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Abstracts in Alphabetical Order

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Between propagation and mediation: Negotiating Islamic norms in *Forum Lingkar Pena*

The Indonesian reading forum Forum Lingkar Pena (FLP), established in 1997, has become an important producer of Islamic texts, in particular proselytizing (dakwah) literature, which serves to propagate Islamic faith. It has become prominent in a time, when the literary and media landscape changed drastically after the fall of President Suharto, providing more freedom for authors and journalists (Garcia 2004). In the face of this liberalization, in addition to an increasing number of authors raising sexual topics in their literary works, FLP, which has ties with the Islamist party PKS, serves as a counter model, placing emphasis on personal piety, morality, and education. The works of art produced are meant to worship God (Hermawan 2008). The great number of different branches in Indonesia, especially on Java, as well as its numerous activities, such as founding and organizing reading rooms, writing schools, and holding discussion forums, serve the declared aim of the forum, dakwah, which has gained importance in the Muslim world over the last years. FLP, which coordinates its activities through the mass media, addresses teenagers as its main target group, who are meant to become writers upholding and disseminating Islamic norms.

Based on multi-sited fieldwork in several FLP branches this paper examines the relation between FLP elites, its members and the media (mass media and fictional as well as non-fictional books such as guides and manuals). To what extent do FLP elites determine the forum's Islamic norms in their writings? Which media do they consider suitable to communicate FLP's message and how do FLP members use these to exert influence on religious contents? What role do the mass media play in coordinating the manifold FLP activities, and in which way do the authors and members deal self-critically with the religious texts produced?

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From Churches to Malls: Reconfiguring Worship Spaces in the Philippines

This paper reviews the reconfigurations of the 'centers' of evangelization in modern-day Philippines. The investigation is focused on the shifts in understanding new places of worship in contrast to the traditional notions assigned to places of worship in colonial and post-colonial times. The shifts in understanding have gradually introduced newfound practices in the local churches which bear some pastoral and spiritual implications for the local church in the Philippines today. While the religious dispensation in colonial times placed the Church at the center side by side the seat of civil power representing the King of Spain, the new order sees the places of worship side by side the seats of entertainment. Has the demarcation between commerce and worship been eliminated? This paper shall thresh out the lines through a historical and religio-cultural investigation.

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Phi Krasue – How a Postmodern Ghostly Image Re-Presents the Abjection of 'Khmerness' in Thailand's Popular Culture

Starting from Pattana's (2011: 202) suggestions that contemporary Thai ghost films contain "powerful ethnographic material", "magic and ghosts are (re-)invented in modernity" and ghosts therefore represent "key modern social characters and cultural institutions", I will argue that postmodern ghostly images are inextricably linked to "ethnic" and "religious" images of Thailand's popular discourse and thus embody implicit knowledge of Thailand's social structure. I will take Bin Banluerit's (2002) film "Tamnan Krasue" as a case study and argue on the basis of Kristeva's theory, that the postmodern ghostly image of Phi Krasue - as depicted (invented) by Banluerit - may be interpreted as re-presenting the continuous abjection of 'Khmerness' as part of Thai national identity. Though it may be argued that Kristeva's (post-)structuralist theory rests on Eurocentric premises, I nevertheless think that her concept of abjection may help us to partly understand postmodern conceptions of 'Khmerness' and especially its inextricable association with malevolent magical practices in contemporary Thailand.

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The Face of Jose Rizal as Medium: The Intersection of Nation, Religion, and Documentary Image

Every December 30, the Philippine government officially commemorates the life and death of Jose Rizal, the national hero, in front of his “rebulto” or monument, at the Rizal Park. After the official celebrations, a host of “millenarians” who make their annual pilgrimage to Manila, also gather around the monument to hold religious services.

Both these “official” and “folk” events center on a constant image of Rizal – his portrait taken by Edgardo Debas in 1890. This “documentary” image has been the basis of critical engagements that deal with the “local” and “foreign” configuration of the “Filipino.” This has also been the most widely disseminated surface image that functions as a cinematic, photographic, and televisual medium of Rizal and his association with Hispanic history and of the lifestyle branding and emblemization of Rizal in popular culture today. This same image is also the basis of the icon of the “Rizalistas,” which is a folk religion that takes off from Roman Catholicism but anchors itself on the idea of a “national paradise”.

The paper is a reflection on this portrait of Rizal as a medium that ironically contains both nationalist and religious impulses and encapsulates the religious currents present in notions of heroism and martyrdom.

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Practices of mediation in Pentecostal Charismatic Churches - Vietnam and abroad

The explosion of Pentecostal Christianity and spirit mediumship in Vietnam are part of a changing religious landscape. This paper explores the connections between these forms of religious practices by focussing on media and practices of mediation (Meyer & Moors 2006). The concept of religion as a practice of mediation contributes to an understanding of the creation and maintenance of links between believers on the one hand as well as between religious practitioners and the spiritual realm on the other hand. Instead of separating religion and technology into different domains, the focus on practices of mediation illustrates how ideas about the supernatural, the spiritual, or the transcendental are made accessible for believers, are reconfigured via media and are effective in the sense that religious entities and religious messages travel across borders.

In my paper, I argue that in Vietnamese Pentecostal underground churches mediatization, politics and mobility are intrinsically interwoven. Based on ethnographic fieldwork in

underground churches in Vietnam and among Pentecostal Vietnamese migrants in Europe this paper focuses on a. the visual representation of healing sessions and trance mediums, b. the communication of sacred contents and the enhancement of the authoritative role of religious experts, c. the role of media and media teams, in particular with regard to the remembrance of flight, refuge, and migration.

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Reproduction of mission frontiers: or why Protestantism can climb the hills of Southeast Asia

It has been said that highland groups in Southeast Asia have maintained a high degree of religious autonomy, blocking the influences of the lowland societies. “Civilization can’t climb hills,” as James Scott has put it. In the past two centuries, however, many upland groups—in both the mainland and maritime regions—have converted to Protestant Christianity. The Kachin people in northern Myanmar (Burma) is one of them; a vast majority of them are Protestants today. Although much attention has been paid to the pioneering foreign (especially American) missions, most of the evangelical campaigns to the Kachin region have been actually conducted by “indigenous” peoples themselves: first Karen and later Kachin. The “Karen home missions,” established in the Irrawaddy Delta, carried out long-term and long-distance mission work across and beyond Myanmar in the 19th century. And then such “home missions” were reproduced elsewhere by other groups including the Kachin, who in the 20th century reached even more remote frontiers such as the Naga and Wa areas. The spatial extension of Protestantism to the uplands has been achieved through the indigenous reproduction of evangelical frontier missions. That is, the “indigenization” has required a series of frontiers to be successively identified. Framing frontier as “space of conversion” or “space-to-be-converted,” I identify and analyze the key developments both in doctrine and practice of Protestant evangelism that have enabled the reproduction of mission frontiers.

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Worshipping Independence in Contemporary Cambodia

David Chandler (1983) has posed the moving question: If Cambodia had long been in the period of, in Marxist terminology, mystification, what did the independence gained from French Protectorate in 1953 really mean to Khmer society? With this regard, the paper aims to investigate the meaning of building and re-building of the more tangible manifestation of independence-independence monuments-as the sacra of independence worshipped in contemporary Cambodia.

By looking at the monuments as the sacred images of success in societal liberation or salvation, the author further explores in-depth by asking: What does the 'independence' look like iconographically? What is the 'merit' of building and re-building those monuments? How do the monuments activate 'the sense of being independent'? How does contemporary Cambodia accommodate the independence monuments? And most importantly, how did the independence monuments survive from the suppressive Khmer Rouge regime? Ethnographic and historic approaches are employed to decode these politico-religious monuments.

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“Chinese Religion” in modern Indonesia: Focusing on the trend toward systematization in the Post-Soeharto era

After the fall of the Soeharto's regime in 1998, socio-political conditions surrounding ethnic Chinese in Indonesia have drastically improved, and the governmental supervision against religious institutions has been getting weaker. This article focuses on relatively inconspicuous yet significant on-going change regarding “Chinese Religion (Agama Tionghoa)”.

In the early 20th century, Peranakan Chinese intellectuals discovered Confucianism and “Three-teaching (Sam Kauw)” in their effort to seek for “a spiritual pillar for Chinese”, stimulated by the Chinese nationalist movement on the one hand and Christianization of ethnic Chinese on the other. “Three-teaching”, or “Tridharma” in Indonesian, was conceptualized as a holistic “Chinese traditional religion” encompassing Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism as well as ancestral worship and folk religious practices in Chinese temples. Since mid-1960s under the Soeharto's regime, however, the organizations holding up Tridharma have functioned just as protectors of Chinese temples, and have done few so-called “religious activities”. In this Post-Soeharto era, following the change in the landscape of “Chinese Religion” caused by, among others, the re-acknowledgement of Confucianism as the officially recognized religion, the Tridharma organizations are beginning to reinforce their *raison d'etre* by establishing doctrines and standardizing rituals.

In this article, after overviewing the above-mentioned historical process since the beginning of the 20th century, the author reviews those recent substantial attempts of religious systematization made by Tridharma organizations, two main ones in West Java (Majelis Agama Buddha Tridharma Indonesia) and East Java (Perhimpunan Tempat Ibadat Tri Dharma se-Indonesia) and the latter's branch in Central Java (PTITD Komisariat Daerah Jawa Tengah). Also, this article analyzes their sources of religious knowledge that support these systematizing movements.

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(Re-)Sacralization of Politics? – Politics and Society in Filipino Pentecostalism on Negros (Oriental)

On February 2nd 2010, the then largest Filipino flag was unfolded as Bishop Eddie Villanueva kicked off his presidential election campaign. Throughout the campaign, Villanueva, founding president of the Philippines' largest Pentecostal denomination, was strongly supported both by evangelical leaders tied to conservative US-politicians, e.g. Cindy Jacobs, and exponents such like Nur Misuari, leader of the armed Moro National Liberation Front, and Zafurallah Alonto (Moro Islamic Liberation Front). Against the backdrop of the Philippines' history of colonization and Christianization and in the light of recent studies on global Pentecostalism this constellation appears rather surprising and begs for a deeper investigation of the relationship between Filipino Pentecostalism, Politics and Society. Yet even more, it calls for a methodological approach which takes into account the peculiar historical context of the Philippines, thus avoiding to impose preconceived concepts of "politics", "religion" etc. or dichotomies (such as "conservative/progressive", "sacred/secular" etc.) on the object of research. Any operationalized category should be grounded on and generated by the Filipino Pentecostal's own articulations, which implies a critical and self-reflective scrutiny of this very process vis-à-vis the discursive inherence and immediacy of the researcher.

Triangulating more than 60 narrative interviews conducted in the Cebuano-speaking part of Negros, Philippines from January and March, just before the presidential elections 2010 and from February to May during the midterm elections campaign 2013; participant observation; and grey literature, this paper pursues a paradigmatic discursive analytical reconstruction of some key notions employed by Pentecostals in the conceptualization of politics and society. Assuming that concepts do not exist extra usum this study analyzes their concrete meaning for Filipino Pentecostals focussing on three areas, which are viewed as non-subsidary starting points, rather than essentially distinct spheres:

How do Filipino Pentecostals express political participation in terms of documentable activities?

- How is this participation and its goals articulated and justified theologically?
- How are Muslim fellow citizen being located within this expressions?

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Ritual imagination of rural village origins among migrants in Ho Chi Minh City: the case of *cúng xóm* ('hamlet worship') during the lunar new year festival

In recent years an interesting phenomenon can be observed in certain parts of Ho Chi Minh City, especially Tan Binh and Tan Phu districts, usually about eight or nine days after Tet, the lunar new year. On street corners and in alleyways in residential areas at this time, marquees and altars are set up for rituals known as *cúng xóm*, 'hamlet worship', but which in

this context means worship by neighbourhood groups who are long-term migrants to the city from the centre of Vietnam, especially Quang Nam and Da Nang provinces.

This paper describes these rituals and outlines their nature and significance, based on research in Ho Chi Minh City's Tan Phu district and in Da Nang, conducted in 2011-12. It shows how importing this ritual into a new urban environment is linked to the process of urban adaptation, while simultaneously providing the participants with a sense of community and identity linked to their original homes. *Cúng xóm* also has to be understood within the context of the process of religious revival in Vietnam, itself linked to economic modernization since 1986 and the movement of people associated with this.

Keiko Miura

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Merging Deities, Religious Conversions, and Spatial Movements of Spirits, Objects and People in Angkor, Cambodia

This paper will discuss the dynamics of several religions in Angkor, Cambodia, by demonstrating how the respective religions have reorganized spaces and recreated the sacred order there. Religions such as the indigenous spirit cult, Hinduism and Buddhism have attempted to overpower or maintain their influences over other religions. In the process guardian spirits appropriated certain Hindu figures in Angkor monuments to demonstrate their powers through spirit mediums' healing practices or finding solutions for the people coming from near and far. While Hindu temples converted to Buddhist, guardian spirits reestablished their abodes in Buddhist temple spaces. People following new cults often combine anything considered powerful and gather in Angkor to organize religious ceremonies or practices. Even cultural objects worshipped as representing particular spirits might have been lost, newly created concrete replacement are made sacred through people's recognition of and continued beliefs in the power of the spirits embodied in the objects and particular places. All these dynamic religious expressions and spatial movements of spirits, objects, and people enhance the sacredness of particular places and space of Angkor on the whole.

Thomas Patton

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Embodied Constellations of Behavior: Buddhist *Weizzā* Devotees and Lived Religion in Myanmar

My paper explores the relationships that develop between men and women of Myanmar with sorcerer-saints (Burmese: *weizzā*) and the consequences of such connections for the

everyday lives of these people. My ethnographic and textual research seeks to uncover the beliefs and practices that have developed around saints, whose cults, visible throughout the country, attract large numbers of devotees from all walks of life. The economic, medical, and political changes that have been taking place in Myanmar over the past fifty years are reflected in the relationships Burmese Buddhists form with sorcerer-saints and in the content found in popular Burmese Buddhist magazines and devotional literature. This paper specifically explores how Burmese women understand these saints to be working in their lives for purposes of healing and increasing their social and economic prestige during this prolonged period of instability in the country.

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Profane Temple: Transforming Sacred Space to Profane Space in Buddhist Temple, Thailand

This research studies a space of contemporary Buddhist temples in Thailand, relating with transforming in social and political context. During the past 100 years, Buddhist temples in Thailand that always act as signifiers of sacred space were transformed its function and meaning become to signifiers of profane space. The article suggests that these phenomena have three aspects. First of all, art objects in Buddhist temples that were represented Buddhist cosmology belief have changed its meaning become to signifiers of Thainess and civilization. Second, the mid 20th century, Thai government has changed the rules for providing financial assistance for Buddhist temples. This policy has pushed all of temples becoming the space of trade and tourism, if they would like to survive. The Third, religious buildings in Buddhist temples that originally designed from the concept of "simulation" and "mimic" the structure of the spiritual world in traditional society has become a space for showing the individual creativity and self identity of architects and artists in contemporary period. Buddhist temples in Thailand were already changed from sacred space into a work of art.

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Religious Conversions and Flexible Spaces in Riung (Flores, eastern Indonesia)

The Riung people of Flores (Ngada District) are divided into Moslems and Catholics sharing a common local cultural identity. Peaceful interreligious coexistence between these communities can well be observed in the regular intermarriages that take place across religious borders. This paper will focus on religious conversions occurring mainly in the context of marriage and will show how local notions related to symbolical spaces accompany

shifts in religious identity. Religions in Riung are not treated as mutually exclusive categories but as flexible spaces, both symbolical and inscribed in the landscape. Water used by Moslems for ritual and hygienic purpose becomes in this context a critical component in the elaboration of contrastive identity and spaces. Christians are “people of the dry land” while Moslems are “people of the water”. However in Riung the opposing contrast usually found in this part of Indonesia between inland-Christians and coastal-Moslems is upset at some levels. Since the introduction of Islam (in the nineteenth century) and Christianity (in the twenty century) religious affiliation is adapted and manipulated by the Riung and religious conversions are integrated and institutionalized in the local custom rules (adat). This general modularity and pragmatic flexibility is analyzed in the light of a distinctive historical context in which the adoption of world religions, dynamics of migrations and settlement processes are closely linked.

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Practices of Conversion in Southern Thai Counterinsurgency

The military-led drug rehabilitation camp ‘Yalannanbaru’ (The New Path) is one of the most successful projects launched as part of a comprehensive military counterinsurgency programme in Thailand’s conflict-ridden Malay-Muslim provinces.

This field-research based exploration of the camp is guided by a theoretical reading that approaches counterinsurgency techniques as cultural practices of state formation. It will shed light on the interplay between religion and state in southern Thai counterinsurgency from two angles. On the one hand, it will expose the Buddhist undercurrents of a counterinsurgency practice designed to foster subjective attachments to the Thai nation-state. On the other, it will highlight how Muslim religion is constructed to re-educate young Malay-Muslim men. Based on this analysis, counterinsurgency techniques employed at the camp are revealed as pedagogic practices aimed to convert young Malay-Muslim men into both, modern Muslims and good Thai citizens.

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Regulating ritual: spiritual aspiration and religious governance on Lombok

Attempts to regulate religion for political purposes were integral to Indonesia’s New Order regime (1966-98). These policies heightened the importance of ‘religion’ (agama) as an identity marker, making adherence to a state-approved religion a requisite of citizenship. This variety of secularism has been challenged since 1998, when Indonesians began ‘identifying with freedom’ (Day 2007) and initiated a process of democratisation and decentralisation. Seeking to unsettle the religious-secular binary, this paper examines spiritual aspiration and politics in post-New Order Lombok. The paper

examines the conflict erupting in 2007, when members of Lombok's Hindu Balinese minority made plans to build a large public temple. Despite the fact that this temple failed to receive a construction permit, province-level authorities have also found it necessary to restrict ritual activity at the controversial site. While the justification for restricting ritual centred on the (secular) need to maintain 'public order', I suggest that these efforts were informed by an understanding that rituals have powerful transformative effects, thereby obliquely acknowledging the reality of the 'spiritual'. The paper concludes by showing how contemporary modes of religious governance and the preoccupation with 'public order', works to the disadvantage of religious minorities.

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Betrayal, Hospitality, and Stories of Justice among Tamils in Malaysia

Malaysia's multiethnic ideology is premised upon an ideal of hospitality that simultaneously announces its own impossibility through the marking of legal ethno-nationalist rights and privileges. The performativity of the Law has been increasingly revealed to Malaysian Tamils through a series of recent events that have left them questioning the civility of their country. Specifically, the demolitions of temples and the acquisitions of land by the State, forced conversions, and the dispossession of Tamil plantation workers have precipitated doubts. I argue that the force of law within the ethno-nationalist state is haunted by a fragmentation of memory and experience among Tamils. This is wrought by a sense of "betrayal" by the State upon an increasingly sacralized landscape. Among Tamil Hindus, notions of divine justice have become fused with possessive and sometimes violent imaginaries. Tamil notions of divine justice are revealed to be a form of compensation, albeit one grounded in a growing victim's narrative. Through my interlocutors and collaborators, I have come to critique the Law, as mutually understood through the ethnographic encounter. At the same time, I have strategically utilized empathy in the face of great hospitality, whilst recoiling, at times, from the implications that accompany calls of justice. I conclude with a meditation upon the ethics of critique by suggesting the ethnographic betrayal is both painful and necessary.

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Images, Imaginations and Visual Regimes: Displaying artefacts of agama in Kempo Manggarai houses, eastern Indonesia

This paper deals with practices of religious mediation through different vehicles and materials, by which religion becomes a concrete and sensible experience for Kempo Manggarai Catholics and Muslims on the island of Flores in eastern Indonesia. It takes a look at the various religious artefacts on display in the front rooms of Kempo Manggarai houses. Front rooms are semi-public, highly visible realms of a house, where the omnipresent

artefacts of agama perform multifarious capacities: they provide material evidence of religious identification, act as emblems of “modern” citizenship, reveal economic status, coexist with non-religious artefacts, collide with material testimonies of ancestor worship, engender polemics, establish moral boundaries, and frame the realm of the speakable in this religiously diverse setting. They are powerful devices that purify, protect, ward off, and cast out invisible forces. As forms of visual piety such as Catholic icons and Qur’anic calligraphies, they are potent surfaces mediating the sacred. Discussing several ethnographic examples, I examine the roles artefacts of agama perform in shaping religious subjectivities and collectives. My analysis is theoretically engaged with recent scholarly work that studies the formation of religious experience in relation to the material, sensory, and aesthetic worlds of everyday religious practice.