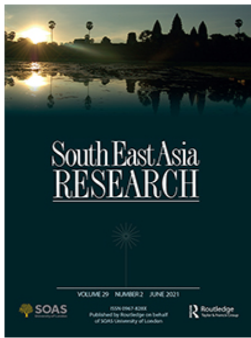

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The cult of glory: national myth and the idea of Global Maritime Fulcrum in Indonesia's foreign policy, 2014–2019

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ABSTRACT

This article aims to explain the idea of Global Maritime Fulcrum (GMF) by applying the concept of national myth. In his first term as Indonesia's president, Joko Widodo, committed to restoring the country's status as a maritime power, based his government's foreign policy strategy on the glorious story of the Srivijaya and Majapahit kingdoms that ruled from the seventh to sixteenth centuries AD. Existing literature on the GMF in Indonesia's modern-day foreign policy fails to address the question of how the story has influenced the political elites in dictating foreign policy agenda. This article argues that the idea of the GMF comes from the recreation of national myth from Indonesia's pre-modern era. Furthermore, Jokowi's administration uses the past glory to bring about collective identity in order to restore the country's status through the GMF framework.

KEYWORDS

Global Maritime Fulcrum (GMF); Indonesia's foreign policy; Joko Widodo; national myth; Srivijaya and Majapahit kingdoms

Introduction

The 'Global Maritime Fulcrum' (GMF) has undoubtedly become a foundation of contemporary Indonesia's foreign policy. Since Joko Widodo (Jokowi) came to power in 2014, Indonesia's foreign policy has dramatically changed, channelling its attention towards the country's maritime status more than to its role globally. Jokowi quoted a Sanskrit proverb 'jalesveva jayamahe', which means 'our glory is at sea', to assert the central focus of his foreign policy agenda (Cabinet Secretariat of the Republic of Indonesia 2014). Existing literature on the GMF can be classified into two major categories: *description* within the context of Indonesia's foreign policy (for example, Yani and Montratama 2015; Gindarsah and Priamarizki 2015; Nainggolan 2015; Andika 2017; Aufiya 2017), and *policy evaluation* with suggestions and recommendations (for example, Sambhi 2015; Saha 2016; Wicaksana 2017; Laksmana, Gindarsah, and Mantong 2018).

While existing literature has contributed significantly to the discussion of GMF in contemporary Indonesia's foreign policy, it lacks a theoretical foundation and builds an argument based solely on empirical evidence, as well as evaluative analysis that offers suggestions for policymakers. Theory helps both academics and practitioners to interpret empirical evidence based on systematic ways of thinking. As Frieden and Lake (2005, 151) argue, 'When scholars combine carefully specified theory with

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systematic empirical testing, they can provide important explanations of world politics.' This article fills a gap in the absence of academic accounts of the GMF in contemporary Indonesia's foreign policy.

While aiming to understand the connection between historical experience and contemporary Indonesia's foreign policy, this research does not intend to prove that Indonesia's past experience affects the formulation of the concept of GMF as it has become to be generally accepted in the public sphere. Instead, it seeks to demonstrate that history provides a strong, driving force behind the birth of novel ideas that have shaped the country's foreign policy. Applying the concept of national myth borrowed from sociology, theology and political science, I argue that the GMF is a recreation of national myth from Indonesia's pre-modern era: it aims to reflect the 'cult of glory' in contemporary Indonesia's foreign policy. This article focuses on the first term of Jokowi's presidency because the GMF recently disappeared from foreign policy discourse and is no longer part of Indonesia's grand strategy. Thus, it highlights the role of history in legitimizing Jokowi's foreign policy agenda during his early career as a president.

The national myth: a conceptual framework

National myth has long been associated with the origin of a nation. Ernest Renan, in his famous lecture *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation*? (What is a nation?), defined a nation as a soul and a spiritual principle consisting of two elements: the past and the present. The past refers to a rich legacy of memories while the present is the desire to continue that heritage. The element of the past is the foundation of a nation for which '[A] heroic past with great men and glory is the social capital upon which the national idea rests' (Renan 1882). Smith (1999, 9) suggests that the underlying factors of nationalism are the myths, memories, traditions and symbols used to rediscover, reinterpret and reconstitute modern national identities in each generation. Smith describes it as a group of people that share 'an historic territory, *common myths and historical memories* [author's emphasis], a mass, public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members' (11). Similarly, Anderson (1991, 4) argues that nation as well as nationalism are cultural artefacts which, derived from historical experience, evolve and change over time, and generate emotional legitimacy.

The term 'myth' is often misinterpreted as 'lies', 'false', 'unreal', 'irrational', 'fiction, 'deception' and so on. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines it as 'a widely held but false belief or idea'. From the philosophical standpoint, it is regarded as the opposite of *logos* or reason. Regardless of their contradictory character, both *mythos* and *logos* are instruments used to arrive at the truth. Furthermore, while *mythos* stresses the meaning behind any phenomenon, *logos* is more practical and seeks to understand any phenomenon using logical reasoning (Armstrong 2000). Myth exists because humans are meaning-seeking creatures and use stories to create meaningful realities that they cannot grasp rationally. In contrast to what is commonly understood by the notion, myth can help us determine our orientation. We create narratives about our history for our journey to be meaningful (Armstrong 2005).

With regard to national myth, the power of narrative is a key feature of state policy. Ideology, political systems or decision-making processes often involve the creation of narratives to legitimize government policy. According to Guevara (2016, 18), myth

refers to 'stories about significant events of the past, present, or future presented in the form of a *narrative* or story that involves specific characters'. The mythical elements of policy can be regarded as a motivating force because they produce collective memories for people. National myth is therefore not fiction, deception, lies or fabrication but rather 'inspiring narratives, stemming from human *imagination*, in which we tell ourselves who we are or want to be' (Abizadeh 2004, 293). Caroline Ziemke (2000, 89) in her explanation of Iran's nuclear programme argues that national myth is not incorporated in the debate on the basis of whether it is true or false. Instead, it is a metaphorical representation of a country's history used to guide its political affairs. As previously mentioned, a myth matters not because it is rational or real but because its meaning and motivational power bring benefits. National myth can also highlight the most memorable events from the past. The glorious moments provide good narratives for the next generations in shaping their future. Ziemke points out, '[T]o make use of their historical experience, nations tend to focus most on those aspects of their history that have the most meaning and tell them the most about who they are and what they aspire to be' (88).

Some scholars define national myths as '*half-truth narratives* [author's emphasis] about the origin, identity and purposes of a nation. They constitute an integral part of the ideological and spiritual foundation for nation and nationalism' (He 2003, 4), or they may be defined as '*distortions* [author's emphasis] of the historical record and the present-day character of the nation' (Smith 2012, 388). In contrast to those who define national myth as either 'half-truth' or 'distortion', this article argues that its key feature is the narrative or story of the past regardless of whether it is true or false. According to Bottici (2007, 320), what makes a political myth different from a simple narrative is not its claim to truth but rather its ability to represent and address the political issues of a group. Therefore, political and national myths are similar because the former provides 'a common narrative by which the members of a social group (or society) make significance of their political experiences and deeds' (Bottici 2007, 179). Tudor (1972, 65) does not explicitly define the concept but argues that, '[M]any political myths are what we may call foundation myths. They tell the tale of how a political society came to be founded.' In this regard, political myth legitimizes the policy-making of the government. Milosevic and Stojadinovic (2012, 78), for example, argue that political myths

> seek to establish themselves as the basis of values and beliefs about the social order and political relations, i.e. as a way of validating the idea of the state, political authority, leadership, hierarchy, power and government, respect for order, equality or inequality, whether they are justified or challenged.

In other words, political myths are created by a government to justify its policy on certain issues.

National myth defines a country's identity and provides people with a world view that 'generates a strong sense of identification' (Edwards 2015, 189). It plays the role of a 'social glue' that enables groups of people to come together in order to determine common ground to define who they are and their future endeavours (189). Anderson's *Imagined Communities*, for example, is perhaps the most influential work on how the concept of 'nation', 'nationess' and 'nationalism' are culturally constructed throughout history. With respect to Indonesia's concept of nationalism, Anderson points out that Dutch colonialism has created 'horizontal comradeship' (Anderson 1991, 7) among

the Indonesian people regardless of their different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Memory of colonialism triggered Indonesian intellectuals in the early twentieth century to formulate the idea of Indonesia. Suwardi Suryaningrat, also known as Ki Hadjar Dewantara, and Ernest Douwes Dekker, among others, stated that the very nature of Indonesia as a 'nation' depends not on the solidarity among various ethnic, racial, religious or geographic groups but rather on the shared colonial experience (Elson 2009, 22–23). Indonesia's history of colonialism exemplifies how people with different ethnic and cultural backgrounds formulate their own concept of 'nation' using the historical narrative of colonialism. Memory is the building block for the construction of a nation's identity.

Like nation-building, national myth tends to facilitate collective identity using narratives of the past. Memory of historical experience plays a significant role in constructing the so-called 'nationalist narrative' which is 'the alleged unified, coherent memory shared amongst *all* of the people concerning *their* national past' (Bell 2003, 74). Through the dramatization of historical events, a government forms collective memory and identity of its people. In short, 'national myths are the symptoms of common identities' (Bottici 2007, 229). National myth gives people a unity of feeling, which shapes emotional elements and raises the question of 'where they have come from and to which end they tend' (Cassirer 1946, 48). Since collective identity lies on the emotional rather than intellectual dimensions of human agency, this question provides a strong foundation of common fate among a group of people. In order to build a collective identity, therefore, people require narratives that unite them based on the same level of understanding.

The source of national myth: Srivijaya and Majapahit as maritime powers

The kingdoms of Srivijaya and Majapahit have been regarded as the key source behind the idea of Indonesia's maritime power. Srivijaya's polity was strongly influenced by Indianization. Cœdès (1975, 15–16) defines it as 'the expansion of an organized culture founded upon the Indian concept of royalty, and characterized by Hinduist or Buddhist cults'. One of the most salient ideas from Indian culture is the concept of *mandala*, or 'circles of kings'. The polity of South East Asian kingdoms during the pre-modern period may be fully understood by this concept. Wolters (1999, 27–28) argues that in this conception, a king is perceived as a person of divine and universal authority with hegemonic claims over other kingdoms. In other words, *mandala* describes the structure of power in which a central kingdom demands obedient allies and vassals. In contrast to the Western idea of sovereignty, *mandala* represents 'a particular and often unstable political situation in a vaguely definable geographic area without fixed boundaries and where smaller centres tended to look in all directions for security' (27). The power of a ruler is represented by the *cakravartin*, the centrifugal leadership style in which the power radiates outward from the centre, that is, a divine king. *Cakravartin* implies that the ruler bases its legitimacy solely on the personal and devotional rather than the institutional as in the modern era. It is important to note that although *cakravartin* and *mandala* have often been associated with the power of conquest through the military, the leadership is based on the principle of non-violence. The key instrument of power is

> the ability of the leader to tap into 'cosmic power', be it as a Hindu 'devaraja' (king of gods) or a Buddhist 'Dharmaraja' through virtuous behaviour. Such a leader represents the charismatic centre of a mandala and is considered a person of 'prowess'. (Dellios 2003)

In describing the geopolitical structure of the Srivijaya kingdom, Kulke (1993) uses the term *kadātuan*, which, based on a Malay inscription, means 'empire' and depicts the structure of the hierarchical and territorial division of the Srivijaya kingdom. It consisted of four concentric circles with the centre of power or *dātu* surrounded by *vanua* or 'villages', a space with urban features such as a monastery, markets and parks. *Vanua* were surrounded by *samaryyāda* or 'neighbouring tributary chiefs', where the Srivijaya kingdom had direct control over frontier provinces outside the *dātu*. However, according to Casparis's analysis of fragmentary inscriptions, *kadātuan* Srivijaya had dealt with many insurgencies from far-off *dātus* under the control of local rulers. At the outermost concentric circle of the Srivijaya kingdom was a *mandala* consisting of two groups, namely the princes of royal and non-royal blood represented by family members or clans of the *dātu* and local *dātus* in the presence of indigenous local chiefs (173). The political control of *dātu* over *mandalas* was carried out by military force as well as through peaceful means such as marriage alliances, trade or tribute payments.

Srivijaya has long been regarded as the most powerful maritime power in South East Asia during the seventh to eleventh century and was called a 'thalassocracy', or 'ruler of the sea' (Taylor 1992, 173; Bottenberg 2010; Ricklefs 2013, 89). Yet, according to Dellios and Ferguson (2015, 4–5), Srivijaya did not literally control the sea but was 'limited to the straits within its immediate vicinity, rather than the Indian Ocean or the South China Sea'. Nevertheless, it remained a maritime power without having to dominate the oceans like many empires in the pre-modern era. Srivijaya controlled the Straits of Malacca – a strategic gateway connecting the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean – as an important international sea trade route for centuries. In his book *Suma Oriental*, Tomé Pires states that anyone capable of controlling the Straits of Malacca controlled Venice, while in his study of early Indonesian commerce, Wolters (2017, 17) claims that Malacca, China, the Moluccas, Java and Sumatra were under Indonesia's control. According to Hall (1988, 42), Srivijaya demonstrated its expansionist policy approach to the Straits of Malacca and Sunda. As Srivijaya's centre of power or *dātu*, Palembang played a critical role in maintaining hegemony over international trade in the region by controlling these areas. It became a key seaport for Chinese ships during the northeast monsoon, and in turn established good relationships with India and China. Palembang had a total monopoly over trading, was a centre for ship repair, and provided stores and supplies for ships engaged in east–west voyages (Sakhuja 2011, 260).

Historical evidence also supports the claim that Srivijaya was a strong maritime power. Zhou Qufei wrote in *Ling Wai Dai Dai* (1163) during the Song Dynasty (AD 1127–1279) that

> Somboja [Srivijaya] was strategically located in such an important position in the 'South Sea' that traders of kingdoms from the east (such as the Javanese) or the west (such as the Arabs) needed to pass through Somboja in order to reach China. (quoted in Qin and Xiang 2011, 13)

Although its location was far from the Straits of Malacca, Srivijaya succeeded as the dominant South East Asian maritime trading centre due to its political strategy. It

consolidated Sumatran hinterland and controlled rival ports, which enabled Srivijaya to concentrate on trading commodities in its own ports (Sulistiyono and Rochwulaningsih 2013, 121). Srivijaya also enjoyed victory over many independent ports and polities in South East Asia that had competed to control the Straits of Malacca since AD 400 (Hall 2011, 111). One of the many factors that explains Srivijaya's success in defeating its rivals was its location. Hall points out that 'Palembang also offered a fine natural harbour and a river that was navigable for long distances' (113).

Srivijaya's maritime power also rested on its naval supremacy. The Kedukan Bukit inscription of AD 638, for example, stated that 'Dapunta Hyang' (the king) used a vessel for his *siddhayatra* (pilgrimage). The Kota Kapur inscription of AD 686 also stated that a sea expedition was prepared to cross and attack 'Bhumi Jawa' (Lapian 1982, 35). Such a naval force played a crucial role in maintaining Srivijaya's predominance and its status as a major international port and the central treasury (Taylor 1992, 202). The story of Srivijaya's naval force is also evidenced by the Chinese Song Dynasty sources. In *Ling Wai Dai Dai*, Zhou Qufei wrote that Srivijaya's fleet had not only developed warfare capabilities, but also functioned in mobilizing as well as maintaining a constant presence in the Straits of Malacca and the East Java Sea. Zhao Rukuo wrote in *Zhu Fan Zhi* (1225) that 'the Srivijayan navy was becoming institutionalised and professionalised, with a coherent framework that included a command structure, a mobilisation sequence, and a rationalised equipping and supply scheme' (Heng 2013, 389). In order to strengthen its naval force, Srivijaya gained support from the sea nomads – 'orang laut' – living in coastal and offshore islands around the controlled area, who were paid by the Srivijaya kingdom to prevent them from conducting acts of piracy and to keep their service. The sea nomads conducted patrols and collected tributes from ships, thereby playing the roles of police and pirates (Matsuda 2012, 34). In this way, the kingdom monopolized international trade in the region (Kee-Long 1998, 296).

After the demise of Srivijaya in the eleventh century due to the Chola invasion, the supremacy of pre-modern Indonesian maritime power was replaced by the Majapahit kingdom, which ruled from the thirteenth to sixteenth centuries. Majapahit was established in Trowulan, on the Brantas River in East Java by Raden Wijaya (also known as Kertarajasa Jayawardhana) in 1293, after the defeat of the Mongol forces sent by Kublai Khan. A major source recording the existence of Majapahit is the epic poem *Nāgarakĕrtāgama* ('the state with holy tradition'), written in 1365 by Mpu Prapanca. It describes in detail the Majapahit empire, the influence of Hindu-Buddhism, ceremonial observances, the features of the capital city, adoration and reverence to the king, and its territorial ambition. According to *Nāgarakĕrtāgama*, Majapahit ruled ninety-eight different areas including twenty-five in Sumatra, twenty-four in south, west and north Kalimantan, and thirty-three in the east of Java (Lombard 1996, 49). Another key text chronicling the Majapahit Empire is *Pararaton* ('the story of kings') written anonymously in 1613. According to *Pararaton*, Majapahit inherited its expansionist foreign policy from Kertanegara, a king of the Singhasari kingdom and a father-in-law to Raden Wijaya. Political alliances were reportedly built by Raden with four overseas countries by marrying the princess of each of Bali, Malayu, Madura and Tanjungpura. Since then, formal control of most Indonesian territory had become an integral part of Majapahit's foreign policy (Vlekke 2016, 64–65). During the reign of Hayam Wuruk (1334–1389), Gajah Mada, as prime minister, committed to uniting *nusantara*

(archipelago islands) by referring to Kertanegara's expansionist policy. He took the *sumpah amukti palapa* oath vowing never to eat anything flavoursome until he had succeeded in unifying all Indonesian territories. Muljana (2012, 251) points out that the oath was essentially a continuity of Kertanegara's *nusantara* idea.

As one of the Indianized kingdoms in South East Asia, Majapahit was strongly influenced by Indian culture. In its geopolitical structure, the concept of *mandala* became predominant in defining the 'galactic polity' (Tambiah 2013) of the Majapahit empire. According to *Nāgarakĕrtāgama*, Majapahit was made up of four concentric circles, namely *desantara*, *nusantara*, *Jawa Bhumi* or *yawabumi*, and the royal palace. The capital city of the kingdom was the centre of power, which was surrounded by *yawabumi* or 'the land of Java'. From what we understand, there were regions within the island of Java under the control of Majapahit rule, while *nusantara* referred to the wider regions that tended to be submissive to, and respectful of, the monarch. It represented Majapahit's core political sphere of influence but not omnipotent control. Majapahit and *nusantara* established an equal federation, which was typically built by political marriage to preserve strong ties between Majapahit and other kingdoms within the *nusantara* concentric circle (Nugroho 2010, 147–148). At the outermost concentric circle were the *desantara* or *mandalita rastra*, that is, other countries with which Majapahit had diplomatic and cultural exchanges (Hall 2019, Ch. 4). Therefore, Majapahit's conception of *mandala* was somewhat different from Srivijaya's galactic polity in which the kingdom as a centre of power did not control its outermost circle or *desantara*. In other words, *desantara* consisted of independent states that had an equal relationship with Majapahit. Conversely, Srivijaya controlled its *mandalas* using either coercive or non-coercive power.

Majapahit has long been regarded as an agricultural kingdom, known for its copious rainfall and rice cultivation. It also developed as a maritime power, extending its territory across Sumatra, Java, Borneo, the Moluccas and southern Philippines (Orillaneda 2016, 36; Matsuda 2012, 302). Like Srivijaya, it was considered a thalassocracy able to control large area of waters in South East Asia. According to Vann (2014, 22), in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, Majapahit controlled the spice islands of the Moluccas and dominated the Straits of Malacca. In the fifteenth century, it controlled supply and demand of international trade in many seaports similar to the monopoly held by Portugal, Spain, the Dutch East India Company (VOC) and the East India Company in subsequent centuries (Nugroho 2010, 93). The kingdom had a strong economic relationship with India and China, indicated by the existence of trading communities in several city ports on the north coast. These ports acted as hubs connecting the international trade route from India and China to the Moluccas, and for ships carrying trade to India, the Malay Peninsula, China, Philippines and the countries between (Pigeaud and de Graaf 1976, 5). By 1377, Majapahit controlled networked ports from Sumatra to New Guinea and the southern islands of the Philippines, and in order to maintain its power over *nusantara*, its naval force was based on the north coast of Java. The royal palace paid local sailors to play the role of both mercenaries of trade and security guarantors of maritime routes (Hall 2011, 258), a similar strategy to Srivijaya's maritime policy of recruiting sea nomads to serve the monarch.

There is no doubt that Majapahit, in its expansionist policy, demonstrated its maritime power. In defeating many countries, Majapahit relied on its ships or *jung* or *jong*.

When the Portuguese reached Malacca in 1511, they were surprised by the Javanese ships. According to the testimony of Nicolau Perreira in 1582, some of the Javanese ships or *juncos* were '*very big*, like the very large *naus*' (Manguin 1980, 267).

Despite the demise of Majapahit in the early sixteenth century, we know that the building of such big ships required advanced maritime technology. The writer Duerto Barbosa witnessed Javanese commercial *jung* in India:

> Many ships reach here [India] from Java; four masts; they are very different from ours. The ship was made of thick wood and when it began to age, the lining of the hull was strengthened by adding on it a new layer of board; and so on up to three four times. The sails are made of rattan, and so are the rope. (Lombard 1996, 117–118)

Nugroho (2010, 152) rather exaggerates by suggesting that Java was one the most important centres of shipbuilding in Asia, even in the world, until the fifteenth century. However, it is no exaggeration to claim that Majapahit's ability to control overseas and many strategic ports in the region proves that the kingdom was a great maritime power.

The return of history: a maritime power once again?

The idea of 'maritime identity' first appeared during the presidential campaign in 2014. In his vision and mission, Jokowi stated that he was committed to focusing on Indonesia's identity as an archipelagic state through diplomacy and foreign policy (Widodo and Kalla 2014, 12). He envisioned Indonesia as a GMF. Considering Jokowi's lack of interest in foreign policy, it is easy to assume that he was not the originator of this concept. Ben Bland, author of Jokowi's biography *Man of Contradictions* argues, 'Jokowi is driven by instinct, whim and the winds of fortune. He has no strong sense of where he wants Indonesia to go' (2020). Rizal Sukma, Jokowi's key foreign policy adviser during his first term, was arguably the mastermind behind the concept. Writing in *Kompas*, an Indonesian leading newspaper, Sukma succinctly presented the idea of GMF, defining it from three different perspectives: as a vision, doctrine and a priority for Indonesia's national development agenda (Sukma 2014).

To address potential threats to Indonesia's national security, the strategy of the GMF covers a wide array of security challenges ranging from traditional to non-traditional issues. On traditional security issues, the GMF focuses on protecting Indonesia's territorial sovereignty. Despite the relatively stable relationship between Indonesia and its neighbouring countries, unresolved border lines have become a major concern of the government along with foreign military aggression (Gindarsah and Priamarizki 2015). The growing tension in the South China Sea, particularly over China's aggressive stance, has caused great concern among Indonesian elites. According to Indonesia's Defence White Paper, it is widely believed that the tension may affect the stability of the whole region since it has the potential to become an open armed conflict (Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Indonesia 2015). After all, although Indonesia is not a claimant state and remains neutral on the South China Sea dispute, China's vessels have frequently violated Indonesian sovereignty by crossing the border of Indonesia's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) in the Natuna Islands (NI).

Indonesia has long been cautious in response to China's maritime ambition in the disputed area. Since 1992, the Indonesian government has set up air and sea patrols in the

NI as well as conducted large-scale military exercises to deter China (Syailendra 2017, 240). Indonesia's assertive approach to the issue has been repeated under President Jokowi. After the incident in June 2016 when twelve Chinese fishermen's boats violated Indonesia's EEZ in the NI, a mass military drill to commemorate the seventy-first anniversary of Indonesia's National Armed Forces (TNI) was held in the NI. The Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated that the drill was part of the implementation of government policy to strengthen Indonesia's outer islands (Cabinet Secretariat of the Republic of Indonesia 2016b). Since China promulgated its nine-dash-line map in 2009 that included part of the NI, Indonesia does not acknowledge China's unilateral claim because it has no basis in international law (Syailendra 2017, 241). As China has emerged as a potent rival, Indonesia remains persistent in its approach of asserting 'its rights to territory and resources against more powerful rival nations' (McRae 2019, 16). While Indonesia under Jokowi has strong bilateral ties with China, especially in economic terms, Indonesian elites tend to perceive China as a major security challenge to Indonesian territorial integrity. According to a recent study on the securitization of the NI, Indonesian elites were 'successful in convincing the Indonesian people that China's challenge in the NI represented an urgent national security threat' (Meyer, Nurmandi, and Agustiyara 2019, 14).

Aside from protecting its territorial sovereignty from foreign aggression, the GMF also addresses non-traditional threats, primarily illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, piracy, people and drugs smuggling, terrorism and transnational organized crimes. A joint study between Indonesia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Centre for Strategic and International Studies stated that during the first two years of Jokowi's tenure, IUU fishing was the most salient external policy implementation of the GMF (Cassidy 2016, 14). From October 2014 to 2019, Indonesia's Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries sunk 556 vessels all in all, from countries including Vietnam (321 vessels), the Philippines (91), Malaysia (87), Thailand (24), Papua New Guinea (2), China (3), Nigeria (1), Belize (1) and Indonesia (26) (Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries of the Republic of Indonesia 2019). Although sinking fishing boats is not a matter of foreign policy but rather of national law enforcement, it has sparked serious responses from several countries. Vietnam, for instance, sent a diplomatic note to Indonesia stating that Indonesia should pay attention to the strategic partnership between the two countries and that it hoped the Indonesian government would treat Vietnamese fishermen and boats 'with a spirit of traditional friendship and strategic partnership' (Parameswaran 2015). Similarly, China also sent a diplomatic note that questioned the policy in its position as a flag state of merchant's vessels for which jurisdiction has deemed the nationality of those vessels. China suggested that the Jokowi administration prioritize infrastructure projects under the GMF instead of being concerned with IUU fishing. Nainggolan (2015, 181) argued that China's response reflects its method of avoiding accusations of wrongdoing. For Indonesia, eradicating IUU fishing has been the most appropriate measure for reviving its maritime sovereignty (Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries of the Republic of Indonesia 2018).

As discussed, the existence of the Srivijaya and Majapahit kingdoms as maritime powers inspired Indonesian elites to formulate a new model of foreign policy to apply past glories to present circumstances. The glorification of Srivijaya and Majapahit matters because it legitimizes elite policy and its use of glorious narratives to gain

mass support and remind the people that Indonesia was the most powerful maritime country in South East Asia in the pre-modern era. The centuries-long hegemony of Srivijaya and Majapahit is the ideal symbolic ingredient drawn from national myth to bring about national pride and unity among the Indonesian people. In his 2014 presidential election victory speech, Jokowi and his elected vice-president, Jusuf Kalla, used a pinisi boat, which has long been used by the Bugis people (but not during the Srivijaya or Majapahit empires), as a podium. It sent a strong message that the pinisi boat is a symbol of Indonesia's identity as a maritime country and acknowledged that its ancestors were sailors. In addition, the speech took place in Sunda Kelapa, originally the main port of the Sunda kingdom. Although the content of his speech failed to emphasize Indonesia's maritime identity, both the pinisi boat and Sunda Kelapa port symbolize Jokowi's vision of the GMF. He asserted that,

> The spirit of *gotong-royong* [mutual cooperation] will help the Indonesian people survive challenges, and help Indonesia develop into a global maritime fulcrum and establish its position as a great political civilization in the future. (Liputan6 2014)

Aside from symbolism, Jokowi used the ocean as a metaphor to emphasize his vision of the GMF. In his 2014 inauguration speech before parliament, Jokowi applied oceanic terms such as 'oceanic horizons', 'sailors', 'rolling waves', 'captain', 'on board', 'sail', 'storms' and 'ocean waves' to build the idea of a big, strong, prosperous and peaceful Indonesia (Cabinet Secretariat of the Republic of Indonesia 2014). To unite all people, leaders must gain mass attention using 'the power of language' and narratives that refer to historical events to build national myth. Maratos (2006, 90) writes that myths are 'important narratives shared by a number of people; they influence these people's lives and are re-interpreted by them in order to fit with their understanding of current events according to contemporary thinking'. As Malan (2016, 4) states, 'metaphor is more than a rhetorical device or an instrument of research, but is structural to the process of meaning production and the acquisition of knowledge'. In other words, metaphor is used to construct worlds where the audience lives. Jokowi's use of oceanic terms can be interpreted as a way through narrative for the leader to gain mass support. More specifically, Jokowi used words closely related to maritime identity in order to connect people's feelings and memories with a glorious past.

To Jokowi, history matters in cultivating people's awareness of the Indonesian identity and desire to make the country as great as Srivijaya and Majapahit in terms of maritime power. He frequently mentioned the glory of both empires; for example, his plan to establish an inter-island sea toll to connect islands and reduce the price disparity in Indonesia's outermost and border areas was inspired by the Srivijaya and Majapahit's maritime strength (Merdeka 2014). When bestowing the Adibakti Mina Bahari award in 2015 to those that had contributed to maritime, coastal and small island areas, Jokowi asserted that great countries exist because they controlled seas and oceans as exemplified by Srivijaya and Majapahit (Detik 2015). In his remarks before the participants of the 2016 Marine Environment Protection Committee forum at the International Maritime Organization (IMO) in London, Jokowi committed 'to making Indonesia a Global Maritime Fulcrum, restoring the motto *Jalesveva Jayamahe* ('At sea we are victorious') and returning to the identity of the country as a maritime nation' (Cabinet Secretariat of the Republic of Indonesia 2016a). Although he did not mention Srivijaya and Majapahit in his

remarks, the reference to *Jalesveva Jayamahe* was a reminder to people of the glory of both empires.

National myth is not merely a historical narrative used by political leaders to legitimize their policies. More importantly, it guides policy-making in order to make an impact on the people as a whole. As suggested by Ziemke (2000, 89), national myth provides motivational power in guiding a country's political affairs. Maritime diplomacy has become a key paradigm in contemporary Indonesia's foreign policy and, unlike his predecessor, Jokowi has emphasized maritime issues when dealing with multilateralism. As a pragmatic leader, his involvement in multilateral forums is largely driven by cost and benefit calculation instead of status-seeking behaviour. One of the prominent instruments of Indonesia's maritime diplomacy is the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA). Although IORA had been in existence since 1997, it was only after Jokowi took leadership that Indonesia seemed eager to participate in this forum. IORA has played a strategic role in facilitating Indonesia's ambition to be a global maritime power as aspired in the GMF. Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi underscored the strategic role of IORA as 'a realization of Indonesian maritime diplomacy to back up the country's vision of maritime axis' (Antara 2017). IORA was not only a platform to attract foreign investment but also to 'provide an opportunity for Indonesia to show its teeth as a "global maritime fulcrum"' (Dinarto 2017). While Indonesia currently lacks interest towards ASEAN, IORA has become a new regional architecture to project its ambition as a maritime country. In other words, Indonesia's involvement in IORA represents the country's corporate identity as an archipelagic state. Rezasyah (2017, 212) argues that IORA matters for Jokowi since it makes sense 'to associate the country as more sea-based rather than land-based'. The chairman of IORA from 2015 to 2017 indicated that the country has tended to expand its sphere of influence in the Indian Ocean as part of Jokowi's 'look-west policy'. By turning its focus towards the Indian Ocean, Indonesia followed the strategic logic adopted by the Srivijaya kingdom, which, as discussed previously, controlled the centre of international trade between western Asia and eastern Asia through the sea ports as well as protecting the sea lanes from pirates (Sebastian and Syailendra 2014). Its leadership in IORA was shown by the initiative to propose an overarching theme during the summit level meeting in Jakarta in March 2017 – 'Strengthening the Maritime Cooperation for a Peaceful, Stable, and Prosperous Indian Ocean' – which resulted in the Jakarta Concord agreement.

The ASEAN Maritime Forum (AMF) and the Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF) were formed in the interests of maritime diplomacy and, as such, have been a platform for Indonesia to deal with IUU fishing, to propose the development of a regional arrangement for IUU fishing, and to build regional cooperation concerning those issues (Wahyunnisa 2016, 14). Although the existence of AMF and EAMF is crucial given that the country has many problems regarding territorial disputes in the border areas, such as illegal fishing, people smuggling and drug smuggling, the 7th AMF and the 5th EAMF summits in 2016 were postponed by the host country, Brunei, without proper explanation. Aside from a lack of commitment towards its own institutions, ASEAN does not have a special body that handles maritime issues. In addition, the agenda of AMF and EAMF is driven more by non-ASEAN countries that finance programmes and projects related to maritime issues (Muhibat 2017). Thus, Indonesia could be considered the only members committed to AMF and EAMF partly due to their relevance to Indonesian

maritime diplomacy. Rijal (2018, 167) argues that Indonesia's leadership in the AMF and EAMF is driven by Indonesia's identity as a maritime country shaped by its glorious past. In line with the GMF doctrine, the forums have a direct impact on Indonesia's national interests, specifically maritime security issues.

Indonesia's commitment to maritime issues resulted in the country being re-elected as a member of the IMO Council for 2020–2021. The IMO is a special UN agency responsible for shipping safety and security as well as pollution prevention at sea. There are three categories of membership in IMO: category A consists of ten countries with large sea fleets; category B consists of ten countries with the greatest interest in shipping services; category C consists of twenty countries interested in sea transportation. Indonesia is included as a member of category C, which allows it to participate in influencing IMO policies in terms of developing sea transportation, shipping safety and maritime environmental protection. This has also strengthened the pillars of the GMF and gained international recognition of its strategic value in terms of maritime development (Roza 2017). During a speech at the Marine Environment Protection Committee held by IMO in London, Jokowi stated that the IMO is important to Indonesia and the world because its future is determined by how countries manage the sea through cooperation (Cabinet Secretariat of the Republic of Indonesia 2016a).

The narrative of maritime security is closely associated with the Srivijaya and Majapahit policy of controlling seas and oceans in order to secure maritime trade routes from any threat. However, unlike pre-modern empires which used sea nomads to conduct patrols, countries today commonly seek cooperation under institutional arrangements to deal with threats. In this way, strong leadership on matters is required to bring solidarity and commitment among nations. In ASEAN, Indonesia has long been acknowledged as the *primus inter pares* in playing a leadership role in the region. Acharya (2014) regards Indonesia as a 'normative power' that advocates rules and norms in managing international disputes either within or beyond the region. The country promoted an 'Indo-Pacific Outlook' during the 32nd ASEAN Summit in Singapore, 2018, during which Jokowi suggested that ASEAN needed to adopt the Indo-Pacific concept 'that prioritizes the principles of openness, inclusiveness, transparency, respecting international law, and respecting ASEAN's centrality' (Cabinet Secretariat of the Republic of Indonesia 2018). At the 34th ASEAN Summit in Bangkok, Thailand, ASEAN adopted the Indo-Pacific concept as stated in its final draft report 'ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific'. The concept is expected to be a guiding principle on which to build cooperation in the region; to promote an enabling environment for peace, stability and prosperity; and to enhance ASEAN's community-building process and further strengthen the current mechanisms, as well as implementing existing and exploring other prioritized areas of cooperation (ASEAN 2019).

The idea of integrating ASEAN and the Indo-Pacific concept reflects Indonesia's effort to extract ASEAN from South East Asia's outer circle. For Indonesia and ASEAN countries, the Indo-Pacific concept 'seeks to leverage its core maritime geography as a basis for legitimacy and influence in shaping the regional debate' (Medcalf 2019, 82). Therefore, its proposal of the Indo-Pacific concept reflects a diplomatic approach that puts maritime identity as the fundamental narrative of contemporary Indonesia's foreign policy. The Indo-Pacific concept is inseparable from the structural context of geopolitical rivalry among great powers. The emergence of the Quadrilateral Security

Dialogue or 'Quad', that is, the non-military alliance between the US, Japan, Australia and India has raised security concerns in South East Asia (Cook and Singh 2018). More specifically, Indonesia embraces the Indo-Pacific concept due to its unease about the growth of Sino-US competition, which marginalizes ASEAN and Indonesia in the region (Scott 2019, 3). By adopting this concept, Indonesia is in a position to maintain regional order and security challenges faced by ASEAN.

However, in his second term as president, Jokowi seems to have dropped the GMF from foreign policy discourse. For example, in his 2019 presidential debate on defence and foreign policy, Jokowi emphasized Indonesia's identity as the 'largest Muslim country' instead of a 'maritime country' (Republika 2019), a statement that was arguably directed toward his opponent, Prabowo Subianto, who was supported by hard-line Muslims. According to Jokowi, to be the largest Muslim country provides Indonesia with diplomatic currency to solve international conflicts that contribute to world peace. Again, in his 2019 presidential election victory speech, Jokowi did not mention 'maritime', 'GMF' and related terms. He also failed to elucidate a coherent Indonesian foreign policy for the second term of his presidency (Detik 2019).

The glorious story of the Srivijaya and Majapahit kingdoms has provided the political justification to adopt the GMF both in domestic and foreign relations. Jokowi has successfully exploited such narratives to gain public support and awareness of Indonesia's national identity as a maritime country, at least in the first term of his presidency. This may have helped the government to legitimize its policies, in realizing Indonesia's status as a global maritime power in the long run. However, it has lacked consistency in several public discourses. Aside from the war on illegal fishing, the implementation of the GMF has fallen short of expectations. Indonesia's multilateral diplomacy within the framework of the GMF has gradually disappeared from the current foreign policy agenda. Rather, Jokowi now reasserts Indonesia's traditional role as a 'bridge-builder', as stated in his speech at the seventy-fifth UNGA general debate (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia 2020). At the domestic level, Indonesia's naval force remains small. As argued by an Australian scholar, 'Indonesia doesn't have a maritime consciousness and remains very much a continental military power' (Schreer 2013). The glorification of Srivijaya and Majapahit as the pre-modern maritime power is thus fading from Indonesia's current foreign policy agenda.

Conclusion

National myth matters in foreign policy due to its ability to provide the government with a strong narrative for the people to legitimize its agenda. Under Jokowi's administration, Indonesia's foreign policy has been framed by the idea of the GMF based on the deep-rooted, glorious story of the Srivijaya and Majapahit kingdoms that ruled from the seventh to sixteenth centuries. The two empires are recognized as the largest maritime power in South East Asia during the pre-modern era. On many occasions, Jokowi expressed the glorification of Indonesia's past to unite and gain public support. He used symbols such as the pinisi boat and Sunda Kelapa port in his 2014 presidential election victory speech, a reflection of the romanticization of the Srivijaya and Majapahit empires that has shaped the elite's thinking on how to project Indonesia's power. In other words, one of its foreign policy goals under Jokowi is to restore Indonesia's

status as a global maritime power. Although the GMF has not been fully implemented by Jokowi's administration, especially during his first term, Indonesia's foreign policy has been strongly influenced by the narrative of maritime identity as indicated by Indonesia's involvements in many multilateral forums such as IMO, IORA, AMF and EAMF, and in proposing the ASEAN Indo-Pacific outlook. The salient example of Indonesia's maritime policy is probably its sinking of illegal fishing boats. This assertive behaviour reflects Indonesia's commitment to maintaining sovereignty at sea.

This article demonstrates that the GMF lost its relevance during the 2019 presidential campaign and its subsequent discourse. Instead of using narratives, symbols and metaphors of Indonesia's past glories to reinforce his message, Jokowi turned his back on history. It seems unlikely that during the second period of Jokowi's presidency the idea of the GMF will be implemented. Jokowi's commitment to championing this idea in his current foreign policy has also been lost. Assuming Indonesia needs to be a global maritime power, the government should focus on the three main pillars of maritime power: naval force, shipbuilding and seaports. Till (2009) defines sea power as comprising both military and non-military capabilities. Conversely, sea is a source of power that can be used to influence the behaviour of other countries. Maritime capabilities tend to determine defence policy paradigms in the twenty-first century, while the commercial use of sea power is crucial to a country's economic growth. As Till asserts (22), the government would therefore be well advised to shift its focus from 'power *at* sea, to power *from* the sea'.

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