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East Timor, Its Invasion, and the Aftermath

In the mid-1970s, the Republic of Indonesia invaded East Timor, an area then controlled by Portugal. The invasion, and the subsequent occupation of East Timor by the Indonesian military, had a devastating impact on the East Timorese. The Indonesian soldiers carried out numerous human rights abuses, and destroyed property and culture in East Timor.

The island of Timor, which is divided into East Timor and West Timor, is on the eastern tip of the Sonda Archipelago. The island is about 2000 kilometers from Jakarta, Indonesia (Magalhães 15), about 645 kilometers from northwest Australia, and about 1600 kilometers from the southern part of the Philippines. The island is almost 19,000 square kilometers in area, which is slightly larger than the state of Maryland (Jardine 5). Before the Portuguese landed on the island in the early 1500s, Timor was part of the Javanese empire. However, the culture of the East Timorese was relatively unaffected by the rest of the empire, because Timor was not as connected to the empire as most of the other islands (Magalhães 17). During this time, the people of Timor had no written alphabet and were mainly animistic, meaning they believed that natural objects had souls. Although they traded with other countries, they didn't adopt any of the larger religions, such as Buddhism, Hinduism, or Islam, and they had a very individual political system and way of life. This, however, was greatly disrupted when Indonesia began an invasion in 1975.

Indonesia was a country composed of about 17,000 islands. Its capital, Jakarta, was on the large island of Java, which held about 60 percent of Indonesia's almost 200 million people, as of the mid-1990s. Indonesia's population was only surpassed by that of India, China, and the United States. In 1965, Indonesia was taken over by the dictator Suharto, in a coup that lasted a few months and killed about a million Indonesians, who were alleged to be enemies to Indonesia (Jardine 6). During his decades of rule, Suharto carried out many atrocities, including the invasion of East Timor in the 1970s, which cost thousands of lives and hurt many more.

The invasion and genocide that took place in East Timor from the 1970s forward had negative effects on the people of the area, and its aftermath is still affecting people today. Before the invasion and genocide, the people of East Timor had a very primitive yet interesting lifestyle.

The indigenous political system of Timor involved several different villages, each ruled by a headman and a council of elders. Above these villages were princedoms and above those, kingdoms, governed by rulers who possessed an aristocratic status (Taylor 7). Goods were often given to the headman of an area; for example, in the Wehale Kingdom, the ruler allocated land in return for a rent token (Taylor 6). Each group of Timorese paid tribute to the kingdom to which it belonged, and the groups also traded with each other. The Timorese raised animals such as pigs, goats, buffalo, and sheep and grew several crops, including rice, maize, sweet potatoes, cassava, yams, and fruits (Taylor 5-6). Food was sometimes exchanged between groups at markets, but much of it was produced and consumed locally. In their society, the Timorese distinctly separated the roles of men and women. For example, women would plant rice and men would harvest it; women would weave and men would make tools (Taylor 6).

The people of Timor were able to live well in this independent society, but in the 1500s, they began to trade with the Dutch and Portuguese sailors (Taylor 2). The Timorese received such goods as cloth, iron tools, and guns, in return for honey, wax, and especially sandalwood, among other materials (Taylor 2-3). Before settling on Timor itself, the Portuguese colonized various other islands. On the island of Solor, the Portuguese intermarried with the women there, creating “Topasses” or “Black Portuguese” (Taylor 3). However, the Dutch forced the Portuguese, along with the Topasses, out to the island of Larantuka in 1613. Although the Portuguese had already settled on Timor, the island remained rather undisturbed until 1642 when the Portuguese invaded in an attempt to control the island’s inner trade. The Portuguese attacked the kingdom of Sonbai and its parent kingdom, Wehale, which was the principal political and religious center of Timor (Taylor 4). After the attack, Portugal conquered Timor and the Topasses became the dominant group of the area. However, Portugal never gained full control of the territory because of the attacks and resistance of the indigenous people; thus, unlike most colonies, Timor was rather unaffected by the Portuguese, and the Timorese maintained much of their original way of life.

Long after the Portuguese settled in East Timor, the Dutch took control of the western half of Timor in 1651 (Magalhães 18). Before the 1500s, the island had already been divided into two major sections: the Confederation of Serviao in the western part and the Confederation of Belos on the eastern part, and this preexisting division allowed for the territory to be more easily separated by the colonists (Magalhães 17). The Sentença Arbitral, a treaty that divided the island into Portuguese Timor and Dutch Timor, was agreed upon by the Portuguese and Dutch in 1913 (“Crimes”) and signed in 1915 (Taylor 12).

Although East Timor was largely unaffected by Portuguese control, near the end of the 1800s, Portugal, in the hopes of developing and industrializing, began to exploit and extract resources—including raw materials and cash crops—from its colonies. At the time, Portugal was mainly an agriculturally based country while other European nations had become more industrialized. East Timor, which had previously been little more than a trading post for Portugal, was now used for gaining raw materials and planting cash crops, such as coffee and copra (the dried meat of coconuts). A system of roads was built with forced labor from 1884 to 1890, and in 1899, a company named Sociedade Agricola Patria e Trabalho (SAPT) introduced coffee plantations to Ermera (Taylor 11). In 1908, Portugal levied a tax on all males between 18 and 60 years of age, and between 1911 and 1917, copra was introduced as a cash crop. The exploitation of the people of East Timor caused an uprising between 1910 and 1912, led by a local ruler. Portugal sent in African troops from its colony of Mozambique to suppress the rebellion (Jardine 20) and 3000 Timorese were killed and 4000 captured (Taylor 11). Portugal acquired direct control of its colonies with the Colonial Act of 1930, which established legislative councils so that the interests of those with power—including the church, the army, those in control of the colony, and the plantation owners—were represented (Taylor 12). The act also segregated the people of East Timor into two classifications: “assimilated” and “unassimilated.” Those who were categorized as assimilated were required to be able to speak Portuguese, support their family, and possess good character, although individuals involved in administration were not required to meet these standards. Only a minority of the population was assimilated and only those who were assimilated could vote in elections (Taylor 13).

During World War II, the Allies used Timor to keep Japan from advancing southward, although Portugal objected to this because Portugal was a neutral country. By December 17, 1941, about 400 Allied troops had landed in Dili and in February of 1942, Japan invaded Timor. The Japanese quickly forced the Dutch out of West Timor, but a few hundred Allied troops and the people of East Timor were able to resist 20,000 Japanese soldiers for almost a year. However, by 1943, the entire island had succumbed to Japanese control. By the time Japan surrendered, about 60,000 East Timorese—13 percent of the population—had been killed, and many towns had been destroyed. In 1945, the Dutch East Indies became Indonesia, and West Timor became a part of it along with the other islands (Magalhães 18). Portugal continued exploitation of the colonies after the war, but a feeling of nationalism also began to develop in East Timor, with such changes as increased newspaper publications and education, assisted by the Catholic Church (Jardine 23). In April of 1974, a relatively nonviolent coup took place in Lisbon, Portugal, in

which the fascist government was replaced by democracy. This allowed for all of Portugal's colonies to choose independence and for political parties to form in East Timor (Magalhães 19).

Several political parties began to form in 1974 in East Timor, although only two of them were broadly supported. The first party, called the Timorese Democratic Union (UDT), was formed on May 11 and advocated democracy, social justice, and human rights. Originally, it had supported ties with Portugal, but it soon changed to promote self-determination for East Timor (Magalhaes 20). The second party, the Timorese Social Democratic Association (ASDT), was formed on May 12; it supported a government that involved both socialism and democracy and hoped to get rid of colonial ties (Taylor 27). In the beginning, UDT was more popular. A smaller third party, originally called the Association for the Integration of Timor into Indonesia, was formed on May 25, largely with the help of Indonesia. The name was soon changed to the Timorese Popular Democratic Association or APODETI. This party promised to advance human rights, freedom, fair income levels, free education, and free medical treatment, but because it supported the integration of East Timor into Indonesia and mandating that the Indonesian language be taught in schools (Taylor 28), it never received more than a few hundred members (Jardine 26). Three additional parties were also formed, but they acquired even less support than APODETI. The three parties were the Klibur Oan Timur Aswain (KOTA), which means "Sons of the Mountain Warriors," the Partido Trabalhista, or the Labor Party, and the Associacao Democratica Integracao Timor-Leste Australia (ADLITA). ADLITA promised integration with Australia, but the party declined even further after Australia rejected the proposal for integration at the end of 1974 (Taylor 28). On September 12, 1974, members of ASDT held a conference in Dili, at which they modified the party and transformed it into Frente Revolucionara do Timor Leste Independente (FRETILIN). FRETILIN's main objective was to achieve independence through decolonization (Taylor 33). With the changes in the party, FRETILIN gained popularity and soon surpassed UDT, which was seen as more conservative. FRETILIN also gained support by traveling throughout East Timor and helping people in various ways, such as teaching them to be literate, helping to start labor unions and cooperative gardens, and by spreading and encouraging the culture of the East Timorese (Jardine 27). Given the enormous support for UDT and FRETILIN, it is clear that the majority of the people supported and hoped to achieve independence.

In mid-January of 1975, UDT and FRETILIN formed a coalition to attain independence for East Timor; APODETI refused to join. The coalition agreed on "total independence, rejection of integration, repudiation of colonialism, and recognition of decolonization" (Taylor 39). It had proposals for a transitional government, which

included the establishment of an assembly in October 1975, with representatives elected by the people, and proposed that elections for a National Constituent Assembly take place in November 1976. They hoped East Timor would gain its independence after the first meeting of that assembly. In March, however, UDT leaders were persuaded to support Indonesia, and by May 27, UDT left the coalition, thereby accomplishing part of Operasi Komodo, the Indonesian operation to integrate East Timor. At the end of May, it was announced by the Lisbon Decolonization Commission that a conference would be held in Macao in mid-June and that all of East Timor's parties, the Portuguese Armed Forces Movement (AFM), and the Portuguese government could attend. Indonesia also planned on being present at the conference to monitor how the decisions would affect Indonesian interests (Taylor 47). FRETILIN decided not to attend the conference in Macao but nonetheless retained its widespread popular support. At the conference, it was decided that elections would be held in October 1976 for a Popular Assembly of Timor, which would decide the future of East Timor. A transition period would then follow and colonial control would end in October 1978 (Taylor 201). These events were carefully planned, but they never took place because of Indonesia and Operasi Komodo.

In July 1975, agents of Operasi Komodo spread rumors that FRETILIN was attempting to take over the government and that it was receiving weapons from China (Taylor 49). On August 6, 1975, UDT leaders, after returning to Dili, heard rumors that FRETILIN troops describing themselves as communists were blocking the roads. On August 9 and 10, UDT members held demonstrations insisting that "communists" be removed from the country. On August 10, UDT attempted a coup of Dili by capturing the Portuguese police chief and threatening to kill him if the police didn't help UDT. UDT also gained control of several other important areas, including the airport. On August 11, it was reported to some outside the country that UDT was simply trying to prevent a communist massacre (Taylor 50). A civil war soon broke out between UDT and FRETILIN, and with the help of the army, FRETILIN gained control of Dili on August 27; by early September, it had gained control of several other regional areas. After FRETILIN had regained control, UDT troops traveled west until they were trapped at Batugade, which borders West Timor. The 500 soldiers, 2500 refugees, and 19 Portuguese troops were able to cross the border on September 24, but only after they signed a petition demanding the integration of East Timor with Indonesia (Taylor 51). About 1,500 had died in the civil war, and FRETILIN gained more support after the coup because UDT had lost followers on account of backing Indonesia and attempting to take over the country (Magalhães 31-32).

Indonesia had hoped that this coup attempt would cause enough violence to justify sending Indonesian troops to East Timor, which could have helped with the forceful integration of East Timor. Although the conflict subsided too soon to do so, the CIA reported that “Jakarta is now sending guerilla units into the Portuguese half of the island in order to engage FRETILIN forces, encourage pro-Indonesian elements, and provoke incidents that would provide the Indonesians with an excuse to invade should they decide to do so” (Taylor 58).

At this point, it was quite clear that Indonesia was at least preparing to invade East Timor, although this hadn't been so apparent a few years or even months beforehand. Back in the 1950s and 1960s Indonesia may or may not have wanted to annex East Timor. During the 1970s, some unofficial statements were in support of integration, but Indonesia officially stated that it had no interest in doing so until the mid-1970s (Taylor 23). By mid-1974, the Indonesian Military Co-ordinating Agency (BAKIN) had developed plans—called Operasi Komodo or “Operation Komodo”—for integration, though they were not supported by other military agencies and few in Parliament openly defended them. By the end of 1974, however, more and more leaders came out in support of integration, as did Australia. Indonesia had probably always wanted to annex East Timor but didn't openly admit it until then. In late 1974, Suharto allowed for Operasi Komodo to commence, and on February 18, 1975, Indonesia held practice landings on Dili Harbor and a simulation air attack on Baucau in order to warn the East Timorese and Portuguese that they ought to consider Indonesia's interests (Taylor 24, 40). These military simulations were noticed by some Australian journalists, who reported in the Australian press that Indonesia was planning to conquer East Timor (Taylor 40). Support continued to build in Indonesia, and at the beginning of July 1975, Suharto declared that “East Timor is not viable” and needed to become a part of Indonesia to economically sustain itself (Taylor 46). After the attempted coup by UDT, Indonesian forces were sent across the border to create the appearance of a resurgence of conflict between UDT and FRETILIN. The Indonesian newspapers rarely reported accurately the situation in East Timor, and Indonesia even went so far as to murder journalists who attempted to investigate the issue (Taylor 60-61), such as when five Australian reporters were killed by Indonesian forces (Magalhães 32). In mid-November, Indonesia launched a land, air, and naval attack on Atabae, which is to the north of Maliana and is an advantageous area from which to move east to Dili. After some conflict, Atabae was conquered. The invasion of Dili then seemed near, so FRETILIN, by itself, declared the Democratic Republic of East Timor an independent nation on November 28, 1975. FRETILIN hoped that an independent nation would have a better chance of a successful appeal at the United Nations; it also reasoned that if East Timorese were going to die

fighting, they would rather die for an independent country (Taylor 63). Indonesia planned to initiate its invasion on December 4 but was delayed until President Gerald Ford left Jakarta (Taylor 64). The United States had a major influence on Indonesia, and it is likely that President Suharto wanted to make sure he had American support. On December 7, 1975, Indonesia commenced an invasion of East Timor (Mackie).

At 2 a.m. on December 7, 1975, the invasion of East Timor began with naval bombardments, and by 5 a.m., airplanes were dropping paratroopers. This first series of operations involved almost 10,000 troops (Magalhães 36). A radio broadcast from FRETILIN in Dili on the day of the invasion declared: “The Indonesian forces are killing indiscriminately. Women and children are being shot in the streets. We are all going to be killed. I repeat, we are all going to be killed [...]. This is an appeal for international help. Please do something to stop this invasion” (Jardine 31). The former bishop of East Timor, Mgr Costa Lopez, described the attack on Dili on December 8, 1975: “The soldiers who landed started killing everyone they could find. There were many dead bodies in the streets—all we could see were the soldiers killing, killing, killing” (Taylor 68). As a result, 2000 people in Dili died within the first two days of the invasion (Jardine 34). The soldiers targeted FRETILIN supporters, and in the villages of Remexio and Aileu, everyone above the age of three was shot because “they were infected with the seeds of FRETILIN” (Taylor 70). Indonesian soldiers near the ocean would round up a group of East Timorese, force some of them to face the ocean, shoot them into the water, and require the remaining East Timorese to push the bodies into the water (Taylor 68). The Timorese women were raped and abused by the soldiers. Many of them were arrested and jailed, with FRETILIN supporters often receiving the worst treatment. On occasion, the fathers or husbands who attempted to protect the women were killed (Jardine 34). The soldiers also looted whatever they could find, including furniture, cars, and windows (Jardine 33). On December 10, 1975, Indonesia initiated a second attack near the second largest city of Baucau, which involved similar atrocities (Magalhães 38).

On account of the carnage in East Timor, the United Nations General Assembly on December 12 approved a resolution deploring the invasion, ordering Indonesia to remove its armed forces from the area, and upholding the right of the East Timorese to self-determination. A similar Security Council resolution was passed on December 22 (Jardine 36), yet with little effect, as seen by the fact that on December 25, 10,000 to 15,000 more Indonesian troops landed in Dili, Liquiba, and Maubara (Magalhães 38). Naval and aerial forces continued bombardment with incendiary bombs and toxic sprays. By February 1976, about 60,000 Timorese (Jardine 35)—roughly 10 percent of the population—had been killed (Taylor 71). This figure, which was later confirmed by relief workers, indicates

that the proportion of East Timorese who died in the first few months relative to the total population is almost equal to the proportion of all Soviet deaths in World War II compared to the population of the Soviet Union at that time (Jardine 10). Other human rights abuses occurred throughout 1976, including the use of chemical weapons, the murder of 67 boys in Suai in mid-May, and the burning of six villages and the killing of hundreds of villagers in an area near Zumalai in early August (Taylor 71).

Despite such great atrocities, Indonesia often lied about its actions and involvement in East Timor. Until the end of March 1976, it didn't even admit that troops were present in the area. Instead, the country claimed that the Indonesians there were helping the UDT and APODETI against FRETILIN (Taylor 72). Indonesia also used a puppet assembly to declare formally that East Timor was part of Indonesia. On December 18, 1975, the Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs announced the establishment of a "provisional government" in Dili. No elections were held for this government, as Indonesia claimed that there was overwhelming support for integration in East Timor. May 31, 1976 saw the convocation of a "Representative Popular Assembly" of unelected members handpicked by Indonesia; it unanimously approved a petition allowing the integration of East Timor into the Republic of Indonesia (Magalhães 39). After the petition was given to Suharto, the Parliament accepted it on July 16 and Suharto signed it the following day. Suharto then declared that East Timor was Indonesia's 27th province, although it wasn't recognized as such by the United Nations ("Crimes").

In the first few months of the invasion, the Indonesian forces had captured mainly the large cities, not the more rural areas where most of the population resided. FALINTIL, FRETILIN's military section, had been able to maintain strength. In the first few weeks, about 450 Indonesian soldiers had been killed, and after the first four months of 1976, about 2000 may have died (Jardine 50). In some areas, East Timorese were able to live relatively undisturbed lives because FRETILIN had been able to maintain some control of East Timor. Accounting for its success were the facts that it had expected the invasion, it had moved the East Timorese into the interior of the island, it had a number of fighters (especially after the civil war with UDT), it had weapons left by the Portuguese, and its troops knew the territory well (Jardine 50-51). However, this relative control of the island was soon diminished when, in September 1977, Indonesia began an "encirclement and annihilation" campaign (Jardine 51).

With this campaign, Indonesia hoped to force FRETILIN fighters into the center of East Timor to be captured or killed, with the goal of driving the East Timorese to lower land where they could be more easily controlled (Jardine 51). In September 1977, bombing was used to clear paths for troops and to defoliate forests, and

chemical sprays were used to kill crops and livestock, causing famine (Taylor 85). Tens of thousands of troops were involved, as were napalms, F-5 jets, A-4 bombers from the United States, Hawk aircraft from Britain, and Bronco aircraft, which are ideal for use on the uneven ground of East Timor (Jardine 51). One letter described the bombing of the village of Zumalai: “Many elements of the population were killed under inhuman conditions of bombardment and starvation [...]. The waters of the river were filled with blood and bodies” (Taylor 85). A priest from Dili recalled, “After September [1977] the war was intensified. Military aircraft were in action all day long. Hundreds of human beings die daily, and their bodies are left as food for the vultures. If bullets don’t kill us we die from epidemic disease; villages are completely destroyed [...]. The barbarities, the cruelties, the looting, the shooting of people without any justification are now part of everyday life in Timor” (Taylor 86-87). A report on chemical use in the early part of the 1977 bombing stated: “In some places, a day or two after a bombing raid, maggots (ular kecil) would emerge and destroy the crops. Another experience was that after bombing raids, a large number of people would get violent attacks of diarrhea and vomiting from the drinking water. This happened in Zumalai, Matabea, and many other places” (Taylor 85).

After bombing, Indonesian soldiers entered the impacted areas and performed horrible atrocities. According to a 1982 report by a missionary, “On 23 November 1978 on the mountain of Uadaboro, in the Matebia Range in the eastern part of the island of Timor approximately 500 persons were machine-gunned, including pregnant women, children of all ages, and adults and elderly people, when they came to surrender [...]. The same occurred in Taipo, where 300 persons were killed in the same way, and in other parts of the province, although few in number” (Magalhães 48). Between April and May of 1979, 97 were killed in Lospalos, and 118 were killed on Mount Matebian between April 15 and April 17 (Taylor 88) (see Fig. 1). The report continued: “Young women, single and married, were taken to huts and sexually abused by [Indonesian] soldiers. When they resisted they were stripped naked and burned with lighted cigarettes. Most of them, as they did not give in to torture, were raped and shot. Several married women were tied and bound with their husbands, raped in front of them, and then all were killed” (Magalhães 48). Men and women were tied together and then shot, children were killed in front of their parents, and the elderly were burned alive in their houses (Taylor 88). When the East Timorese were captured or surrendered, they were sometimes taken to the island of Atauro (Jardine 53) or, more frequently, to “resettlement centers,” where hunger and death were rampant (Magalhães 64). By the time the “encirclement and annihilation” campaign ended in March 1979, thousands of civilians, as well as many FRETILIN leaders, were dead. About 90

percent of livestock had been killed, and FALINTIL had lost 90 percent of its weapons and 80 percent of its troops (Jardine 54). By 1980, the population of East Timor was about 425,000, compared with 700,000 in 1975, meaning that, after accounting for error, about 200,000 East Timorese had died—about a third



Fig. 1. Boy at Graves on Mount Matebian from Richard Tanter, Mark Seldon, and Stephen R. Shalom eds, Bitter Flowers, Sweet Flowers: East Timor, Indonesia, and the World Community (Lanham: Rowman, 2001) 196.

of the population (Magalhães 56).

Despite such massive losses, including to FALINTIL, FRETILIN was able to regain some strength in smaller units, and by March 1981, the units were able to communicate well enough to hold a conference, at which Xanana Gusmão was elected FRETILIN's leader. Due to FRETILIN's resurgence of strength, Indonesia, in mid-1981, initiated Operasi Keamanan ("security"), or Operasi Kikis ("final cleansing"), in which East Timorese men from 8 to 50 years of age were forced to form human chains around the island, in the hopes that FRETILIN members would be trapped and then captured. The 80,000 men involved created a "fence of legs" or shield in front of the Indonesian soldiers. However, the men involved were taken without prior notification and were allowed very little food, so many starved. The troops also attacked during the harvesting and planting seasons, so many East Timorese all across the island had very little food (Jardine 55). Indonesia provided some famine relief in 1982, but in minimal amounts; often the food and aid were not properly distributed.

Several FRETILIN leaders and supporters had been killed or had surrendered during Operasi Keamanan, but many survived and were able to reorganize. By late 1982, FRETILIN was relatively strong and was able to initiate attacks throughout East Timor. This led to the proposal of national ceasefire talks in March 1983; on March 23, 1983, a ceasefire agreement was signed. However, it was unilaterally broken when on August 17, 1983, Indonesia's independence day, Indonesia launched a new attack called Operasi Persatuan ("unity"), which involved more ground troops and air and naval attacks. Indonesia continued to launch strikes against East Timor after the ceasefire, such as one in February 1984 during which the number of Indonesian troops in East Timor increased from 14,000 to 20,000 and the "fence of legs" method was again used (Taylor 151). After bombing in this attack, troops were dropped from helicopters to finish up by burning villages; food stores were destroyed and crops burned.

Concomitant with such military operations were some appalling atrocities and human rights abuses. Imprisonment could happen at any time for any reason, and no trials were held until 1984 (and even then, only for a few people in Dili). A sentence could be for any length of time, and a prisoner could be killed by troops at any time (Taylor 104). The people in East Timor lived in constant fear of being captured and taken away for supposedly supporting the guerrillas. In Dili, the police looked for small groups on the streets and broke them up, those who listened to broadcasts from outside the country were arrested, mail was censored, and speaking Portuguese was

forbidden (Taylor 110). Some FRETILIN supporters, as well as their families, were taken to the island of Atauro, which is north of the Dili coast. The island was first used as a prison in 1977, but it wasn't until 1980 that large numbers of Timorese were transported there. Most of those incarcerated on the island had only one set of clothes. Hunger prevailed, and an average of two people died there each day (Taylor 106). When the East Timorese were captured or surrendered, they were often interrogated and then disappeared, especially in the period from 1979 to 1980. FRETILIN supporters and those who were more educated were targeted in particular (Taylor 101).

After interrogation, people were killed in large numbers at sites called killing grounds. In the Village of Kraras, 200 people were burned alive inside their houses, and in September 1981 in Lacluta, at least 400, mostly women and children, were murdered (Taylor 101). Killings there were described by an eyewitness:

Indonesian soldiers took hold of the legs of small children and threw them around in the air a number of times and smashed their heads against a rock. There was a woman who asked that one of the children be given to her after the mother had been killed. At the time, the soldier permitted the woman to take this small child, but a few minutes later he grabbed the child and killed him. The poor woman was not so wise, because she too was then killed. (Taylor 101-102)

One of the many massacres occurred in August 1983 in the village of Malim Luro, when Indonesian troops, as described in a report transmitted on FRETILIN radio during February and March of 1985, "after plundering the population of all their belongings, firmly tied up men, women, and children, numbering more than sixty people. They made them lie on the ground and then drove a bulldozer over them, and then used it to place a few centimeters of earth on top of the totally crushed corpses" (Taylor 103, 111).

Apart from being terrorized, captured, and murdered, some Timorese, especially FRETILIN supporters, were brutally tortured, often during interrogation or for confession. At first, beatings, burning the skin with cigarettes, and sexual abuse were the primary means of torture, but the Indonesian military soon progressed to electricity, breaking limbs, and skin cutting, along with other methods (Taylor 107). A missionary in 1982 described:

There are several types of torture, and they are unbelievable: burning iron rods, electric chairs, lighted cigarettes, pulling out fingernails with pliers, being slashed with razor blades, putting fingers under the legs of heavy loaded tables, etc., in order to obtain information or make them betray those who remain faithful to

their patriotic ideals [...]. During torture sessions, the victims are naked and are burned all over their bodies, mainly on the genitals. (Magalhães 49)

One Timorese who was part of the Red Cross before fleeing from Dili in 1987 said: “I was beaten with rifle butts and sticks. I was then tied hand and foot and hung up by the feet; my head was plunged into a tank of cold water. After about two minutes, I was hoisted up and interrogated. They repeated the procedure until I confessed” (Taylor 108). A Timorese refugee named Andre Faria recalls:

They put me with my back to the wall, stretched my arms out like a cross and began hitting me again. I received so many blows to my head and other sensitive parts of my body that even today I still ask myself how I managed to survive it all. Blood began to trickle from my mouth, nose, ears, eyes, and from my toes which had been crushed repeatedly under military boots [...]. They wanted me to denounce other people whose names they gave me. They tortured me until well into the night, and led me to a cell [...]. For three days we were woken at 2 a.m. with buckets of cold water that they threw on us in the cells. An hour later some policemen burst into the cells, began to beat us up, and made us go into the yard where we were obliged to crawl and do physical exercises. While we did these, they beat us, especially on the joints and other sensitive parts of the body. They used chair legs, broken benches, sticks, lengths of bamboo, and even stones. This pattern lasted for three days and nights. (Taylor 107-108)

Apart from such horrific human rights atrocities as murder and torture, the people of East Timor also endured a pernicious process of “Indonesianization,” which was the long-term goal of Indonesia. During this process, Indonesia tried to “civilize” the people of East Timor with the Indonesian culture (Jardine 57). The first step towards “Indonesianizing” the East Timorese was to control the population by confining it to “guarded camps,” which were described by a FRETILIN radio broadcast in April 1976. It was estimated by the American agency USAID that 300,000 were present in these camps eight months after the September 1977 encirclement and annihilation campaign (Taylor 88). A July 1979 report written by the Australian Council for Overseas Aid stated that there were fifteen camps containing 318,921 people, and that the Indonesian soldiers moved people from their villages into one of the camps in order to weaken FRETILIN and gain more control over the population. This technique was also used in Rhodesia, Vietnam, and Malaysia (Jardine 57-58). Forced labor was relatively common at the camps; it could include building roads, cutting timber, building houses, and cultivating export crops like sugar, coffee, and rice (Taylor 94). Diseases, including tuberculosis, were rampant in the camps, and hunger was

ubiquitous because the land available for growing crops was meager, with the same ground being used continuously until its fertility was exhausted. The families in the camps were confined and could not go very far to tend to crops, and this also meant they couldn't gather many wild fruits, leaves, and roots to eat. Each family was only given 100 to 200 square meters on which to farm, which was not nearly enough space to grow a sufficient amount of food (Taylor 93). A delegate from the International Committee of the Red Cross, after visiting a camp where 80 percent of the 8,000 East Timorese there were malnourished, thought the situation was "as bad as Biafra and potentially as serious as Kampuchea" (Jardine 58). The East Timorese in these guarded camps were moved to "resettlement villages," and during the transition, the Indonesians purposely separated Timorese who had lived together in the same village, so that it would be harder for resistance to develop. Several resettlement villages existed; for example, in 1979, over 50 were present near Baucau. Their purpose was to keep the East Timorese away from the FRETILIN fighters, but those forced into them had to give up their land, ancestors, and things that were sacred. Again, hunger and sickness were rampant at the camps, and those who transgressed the boundaries of the camps were suspected of trying to contact FRETILIN guerillas and would be shot, killed, or imprisoned (Jardine 58, 59). This was the first main step towards Indonesianization, but it was not the only one.

Another aspect of Indonesianization was to control the economy of East Timor. Land was taken by Indonesian authorities, and, despite a shortage of food felt by many East Timorese, they were forced to grow cash crops, including cloves, peanuts, coconuts, sugar cane, cinnamon, and rubber (Taylor 125). Companies were established to control the distribution of the crops, such as the military monopoly, P.T. Denok Hernandez International, which was established by General Benny Murdani and others soon after the invasion. This company controlled the growing and export of coffee, which hurt the incomes of many coffee farmers. One of the company's subsidiaries, P.T. Scent, had a monopoly on sandalwood. These companies possessed so much control, one Indonesian academic said they virtually controlled the economy of East Timor (Jardine 60).

Indonesianization also involved control of East Timor's educational system. The students in the Indonesian schools received a very limited education and learned about East Timor only when Indonesia approved of what was taught. The Indonesian language, Bahasa Indonesia, was the only language taught, the schools focused on military activities, including physical education, and students were forced to memorize the Pancasila, which is supposedly the ideological basis for Indonesian society. They also learned many songs, especially those that involved

patriotism towards Indonesia (Jardine 62). Indonesia claimed that they were helping the East Timorese by establishing schools, but in 1989, the illiteracy rate of the population remained very high, at 92 percent (Taylor 129).

Apart from these methods of Indonesianization, a “family planning” program, to limit the birthrate of the population, was expedited after the encirclement and annihilation campaign. Contraceptives were given out carelessly, and some claimed that sterilizations occurred without the consent, and occasionally even the knowledge, of the person being sterilized. A 1986 letter explained that “officials of the state planning program are present in every little village and hamlet to make people limit their number of children, and each family is only allowed to have three children. In the interior the military force our women to receive injections, and pills are being distributed to them for the same effect. All the women are being forced to take part in this. It is one way the enemy has to make our ethnic identity disappear” (Taylor 159). Indonesia alleged that they were improving the quality of life of the East Timorese by reducing family size, but at the same time, they were actively encouraging Indonesians on other islands such as Java and Bali, which had large populations and were very crowded, to transmigrate to East Timor, so that those Indonesians could spread the Indonesian culture and so they could assist the military in East Timor. The land on which transmigrates settled was either taken forcibly from an East Timorese, without payment, or it was land that Indonesia called “underutilized,” and was also taken without payment (Jardine 63).

Indonesia continued to terrorize and kill East Timorese throughout the 1980s. From June 1986 to May 1987 and in the fall of 1987, Indonesia again used the fence of legs method in Operasi Kikis. Beginning in May 1988, Indonesia launched Operation Clean Up, and after October 1988, Indonesian soldiers began to use a “fortress system,” which involved sealing off large areas of land where FRETILIN was suspected to be and then organizing troops to search for the FRETILIN members (Taylor 161). During this time, no substantial international policy changes towards Indonesia occurred until 1991. On November 4 of that year, a parliamentary delegation was expected to arrive from Portugal to be the first genuine investigative group to visit East Timor. It was hoped by the East Timorese that the visit could initiate more serious United Nations involvement in the area. On October 27, however, the trip was cancelled because of opposition from the Indonesian military, and when this happened, those who had been preparing for the arrival were more exposed. The Indonesian military surrounded the Motael Church, into which 30 independence supporters had fled. One student, Sebastio Gomes, was killed, and 25 more were arrested. A memorial service for Sebastio was held on November 12 in the Motael Church, and after the service, a large group walked to the Santa Cruz cemetery to place flowers on his grave. While the crowd marched through

Dili, some members began shouting and holding up banners demanding independence. By the time the crowd reached the cemetery, 3000 to 4000 people were part of it. At the cemetery, the crowd encountered Indonesian troops who, without warning, opened fire on the crowd, killing many dozens of East Timorese. Indonesian soldiers took those who were injured to a hospital in Dili, where they were beaten or killed. After it was over, 273 East Timorese had been killed (Taylor xiii). The Santa Cruz massacre was nothing new in East Timor, but, unlike other massacres, this one was videotaped and smuggled out of the country to be shown worldwide. With the enormous public reaction caused by the massacre, many governments felt more compelled to support independence than they had previously (Cotton). With the public pressure from the Santa Cruz massacre, the United States Congress, in September 1992, terminated the International Military Education and Training (IMET) program worth \$2.3 million to Indonesia; this was the first time aid to Indonesia had been reduced since the invasion. Despite the ban, however, a loophole allowed training to continue, and documents released in 1998 showed that some United States Army and Marine staff had continued to train Indonesian soldiers, including the KOPASSUS, under the Joint Combined Exchange Training (JCET) program. After the Pentagon discovered the JCET program, though, the program ended for Indonesia in May 1998 (“Background”).

The independence movement in East Timor gained strength after the Santa Cruz massacre and it was also encouraged when on October 1, 1996, the Nobel Peace Prize Committee announced that it would give the peace prize to the head of the Catholic Church in East Timor, Bishop Belo and to Jose Ramos-Horta, who was an external representative of the East Timorese (Taylor 219). Major-General Prabowo, a son-in-law of Suharto, was active in the 1990s as the leader of KOPASSUS Group 3, which attempted to stop the independence movement by targeting individuals and groups, with tactics such as using groups dressed in black (“ninja” gangs) to abduct people in the middle of the night. However, the conditions in East Timor were largely the same throughout most of the 1990s, until 1998. In that year, Indonesia’s economy plunged, and many Indonesians blamed the Suharto regime for the situation. On May 20, 1998, Madeline Albright, the United States Secretary of State, called for Suharto’s resignation so “a democratic transition” could take place (Tanter 140). This, combined with student protests and a demand for political reforms, caused Suharto to resign on May 21, and power was transferred to his successor, B.J. Habibie. After Suharto’s resignation, Indonesia became much more open and democratic, new political parties formed, some of the worst members of Suharto’s administration resigned, and national elections were scheduled for June 1999 (Taylor xv). These were to be the first democratic elections in Indonesia in 40 years (United, Political 1).

On June 9, 1998, President B.J. Habibie offered the people of East Timor a special status agreement, allowed them to choose to maintain partial control over their country if they agreed to be recognized as a part of Indonesia; however, many independence leaders in East Timor rejected this proposal. On January 27, 1999, Indonesia announced that if the East Timorese didn't accept the special status offer, the Indonesian government would ask the National Consultative People's Assembly to "let East Timor go" (Taylor xv). Although this wasn't very specific at first, it was later decided that a referendum would be held, and the people of East Timor would be able to vote on whether they wanted to accept the special status offer or gain independence from Indonesia. The United Nations Assistance Mission to East Timor (UNAMET) was formed to supervise the ballot. At this news, pro-integration militias, largely trained, armed, and abetted by the Indonesian military, began a massive campaign of violence and threatened to attack anyone who voted for independence (Cotton). On May 12, 1999, pro-integrationists attacked and killed many independence supporters in Dili. In the spring of 1999, Kofi Annan, the United Nations Secretary-General, requested that Indonesia stop arming the militias and allow peacekeeping troops into East Timor. Indonesia rejected this, and 300 unarmed police officers were sent by the United Nations, instead. Between the announcement of the referendum and the vote itself, the pro-integrationist paramilitary groups had killed 5000 to 6000. The referendum was originally scheduled to take place on August 8, but because of the paramilitary violence, Kofi Annan delayed it to August 21, and then again to August 30. Despite pro-integrationist threats, 98.6 percent of registered voters took part in the referendum (United, Political 3), and on September 4, it was announced that 344,000 East Timorese, 78 percent of those who had voted, rejected the special status offer and chose independence (Taylor xxiv).

After the announcement of the referendum results, paramilitary violence exploded, with villages being burned, belongings and property being looted or destroyed, killings, abductions, sexual assault, torture, and assault against children. Soon after the referendum, the United Nations estimates that 1500 had been killed, that three fourths of the population had been displaced, and that 60-80 percent of all property had been destroyed or at least damaged ("Background"). UNAMET, which had promised to stay in East Timor after the referendum ended, was forced to leave Dili on September 10, leaving only a few dozen staff members, because of the carnage that took place. About two weeks after the referendum, 150,000 East Timorese had been moved, mostly by force, across the border into West Timor, and 330,000 had fled to the mountains of East Timor (Taylor xxvii-xxviii). Those in the mountains had little food and medical treatment, and thousands faced starvation even though copious food existed in

warehouses in Dili. By the end of September, about 230,000 East Timorese were in West Timor, and there they had been forced to live in concentration camps (United, Humanitarian 13). The militia in West Timor had lists of independence supporters, and they tried to execute those that they could find. Some of the camps in which the refugees stayed had fair conditions with ample water and food, but many others were unsanitary and had little food and water. Amnesty International reported that the East Timorese in West Timor “were trapped in makeshift camps and living in a state of constant fear under the rule of the militia groups that destroyed East Timor, [...] often intimidated, harassed, extorted, and in some cases sexually assaulted and killed” (Tanter 128-129). Many of the refugees were also threatened with being forced to move to other parts of Indonesia. By the end of September 1999, 7000 to 20,000 had been killed since the referendum (United, Humanitarian 103).

Because of all of the violence that took place after the referendum, President Bill Clinton on September 9 stopped all training and military support for Indonesia and also helped to suspend any World Bank or IMF funds for Indonesia (“Background”). At first, Indonesia was reluctant to allow a United Nations peacekeeping force to enter East Timor, but international pressure and the threat of economic sanctions by the United States may have pushed Habibie to authorize the force on September 13. On September 20, the first 1,190 of the Australian-led peacekeeping troops landed in Dili, and within 24 hours, 2,300 had been sent (Taylor 229). The peacekeeping force was helpful, but it was sent a little too late to help many of the Timorese from some of the worst violence caused by the pro-integration militias.

Over two years after the referendum, East Timor is now a peaceful country again. It is currently under the supervision of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET). Many of the East Timorese are taking part in their new government, and many others are finishing their education. On August 30, 2001, the second anniversary of the referendum, 91 percent of the population elected a Constituent Assembly, in a fair and peaceful election. The Constituent Assembly, which wrote East Timor’s constitution in three months, is composed of about 27 percent women, almost twice the percentage of women in the United States Congress. However, almost 10 percent of the population could not vote for the Constituent Assembly because about 80,000 East Timorese still remain in camps in West Timor, where disease, hunger, violence against women, and other problems are present (“East”). In East Timor, poverty, poor education, and inadequate health care are widespread. Hopefully, with the work of citizens everywhere, these problems will be resolved. Finally, after centuries of

Portuguese control and decades of violence and oppression caused by Indonesia, East Timor, the world's newest nation, is expected to gain its independence on May 20, 2002.

There are several ways that the invasion and occupation of East Timor harmed the people of the area. The massive atrocities that were carried out by Indonesian soldiers resulted in the death of over 200,000 East Timorese, as well as widespread torture, sexual assault, famine, and other horrific effects. The violence also caused damage to property, such as buildings and belongings in East Timor. Today, some East Timorese remain in West Timor, and many others are still dealing with the terror and grief caused by the genocide. It is clear that the invasion and genocide that took place in East Timor from the 1970s forward had negative effects on the people of the area, and its aftermath has had repercussions up to the present day.

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¹ Note: For some of the citations in this paper, the source material was actually an author whose work was merely summarized by the cited document. That is, not all citations have been traced all the way back.