

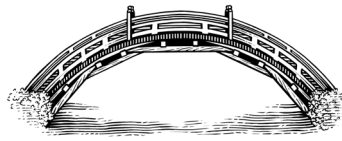
BOOK REVIEW ROUNDTABLE

Anthony Ware and Costas Laoutides's

Myanmar's 'Rohingya' Conflict

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Tackling Myanmar's Elusive National Identity

Priscilla Clapp

*M*yanmar's 'Rohingya' Conflict by Anthony Ware and Costas Laoutides is a *tour de force*: a comprehensive, balanced, meticulously researched, and trenchant analysis of a modern human tragedy. It should be required reading for everyone engaged in efforts to save the Rohingya and to address conflict in Rakhine or elsewhere in Myanmar, whether they are working on the ground or participating in media reporting and public advocacy. The excellent foreword by former U.S. ambassador to Myanmar Derek Mitchell also adds valuable context to the book.

The authors begin by addressing three major misconceptions in the international community concerning the Rakhine conflict. First, they challenge the notion that the conflict is merely a recent phenomenon arising from communal tensions between Rakhine Buddhists and Rohingya Muslims in 2012 by amplifying the historical origins of the conflict to explain its many earlier manifestations. Second, they debunk the common misconception that the conflict in its current form is driven by oppression of a minority, demonstrating instead that it actually comprises three distinct sets of ethnic rivalries: between Rakhine Buddhists and Muslims, between the Rakhine ethnic minority and the Bama majority, and between the Rohingya and the military (the Tatmadaw). Third, the authors clarify the misconception that the Rohingya struggle is about citizenship, contending on the contrary that it is actually a question of whether the Rohingya constitute an indigenous "national race," which is a status above citizenship that determines full political rights in Myanmar.

Ware and Laoutides focus next on three distinct waves of violence that have erupted in Rakhine State in the last five years. The first was a wave of communal violence triggered by local events that were portrayed arbitrarily in terms of religious differences. The second was armed violence set off by the emergence of a militant Muslim armed group, the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA), that staged a series of attacks on security posts in October 2016 and August 2017, triggering an inordinately strong response by the Tatmadaw that sent hundreds of thousands of Rohingya into refuge in Bangladesh and elsewhere. The third wave of violence has been brought

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on by the movement of the Arakan Army (AA), representing the Rakhine ethnic minority, into Rakhine State in opposition to the Tatmadaw. In the last two years, the AA has staged a number of surprisingly deadly armed attacks against the Tatmadaw, effectively extending the armed ethnic conflict in the northeast of the country to the western border. Ware and Laoutides identify five key actors driving the violence in Rakhine State today: the Rohingya with their militant wing ARSA, the Rakhine Buddhists with their armed group the AA, the ethnic Bama-dominated Tatmadaw, the National League for Democracy (NLD) government locked in a power struggle with the military, and the international voices who have “weaponized public shaming” (p. 21).

The book warns that the violence in Rakhine State poses a serious threat to Myanmar’s reform process in several important respects. The conflict has confronted the NLD—the main advocate for reform—with two powerful groups attempting to undermine its legitimacy: one “anchored in domestic conservative circles” supported by the Tatmadaw, demanding a hard-line approach to the Muslim population, and a second “spearheaded by international actors,” charging the government with collusion with the military in the abuse of human rights, ethnic cleansing, and genocide (p. 59). In the authors’ estimation, Rakhine has become a major battleground in the NLD’s power struggle with the military and seriously threatens national cohesion, particularly when combined with the rapid spread of anti-Muslim sentiment across the country, led by ultra-nationalist monks and other groups and propelled by misuse of social media. Anti-Muslim sentiment has become a pawn for political parties in the electoral process, threatening NLD prospects in 2020 and thus hopes for further reform. And finally, the violence against the Rohingya has seriously eroded international support for Myanmar and the reform process.

The book skillfully digests an enormous body of historical research on centuries of Rakhine history to take the reader through the evolving historical narratives that have become so essential for each of the three ethnic parties to the conflict in Rakhine. Among other things, this exercise in historical analysis helps the reader understand the critical role that so-called indigenous status plays in all the conflicts—not only those in Rakhine but also elsewhere in the country. In brief, the authors contend that the mythology surrounding indigeneity in Myanmar grew from the practices of British colonial rule that created a reification of society based on indigenous ethnic identity, which was compounded by the deliberate introduction of Indians to replace the Bama ethnic majority in the economy

and government. It was the British colonial masters who came up with the famous list of 135 ethnic identities (*taing yin tha*) that determine official indigenous status today.

After independence, the Bama majority regained its dominant role and gradually marginalized the country's ethnic minorities. This process accelerated rapidly with the ascendancy of General Ne Win in the 1960s, when he deliberately excluded ethnic minorities and Muslims from the military and prominent positions in government. Consequently, the military created the national myth of *taing yin tha* solidarity under the Bama majority to preserve the union from disintegration, enshrining *taing yin tha* status in the 1982 citizenship law. Although all immigrants can eventually gain citizenship, *taing yin tha* status is above citizenship, and this principle is now embedded in the 2008 military constitution under which the NLD governs. Thus, in the authors' view, it is precisely this lack of access to *taing yin tha* citizenship that assigns the Rohingya permanently to second-class status, even though many can trace their ancestry in the country back to before the British arrival in 1823, which would qualify them as *taing yin tha*, no matter what they called themselves at the time. The *taing yin tha* mythology, they conclude, is the most essential roadblock to peace in Myanmar, not only in Rakhine but with all the other minorities as well.

These historical narratives also reveal two other critical factors in this conflict. First, the ethnic Rakhine resentment of mistreatment at the hands of the Bama majority is even more deeply rooted in history than the persecution of Rohingya, and it remains salient today. Second, the current Rohingya identity has evolved over centuries from a mixed migration of Muslims into the Arakan/Rakhine region who gradually developed a common ethnic identity as the military vise closed around them after independence. The authors conclude that the Rohingya can rightfully claim indigenous status on the basis of the historical record, and that—particularly in light of the mixed-race composition of Myanmar society today—the Rakhine and Bama communities should accept a Rohingya “cultural” identity instead of pretending that members of this group are all recent immigrants from Bangladesh.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the historical narratives demonstrate clearly that the key driver of conflict in Rakhine State for many decades has been the Tatmadaw's predatory practices, including its increasing restrictions on the Muslim population and its consignment of the Rakhine ethnic minority to economic and political marginalization. This helps explain why Rakhine political parties have become among the most

successful of the ethnic minorities in gaining parliamentary representation, adopting a strongly nationalist agenda aimed primarily at the Bama majority. In the authors' words, "while there are some in their midst who could be considered extremist, there are deep sensitivities about Muslim issues, and...their primary struggle has long been to wrest political and economic control over their state from Nay Pyi Taw rather than directed towards the Muslims" (p. 47).

The final chapter offers a long list of sensible and thoughtful recommendations for arriving at a long-term solution to the conflict, expanding on the recommendations of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State led by Kofi Annan, which was originally inspired by Aung San Suu Kyi. In my view, however, the authors' most significant contribution consists of three major pieces of advice that I have not seen previously vetted so clearly in this debate.

First is their stark conclusion that a peaceful solution to conflict in Rakhine State, and indeed Myanmar as a whole, will not be possible until the country is able to develop a national identity, rather than continuing to define citizenship in terms of ethnicity. In their words, the *taing yin tha* policy is a weapon

of exclusionary politics, largely perpetrated by Ne Win and the military regime after the 1962 coup, and it should be consigned to history along with the xenophobic and autarkic authoritarianism of that period...Without leaving this poisonous politics of ethnicity behind and reframing the debate entirely away from race and ethnicity, it is hard to see how a sustainable long-term peaceful solution could ever be achieved—in Rakhine State or nationally (p. 200).

Second is the centrality of the military to the continuing conflict in Rakhine and elsewhere, which Aung San Suu Kyi and the NLD government are powerless to control. The analysis throughout the book makes clear that until an enlightened military leadership emerges and it becomes possible to negotiate new arrangements that provide equal security to all citizens, peace will remain elusive, if not impossible.

Finally, the book ends with a warning to the international community that its response to local conflict over the past twenty years has inadvertently become an incentive for violence on the part of aggrieved minorities. In the case of Rakhine, the authors identify four particular forms of international involvement as (1) a vocal Rohingya diaspora, (2) the humanitarian response to communal conflict in 2012 that was perceived to favor Muslims, (3) Western human rights advocacy groups, and (4) Islamic countries and

networks showing solidarity with the Rohingya cause. They postulate that the intense international concern for the Rohingya may have led ARSA to attack security posts in Rakhine to trigger a more punishing international response that would force the Myanmar government into a political solution. Ware and Laotides urge the international community to move away from high-profile confrontation and public shaming, which sidelines moderate voices, and to concentrate instead on “principled engagement that works hard to bring the parties together, around a negotiated solution” (pp. 216–17). In my estimation, this is sound advice. ◆

Myanmar: The Multiple Conundrums of Rohingya Policy

David I. Steinberg

In their new book *Myanmar's 'Rohingya' Conflict*, Anthony Ware and Costas Laoutides have deftly traversed the disputatious minefields that surround the current Rohingya problem. They have done so with balanced, sensitive, and measured steps and analysis, providing insights into the complex, conflicting historical and present narratives that make up real and mythical history. This book provides the necessary background for judicious appraisal of the problems, if not simple means for their solution. We are in their debt.

Yet the minefields remain and are likely to expand over time. Multiple historical narratives regarding this group of people are in dispute, encumbered by various myths and half-truths that solidify into supposedly revealed wisdom. The present is emotionally and legally entrapped in the past. Responsibilities are ignored. Access is restricted or denied. Prejudices mount. And international outrage and internal suspicions of such outrage are increasing. The United Nations, world and regional powers, and the Myanmar government differ in their responses. But the longer solutions are ignored or denied, the more intractable the issues become.

Myanmar's political liberalization and technological changes have heightened confrontations. Better access to diverse information—informed or derogatory—and the relative freedom to express such views, together with the power of technology, have quickly spread vituperative prejudices and misinformation. Cumulative issues and group identity, but ones sparked by individual incidents, cause “ethnic entrepreneurs seeking to anchor their narratives in particular events” (p. 187). Flashpoints cannot easily be controlled and are likely to persist.

With careful, deliberative attention, the authors have sought what Confucius called “the rectification of names.” The term “Rohingya” in political parlance exacerbates tensions and is restricted in Myanmar circles, as it implies a distinct indigenous group to Myanmar officialdom and contrasts with the officially preferred term “Bengali,” indicating foreign origins. So too does Burmese terminology excite passions: *lu myo* (literally, “people type”—race, nationalism, ethnicity) and *taing yin tha* (literally,

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“sons of the country”—indigenous ethnic groups) have been “weaponized” to further particularistic goals and exclude others, although the terms can overlap. “The *taing-yin-tha* definition of indigeneity, and the politics that drive it, are not inherent in history or the context. Rather, they are weapons of exclusionary politics, largely perpetrated by General Ne Win and the military regime after the 1962 coup” (p. 200). The authors thus carefully delineate the various historical narratives of each group that are used to justify or vilify present policies and actions.

Perceived vulnerabilities, no matter how seemingly illogical or farfetched to the outside observer, provide avenues into explaining, but not justifying, various fears and are essential to comprehending the dynamics of antagonisms—past and future. Without considering their importance to a diverse set of actors, no solutions to the plight of the Rohingya are possible. These long-standing emotions have become more acute in the present period of rising ethnic, religious, and group nationalism, thus complicating solutions.

The Rohingya feel vulnerable to three sets of antagonists: most immediately to the essentially Burman Tatmadaw (the military), their oppressors; then to the Buddhist Rakhine (an ethnic group primarily on the Bay of Bengal coast); and finally to the Burman population at large. The Buddhist Rakhine people feel vulnerable to the expanding Rohingya population within their state, a demographic accentuated by a lack of education and healthcare. But having been treated as second-class citizens, the Buddhist Rakhine are also vulnerable to the dominant Burman majority and the Tatmadaw. This has been evident over history with the rise of ethnic and particularistic nationalism, the destruction of their kingdom by the Burmans in 1784, and the looting of their most revered religious image, the Mahamuni Buddha, which is now resident in Mandalay. The suppression in 2017 of a Rakhine celebration of their kingdom by the central government, resulting in several deaths, is simply a recent reminder of such deeply held emotions and residual but strong antipathies.

The Burman majority is evidently disturbed by the expanding Muslim population and has passed legislation to reverse this trend and restrict conversions to Islam. Even the supposed 4% Muslim population of Myanmar, excluding the Rohingya, may fear that Burman antipathy toward the Rohingya will reverberate negatively toward them. Finally, the dominant Tatmadaw regards the new, even if pathetically meager and ill-armed, Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) as a national security threat that

could expand with Middle Eastern backing. Former senior general Than Shwe regarded the Bangladesh border as the most vulnerable.

ARSA's attack in August 2017 came one day after the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State, in collaboration with the Kofi Annan commission, which had investigated the previous Rohingya riots, released its report with 88 constructive recommendations. These are discussed in some detail in this volume. State Counselor Aung San Suu Kyi accepted the report and its recommendations, and she promised to implement them. The recommendations are sound and equitable but virtually impossible to implement in the current atmosphere. It is quite natural for the authors of the volume to accept and advocate their pursuit, but progress is unlikely, and an air of unrealistic possibilities, if not optimism, is apparent in the volume.

Although the sometimes-articulated charge of genocide against the Rohingya is questionable to this observer, that of ethnic cleansing seems, alas, apt. After some reluctance, perhaps because the U.S. government did not want to appear to be too critical of the Aung San Suu Kyi administration, the Department of State admitted the ethnic cleansing in Myanmar. Some Western observers are reluctant to criticize Aung San Suu Kyi, as they regard her as the best hope for a future "democratic" Myanmar. However, the Burmese do not want the Rohingya back (which is what ethnic cleansing is) and will not give up any of their former land to Bangladesh. Bangladesh does not want them either, even suggesting that refugees be confined to a remote island in the Bay of Bengal that is subject to fierce annual monsoon rains and typhoons that flood the area. Any agreement between the two countries at this stage seems more like theater than reality.

International discussion of the Rohingya's return to Rakhine thus seems unrealistic to a significant degree. Western international organizations advocate citizenship for the Rohingya, who are now stateless, but this is highly unlikely under Myanmar's restrictive 1982 citizenship law. The government's denial of the use of the term "Rohingya" is in large part motivated by the consideration that this designation would imply an indigenous ethnic group (*taing yin tha*) to which citizenship should be granted. If significant numbers were somehow to return under UN auspices, then new, liberal conditions for their livelihood, education, healthcare, and mobility would be required. The Tatmadaw has already occupied some burned out Rohingya villages.

The Tatmadaw may well be blamed for the atrocities and excesses connected to the Rohingya's migration, but the regime of Aung San Suu Kyi

and the National League for Democracy are also complicit. Her defense of the Tatmadaw to the assembled diplomats on September 19, 2017, was egregiously simplistic and even ingenuous, misstating conditions of which the diplomatic community is well aware.¹ Surely, she and her party must also navigate the minefields of administration in which the Tatmadaw controls all coercive power, minority relations, and both state and local government. Her statement on a visit to Hanoi in October 2018 that the Rohingya problem “could have been handled better”² must rank among the gross understatements of the year and, in effect, insults all involved and cognizant observers of Myanmar.

International effects from the Rohingya problems have begun to occur. ARSA is said to have received some Middle Eastern backing, and the status of Muslims in Myanmar came to the attention of Osama bin Laden a generation ago. The continued mistreatment of both the Rohingya and the broader Muslim minority throughout the country will continue to excite potential concerns within the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and beyond. The Rakhine dilemmas have had an effect on Myanmar’s broader international relations as well. China has supported the government in its handling of the crisis, while the West, especially the United States, has vehemently criticized the regime and imposed selective sanctions again some members of the Tatmadaw. Diminished U.S. influence is evident, and closer relations with China are likely. Myanmar has turned from the West, and Aung San Suu Kyi has lost the veneer as the icon of democracy. While she has decried this designation, claiming to be a politician, she has yet to exhibit such talents. Western influence, investment, and tourism have already suffered.


Myanmar’s ‘Rohingya’ Conflict claims that this study is not about statelessness, denial of citizenship identity, and so forth but “primarily about the possibility and the extent of inclusion, on equal terms, of the Rohingya and (to a lesser extent) the Rakhine in the political community that constitutes the Union of Myanmar” (p. 198). Unfortunately, insofar as it deals with reality, the book is about the former, with hopes for the latter, though these goals seem distant in terms of reaching fruition.

¹ Oliver Holmes, “Fact Check: Aung San Suu Kyi’s Speech on the Rohingya Crisis,” *Guardian*, September 20, 2017 ~ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/sep/20/fact-check-aung-san-suu-kyi-rohingya-crisis-speech-myanmar>.

² Hannah Beech, “Rohingya Crisis ‘Could Have Been Handled Better,’ Aung San Suu Kyi Says,” *New York Times*, September 13, 2018 ~ <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/13/world/asia/aung-san-suu-kyi-rohingya.html>.

This volume discusses in detail current conflict studies literature and draws lessons from the Rohingya case for states, the media, scholars, and donor organizations. Although the crisis in Myanmar may adhere to some of the general theoretical concepts of internal and ethnic conflict, this situation is unique. There are important lessons for potential donors to Myanmar and for the alleviation of the suffering of the Rohingya that are spelled out in this volume.

A rational solution to the Rohingya dilemmas is devoutly to be wished, as Shakespeare wrote, but none appears plausible at this time and for some years ahead at a minimum. The preparations for the 2020 Myanmar elections will mean that no significant political group, given the unpopularity of the Rohingya, will be prepared to make the electoral sacrifices necessary to alleviate the crisis. Political will and courage are lacking under the fears and vulnerabilities so evident among all actors. And international intervention is not a feasible alternative. So the tragedy unfolds, and suffering and debasement continue.

Although the minefields remain, few available works have dealt as equitably and carefully as Ware and Laoutides's book in both explaining the past and charting a desirable future path once these hazards have been traversed. But who is or will be our Virgilian guide through this dangerous maze? 

Identity Politics, Myanmar's *Bête Noire*, Continues to Constrain the Nation's Future

Bruce Matthews

With Myanmar's *'Rohingya' Conflict*, Anthony Ware and Costas Laoutides have crafted a valuable study of the long-standing Rohingya emergency in Myanmar. The book provides both a helpful historical review and a fresh perspective on this conflict, including the recent events that have seriously compromised the international reputation of the country.

Scarcely two years ago, then U.S. president Barack Obama lifted the economic sanctions imposed on the long-time military state after it finally ceded some control (but not all) to the government of Aung San Suu Kyi elected in 2015. Just as Myanmar seemed to have turned a corner on decades of suffocating military rule, however, renewed attempts by indigenous Muslims (the Rohingya, derived from "Rohang" or "Arakan") to gain some political autonomy in the west of Myanmar's Rakhine State have led to disaster. A recent manifestation was the Rohingya military-style assault on border security forces on August 25, 2017, aided by possibly minor but worrisome connections to international jihadists. It was particularly unfortunate that these attacks came only hours after the submission of the final report by the Kofi Annan-led Advisory Commission on Rakhine State, which the authors aver was the best set of recommendations to date even despite certain gaps (p. 208). The violence led to the subsequent excessive response by the army (the Tatmadaw) involving horrific, documented human rights abuses and the forced expulsion of 700,000 Rohingya (two-thirds of the community) from Myanmar into neighboring Bangladesh.

The authors come to grips with the general theme of the Rohingya crisis and its historical grievances in three parts. One way of reviewing their approach to this complex topic is to provide a brief outline of the book's structure, and then to isolate several crucial issues identified for further discussion. The book does not claim to have all the answers, nor to apportion blame, but aims to explain the conflict, correct misconceptions, examine the historical narrative, and help conceptualize a way forward. The first part, entitled "Context," is initially designated as "Personal Journeys into this Conflict." Its two chapters reflect the comprehensive fieldwork

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undertaken by the two authors, who visited Myanmar and the state of Rakhine several times over five years, and explore the complexities and misconceptions encountered in analyzing the 2017 Rohingya uprising. These chapters provide a geographic, demographic, and historical basis on which an analysis should be formed. They argue that Myanmar's 2017 experience of sectarian violence and what amounts to subsequent "ethnic cleansing" needs to be seen as an extension of other Rohingya attacks on security forces dating back to 2012. These have involved the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) and show evidence of likely foreign Islamist jihadist involvement. But, importantly, the authors stress that the Rakhine State is also the homeland of a historic and substantial Arakan (Rakhine) Burmese Buddhist society that is ethnically and culturally separate from the Rohingya. This society has roots in western Myanmar associated with the once-famous Mrauk-U kingdom (1430–1784 CE) and its own significant chronicles (the *Razawin*), which lend support for an independent identity. The Rakhine Buddhists affirm that their political independence was harshly terminated by invading Burmese forces in 1784. Importantly, therefore, this community, with its independent Arakan Army (AA), is still involved in its own insurrection campaign against rule from Naypyidaw, Myanmar's capital. It is significant that the Rakhine State (its name changed from Arakan in 1990) has a solid overall Buddhist majority, who in turn are not at war with the Rohingya.

The book's second part, entitled "Historical Narratives, Representation and Collective Memory," continues an examination of the "competing nationalist narratives," and how they are used to exacerbate the conflict from the three entirely separate perspectives of the Rohingya, the Rakhine Buddhists, and the Burmese. The third part, comprising two final chapters, focuses on conflict analysis theory. Most important is the key demographic issue of a Muslim community with high birthrates, stemming from, among other things, a lack of education, healthcare, and economic security. These factors are seen as a long-term major driver of the current crisis. The final chapter discusses the role that the international community could play in bringing the Rohingya crisis to satisfactory resolution and offers recommendations.

Of the many factors contributing to the Rohingya crisis addressed in this book, four deserve particular emphasis. First, an acknowledgment of the deeply historical nature of Burma's identity politics is crucial. The struggle for Burmese and Buddhist dominance in a country composed of many tribal groups arguably fostered a fear of outsiders, one that accelerated


during the British colonial era (1824–1948). In Rakhine (one of seven states or primarily ethnic regions in the modern nation, distinct from the seven divisions, which are largely Burmese), this fear continues to focus largely on the presence of the Muslim Rohingya. The Burmese consider the Rohingya as later arrivals from the subcontinent and not as belonging to one of the so-called traditional 135 *taing yin tha* or indigenous national “races” settled in Myanmar before the British arrived. The authors confirm this “poisonous policy of ethnicity” as “a key driver of multiple conflicts across the country” (p. 201). The Rohingya Muslim community in Rakhine (they self-identified with the name Rohingya only in the 1950s) was not on the list. Although the first post-independence officials accepted the presence of the Muslim community in townships on the border with East Bengal (Maungdaw, Buthidaung, and Rathedaung) and provided them with national registration cards, this initiative was immediately voided by the dictatorship and extreme nationalism of Ne Win (1962–88). Historical records show, however, that a Rakhine Muslim presence in western Myanmar is very old, with several sources of origin (prisoners of war, slaves, and traders), waves of migration, and involvement as a recognized, contributing community in the pre-Burman Rakhine Buddhist kingdom of Mrauk-U. More recently during World War II, the Muslim community in the west of Burma sided with the British against the Japanese and Burmese nationalist forces. Subsequently, when the Muslims did not receive hoped-for autonomy, their actions in the ensuing *mujahid* rebellion caused further disconnect from the state.

Second, the book provides details of ARSA, the militant resistance force that has been involved in several attacks on border facilities since 2012. Initially more of a peasants’ militia armed with slingshots and knives, ARSA recently has been internationalized to some degree under the leadership of Ataullah abu Ammar Jununi, a Pakistani jihadist. It brought its secessionist agenda to full view in the attacks against the Myanmar state in late August 2017, now widely considered “a grave miscalculation.” The possibility that the ARSA strategy of coordinated attacks on the border forces was not a miscalculation but a tactical response to increase public outcry following an anticipated disproportionate military response—and even a way to attract potential recruits for future operations—makes it an even more “serious moral hazard situation” (p. 216).

Third, Myanmar has a substantial Muslim population that is not identified with the Rohingya and whose members have full citizenship rights (such as the Kaman and Muslims of mixed marriages). But spillover anti-Muslim pogroms are nonetheless not uncommon (for example, in

Meiktila in 2013). Events in Rakhine State negatively reverberate deep into Myanmar society.

Fourth, a key feature is how the international community should continue to respond to the expulsion of the Rohingya in what is now acknowledged as an act of genocide by the International Criminal Court. The near-silence of Aung San Suu Kyi on the issue is disheartening. She has no authority over Myanmar's armed forces, which is a serious impediment to any resolution of this crisis. But she at least invited former UN secretary-general Kofi Annan to preside over the important Advisory Commission on Rakhine State, though a later "advisory board" to help implement the proposals was a dismal failure. Other international initiatives, such as the April 2018 report of Bob Rae, special Canadian envoy to Myanmar, and the March 2018 Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar, led by Marzuki Darusman, at the 39th session of the UN Human Rights Council, provide similar efforts to bring resolution to the tragic situation, the consequences of which are still unfolding.

In the conclusion to their well-researched and comprehensive book, Ware and Laoutides bring forward several suggestions for the Myanmar state, including moving quickly and openly on citizenship with a social policy to support reform, removing the link between citizenship and ethnicity, enforcing measures to protect the land and assets of the displaced Rohingya refugees, and, importantly, acknowledging the state's negative role in this conflict. The authors understandably appear to be actually quite skeptical about whether these expectations are realistic given the unwholesome historical record of military rule, by whatever name, that Myanmar is still governed under. 

Elucidating Intractability

Katherine G. Southwick

Violence dramatically escalated in western Myanmar's Rakhine State in 2017 and 2018, forcing well over 700,000 Rohingya to flee to neighboring Bangladesh. At the height of violence, the weekly exodus was said to be swifter than the flow of refugees from Rwanda in 1994. Reports of indiscriminate killings, systematic rape, a long history of discrimination, and hateful official language directed against the population have led several organizations and experts, including the UN-sponsored Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar, to conclude that the crimes committed against the Rohingya likely meet the definition of genocide. The need to respond to the humanitarian crisis and the responsibility to protect vulnerable groups seem clear. Many have made calls to hold perpetrators accountable and enable Rohingya refugees to return safely and with dignity.

If only it were that simple. Situations of apparent moral clarity tempt us to minimize their political and practical complexity. Yet we know that sustainable solutions cannot gloss over the Gordian knot of history, structural factors, and opportunism that bring about intractable conflict and mass atrocities. In *Myanmar's 'Rohingya' Conflict*, Anthony Ware and Costas Laoutides provide a great service in elucidating this conflict's intractability and the factors that lead to violence. The book largely succeeds in its aim "to illuminate the multiple dimensions and perspectives, explain the extensive role that historical narratives play, interrogate positions, and provide in-depth analysis that might help conceptualize a pathway forward" (p. 12). While some aspects of the analysis remain open for further inquiry, the value of this work in broadening and deepening understanding of conflict in Rakhine State and how it threatens to undermine the country's reform process is indisputable.

The first part presents a well-rounded portrait of the conflict, illustrating that the internationally dominant narrative of a persecuted Rohingya minority is incomplete. It painstakingly describes the three main tensions in the region: the violence between Rohingya and Rakhine communities, fanned by nationalist sentiment among members of both groups, and two sets of long-standing hostilities between the central Burman state and

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the peripheral Rakhines and Rohingya groups, respectively. While the Rohingya “have never previously been a particularly violent or religiously radicalized population,” despite decades of marginalization, small groups have engaged in armed insurgency since independence in 1948 (p. 47). The focus of the two armed, secessionist groups today—the Rakhine-led Arakan Army (AA) and the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA)—on the central government conveys that both groups perceive the state as the real adversary, rather than their Rakhine or Rohingya neighbors. In providing this fuller picture, Ware and Laoutides make the essential point that resolving the plight of the Rohingya requires recognizing how these three conflicts are interconnected and thus must be addressed together.

The book’s second part is particularly valuable in offering a discussion of the competing historical narratives that help justify each party’s claims and uphold this conflict’s intractability. The authors recount the Rohingya “origin” narrative, which serves to portray the Rohingya as an indigenous group with historical roots in the region that reach back to the ninth century. The Rakhine narrative on the region’s historical “independence” serves to bolster Rakhine demands for autonomy from Burman rule. The Burman “unity” narrative counters this conceptualization with a historical interpretation that emphasizes shared ancestry and unity among Myanmar’s national races. Finally, the shared Rakhine and Burman “infiltration” narrative portrays the Rohingya as “Bengali Muslims” that pose an existential threat to Rakhine identity, Buddhism, and nationhood.

The authors then carry out the dicey task of evaluating these narratives based on historical records and dispassionate critique. Drawing from Jacques Leider, they conclude that the Rohingya identity, popularized in the 1960s, appears to draw from a “hybridized history” that finds roots in precolonial times as well as extensive Muslim migration in the nineteenth century (pp. 134–35).¹ Thus, the authors convey that while the Rohingya’s origin narrative may not be watertight, the group’s claims for political rights, even under existing law, are legitimate (p. 135). Ware and Laoutides also highlight how the Rakhine claim for independence is based on a principle of racial equality, partly rooted in an experience of relatively peaceful coexistence with Muslims up until the late colonial period. The authors state that their primary purpose is to adequately depict each perspective, not to provide a detailed history or validation of one side’s perspective over another (p. 32).

¹ Jacques P. Leider, “Competing Identities and the Hybridized History of the Rohingyas,” in *Metamorphosis: Studies in Social and Political Change in Myanmar*, ed. Renaud Egretreau and Francois Robinne (Singapore: National University of Singapore Press, 2015), 151–78.

By highlighting some of the inconclusive aspects of each narrative, however, the authors demonstrate that appeals to history are insufficient in charting a path forward. They also convey that while accurate history matters, peace and reconciliation cannot be won through a “stalemate of stories” (p. 69).²

Deconstructing the narratives in turn presages the path forward, proffered in the third part, which emphasizes the need to shed the importance of these narratives and the toxic parameters under which they are constructed, including the notion of *taing yin tha*, the ideology of indigenous identity that gave rise to the exclusionary politics propounded by General Ne Win and the military regime after the 1962 coup (p. 200). Ideas of racial hierarchy, of tying political inclusion and exclusion to ethnicity, have sharpened demographic and ethnic security dilemmas and the salience of political economy and territory as conflict factors, as discussed in chapters 5 and 6. A long-term solution thus requires “leaving this poisonous politics of ethnicity behind, and reframing the debate entirely away from race and ethnicity” (p. 200). The book avers that the solution goes to the heart of democratic reform, which requires, as others have suggested,³ recognizing the political community as a “community of citizens...in which cultural diversity between equals is celebrated in non-hierarchical and non-exclusionary terms” (p. 210). In line with that core message, and drawing in part from the recommendations of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State (also known as the Annan Commission), the authors call for a range of responses related to holding perpetrators of alleged crimes accountable, revising laws to afford broader access to citizenship and equal rights, and facilitating peaceful dialogue and cooperation among “elite social entrepreneurs,” among other recommendations (p. 211).

While *Myanmar’s ‘Rohingya’ Conflict* is rich in knowledge and analysis, the authors admit that “this book does not purport to have all the answers” (p. 12). Moreover, while seeking to “provide as reasoned and evidence-based an analysis as possible, while causing minimal offence,” the authors recognize that goal is “nigh impossible” (p. xv). The fact that the conflict is

² P.L. Hammack, “Identity as Burden or Benefit? Youth, Historical Narrative, and the Legacy of Political Conflict,” *Human Development* 53 (2010): 173–201.

³ International Crisis Group, “Rohingya Crisis: A Major Threat to Myanmar Transition and Regional Stability,” October 27, 2017 ≈ <https://www.crisisgroup.org/asia/south-east-asia/myanmar/rohingya-crisis-major-threat-myanmar-transition-and-regional-stability>; Nick Cheesman, “How in Myanmar ‘National Races’ Came to Surpass Citizenship and Exclude Rohingya,” *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 47, no. 3 (2017): 477; Katherine Southwick, “Preventing Mass Atrocities against the Stateless Rohingya in Myanmar: A Call for Solutions,” *Columbia Journal of International Affairs* 68, no. 2 (2015): 149; and Thein Sein, “Myanmar’s Complex Transformation: Prospects and Challenges” (remarks given at Chatham House, London, July 15, 2013) ≈ <https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/public/Meetings/Meeting%20Transcripts/150713Sein.pdf>.

ongoing further denies analysts the full benefit of hindsight in providing a sense of objectivity or scholarly consensus. These caveats recognize that differences of opinion and the need for more knowledge and guidance in finding a path to peaceful resolution will persist.

For instance, an issue arises from the difficult task of distinguishing a scholarly approach from a potentially unsettling sense of moral equivalence in terms of characterizing different actors' grievances. The authors clearly recognize that the Rohingya have suffered disproportionately and that the violence between the Rohingya, Rakhines, and the Myanmar government is asymmetric. In that light, the decision to place the word Rohingya in quotation marks in the title and to refer to the group in the text as "Muslims in northern Rakhine State" is fraught. To be sure, the authors are aware that using or not using the word Rohingya is polarizing, as "avoiding the name is seen by others as representing complicity in human rights violations" (p. xv), while using the term implies support for a political cause that many in Myanmar strongly oppose (p. xvi). Thus, the authors are understandably concerned that using the name would appear "naïve" or "partial" (p. xvii), alienating non-Rohingya readers in Myanmar (though Laoutides observed that Rakhine villagers he had met seemed uninterested in a "war of names") (p. 4). The labeling decision in a sense functions as a kind of concession to lead resistant minds to the authors' final recommendation to depoliticize ethnicity and accept a people's "moral right to name themselves" (p. 212). Placing Rohingya in quotation marks also resonates with the book's theme concerning contested narratives. All that said, the balance of considerations seems to favor embracing the term Rohingya, given the importance of equality and inclusion to the authors' prescription for sustainable peace, the call for "highly principled but committed engagement" (p. 217), and the moral consideration in modeling a stance that cannot be seen to enable the erasure of a vulnerable group or to challenge the very few tools available to that group to advance its members' sense of dignity and rights.

This sense of moral equivalence among grievances occasionally reappears, such as when the authors write, "This is thus a multi-polar conflict, in which at least three groups react defensively, out of deeply compelling existential fears" (p. 18). That the central government has a deeply compelling fear of ARSA or the Rohingya seems implausible, particularly in light of the authors' observation that the government's response to ARSA's attacks in 2017 constituted a "dramatic overreaction" (p. 19). In characterizing the Rohingya as actors in the conflict, the authors write that "while most are peace-loving and have shown great forbearance

under prolonged discrimination, some have turned to violence” (p. 19). The statement is true, but it can be read to imply that the turn to violence is disappointing rather than a possibly understandable result of desperation. Given the prolonged persecution and risk of death to which Rohingya have been subjected, reproach of ARSA attacks raises the question of how the insurgency is morally or qualitatively distinct from other acts of armed resistance to ethnic cleansing and genocide, such as the Warsaw ghetto uprising of 1943.

The authors speculate that ARSA deliberately undermined the Annan Commission report when the group launched its attacks against the military hours after the report’s release. The authors observe that the commission’s recommendations fell short of ARSA’s goals for autonomy. Alternatively, perhaps having seen how little meaningful action followed previous commissions, and with Rohingya continuing to die from the various constraints imposed on their lives, ARSA determined, rightly or wrongly, that there was nothing left to lose. According to the authors, the prospect of international outcry and calls for intervention based on human rights discourse and a “process of global victimhood developed after the Second World War” create a moral hazard for armed groups to provoke brutal, large-scale responses from the military (p. 214). In this characterization, ARSA and international human rights advocates arguably share some responsibility for the depth of the humanitarian crisis, a weighty charge worthy of introspection. It is a claim, however, that unfairly portrays the role of international law and advocacy, on which many of the Annan Commission’s and the book’s recommendations are actually based. Arguably, pressure on international entities not to speak out earlier enabled violence on all sides to reach this point. The risk of being labeled a terrorist organization and thus unworthy of international support also perhaps constrains the moral hazard perceived here. To the extent that moral hazard exists, then responsibility lies with the international community to mitigate it by working more proactively to support conflict prevention and resolution in a form of “principled engagement” that the authors ultimately advocate. How exactly that alternative should manifest and how the considerable barriers to implementing the necessary recommendations can be overcome remain to be seen. ◆

Authors' Response:
Is There No Resolution in Myanmar's Rohingya Conflict?

Anthony Ware and Costas Laoutides

We are deeply grateful to the reviewers of our book *Myanmar's 'Rohingya' Conflict* for their kind words as well as their in-depth engagement with the material. We are gratified that the reviewers all endorse our central argument, namely that identity politics—in particular, the *taing yin tha* mythology—is the primary roadblock to peace. Myanmar must move beyond these toxic conceptions of ethnicity and indigeneity and develop a truly Myanmar identity before any lasting and equitable resolution is possible, not only of this conflict but of the many conflicts across the country. That is, however, a very unlikely outcome in the foreseeable future.

We appreciate that the reviewers all concur about the complexity and deeply historical nature of this conflict. Gaining an understanding of this complexity and the causes of intractability is an essential first step in any pathway toward effective international engagement. As Katherine Southwick reminds us, in situations like this the “apparent moral clarity tempt[s] us to minimize their political and practical complexity. Yet we know that sustainable solutions cannot gloss over the Gordian knot of history, structural factors, and opportunism that bring about intractable conflict and mass atrocities.” These complexities, of course, are the central messages throughout the book.

David Steinberg is concerned that in our pursuit of recommendations from our analysis, we err toward offering “unrealistic possibilities, if not optimism.” We accept this critique in part as we agree about the improbability of solutions—or even any real progress—being found quickly. We, nonetheless, do find a need to stand with the practitioners, advocates, and engaged locals who work tirelessly for some way forward. The nature of intractability means virtually everything appears irresolvable and any recommendations implausible. As Bruce Matthews noted, “the authors understandably appear to be actually quite skeptical” about whether these recommendations are in any way realistic. Yet, continue to try we must.

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We are pleased to see Steinberg expand on the international relations turmoil this conflict is causing for Myanmar and the extent to which Aung San Suu Kyi and the National League for Democracy are complicit—castigating her for an “egregiously simplistic and even ingenious” defense of the Tatmadaw, “misstating conditions” and making statements that “must rank among the gross understatements of the year.” This posture continues, unfortunately, with her and her party’s maneuvering regarding repatriation of the Rohingya from Bangladesh, for example, and ingenious misstatements about the degree of implementation of the Kofi Annan-led Advisory Commission on Rakhine State recommendations.

Steinberg articulates the view that the charge of genocide against the Rohingya is questionable, while the charge of ethnic cleansing seems apt. Although we took this line of argument in our book, the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) report released in August 2018 significantly changes our minds. The report found evidence that the crimes in Rakhine State, and the manner in which they were perpetrated, “were similar in nature, gravity and scope to those that have allowed genocidal intent to be established in other contexts.”¹ It thus recommended investigations and prosecutions for genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes. Despite Myanmar not being a signatory to the Rome Statute, in September 2018 the International Criminal Court claimed jurisdiction at least over the deportation of the Rohingya,² and it has commenced a full-fledged preliminary examination against the Myanmar commander-in-chief and other senior officials. These are very significant findings, which, as Southwick notes, suggest that it is now time to accept “genocidal intent.” Indeed, since the release of this report, we have accepted this terminology in several subsequent publications. The evidence is now compelling.

Southwick comments that some of our writing seems to imply moral equivalence of the different actors’ grievances. This is perhaps unsurprising given our extensive efforts to convey the perspectives of Rakhine and (as much as possible) Tatmadaw/Burman leaders, particularly about some of the deeper fears motivating them. Although Southwick acknowledges that we have clearly and repeatedly stated that the Rohingya have suffered

¹ C. Sidoti, M. Darusman, and R. Coomaraswamy, “Report of the International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar,” UN Human Rights Council, A/HRC/39/64, August 24, 2018, 16.

² “Statement of ICC Prosecutor, Mrs. Fatou Bensouda, on Opening a Preliminary Examination Concerning the Alleged Deportation of the Rohingya People from Myanmar to Bangladesh,” International Criminal Court, September 18, 2018 ~ <https://www.icc-cpi.int/Pages/item.aspx?name=180918-otp-stat-Rohingya>.

disproportionately and that the conflict is deeply asymmetric, she highlights a few ways in which our writing still leaves her uncomfortable in this regard.

We respect and appreciate this discomfort. Indeed, we suggest that grappling meaningfully with the perspectives, fears, and motivations of the perpetrators of any crime is always uncomfortable—and crimes have been committed. However, one of our premises in writing this book was that people do not listen until they feel their fears and concerns have been heard and taken seriously. Thus, from the outset, a key aim was not only to lay out and analyze the issues with as much academic objectivity as possible, but to do so in a way that facilitates a real understanding of the various actors' deeply held perspectives. Regardless of how much we agree or disagree with any party, our contention remains that understanding their fears and motivations is essential before any meaningful engagement is possible. We have endeavored to provide this perspective, something we consider to be widely missing in other analysis of this conflict.

Nothing in this, however, implies moral equivalence among grievances. Rather, our claim is that the intractability of this conflict stems from an equivalence in the depth of belief and fear held by key actors. Thus, there is no moral equivalence in rightness or injustice. But there is, we maintain, an equivalence in the existential fear perceived by all sides and their commitment to a set of perceived “facts,” informed by historical narratives, about this conflict. As Steinberg observes, “no matter how seemingly illogical or farfetched to the outside observer” the various fears and vulnerabilities are, these, as explained in our book, are “essential to comprehending the dynamics of antagonisms—past and future. Without considering their importance to a diverse set of actors, no solutions to the plight of the Rohingya are possible.”

The Rohingya are genuinely existentially threatened, as demonstrated by the violence perpetrated against them. The ethnic Rakhine, we argue, feel just as existentially threatened by things like the demographic threat of Rohingya population growth and the assimilation pressure of “Burmanization.” We make this argument in detail in the book and will not rehash it here. The third strand of this argument, and what Southwick in particular doubts, is that the Tatmadaw and central government have a deeply compelling fear of the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) and the Rohingya. We would suggest, however, that the military’s “dramatic overreaction” (p. 19) to the 2016 and 2017 ARSA attacks is not evidence of the lack of fear, as Southwick implies, but of the depth of their fear—a fear capable of blinding battle-seasoned officers to the consequences of

their actions beyond immediate objectives. These consequences include the breakdown of the very law and order they claimed to be protecting as well as ramifications for the long-term conflict dynamics in Rakhine, for national peace efforts, and for national development and international relations. We turn to Steinberg for support on this point: “the dominant Tatmadaw regards the new, even if pathetically meager and ill-armed, [ARSA] as a national security threat that could expand with Middle Eastern backing. Former senior general Than Shwe regarded the Bangladesh border as the most vulnerable.” We maintain that, in the mind of Burman army generals and civilian leaders, the greatest perceived threat to the security of the Myanmar people and state has long been massive irregular migration of Muslims from Bangladesh and the importation of jihadism and an Islamization agenda. The rise of ARSA piqued those fears in ways that prompted irrational reactions.

Southwick is not convinced by our caution at the end of the book about moral hazard. Although the situation for the Rohingya was dire before 2017, we argue it cannot be compared with the Jewish ghetto in 1943 Poland, as she suggests. Unlike the Polish Jews, there is no evidence that the Rohingya were facing an imminent extermination. In addition, there is little evidence that ARSA enjoyed wide support among the Rohingya at the time, an issue that raises questions of legitimacy regarding its justification for violent action. Nevertheless, ARSA’s attack triggered a response by the military that put Rohingya into harm’s way, with their final position more endangered than it was prior to 2017. In the least, ARSA’s action amounted to poor leadership that certainly does not advance the Rohingya cause or interests in any meaningful sense.

It is always difficult writing about contemporary events as they unfold, without the benefit of hindsight. A lot has happened since we completed the manuscript, yet in many regards little has changed. As Steinberg notes, many minefields still remain, and all of our analysis has barely helped plot a course forward. Indeed, the number of minefields seems to have multiplied over the past year, not just the scale of each issue.

The number of Rohingya refugees has been revised upward since our manuscript was completed. It is now recognized that over 700,000 refugees were driven across the border into Cox’s Bazar, Bangladesh, in the span of a few months after the attacks and military operations commenced on August 25, 2017. As of December 2018, the UNHCR lists 900,998 Rohingya

refugees in camps, with more in host communities.³ Some 933,387 are currently receiving regular food assistance in Bangladesh.⁴ The best estimates we have heard are that no more than 500,000–550,000 Rohingya now remain in Myanmar, meaning that close to two-thirds of the Rohingya population living in Myanmar just two years ago has now been driven out. Given the sentiment across much of the country against their return and the continued issues with the process, the charge of ethnic cleansing seems well justified.

It is notable, and of deep concern, that adding the total now in Bangladesh with the number remaining in Myanmar leads to a population estimate in the order of 1.4–1.5 million Rohingya. The 2014 census, while not enumerating the Rohingya for political reasons, did provide an estimate of the number of people not enumerated in Rakhine State, namely 1.1–1.3 million.⁵ Given the sensitivities at the time, most latched onto the lower figure, and the Rohingya population in Rakhine has been widely quoted as 1.1 million in 2014. It now appears this was a serious underestimate based on lack of real enumeration. This difference becomes highly significant in the context of any return.

What this means is that, even if a repatriation of a large number were to occur in 2019—something we agree with the reviewers is highly unlikely—it is inconceivable that more than half the current refugee population in Bangladesh could be brought back. Already many voices in Myanmar claim the camps have been infiltrated by large numbers of poor Bangladeshis hoping to emigrate to Myanmar to obtain land alongside the returning Rohingya. While this is ludicrous, it is just one more powerful obstacle to the return of large numbers of refugees. With most Rohingya land now cleared, with in some cases military installations even having been constructed where Rohingya houses once stood, and with the impossible claim of full citizenship before repatriation being maintained, large-scale return seems like a pipe dream.

One final key update since publication, and very pertinent for any international actors seeking a way to inch toward resolution, is the startling

³ “ISCG Situation Report Data Summary: Rohingya Refugee Crisis, Cox’s Bazar,” UNOCHA Inter Sector Coordination Group, December 13, 2018 [≈ https://reliefweb.int/report/bangladesh/iscg-situation-report-data-summary-rohingya-refugee-crisis-cox-s-bazar-13-december](https://reliefweb.int/report/bangladesh/iscg-situation-report-data-summary-rohingya-refugee-crisis-cox-s-bazar-13-december).

⁴ “ISCG Situation Report: Rohingya Refugee Crisis, Cox’s Bazar,” UNOCHA Inter Sector Coordination Group, December 13, 2018 [≈ https://reliefweb.int/report/bangladesh/iscg-situation-report-rohingya-refugee-crisis-cox-s-bazar-13-december-2018-0](https://reliefweb.int/report/bangladesh/iscg-situation-report-rohingya-refugee-crisis-cox-s-bazar-13-december-2018-0).

⁵ Department of Population, Ministry of Immigration and Population (Myanmar), “The 2014 Myanmar Population and Housing Census: Rakhine State,” Census Report, vol. 3, May 2015.

revelation unearthed by Paul Mozur in October 2018 about a major Tatmadaw psychological warfare campaign against the Rohingya.⁶ Mozur claims the Tatmadaw has run a major operation on Facebook for years, employing up to seven hundred personnel just outside Naypyidaw who created innocuous-looking pages and identities and then over time ramped up the distribution of anti-Rohingya sentiment. This is a startling revelation, suggesting major manipulation of public opinion by the Tatmadaw. The question it raises is, how much is Myanmar public opinion about the Rohingya a result of this manipulation, and how easily could this change? If the widespread anti-Rohingya sentiment across most of Myanmar has, in part, been whipped into a frenzy by a psychological warfare campaign, then perhaps this points to an opportunity. Perhaps by increasing dissemination about this underhanded action by the Tatmadaw, and strengthening the profile of local support being given to the Rohingya, public opinion may be able to be turned around rapidly. Is that possible? It seems farfetched, but we do note that over the last year or more a number of prominent Burmese civil rights campaigners have begun speaking out publicly on Facebook in support of the Rohingya, including regarding their rights to citizenship and to call themselves Rohingya.

Finally, we thank Priscilla Clapp for highlighting three of our most central conclusions, which we wish to restate here. First, even though we argue the Rohingya should be seen as eligible for citizenship, and even indigenous status, on the basis of the historical record, this is not enough. Peaceful resolution will not be possible until the country leaves behind the toxic, destructive identity politics that elevate *taing yin tha* status above citizenship and develops a national identity with rights that apply to all peoples. Second, given the lack of civilian control of the Tatmadaw, resolution of this conflict is not possible until a more enlightened military leadership emerges. And finally, many of the responses to the conflict by the international community have inadvertently become incentives for further violence, meaning we need to rethink and improve the ways in which we engage with all parties. We hope our book helps readers do this. ♦

⁶ Paul Mozur, "A Genocide Incited on Facebook, with Posts from Myanmar's Military," *New York Times*, October 15, 2018.

