (p. xxv). Already in the foreword the central finding of the book is formulated in terms of a military dichotomy (winner vs. loser) when the author says that "the Taliban has won the information war" (p. xxxv).

The book is aimed at assessing the information operations and associated narratives and stories of the Taliban and other Afghan insurgent groups, namely of the Hezb-e Islami. The author tries to suggest "why the Taliban have been so much more efficient and effective in presenting messages that resonate with the Afghan population than have the United States, the Afghan government, and the allies" (p. 2). It argues that the efficiency of Taliban information operations can be explained by the fact that they are indigenous and rely on traditional tools like night letters (leaflets, flyers), chants, poems and a variety of other culturally effective artefacts (p. 15). These tools are introduced and discussed in detail in separate chapters.

With regard to the theoretical background of his research, Thomas H. Johnson refers variously to works by successful authors of literature, commu-

nication studies, studies in the field of propaganda and persuasion strategies, Aristotle's Rhetoric and Patrick Hogan's book *The Mind and its Stories* (pp. 4–7). Johnson defines narratives as a "system of cognitive standards within which 'messages' are interpreted" whereas "stories are always interpreted within a persistent structure of norms and beliefs (narratives) that will affect the ways that stories and messages are interpreted" (p. 9). What is lacking is some background information about the role, function and mechanisms of story-telling in Afghan society. Johnson uses the term "story" in a rather loose sense. Mostly it is understood as an easier-to-understand interpretation of a translated text segment (see pp. 75–76, 113–131 et al.) or as an equivalent to "narration" (see pp. 217, 222). However, in the Afghan tradition of story-telling a "story" (Pashto and Dari: *riwāyat, hikāyat,* or *qessa / kisa*) is always a meaningful (and mostly entertaining) narration. In other words: Every narration of this kind transmits a particular message which can be seen as the quintessence of the narration and which usually has a broader meaning than the reported events. Such stories are allegories and metaphors.

According to Johnson, the Taliban always focus and act in a rural context. Tools of narration such as night letters, the Internet, DVDs, cellphone and other videos, radio broadcasts, official announcements or graffiti are discussed in detail, as well as traditional genres like poetry and chants. A separate chapter is dedicated to the "Code of Conduct" issued regularly by the Taliban leadership for their cadre. To sum up, Johnson comes to the conclusion that the Taliban maintain simple objectives in their strategic communication with a finite messaging spectrum and narrative universe and are quite successful in doing so. The US military and the Afghan government were unable to present a competitive narrative because their stories and overall narrative failed to resonate with a vast majority of the Afghan population (pp. 265 ff.).

When studying narrations it is always important to take into consideration the means of distribution and ask how the narrations were perceived by the target audience. Otherwise it can happen that we thoroughly discuss a text or some other narration that, in fact, remained meaningless for the society because it was not distributed as assumed or because it was not noticed at all. Only little is said in this respect in the book. The author mentions the low level of literacy among rural Afghans more than once. Maybe this can also explain why many rules of the Taliban's "Code of Conduct" were not followed in practice as mentioned on p. 177. Perhaps some Taliban fighters were simply unable to read this document.

The book is based on material that was translated from Pashto and Dari by native speakers who mostly live in the US. From a methodological point of view, such an approach faces substantial limitations. Every translation is an interpretation as a matter of course. Hence when working with translated texts, it is not the primary source being analysed but an interpretation of it.

This can explain why some analytical details remained superficial, not to mention the instances of incorrect translations and numerous mistakes in the transliteration of Pashto words and names. Notwithstanding such (mostly linguistic-hermeneutical) details, the book will undoubtedly find a grateful audience, especially among persons who are interested in political and military studies. For those unfamiliar with military issues, the large number of military-specific abbreviations may be confusing.

Lutz Rzehak

Samina Yasmeen, *Jihad and Dawah. Evolving Narratives of Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jamat ud Dawah*. London: Hurst, 2017. 320 pages, £35.00. ISBN 978-1-8490-4710-4

With the jihad-focused spotlight of journalists, pundits and scholars shining brightly on the so-called "Islamic State", interest in Pakistan has taken a back seat over the last few years. Samina Yasmeen's new book, *Jihad and Dawah*, makes a compelling case for why it is fruitful to bring the country's shifting jihadi landscape back into the realm of rigorous academic analysis. As Yasmeen rightly notes, existing studies have tended to exhaust themselves in mere descriptions of the terrorist activities and global linkages of Pakistan's jihadi groups. Her goal, by contrast, is to dissect the ideological writings of one influential organisation, Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT, "Army of the Good"), and its political wing, Jamat ud Dawah (JuD, "Society for the Call to Islam"). In particular, the author wants to understand "how locally relevant narratives have been employed by jihadi groups in Pakistan to attract supporters" (p. 3).

To this end, Yasmeen has scrutinised a wide range of books, magazines and pamphlets that have been published in Urdu since the early 1990s. Her argument is straightforward: LeT initially considered the promotion of jihad as its main task. Proselytising (*da´wa*) was only a secondary consideration. Yet, this approach gradually – and mostly as a result of external shocks – gave way to a much more prominent role for religious preaching. As Yasmeen sees it, by carefully reshaping its message and postponing the call for armed struggle against the enemies of Islam, LeT managed to avoid government bans, broaden its societal base and secure additional sources of funding in the midst of a highly competitive "Islamic market". Alongside this main argumentative arc runs the important notion that women's agency within the organisation received a significant boost through this development, as well. Over the last three decades, female activists attached to LeT have made their voices increasingly heard. They hail "proper Muslim mothers" as crucial catalysts, both

within the domestic sphere and beyond, for the establishment of a society conducive to jihad.

Jihad and Dawa extends over six chapters plus an introduction and conclusion. The first two sections are perhaps the least impressive parts of the book. Chapter 1, "Islam in Pakistan", merely provides a rehashing of the oft-repeated (but, sadly, less-frequently deconstructed) story of increasing Islamisation in the country since the 1970s, fuelled by religious influence stemming from Saudi Arabia. Chapter 2 introduces the LeT as originating within a particular South Asian Salafi tradition, known as Ahl-i Hadith (The People of the Prophet's Sayings). This part of the book is somewhat weak on the historical and theological background of this sect but makes a highly convincing case for how certain factions within the Pakistani military had a major hand in the founding of LeT in February 1990.

The organisation was supposed to be a vehicle for channelling expertise in armed conflict, gained during the Afghan jihad, toward the support of an existing uprising in Indian-held Kashmir. The LeT leadership at this time argued that neither was a "perfect" Islamic state necessary to wage holy war against external enemies (such as India), nor was it required that those recruited for this task displayed complete purity in their doctrinal convictions (pp. 65–67). In this chapter, Yasmeen provides an excellent account of the elaborate training courses devised by LeT. She shows how the organisation made use of its annual conventions in order to drum up support, inter alia by having Osama bin Laden address the attendees via telephone in the mid-1990s.

Chapter 3 "The Kargil Crisis and MDI" very successfully argues that the border conflict with India in 1999 had serious repercussions for LeT. After the Indian army recaptured positions held by LeT fighters, the organisation scaled back its call for jihad and redirected its outreach activities toward alternative fields such as education. The author consequently detects an ideological shift in LeT publications that began to equate the role of the *mujahid* (one engaged in jihad) and the *da'i* ("preacher"): while the former shed his blood on the battlefield, the latter spilled his sweat on the pulpit. This way, LeT granted both essentially complementary roles, since their activities had the same aim – namely the propagation of God's word (pp. 106–107).

Chapter 4 "From *Lashkar-e-Taiba* to *Jamat ud Dawah*" and Chapter 5 "JuD and the Mumbai Attacks" demonstrate how this reconfiguring of the organisation's message gathered further momentum. LeT and JuD carefully adjusted their activities after events such as 9/11, the assault on the Indian parliament in October 2001 and the 2008 string of terrorist attacks in Mumbai. LeT responded to steadily increasing international pressure – especially since it was widely seen as being implicated in the context of Mumbai – by foregrounding the need for patience. Its leading thinkers reacted by stressing that first the correct understanding of God's unicity (*tawhid*) needed to be in-

culcated in society before jihad could be waged (again). LeT emphasised that it would never fight the Pakistani state and embarked on alternative forms of activism such as spearheading protests against "anti-Islamic" messages emerging from the West or devoting itself to extensive welfare programmes for the wider Pakistani society. In this challenging climate, LeT magazines for women shifted the responsibility for keeping the flame of jihad burning to the group's female members.

While Yasmeen manages to tell a persuasive story, the book's readability is impacted by some structural issues. For long stretches, the author seems merely to relay the arguments she finds in her sources without embedding these into the context of wider Islamic thought or additional scholarship. This issue is particularly evident in her extensive discussion of a new "theory of jihad" post-9/11, which she ascribes to Hafez Saeed, one of the main ideologues of LeT. Yasmeen perceives echoes of the thought of Carl von Clausewitz and Sun Tzu in Saeed's writings, without, however, being able to substantiate these claims (pp. 129–135). More troubling perhaps is the lack of engagement with recent literature on the conceptualisation of Pakistan as an Islamic state, such as the monographs by Naveeda Khan, Faisal Devji or Venkat Dhulipala, contributions on JuD such as Humeira Iqtidar's book *Secularizing Islamists?*, or Andreas Rieck's study of Shi'i Islam in Pakistan. Nevertheless, Yasmeen has done a great service to the field. She has skilfully engaged with LeT publications that have remained relatively inaccessible to many scholars and has deftly proven that jihadi writings need to be explored on their own terms. Her attention paid to female activists, in particular, is both innovative and highly fascinating. *Jihad and Dawah* is thus a trailblazing work in demonstrating the gendered dimensions of jihad in South Asia and beyond.

Simon Wolfgang Fuchs

Stephanie Stocker, *Caste and Equality. Friendship Patterns among Young Academics in Urban India*. Bielefeld: transcript, 2017. 300 pages, €39.99. ISBN 978-3-8376-3885-1

The primary theme of this book is described in the subtitle, whereas the tension between the caste hierarchy and equality is dealt with in a more implicit manner. The notoriously difficult term "caste" is introduced all too cursorily, yet strangely enough, the word *Harijan*, unusable today, is used for the Dalits, and the error – often found in the literature – is repeated here, that the Indian government has abolished the caste system (p. 63), whereas only the practices of untouchability have been made illegal. Nevertheless, in her dissertation (in

Cultural Anthropology at the University of Tübingen) the author pursues the laudable approach of investigating practices that are connected with everyday life in a highly structured society and have the potential to change it. The notion of "modernization" alluded to here is critically examined in the first chapter, which also explains the choice of a university in Chennai (Madras), Tamil Nadu, as the location of the study.

The educational system opens new spaces for actors, in which they can form friendships characterised by greater equality, even when the participants come from unequal backgrounds (see also the comparative study by Barbara Riedel, *Orient und Okzident in Calicut. Muslimische Studenten und Studentinnen in Kerala, Südindien, im Spannungsfeld zwischen lokaler Verwurzelung und globalen Verflechtungen*. Heidelberg: Draupadi Verlag, 2014).

The author rightly points out that in anthropology, it is most often "kinship" that is investigated, even though "friendship" can be equally important. The meaning of friendship is naturally time- and culture-dependent and depends on the concrete relationships or on the particular context, such as the educational system or work. This latter point was recently thematised by Christian Strümpell (*"Wir arbeiten zusammen, wir essen zusammen". Konvivium und soziale Peripherie in einer indischen Werkssiedlung*. Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2006), whose research Stocker explicitly cites, as it introduced the term conviviality (as opposed to commensality). Louis Dumont had argued that in India the hierarchical order was primary, while relations of equal rank were secondary. Stocker therefore poses the question of how far the forms of egalitarian interaction, lived in the special context of educational institutions, extend in their effects. She describes friendship relations on campus and in the domestic environment (Chapters 3 and 4).

The next four chapters illuminate the effects of these relations on that most sensitive topic in India, marriage. Desires for a partner are aligned with new ideas but remain within the established framework of the status system. Friends can play a role here up to a certain point, and they are valued guests, but in the end, the barriers remain. They help to organise the preparations for a wedding, but can scarcely participate in ritual activities. Despite a certain elasticity in implementation, adapted to the respective situation, the system of social rank thus remains largely intact, even if education is now an important aspect within it. The behaviour of the actors is oriented towards the context, which in fact requires a particular competence (p. 270). This can explain why some norms can be circumvented while others continue to have an effect. It would be interesting to investigate when and why people recognise this as an inconsistency. When does a greater social change find more open support?

Similarly, in a few sentences at the end of the book the author names several themes for further research. To this list could be added the need for a more precise distinction between kinship or caste ties (normative), friendship (emo-

tional) and contacts (instrumental), as mentioned in the work of Kathinka Frøystad (*Blended Boundaries. Caste, Class, and Shifting Faces of "Hinduness" in a North Indian Village*. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2005, pp. 129ff.). The work of Minna Saavala (*Middle-Class Moralities. Everyday Struggle over Belonging and Prestige in India*. Hyderabad: Orient Blackswan, 2010, pp. 74 ff.) could also contribute here. Stocker herself writes: "As part of a 'modern' sphere, 'university friends' assume an esteemed status. However, they exhibit a functional character, in contrast to emotional ties experienced between 'village friends'" (p. 121).

As we all know only all too well from our own societies, social inequality can persist despite legal equality. To the great credit of this book, it shows that – and how – status differences can persist and reproduce, even in the face of egalitarian relationships.

Gernot Saalmann

B. D. Chattopadhyaya, *The Concept of Bharatavarsha and Other Essays*. Ranikhet: Permanent Black, 2017. 238 pages, Rs 795. ISBN 978-8-17824-516-4

Prof. B. D. Chattopadhyaya's new anthology is a significant and essential addition to his previous publications. In his first anthology – his magnum opus from 1994, *The Making of Medieval India* – and in his successive studies he validated the existence and identity of the Early Middle Ages as a distinctly post-classical period of Indian history. In order to verify its actuality it was not enough for him to contradict the Indian History Congress's tripartite periodisation of Indian history into Classical, Muslim and Modern Indian History (and its predecessor of colonial historiography – Hindu, Muslim and British History). He had primarily to detect political, social and cultural processes in the time of the post-Gupta and pre-Delhi Sultanate that verified "certain fundamental movements within the regional and local levels, and not in terms of the crisis of a pre-existent, pan-Indian social order" (1994: 17). In other words, he emphasised the "positive" elements that finally emerged in regional state formation and regional cultures, the landmarks of Early Medieval India, without, however, completely neglecting conflicts and antithetical ideas.

In view of more recent political developments Chattopadhyaya focuses in his new anthology, *The Concept of Bharatavarsha and Other Essays*, on contradictory aspects of socio-political and cultural developments and on controversial concepts of Hindu nationalist historiography. He has focused his critical discourse on two essential Hindu-nationalist topoi – the imagined age-old

territorial and cultural unity of India – elucidating his concerns in detail in the two most essential essays in the volume: the title piece "The Concept of Bhāratavarşa and Its Historiographical Implications" and "Interrogating 'Unity in Diversity': Voices from India's Ancient Texts", his address as general president of the December 2014 session of the Indian History Congress. It was certainly a deliberate move to place these essays at the beginning and at the end of the volume. This review will thus concentrate on these two significant key articles, which deserve detailed presentations.

Since the Indian Constitution came into effect in 1950, India and Bharat have been the two official names of the Republic of India. Bharatavarsha, the "land of Bharata", refers to a legendary king of central northern India, who is praised of as the forefather of the epic dynasties of the Mahabharata. Contemporary Indian and in particular nationalistic historiography projects the unitary state of contemporary Bharatavarsha into the distant past of ancient India. Thus it marginalises or even denies the existence of historically arising independent local and regional identities and state formation. It is this situation in which Chattopadhyaya's critical screening of the history and historiography of the concept of Bharatavarsha becomes very necessary. He emphasises that the idea of Bharatavarsha was not static but underwent contradictory development stages. Thus he observes that in India's earliest textual phase "the term Bharatavarsha, even in a geographical sense, did not appear at all". The Rigvedic tribes (*janas*) were communities without fixed territories. In the subsequent Brahmana texts they were associated with their larger tribal settlements (*janapadas*). But these, too, were still only vaguely defined dwelling places situated in different areas of North India. The early Buddhist texts integrated the meanwhile vaguely known separate territories of the subcontinent into their cosmographic concept of Jambudvipa. Although it was associated and even, if rarely, identified with India, Jambudvipa did not correspond clearly with the geography of any specific country such as present-day India. It is the merit of the early medieval Purana texts, such as the "description of Bharatavarsha" (*Bhāratavarşa-varṇanam*) of the Visnu Purana, that they present for the first time a depiction of Bharatavarsha. But, as Chattopadhyaya points out, they highlight Bharatavarsha's nine divisions, their *janapadas* and distinct communities, as different and unequal segments that also do not pertain directly to the geography of India.

In order to lend further insight into the controversial history of currently relevant spatial, religious and ideological concepts such as Bharatavarsha, Chattopadhyaya includes into his considerations also Kalidasa's poem *Rāghuvamśa* and Rajasekhara's *Kāvyamīmāmsā*. Kalidasa's famous fifth-century depiction of Raghu's *dig-vijaya*, "the conquest of the four quarters", depicts the convergence of the geography and the ideology of space. The space over which an early Indian monarch aspired to have unrivalled dominance was praised as

the "place of the world ruler" (*cakravarti-kṣetra*). The desire to "conquer the [four] directions" (*dig-jigīṣā*) and their kingdoms confirms concepts of classical Hindu and Buddhist kingship ideology of an imagined politically united Bharatavarsha. Chattopadhyaya questions whether Rajashekhara's tenth-century Kavyamimamsa is an "Exercise in Synthesis". It largely follows the Puranic concept of Bharatavarsha with its nine parts and their various *janapadas* and communities. But significantly innovative is Rajashekhara's design of Āryāvarta ("abode of the noble ones"). Due to its central position in North India and its rigid enforcement of the Brahmanical social order it was praised as Bharatavarsha's sacred region, and its capital Kanyakubja was the point of departure for defining the cardinal directions. It was indeed an ideally constructed concept of Bharatavarsha, but with little meaning for India's political geography, however.

Chattopadhyaya then finally refers to several inscriptions from the tenth to fourteenth centuries that praise several *janapadas* and sacred centres as ornaments of Bharatavarsha. He is certainly right when he regards this as "a device for valorization by relating it to a universally recognized cosmographical landmark, much in a same way as a new royal lineage would seek to validate its status through affiliation with an epic-Puranic genealogy" (p. 25). In this way, Bharatavarsha was also used by the colonial administration as a device for the revaluation of "British India", through an ancient Indian sacred concept, as a unified and centrally oriented state. This misconception of Bharatavarsha as a unified state was a definite misinterpretation of its historical meaning. But, as is well known, it was adopted by early twentieth-century nationalist historical writing. Chattopadhyaya summarises his historiographical study on the concept of Bharatavarsha with the remark: "The idea of India, identified with Bhāratavarṣa, created in the colonial period, is a burden that we are forced to carry and perhaps further embellish in our increasingly neo-nationalist age" (p. 23).

In his general president's address on "Unity in Diversity", Chattopadhyaya also critically scrutinises the historical background of this essential building block of contemporary Indian national identity "that we carry with us throughout our lives". He emphasises that it is not his intention to question it in principle. But he points out that unity, rather than diversity, designates the main essence of this phrase in hundreds of schoolbooks and scholarly treatises and thus circumvents diversity as an equal essence of this composite unity. His main concern is therefore not only to trace diversities already in ancient texts. The overdue question is "if 'diversities' of a country (in whatever sense the term 'diversity' is used) are seen to have coalesced into a structure of unity, how do networks of diversities function within what is perceived as 'unity'?" (p. 190).

In the Rigveda, the classical early example of binary opposites is the Dasyus. Because of their irreconcilably different culture lacking the four castes and

four stages of life, they were discriminated against and even had to be annihilated by the Aryas. Linguistic differences with various immigrant ethnic communities in the Northwest, such as the Yavanas and Sakas in the last centuries BCE, might initially have been less disjunctive. But these differences considerably elevated the rank of Aryan languages and created a linguistic and cultural hierarchisation on a significant scale. And as Chattopadhyaya has already pointed out in regard to the imagined unity of Bharatavarsha, the same sense of contrasting diversities and hierarchisation was caused by the dominant cultural position of Madhyadesa or Aryavarta in relation to other regions. In the Gupta and post-Gupta ages Aryavarta emerged as the holy land of Brahmanical learning, purity and ideal social order at the expense of outer regions, a development that has endured until today.

The same kind of diversification and hierarchisation emanated from normative texts such as the Manusmrti as they accepted and justified disparate *dharmas* in politically and culturally separate and distinct spaces. Even Bharata's and Vatsyayana's famous "apolitical" texts, the Natyasastra and Kamasutra, also contain detailed depictions of the multifarious social and cultural differences of various regions and their manifold communities. They may even be considered as pre-modern anthropological studies. But they were mostly neither value-neutral nor even intended to be objective. For Chattopadhyaya it is particularly significant that "in almost all cases, characterizing differences also implied hierarchization and making value judgements in terms of perceived quality" (p. 201). And he even brought into consideration the fact that early texts usually do not point "in the direction of a consciousness of unity, but of mutually distrustful diversities" (p. 203). Moreover, he raises concerns about "the negative potentialities" of unity in the aftermath of "imperial" state formation. It "invariably implies select accommodation, marginalization, elimination or subordination" of local or sub-regional cultural identities. He therefore rightly asks again whether we then abandon the idea of unity altogether. But he cautiously contradicts his uneasiness with the ambiguous concession: "The most that I shall be prepared to speculate for the present is that the interactional process developed over time a reference point to which heterogeneous cultural elements and geographical spaces could relate" (p. 212).

The other six essays of this volume come off rather badly in comparison with the two more thoroughly discussed articles in this book review. Nonetheless, two further pieces supplement major issues of the volume in an exemplary manner. The second essay, "Festivals as Ritual: An Exploration into the Convergence of Rituals and the State in Early India", pertains to rituals as one of these reference points of heterogeneous elements. Since the early Middle Ages royally sponsored festivals have been significant in this regard. Orthodox Brahmanical texts prescribe royal adherence to orthodoxy in all ritual matters. But in reality, "the theorists and the monarchs, too, had, at the same

time, to reach out to the social, religious and ritual practices of public spheres and of 'marginal' communities which constituted the reality of the monarch's domain" (p. 140). The strength of these ritual events was their wide social participation. Chattopadhyaya aptly calls them "ritual subversion". And one can plainly agree with him to define these social ritual events as the result of the convergence of Brahmanical orthodoxy and popular tradition (*laukika*, derived from *loka*, "people"). This ritual convergence of orthodoxy and *laukika* indicates a successful facet of "Unity in Diversity", although mostly only at the subregional level of early kingdoms. As a rare example at the regional level Chattopadhyaya refers to Puri's famous Jagannath cult.

His seventh essay, "Accommodation and Negotiation in a Culture of Exclusivism. Some Early Indian Perspectives", begins with a critical observation on the notion of "composite culture", an expression conceived "in the context of a fast-paced growth of nationalist ideology". According to Chattopadhyaya's interpretation, this stands in direct contradiction to the early Indian, particularly Brahmanical, thinkers and their exclusivism. He reiterates the fact that notions such as the "fundamental unity of India" and "composite culture" are recent accomplishments. But he also emphasises the need to "understand how India as we observe it today, evolved with variations, contradictions and confrontations as a continuum" (p. 164). He concludes his essay with a statement that directly leads up to his address to the Indian History Congress. India's cultural development was based not on "homogenization from a hegemonic source but [on] interpenetration in diversity and of emergence of symbols of universal recognition" (p. 182). This statement is of fundamental significance and paradigmatically represents the essence of this volume and its eight articles.

Hermann Kulke

Karl E. Ryavec, *A Historical Atlas of Tibet*. Chicago / London: The University of Chicago Press, 2015. 202 pages, 49 maps, $45.00. ISBN 978-0-226-73244-2

A Historical Atlas of Tibet by Karl Ryavec far exceeds expectations, in that it is not merely a set of maps depicting the geographical changes experienced by the Tibetan territories throughout different historical periods. On the contrary, the book presents a comprehensive analysis of the different eras that shaped the development of the region we now call Tibet, illustrating developments on the Tibetan Plateau since the first evidence of human activity, which can be traced back as far as 30,000 BC (Map 9) until the end of the 20th century, by

which time the majority of land inhabited by Tibetans had been incorporated into the People's Republic of China (Maps 47–49).

In his atlas, Karl Ryavec skilfully turns the available primary and secondary texts covering the historical development of Tibet into maps, tracing the significant events that influenced the creation of pastoral and farming societies, the establishment of local power entities, such as the individual Tibetan kingdoms, the spread of Buddhism and the changing power of the various Bonpo and Buddhist sects, as well as the cultural and political leverage of neighbouring ethnic groups, tribes and empires. The atlas clearly depicts the relations of the rise and fall of the Tibetan Kingdoms of Zhangzhung (Maps 10–11), Guge (Maps 17 and 30–31), Derge (Map 41) and Nangchen (Map 42), as well as the growth and decrease in influence of the Lhasa Ganden Podrang administration (Maps 33–37) to the spread of Bon and Buddhism (Maps 12, 15–16, 18–19 and 25–27) and the spread of influence of the Mongols (Map 25) and the Chinese (Map 28). The cultural and political shifts are demonstrated through the construction of temples and monasteries, trade centres, centres of administration, and forts and military garrisons.

The historical atlas is divided into four major parts, each focusing on a specific period of Tibetan history. In each part, a comprehensive summary of the main events from each period is accompanied by and visualised in a series of detailed maps, which also carefully depict the changes in urbanisation and demography and shifts in secular as well as religious power. The first part concerns the prehistoric and ancient periods up to 600 AD and maps not only important archaeological sites of evidence for human occupation of the Tibetan Plateau (Map 9), but also the establishment of the ancient cultural and political centre of Zhangzhung in Western Tibet, showing the locations of castles, fortresses and royal residences (Map 10). Part two depicts the imperial period of the Yarlung Kingdom and the shift of the political centre towards Central Tibet (Maps 11 and 12). The third part focuses on the period of disunion between 900 and 1642, specifically through the diffusion of Buddhism into different schools (Map 15) and the establishment of parallel centres of authority. It includes a closer look at the Tibetan Kingdom of Guge (Maps 17 and 18) in Western Tibet and the Tsongkha Kingdom in the East (Map 21). Maps 22–26 show important administrative changes in the Tibetan areas that followed the establishment of Mongol rule over certain parts of the Tibetan Plateau and Maps 28 and 29 depict the return to Tibetan administration under the Pakmodrupa rule. The final part, part four, then concentrates on the period of the rule of the Dalai Lamas and the Ganden Podrang in Lhasa.

The individual maps treat the historical developments on the Tibetan Plateau not only from a Lhasa-centred perspective. The atlas describes all four macroregions of Tibet, i.e., Ngari, U-Tsang, Amdo and Kham, "where population and agricultural resources historically concentrated in the river valleys"

(p. 14), and offers separate maps showing political and religious developments in these regions, which were themselves centres of Tibetan culture with their own administrative systems.

The well-elaborated maps clearly show the interrelationship between religious influence and economic and political power (Maps 13, 22–23, 25–28, 32 and 43–45) and are able to support or contradict claims of the territorial control of, for example, Mongol tribes or the Chinese imperial court (Maps 22 and 25). Moreover, the maps also help to illuminate the less clear links such as between the existence of functioning administrative networks and local political and religious authority and climate change (Map 18).

Presenting historical narratives in the form of maps allows us to view the historical events and their complex backgrounds from new perspectives. Providing unique perspectives from the viewpoint of the various Tibetan centres of political, religious and economic influence, the Historical Atlas of Tibet is a valuable tool for all those who seek to understand historical developments on the Tibetan Plateau and the complex interrelationship between Tibetans and their neighbouring regions.

Jarmila Ptackova

Rainer Werning / Helga Picht (eds), *Brennpunkt Nordkorea: Wie gefährlich ist die Region? Berichte, Daten und Fakten*. Berlin: edition berolina, 2018. 192 pages, €9.99. ISBN 978-3-95841-088-6

In response to the latest nuclear and missile crises as well as the increase of media (and policy) attention to North Korea, Rainer Werning and Helga Picht have released a timely publication. The book at hand is an edited volume, consisting of essays by the editors and other authors. The range of authors runs parallel to the range of topics being discussed: from the latest crises to the Korean War, from cultural insights to travel reports and regional comparisons. Moreover, the annex (pp. 178–187) provides facts on the isolated state, such as geographic data, national holidays – which all have political meaning of some sort – and the structure of the political system. Such a list of objective facts is not trivial; the scarcity, dispersion and ambiguity concerning data on North Korea demand the continuous compilation of available and verified statistics.

The academic (and social) objective is explicit throughout the book. The editors aim to provide background information and shed light on often neglected aspects of the ongoing conflict. This objective of clarification has resulted in a book that focuses mainly on discussing actions taken by the US and

dynamics within South Korea. As counterintuitive as this might seem, Rainer Werning and Helga Picht employ these historical aspects to explain North Korea's threat perceptions and subsequent arms development, isolation and foreign policy behaviour. The book thereby fills two gaps in the existing literature: it offers key insights into North Korea and illustrates how internal narratives have served the stable dictatorship. Additionally, early events within South Korea are rarely discussed in English- or German-speaking circles – even in South Korea, many aspects of its authoritarian past and Washington's role remain underreflected.

With regard to the latest crisis in 2017, Arnold Schölzel (pp. 15–30) argues that it stemmed from Washington's policies since the end of the Cold War: guided by false assumptions – mainly the prevalence of democratic liberalism and the demise of communism – the US was unable (and unwilling) to resolve the conflict on the Korean Peninsula, focusing instead on preserving its superpower status. This depiction of US–North Korea policy simplifies the manifold dynamics, especially in the 1990s: from the decision to withdraw all tactical nuclear weapons from South Korea, to the first nuclear crisis and its successful bilateral resolution, as well as the number of missile talks and high-level visits, the Bush Sr. and Clinton administrations showed a willingness to engage North Korea and shape the relationship, the latter even considering a presidential summit. It is true, however, that all US administrations were biased by the presumption of a looming regime collapse in Pyongyang (pp. 16–17).

Rainer Werning continues with the denunciation of US actions on the Korean Peninsula. He rightly describes the Korean War (1950–53) as the first "hot" conflict of the Cold War and, moreover, as a welcomed opportunity for the US military to experiment with chemical and biological weaponry (p. 37). This argument of the Korean War as Washington's geopolitical endeavour is reinforced through the example of General MacArthur's plans to drop atomic weapons across Korea and Northern China (p. 57). The depiction of horrific US actions serves Rainer Werning's argument that North Korea's behaviour is merely a reaction to these (p. 82). As plausible as the justifications of the North's continued trauma ("bunker mentality", p. 37) are, the regime in Pyongyang has craftily utilised the events endured by the country: the Sinchon Museum of American War Atrocities and similar, mandatory exhibition rooms in all schools are only small examples of how the North Korean population is constantly and consistently reminded of the evilness of Americans. Nevertheless, people in North Korea never learn that it was Kim Il Sung who initiated the Korean War with his very own strategic agenda in mind; this fact is also not mentioned in this book.

In one essay (pp. 116–134) Rainer Werning depicts the struggles of making a long-time foe into a possible friend: deep-seated mistrust and threat percep-

tions complicated Seoul's and Washington's attempts at engagement at the end of the 1990s, creating a zig-zag pattern in Pyongyang's foreign policy behaviour. An analysis of whether such behaviour is indeed unintended, or instead a bargaining tactic, would have been helpful here. Nevertheless, the question of overcoming suspicions of genuine offers of cooperation is now once again of the utmost importance.

As becomes clear in her contributions to the book, Helga Picht has a broad and deep knowledge of Korean history, language and culture in addition to having worked in Pyongyang for many years. Her insights from one of her first trips to North Korea in the early 1950s offer indispensable information about the country's internal state before Kim Il Sung's seizure of absolute power (p. 90). Helga Picht's profound knowledge of East Asian history and culture allows her to draw valuable comparisons and conclusions: she explains North Korea's constant aim of gaining political and ideological autonomy, especially with respect to China and the Soviet Union (p. 83). Nationalism and the determination to break free from the common Korean self-description as a shrimp among whales are driving Pyongyang's omnipresent narrative of self-determination. Helga Picht skilfully illustrates North Korea's internal struggle to create fitting philosophical underpinnings and emphasises how the enabling, socio-psychological circumstances have made it easy for the ideology of Tschuche and Tschuchesong to take root in the population (p. 106).

As there are (at least) two sides to a story, this book offers the other side of a commonly known narrative. The authors fulfil their stated objective of clarification, but tend to emphasise solely all the wrongdoings on the US and South Korean side. Despite the refreshing counter-narrative, many depictions and arguments run short, as they fail to reflect on North Korea's own actions and instrumentalisation for the sake of the stability of the regime. It should be noted that for a complete and comprehensive discussion of the conflict concerning North Korea, this book is certainly to be recommended, but only in conjunction with the existing literature.

Elisabeth Suh

Scott A. Snyder, *South Korea at the Crossroads. Autonomy and Alliance in an Era of Rival Powers*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2018. 355 pages, $35.00. ISBN 978-0-23118-548-6

Scott A. Snyder is Senior Fellow for Korea Studies and Director of the Program on US-Korea Policy at the Council of Foreign Relations (CFR), a renowned US think tank, and has widely published on the Korean peninsula.

Snyder's aim with this book is to explain the necessity of South Korea's past, present and future alliance with the US despite the increasing influence of a growing China in the East Asian region: "I contend that despite growing international pressure and intensifying domestic debates, South Korea's only viable strategic option for the foreseeable future is continued cultivation and strengthening of the alliance with the United States" (p. 15). To make this argument, the book is organised into two parts. In the first half of the book Snyder recapitulates the foreign policy orientation of all administrations (up to Park Geun-hye, 2016) since the foundation of South Korea in 1948. Based on this retrospective analysis, in the second part he discusses the future of South Korea's foreign policy and its alliance with the US with regard to its role as a middle power, Korea's position between the US and a rising China, the unification of the Korean peninsula, and Korea's alliance with the US.

In the introductory chapter, Snyder puts forward a "Framework for Understanding South Korea's Foreign Policy" (p. 7), and brings in additional factors that affect the course of this policy (pp. 10–14). The framework resembles a classic model with two coordinated axes representing, vertically, the spectrum between an outwardly-oriented (international) foreign policy orientation and an inwardly-oriented (parochial) foreign policy orientation, and, horizontally, the spectrum between an orientation towards alliance and an orientation towards autonomy. He adds three important factors that have to be considered when making sense of shifts in South Korea's foreign policy orientation: its geopolitical environment, its growing capacity and its changing domestic politics. Geopolitics is known to be one of the most crucial factors that has influenced South Korea in various ways, not only since the end of World War II but from long before. However, the division of the Korean peninsula under the conditions of the Cold War, and the ensuing hot Korean War (1950–53) hardened a constellation of power competition in Northeast Asia within which South Korea's only reliable ally has been the US. Changes in the geopolitical situation, such as the warming up of the Cold War and the development of global markets, represent opportunities and risks that have to be taken into account when explaining South Korea's foreign policy orientation. This is closely related to the second factor put forward by Snyder: South Korea's economic, military and developmental capacity in relation to that of its neighbours. In other words, the less dependent it is on the US, the more South Korea is able to pursue a more autonomous foreign policy vis-à-vis neighbouring countries such as North Korea, China, Japan and Russia – as well as the US, of course. The third factor is the continuing democratisation since the late 1980s, which produced a stronger demos with an increasing say in politics as well as strong interest groups, such as the large conglomerates (*chaebol*), with strong leverage on state affairs.

Using these conceptualizations Snyder runs through South Korea's contemporary history and discusses the succeeding administrations and their respective foreign policy orientations – always torn between the desire for autonomy from and the need for alliance with the US (pp. 20–191). The author comes to discover an evolving pattern of increasingly internationalisation-orientated alignments as time goes by and administrations follow each other, while the tendency of aligning with America as an ally remains stable. According to Snyder's observation, the foreign policy orientation of South Korea during the authoritarian era (1948–1987) of the first three presidents – Rhee Syngman, Park Chung-hee and Chun Doo-hwan – can be chronologically traced from a strong dependence on the parochial alliance with the US moving increasingly towards more internationalism. Rhee Syngman (1948–1960) pursued a hostile North Korea policy based on fundamental economic and military support from the US, but his ultimate aim was to unify the Korean peninsula by invading the North. Park Chung-hee (1961–1979) attempted a more independent approach, but soon realised that he, too, was constrained by the need for US support. When the détente set in at the end of the 1960s, Park approached North Korea to settle matters on the peninsula, and even started an open-door policy towards China and the Soviet Union; later he attempted to develop a nuclear bomb to lessen South Korea's dependency on the US – a strategy also pursued by his successor Chun Doo-hwan (1979–1987), who, however, was ultimately convinced by the Reagan administration to scrap the programme.

After the transition to democracy in 1987, the Roh Tae-woo administration (1987–1993) realigned its foreign policy to an even more internationally oriented approach, better known as *Nordpolitik*, which was mostly spurred by shifts in the liberalising global environment, South Korea's growing economic capacities and the influence of domestic actors. These changes towards an alliance-enabled internationalist foreign policy orientation continuously increased with each of the succeeding presidents, known respectively as the "Sunshine Policy" under Kim Dae-jung (1998–2003), "Balancer Policy" under Roh Moo-hyun (2003–2008), "Global Korea Policy" under Lee Myung-bak (2008–2013) and "Asian Paradox" under Park Geun-hye (2013–2016).

In the second part of the book Snyder draws on these patterns to discuss the outlook of South Korea's options and possible choices. In his view, South Korea will be trapped for the foreseeable future in its dilemma of striving for a more autonomous foreign policy while still remaining too dependent on its US alliance (pp. 192–211) – even in the face of a rising China next door (pp. 212–236) and also with regard to a possible unification on the Korean peninsula (pp. 237–261) – unless the country develops the necessary capacity.

The selected source documents detailed in 60 pages at the end of the book come in quite handy for those who want to review the major historic agreements and declarations of South Korea, the US and North Korea. Also, the

chronology of important events in South Korean strategic history (pp. 293–307) is a helpful guide for following the book's argumentation. The relatively detailed index is useful, as well. All in all, Snyder presents a somewhat simple but at the same time tidy observation of South Korea's foreign policy developments, and helps the reader who is not familiar with the history of the Korean peninsula to understand the dynamics that have shaped the region, and how they might do so in the future. The flow of the book is somewhat hampered by the reiterations of facts and arguments throughout the chapters and subsections, which might owe to a certain style of writing for an audience such as "government officials, business executives, journalists, educators and students, civic and religious leaders, and other interested citizens" (front matter). Nevertheless, overall *South Korea at the Crossroads* is indeed a fine source book on the recent history of South Korea's foreign policy strategy, and will be a solid reference for scholars of comparative foreign policy interested in the East Asian region.

Hannes B. Mosler

Frank Jakob, *Tsushima 1905. Ostasiens Trafalgar*. Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2017. 217 pages, €29.90. ISBN 978-3-506-78140-6

The global political significance of the naval battle between the Russian Baltic Fleet and the Japanese at Tsushima, a Japanese island in the Korean Strait, on 27/28 May 1905 can hardly be compared with that of the victory of the English admiral Nelson over the Franco-Spanish fleet at Trafalgar – only in the extent of the respective defeat. Russia lost nearly all of its heavy units, battleships, cruisers and destroyers, and lamented the death of about 5,000 men. On the Japanese side, however, only three torpedo boats were lost, and only 127 seamen were killed. Similarly, the French fleet was almost completely destroyed in 1805, leaving France to remain a land power, much like Imperial Russia after 1905.

The author rightly concentrates, therefore, on the multi-layered political dimensions of the sea battle, its historical background and consequences, both for international politics as well as for the internal development of Russia and Japan. In doing so, he somewhat neglects the military events, which are dealt with on only 14 pages. Still, the defeat of the Russian Baltic Fleet, which was almost as strong as that of the Japanese, was determined as much by the inability of Russian policy to accept Japan as an equal power in East Asia, as by military factors.

After the first Russian defeats on land at Yalu and in southern Manchuria, as well as futile fleet advances of the Russian Pacific units from Vladivostok and the Russian naval port of Port Arthur, the Baltic Fleet was despatched from Libau to East Asia on 15 October 1904. Under the critical eyes of world public opinion – for the first time in a war both civilian reporters and military observers were on site – the Russians made headlines again and again due to the seafaring incompetence and poor discipline (drunkenness) of crews and officers. As news reports revealed sailors tormenting monkeys with champagne while waiting off of Madagascar, Russian prospects of victory faded further in the eyes of observers. The commanding admiral, Rozhestvensky, was in no way equal to his task. He had long since lost any confidence in a possible victory, and after the capitulation of Port Arthur (1 January 1905) finally steered to the only destination remaining to him, the safe haven of Vladiovostok. Against a fleet like this, the Japanese Navy, built up in the English model, with ships constructed in Glasgow, had an easy time of it. Shot to pieces, the remaining Russian units were to capitulate on 28 May – uncommon conduct in naval warfare.

The repercussions of the Russian defeats on land and at sea in East Asia for the revolutionary events in 1905 in the tsarist empire itself are well known; what is less well known are the contacts of the Japanese military with the national movements in Finland and Poland. The author, a recognised expert on Poland, describes in detail Japan's efforts to revolutionise Congress Poland, which was under the Russian yoke. Finally, the two leading heads of the Polish national movement, Piłsudski and Dmowski, arrived in Tokyo to conclude an agreement. But more decisive for the Japanese side was the financial aid from the Jewish bank Loeb und Co. in New York, whose banker Jacob Schiff, with a loan of 400 million dollars, wanted to send a clear signal against the Russian policy of permanent pogroms against Russian Jewry, who were completely without rights. The later Jewish policy of Japan, even during the wartime alliance with Hitler's Germany, was always determined by this generous Jewish help for the Japanese victory. The war was also to have an impact on the Zionist movement and the still sparse emigration of Jews to Palestine. For the first time in the Russian army, Jewish soldiers and Jewish military physicians were drafted. Jewish self-protection in Palestine was then largely recruited from former tsarist soldiers.

The Russo-Japanese war, which some historians refer to as "World War Zero", had devastating consequences for the coming Great War. The Japanese army was coerced by the German military advisor Jacob Meckel into a closed frontal attack, with which they finally succeeded in storming Port Arthur, but at the cost of 60,000 lives. This strategy also determined Germany's offensive approach in the west, with no regard for losses. Whether the Schlieffen Plan

was also an outcome of this suicidal strategy, as the author claims, seems doubtful, however.

Last, but not least, although the war may have resulted in the peace of Portsmouth under the mediation of President Theodore Roosevelt, it also helped the United States to a dominant position in the Pacific. The dualism of the sea, contested by both the United States and Japan, and the various US "open door" imperial strategies towards an East Asia ostensibly to be freed from colonialism, began in 1905 and ended 40 years later with the total defeat of Japan.

The book is convincing as a scientific achievement that carefully touches upon many aspects.

Bernd Martin

IQAS Vol. 49/2018 1–2, pp. 147–156

Conference Reports

6. Asientag "Asia First" – Populism, Authoritarianism, Civil Society

Cologne, 21 April 2018

The sixth Asientag, organised by the Stiftung Asienhaus, the Philippinenbüro and the Southeast Asia Information Centre, took place on 21 April 2018 in the Alte Feuerwache in Cologne. Director of the Stiftung Asienhaus, Monika Schlicher, gave the opening remarks, in which she introduced this year's thematic focus. Democratic governance is experiencing a worldwide decline, while authoritarianism and populism are increasing on a global scale. It is concerning that only a fraction of all countries have a free civil society, while discrimination, repression, violence, censorship and immunity for perpetrators are becoming increasingly common. Thus, it is crucial to analyse and discuss the various aspects of populism and authoritarianism from different angles, especially with guests from the affected countries. Moreover, discussions should take into account the possibilities for civil society organisations to take action.

Due to Islamic populism and political opportunism, Indonesia's political environment is becoming more conservative, with a clear reference to Indonesian nationalism, as described by Hendra Pasuhuk (Deutsche Welle). Although political Islam has not yet completely permeated the political system – after the "Reformasi" (Suharto's resignation in May 1998) it gained in momentum but was unable to win any elections – it is strengthening its influence over politics by means of extra-parliamentary movements with strong political mobilisation. In this way, political Islam can exert more pressure on political parties and the government than it could through participation in elections. Mobilisation for those movements is accomplished through media appearances, the Internet and social media. Because secular political parties lack strong ideological foundations, they act opportunistically: many politicians associate with political Islam and its activists to increase their mobilisation power.

Similarly, Cambodia's political situation has significantly worsened in recent months, according to Ali Al-Nasani (Heinrich Böll Stiftung Cambodia). Despite being a signee of various international human rights contracts, the country denies human rights to its own people. A *rule by law* governance (as opposed to *rule of law*) allows for the issuance of antidemocratic laws, which

in turn are readily implemented by the politically influenced judiciary. The so-called "elastic clause", which condemns anyone infringing upon national security or national values, significantly constrains actions by the opposition and by civil society. Kept ambiguous on purpose, the clause can easily be used to silence all critical voices. A subsequent workshop discussed Cambodia's avenues for post-election development: either the status quo will continue, new small spaces for an emerging civil society will be opened, or we will see additional repression and restrictions. The panellists all agreed that civil society is increasingly afraid of publicly voicing political opinions and that any post-election opposition is quite unlikely. What is certain, however, is that Germany's solidarity towards Cambodia must be strengthened.

Myanmar and the Philippines both face challenges in developing their federalist systems away from the consolidation of power and towards social justice. Panellists Christina Grein (Burma-Initiative of the Stiftung Asienhaus) and Kaloy Manlupig (Balay Mindanaw Foundation) discussed the requirements for a strengthened and socially just federalist system. Despite the countries' differing contexts, both are lacking in open debate and active participation by civil society, two important conditions for a functioning federalism.

According to panellists Praphakorn Wongratanawin (Stiftung Asienhaus), Nick Nostitz (freelance photojournalist and author) and Nicola Glass (freelance journalist and former Southeast-Asian correspondent), Thais are facing increasing repression by the Junta, which came to power through a coup in 2014. The new ban on assembly and the harsh law against insulting the king particularly exemplify this development. Mass demonstrations have not yet occurred, but small protests are taking place. Further, the trauma from the army crackdown on the "red" protests in 2010 is still keeping the "Red Shirts" movement (who are mostly followers of former Prime Minister Thaksin and Yingluck Shinawatra) rather quiet. Nonetheless, even while the Junta continues to delay the originally promised elections, new parties that strive towards democratic principles, justice and national reconciliation have formed. When and how they will appeal to the electorate, however, will become visible only if the military's promised elections are in fact implemented. As of now, Thailand remains far from democratic, considering that the new constitution serves to keep the military in power permanently.

In India, too, a substantial portion of the population is suffering under the political situation. In the workshop "Clean India" Bezwada Wilson and Michael Gottlob discussed "manual scavenging" to illustrate India's lingering racism. Despite the practice being legally banned, around 340,000 Dalits (the unofficial figure is estimated to be 1.3 million) still dispose of human excrement and clear sewage drains with their bare hands. These degrading working conditions are able to persist because of the current Indian government, which makes no effort to close existing social and cultural gaps.

Several workshops also dealt with the conference topics on a transnational level. As described by Benedikt Frank, the situation for workers and labour unions in Cambodia is becoming challenging. Various developments, amongst others the 2016 implemented Trade Union Law, leads to repression of trade-union labour. In Indonesia, the Kendeng Campaign (against a cement project in Java by the German company HeidelbergCement) has sparked opposition and protests from the population. In both countries, solidarity and engagement are increasingly difficult, and the media plays an important role not only in local and international campaigns, but also in influencing the debate in the national context. Generally, it was agreed that safer and more stable structures needed to be created, in order to improve transnational solidarity.

Another workshop discussed how the EU could influence other countries to comply with human rights standards through its Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP+), through which it binds trade deals with poorer countries to their adherence to such standards. Taking the Philippines and Sri Lanka as examples, it was controversially argued whether this GSP+ mechanism presents a useful instrument for European human rights politics. Weaknesses in the mechanism were revealed, given that the EU uses GSP+ to expand trade relations, and thus is often unwilling to demand consequences for trading partners' human rights violations, as can be witnessed in the Philippines. On the other hand, the mechanism's strength lies in its usefulness to civilians, who can use it to bring the human rights situation to the attention of the EU, which would otherwise not take notice of it.

In a workshop concerning China, participants discussed the potential effects that the new law regulating foreign NGOs in China could have on foreign civil society organisations. Anna Caspari (Ruhr University Bochum) clarified how the reassignment of foreign NGO issues from the Ministry of Civil Affairs to the Ministry of National Security has led to a clear differentiation between domestic and foreign NGOs, thus defining "civil society with Chinese characteristics". Bertram Lang emphasised that the new law affects different European countries differently. German NGOs are said to have the most cause for concern, whereas Eastern European NGOs face few problems. Relations with Eastern European countries are also more informal. On the other hand, talks by Renée Rentke (MISEREOR) and Li Lina (adelphi) revealed that the new law is not solely problematic, but also creates a clearer, more unified and more transparent workflow. Additionally, Chinese civil society is bound to become increasingly independent of foreign monetary aid, leading it to become more active globally.

Three presentations discussed "Gender Trouble" in Asia. Timo Duile (University of Bonn) discussed the current societal developments in Indonesia, particularly the attitudes towards LGBTs. In recent years, conservative religious values have come to be more and more important in the country. In 2016

politicians and clergy initiated a hate campaign against LGBTs, even though many indigenous traditional cultures recognise more than just male and female gender identities, and homosexuality thus far has not been criminalised. However, conservative groups are now strengthening their efforts to create legal groundwork to permit the prosecution of homosexuals.

Ever since Duterte became president of the Philippines, violence has become widespread, according to Marilou Hardillo (Babaylan). It starts with social media: whoever criticises the president is immediately bombarded with online attacks in the form of curses and hacking, and even physical threats such as rape or murder. These attacks and threats, also of a sexist nature, have been able to proliferate and even become trendy because government officials who publicly ridicule women earn laughs and approval, resembling a strange kind of entertainment industry. There is an urgent need for civil society forces to voice a clear "NO" against the return to despotism and tyranny in Indonesia.

Timor-Leste, Asia's youngest nation, presents a glimmer of hope for a region where LGBT rights are often strongly questioned. Monika Schlicher (Stiftung Asienhaus) explained that although LGBTs in Timor-Leste are to date experiencing an alarmingly high level of violence in their everyday lives, they are supported by premier de Araujo. De Araujo has called upon the populace to create an integrative society that accepts people with different sexual orientations and gender identities. On the national level, the country has already won the right of self-determination, but there remains an ongoing struggle to apply this concept to the societal level. For activists, the country's first LGBT Pride Parade in June 2017 was a milestone in their struggle for recognition.

The final session discussed the developing role of social media and the Internet in the political realm. The view that the Internet is a guarantor of democratisation has been put into perspective. Both in Europe and Asia, online hate attacks and violent threats against opponents as well as a brutalisation of language are on the rise; in authoritarian regimes, the Internet is often a sphere of national and social supervision. Against this background, Joanna Klabisch (China-Programm of Stiftung Asienhaus), Emmalyn Liwag Kotte (PhilNetz), Praphakorn Wongratanawin (Stiftung Asienhaus) and Nataly Jung-Hwa Han (Korea-Verband) examined the situation in China, the Philippines, Thailand and Korea. It became apparent that in most countries the Internet is in fact a strongly contested sphere, which plays a central role in the spread of the new authoritarianism. Still, in these countries one can also find examples of successful progressive political campaigns that have managed to successfully fight corruption, human rights violations and other grievances.

Raphael Göpel / Stella Treumann

Taiwan and the International Order

Berlin, 22 February 2018

Since Tsai Ing-wen's inauguration as President of the Republic of China (Taiwan) in May 2016, relations between Beijing and Taipei have deteriorated substantially. Island encirclement flights, live-fire drills and an upsurge in bellicose rhetoric have raised concerns about stability across the strait. At the international level, the conditions for political order in East Asia pose distinct challenges for Taiwan. Competing territorial claims in the Western Pacific, incidents in Sino-Taiwanese airspace or calculated provocations by paramilitary forces at sea could lead to a series of frictions with the potential to escalate the differing interpretations of Taiwan's sovereignty status. What chances and risks emerge from the international order for the self-governing island?

About 100 attendees discussed this subject at the conference "Taiwan and the International Order" on 22 February 2018, in Berlin. The event was jointly organised by the Taipei Representative Office in Germany and Martin Wagener from the Federal University of Applied Administrative Sciences of Germany. The representative of Taiwan, Jhy-Wey Shieh, received the participants on the delegation's premises. Bundestag members Anita Schäfer, Mark Hauptmann and Klaus-Peter Willsch delivered the opening remarks.

A summary of Taiwan's current situation and the first months of Tsai's presidency was provided by Jhy-Wey Shieh. Since Tsai's inauguration, contact with mainland China has been fraught with Beijing's rising leverage. China's position toward Taiwan, diplomatically and otherwise, is increasingly coercive, and Beijing has been ratcheting up the pressure on Taipei. Its continuing efforts to isolate the island nation are the most intense in decades. The easing of bilateral tensions from 2008 to 2016 during the tenure of then-president Ma Ying-jeou, whose conciliatory approach led to unequivocal reassurances across the strait and the suspension of competition for diplomatic allies, has been reversed. China is sceptical about the newly elected leadership in Taiwan, which Beijing regards as a renegade province. Shieh remarked that Taipei prefers solid democracy over reunification. Security provisions by the United States remain essential for Taiwan's survival. The common democratic values Taiwan shares with several Western countries need to be transformed into diplomatic backing.

Martin Wagener addressed Taiwan's position in East Asia's security architecture. Taipei's military expenditure is too low to contain China and is incapable of countering the rising power asymmetry. Taiwan's security depends on risk-coverage by Washington. Tsai might indirectly "tame" China by emphasising Taiwan's similarity with liberal states, using democratic values rather

than military force as a counterweight to Beijing. Western governments will be more willing to support Taipei once they perceive Taiwan as a consolidated democracy, Wagener presumes. If solidarity measures against China are easy to legitimate domestically, they will become more likely.

An introduction to Taiwan's role in international security was provided by Enrico Fels from the University of Bonn. The security dilemma in East Asia has not been overcome, and the promotion of confidence-building measures is necessary to strengthen the rules-based international order. Taiwan is seldom integrated into international institutions and barely benefits from the established multilateral consultations on regional security. Despite Taipei's long-standing pursuit of participation, the island state is continuously confronted with minimisation in terms of security policy.

Michael Zickerick, former director general of the German Institute Taipei, commented on both talks concerning Taiwan's security environment. Germany has long refused to be tougher with China over the principle of Taiwan's national sovereignty, Zickerick emphasised. Berlin could afford gradual emancipation from its "One China" principle.

The discussion that followed was moderated by Manfred Bohr from the Federal Academy for Security Policy in Berlin. There was a strong consensus among the attendees on Taiwan's insufficient defence spending. It is within the responsibility of Western allies to substantially unburden the US military to strengthen Washington's power projection in East Asia. The European Union should not quietly endure Chinese naval manoeuvres in the Mediterranean or Baltic Sea. Brussels should react robustly and show a willingness to discipline China's practice of encroaching into Europe.

Dirk Schmidt from the University of Trier reported on Taiwan's economic vulnerabilities. The Republic of China is to a large extent dependent on integration into transnational value chains and contract manufacturing on the mainland. Taipei is threatened by potential US–China trade tensions and the massive industrial programs of the People's Republic designed to climb the value chain.

A further perspective on economics was provided by Gunter Schubert from the University of Tübingen, who presented new approaches to economic policy for Taiwan. Comparatively low real wages and decreasing competitiveness in key industrial sectors, together with budgetary limitations due to the high public debt, have led to the large-scale emigration of Taiwanese employees. Governmental programs for the stimulation of industrial production networks, socio-political reforms and bilateral free-trade agreements are appropriate measures to reduce Taiwan's economic vulnerability, Schubert declared. Foreign economic emancipation from China would mean consciously accepting a range of disadvantages at short notice, however.

Markus Taube from the University of Duisburg-Essen commented on both contributions on Taiwan's economic relationships and outlined Taipei's extensive dependence on value chains controlled by foreign agents. The inner rationality of Beijing's urge for economic expansion aims to crowd out foreign competitors. Taube expressed scepticism about Taipei's New Southbound Policy, which serves the development of geoeconomic spaces south of Taiwan. If Taipei were to view itself instead as a technology incubator concentrating on national economic strengths, the available resources could be invested with more impact on domestic industries.

The German ambassador to Luxembourg, Heinrich Kreft, moderated the subsequent debate. Most participants supported a more structural Taiwanese innovation policy. Although Taiwan benefits from substantial process innovations, large national markets are essential for the scaling of network effects. The Republic of China lacks the innovative impulses to compensate for the insufficient domestic demand and can thus scarcely maintain sustainable competitiveness in the global market.

Hanns W. Maull from the German Institute for International and Security Affairs gave his thoughts on turbulence as a structural characteristic of international politics. Processes of globalisation systematically overwhelm political decision-makers, he stated. The legitimacy, efficacy and authority in the international order are in precarious condition. Their cohesion is eroding. Taiwan lies in between the competing poles of liberal democracies and authoritarian sys-tems. The future of the international order depends on the build-up of effective multilateral coalitions and the cooperation of international partners along shared values.

Another participant from the German Institute for International and Security Affairs, Gudrun Wacker, outlined future perspectives on the state of security in the Taiwan Strait. The "diplomatic ceasefire" brokered during Ma Ying-jeou's presidency seems to have been abolished. Beijing's campaign to fulfil its "Chinese Dream" by 2049 indirectly sets a deadline to finally settle the dispute over Taiwan's sovereignty status. Wacker considers it unlikely that Beijing and Washington will embark on a cooperative strategy to edge closer to an accord on clearly defined zones of influence in the Western Pacific. China will not likely make concessions on US President Donald Trump's priorities on Taiwan.

Reinhard Wolf from Goethe University Frankfurt commented on both presentations on Taiwan's future role in the international order. The stabilising effects of the liberal world order on the international system are paramount, Wolf insisted.

The discussion that followed was led by Siegfried Schieder (Heidelberg University). The participants outlined an urgent need for innovations to the

state order and asserted that emerging powers should be given equal opportunity to introduce demands into multilateral cooperation formats.

The event's outcomes illustrate how the security architecture in East Asia limits Taiwan's strategic options to ensure its national security. The attendees agreed on the preservation of the status quo as the most favourable option for Taiwan to ensure stability in cross-strait relations.

Kevin Kälker

8th Annual Meeting of the South Asia Working Group of the German Society of Geography

Cologne, 19 – 20 January 2018

The eighth annual meeting of the South Asia Working Group of the German Society of Geography (Arbeitskreis Südasien in der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Geographie [DGfG]) took place from 19 to 20 January 2018 at the Institute of Geography, University of Cologne. The meeting, which included thirty participants, was organised by Carsten Butsch and Alexander Follmann. The presentation of the "Geographies of South Asia" research prize for the best geographic thesis on South Asia was the highlight of the event. Raphael Pinheiro Machado Rehm received the award for his master's thesis presented at the University of Augsburg entitled "Small Scale Variability in Soil Hydraulic Properties in Headwater Catchment of the Indian Western Ghats". This is the first time that a work on physical geography was awarded the prize, which was initiated by the working group in 2015. The selection was made by a jury consisting of Martin Franz (Osnabrück), Markus Nüsser (Heidelberg) and Matthias Schmidt (Augsburg).

The conference began on Friday afternoon with a presentation by Tatiana López Ayala (Cologne) titled "Workers in Global Production Networks: Local Labour Control Regime and Trade Union Organisation in the Bangalore Export Clothing Cluster". She outlined how the control regime in the clothing production network at the local level is shaped by the complex interaction of strategies between actors at different levels. Three presentations from the field of high mountain research followed: first, Juliane Dame (Heidelberg), Julia Poerting (Bonn) and Stefanie Raschke (Heidelberg) talked about perspectives and challenges in introducing standardised cultivation systems in the high mountain regions of South Asia. In particular, they addressed power issues in (inter)national standardised food chains and the relationship between chang-

ing livelihoods and new markets. Corinna Wallrapp (Göttingen) then presented her research results on the commodification of the Yarshagumba mushroom. Under the title "Institutional Issues, Power Struggles and Local Solutions – Governance Systems of Yarshagumba Collection in India and Nepal in the Kailash Landscape" she showed which local and regional changes are triggered by the increased demand for the mushroom, which is used as a medicine. Miriam Wenner (Göttingen) completed the section. Focusing on a social movement advocating regional autonomy in Darjeeling, India, she analysed how ideal concepts of politics and anti-politics become effective in action and space and contribute to the legitimisation of political actors. Nicolas Schlitz (Osnabrück) was the last speaker of the day. He presented his findings on the social embedding of value production in informal recycling networks in Kolkatta.

The paper sessions were followed by a discussion on research ethics and the special conditions of geographical research by European scientists in the Global South and was moderated by Katharina Molitor (Cologne). She presented some insights from a survey conducted among the members of the South Asia Working Group on the research methods used.

The first session on Saturday morning dealt with the Indian diaspora. Pierre Gottschlich (Rostock) gave the first presentation on "The Indian Diaspora in the USA as a Transnational Political Actor". He showed that the Indian community is well integrated and economically successful in the USA. Furthermore, he made clear that the diaspora is/was of particular relevance for the development of Hindu nationalism in India. Hindu communities in the USA have been shaped or infiltrated by nationalist organisations since the 1970s and have had a great influence on the identity of the second generation. Carsten Butsch (Cologne) presented his research results on remittances of Indian migrants in Germany. He revealed different motivations for remittances being paid to family members and friends or for charitable purposes and how these practices and motives change over time.

In the second session, on agriculture and land use change, Paul D. Wagner (Kiel) presented a model for assessing future landscape change in the Western Ghats. He showed that, in the past, a decline in near-natural areas and an increase in settlement areas were accompanied by an increase in arable land in the Western Ghats. However, for the future, his model forecasts urban growth at the expense of arable land. Luisa Knobloch's (Göttingen) paper presentation on "Genetic Engineering in India's Agriculture – A Policy of Knowledge and Ignorance" resulted in strong discussions among the participants. In particular, she outlined the mechanisms behind politicised technological transformations in India in the recent past. Katharina Molitor (Cologne) discussed the role of food price fluctuations in food security for small farmers and their inclusion in (local) markets, using Bangladesh as an example.

In the concluding session on economic developments in South Asia, Raquib Ahmed (Cologne) spoke about "Economic Integration in South Asia and the Regionalisation Process". He presented various approaches to economic cooperation within South Asia and analysed the opportunities for deeper economic integration in the region. Satyendra Singh (Cologne) presented the results of his project "Informality as Instrument of Formal Sector Competitiveness – A Case Study of Women Homeworkers in Delhi, India", examining the connections between female homeworkers and the formal sector in Delhi. He showed how women workers become competitive even though they are in a precarious situation without any form of social security.

During the general meeting of the working group on Friday evening, the speakers provided information about the activities of the past year. In addition to the annual meeting, joint sessions were organised at various conferences and two volumes were published in the working group's publication series. Carsten Butsch, Alexander Follmann (both Cologne), Martin Franz (Osnabrück) and Markus Keck (Göttingen) were confirmed as speakers in the annual elections of the group of speakers. After a transitional period, Judith Müller (Heidelberg) will replace Julia Poerting (Bonn) as the coordinator of the working group's publication series. The next annual conference will take place in Heidelberg on 25 and 26 January 2019. Further information about the working group and planned events can be found at www.geographien-suedasiens.de.

Alexander Follmann / Martin Franz

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