Of Time and History: The Dead of War, Memory and the National Imaginary in Timor-Leste

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Abstract

Patterns of memorialisation in Timor-Leste have been shaped by political trajectories and priorities that are bound up with state-formation since the end of the Indonesian occupation in 1999. The state has tended to give priority to both the living and the dead in terms of their involvement in the military resistance by providing pensions for still-living veterans and for the families of combatants killed in the war, as well as by establishing graves and ossuaries for the dead. Across these hierarchies, remembering the dead in Timor-Leste is both shaped by and embedded in different forms of temporality. On the one hand, memorialisation is part of the process of forming the new nation. On the other hand, it exists alongside what are referred to here as both ecclesiastical and customary temporalities. Remembering of the dead by the living— even when represented in empty cenotaphs and marked by political hierarchies—draws people into a kind of simultaneity across time and binds them not only to a distinctive past, but also to a new, reimagined future through collective mourning and recognition. A fuller sense of how the violence of the Indonesian occupation plays out in the post-conflict context can be found by considering other kinds of memorialisation concerning those killed in war, including graves and mortuary rituals. Both customary and ecclesiastical patterns of memory and temporality continue to be present in patterns of memorialisation.

Keywords: memory, memorialisation, the dead, temporality, nation, Timor-Leste.

Introduction

In Dilai, a small village on the back road between Lolotoe and Suai on the South Coast of Timor-Leste, there is a set of graves that sprawls down a hilly landscape and seems to merge with the houses below. Referred to collectively as '*rate*' (pronounced 'ra-te' in Tetun, one language spoken in the area), each of the graves differs markedly, depending for instance on the status of the person and the resources available to the living family to devote to the dead. There are noticeable variations in the size and complexity of the graves; there are those marked by small ovals of gravel with a simple stick cross, indicating the burial of children, while others are large concrete and tiled structures denoting an important family member. There are graves that are lined up symmetrically next to one another, others that are distinctly individual, and yet other constructions that hold multiple remains. Pointing in different directions and at different angles, the graves are not in close proximity to the local church, though the Catholic Cross in prominent on almost all of them.

A recent addition at the top of the hill is a small memorial that directly buttresses the *rate*. Clearly demarcated by a cement fence painted in the black, yellow and red of the East Timorese flag, this construction is a form of cenotaph to the '*Matries de Patria de Timor-Leste*' (the patriotic martyrs of Timor-Leste), a site of remembrance to those killed during the

1975-1999 war with Indonesia. Inside are forty waist-high pillars, laid out in four rows of ten. Each carries the name of a former combatant from Dilai, their code name from when they were a combatant and a variety of different symbols: the national flag, the coat of arms, weapons and the FALANTIL military flag.[2] Otherwise, these pillars are identical in form, dimensions, colouring and tiles. Unlike the *rate*, the area is distinct, squared off, and excavated in order to make the site level. Funded via the state, the site holds no human remains, which are either located in the adjoining graves or missing. While the memorial was unfinished at the time of writing—the main plaque has yet to be mounted and there was yet to be a ceremony featuring customary leadership and state officials—it is a site that is at once linked to the adjacent graves while remaining quite different.

Memorials such as those in Dilai are reminders of the staggering cost of the independence struggle for Timor-Leste. The 1999 withdrawal of Indonesian forces following 24 years of occupation left the former Portuguese colony materially and socially devastated. As will be shown through this article, the act of remembering the dead from war has been a complex and uneven process, shaped by the magnitude of human suffering and loss of life, a sheer lack of resources and competing political priorities, and the impact of the occupation and subsequent independence on customary practices and beliefs (CAVR 2005, Kent 2012, McWilliam 2011). The need to duly recognise and show respect for the dead has not abated, however, and the risk posed by ancestral spirits to the living is treated as real and likely.

Reflecting on the differing dynamics, I argue that patterns of memorialisation of the dead have been both shaped by and respond to broader social changes that have occurred since independence. The dead have been remembered in ways that respond to different forms of meaning and identity in relation to the customary, the ecclesiastical and the national. I also contend that shifting forms of temporality are both shaped by and embedded in patterns of remembrance. A key point is that the temporality of the new nation also has the power to shape and embed patterns of memorialisation in cultural and social life.

This article is comprised of two sections. With Benedict Anderson's work on time and the nation in mind, the first section argues that the priority of recognising the dead has to a significant extent been wedged between the political imperatives of the new state—and its relations with the former occupiers—and the domestic need to build a polity where recognition goes to those seen to have paid the ultimate price. The dead, and through them the living, are being drawn into a form of modern-national time that manifests in the practices of recognition. In the second section of the article, the discussion about war dead is extended so as to consider how memorialisation in the form of graves and mortuary ritual also answers to other customary and ecclesiastical forms of community.

Anderson's work on the nation and national time is an important underpinning of my examination of remembering violence in Timor-Leste. It is not merely that the forms of memorialisation differ in various social realms, but also that material and spiritual manifestations are influenced by modes of temporality. While all forms of sociality have elements of abstraction in them, as noted by Anderson at the start of his famous treatise on nations, modern nations are demarcated by a particular form of abstraction where people are held in relation to each other 'across time' (Anderson 1991, p. 6). It is understood by 'abstract' (the 'imagined' for Anderson) that the 'thing' at hand does not have a material existence in and of itself, and that abstraction 'is the process of drawing away from the embodied or particular while maintaining a generalizing connection between those particularities and embodied relations' (James 2006, p. 318). Anderson, writing of the formation of European nations, argues that it is a peculiarly modern form of community where fundamental shifts—new social and scientific discoveries—stimulated social changes that made possible new forms of community formed at the intersection of print and capitalism. He tracks changes during early modernity 'from simultaneity along time, where

the past and future are bound to an instantaneous present, marked by prefiguring and fulfilment' (what he refers to as Messianic time) to what he refers to as a 'homogenous, empty time', one marked by temporal coincidence and measured by the clock and calendar (Anderson 1991, p. 24). It is this change in temporality that creates the conditions under which people can imagine themselves as living alongside other people *simultaneously*. This does not mean occurring identically at the same time, but rather being part of a broader, generalised time. Although nationalists subjectively call upon more embodied forms of social integration—for example, through the embodied connection of blood and belonging—the nation is understood as a bound community of strangers moving concurrently across time.

The various memorialising practices that I describe in this article should be seen in this context of forms of temporality that are coexistent yet are also shifting with regard to the ways that they draw groups of people into connection with one another.

The Politics of Memory and Memorialisation in New Nations

Following the vote for independence on 30 August 1999, the retreating Indonesian military, along with their associated militia and sympathisers, ensured as much destruction and dislocation occurred as possible. The capital, Dili, along with many other towns and villages, was razed. It was virtually deserted by the time the United Nations-led INTERFET force began to arrive on 20 September 1999. Houses were stripped of valuables, cattle killed or stolen, electrical cables pulled from poles, and thousands of buildings gutted by fire, with some 70 per cent of all material infrastructure destroyed (Chopra 2002, p. 983). More than 400,000 people were forcibly displaced, some 250,000 of them to West Timor and other islands in the Indonesian archipelago (Robinson 2003, p. 40). The 1,500 people killed in the final carnage added to the total number of conflict-related civilian deaths under the occupation, which has been estimated to be between 102,800 and 183,000 (CAVR 2008).

In the period between 1999 and 2002, when the territory was governed by the United Nations Transitional Authority for East Timor (UNTAET) and as the National Council for Timorese Resistance (CNRT) assembled to set future priorities, many of the institutions that would be important post-independence began to take formation. The Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation (CAVR) was established in 2002 and would for the next three years be a vitally important institutional force in articulating a national memory. Tasked with mitigating the risk of a resumption of violence—not least because many East Timorese had sided with the Indonesian occupation—and clarifying the facts behind the vast human rights abuses that had occurred over the previous 25 years, the CAVR embarked on both community reconciliation and truth-seeking programs across the territory. At its closure in 2005, the CAVR produced a final report titled *Chega!*,[3] a massively detailed record of human rights abuses, along with a list of recommendations. This report was handed to the President in October 2005 as part of the formal closing of the CAVR, and then to Parliament a month later on 28 November (an anniversary day in Timor-Leste that marks the declaration of independence made in the face of an impending Indonesian invasion in 1975).

There are various ways in which the dead were memorialised through the CAVR's work. In a straightforward sense, *Chega!* is replete with accounts of the dead. Based to a significant extent on the testimony of the living, there are lists of those killed, with dates, places and political associations, and context given for the untimely fates of those who made it into the pages of the report. In a textual sense, this gives clarity to why and how people were killed— important when it comes to providing an account of deaths during a political struggle. Such recording in post-conflict texts is not necessarily a positive process, though; for instance, Ashby-Wilson speaks of the effects of how the South African Truth Commission constructed 'a new vision of the national self by inscribing the individual into a new national narrative on

personhood,' subordinating narratives of trauma to an elite agenda (Ashby Wilson 2002, p. 369; on Cambodia, see Tyner, Sirik and Henkin 2014, p. 85-86)

The desire to acknowledge victims generally, including the dead, also shaped a number of the key recommendations in *Chega!*. Assistance for families to locate and re-bury their dead, the memorialisation of significant killing sites, a public register of the missing and a national day of remembrance for those who had died in the famine of 1978-79 were all put forward as individual recommendations, along with the following general call for memory initiatives:

> The programme will promote national memorialisation in consultation with victims and other stakeholders including the government. The programme of memorialisation should be guided by, but not limited to, atrocities described in this Report and include commemoration ceremonies, dates, monuments, and other initiatives to honour and remember victims of human rights violations in local communities and at the national level.

> (CAVR 2005, p. 43)

Working towards one further step of abstraction, the incorporation of memory into the text itself frames people's experiences—however intimate or isolated from a more general independence movement—into a particular form of time. Engaging with the work of Ong, Lewis writes of how historically 'writing technology created a new conception of time and memory, allowing a form of record-keeping that was liberated from temporal and cognitive uncertainty' with the result that 'agricultural societies were thrust into a condition of extended knowing in which a past and a future could be inscribed beyond living memory' (Lewis 2012, p. 12). Drawing on the notion of 'extended knowing', here the argument is interested in the impact of those still living, both in terms of the textual effect of public reports, but also in terms of the actual embodied practice of remembering and patterns of temporality.

To give some context, the CAVR's Community Reconciliation Program (CRP) resulted in 217 community meetings held across all districts in Timor-Leste, in small villages as well as larger centres, with 1,404 perpetrators and an estimated 40,000 participants (CAVR 2003).While the meetings themselves were discursively and materially framed by the idea of the nation (the laws and regulations were read at the start of meetings for example), that such hearings were being held 'across the nation' had in itself the potential for an integrative effect as participants were drawn into a broader community. To understand this point, it is important to look beyond the immediate national-symbolic 'content' in a directly material sense, and point to how a CRP hearing, by way of example, can have a profound effect as people participate with the knowledge that other like processes are occurring in other sites. To explain this point more fully, it is important to engage in a discussion of temporality before returning to what this means in the context of Timor-Leste.

Anderson's idea of a simultaneity linking people otherwise unknown to each other across a territorial form is valuable when we think about patterns of memorialisation in Timor-Leste. He has, of course, been quoted extensively over the last three decades, more often than not with superficial references to 'Imagined Communities'. However, there remains much value in considering the conceptual underpinnings to his arguments within new contexts, and in turn looking at ways to modify or extend them. For a start, it is important to note here that the use of Anderson's concept of simultaneity is not necessarily exclusive to the nation and that, when tied to the idea of spatiality (language groups for Anderson act as analytical surrogate for space), it provides a powerful platform from which to understand how people are

integrated into nations. In turn, this article attempts to adapt Anderson's concept of simultaneity in two ways.

The first adaptation of the concept concerns how a simultaneity can be brought to the fore in societies, such as in Timor-Leste, where literacy and the use of printed materials remain limited (thereby necessitating mediums of integration beyond print capitalism).Walter Ong, who has a similar interest in the impact of writing (in effect pre-printing) on time and memory (Ong 2002, see also Lewis 2012), adds powerful alternative points of focus to Anderson's arguments. One such alternative lies in Ong's discussion of how the oral remains a vital source of authority even in more abstracted communities (Ong 2002, pp. 72-73). Nevertheless, of critical interest here is Anderson's notion of simultaneity and how, beyond print (or writing for that matter), particular forms of co-connection can be embedded in and reflected through practices of remembrance.

The second point to discuss in relation to Anderson's work is that while the conception of a modern form of temporality is important in the formation of nations, the modern does not sweep all aside. This point is also implied in the work of others addressing issues of temporality, such as Barbara Adams and her writing on conceptions of the future:

> With the development of clock time during the fourteenth century the link between time and planetary patterns is progressively weakened until, at the beginning of the twentieth century, clock time is fully decontextualised. The variable hours, which changed with the season, are abandoned. Standard time is instituted across the world. … The contextually unique, embedded and embodied living time is supplanted by a standardised, de-contextualised quantity that is applicable anywhere, any time and, as such, can be used as an abstract exchanged value in trade relations.

> (Adams 2010, p.365)

Here, global time in effect entrenches national time, locking respective senses of simultaneity into comparative relation to one another. However, in this article I argue that 'contextually unique, embedded and embodied living time' continues, and is part of the complex interactions of different life-worlds that exist beyond the temporal encroachments of modernity. It is important to reiterate that institutions such as the CAVR—occurring often in isolated sites with relatively immobile populations—draw people into temporal connection across a defined space through both textual as well as embodied forms of remembering. The localised act of reconciliation is reframed by a national logic in this instance, so that even in the immediacy and specificity of a group of people negotiating acute differences they are being drawn into something that they understand is also occurring elsewhere and yet, in turn, is limited to a distinct grouping of people within a given space (in the form of territory).

This effect, of what could be categorized as a form of 'embodied simultaneity', can be seen repeated in different examples of memorialisation, such as with the empty pillars of the monument to the martyrs in Dilai. Echoing the generic qualities of other military related memorials and grave sites—including the logic of the ordered and identical stone slab graves in the Heroes Cemetery in Metinaro—the construction in Dilai is in some senses a more durable version of the CRP process discussed above. As a permanent feature in a central location in an otherwise isolated village, it spatially concentrates practices of remembrance with a recognition, *at one level,* that others are engaged in the same act across a shared territory and history (Tumarkin 2005, Leach 2008, Kent 2012). As Anderson argued, a temporality emerges from distinct groups of people reading in increasingly codified languages; here, a similar effect comes into being through the act of ritual, as a sense of temporal connection with unknown others permeates the most profound moments of grief,

through a connection reflected in the origins of the construction (a budget line in a Ministry based in Dili) and in the pro-forma logic of the memorial and its use of national emblems and colours.

Given all this, it could be assumed that with both the generality of the effects of the war, and the potentially integrative effects that state-led memory practices could have in consolidating a new nation, that some form of national monument to the victims of the occupation would have been built. The possibility of a 'Tomb for the Unknown Soldier', as evidenced in capitals such as Canberra and Paris and at Arlington Cemetery in the US, might seem to make sense also in the newly constituted Timor-Leste. In reality, the outcome has been much different, and there remains no single site that memorialises in a generalised way the contribution of victims, either those still living or the dead.

One reason for this absence springs from the fear of Timor-Leste antagonising its former occupiers, amplified by the new nation's economic dependence on Indonesia. In this context, national memorials that may focus and mobilise political demands for justice writ large would appear less appealing. It is not surprising in this context, then, that the CAVR report was met with public condemnation by the then-President of Timor-Leste, who labelled its recommendations as 'grandiose idealism' (Kingston 2006, p. 281), nor that while the report has yet to be formally accepted by the state ten years after it was presented formally to Parliament.

The patterns of remembering and memorialisation have of course been conditioned by domestic politics and power dynamics as well. Rather than a generalised and encompassing approach to remembering, as writers such as Lia Kent have demonstrated, the East Timorese state has prioritised some groups over others in a process of selective remembering (Kent 2012, p. 182). For instance, veterans' pensions have become a significant budgetary priority, and emphasis has gone first and foremost to symbolically and financially recognising living veterans and living relatives of those killed during the occupation (Wallis 2013; Myrttinen 2014, p.99-102). In terms of public recognition, the emphasis has been given to valourising former guerrilla fighters, typified by the Heroes Cemetery discussed above (Leach 2008) and the construction in 2013 of a huge statue of Timor-Leste's early nationalist hero, Nicolau Lobato, presented in a military uniform and holding a gun. In more recent years, the construction of ossuaries in different sites across Timor-Leste has seen families encouraged—to very different levels of effect—to exhume the remains of former combatants in preparation for reburial within the grounds at a later date (Feijó and Viegas 2015, Kent 2015).

There are of course instances where these hierarchies of memorialisation do not quite hold, such as with a statue built in remembrance of the Santa Cruz massacre, a recognition of the role of the clandestine front within the broader liberation struggle. Here, the sense of half-heartedness on behalf of the political elite is profound. The statue is based on an image captured on film during the 1991 massacre, depicting people who are still alive (at least one of whom is opposed to the statue). It is not at the cemetery itself where commemorations occur each year but at the Motael Church, where the protest began in Dili that day (Kent 2015). The opening of the statue was delayed a number of times, with a large white sheet covering and revealing the figures, giving a strong sense of the lack of political will behind it. While there are numerous examples of other memorials in Timor-Leste, these have not been part of a systematic attempt at a broad recognition to victims generally, and the state has only been involved in different ways and to different extents in the construction of some of these (Grenfell 2012, Kent 2012).

That there are clear hierarchies that have emerged in terms of recognising and memorialising the dead is testament to the new patterns and concentrations of power that have emerged in Timor-Leste post-independence. The fact that veterans have been recognised

so strongly demonstrates the priority given to particular groups in place of a more generalised and systematic approach to memorialisation of victims per se. Even with (or despite) this hierarchy, there remains an integrative effect where the subjective sense of being connected to others across territory and history intensifies. Almost counter-intuitively, this occurs even as the hierarchies create groups within (veterans) and beyond (other victims) areas of political priority, where the latter still have their 'place' within the greater whole confirmed through their experience of being relegated to a lower standing of social importance.

In remote communities like Dilai and in different ossuaries in district centres outside of the capital, the overt national symbols on which such memorials draw are only one part of a deeper effect of patterns of temporality. It is argued here that in the combined effort to respect the dead as well as gain a place within the new nation, memory becomes contoured *across* time and in a way that is bound to a specified space. For those killed in warfare, the pattern of their remembrance has taken on distinct forms and dimensions of memorialisation that distinguish them from those who have experienced a common death (e.g. by accident, illness or age). This does not mean that other forms of temporality and memorialisation are not also present, but rather that what has been outlined here thus far accounts for temporality and memory within a new national form. Even for those killed in this valourised way, this particular pattern of memory and memorialisation sits in relationship with at least two other forms: one customary and one ecclesiastical.

Time and Memorialisation from the Customary to the Ecclesiastical

In the years following the end of the Indonesian occupation, there has been a noticeable surge in the number of re-burials and grave rehabilitations in Timor-Leste. This could be regarded as a kind of revitalisation of customary practices, at least in an outward material sense (McWilliam 2011, Traube 2015), and one afforded by the space created by political independence and evidenced by other practices such as the re-building of *umaluliks* (sacred houses) and the return to ancestral lands. Either way, the importance of customary social relations—where people are bound in dominance into genealogical and affinal connections of marriage that manifest through relations within and between *umaluliks*, and according to *adat*[4] or *lisan*, forms of social regulation interpreted by *lia-nain* (elders)—remains of fundamental importance to identity and the reproduction of meaning.

One way in which customary practice endures is in the way that the recognition given to the dead remains a central element of the well-being of the living. David Hicks, in his *Tetum Ghosts & Kin,* writes how the 'source of fertility, tapped by ritual for the benefit of humanity, is considered to lie in the world of the dead' (Hicks 2004, p. ix).Although Hicks speaks here of the Tetun people of Viqueque on the South Coast of Timor-Leste, the belief that spirits occupy a domain that is coterminous with that of the living is common across the territory. Not only do ancestral spirits co-exist with the living, they can '*bo'ok*'(to move, negatively impact) them. These spirits may appear in dreams and cause illness (and even death), especially if ritual necessities have not been adequately fulfilled at the time of burial. In this regard the *beialasira* (ancestors) are treated as having an intense power and agency in daily life and must be appeased, as the following quotation from a local inhabitant confirms:

> Yes [there were problems], his spirit was appearing and made problems before we did the ritual but there were no problems again with his spirit after we did the ritual. …His spirit also will not be angry with us because we have sent him to the spirit of our grandfathers through the traditional process.

(Cited in Robbins 2010, p. 50)

The secondary burial of those killed during the Indonesian occupation is imbued with a deep importance. Because groups of people were often killed together in horrific circumstances, they may not have been paid appropriate recognition, given their hasty or temporary burials in the first instance. In a more general sense, a fitting burial is imperative because the dead are seen to have paid for the independence of the nation while the living are reaping the benefits. This latter point, confirmed by writers such as Traube in the context of Timor-Leste (Traube 2007), is highly significant, as it creates an active debt between living and dead. The belief has also been noted in other post-conflict states, such as Vietnam (see Jellema 2007) and post-Apartheid South Africa (see Aronson 2011, p. 273).

The memorialisation of the dead through ritual and the construction of appropriate graves becomes then a vitally important process of securing the living—not just in terms of one's place within the new nation, but in spiritual terms as well. In turn, the significance of proper forms of commemoration can be most apparent in the acute stress caused when it cannot be adhered to. This is captured in a young girl's account of an attack on her home by militia in 1999:

> After a while, we came down from the mountain and found that the militia and TNI[5] had destroyed the house and the corpses had been dragged away and eaten by dogs and other animals. For four months we have been trying to collect the remains of their bones. As a daughter I feel that I must help my older brothers to recover our parent's bones, which are not yet complete. I don't know about our future, as we are still young and who will look after us? Even though my parents are dead, I believe that their spirits are still with us.

(CAVR 2005, pp. 280-1)

In a post-conflict context, the need for proper commemoration sees otherwise scarce resources mobilised: bodies are returned to their villages of origin, familial ties activated across often-dispersed communities, material possessions drawn into the demands of ritual obligation, and graves re-built with family members making financial contributions. Whether in Dilai or villages and towns elsewhere, this is frequently done despite a lack of resources for the living, and where not having enough food for extended periods is still common. Moreover, the practices themselves point to complex processes of memory and temporality that intersect in different ways the modern (as discussed above), and which can be seen in the patterns of ceremonial practices that are undertaken.

Following death, there is typically a fixed period in time in which a body is to be buried, in some instances only two or three days after a person has died (an effect of Portuguese colonial and/or Church edicts that brought an end to extended periods before burial). The deceased are often placed in coffins in either the *umalulik* or the house of an immediate family member. Before burial, family members will begin the process of mourning (sometimes known as *lutu*), typically sitting with the body around the clock, grieving, burning candles, saying the name of the deceased and praying. In carrying forward reciprocity from the world of the living, the good deeds of the deceased will be spoken of at the time of death as a way of ensuring that the *klamar* (spirit) can properly leave the body without hindrance and enter the spiritual domain.

While practices relating to the remembrance of the dead vary following burial, they commonly encompass periodic visits back to the gravesite where flower petals are spread (*kariaifunan*), candles lit and prayers made, together giving sustenance to the spirit (as food and light). Initial visits are often marked by 'bitter flowers' and 'sweet flowers', the former

representing the 'sorrow' and the heaviness (*todan*) of the loss, the latter as a way to celebrate the transformation of the person from living being to ancestor.

In rural areas, the place of burial tends to follow genealogy and affinal ties, hence the predominance of familially connected groups of graves. In the instance of a cemetery such as Santa Cruz in Dili, strangers are buried side-by-side by virtue of their shared fate as Catholics. This practice shows how, in a space like this, the ecclesiastical becomes the legitimating frame for how people can be buried, rather than customary genealogy. An alternative found in both rural and urban areas is for the grave to be located in the front yard of people's homes. This makes it easier to tend to the grave and reduces risk so that people do not have to venture beyond the immediate vicinity of their homes. There is also said to be a more recent trend emerging where the dead are buried close to houses as a way of securing land tenure.

Through the ritual of death, the *adat* and Catholic elements of practices of remembrance are brought together in different ways. In terms of custom, the *tais* (woven cloth) that accompanies the body in the process of burial will be given by specific people within the extended family, who are often differentiated by the status of the living in relation to the deceased and in accord with the *adat* of that house (*uma*, akin to clan). Animals will be killed, and different sections of the carcass will be given to different people within the *umalulik*—again according to their status and role within the larger group. The saying of prayers and use of candles, the placement of a cross, and blessings by a priest or catechist (or a mass) each mark in a different way the Catholic elements of the ceremony. The following description by anthropologist Andrea Molnar in her discussion of the Kemak in Atsabe gives a sense of this combination of religious and customary practices, arguing that in the instance of a secondary funeral the apparent universality of Catholic ritual can only be understood through an indigenous cosmology.

> While the deceased are buried in Christian graves, even in secondary rituals, the secondary treatment of the dead incorporates Catholic rites at the stage of the inauguration of the new grave, when a commemorative mass is said. During the secondary funerary rites the bones are dug up, and are cleaned and placed in state in the origin source house of the deceased. There, after extensive animal sacrifices, the traditional sacred man of the group performs a more than 12-hour chant (*toli*) that will guide the soul to the village of the ancestors, and thus transforms the deceased into an ancestor. The bones then are ready to be re-interred. Only at this stage is a Catholic mass performed.
>
> (Molnar 2006, p. 344)

Across these customary and ecclesiastical patterns of memorialisation and memory, the domains of the spirits are not conflated, but are typically held to be distinct from one another. There is a clear distinction between the 'ladder' leading to the Catholic heaven (above) and the spirit world (around us) in which the Catholic tradition is given priority over the local, as the following quotation illustrates:

> Yes, the spirits can create problems [for us living], because they can ask God—the ancestors are second and God is first—and so the sprits can ask 'can God open the door for me or not?' And then if God opens the door for the spirits they can enter the world and create problems if the living did not give them [at their burial] *tais*, or contribute money, and so this way the dead can cause problems.
>
> (Interview with East Timorese: 21 April 2012)

A customary form of remembering is, in one important sense, framed by a need to keep balance with a sacred-spirit world which encompasses *beialasira*. This is quite distinct from the role of ritual within a modern worldview where, for instance, a secular notion of 'closure' places the emphasis on the living victim and their ability to re-establish themselves in the absence of a deceased relative. As Babo-Soares writes, in Timor-Leste there is an incredible importance placed on keeping equilibrium between the material world of living humans and the sacred world of the spirit. He observes that 'for life to proceed there should be a balance between the two worlds. Failure to observe appropriate rituals leads to an imbalance, which might result in negative consequences to those living in the secular world' (Babo-Soares 2004, p. 22).The emphasis on balance is vitally important and, in contrast to the modern form of temporality described in the first part of this essay, is suggestive of something distinct.

There are three key concluding points to be made here. Reflecting on the above discussion of mortuary practices, the first point to make is that, for the dead of war, forms of memorialisation extend beyond those of the modern (as outlined at the beginning of this essay) and incorporate both ecclesiastical as well as customary practices. With Catholic and customary funerary rites often ritually combined, these can be treated as syncretic in terms of performativity, as the two sets of acts are brought together and there is a form of internal dialogue between them—the shifting of hierarchies, for instance—even if that dialogue produces far less than an unambiguous unity. Nevertheless, the two worlds that are being brought together should be treated as non-syncretic and as answering to distinct sets of beliefs—God and the ancestral spirits may be linked by an ordering principle, but they are not of the same domain.

Extending on this first point, my second argument is that while a modern form of 'embodied simultaneity' may be evident in moments of national memorialisation, such moments are also speaking to other patterns of integration into and identification with differently constituted groups of people. Alongside the 'empty time' of modernity, it is possible to argue for two other forms of temporality that reflect the differences between ecclesiastical and customary practices described above. There is the one that Anderson describes as usurped by modernity, where the past and future are bound to an instantaneous present, signifying a 'messianic time' as he refers to it. Here, the idea of mass on Sunday mornings is the most obvious manifestation, as is the liturgical cycle, of a more generalised form of connection. People are bound at once to the permanence of God and to a Catholic unity of faith. Even as modern time gains traction, people remain pulled into an 'ecclesiastical simultaneity along time' at particular junctures, including at the point of the memorialisation of the dead. Prayers, despite nationalist hopes for the ultimate dominance of modern time, still buttress the nation on days of national remembering, whether it is Independence Day on 20 May, or Santa Cruz Day on 12 November.

And yet, the notion of balance, discussed above and still so integral to Timorese sociality, is suggestive of what I will call here a customary form of temporality. In this third form of temporality, the present is folded back into an always-existing origin. The origin neither dissipates into something faded nor needs to be recorded in a modern sense, as it still exists as part of the everyday, carried through the earth, the water, the trees and the rocks. There are no strangers in this community. Rather, it is comprised of kin and kind both living and deceased, and any sense of linearity is drawn back into a constant sense of co-presence between the present and the origin.

Returning to Dilai to make the third and final point, it is possible to read the memorial listed at the outset of this essay in (at least) two ways. In one sense, the space of the 'Matries de Patria de Timor-Leste' gives, via the nation, an opportunity for a vaunted recognition of the dead that answers to the needs of custom. The spirits are appeased, according to this

reading, by their elevated position following their sacrifice for the living. And yet, in another sense, the existence of such a memorial appears to be pulling towards a modernity, where one of the most intimate elements of social life is drawn into the modern nation, both distinct from the remaining population (including victims) and part of a shared history.

Conclusion

This article has argued that the patterns of memorialisation in Timor-Leste have been affected by the political trajectories and priorities in the decade-and-a-half since the Indonesian withdrawal and subsequent independence. Priority at the state level has tended to be given to both the living and the dead in terms of their involvement in the military resistance; this prioritisation has manifested as pensions for veterans and the living relatives of deceased veterans, and graves and ossuaries for the dead. At a theoretical level, even with these hierarchies in place, the memorialisation of the dead is suggestive of an integration into a new nation, not just through the symbolic motifs that are employed at sites of memorialisation, but in the ways in which memory practices reflect particular forms of temporality. The remembering of the dead by the living, even in the form of cenotaphs otherwise empty of remains, draws people in a kind of simultaneity across time. They become part of a shared trajectory with others—from distant districts, locales and villages—who they will never meet but with whom they are bound together into a distinct past and a future by a collective form of mourning and recognition. The second part of this article extended these arguments by seeking to demonstrate that, taken alone, such a representation of memory and memorialisation remains one-dimensional, integrating the living across time as it intersects unevenly with two other patterns of time: one customary and another, echoing Anderson, ecclesiastical or 'messianic' in form. These can be bound together into singular patterns of memorialisation in a material sense, but in significance comprise multiple and at times intersecting forms of meaning.

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Notes

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[2] 'FALANTIL' stands for the *Forças Armadas da Libertação Nacional de Timor-Leste,* or in English the 'Armed Forces for the National Liberation of East Timor', the military front in the resistance to Indonesian occupation.

[3] A Portuguese term meaning 'no more, stop, enough'.

[4] *Adat* is a term derived from Arabic meaning customs and traditions.

[5] *Tentara Nasional Indonesia* (Indonesian Armed Forces).