



# TSpace

---

The University of Toronto's research repository

Accepted Manuscript of **Articulating indigenous identity in Indonesia: Resource politics and the tribal slot**

## How to cite TSpace items

**Always cite the published version**, so the author(s) will receive recognition through services that track citation counts, e.g. Scopus. If you need to cite the page number of the TSpace version<sup>1</sup> because you cannot access the published version<sup>2</sup>, then cite the TSpace version **in addition to** the published version.

Published version citation:

Li, Tania M.

2000 Articulating indigenous identity in Indonesia: Resource politics and the tribal slot. Comparative studies in society and history 42(1): 149-179.

TSpace version citation:

Li, Tania M.

2000 Articulating indigenous identity in Indonesia: Resource politics and the tribal slot. TSpace. Available at <http://hdl.handle.net/XXXX/XXXXXX>. Replace the 'XXXX/XXXXXX' with the item handle from the URL, i.e. the last 9 digits.

[tspace.library.utoronto.ca](http://tspace.library.utoronto.ca)

---

<sup>1</sup> TSpace version: includes the pre-print/original manuscript (version before peer review) and post-print/accepted manuscript (version after peer-review and editing).

<sup>2</sup> Published version: the publisher's final PDF.

# ARTICULATING INDIGENOUS IDENTITY IN INDONESIA: RESOURCE POLITICS AND THE TRIBAL SLOT

Tania M. Li

It was the official line of Suharto's regime that Indonesia is a nation which has no indigenous people, or that all Indonesians are equally indigenous.<sup>1</sup> The internationally recognized category "indigenous and tribal peoples" (as defined in International Labour Organization convention 169) has no direct equivalent in Indonesia's national legal system, nor are there reservations or officially recognized tribal territories. Under Suharto the national motto "unity in diversity" and the displays of Jakarta's theme park, Taman Mini, presented the acceptable limits of Indonesia's cultural difference, while development efforts were directed at improving the lot of "vulnerable population groups", including those deemed remote or especially backwards. Expressions of the desire for development made through bottom up planning processes and supplications to visiting officials were the approved format through which rural citizens communicated with the state. National activists and international donors who argued for the rights of indigenous people were dismissed as romantics imposing their primitivist fantasies upon poor folk who want, or should want, to progress like "ordinary" Indonesians. Nevertheless, a discourse on indigenous people took hold in activist circles in the final years of Suharto's rule, and it has increasing currency in the Indonesian countryside. With the new political possibilities opened up in the post-Suharto era, it seems an appropriate time to reflect on how Indonesia's indigenous or tribal slot is being envisioned, who might occupy it, and with what effects.<sup>2</sup>

A comparative problematic stimulated this inquiry, and forms its focus. My attention was drawn by the contrast between two locations in the hilly interior of Central Sulawesi.<sup>3</sup> In earlier centuries, both locations were inhabited by rather similar people: scattered swidden farmers, loosely organized into family groups, threatened by slave raiders and by sometimes hostile neighbours, and involved in important but tense and

unstable trade and tribute relationships with coastal powers. Today, one is peopled by prosperous, literate, Christian farmers growing irrigated rice and coffee, whose children aspire to government jobs. In the other, very few people can read or speak the national language, swidden cultivation is the norm, housing and nutrition are poor, and livelihoods and health precarious. Yet it is in the former, Lake Lindu, that a collective position as indigenous people has been persuasively articulated. The immediate context of this articulation has been a national and international campaign to oppose the construction of a hydro-power plant at the lake but the preconditions which enabled it have deep historical roots. In the Lauje area, by contrast, while no one would question that the hill farmers are the original inhabitants of their land, the specificity of their identity has not been made explicit, nor does it serve to conjoin local projects to national or global ones.

The comparison of these two locations raises a political problem. In view of the still-powerful official line that indigenous people are figments of an NGO imagination unduly influenced by imported ideas, the contrast between the two sites could be taken to imply that the indigenous identity articulated at Lindu has been adopted strategically, is opportunistic and inauthentic. Mention of the “invention of tradition” presents a similar risk. So too might academic discussions of ethnic identity framed in individualist terms, which seem to suggest that maximizing goal oriented “actors” switch or cross boundaries in pursuit of their ends, approaching questions of identity in consumer terms, as a matter of optimal selection. Equally problematic, from another perspective, are theoretical positions which might suggest that one or other of the groups is suffering from false consciousness: the Lindu perhaps for articulating a tribal position rather than one defined in class terms, or the Lauje for their apparent failure to mobilize at all.

My goal in this article is to set out an alternative approach to the question of indigenesness which is theoretically more adequate to the diversity of conditions and struggles in the Indonesian countryside, and alert to the political risks and opportunities posed by particular framings. I use the terms indigenous and tribal interchangeably in my general discussions, while drawing attention to the nuances of how these terms are deployed and the meanings they invoke in particular contexts. For reasons of history and social structure which I discuss later, anthropologists have not tended to use the term tribe in reference to Indonesia, and legal scholars (e.g. Kingsbury 1998) are uncertain about whether the term indigenous people, framed in the context of white settler colonies, fits the Asian scenario.<sup>4</sup> But these are mobile terms which have been reworked and inflected as they have traveled, as they have been used

to engage with, and envision alternatives to, the models of development promoted by Indonesia's New Order regime. They have taken on new meanings in relation to quite specific fields of power.

My argument is that self-identification as tribal or indigenous people is not natural or inevitable, but neither is it simply invented, adopted, or imposed. It is, rather, a positioning which draws upon historically sedimented practices, landscapes and repertoires of meaning and emerges through particular patterns of engagement and struggle. The conjunctures at which (some) people come to identify themselves as indigenous people, realigning the ways they connect to the nation, the government and their own, unique tribal place, are the contingent products of agency and the cultural and political work of articulation. Other conjunctures have a different resonance, but are no less political in character. The Lauje who do not currently see themselves in the "indigenous peoples" slot nevertheless engage with routine, everyday forms of power. This point is important because one of the risks that stems from the attention given to indigenous people is that some sites and situations in the countryside are privileged while others are overlooked, unnecessarily limiting the field within which coalitions could be formed and local agendas identified and supported.

The concepts of articulation and positioning, which I draw from Stuart Hall, are central to my analysis, and I discuss them in the next section. Then, I describe the fields of power within which the discourse on indigenous people is taking shape in Indonesia, focusing upon the ways in which government departments and NGOs characterize, and seek to transform, the rural populace in the frontier spaces potentially envisaged as indigenous or tribal. Following this I explore the historical and contemporary processes at work in the formation of collective identities in the two study areas, seeking the reasons why the discourse on indigenous people has taken hold in one place but not another. Finally, I discuss issues of risk and opportunity, indicating what is at stake for those who might occupy Indonesia's tribal slot, as well as for those who seek to support their struggles and frame alternatives to the New Order development regime.

## I. Articulation and Positioning

Stuart Hall alerts us to the dual meaning of the term articulation. It is the process of rendering a collective identity, position or set of interests explicit (articulate, comprehensible, distinct, accessible to an audience), and of conjoining (articulating) that position to definite political subjects. For Hall:

An articulation is ... the form of the connection that can make a unity of two different elements, under certain conditions. It is a linkage which is not necessary, determined, absolute and essential for all time. You have to ask under what circumstances can a connection be forged or made? So the so-called 'unity' of a discourse is really the articulation of different, distinct elements which can be rearticulated in different ways because they have no necessary 'belongingness'. The 'unity' which matters is a linkage between that articulated discourse and the social forces with which it can, under certain historical conditions, but need not necessarily, be connected. Thus, a theory of articulation is both a way of understanding how ideological elements come, under certain conditions, to cohere together within a discourse, and a way of asking how they do or do not become articulated, at specific conjunctures, to certain political subjects...[It] asks how an ideology discovers its subject rather than how the subject thinks the necessary and inevitable thoughts which belong to it; it enables us to think how an ideology empowers people, enabling them to begin to make some sense or intelligibility of their historical situation, without reducing those forms of intelligibility to their socio-economic or class location or social position (1996:141-2).

Hall's formulation offers a framework for addressing both the empirical and the political dimensions of my problematic. In relation to the empirical questions of how the tribal slot comes to be defined and occupied, the concept of articulation usefully captures the dual move of positioning which simultaneously posits boundaries separating within from without, and selects the constellation of elements that characterize what lies within. Further, it suggests that the articulation (expression, enunciation) of collective identities, common positions, or shared interests must always be seen as provisional. Cultural identities, as he argues elsewhere, "come from somewhere, have histories. But far from being eternally fixed in some essentialised past, they are subject to the continuous 'play' of history, culture and power" (Hall 1990:225). They are "unstable points of identification or suture ... Not an essence but a positioning" (1990:226). While the "cut" of positioning is what makes meaning possible, its closure is arbitrary and contingent rather than natural and permanent. This feature renders any articulation complex, contestable, and subject to re-articulation. Positively asserted on the one hand, articulations are also limited and pre-figured by the fields of power or "places of recognition" which others provide (c.f. Hall 1995:8, 14).

In relation to the political dimensions of my problematic, Hall's argument that identities are always about becoming, as well as being, but are never simply invented, offers a way out of the impasse in which those who historicize the identities or traditions of "others" are accused of undermining subaltern political projects founded upon originary, perhaps essential truths.<sup>5</sup> In rejecting the idea of a necessary correspondence between social or class position and the discourses through which people make sense of their lives, Hall moves beyond the concept of false consciousness. At the same time, his attention to history and structure suggests a notion of agency quite different from that found in transactionalist accounts (e.g. Barth 1981). While there is a tactical element in the cut of positioning and, at times of heightened politicization and mobilization this element may become explicit, the flow of meaning from which an articulation is derived and the fields of power with which it is engaged transcend that temporary fixity. The concept of articulation is thus alert to the unevenness of conjunctures and conditions of possibility, but it offers no simple recipe for assessing degrees of determination or the points at which everyday understandings and practices shade into tactics consciously selected. It points rather to the necessity of teasing out, historically and ethnographically, the various ways in which room for maneuver<sup>6</sup> is present but never unconstrained. Finally, rather than focus on the identity dilemmas of the individual subject, Hall draws attention to those articulations which have the potential to define broad constellations of shared or compatible interests, and mobilize social forces across a broad spectrum.<sup>7</sup>

## **2. Locating the Tribal Slot in Shifting Fields of Power**

Simplification and stereotyping are characteristic modes of apprehending the symbolic and material space of a nation's frontiers, the space at the cutting edge of capitalist expansion and state territorial control (Watts 1992:116-7; Shields 1991). An archipelagic state, Indonesia's frontiers are the hilly and forested interiors of the larger islands, and the smaller islands of Eastern Indonesia. The populations that occupy these spaces are classified by the state according to two rather distinct frames of meaning and action, and classified by social and environmental activists according to a third, competing frame. Each of these frames narrows or simplifies the field of vision in its own particular way, highlighting some aspects of the landscape and its inhabitants, and overlooking others. The tribal slot, like the savage slot described by Trouillot (1991), is a simplified frame of this sort. As my comparative study will later demonstrate, which frame predominates at a particular time and place depends not upon essential differences between the populations themselves, but upon the regimes of representation or "places of recognition" which preconfigure what can be found there

together with the processes of dialogue and contestation through which identifications are made on the ground.

### State Programs for Interior and Upland Frontiers

Unilaterally, the New Order government classified about one million rural people as “estranged and isolated” (masyarakat terasing, masyarakat terpencil, Department of Social Affairs 1994). The official program designed to civilize such people views them as generic primitives, occupants of a tribal slot which is negatively construed. Their ethnic or tribal identities, cultural distinctiveness, livelihood practices, and ancient ties to the places they inhabit are presented in program documents as problems, evidence of closed minds and a development deficit which a well-meaning government must help them to overcome. This is to be accomplished by means of a resettlement program, successor to Dutch efforts, which attempts to narrow the distance (in time, space and social mores) between masyarakat terasing people and the “normal average Indonesian citizen” (Koentjaraningrat 1993). The cultural distinctiveness they are encouraged to retain is of the song and dance variety.

Resettlement program guidelines specify that masyarakat terasing can be recognized by their tendency to move from place to place, as well as their lack of a world religion, strong commitment to local customs and beliefs, and deficient housing, clothing, education, diet, health and transportation facilities (Department of Social Affairs 1994). But there is, as I have argued elsewhere (Li 1999b), a problem with this list. Elements of the description could apply to almost all the rural population outside Java, especially to the tens of millions engaged in swidden agriculture or living in or near forests.<sup>8</sup> Identifying suitable subjects to be classified as masyarakat terasing is, therefore, a matter of interpretation and negotiation. Considerations include the need for the Department responsible for resettlement to meet its quota; the distribution of construction contracts and associated forms of state largesse; pressures to reallocate land to more lucrative ventures; and the interest of the subjects themselves in access to the short or long term benefits promised to them.

In contrast to the few classified as masyarakat terasing whose ethnic distinctiveness is acknowledged, and whose unique cultural characteristics are officially marked (albeit negatively), the majority of people occupying forested, mountainous or other types of frontier land are classified simply as village folk, orang kampong. The development programs designed for them ignore ethnic differences and assume, at the same time as they seek to create, homogenous forms of family and village life and a common

administrative structure throughout the archipelago.<sup>9</sup> Many of these programs encourage or enforce mobility across the rural landscape. In the past few decades Indonesians have moved from one place to another as migrants, transmigrants, or workers attracted to, or ejected from, boom/bust industries (Brookfield et al 1995). They have been forced to move when the state, which claims control over most of Indonesia's land (approximately 75% of it under the Ministry of Forestry), allocates their lands to other uses and users (Evers 1995, Zerner 1990, Moniaga 1993b). Few rural people outside Java have formal title to their lands. Regardless of the depth of their attachments to a particular place, most of the people who are rural and poor are deemed to be illegal squatters, subject to expulsion and other sanctions (Departmen Kehutunan 1994). To be an "ordinary villager" is, therefore, to belong to a homogenized or simplified category of people whose ethnic identity, distinctive forms of social organization, and localized commitments are officially unrecognized and often seen as contrary to national laws, policies and objectives. In keeping with this official views of the countryside, national census data contains no information about the numerical size of ethnic or linguistic groups, their regional concentrations, or the relative proportions of migrants and original inhabitants in a particular area (Peluso 1995:399).

### NGO Visions and Agendas

Counterposed to these two official frames for defining and managing rural space and populations is the category of indigenous people whose presence in the Indonesian countryside has been highlighted by social and environmental activists, especially in the past decade. Activists draw upon the arguments, idioms and images supplied by the international indigenous rights movement, especially the claim that indigenous people derive ecologically-sound livelihoods from their ancestral lands and possess forms of knowledge and wisdom which are unique and valuable. But the discourse on indigenous people has not simply been imported. It has, rather, been inflected and reworked as it has traveled. While it is significant that some Indonesian activists writing in their own language continue to leave the English term "indigenous people" untranslated, others use a range of terms such as masyarkat adat, masyarakat tradisional, masyarakat asli and penduduk asli each of which is contextualized in particular struggles, some of them decades old.

Support for indigenous or tribal people is widespread in the Jakarta activist community, where their plight is taken to indicate one among many ways in which the promises of Indonesian democracy and nationhood remain unfulfilled. The population that is envisaged to fit the indigenous or tribal slot differs according to the agenda and



activities of the NGO in question.<sup>10</sup> For urban activists concerned to critique and redirect Indonesian modernity, indigenous people are the embodiment of pure forms of Indonesian cultural heritage unsullied by encounters with colonialism, westernization and modernity.<sup>11</sup> Some activists focus their concern upon especially isolated or exotic groups, those who conform to the slot imagined by international promoters of tribal environmental wisdom. These are the same people who would readily be classified by the government as masyarakat terasing: some NGOs refer to the number published by the Department of Social Affairs (ie about one million ) to identify the subjects of their concern. Their goal is reverse the negative valorization which the government has placed upon the traditions of those in the tribal slot, and defend their right to maintain their distinctive ways of live, rejecting state-defined environment and development imperatives which involve displacement or forced and rapid change.<sup>12</sup>

For other activists the term indigenous people can be applied not only to especially isolated or exotic groups, but to the majority of Indonesia's rural citizens outside Java. At their most radical, these broader definitions amount to an attempt to roll back the state's territorial, social and political control over the countryside and empower tens of thousands of rural communities to manage their own affairs.<sup>13</sup> A key objective for many activists is the implementation of the provisions in the Basic Agrarian Law of 1960 which recognizes rights to land based upon adat or custom. They do not restrict their attention to those groups formally recognized by the Dutch as "adat law communities" but argue rather that any rural community can qualify under the provisions of the Basic Agrarian Law if their rights to land derive from and are recognized under local custom. Distinctive cultural styles which substantivize the idea of "a customary law community", and local sites and signs which provide proof of ancient ties to a place strengthen a claim but, according to some activists at least, are not essential to it. As one activist explained, "Adat is dynamic. So long as local people manage their land and resources in an orderly way, they can be said to have a customary tenure system".

Within this array of state and activist positions, there are many criteria for specifying who fills the tribal or indigenous slot, just as there are many agendas for their future. Rural people in Indonesia have some room for maneuver as they situate themselves in relation to the images, discourses and agendas that others produce for or about them. On the one hand, if they are to fit the preconfigured slot of indigenous people, they must be ready and able to articulate their identity in terms of a set of characteristics recognized by their allies and by the media that presents their case to the public. But the contours of the tribal slot are themselves subject to debate, as I have shown.

Agency is involved in the selection and combination of elements that form a recognizably indigenous identity, and also in the process of making connections. Under some conditions, the room for maneuver may be quite limited. Struggles over resources, which are simultaneously struggles over meaning, tend to invoke simplified symbols fashioned through processes of opposition and dialogue which narrow the gaze to certain well established signifiers and traits. In contests that pit marginalized populations against the state, it may be the case that only one story can be presented. Whichever story this is, its audibility increases to the extent that it fits a familiar, pre-established pattern.<sup>14</sup> But power is seldom so singular, and articulations are correspondingly complex. They are contingent but not random; provisional, indeterminate, but not without form. It is not possible, just by surveying the rural scene, to predict which articulations will in fact be made. Nevertheless, it is possible to gain some understanding of the processes involved. To this end, I focus upon particular conjunctures, in this case, the two contrasting sites in the Sulawesi hills.

### **3. Articulating Indigenous Identity: Where An Ideology Finds its Subject**

#### Power and the Production of Cultural Difference

In the western popular imagination fed by the National Geographic, and also in the minds of some activists, tribes are naturally bounded, culturally distinct groups occupying spatially continuous and usually remote terrain. Tribes so imagined are hard to find in Indonesia, where analysis of history and social structure points, rather, to the political nature of processes of group formation. The bilateral kinship system found in much of the archipelago lends itself more easily to the inclusion of others than to their exclusion. While there are some unilineal and hierarchical groups at the western and eastern extremes of Indonesia, in most areas kin loyalties are diffuse and residence patterns flexible. More common than sharp ethnic boundaries are patterns of continuous variation on familiar themes (Kahn 1999, Kipp and Rodgers 1987:8). Therefore, when tribal or ethnic boundaries are clearly marked, they can usually be traced to specific histories of confrontation and engagement.<sup>15</sup> Kipp and Rodgers (1987:1) argue that the distinctive ancestral customs claimed by Indonesia's more ethnicized groups are often "less ancestral than exquisitely contemporary ...a system of symbols created through the interaction of small minority societies, their ethnic neighbours, colonial administrations, the national governments, and the world religions, Islam and Christianity".

Precolonial coastal kingdoms were not much interested in the details of cultural variation and ethnic affiliation in the uplands and interiors of their domains. Their principal goal was to monopolize trade and, in some cases, to control labour through direct enslavement or debt bondage. In both these endeavours, coastal powers were often thwarted by the capacity of interior peoples to subsist on their swidden fields, avoid trade engagements, and retreat to inaccessible areas when faced with violence or unreasonable demands. Muslim coastal powers therefore relegated most of the inhabitants of the interior to a tribal slot which they characterized by animism, backwardness and savagery. Interior peoples, meanwhile, developed positive identities stressing independence, autonomy, and their capacity to carve a livelihood out of their hilly, forested terrain.<sup>16</sup> Domination and difference emerged therefore within a single political and cultural system, as distinctive identities began to be attributed to, imposed upon, and forged by, interior populations through a complex and resistance-permeated process Sider (1987:17) terms “create and incorporate”. Where definite, tribe-like social units were found in the interior, their emergence could often be traced to conditions of warfare and conflict.<sup>17</sup> In the absence of such encounters and confrontations, loosely structured, decentered, often scattered populations did not view themselves as distinct ethnic groups or tribes, and their identities remained only vaguely specified.<sup>18</sup>

The Dutch colonial authorities played an important role in ethnicizing or traditionalizing the Indonesian interior. In frontier areas where the indigenous political structures were amorphous, they set about consolidating people into tribe-like groups under centralised, hierarchical leadership.<sup>19</sup> They used the notion of tradition quite deliberately to legitimate colonial policies of indirect rule, and to help consolidate the authority of the Dutch-appointed “traditional” leaders through whom this rule would be exercised.<sup>20</sup> To this end, local practices or customs (adat) were codified by scholars and officials.<sup>21</sup> The Dutch concept of the adat law community (masyarakat hukum adat) assumed, as it simultaneously attempted to engineer, named, bounded, and organized groups. It was a concept that resonated differently with the local social formations that existed across the archipelago.<sup>22</sup> Ironically, but not surprisingly, it corresponded better to the formations that arose as result of colonial interventions (including the adat codification process itself) than it did to those that existed prior to Dutch control. In regions of little interest to the Dutch, the process of traditionalization did not occur or was incomplete and identities, practices and authority in matters of custom remained, and in some cases still remain, flexible and diffuse.<sup>23</sup>

Dutch efforts to systematize adat preconfigured the contemporary “indigenous peoples” slot, and their uneven reach continues to be reflected in the differential capacity of frontier peoples to articulate collective identities and positions. In the pre-colonial period, both the highland I will describe were peripheral to the concerns of the coastal chiefdoms which claimed nominal control over them. It was in the colonial period that a marked divergence occurred in their historical trajectories, laying the basis for the distinct spatial, political and social configurations that characterize them today.

### The Mountain Lauje: Development Supplicants, Cynics, or Tribe Manquée?

The Lauje, currently numbering about 30,000, occupy the hilly interior and the narrow coastal strip of the peninsula to the north of the Tomini Bay. They are concentrated in the present day sub-districts of Tomini and Tinombo. Their language (Lauje) shades gradually into Tiaolo and Tajio, the languages of their neighbours, and there are no ethnicizing signs that mark the borders of the Lauje domain. The Lauje hills are fairly densely settled and cultivated but not especially fertile, so they have not attracted outsiders. The Lauje have not therefore been provoked into articulating collective identities and associated boundaries in order to claim or defend their territory (Li 1996).

According to Nourse’s (1989) account of local history, in pre-colonial times, most Lauje kept to the hills for fear of slave raiders and pirates, although they traded jungle produce. Those occupying the drier lower slopes produced tobacco for regional markets. Lauje who moved down to the coast during the nineteenth century constituted themselves as a class of aristocrats, and intermarried with traders who moved in from other parts of Sulawesi: mainly Bugis, Mandar and Gorontalo. The Lauje area was of only peripheral interest to the Dutch. It contained little natural wealth, and the coastal aristocrats were quiescent and easily co-opted, posing no threat to Dutch authority. A half-hearted attempt was made early this century to move the interior population to the coast, but it was clear that the land base was insufficient and they were soon allowed to return to their scattered mountain homes. Some undertook forced labour service, working on the construction of the coastal road and bridges, while others moved further inland to evade such obligations. Dutch revenues from the area, such as they were, came from taxing the owners of coconut groves planted along the coast at Dutch insistence.

The minimal obligation of the coastal chiefs toward their Dutch overlords was to keep peace in the interior, and prevent feuding and bloodshed. Their model for governance

was to select highlanders of renown, and make them responsible for maintaining order. Since the expectations associated with rule over the interior were relatively light, the Dutch had no need to discover, constitute, or record Lauje customary practices or traditional law (adat). The mechanisms for accomplishing rule in the post-colonial period became somewhat more systematic but did not fundamentally change. Since the borders of the lowest level administrative units (desa) were defined to cross-cut the terrain from the coast to the hills, the coastally-based desa heads continued the practice of appointing hillside leaders to be responsible for the maintenance of order in their vicinity. These leaders occupy the official positions of hamlet chief (kepala RT) and chief of customary affairs (kepala adat). The task of the latter is to adjudicate marriage arrangements and local disputes in the hillside hamlets to which they belong.

According to several of those holding responsibility for “customary affairs”, the procedures, rules and fines they administer in their hillside hamlets were not handed down by the ancestors but, rather, established by the coastal authorities earlier this century in order to overcome the anarchy and feuding that previously prevailed in the hills. They consider their own authority to settle disputes to be a power granted by the desa administration, ultimately backed by the civil, police and military authorities of the district. They do not articulate a sense of adat as something distinctive, autochthonous, locally derived, or essential to Lauje identity. There are, of course, many beliefs and practices of a spiritual nature relating to ancestors as well as to features of the landscape, but these are described as matters of personal, family or at most hamlet-wide conviction rather than pan-Lauje tradition.

Desa officials regard the hill people and their farming practices as backward, and generally show little interest in them. Desa maps portray the hills in spatially compressed form, while depicting the houses and public facilities on the narrow coastal strip in minute detail. Some desa officials describe the hilly interior as “empty”, even when more than half the desa population lives up above (see Li, 1996). When pressed to discuss the mountain population, they emphasize their primitive, unruly nature and their status not as noble savages but as awkward and annoying ones. They sometimes refer to the mountain dwellers as orang dayak, a term they have picked up through media exposure to the apparently wild and primitive people of the Kalimantan interior, and now use to label and characterize their own backwoods. Many desa officials are themselves Lauje, but they, like the rest of the coastal Lauje elite, regard their shared ancestry with the heathen and backwards interior as a source of embarrassment. Some coastal Lauje have tried to highlight distinctions between Lauje and “foreigners” (Bugis, Mandar and others), but their goal has been to bolster their

own claims to aristocratic status rather than to foster an overarching Lauje identity uniting coast and hills (c.f. Nourse 1989, 1994). Meanwhile, officials from the Ministry of Education and Culture bemoan their assignment to an area of Indonesia so patently lacking in the kinds of songs, dances and handicrafts that they are expected to identify and turn into emblems of the local for display in provincial or national fora. No sympathetic outsiders have yet come looking for indigenous people.

Engagements between the state and the Lauje people have been framed within, rather than outside or in opposition to, the state's discourse of development. This does not mean that there is consensus on who or what needs to be developed, or how development should be accomplished. For their part, desa officials readily classify the mountain Lauje as masyarakat terasing when planners from the provincial capital visit to ask about local development needs. In so doing, they seek to absolve themselves of responsibility for the onerous task of trying to count, monitor or control, let alone provide services to, a mountain population which, they stress, is continuously on the move. They also hope to attract resettlement projects to their desa, massive deployments of state attention and expenditure which would help to resolve their administrative difficulties and potentially also their financial ones. To this end they have helped to generate long lists of names of people who should be resettled and the Department of Social Affairs (1994:89-92) has it on record that there are 912 households of Lauje masyarakat terasing in need of government attention, in addition to the eighty that have already been resettled under the Department's program. But the Department receives many more requests for resettlement programs than it can handle. Numbers alone do not make a compelling case. The Department has already been exposed to embarrassment when all the Lauje abandoned a resettlement site and returned to the hills within a year. Moreover, the Lauje are considered rather dull folk, lacking in the paint and feathers expected of true primitives. As one senior official observed in an interview, "sometimes we look at them and say these are not indigenous people, they are village people".<sup>24</sup> There are other groups in Central Sulawesi, such as the Wana, who better fit the bill.<sup>25</sup> The mountain Lauje, who are not especially exotic and have no serious competitors for their hilly terrain, have therefore been left pretty much to their own devices.<sup>26</sup>

Generally, the mountain Lauje agree that their part of the Province, and the hills in particular, suffer from a development deficit. This is a deficit they mostly attribute not to their own primitiveness or recalcitrance, but to the indifference, corruption and greed of local elites who direct state facilities, programs, and benefits away from them. Those who have heard about the official resettlement program oppose it on practical

grounds. While they would be happy to receive new houses and rice rations as gifts from the government, they are rightly skeptical about livelihood prospects on the coast, and insist therefore that they would have to remain where they are.<sup>27</sup>Not having been exposed to the overtly coercive dimensions of state power, nor to the threat of having land and livelihoods removed from them in the name of development, they have not articulated collective positions on these matters. Their engagements with state authority and development occur mostly through unremarked, “everyday” patterns of action and inaction. Some participate in mandatory public works days (*kerja bakti*), others do not. Some hike down to the *desa* office when called to pick up free cocoa seedlings, others surmise that any handouts offered to them will probably be of poor quality, or purloined by coastal elites, and make their own arrangements. Some pay land taxes, others claim they are too poor to pay, and count on officials to be lenient. Like the coastal elites, they bring a well-honed cynicism to these everyday encounters. They have learned the parameters of what can be requested from the government, the list of things (schools, seedlings, roads or footpaths) that fit within the official purview of what development entails. These are indeed things they feel they want and need, although they do not define their lives as chronically deficient due to their absence, nor do they sit passively waiting for the government to secure their futures. They are, however, willing to adopt the position of supplicants in the hope that some of the desired things will come their way.

So far, there has been no conjuncture, no context, site, event or encounter, in which the mountain Lauje have articulated a collective position as indigenous people. No hillside leaders have emerged interested in, or capable of, articulating territorial claims beyond the level of their own hamlet, still less a generic Lauje identity. There are respected shamans living both in the hills and on the coast, but their agendas do not appear to be political. The pretensions of coastal Lauje “aristocrats” are largely unheard or ignored. The main authority hill folk acknowledge is that of *desa* officials but, as noted above, they are rightly suspicious of the motives of this group and resent the unfair treatment they receive at their hands. They are not anti-development. Indeed, they are taking their own initiatives to improve their chances of being *included* in state development agendas which have hitherto passed them by. They engage with the state in a discourse consistent with their knowledge of themselves, their needs and aspirations, and their understanding of what it is possible to demand and expect in that relationship. The ideology of indigenous people has not found its subject in the Lauje hills because, under current conditions, it would not help people to make sense of their situation, nor would it help them to improve it.

## Sulawesi Tribe Opposes Lake Lindu Dam Project

So stated a headline in the Jakarta Post (an English language daily) on September 11 1994. The article quoted Gesadombu, “Tribal Chief of the Lindu plains”, on the centrality of the Lake to the Lindu tribe’s livelihood; the “strong traditional and practical ties the Lindu people had with the land they live on”; and the certain loss of traditional values should the people be forced to move out. Accompanying the Chief were “23 other fellow Lindu indigenous people, non-governmental activists, students and nature-lovers from Central Sulawesi”. They were visiting Jakarta to meet with state officials and present their case against the construction of a hydro-power plant at the lake. The article also quoted activists on the ecological soundness of the Lindu people’s traditional resource management practices, on the need for the government to learn about land and water management from the people, and on the right of the Lindu people to express their culture.

Every component of this news story is familiar: the presence of tribes, tribal leaders, tribal ecological wisdom and a specific tribal place central to the group’s identity and culture, plus the presence of allies and sympathizers, and of a massive external force poised for destruction. It is a story for which the conceptual frame or “place of recognition” already exists, and for which the intended readership has been prepared. Nevertheless, the telling of this story in relation to Lindu or any other place in Indonesia has to be regarded as an accomplishment, a contingent outcome of the cultural and political work of articulation through which indigenous knowledge and identity were made explicit, alliances formed, and media attention appropriately focused.

The historical pre-conditions for this situation were established at Lindu at the turn of the century, when, according to Acciaioli (1989) the area was subjugated by the Dutch and the scattered hill farmers (numbering about 600) were forced to form three concentrated settlements beside the lake. There, they were converted to Christianity by the Salvation Army mission, educated in mission schools, and encouraged to view custom as matter for display at celebrations overseen by an officially recognized “customary” leadership, the adat council. Subsequently, the arrival of migrants from neighbouring districts and Bugis from the south gave the Lindu people some (often bitter) experience in articulating claims to their “ancestral, customary or village land” (Acciaioli 1989:151). Resource struggles thus provided the stimulus to articulate (select, formulate, and convey) a set of Lindu adat rules which ought to be acknowledged by outsiders, a process which in turn reworked the significance, and the



substance, of Lindu knowledge and identity. Even before the discourse of indigenous people became available to them, the preconditions that would suggest its relevance were firmly in place. Moreover, unlike the mountain Lauje whose aristocratic elite, as well as desa administrators, are located far away on the coast in a distinct class position and ecological niche, the leaders of the consolidated lakeside villages at Lindu experienced the threat posed by newcomers in the same way as their co-villagers. Thus mission-educated, literate, desa officials, school teachers and prosperous farmers played a central role in the articulation of Lindu identity, rights and claims.<sup>28</sup>

The identity of the Lindu as indigenous people with valuable knowledge and with rights to their ancestral land was firmly established in the context of opposition to the hydro plan and the threat of forced resettlement. According to Sangadji's account (1996), the campaign involved confrontational encounters with the authorities, media attention, collaboration with national and international NGOs, and activities organized by Lindu leaders to heighten awareness within the community. NGO campaigning and support began in 1988. In 1992, at a dialogue with NGOs in Palu, a Lindu leader stated that he and his people would rather die than be removed from their ancestral lands. A youth group was formed at Lindu to research Lindu tradition and work for its preservation. Many journalists and officials visited the site, and adat leaders reiterated the preference to die rather than lose their culture. Security forces warned the people against activists who were misleading them, and whose values were western and contrary to the official national ideology (pancasila). An environmental assessment was carried out by consultants in 1993, but invited no public input. The delegation mentioned above then visited Jakarta to meet with top officials, and was told that an amended design would avoid the necessity for resettlement. Currently, the hydro plan is on hold, though the Lindu and their supporters remain vigilant.<sup>29</sup>

The scale of the threat to local lives and livelihoods, the dramatic nature of a dam as a stage for NGO action, the location of the dam within a National Park, and the massive economic implications of the project explain why Lindu attracted so much attention. But it remains to be explained how and why the Lindu have come to articulate their identity, present themselves, and be represented by their supporters in terms consistent with both national and international expectations concerning indigenous people or tribes.

The news coverage and documents prepared in the course of the campaign shed some light on the "how" question. Members of the NGO coalition worked with Lindu leaders produce documents to inform the public and policy makers about the Lindu people

and the negative impacts of the dam. These documents present Lindu as a unique, tribal place, its integrity basically intact. They note that the Lindu are the only speakers of the Tado language (related to Kaili) and that they are an autonomous group that have managed their own affairs (*hidup mandiri*) for hundreds of years (Sangadji 1996:19, Laudjeng 1994:150-152). There is little mention of the impact of Dutch rule or the presence of Bugis and other non-Lindu at the lake. The documents focus upon cultural features which confirm the uniqueness of the Lindu people, their environmental wisdom, and their spiritual attachment to the landscape. Culture is substantivized through a focus upon “traditional” costumes, major annual feasts and marriage arrangements. Lindu capacities for environmental management are demonstrated through the existence of the *adat* council, said to have jurisdiction over the Lindu people’s collective territory, an area which extends to the peaks of all the mountains surrounding the lake. Management rules include the exclusion of outsiders from the use of Lindu resources, except with permission from the *adat* chiefs, and the zoning of land according to specified uses. The documents pay considerable attention to the existence of named zones for farming, for hunting and grazing, and sacred sites in which all forms of activity (tree cutting, gathering, etc.) are strictly forbidden (Laudjeng 1994:155-160). They also state that each clan and, within the clan, each household, has fishing rights over specific portions of the lake. Filtered and interpreted through a “green lens” (Zerner 1994), these land use categories are presented as similar to, but more efficient than, the land use zones imposed by the state through its forest and National Park regulations (Sangadji 1996:26-8). Finally, the documents emphasize Lindu people’s attachment to their place by naming features of the landscape: hills, sacred spots, grazing areas and the sacred island in the lake associated with the magical culture hero Maradindo. Although they mean nothing to a reader without a map, these place names assert and confirm that the Lindu are thoroughly familiar with their territory. Between the named zones and the specific named places, the point is made that there is no undifferentiated or unclaimed space but, rather, an orderly system of land use designed and managed by the indigenous people of Lindu.

A finer reading reveals many subtleties in these accounts. They present a selective picture, but one which is complex rather than simple, positioning the Lindu in relation to multiple fields of power. They emphasize that the Lindu are “traditional” people, but in no sense are they primitive. The mention of Christianity confirms their nationally acceptable religious standing, yet little is made of the influence of ninety years of missionary work upon their “traditional” rituals and practices. They are shown to be in touch with nature and bearers of tribal wisdom, but by emphasizing the orderliness of the Lindu land use system it is made clear that there is nothing wild about this scene.

The accounts emphasize subsistence uses of the forest, such as building materials and medicinal plants (Sangadji 1996:44). They make less of the presence within these forests of the hill-side coffee-groves that provide the Lindu people with a significant source of cash. It is noted that the Lindu people are not poor. They have an adequate standard of living, though not luxurious, and they are satisfied with their lot. Thus they are sufficiently similar to “ordinary villagers” not to be in need of drastic changes or improvements framed as development, still less the civilizing projects directed at masyarakat terasing. Yet they are unlike “ordinary villagers” in their uniqueness, their special knowledge, and their attachment to their place.

When these documents are read through the prism of the history of Lindu presented in Acioli's thesis (researched prior to the dam conjuncture), and in relation to the fields of power and opportunity presented by the Lindu people's NGO and government interlocutors, they reveal how group boundaries were defined, and how elements from the local repertoire of cultural ideas and livelihood practices were selected and combined to characterize the group. They reveal, that is, the “cut” of positioning, its arbitrary closure at a highly politicized moment. They point to the uniqueness and contingency of articulation, and its necessary occlusion of the larger flows of meaning and power, the practices of everyday life and work, the differences according to gender or class position, and the structures of feeling which form the larger canvas within which positioning occurs.

The efficacy of framing of the position of the Lindu people in terms of the arguments and images associated with indigenous people was not guaranteed. It was effective in the NGO campaign, as activists were able to use the environmental soundness of the Lindu's livelihood practices to argue against the dam and also to support their arguments on behalf of other indigenous people in Indonesia. In activist circles, Lindu became an exemplary case, which was both framed within - and helped to frame - broader struggles.<sup>30</sup> But not all non-government organizations recognized the tribal uniqueness of Lindu. In 1992, while the Lindu campaign was underway, a parks-focused international conservation NGO described the population in the many villages bordering the National Park as ethnically diverse, with a mix of “local” or “traditional” people and newcomers. It observed that they were subsistence farmers, only weakly integrated into markets, and often exploited and displaced by aggressive newcomers. It also noted that they were rather lacking in handicrafts with a tourist potential (Schweithelm et al 1992:39-47). So described, they fit the state category of “ordinary villagers”. But the NGO's report contains no suggestion that the border villages in

general, or Lindu in particular, are populated by tribal people who have ancient ties to the forest, or who possess unique environmental wisdom.

Media receptiveness to the idea of Lindu as indigenous people was also mixed. The English language news coverage cited earlier picked up the tribal angle, as the headline clearly shows. The coverage of opposition to the dam in a major Indonesian language newspaper (Kompas) was more equivocal. An article ("Masyarakat Lindu" 11 Sep 1993) described the Lindu people not as a tribe but as a sub-group of Kaili. It acknowledged their environmental wisdom, but observed that -- the satisfaction expressed by residents notwithstanding -- the area does suffer from a development deficit, signaled by the 17km hike from the nearest road, the muddy village paths, and the incomplete electrical service. Most of the media coverage skillfully analyzed by Sangadji (1996) supported the hydro plan on the grounds of development, and did not address the issue of indigenous people.

Throughout the campaign, the government agencies promoting the power plant neither accepted nor rejected the notion that the Lindu are indigenous people: they simply did not engage with it. Refusing, or not recognizing, the discursive terrain developed by the Lindu people and their allies, officials maintained their focus upon the need for electricity to promote modernization and industrial development in the Palu valley (Sangadji 1996:54). They also made the argument that the resettlement of the Lindu would make them more developed, but this was difficult to justify. Livelihoods at Lindu are, in provincial terms, rather good, as the government itself previously acknowledged when it brought new settlers into the area to share in its prosperity and help develop the potential for irrigated rice production (Sangadji 1996:44). For these reasons, the development argument was consistently rejected by Lindu spokesmen. Indeed, it was their overt rejection of the idea that they were in need of any form of state-directed development, as much as their emphasis upon the unique character of their tribal place, that was notable in their campaign.

In view of the weak case made by the state, various approaches could have been used to frame opposition to the project. A materialist case, focusing upon the loss of good livelihoods, and a political case focusing upon the rights of the Lindu people to fair treatment as citizens were indeed argued. But the most prominent form of articulation -- that which clarified positions and made connections -- was focused upon the loss of a unique tribal identity and way of life. The reasons for this had to do with the fields of power and opportunity surrounding the concept of indigenous people at that conjuncture. The possibility of articulating local concerns with national and

international agendas was clearly present. Situations which set indigenous people up against big projects and the state are guaranteed attention, and they set up predictable alliances (Sangadji 1996:13, 16). Also significant is the way in which an indigenous or tribal identity asserts the unity of people and place, addressing an issue at the heart of state-society relations in the Indonesian countryside. According to the state model which sees rural people as “ordinary villagers”, those that must be moved to facilitate national development can be compensated in cash, or given new land to replace the old. If the Lindu people were simply villagers, their livelihoods could, in theory, be recreated elsewhere. Indeed the future planned for them was to join the (technically troubled) transmigration scheme at Lalundu (Sangadji 1996:20), homogenized quota-fillers, names on a list. Only indigenous or tribal people can claim that their very culture, identity and existence are tied up in the unique space that they occupy (Cohen 1993). There can be no compensation. This was the point argued repeatedly by the Lindu and their supporters (Sangadji 1996:16).

Finally, the tribal slot opens up some room to maneuver unavailable to ordinary villagers. Obstinate peasants can be labeled communists, as they often are in Java (Sangadji 1996:15) but communist tribesmen are somehow less plausible. Their concerns seem to be somewhat different from those of the mass of rural people reacting to the contempt and arrogance with which they are treated by their government. Indigenous people, and their nature-and-culture loving supporters, are differently positioned in relation to the field of power. The sacred shrine of the Lindu’s heroic and supernatural ancestor Maradindo, is located on an island within the lake. When Maradindo is angered, he causes accidents, bizarre events, of which the Lindu can cite recent examples (Sangadji 1996:32, 41-2). The Lindu tell a powerful story: ignore Maradindo at your peril.<sup>31</sup>

## **4. Articulating Indigenous Identity: Conditions, Risks and Opportunities**

### Conditions for Articulation

The contrast between my two examples highlights some of the conditions and conjunctures that have enabled the articulation of “indigenous” identity in contemporary Indonesia. A summary of the factors present at Lindu, but not in the Lauje case, includes the following: competition for resources, in the context of which group boundaries were rendered explicit and cultural differences entrenched; the

existence of a local political structure which included individuals (elders, leaders) and an adat council mandated to speak on behalf of the group; a capacity to present cultural identity and local knowledge in forms intelligible to outsiders, an activity undertaken in this case by a literate elite of teachers, local officials, prosperous farmers and entrepreneurs; an interest on the part of urban activists in discovering and supporting exemplary indigenous subjects and documenting indigenous knowledge which fit the niche pre-constituted in national and international environmental debates; and, finally, heightened interest in a particular place, arising from a conflict which pit locals against the state or state-sponsored corporations.<sup>32</sup>

My comparative study also illustrates the contingent aspects of articulation and the significance of human agency. Which articulations would be made at the conjunctures described was not pre-determined: by some of the obvious criteria, the Lauje were more qualified for the tribal slot. Every articulation is a creative act, yet it is never creation ex nihilo but, rather, a selection and re-articulation of elements structured through previous engagements. It is also, as Hall points out, subject to contestation, uncertainty, risk and the possibility of re-articulation at future conjunctures.

### Contestation and Risk

The potential for contestation is easy enough to identify, since the different interests at play in any articulation could always lead to its unraveling. At Lindu, for example, the Bugis and other settlers who currently go along with the indigenous position could object to, or find themselves threatened by, the potential exclusivism of “the Lindu Tribe”, and identify alternative positions and alliances from which to oppose the dam. Lindu people themselves have different stakes in adat and its contemporary articulations, and are situated unevenly in relation to the power of adat chiefs.<sup>33</sup> NGOs do not always agree on visions, priorities, or the forms in which connections should be made and actions taken. Many activists are aware of the differential benefits that would accrue from a strengthening of customary land rights. Losers would include those who fail to fit a clear cut ethnic-and-territorial niche, whose family background or patterns of geographic and class mobility have removed them from any material connection to a specific tribal place. Several observers have noted that it is displaced, landless people, mainly Javanese, not indigenous people, who are Indonesia’s most vulnerable group (Brookfield et al 1995, Evers 1995:11). The whole concept of indigenous people, and the idea that they have particular rights, can be -- and is, in some quarters -- contested on these grounds. Others see the possibility of broadening and redefining interests and visions to create even stronger alliances.

Risk is apparent at many levels. Under Suharto, risk was endemic to any form of political organizing. Government critics commonly saw activists as fomenting trouble, or in the standard language used to refer to subversive activities, acting as an (unspecified) “third party” misleading and manipulating simple rural folk and creating “politics” where there is none. But, despite the risk, support for indigenous people provided activists with an opportunity, a space where they could act. The grounding of association and mobilization in culture and tradition, and its association with conservation agendas, became crucial to the (precarious) political acceptability of community organizing in the Indonesian countryside (Zerner 1994). It also provided a space in which some rural people could affirm positive identities, and articulate, substantiate, and defend their claims.

Conjunctures at which rural people have identified themselves, and become identified, as indigenous people are moments at which global and local agendas have been conjoined in a common purpose, and presented within a common discursive frame. But the tribal slot fits ambiguously with the lives and livelihoods of people living in frontier areas. It is not an identity space that every local group is able or willing to occupy. They may present themselves as indigenous people, or they may emphasize their standing as ordinary villagers. Too much like primitives, and they risk to be classified as masyarakat terasing to be resettled by the Department of Social Affairs. On the other hand, as “ordinary villagers”, they are vulnerable to arbitrary removal under another set of government programs. Candidates for the tribal slot who are found deficient according to the environmental standards expected of them must also beware.<sup>34</sup> The majority of Indonesia’s swidden farmers have long been committed to producing for the market, and many are more interested in expanding commercially-oriented agriculture than in conserving forests. Some are interested in profits from the sale of timber, and not just the non-timber forest products usually deemed appropriate to them (Dove 1993). Neither good tribes nor good peasants, they are in an ambiguous position which, rather than allowing them room for maneuver may instead restrict their scope, and make it difficult to isolate opponents and identify allies and arenas for action.

### Uncertainty and Contingency

One of the most significant uncertainties in the articulation of indigenous identities concerns whether or not connections can actually be made. At Lindu, government officials refused to engage with the issue of indigenoussness. They simply repeated the

development argument regardless of evidence that it was inappropriate. Environmentalists, journalists, or other social and political activists searching for indigenous knowledge find it more easily in some places than others, as the contrast between Lauje and Lindu clearly reveals. For people in a hurry, it is easier to seek out conjunctures at which the articulations they seek are readily forthcoming and connections easily made. Such places then become exemplars, visited by many people, and increasingly reified as they are written about, quoted and cited in ever-broadening circuits of knowledge and action (c.f. Keck 1995, Rangan 1993). The process has a dynamic similar to that which Robert Chambers has dubbed “rural development tourism” (1983) although, in the case of tribes, the issue which mostly draws outsiders is not development success but conflict, especially when it pits locals against the state. Struggles that go on over access to mundane resources like schools and roads, and the strategies of those who seek to position themselves closer to the state, go relatively unremarked.

The circumstances of my research at Lindu and Lauje can usefully illustrate the uneven channels through which outsiders connect to “the local”. I point this out not in confessional mode, but because reflexivity, in this instance, brings to light issues of a general nature (Herzfeld 1997). NGO friends in Jakarta active in the campaign against the hydro project suggested I should visit Lindu, and put me in touch with their partner NGO in Palu. Contacts easily made, I was able to make a two-day visit to Lindu at the end of a five-week stint in the Lauje hills. When I arrived at Lindu, a group community leaders gathered to talk to me. The contrasts with the Lauje area I had just left were palpable: a much higher standard of living, an educated, Indonesian-speaking population, and a leadership with a clearly articulated collective position. Moreover the clarity of their discourse, together with the set of documents and press clippings given to me by the NGO, made it possible for me to write about them even without conducting field research. Connecting with the hillside Lauje is much more difficult. Very few people speak Indonesian, illiteracy is almost total, and there are precious few documentary sources. The hillside population has no obvious spatial or social center, no hierarchy of leadership that would suggest to a visitor (especially one in a hurry) where they should go, or who they should talk to. The historical reasons for this are deep but contingent, as I have shown. The conditions of possibility for research, writing, and connecting run equally deep, and they have real political effects. While I can protest that more attention should be paid to the Lauje and people like them, as well as to the historical contexts of meaning and action and the more subtle workings of power, it was usually the dramas at Lindu that captured the imagination of readers of this paper in its earlier drafts. My accounts of the Lauje are more nuanced, but also



fuzzier, more equivocal, less easily picked up and read by outsiders in search of a tribal place.

### Articulation versus Imposition

Many locally produced images, counter-images, inversions and inventions receive little attention on the global stage as a result of the unequal power relations within which processes of representation occur. One could mention here the shaman/ leader described by Tsing (1993), whose project for defining Meratus identity and reordering community life enthralled local audiences, but would surely be dismissed by outsiders as the ravings of a mad woman. Her articulations fail to forge connections to wider circuits of meaning. Thomas (1994:89) also draws attention to the problem of uneven privileging: “constructions of indigenous identities almost inevitably privilege particular fractions of the indigenous population who correspond best with whatever is idealized: the chiefly elites of certain regions, bush Aborigines rather than those living in cities, even those who appear to live on ancestral lands as opposed to groups who migrated during or before the colonial period.”<sup>35</sup> As my studies in Central Sulawesi suggest, “correspondence” is itself a product of articulation. Few places could be more “bush” than the Lauje hills and yet, as I have shown, the people and their concerns do not easily connect.

There has been much written about the distortion of subaltern struggles caused by representations created and imposed by outsiders. DuPuis and Vandergeest (1996) decry the simplified spatial images (wilderness, countryside) imposed upon rural people through policy processes (and their green counterpoints) pursued in ignorance of the complexity of local histories, livelihoods and aspirations. Similarly Fisher (1996) and Hecht and Cockburn (1990) are troubled by the way political space for Amazonians has been circumscribed by contemporary anti-development in the shape of environmentalism. Lohmann (1993:203) argues that “green orientalism” compels locals to act out assigned roles which they can, at best, only “twist and subvert” to their own advantage. Similar effects result from indigenismo and images of the “hyperreal Indian” (Ramos 1994). Rangan (1993) has recounted the damage done by an externally generated image of the Garhwal Himalayas, home of Chipko, as an ecological utopia.

This is an important critique. However, it treats representation as a one-sided imposition, a unilateral power. By paying attention to the process of articulation it is possible to appreciate opportunities as well as constraints, and the exercise of agency in these encounters. Simplified images may be the result of collaborations in which

“natives” have participated for their own good reasons. In the Philippines, according to Eder (1994) Batak highlanders see themselves, simultaneously, as a deprived underclass lacking the resources (but not the desire) to pursue lowland Filipino lifeways and also as proud bearers of a tribal identity. The latter has become emphasized through their collaboration with NGOs allies, as they have discovered the value of ethnic claims in obtaining desired outside resources. Neumann (1995) describes the way Tanzanian pastoralists have made productive political use of an environmentalist rhetoric even as it was deployed to displace them. Jackson (1995) describes Tukanoans in the Vaupes “orientalizing themselves” to acquire more Indianness. Complexity, collaboration and creative cultural engagement in both local and global arenas, rather than simple deceit, imposition or reactive opportunism, best describe these processes and relationship.

### Connecting Social Forces

As Hall observed, the most important articulations go beyond the “cut” through which localized groups position themselves, to connect broader social forces. Like a localized group, a social movement also needs to select some issues from a broader canvas if it is to position itself and build alliances. From this point of view, images of environmentally friendly tribes in exemplary places may be necessary, at least as a starting point. But there are limitations to a social movement built around such images. To the extent that they highlight primordial otherness, separating us from them, traditional from modern and victim from aggressor or protector, they reinforce differences and channel alliances along binary pathways. Moreover ideal candidates for the tribal slot are difficult to find in Indonesia, and where they have in fact been identified is, as I have indicated, a contingent matter. Taking advantage of such ambiguities, the government could set out new rules to identify and accommodate a few “primitives” or traditional/ indigenous people, and even acknowledge their rights to special treatment, without fundamentally shifting its ground on the issue that affects tens of millions: recognition of their rights to the land and forest on which they depend. Some people would gain from official recognition of their “indigenous peoples” status, but the result might be heightened tensions as neighbouring or intermingled populations find themselves differently affected.

On the other hand, too much fuzziness, or too broad an agenda, makes it difficult to forge connections. It is not obvious to me, for example, that substituting a discourse of class for one about indigenous identities and practices, as proposed by Rouse (1995), would necessarily have formed a broader coalition or more effectively “found its subject” in the Indonesian countryside over the past decade. Rouse exposes the politics

of identification in the U.S. as the effect of routinized micro-power and attempts by the ruling regime to deflect opposition potentially formulated in broader, class terms. In Indonesia under the New Order, in contrast to the U.S. and also in contrast to the adat-making endeavours of the Dutch colonial period, ethnic identity has most decidedly not been the chosen ideological terrain of the state. Although colourful cultural signs have always been acceptable, localized identities, histories and commitments have been consistently unmarked and derecognized in favour of a homogenizing discourse of development. Positioned in relation to this particular field of power, an articulation that focused attention on the tribal slot has been able to make important connections. But articulations are, as Hall argues, not given or fixed for all time.

The broader visions framed by the discourse on indigenous people have been attempts to rework the meanings of democracy, citizenship and development. These are visions which could incorporate Lauje, Lindu and millions of other rural Indonesians. Often they note, but then proceed to blur the distinctions between indigenous people, local people, and other rural folk including migrants, stressing the common concerns that arise from the grounding of livelihoods in particular places, and the need to contest arbitrary state power to displace and impoverish. These visions do not reject the idea of development, but hold the state to account. They engage with the state at its most vulnerable point: when its promises are tested by routine or spectacular development failures, and its raison d'être called into question. The Lindu rejected the idea that the state could or would bring them development, and mobilized accordingly. The cynical reflections of the Lauje are the product of decades of experience with official greed, incapacity and indifference. They know full well that their future does not lie in state handouts, a knowledge which renders the exaggerated claims of state programs vulnerable to exposure and critique.

## Conclusion

The discourse on indigenous people in Indonesia has emerged from new visions and connections that have created moments of opportunity, but there are no guarantees. There is the potential for the development of a broad social movement in which urban activists and rural people can begin to articulate shared interests. There are also risks. Articulation, in Hall's formulation, is a process of simplification and boundary-making as well as connection. The forms it takes are not pre-given by objective structures and positions, but emerge through processes of action and imagination shaped by the "continuous play of history, culture and power".

Seeking to negotiate the political dangers of attributing either too much, or too little, agency to those who would claim the tribal slot as their own, I explored contrasting conjunctures to expose the conditions and processes which made particular articulations possible. The Lindu came to position themselves in the tribal slot at a moment of crisis, but their articulations drew upon experiences of boundary making and selection sedimented over more than a century. The Lauje have engaged with more diffuse forms of power, and their positions have not been collectively defined. They do not easily connect to the tribal slot defined for them in some activist agendas. In their work on behalf of tribal and indigenous people, NGOs have also articulated their positions to engage quite specific fields of power. As agendas and positions are recalibrated in the post-Suharto era, no doubt the risks and opportunities associated with the tribal slot will be reassessed by those it potentially engages as subjects, and by those who seek to place the resource struggles and aspirations of Indonesia's frontier peoples at the center of a broad social movement.

## References Cited

Acciaioli, Gregory 1989. Searching for Good Fortune: The Making of a Bugis Shore Community at Lake Lindu, Central Sulawesi. Ph.D. Thesis, Australian National University.

Bamba, John 1993. "The Concepts of Land Uses among the Dayaks and Their Contribution to the Sustainable Management of the Environment" in Arimbi ed. Proceedings, Seminar on the Human Dimensions of Environmentally Sound Development Jakarta: WALHI and Friends of the Earth, 37-49.

Barth, Frederick 1981. Process and Form in Social Life London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Benda-Beckmann, von Franz and Keebet von Benda-Beckmann 1994. "Property, Politics, and Conflict: Ambon and Minangkabau Compared" Law and Society Review 28(3): 589-607.

Brookfield, Harold, Lesley Potter and Yvonne Byron 1995. In Place of the Forest: Environmental and Socio-economic Transformation in Borneo and the Eastern Malay Peninsula Tokyo: United Nations University Press.

Brown, Elaine 1994. "Grounds at Stake in Ancestral Domains" in James Eder and Robert Youngblood eds. Patterns of Power and Politics in the Philippines Arizona: Arizona State University, 43-76.

Carrier, James 1992. "Occidentalism: the World Turned Upside-Down" American Ethnologist 19(2):195-212.

Chambers, Robert 1983. Rural Development: Putting the Last First New York: Longman.

Cohen, Anthony 1993. "Culture as Identity: An Anthropologist's View" New Literary History 24:195-209.

Colchester, Marcus 1986a. "Unity and Diversity: Indonesian Policy towards Tribal Peoples" The Ecologist 16 (2-3):89-97.

1986b. "The Struggle for Land: Tribal Peoples in the Face of the Transmigration Programme" The Ecologist 16 (2-3):99-110.

1994. "Sustaining the Forests: The Community-based Approach in South and South-East Asia" Development and Change 25(1):69-100.

Cooper, Frederick and Ann Stoler eds. 1997. Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World Berkeley: University of California.

Department of Social Affairs 1994. Isolated Community Development: Data and Information Jakarta: Directorate of Isolated Community Development, Directorate General of Social Welfare Development, Department of Social Affairs.

Departmen Kehutanan 1994. Pentunjuk Teknis Inventarisasi dan Indentifikasi Peladang Berpindah dan Perambah Hutan Jakarta: Direktorat Reboisasi.

Dove, Michael 1993. "A Revisionist View of Tropical Deforestation and Development" Environmental Conservation 20(1):17-24, 56.

Dupuis, E. Melanie and Peter Vandergeest 1996. "Introduction" in E. Melanie Dupuis and Peter Vandergeest eds. Creating the Countryside: The Politics of Rural and Environmental Discourse Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1-25.

Eder, James 1994. "State-Sponsored 'Participatory Development' and Tribal Filipino Ethnic Identity" Social Analysis 35:28-38.

- Ellen, R. F. 1986. "What Black Elk Left Unsaid: On the Illusory Images of Green Primitivism" Anthropology Today 2(6):8-12.
1976. "The Development of Anthropology and Colonial Policy in the Netherlands: 1800-1960" Journal of the History of the Behavioural Sciences 12: 303-324.
- Evers, Pieter 1995. "Preliminary Policy and Legal Questions about Recognizing Traditional Land in Indonesia" Ekonesia 3:1-24.
- Fisher, William 1996. "Native Amazonians and the Making of the Amazonian Wilderness: From Discourse of Riches to Sloth and Underdevelopment" in E. Melanie Dupuis and Peter Vandergeest eds. Creating the Countryside: The Politics of Rural and Environmental Discourse Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 166-203.
- Foster-Carter, Aidan 1975. "The Modes of Production Controversy" New Left Review 107:47-77.
- Friedman, Jonathan 1987. "Beyond Otherness of: The Spectacularization of Anthropology" Telos 71:161-170.
1992. "The Past in the Future: History and the Politics of Identity" American Anthropologist 94(4):837-859.
- Gray, Andrew 1995. "The Indigenous Movement in Asia" in R.H. Barnes, Andrew Gray and Benedict Kingsbury eds. Indigenous Peoples of Asia Michigan: Association for Asian Studies, 35-58.
- Gupta, Akhil and James Ferguson 1992. "Beyond "Culture": Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference" Cultural Anthropology 7(1):6-23.
- Hall, Stuart 1996. "On Postmodernism and articulation: An Interview with Stuart Hall" edited by Lawrence Grossberg in David Morley and Kuan-Hsing Chen eds. Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies London: Routledge, 131-150 (reprinted from Journal of Communication Inquiry 1986 10.2, 45-60).
1995. "Negotiating Caribbean Identities" New Left Review 209:3-14.
1990. "Cultural Identity and Diaspora" in Jonathan Rutherford ed. Identity: Community, Culture, Difference London: Lawrence and Wishart, 222-237.
1985. "Signification, Representation, Ideology: Althusser and the Post-Structuralist Debates" Critical Studies in Mass Communication 2(2):91-114.

Hecht, Susanna and Alexander Cockburn 1990. The Fate of the Forest London: Penguin.

Henley, David 1996. Nationalism and Regionalism in a Colonial Context: Minahasa in the Dutch East Indies Leiden: KITLV Press.

Herzfeld, Michael 1997. "Anthropology: a practice of theory" International Social Science Journal 153:301-318.

Jackson, Jean 1995. "Culture, genuine and spurious: the politics of Indianness in the Vaupes, Colombia" American Ethnologist 22(1):3-27.

Kahn, Joel 1993. Constituting the Minangkabau: Peasants, Culture and Modernity in Colonial Indonesia Providence: Berg.

1999 "Culturalising the Indonesian Uplands" in Tania Murray Li ed. Transforming the Indonesian Uplands: Marginality, Power and Production Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, 79-101.

Keck, Margaret 1995. "Social Equity and Environmental Politics in Brazil: Lessons from the Rubber Tappers of Acre" Comparative Politics 27(4):409-424.

Kingsbury, Benedict 1998. "Indigenous Peoples' in International Law: A Constructivist Approach to the Asian Controversy" The American Journal of International Law 92(3): 414-457.

Kipp, Rita Smith and Susan Rodgers 1987. "Introduction: Indonesian Religions in Society" in Rita Smith Kipp and Susan Rodgers eds. Indonesia Religions in Transition Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1-31.

Koentjaraningrat 1993. "Pendahuluan" and "Membangun Masyarakat Terasing" in Koentjaraningrat ed. Masyarakat Terasing di Indonesia Jakarta: Gramedia with Departemen Sosial, 1-18, 344-350.

Kusumaatmadja, Sarwono, State Minister of Environment 1993. "The Human Dimensions of Sustainable Development" in Arimbi ed. Proceeding, Seminar on the Human Dimensions of Environmentally Sound Development Jakarta: WALHI and Friends of the Earth, 12-15.

Laudjeng, Hedar 1994. "Kearifan Tradisional Masyarakat Adat Lindu" in Arianto Sangadji ed. Bendungan Rakyat dan Lingkungan: Catatan Kritis Rencana Pembangunan PLTA Lore Lindu Jakarta: WALHI, 150-163.

Li, Tania Murray 1996. "Images of Community: Discourse and Strategy in Property Relations" Development and Change 27(3):501-27.

1997. "Producing Agrarian Transformation at the Indonesian Periphery" in Richard Blanton et al eds. Economic Analysis Beyond the Local System Lanham: University Press of America, 125-146.

1999a. "Marginality, Power and Production: Analysing Upland Transformations" in Tania Murray Li ed. Transforming the Indonesian Uplands: Marginality, Power and Production Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1-44.

1999b. "Compromising Power: Development, Culture, and Rule in Indonesia" Cultural Anthropology 14(3):1-28.

Lohmann, Larry 1993. "Green Orientalism" The Ecologist 23(6):202-204.

Lynch, Owen J. and Kirk Talbott 1995. Balancing Acts: Community-Based Forest Management and National Law in Asia and the Pacific Washington: World Resources Institute.

Moniaga, Sandra 1993a. "The Systematic Destruction of the Indigenous System of Various Adat Communities throughout Indonesia" in Arimbi ed. Proceeding, Seminar on the Human Dimensions of Environmentally Sound Development Jakarta: WALHI and Friends of the Earth, 31-36.

1993b. "Toward Community-Based Forestry and Recognition of Adat Property Rights in the Outer Islands of Indonesia" in Jefferson Fox ed. Legal Frameworks for Forest Management in Asia: Case Studies of Community-State Relations Honolulu: Environment and Policy Institute, East-West Center.

Neumann, Roderick 1995. "Local Challenges to Global Agendas: Conservation, Economic Liberalization and the Pastoralists' Rights Movement in Tanzania" Antipode 27(4):363-382.

Nourse, Jennifer 1989. "We are the Womb of the World: Birth Spirits and the Lauje of Central Sulawesi" Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Virginia



1994. "Textbook Heroes and Local Memory: Writing the Right History in Central Sulawesi" Social Analysis 35:102-121.
- O'Brien, Jay and William Roseberry 1991. "Introduction" in Jay O'Brien and William Roseberry eds. Golden Ages, Dark Ages Berkeley: University of California Press,1-18.
- Peluso, Nancy 1995. "Whose Woods Are These? Counter-Mapping Forest Territories in Kalimantan, Indonesia" Antipode 27(4):383-406.
- Ramos, Alcida Rita 1994. "The Hyperreal Indian" Critique of Anthropology 14(2):153-71.
- Rangan, Haripriya 1993. "Romancing the Environment: Popular Environmental Action in the Garhwal Himalayas" in John Friedmann and Haripriya Rangan eds. In Defense of Livelihood: Comparative Studies on Environmental Action West Hartford: Kumarian Press, 155-181.
- Rouse, Roger 1995. "Personhood and Collectivity in Transnational Migration to the United States" Critique of Anthropology 15(4):351-380.
- Ruiter, Tine 1999. "Agrarian Transformations in the Uplands of Langkat: Survival of Independent Karo Batak Smallholders" in Tania Murray Li ed. Transforming the Indonesian Uplands: Marginality, Power and Production Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, 279-310.
- Safitri, Myrna 1995. "Hak dan Akses Masyarakat Lokal pada Sumberdaya Hutan: Kajian Peraturan Perundang-undangan Indonesia" Ekonesia 3:43-60.
- Sangadji, Arianto 1996. Menyorot PLTA Lore Lindu Palu: Yayasan Tanah Merdeka.
- Schweithelm, James et al 1992. Land Use and Socio-Economic Survey Lore Lindu National Park and Morowali Nature Reserve Sulawesi Parks Program , Directorate General of Forest Protection and Nature Conservation, Ministry of Forestry, and The Nature Conservancy.
- Scott, David 1992. "Criticism and Culture: Theory and Post-colonial Claims on Anthropological Disciplinarity" Critique of Anthropology 12(4):371-394.

Shields, Rob 1991. Places on the Margin: Alternative Geographies of Modernity London: Routledge.

Sider, Gerald 1987. "When Parrots Learn to Talk, and Why They Can't: Domination, Deception, and Self-deception in Indian-White Relations" Comparative Studies in Society and History 29:3-23.

Skephi and Rachel Kiddell-Monroe 1993. "Indonesia: Land Rights and Development" in Marcus Colchester and Larry Lohmann eds. The Struggle for Land and the Fate of the Forests Penang: World Rainforest Movement, 228 - 263.

Stearman, Allyn MacLean 1994. "Revisiting the Myth of the Ecologically Noble Savage in Amazonia: Implications for Indigenous Land Rights" Culture and Agriculture 49:2-6.

Thomas, Nicholas 1992. "Substantivization and Anthropological Discourse" in James Carrier ed. History and Tradition in Melanesian Ethnography Berkeley: University of California Press, 64-85.

1994. Colonialism's Culture Cambridge: Polity Press.

Tsing, Anna Lowenhaupt 1999. "Becoming a Tribal Elder and other Green Development Fantasies" in Tania Murray Li ed. Transforming the Indonesian Uplands: Marginality, Power and Production Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, 159-202.  
1993 In the Realm of the Diamond Queen Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Trouillot, Michel-Rolphé 1991. "Anthropology and the Savage Slot: The Poetics and Politics of Otherness" in Richard Fox ed. Recapturing Anthropology Santa Fe: School of American Research, 17-44.

Watts, Michael 1992. "Space for Everything (A Commentary)" Cultural Anthropology 7(1):115-129.

Zerner, Charles 1990. Community Rights, Customary Law, and the Law of Timber Concessions in Indonesia's Forests: Legal Options and Alternative in Designing the Commons, Forestry Studies UTF/INS/065.

1994 "Through a Green Lens: The Construction of Customary Environmental Law and Community in Indonesia's Maluku Islands" Law and Society Review 28(5):1079-1122.

## Newspaper Reports

“Eksistensi Hukum Adat Dewasa Ini” Kompas 27 Mar 1996 (Achmad Sodiki).  
“` Indigenous Peoples’ dan Penguasaan atas Tanah” Kompas 29 Apr 1993 (Tim Babcock and Maria Ruwiastuti).  
“Kearifan Masyarakat Adat dalam Konservasi Alam Sangat Tinggi” Kompas 13 Sep 1993 (Anon).  
“Masyarakat Lindu Menolak Rencana Pembangunan PLTA” Kompas 11 Sep 1993 (Anon).  
“Semoga Hak Ulayat Dihargai” Kompas 29 Apr 1993 (Masri Singarimbun).  
“Siberut Island Likely to have New Settlement Areas” Jakarta Post 14 Feb 1996 (Anon).  
“Skhepi Opposes Siberut Resettlement” Jakarta Post 17 Feb 1996 (Stevie Emilia).  
“Sulawesi Tribe Opposes Lake Lindu Dam Project” Jakarta Post 11 Sep 1994 (Anon).

<sup>1</sup> Acknowledgements: I thank Tim Babcock, Victor Li, Donald Moore, Anna Tsing, Bruce Willems-Braun and participants of the Environmental Politics Seminar, Institute of International Studies, University of California, Berkeley for incisive readings of an earlier draft. My research in Indonesia has been generously funded by Canada’s Social Science and Humanities Research Council (1989-1992, 1995-2000), and by the Canadian International Development Agency through a Dalhousie University linkage with Indonesia’s Ministry of State for Population and Environment (1990-94). The usual disclaimers apply.

Sarwono Kusumaatmadja (1993), Minister of State for the Environment, addressing an NGO forum.

<sup>2</sup> This paper was first submitted to CSSH in November 1997. It was revised and resubmitted in November 1998, after the fall of Suharto, during a period when hopes for progressive change and skepticism about reformasi were present in equal measure. The situation in November 1999, as I make final revisions before the journal goes to press, has changed again in ways that I cannot fully explore. Most notably, the indigenous peoples’ platform was highlighted by a national congress held in Jakarta in March 1999 and the founding of an indigenous peoples’ organization AMAN (Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara). See the special issue of Down to Earth, October 1999. Improved prospects for some kinds of legal recognition under the new government make reflection on the issues I raise in this article even more important.

<sup>3</sup> In one of these locations, the Lauje area, I have carried out fieldwork for a total of about seven months, spread over a period of seven years. For the other, Lake Lindu, I rely mainly on secondary sources.

<sup>4</sup> While acknowledging the desire of some parties to pin the category down, Kingsbury (1998:450) takes a “constructivist” position on indigenoussness, arguing that this identification will emerge and shift in relation to international discourses, national policies and local dynamics. Gray (1995) argues that the term indigenous lacks descriptive coherence in relation to Asia, but signals a process and phenomenon which occurs in struggles that pit localized groups against encompassing states. Therefore, millions of people in Asia who actually or potentially experience this scenario fall within its compass.

<sup>5</sup> See the polemics over this matter in the journal *Identities* (1996, volume 3,1-2). See also Friedman (1992).

<sup>6</sup> For an elucidation of the phrase room for maneuver and an insightful ethnographic account, see Tsing (1999).

<sup>7</sup> The formulation of articulation in the “modes of production” literature of the 1970s focused upon the process of conjoining but not that of “giving expression to” (Foster-Carter 1975:53). For an account of how Hall positions his concept of articulation in relation to the work of Althusser, Foucault, Lacan and others, see Hall (1985).

<sup>8</sup> Lynch and Talbott (1995:22) estimate that Indonesia has 80-95 million people directly dependent upon forest resources, of whom 40-65 million live on land classified as public forest.

<sup>9</sup> See Colchester (1986a and b) for a discussion of transmigration and other programs which are explicitly designed to homogenize the rural population and eliminate ethnic distinctions. Much criticism has focused upon the Desa Administrative Law No.5/1979 which seeks to standardize villages and weaken adat institutions concerned with social organization and leadership. See Moniaga (1993a: 33-5).

<sup>10</sup> I draw here upon a set of interviews I carried out with Jakarta NGOs in 1996 as well as upon their published documents. Where the subject matter might be sensitive, I do not identify the organizations to which I am referring in my discussion.

<sup>11</sup> See, for example, Moniaga (1993b) and “Ekistensi Hukum” (Kompas 27 Mar 1996).

<sup>12</sup> Simply reversing the images is also problematic, as NGOs increasingly recognize. An NGO campaign against transmigration and large scale plantations on the island of Siberut argued that the island’s residents were so traditional they could not mix with newcomers, or adapt to rapid and major change. But the very same image of an extreme gulf between an isolated and primitive “them” and a modern Indonesian “us” was used by Transmigration Minister Siswono to argue that development must proceed, because the Siberut people cannot be left in a stone-age state. See “Siberut Island” (Jakarta Post 14 Feb 96) and “Skephi opposes” (Jakarta Post 17 Feb 96).

<sup>13</sup> See critiques of the government for its refusal to recognize customary land rights in Moniaga (1993a, b); Skephi and Kiddell-Monroe (1993); “Semoga” (Kompas 29 Mar 93), “Indigenous Peoples” (Kompas 29 Apr 93), and “Eksistensi Hukum Adat” (Kompas 27 Mar 96). See Evers (1995) for an overview of the legal status of customary land rights, the difficulties of specifying who should be included in the category of indigenous people in Indonesia, and an attempt to reconcile these questions with World Bank policies. For a discussion of the difference between the Dutch colonial concept of a traditional-law society (masyarakat hukum adat) and the internationally recognized concept of indigenous people, and the (lack of) resonance of these concepts with forestry law, see Safitri (1995).

<sup>14</sup> See O’Brien and Roseberry (1991:13); Cohen (1993:203).

<sup>15</sup> See Thomas (1992:65), Scott (1992:376) and Gupta and Ferguson (1992:16) for general arguments along these lines; see Kahn (1993:23) and Tsing (1993) for Indonesian examples.

<sup>16</sup> For a summary of the large literature on upland-lowland relations in the pre-colonial era see Li (1999a), and references cited therein.

<sup>17</sup> In Northern Sulawesi, for example, Henley characterizes the indigenous political geography in terms of “aterritoriality, fluidity and fragmentation” (1996:143). He notes that local kin-based groups or walak became more strongly bounded and endogamous under warlike conditions, although they could still fragment and realign (1996:26,35).

<sup>18</sup> See, for example, Tsing’s (1993) description of the mountain dwellers of Southeast Kalimantan for whom she had to coin a singular name, the Meratus.

<sup>19</sup> For Sulawesi examples, see Acciaoli (1989 :66, 73); Henley (1996).

<sup>20</sup> See Kahn (1993), Benda-Beckmann and Benda Beckmann (1994), Ruiters (1999); for a more general discussion of colonial practices of discipline and rule, see Cooper and Stoler (1997).

<sup>21</sup> See Kahn (1993:78-110) for an extended discussion of the intellectual, economic and political rationales for the Leiden School of adat law associated with van Vollenhoven, influential in the codification of adat in the period 1911-1955. See also Ellen 1976.

<sup>22</sup> For example Kahn (1993:180; 1999) observes that in the nineteenth century the term Minangkabau did not have the sense of a discrete, bounded, distinctive cultural unit; this developed in the colonial period and subsequently.

<sup>23</sup> See, for example, the discussion of Meratus identity, leadership and ad hoc adat-making processes in Tsing 1993.

<sup>24</sup> Thanks to Dan Paradis for access to transcripts of interviews with Provincial officials in 1994. Because the transcripts had been translated, I do not know which Indonesian expression was here translated as indigenous people.

<sup>25</sup> To illustrate his point, the official showed photos of a Wana medicine man conducting a ritual. Prominently displayed in the Palu office are “before and after” pictures of near naked Wana who are subsequently clothed, revealing the contradictory impulses of nostalgia and development.

<sup>26</sup> This situation has begun to change in the past five years as coastal elites see the economic potential for hillside cocoa and clove gardens. For a discussion of the local and regional class dimensions of this process, see Li (1996 and 1997).

<sup>27</sup> Many people were reluctant to talk to me when I first started field work in the Lauje hills because they feared my research would lead to their resettlement. They were especially nervous about anything that looked like a list of names.

<sup>28</sup> This did not mean they always spoke with one voice: disputes arose over the issue of who among “the Lindu” had the right to confer upon outsiders permission to use Lindu resources.

<sup>29</sup> The redesign would still require a green belt around the lake, restricting access to both fisheries and farmland. Sangadji’s (1996) research continues to highlight the ways in which the Lindu are, and must remain, anchored to very specific spots on the landscape, including fishing spots that are the preserve of particular families. During my visit to Lindu an NGO was facilitating a community mapping process in which the Lindu leaders who had traveled to Jakarta were key participants. They had been informed by the Minister of State for Environment that their case would be strengthened by representing their customary zones and places on maps which outsiders could read. On the politics of mapping and counter-mapping in Indonesia, see Peluso (1995).

<sup>30</sup> See Moniaga (1993a:33) and “Kearifan Masyarakat” (Kompas 13 Sept 1993). The Institute of Dayakology also presents generic Dayak as environmentalists (Bamba 1993). For critiques of the claim that natives are naturally nurturant of nature, see Ellen (1986) and Stearman (1994).

<sup>31</sup> Opposition to the hydro-project at Lindu was widespread in the community, so there was a common interest in the success of the campaign. On other matters, including the relevance of indigenous environmental knowledge to everyday lives and practices and the role of the adat council in controlling resources, there are bound to be differences of opinion among people differently situated by class, gender and ethnic origins. Since I have not carried out field research at Lindu I am not in a position to discuss these.

<sup>32</sup> For other Indonesian conjunctures in which some or all of these factors were also relevant see Tsing (1999) and Zerner (1994).

<sup>33</sup> On the non-egalitarian aspects of adat see Benda-Beckman and Benda-Beckman (1994); on “lairdism” or the risks associated with concentrating power in the hands of adat chiefs, Colchester (1994:87); on the ways in which concentrated adat power becomes more easily enmeshed in or subverted by the projects of the colonial and post-colonial states, Zerner (1994).

<sup>34</sup> For a good discussion of this point in the Philippine context see Brown (1994). Note, however, that ecological soundness is a relative matter: smallholders expanding into old-growth forests threaten biodiversity, but the resulting mosaic of land uses is vastly more bio-diverse than the industrial scale oil palm or timber plantations programmed to displace them under state-sponsored schemes.

<sup>35</sup> See also Carrier (1992), Friedman 1987, and Scott 1992:387.