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Introduction

On 20 May 2002, the *República Democrática de Timor-Leste*/Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste became the first sovereign state established in the twenty-first century. International recognition of its sovereignty was confirmed when it became the 191st member of the United Nations (UN) in September 2002. This meant that a new, small, fragile state had entered the "international community".[1] For newly constituted states, such as Timor-Leste, sovereignty is the social status that provides political, economic and social freedom and confers upon them decision-making rights and capacities to pursue interests within the sphere of international relations.[2] New states become holders of governmental authority with a status equal to the great powers of international politics.[3] Timor-Leste's movement from occupied territory to sovereign state reflects a monumental shift in identity entailing new goals and interests, and necessitating new patterns of engagement with the international community.

The political history of the territory now known as "Timor-Leste" has been largely shaped by experiences with various forms of foreign intervention. For around 400 years, the eastern half of the island of Timor was subject to Portuguese colonialism. In 1960, Portuguese Timor was granted self-determination rights under

international law as a non-self-governing territory. By 1975, a shift in policy allowed other Portuguese colonies to exercise self-determination, however, Portuguese Timor's decolonization process was halted when its neighbour, Indonesia, annexed its territory in 1975, leading to a twenty-four year struggle for independence. Indonesia's occupation delayed decolonization until 1999, when an internationally-sanctioned ballot resulted in Timor-Leste's separation.

Since 1999, Timor-Leste has been the subject of five UN peacebuilding missions and two international stabilization missions. While international state-building is not new, international recognition of Timor-Leste's sovereignty followed the most extensive period of state-building ever conducted by the UN. The most significant of these missions operated under the auspice of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET). Present in Timor-Leste from 1999 until 2002, it was endowed with responsibility for the administration of the territory and possessed exclusive legislative and executive authority.[4] It was also mandated to provide immediate humanitarian and security assistance, build state institutions and public administration, restore the judicial system and promote "capacity-building" among local actors. The UNTAET's temporary role as *de facto* sovereign reflects a distinctive transition to independence. Not only was this mission unprecedented in its size, scope and mandate, it was also the high-water mark of UN state-building.[5] Following a political crisis in 2006, an International Stabilisation Force (ISF) and the United Nations Integration Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) was introduced to establish internal security and order. From 2006 until 2012, Timor-Leste was again dependent upon a form of foreign intervention.

This book focuses on how Timor-Leste defines and pursues its national security interests, how leaders have positioned the Timorese state within the international community and their efforts to develop and guarantee autonomy. It argues that Timor-Leste's history of foreign intervention and dependence has shaped its approaches to the international community and identity-building as an international actor. This book analyses the historical evolution of Timor-Leste's international identity in the pre- and post-independence periods, and examines the ways the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste (RDTL) has sought to advance its security interests in economic, geopolitical and diplomatic spheres. In so doing, it considers Timor-Leste's bilateral and multilateral engagements with other states, regional

and intergovernmental organizations and key non-state actors and stakeholders.

This study contributes to the existing literature on the politics of Timor-Leste. Significant scholarly analysis has been devoted to the East Timorese independence movement,[6] the international state-building period,[7] the nature and success of various UN missions[8] and political and social development.[9] However, with a few key exceptions in the form of articles and book chapters, the international relations of independent Timor-Leste has been relatively neglected.[10] This book reflects the first comprehensive study of Timor-Leste's policies and discourses across a range of fields relevant to international relations, including foreign policy, security and defence, development and norms of international justice.

The primary aim of this study, however, is to contribute to the International Relations (IR) literature on foreign policy of small, new, weak states. Timor-Leste's development as a new state provides an opportunity to examine how a new state navigates international relations, engages with fellow states and tests international structures. While small states have achieved greater prestige and visibility than in any previous period, it remains the case that IR literature tends to be dominated by great, secondary or middle powers.

This book offers a contribution to the literature on the international preferences, behaviours and interactions of fragile, small and post-colonial states[11] by examining Timor-Leste as an actor within the international community. It draws upon two analytical frameworks for understanding Timor-Leste's search for security. The first relates to the types of security issues that poor, fragile and post-colonial states face, which are often quite different from those of established, developed states. In this study, the concept of state "security" encompasses externally focused military ("hard") security, internal security (social cohesion, political order and stability), non-traditional or asymmetric threats and economic viability. The second framework concerns the foreign policy of small states, including how they cope with vulnerability and the influences that shape their priorities, engagements and strategies in international relations. Timor-Leste's approach to the international community is syncretic insofar as it is influenced by realist and idealist traditions and tends to oscillate between

perceptions of the international structural environment as cooperative and competitive. A degree of what Katzenstein and Sil describe as "analytical eclecticism" is hence necessary for understanding Timor-Leste's efforts to secure the state.[12] Such an approach can incorporate more of the complexity of real-world situations rather than employing one theory. As Wivel, Bailes and Archer point out in their comparative small state security, "the variations in historical, geopolitical and institutional contexts will affect the applicability of general theories to small state security across time and space".[13] The aim here is not to assume that "everything matters", but rather to uncover how different vectors impact on Timor-Leste's pursuit of security and independence and approaches to foreign policy.[14]

The analytical frameworks of weak state insecurity and small state foreign policy provide useful tools for understanding how Timor-Leste engages with the international community as it seeks to assert and defend its newfound political independence. As an international actor, Timor-Leste must operate within a system characterized by power dynamics that constrains its actions and decision-making. This study aims to understand how Timor-Leste exerts agency and makes foreign policy choices within this structural context, rather than focusing on overly determinist narratives of foreign domination and imposition.[15] In examining small, fragile states, this book considers the parameters of legitimate action for Timor-Leste, and its options for opening or closing the spaces for political manoeuvring in the pursuit of influence.[16] It also examines how Timor-Leste has sought to control its identity within the international community. These are important considerations for Timor-Leste because the relations and activities within the international community are integral for its political, economic and social development and the security of sovereignty and independence.

There have been a number of studies from a range of scholarly disciplines on national identity in Timor-Leste that have focused on multifaceted internal and external influences on national identity construction.[17] The distinction with this study is that it primarily focuses on Timor-Leste's international state-based identity construction using IR frameworks in order to examine its foreign policy interactions and orientations. Rather than examining only systemic factors in explaining "rational" activity (as a neo-realist might), this study views national interests as not objectively given but as influenced by various

structural and unit level considerations, and subject to the identities of states.

Small states have agency in projecting desirable self-images to international publics. Identities are complex, multifaceted and historically contingent: it is through intersubjective interactions that states forge a sense of identity that is continually reconstructed. Interviews and informal discussions with politicians, ambassadors, bureaucrats, academics, journalists, NGO workers and others within and beyond Timor-Leste have helpfully contributed to the analysis of this book. However, this study focuses its attention primarily on foreign policy narratives, drawing upon English texts directed to the international community as the audience, including speeches, declaratory policy and government documents, as primary source data. These sources carry narratives that attempt to constitute the "self" as differentiated from others in the international community.[18] These stories about the "self" shape foreign policy action by making actions meaningful, framing the boundaries of what is possible and by legitimatizing or delegitimizing particular forms of behaviour. However, it is also important not to privilege narrative as "truth": for example, narratives and discourses can be used strategically by state actors through public diplomacy campaigns. Therefore, this study juxtaposes narratives against the actual actions and policies of the state, by using primary sources such as budgets, policy documents and voting records.

Timor-Leste's national identity and interests have been shaped by historical factors. In the context of past intervention and dependence, Timor-Leste's international relations have been increasingly determined by its leadership's pursuit of "real" independence' (i.e. "functional" or "actual" independence). Efforts to secure the Timorese state have been motivated by a desire to reduce its reliance upon others and to be "self-determining"; that is, to make decisions and govern free from foreign interference. This tension between Timor-Leste's desire for "real" political independence and the realities of dependence permeates all spheres of its international political, cultural and economic relations. As Rotberg points out, many of the world's newer nation-states "waver precariously between weakness and failure".[19] The dynamic between developing independence amid ongoing dependence that is often encountered by new, fragile states is used as a framework for examining Timor-Leste's search for security. Fragile

states are those that struggle to meet the requirements of "Weberian statehood", typically defined by the exclusive control of a territorial jurisdiction through a legitimate monopoly on the use of force.[20] They are generally low income countries characterized by instability, weak institutions and low levels of political, social and economic development. Fragile states experience difficulties exerting effective governance or "empirical sovereignty", which refers to capacities of states to "be their own masters" and deliver "positive" political goods to citizens, including protecting people's safety, establishing rule of law, enabling access to basic social rights, such as health and education, and developing economic and physical infrastructure.[21] In the international realm, Timor-Leste self-identifies as a fragile, post-conflict state.[22] This book suggests that Timor-Leste experiences a "post-colonial security dilemma", which encapsulates the notion that internal insecurity — not external threats — poses the greatest challenge to Timor-Leste's capacities to exert genuine independence.

The Post-Colonial Security Dilemma

The realist IR tradition has often presented states as power-maximizers preoccupied with "national security", typically defined as the capacities of states to protect themselves from external threats presented by other states within an anarchical, self-help international political system. Within this anarchical structure — characterized by the absence of a higher authority — sovereign states are uncertain and fearful about the intentions of others, and work to expand their material power in order to alleviate their insecurity. These structural conditions of anarchy encourage "security dilemmas". As Herz describes it, the security dilemma arises when states strive to attain security from foreign attack and "are driven to acquire more and more power in order to escape the impact of the power of others".[23] One state's quest for security leads others to heighten their own security, producing a spiral effect which can ultimately result in conflict. Even though states can mitigate uncertainty through confidence-building, collective security arrangements, and knowledge sharing, the security dilemma remain quintessential to realist understandings of state security.[24]

Literature on weak or fragile states, however, has sought to problematize traditional understandings of the security dilemma in

international relations. Scholars such as Buzan, Ayoob and Alagappa have argued that the security concerns of fragile states differ from those of great powers and developed states.[25] The concept of "functional" (i.e. actual or real) independence has concerned the capacities of states to maintain their sovereign status by protecting state boundaries and the societies they encompass. Realistically, most of the world's independent states cannot meet their security needs primarily through their own material capabilities.[26] Rather than small states being forced to meet security and functional requirements, their proliferation and survival suggest that traditional concerns around conquest and intervention are increasingly irrelevant.[27] Functional independence is not just about bolstering defence capacities to defend against foreign threat, it also requires establishing an orderly relationship between the state and society.[28] New post-colonial states are more likely to experience internal conflict and disorder than established industrialized states. Importantly, for fragile states, threats to security are more likely to emerge from *within* the state rather than from foreign sources.[29] The security dilemma for post-colonial states, according to Job, "arises in meeting internal rather than external threats".[30] In fragile states, security apparatuses compete for authority with substate actors, such as militia or rebel groups, and have little coercive power to control them. These internal security threats can be driven by a range of destabilizing domestic conditions, such as poverty, inequality, institutional weakness, regime instability, and identity conflicts.[31]

The security dilemma for fragile states is how they manage the internal and external threats to security. At its heart, the post-colonial security dilemma engages with fundamental political questions of how governments allocate scarce resources. Mainstream international relations suggests that weak, small states are more vulnerable in the international system, and therefore more conscious of external systemic constraints and the need to protect national security.[32] However, spending on traditional military resources to prevent and deter foreign attack can cause internal instability as it requires the diversion of funds away from other areas, such as health and education. Privileging defence spending when other states institutions are weak can also provide security institutions with disproportionate power, potentially destabilizing the balance of power between institutions and undermining rule of law. Essentially, the post-colonial security dilemma reflects the range of challenges facing new states, such as

Timor-Leste, as they try to secure the internal and external dimensions of state sovereignty.

The ways in which new states come into being affect their capacities to be functionally independent. Decolonization was a "revolution of sovereignty" that spread the modern state system across the globe.[33] Many post-colonial states that emerged after World War Two were established through law irrespective of whether empirical sovereignty could be established. Rapid decolonization changed the nature of sovereignty and membership of the international community, and consequently, various studies have sought to create typologies to explain the differences between states. While categories such as "modern" and "post-colonial" run the risk of reifying and homogenizing the identities of particular states, they are useful in highlighting the diversity in the nature and operation of state sovereignty and its different dimensions. Scholars such as Sorenson, Cooper and Clapham suggest that states can be divided into three highly generalized types: post-colonial (new, fragile states), modern (established, possessing internal and external sovereignty) and post-modern (member states of supranational institutions, in particular the European Union).[34] According to Krasner, there are also different types of sovereignty that states possess to differing degrees. International legal sovereignty is the recognition of sovereign statehood, Westphalian or Vattelian sovereignty is the rights to autonomy and non-intervention, and domestic (empirical) sovereignty is effective governance of society.[35] Jackson describes new post-colonial states as "quasi-states" that possess international legal (or "external") sovereignty but lack effective governance.[36] The struggle for fragile states has often been in realizing their autonomy, as recognition of external sovereignty did not, in many cases, translate into empirical sovereignty as new states struggled to establish and maintain internal order.[37]

The territorial arrangements of many small post-colonial states would have been unviable if it were not for the "normative benefits" of sovereign recognition and UN membership.[38] In the contemporary era, post-colonial states "are seldom recolonized, merged, or dissolved", partly because colonization has become illegitimate.[39] While there has been a tendency to view the capacity to defend territory and population from external threat as an essential component of sovereign statehood, the external sovereignty of post-colonial fragile states is generally protected through international regimes of recognition. Timor-Leste's statehood

has been assured by an international constitution that privileges sovereignty and attendant norms of non-intervention as its foundational organizational principles. Nevertheless, survival, security and "real" independence remain the core drivers of Timor-Leste's international engagements. Ayoob suggests that elites in developing states are obsessed with security as a consequence of vulnerabilities that emerge from within and beyond the state.[40] State fragility has undermined the efforts of Timor-Leste to secure popular visions of sovereignty as "real" independence, signified by a lack of dependence upon others.

Traditional conceptions of territorial sovereignty has entailed a belief in the "impermeability" of fixed, "hard shell" boundaries which protected states from outside penetration and interference.[41] There have been various criticisms levelled at this "old-fashioned" concept of territorial sovereignty since the end of the Cold War.[42] Scholars have argued that sovereignty has become increasingly irrelevant due to transnational economic forces, interdependence and globalization;[43] supranational organizations, particularly the European Union, have de-territorialized political authority;[44] a range of non-traditional global issues and threats, such as climate change, transgress the "hard shell" of boundaries;[45] and, humanitarian intervention has limited the capacities of state governments to violate the basic rights of their population.[46] In the words of Chopra and Weiss, these arguments have suggested that sovereignty is not "sacrosanct"; that is, under certain conditions, the international community can legitimately override domestic jurisdictions.[47] Furthermore, scholarly debates have considered the extent to which sovereign states hold responsibilities to their own populations (and to citizens of other states) and whether rights to territorial sovereignty are contingent upon the protection of human rights.[48] These debates about sovereignty reflect various perspectives about the absoluteness of sovereignty, and the extent to which states (with diverse governing capabilities) can or should be considered independent entities.

This book engages with questions of how post-colonial states (re) produce sovereignty through foreign policy discourses, norms and behaviours. Independence movements, such as East Timor's, undermine the idea that sovereignty and territorial boundaries are irrelevant. For liberation movements, sovereignty remains the ultimate goal because it promises nations the ability to enact collective rights to self-

determination. Since independence, Timor-Leste has pursued and promoted a form of territorial sovereignty. This book uses the term "absolute external sovereignty" to describe a notion of sovereignty as providing states with inviolable rights to political authority over a territorial jurisdiction. This conception of sovereignty draws heavily on norms of "non-interference", which bestows upon states the right to independently conduct domestic affairs free from foreign interference, criticism or even advice.[49] Ringmar argues that many post-colonial states are defenders of absolute "Westphalian" conceptions of sovereignty.[50] Burke, on the other hand, suggests that post-colonial states have not always defended an absolute state sovereignty concept.[51] He points to the contribution of new African and Asian nations in the development of the post-World War Two international human rights regime aimed at limiting the range of permissible governmental actions *vis-à-vis* their populations.[52] The vision of sovereignty presented by Timor-Leste's leaders is reminiscent of the central norms embedded in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), an organization that has sought to protect principles of absolute sovereignty and non-interference. Timor-Leste's vision of absolute external sovereignty is shaped by its historical struggle for recognition and the means by which it became independent. For Timor-Leste, this aspiration is shaped by its history of external interventions from Portugal's colonialism and Indonesia's occupation through to the extensive UN missions.

In the twenty-first century, fragile states have been viewed as potential harbourers of terrorist networks, drug syndicates and people smuggling rings that threaten the security of established states.[53] This has rendered fragile states susceptible to intervention by powerful states defending their own national security interests. In Timor-Leste's case, internal conflict has precipitated prolonged peacebuilding efforts that have compromised its pursuit of independence and self-determination. The primary threat to "real" independence is state failure as internal insecurity has repeatedly given rise to foreign intervention in the guise of peace-building missions. As a post-conflict fragile state, the primary challenges to security and functional independence are largely internal. Yet, as this research demonstrates, Timor-Leste's governments have focused on traditional security concerns, such as building a military to deter foreign threat.

Small State Foreign Policy

As well as being a fragile state, Timor-Leste is also small, which is typically characterized by geography, population size and the degree of influence in international relations.[54] Within the UN Forum of Small States, population numbers vary from 10,000 to 10 million.[55] There are currently 107 member states of this informal grouping, meaning that the majority of the UN membership are classified as small states according to population. This problematizes the use of "smallness" as an analytical tool. With a population of approximately 1.25 million people, some studies would classify a population of Timor-Leste's size (e.g. less than 1.5 million) as a "micro-state".[56] However, this study positions Timor-Leste as small but not micro: in 2015, Timor-Leste possessed the 157th largest population of 217 states.[57] Although Timor-Leste shares some similar developmental concerns with its Pacific micro-state neighbours, it is considerably larger than Nauru (population of 10,000), Tuvalu (10,000) and Palau (21,000). In terms of territory size, Timor-Leste is 14,874 square kilometres, ranking 160th of 257 recorded territories.[58] Exacerbating Timor-Leste's small physical size is its geographical location between the much larger states of Australia and Indonesia.

Smallness can also reflect the perceived position of states within an international hierarchy of power. Small states lack coercive power and are more likely to be aid dependent. They cannot guarantee their own security by military means, they struggle to make an impact on the international system and generally pose little or no danger to neighbouring states.[59] Traditionally, power in international relations has been attributed to criteria such as size, military capabilities and gross domestic product (GDP).[60] It is not, however, the case that levels of influence accurately correspond with size. While sometimes small states are conflated with "weak" states in international relations,[61] this is conceptually confusing as weak states are also conflated with "fragile" states (wherein "weakness" relates largely to the internal face of sovereign statehood, not their power in international relations). The category of small states includes some of the world's most and least developed states, and wealth can provide small states with material capacities that are disproportionate to their size.[62] For Timor-Leste, its position in the international community needs to be understood through the combination of its physical smallness, its newness and relative

weakness, both in terms of its external power *vis-à-vis* other states, and its internal capacities to govern effectively.

Foreign policy is comprised of those policies "oriented towards the external world" as state representatives seek to deal with other states and the broader international community.[63] Analysis tends to sit in two camps: systems versus domestic approaches. Systems approaches view foreign policy as disproportionately influenced by external factors, such as balance of power dynamics or international law.[64] In contrast, domestic approaches examine the roles of leaders, institutions and internal politics in shaping foreign policy. Small states do not necessarily act in similar ways because economic and human development, geopolitics, geography and resources, internal stability and state weakness, domestic politics and history and culture also shape the policies of small states. This research considers four key influences on Timor-Leste's foreign policy: structural (external) forces; domestic politics; multilateral organizations and the global "rules-based order"; and, culture and history. These influences shape Timor-Leste's national interests and strategies that leaders implement as they pursue their goals in international relations.

Systemic Factors

International relations has tended to favour powerful, geostrategically influential states because they have the greatest capacity to shape international systems. While constructivists have argued that the structural (environmental) factors that neo-realism focus on as explanatory factors are reified through the behaviours and interactions of states,[65] the extent to which small states may contribute to shaping these external factors — rather than having to cope with external contingencies — is an important consideration. Small states have typically had little capacity to shape their external structural environments. Historically, small states have been more likely than great powers to "die" given their structural "irrelevance".[66] This has created an impetus for small states to "struggle for existence".[67] Realism has suggested that weaker small states "must always be aware of the realities of power and entertain no naïve illustration about disregarding the distribution of power in international relations".[68] The focus on systemic features of the international community suggests that small states' vulnerability within

the political environment forces an unambiguous preoccupation with survival.[69] Small size has been viewed as a "handicap to state action".[70] Waltz, for example, argues that small powers have fewer options and a smaller margin for error than great or middle powers.[71] Consequently, realists view small states as devoting significant foreign policy resources to guaranteeing survival.[72]

Smallness, weakness and newness create particular vulnerabilities that shape the actions and interactions of states such as Timor-Leste. In some cases, the best small states can do is to cope with immediate security concerns, leading to reactive approaches to foreign policy.[73] Under conditions of anarchy, it would make sense that small states should be even more invested in survival and self-help. However, as Sharman argues, international structures provide even the smallest states with "choices rather than imperatives".[74] Small states are actually able to "energetically wield many sovereign prerogatives" as international structures permit greater freedoms for small states than what conventional international relations assumes.[75] Yet, even though it is possibly the safest period for weak and small states in history as they enjoy legitimacy, sovereign recognition and relative safety from foreign aggression, in its international relations, Timor-Leste remains focused on guaranteeing its sovereign status.[76] Foreign policy making is shaped by threat perception and international outlook, and this is central to understanding the goals and behaviours of Timor-Leste.

One of the central concerns for small states is how to best ensure security within the international distribution of power and how they should engage with more powerful states. Should a small state like Timor-Leste seek a great power protector to underwrite its national security, or eschew formal alliances in order to defend its independence and autonomy? Neo-realist small state foreign policy analysis has tended to find, following Walt, that small states are more likely to reluctantly "bandwagon" with (i.e. form an alliance with) an aggressive great power than balance against it.[77] Sharman's research finds that small states delegate fewer prerogatives to alliances than some much larger states.[78] In contrast, Labs suggests that small states can also tend towards balancing behaviours.[79] How can the differences in these findings be explained from a structural viewpoint? For Mouritzen, what matters is how the external "constellation" of power dynamics and relations to strong powers in the "salient environment"

affects the foreign policy of small states.[80] The immediate environment of a small state may constitute an adaptive acquiescent constellation (whereby small states accept certain rules and avoid agitating great powers), an alliance constellation (in which small states are closely tied to a great power and have limited freedom of activity) or a symmetrical constellation (in which small states have greater freedom as they play off competing great powers).[81] As these constellations create a logic of rational action, changes in external balance of power can have consequences for small state foreign policy. However, a purely structuralist account misses the ways in which the actions and behaviours of small states can contribute to constellations of power. How and why small states belong to one of these constellations may be determined by their own agency in developing relations with great powers.[82]

Timor-Leste's immediate security environment, as fleshed out in this book, is defined as Asia-Pacific, a theatre dominated by two great powers, the United States and China. Using Mouritzen's account, this environment could be considered a symmetrical constellation. However, there are other relatively powerful states that also shape Timor-Leste's immediate security environment: principally, its neighbours Indonesia and Australia, two states have significantly affected Timor-Leste's status in recent history. For the most part, Timor-Leste has avoided making bandwagoning or balancing decisions, and has resisted the idea of forming a formal alliance with its main benefactor, Australia (itself a formal ally of the United States). Instead, Timor-Leste has adopted a policy of "hedging" by diversifying its relationships and seeking to reduce dependence on any one state or bloc of states. Timor-Leste may not be able to avoid making a choice about great power relations in the future as the global balance of power distribution shifts. However, its foreign policy choices thus far have undermine conventional assumptions that small states "bandwagon" to guarantee security, and demonstrate the complexity of the emerging "multiplex" world order[83] and the interrelationships with and between middle and great powers that shape their salient security environment.

Domestic Politics

Mainstream international relations tends to assume that domestic politics and institutions play a smaller role in the foreign policy formation of small states than great powers. Handel, for example, argues that domestic

determinants have less salience in small powers foreign policy making than systemic factors.[84] However, Leifer suggests that Southeast Asian states tend to use foreign policy to serve domestic political purposes and to maintain the dominant position of those who rule, which is "not unique in relation to the overall experience of Third World countries".[85] Research on other small Southeast Asian states has also argued that domestic politics, institutional frameworks and regime types play a role in influencing foreign policy choices, for example in how states perceive and balance against threats, or their preference-formation regarding multilateral engagements and diplomacy.[86] In Southeast Asia generally, there remains little known about actual processes of foreign policy formation due to the sheer nature of the subject.[87] However, the general trend is that decision-making authority is normally invested in a few individuals, and in some cases, only one person.[88] Similarly, in Timor-Leste, political decision-making is highly centralized. Like many post-colonial states, foreign policy in Timor-Leste has been generally dictated by influential political leaders. These leaders were diplomats or military leaders during the East Timorese resistance and independence movement, a legacy that has subsequently shaped Timor-Leste's interactions with the international community, the worldviews of foreign policymakers and the tensions that emerge between them.

Since independence, Timor-Leste's approach to the international community has been largely shaped by two leaders. The architect of its foreign policy approach in the early years of independence was Nobel Peace Prize winner Dr José Ramos-Horta, who became Timor-Leste's first foreign minister in 2002 as a member of the FRETILIN (Revolutionary Front of Independent East Timor) government. Ramos-Horta would ultimately become prime minister for a short time during the political crises in 2006, and was elected president from 2008–12. A skilled practitioner of international relations well-known for his advocacy of East Timor's independence on the global stage and at the UN, Ramos-Horta promoted an internationalist stance that was consistent with universal human rights, social democratic values and initiatives for promoting global peace. Following his loss in the 2012 presidential election to former army chief, Taur Matan Ruak, Ramos-Horta's influence declined within the decision-making apparatuses of the state. This has loosely corresponded with a movement against Ramos-Horta's internationalist worldview, towards the reassertion of Timorese culture in national political discourse.[89]

TABLE 1.1
Key Foreign Policy Actors

Timeframe	Government	Key Figures
2002–6	FRETILIN	President – Xanana Gusmão Prime Minister – Mari Alkatiri Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation – José Ramos-Horta
2006–7	FRETILIN	President – Xanana Gusmão Prime Minister – José Ramos-Horta
2007–12	Alliance of the Parliamentary Majority (AMP)	President – José Ramos-Horta Prime Minister – Xanana Gusmão Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation – Zacarias da Costa
2012–15	National Congress for Timorese Reconstruction (CNRT)	President – Taur Matan Ruak Prime Minister – Xanana Gusmão Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation – José Luís Guterres
2015–17 (July)	National Unity Government	President – Taur Matan Ruak Prime Minister – Rui Maria de Araújo Minister for Planning and Strategic Investment – Xanana Gusmão Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation – Hernâni Coelho
2017 (Dec)	FRETILIN	President – Fransisco 'Lu Olo' Guterres Prime Minister – Mari Alkatiri Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation – Aurélio Guterres

The other key leader in Timor-Leste's international relations is Xanana Gusmão. Elected Timor-Leste's first president in 2002, Gusmão became prime minister, forming a coalition government headed by *Congresso Nacional de Reconstrução de Timor*/National Congress for Timor-Leste Reconstruction (CNRT) party in 2007, and the Alliance for Parliamentary Majority (AMP) in 2012. Gusmão retired from the prime ministership in early 2015, which led to the creation of a "unity government" that included members of the opposition FRETILIN party.

Most notably, FRETILIN's Dr Rui Maria de Araújo became the new prime minister. Gusmão, however, retained considerable political influence by virtue of his charismatic leadership that derives from his status as a national liberation hero. A more nationalist leader than Ramos-Horta, Gusmão has promoted Timorese national interests and has led criticisms of the West, international donors and the global economy. Gusmão, however, has demonstrated that he is more likely to pursue idealistic foreign policy strategies in the pursuit of domestic interests than the more pragmatic Ramos-Horta. The politics and personal interests of key leaders influence the foreign policy objectives and strategies of Timor-Leste.

At the time of writing (the end of 2017), the "unity government" had broken down following parliamentary elections in July. A parliamentary majority opposition led by Gusmão emerged, threatening the authority of the new FRETILIN-led minority government and blocking the passing of its national agenda through parliament.[90] This set the scene for new elections. This breakdown in consensus highlights the fluidity of the domestic political context, and although it is too soon to tell, may have internal security and foreign policy implications in the future.

Multilateralism and the Rules-Based Order

Sovereign states are expected to engage in an incredibly large and diverse range of political activities in the international realm. Small fragile states are viewed as constrained in their foreign policy options, having to rely upon soft measure strategies in the absence of hard, coercive power. One characteristic of small state foreign policy can include low participation in foreign affairs and prioritizing close relationships within their immediate region.[91] However, research has also demonstrated that small and underdeveloped states tend to exhibit a range of foreign policy behaviours when confronting their vulnerabilities within international relations. Even Waltz, somewhat contradictorily, suggests that small states face fewer constraints than more powerful actors because of a general lack of interest in their foreign policies.[92] Small states must use their limited foreign policy resources to promote survival and maximize their strategic options. As they lack opportunities to use coercive powers, they rely upon a

range of relationships to advance their core interests, particularly if they choose not to rely upon an alliance with a great power. Timor-Leste has developed an ambitious foreign policy that incorporates a disproportionately large range of relations within various global, regional and cultural multilateral forums, including the UN. Rather than focusing on the immediate neighbourhood, Timor-Leste's international relations extends across multiple regions, including East and Southeast Asia, South Pacific, Europe and Africa. This expansive foreign policy reflects Timor-Leste's unique status as a Portuguese-language speaking, Catholic small island state geographically situated in Southeast Asia, and the support it received during the independence movement from former Portuguese colonies in Africa.

While traditional international relations theories tend to equate size with capabilities, it is not the case that small states are impotent victims of a hostile international political system.[93] While small states are often constrained in the ways that they can advance national security (for example, in building a military), in foreign policy small fragile states employ a range of disparate strategies to balance against threat.[94] Small weak states are driven to cooperate by engaging in multilateralism and promoting international law as they defend legal principles of sovereignty, recognition and non-intervention.[95] Furthermore, the assumption that survival is the *only* preoccupation of small states is undermined by the rich variety of actions and interactions they engage in. Some studies, for example, have highlighted the ways in which small states can be "norm entrepreneurs" by promoting particular worldviews across different policy areas.[96] Others have demonstrated how the international fora may be used to enhance status through diplomacy and international law.[97] Other interests are at stake than survival, including advancing economic interests and promoting values, ideologies or principles within the international community. Multilateral forums provide small states the space to advance their diverse interests.

The literature on small states suggests that because they are deprived of coercive options they are more likely to seek out multilateral organizations for security. As Bull argues, the multilateral system of rules, norms and laws provides order in the anarchical society.[98] The primary functions of this "global rules-based order" is to preserve sovereignty, protect weak states from the strong, and promote peace among them.[99] Small states receive protection from international laws,

norms and principles, and are among the biggest promoters of rules-based multilateralism.[100] As many small states lack the resources to defend borders, they have an interest in ensuring peace and stability through support for a multilateral rules-based order and principles of collective security.[101] As a global multilateral system, the UN also preserves the foundational norms of sovereign equality through the "one nation, one vote" principle. Timor-Leste is a vocal supporter of international rule of law as it safeguards its sovereignty. For Timor-Leste, participation in the global normative order and liberal institutions is in its strategic interests as it relies upon the international community to guarantee recognition. However, Timorese leaders have also been critical of UN organizations and the international development sphere when it has suited their quest for autonomy and domestic political interests.

In some areas, Timor-Leste's governments have embraced "realist" notions of security as relying upon material defence capabilities as other states and actors in the international community pose potential threats. At the same time, Timor-Leste's leaders seek to develop a "legitimate" identity as a "successful" state that provides internal security and order, and respects the rights of its citizens, in order to protect the state from future foreign intervention. This requires complying with international law, gaining membership in international institutions, and cooperating with other states, international institutions and non-state actors. Timor-Leste's "activist" foreign policy strategies employ international discourses in areas such as human rights, democracy and sustainable development in order to validate the state, drawing upon public diplomacy skills that were developed by leaders through the independence movement. The need to be perceived as a legitimate actor within the international community has shaped both the construction of Timor-Leste's democratic political institutions, and its engagement with actors and structuring forces, such as international law.

History, Culture and Identity

Finally, Timor-Leste's foreign policy has been shaped by a distinctive mix of historical experiences: of being colonialized twice, pursuing political independence and experiencing delayed self-determination as a result of international state-building. This history has shaped

Timor-Leste's state-based identity, and impacted upon perceptions of security threats and national interests that underpin foreign policy decision-making. States tend to respond to geopolitical circumstances and threats in ways that reflect historical experiences, domestic political dynamics and relations with regional powers.[102] It is not just that Timor-Leste is juxtaposed between the larger Australia and Indonesia that creates a potential security threat; the perception of threat is also contingent upon the interventionist roles of these two states in Timor-Leste's past. The strategic culture of Timor-Leste has also been shaped by the key decision-makers that were former members of the independence and resistance movement who fought — with weapons and/or words — against Indonesian colonialism.

As a new state, Timor-Leste has strategically positioned itself within an international political order, a process which is partly shaped by identity concerns. Timor-Leste's state identity has been defined by insecurity as it has transformed from colony to a trustee state of the UN to an independent sovereign state. As Sahin has argued, an insecure state identity has contributed to shaping the foreign policy manoeuvres of Timor-Leste's leadership.[103] Timor-Leste's national identity has been subject to three dominant influences: Portuguese colonialism; the resistance movement against Indonesia; and, Catholicism. Timor-Leste's connections with Southeast Asian states to the west and the states of Melanesia to the east are, and continue to be, shaped by cultural and historical links as much as they are geopolitical realities. The ongoing prioritization of Portuguese-speaking countries also reflects these cultural and historical links.

However, identities in international relations are multifaceted; they are representations and beliefs about the state that are externally produced and distinct from (but overlap with) internal or "national" identities.[104] States are social beings that produce categories in order to explain the diversity among actors within the international community. For Timor-Leste, there are a number of identity signifiers that leaders draw upon to position the state within the international community: it is a fragile, "post-conflict" state that has pursued a "zero enemies" policy and projects its image as a "good international citizen". While leaders presented the state as being a social democracy that respects universal human rights for over a decade, this has now shifted to a Timorese-specific "consensus" democracy as Timor-Leste's leaders try to justify their unity government to the international community using

democratic terms. Understanding the multifaceted nature of identity is important for considering the self-images that Timor-Leste seeks to promote within the international community.

Recently, scholars have been paying more attention to the importance that small states place on image and perception building.[105] Identities "are created through an interplay of… two alternative perspectives" held by the self and the other.[106] A theory of recognition acknowledges that states are not in full control of their identities as they are contingent upon recognition by peers (i.e. fellow states).[107] States engage in a process of identity-projection in order to have their self-images accepted by others, which reflects an ongoing "struggle for recognition" of status that does not end upon the attainment of sovereign status.[108] Yet, self-images may not be recognized by others, so states are increasingly invested in pursuing social power through image building as a form of "soft power".[109] They attempt to influence how other states view them within the international community by creating "narratives" that tell stories about who they are.[110] These narratives establish and reify social categories, identities and status.[111] Image projection strategies can support the security objectives of small states as they can help legitimize their identities and deter foreign interference.

This book uses the term "aspirational foreign policy" to describe the ways in which Timor-Leste's foreign policy is motivated by identity goals, and is characterized by aspirations to achieve social prestige. Timor-Leste's aspirational foreign policy involves the use of identity projection through the use of narratives. Timor-Leste's exceptionalism is revealed in the self-image it projects as a state-building "success" story as it has moved "from fragility to resilience".[112] Timor-Leste's aspirational foreign policy is partly related to material considerations as it seeks to transform Timor-Leste from a poor developing state to an upper middle income state by 2030.[113] Timor-Leste's aspirations, however, are not just about status and prestige as part of a "struggle for recognition"; it is also a strategy increasingly used by nationalist political leaders to defend the "self-determination" of the Timorese state. Importantly, leaders are not solely interested in avoiding intervention in order to defend the rights of the Timorese nation to make collective political decisions. Foreign policy is also motivated by "elites"[114] seeking to protect their own personal and political interests. This book examines these complex dynamics between the multiple

internal and external factors that shape Timor-Leste's engagements with the international community.

Chapters Overview

The first section of this book discusses the establishment of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste as an independent sovereign state through the three waves of Portuguese, Indonesian and UN administration. It is impossible to understand Timor-Leste's foreign policy and engagements with the broader international community without first understanding the importance of the independence movement to the identity and interests of Timor-Leste. Its key interests are in fulfilling the dreams and aspirations of independence: securing the state against colonialism and intervention, ensuring "real" independence and guaranteeing self-determination. These aspirations reveal the key source of Timor-Leste's insecurity, which is the prospect of foreign intervention, whether it be by the UN, a multinational force or a hostile external actor.

Chapter two examines the ways in which Timor-Leste was cartographically "imagined" through processes of European colonialism, which territorially defined East Timor, and contributed to the establishment of international legal rights as a colonial entity, and, ultimately, a sense of national identity. Colonial borders constructed by the European states gave East Timor a status under international law as a colonial territory with attendant rights to self-determination. East Timor's independence movement used international law and norms to justify their claims to self-determination during the Indonesian occupation from 1975 until 1999. This highlights the importance of international laws and principles for establishing Timor-Leste's distinct identity and rights within the international community.

Chapter three examines the struggle for recognition during the years of Indonesia's occupation as East Timor's independence movement sought to persuade members of the international community to uphold principles of self-determination. This chapter examines the reactions and activities of international actors to the claims of the East Timorese independence movement for sovereign independence. It examines the contexts that shaped the independence movement (for instance, the Cold War), and analyses the activities of key states

such as Portugal, Australia and Indonesia in relation to East Timor's aspirations for sovereignty. It also focuses on the international pressure that led to Indonesia's policy shift on the issue of East Timor's self-determination. It argues there were two key reasons for the recognition of East Timor's rights under international law: first, the independence movement linked its struggle with key human rights precepts embedded in international law; and second, Indonesia failed to persuade others in the international community that East Timor belonged to Indonesia. The history of this struggle has shaped independent Timor-Leste's engagements with the international community.

Chapter four examines the contribution of international state-building from 1999–2002 in developing Timor-Leste's state identity. Timor-Leste's attainment of sovereignty was permitted by the international community and supported through various state-building and peace-building activities.[115] New states are expected to conform to the pre-existing normative frameworks of the international community. Timor-Leste's political institutions were shaped by external actors, which has consequences — positive and negative — for the development of sovereign statehood. One of the challenges facing local and international state-builders was reconciling the tensions between Western, "Weberian" (centralized) state structures and local, customary forms of political authority and law. This international state-building period was crucial in establishing Timor-Leste as a liberal-democratic state, reflecting dominant international political ideologies. This period of intensive international intervention is important for explaining the subsequent desire for self-determination and "real" independence espoused by Timorese leaders.

The second part of this book examines Timor-Leste's international relations following its achievement of independence in 2002. Chapter five begins by examining the development of Timor-Leste's foreign policy. It examines key bilateral and multilateral engagements since independence. Broadly, the three key aims of Timor-Leste's foreign policy were initially to maintain friendships with Indonesia and Australia, pursue membership of international and regional organizations, particularly ASEAN, and establish relationships with a range of countries.[116] However, this chapter argues that Timor-Leste has increasingly pursued an expansive, "aspirational" foreign policy approach. In the international arena it has

sought to project its preferred self-image as a successful liberal-democracy that respects multilateralism and international rule of law. A dominant foreign policy narrative of "fragile state exceptionalism" has emerged around the belief that Timor-Leste has overcome its history of conflict and colonialism to become a successful model state for other fragile and post-conflict societies.

Chapter six examines the types of international institutions Timor-Leste has sought to join, the types of interests that have been pursued in multilateral engagements and the nature of Timor-Leste's diplomatic priorities. It focuses particular attention on Timor-Leste's pursuit of ASEAN membership, an organization whose members also defend an absolutist conception of sovereignty. It also examines Timor-Leste's relations with the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP) and its Pacific Island neighbours, and its leadership role in the g7+ organization of fragile, post-conflict states. This chapter reveals the significance of common cultural, historical, developmental and regional connections underpinning Timor-Leste's efforts at international cooperation and participation in intergovernmental organizations.

In contrast, chapter seven looks at the ways leaders have presented an image of the international environment as insecure and competitive. It examines the types of external threats identified by leaders and the ways they have sought to protect the state against these threats. Since independence, Timor-Leste has sought to develop their defence capacities in line with conventional thinking about national security and "real" independence, even though internal security has been more problematic than external threats. The growth of a domestic military has influenced the foreign relations of Timor-Leste and has broader implications for understanding security and independence in post-colonial states. Timor-Leste's national security has been linked to a political history that includes collusion between Australia and Indonesia in denying the East Timorese nation its right to self-determination.

Upon independence, Timor-Leste became the poorest sovereign state in Southeast Asia. It has depended upon donations from a range of international aid donors, comprising state and non-state actors. Timor-Leste has relied upon international institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank for the provision of essential services and resources. Chapter eight examines the ways that Timor-Leste has sought to articulate, protect and extend its economic sovereignty. This chapter focuses on Timor-Leste's ambitious pursuit of development

advanced through a neoliberal agenda based on oil industrialization, free trade policies and direct foreign investment. Although it remains a low-income state, Timor-Leste is resource rich and resource dependent. Timor-Leste's short- to mid-term economic future depends upon gaining access to contested hydrocarbon reserves in the Timor Sea, in particular the Greater Sunrise gas field. Timor-Leste responded to this foreign policy challenge by engaging in an ambitious and risky "activist" strategy based on public diplomacy and use of international legal mechanisms. By the end of 2017 (at the time of writing), the development of Greater Sunrise remained under negotiation with Australia and commercial partners. A failure of diplomacy in this regard would likely re-invite intervention and aid dependence, perhaps within a decade. Even if development begins soon on Greater Sunrise, a failure to diversify the economy will have longer term consequences for development. This highlights the ways in which Timor-Leste's tactics may paradoxically undermine its capacities to guarantee independence.

Chapter nine examines Timor-Leste's relationship with international norms of justice. International justice is characterized by the global articulation of basic human rights and norms outlawing crimes against humanity. In the twenty-first century, an international obligation of states to pursue individuals who bear responsibility for gross violations of human rights has crystallized. Since the 1999 independence referendum, Timor-Leste has struggled to achieve substantive justice for the human rights violations committed during Indonesia's twenty-five-year *de facto* administration because many alleged perpetrators of rights violations have been shielded by Indonesia. Many civil society organizations have lobbied the international community to establish an independent international tribunal, but this has yet to occur. This chapter examines the 2008 Indonesia–Timor-Leste Commission of Truth and Friendship, which was the world's first bilateral Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Its formation provides insights into how Timor-Leste has sought to engage its closest neighbour and former colonial master and its pursuit of security through bilateral reconciliation. It also analyses the implementation of the Commission's recommendations by Indonesia and Timor-Leste, and concludes that the Commission was primarily a pragmatic political mechanism designed to support international priorities rather than principles of justice.

Finally, chapter ten examines future challenges for Timor-Leste in the Asian-Pacific region. It explains the strategic relationships successive governments have pursued in response to an uncertain regional balance of power in Asia. It argues that Timor-Leste has, and will likely continue to, engage in "strategic hedging" to cope with insecurities emerging from shifting structural power dynamics. The chapter finishes by considering what is likely to be a most significant factor contributing to Timor-Leste's insecurity: climate change. It examines Timor-Leste's contribution to global climate change cooperation, as well as key environmental challenges facing the state in the future. Timor-Leste's leaders have proven themselves to be skilled rhetoricians insofar as they adeptly use human rights and development vernaculars in their public diplomacy. Ultimately, however, the book demonstrates that undiversified economic policies, weak institutions and increasingly undemocratic governance combine to threaten the future viability of Timorese statehood. Timor-Leste's security and independence will not rely on growing its military capabilities or its aspirational foreign policy, it will depend upon sustainable social, economic and environmental policies that genuinely support the livelihoods of the citizens of Timor-Leste.

NOTES

1. The phrase "international community" is used to encapsulate a range of international actors, including states, intergovernmental and regional organizations.
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3. Hans Agné, "The Politics of International Recognition: Symposium Introduction", *International Theory* 5, no. 1 (2013): 95.
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9. See Ingram, Sue, Lia Kent and Andrew McWilliam, eds, *A New Era? Timor-Leste After the UN* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 2015); Damien Kingsbury and Michael Leach, eds., *East Timor: Beyond Independence* (Clayton: Monash University Press, 2007); Michael Leach and Damien Kingsbury, eds., *The Politics of Timor-Leste: Democratic Consolidation After Intervention* (Ithaca: Cornell, 2014); David Mearns and Steven Farram, eds., *Democratic Governance in Timor-Leste: Reconciling the Local and the National* (Darwin: Charles Darwin University Press, 2008); Vandra Harris and Andrew Goldsmith, eds., *Security, Development and Nation-Building in Timor-Leste: A Cross-Sectoral Assessment* (Oxon: Routledge, 2011); Andrea Molnar, *Timor-Leste: Politics, History, and Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 2010); Dennis Shoesmith, *The Crisis in Timor-Leste: Understanding the Past, Imagining the Future* (Darwin: Charles Darwin University Press, 2007).

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14. Ibid.

15. William Brown and Sophie Harman, "African Agency in International Politics", *African Agency in International Politics*, edited by William Brown and Sophie Harman, p. 2 (Oxon: Routledge, 2013).

16. Ibid.

17. See in particular Nuno Canas Mendes, "Multidimensional Identity Construction: Challenges for State-building in East Timor", in *East Timor: How to Build a New Nation in Southeast Asia in the 21st Century?*, edited by Christine Cabasset-Semedo and Frédéric Durand, pp. 19–30 (Thailand: Research Institute on Contemporary Southeast Asia, 2009); Nuno Canas Mendes, *Multidimensionalidade da Construção identitária de Timor-Leste* (Lisbon: ISCSP, 2005); Michael Leach, *Nation Building and National Identity in Timor-Leste* (Oxon: Routledge, 2017).

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24. Alan Collins, *The Security Dilemmas of Southeast Asia*, p. 2 (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000); Jervis, "Cooperation under the Security Dilemma", p. 172.

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27. Ibid., p. 560.

28. Buzan, *People, States, and Fear*, pp. 63–69.

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30. Brian Job, "Introduction", in *The Insecurity Dilemma: National Security of Third World States*, edited by Brian Job, p. 12 (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1992).

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35. Stephen Krasner, "Abiding Sovereignty", *International Political Science Review* 22, no. 3 (2001): 231.

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40. Ayoob, *The Third World Security Predicament*, p. 4.

41. John Herz, "Rise and Demise of the Territorial State", *World Politics* 9, no. 4 (1957): 473.

42. Simona Ţuţuianu, *Towards Global Justice: Sovereignty in an Interdependent World*, p. 43 (The Hague: TMC Asser Press, 2013).

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105. Thorhallsson, "Small States in the UN Security Council", p. 143.

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109. Joseph S. Nye Jr., "Soft Power", *Foreign Policy* 80, Twentieth Anniversary (Autumn 1990): 167.

110. Jelena Subotić, "Narrative, Ontological Security, and Foreign Policy Change", *Foreign Policy Analysis* 12, no. 4 (2014): 612–13.

111. Ned Lebow, *Politics and Ethics of Identity: In Search of Ourselves*, p. 49 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

112. See chapter 5.

113. República Democrática de Timor-Leste (RDTL), *Strategic Development Plan*, p. 9 (Dili: Government of Timor-Leste, 2011).

114. There are some debates about whether the term "elite" is applicable to Timor-Leste, where there are a few economic elites, and the grouping is subject to high rates of turnover. See Julien Barbara, John Cox and Michael Leach, "Emerging Middle Classes in Timor-Leste and Melanesia: Implications for Development and Democracy", *In Brief* 57 (Canberra: Australian National University, 2014), p. 2. However, the term is used here to describe the small number of people in influential political leadership and economic positions in Timor-Leste. The term has value because a small core of people have disproportionate decision-making capacities and increased opportunities to obtain advantage from highly centralized authority structures.

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116. Storey, *Southeast Asia and the Rise of China*, p. 277.